

One Hundred Twenty-Five Years of Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary

Feryal Salem, PhD

Hartford Seminary,

Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations

The study of Islam at Hartford Seminary has a distinctive history that spans well over a century. Until about forty years ago, Hartford Seminary was one of the few graduate level institutions in North America dedicated to the study of Islam at the Ph.D. level. This discipline also has been developed and redefined several times over the next century as the Seminary itself responded to changing times and shifts in mission. The study of Islam at Hartford Seminary can be divided into three phases; namely that of mission oriented, followed by a model of Christian engagement with Islam and finally its current form of a reciprocal approach of Christian-Muslim or Muslim-Christian relations. Each of these three phases will be highlighted in this study.

Early History of Hartford Seminary¹

The Theological Institute of Connecticut, which would later be known as Hartford Theological Seminary, was first established in 1834 in the context of a number of theological debates that were prevalent in New England at the time. Among members of the churches in Connecticut that would eventually be known as Congregationalist, a divide between more liberal and orthodox readings of Calvinist theology, particularly as it pertains to the concepts of freewill and original sin, became a point of controversy which would divide much of these churches of the Standing Order.

The famous Taylor-Tyler debate in which Nathaniel Taylor (1786–1858) advocated a more rationalist reading of some of the foundational tenets of Calvinism while Bennet Tyler (1783–1858) advocated adherence to a traditional approach, would be the basis upon which the two leading theological schools of Connecticut, that of Yale and

¹ I am indebted to Steven Blackburn, curator of the Arabic collection at Hartford Seminary, for his many insightful comments and suggestions. I am also grateful to Marie Rovero for her assistance in locating rare documents in the Hartford Seminary archives.

Hartford Theological Seminary would form.² Taylor who viewed his progressive approach as essential to the preservation of Calvinist beliefs in the face of the growing trends of Unitarianism and Deism in Massachusetts with Harvard at its center, became a central figure in shaping Yale's vision. Tyler, on the other hand, regarded the progressive ideas among the followers of Taylor to form a threat to the foundations of orthodox Calvinist beliefs that might endanger its future existence through a series of compromises. Tyler was among a group of conservative Standing Order pastors, whose formation of the Pastoral Union aimed at educating ministers and clergy, would establish the Theological Institute of Connecticut to fulfill this mission. It was also Tyler who became the first president of this institute that would later be known as the Hartford Theological Seminary.³

The next fifty years after the establishment of the Theological Institute of Connecticut saw many fundamental shifts that would ensure the survival of this small institution and shape its future. One of these consequential events was the decision to move the Theological Institute of Connecticut from the remote suburb of East Windsor to the city of Hartford. While the seclusion of the institute was regarded by many of its early founders as a means to preserve the authentic theological foundations upon which it was built, it became clear within the first three decades of its establishment that it needed to be in a more central location to have access to potential students, libraries, and other educational institutions it can engage with.

In 1865, the Pastoral Union passed a resolution to move the Theological Institute of Connecticut to Hartford where it would later become known in 1885 by its new name: the Hartford Theological Seminary. Two houses on Prospect Street in Hartford were leased as the home of the new Seminary. The move to Hartford resulted in an increase in the size of both the student and faculty body. It also gave many of the ministers in training access to a more diverse local population they could work with as a part of their formation. An effort was made to build the library collection and eventually the Seminary outgrew the two buildings on Prospect Street and additional buildings were rented to house the growing number of students and faculty. The relocation of the Seminary to Hartford also resulted in the formation of a close community among the faculty, students, and the surrounding population. Geer describes these early days saying:

The Seminary was small and poor and in rented buildings. The faculty was small in the early days on Prospect Street and not very well known. But on the other

² According to Hartford Seminary's popular oral history the debate between Tyler and Taylor was focused on whether infant baptism was a necessity for the salvation of a child who dies before this, which was significant for its connection to a larger issue regarding diverging concepts of the relationship between original sin and God's grace. Susan Setta, *A History of Hartford Seminary*, (Hartford Seminary Archives), 8.

³ C.M. Geer, *The Hartford Theological Seminary: 1834–1934* (Hartford: Case Lockwood and Brainard Co., 1934), 16–25. Geer describes the debates between Tyler and Taylor as precursors to the establishment of the Pastoral Union. Also see: Roland Bainton, *Yale and the Ministry: A History of the Education for Christian Ministry at Yale from the Founding in 1701* (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1957), 103–5.

hand, the life, because the number was so small, was like the life of a large family. The students knew each other intimately. There was close sympathy between the members of the faculty and the student body as a whole, such as is impossible when an institution becomes large. The relationship between the students and the people of the churches in Hartford became cordial. The young men taught in the Sunday schools and entered into other phases of the social life of Hartford. There began that close relationship between the people of the city and the students which is one of the pleasant memories of every Hartford graduate.⁴

While the early days of Hartford Theological Seminary's relocation to Hartford were full of challenges and uncertainty, it was the changes that took place in these next fifteen years that ensured that the fragile institution established in 1834 would have permanence and growth.⁵ Bennet Tyler served as president until 1858 and then the Seminary went through a period without another president until 1888. Dean William Thompson who served from 1834 to 1881 was one of the key figures that ensured the Seminary's transfer from East Windsor maintained a form of continuity and stability. It was also Thompson and later others who filled an unofficial role of leading the faculty. Geer writes:

Professor Thompson had been a member of the faculty from the beginning. It may be safely said that the continuation of the Seminary through the final years at East Windsor and the trying early years on Prospect Street is due to him more than any other man. While the institution was small and often opposed and ridiculed, he never lost faith in its ultimate triumph. He held strongly to the belief that the Seminary had a great task before it, in training orthodox ministry which would be true to the teachings of the New England fathers. It was not without reason that he was known as Saint John by the students. While other men were questioning the value of the Seminary in the Prospect Street period, he went along serenely with his work and with entire confidence in the future.⁶

Even after the move to Hartford, the fledgling Seminary continued to struggle to establish itself in terms of enrollments and financial stability. The 1873 Chicago and Boston fires placed additional strains on many local funders who were linked to the insurance companies that were impacted by these incidents. The appointment of Chester David Hartranft (1839–1914) as Professor of Practical Theology in 1878 would have a critical impact on changing the course of the Seminary. Hartranft proved to be a gifted leader who had a talent for teaching, research, and the unique ability to persuade those around him to support his causes. His professorship at the Seminary left an indelible mark on the institution and when it became apparent that his involvement with translating the Schwenckfeld Corpus may result in his resignation from his teaching duties at the

⁴ Geer, *Hartford Theological Seminary*, 114.

⁵ Geer, *Hartford Theological Seminary*, 115. At the time of the transfer from Windsor to Hartford, the Seminary only had two faculty including Thompson. Robert George Vermilye, who was the other faculty member at the time, served alongside Thompson until 1875.

⁶ Geer, *Hartford Theological Seminary*, 116.

Seminary, the Trustees urged him to stay by appointing him president after a 30 year suspension of this role. The founders of Hartford Theological Seminary were New England pastors who were shaped by the democratic ideals of the Founding Fathers based in the same geographic region. Faculty ran the institution through committees and openly consulted with the Trustees and the president's position at the time was not regarded as essential. The appointment of Hartranft as president in 1888 proved to be one of the milestones that would shape the course of Hartford Theological Seminary's history.

Hartranft demonstrated himself up to the task by transforming this new institution into one that was actively involved in the dynamics of the current state of religious affairs. Hartranft was keenly aware of the religious trends of the time in which universities that were originally built with a focus to train ministers in the faith, who were capable of tending to all aspects of societal needs, were becoming compartmentalized with fields such as medicine and law having their own separate tracks independent of religious studies. As president, he believed it was key for Hartford Theological Seminary to reframe its approach to religious education in which faculty specializations reflected this approach to specialized fields of education.⁷

Hartranft also believed that a dogmatic approach to theological problems by the Seminary would limit its capacity to engage in the prevalent intellectual discussions of its time and render itself obsolete. The issues emphasized by its founder, Bennet Tyler, were no longer relevant by this period and Hartranft believed it was time with his leadership to take the Seminary into a new direction of more openness to academic inquiry and divergent views in order to thrive as an institution. Thus, Hartranft made it his mission to transform Hartford Theological Seminary into what many termed as a "university of religion" that worked inter-denominationally. By emphasizing analytical methods of critical inquiry into religion rather than dogma, it became possible for faculty and students of various denominations to discuss and debate using a common intellectual methodology.⁸ He began this process by significantly expanding the faculty at the Seminary and devising a system of departments with each faculty member specializing in a particular aspect of Christianity based on the university model.

During this period, Hartford Theological Seminary also made the bold move in which it opened its doors to women in 1889. Despite the stern reservations of the time into admitting women, Hartford Theological Seminary became the first seminary in the nation to allow women to enroll. Even though this privilege came with limitations, such

⁷ Hartranft outlined three lines of work that he was committed to as president during his inaugural address in front of the Pastoral Union in 1888. They were research, teaching, and publication. He emphasized the importance of the entire faculty excelling in these three spheres in order to maintain relevance in contemporary theological discussions. See: Geer, *Hartford Theological Seminary*, 159 and Setta, *A History of Hartford Seminary*, 73–5.

⁸ Setta, *A History of Hartford Seminary*, 73–8.

a decision was still regarded as revolutionary within the context of its time.⁹ A significant proportion of women were involved in missionary work and Sunday schools. Hartford Theological Seminary became an opportunity to enhance their knowledge in religious studies with the purpose of furthering their roles in these spheres. A Women's Board formed that dedicated its time to nurturing the female students, securing scholarships, and facilitating their success.

The first women to be admitted were described as "giants" and remarkable students that far exceeded a great many of their male classmates in their abilities. *The Historical Sketch of the Woman's Board at Hartford Seminary* writes of the first women graduates of Hartford Theological Seminary:

The women who first came to the Seminary were picked for high scholastic standing. Sometimes the faculty had to try more than once to get the women they wanted, and truly, "There were giants in those days." The first six women in the Seminary were a remarkable group. In the first class was the vigorous and enthusiastic Miss Juliette Gilson, who, after eleven years of missionary service in Cape Colony, South Africa, came to the Seminary and afterward spent her life in pioneer work in Rhodesia, South Africa. When she went to Mount Silinda School, in 1896, there was so little communication with the outside world that they had to wait seventy days for any news from Europe, and mail came in at their own expense from thirty miles away. Miss Rebecca Corwin taught Bible at Mount Holyoke and Wellesley, and later in three colleges in the South, and published some very learned works. In the second class was Miss Annette Josephine Forehand, who did a remarkable piece of pioneering work as head of the Young Women's Christian Association School of Domestic Science in Boston for thirty-five years. . . . Its graduates filled many important positions as dormitory managers, supervisors, and house mothers in Africa, India, Japan, and all the countries of Europe, Canada, and the United States. . . . Miss Adelaide Locke of the same class was perhaps the most brilliant woman who has ever been in the Seminary. She had a most original and creative mind and captured Hebrew, Greek, and Systematic Theology prizes to the great chagrin of the men in her class. She spent her entire life after graduation as Professor of Biblical History at Wellesley College for twenty-eight years. . . . In the third class, Miss Laura Wild was the first woman to seek ordination, not without a real protest from the Seminary, which disproved the preaching of women, and even reworded the statement in the catalogue as to the admission of women, so as to omit the purpose of training for ministry. But it was at the urgent request of the Congregational ministers in Nebraska that she was first

⁹ Following Hartranft's proposal the board passed a resolution in 1889 that: "women desiring to prepare themselves for Christian teaching, the missionary field, organized charitable work, and religious work other than the pastorate, be admitted to regular, special, and advanced courses of the Seminary, on the same terms as men, on two conditions, viz.: 1. non-residence in Hosmer Hall; 2. Applicants who need financial help must be provided for by special funds." See: Lydia Sanderson Capen, *Historical Sketch of the Woman's Board of the Hartford Seminary Foundation: 1889-1939* (Hartford Seminary Archives), 3.

licensed to preach, and then was ordained in a home missionary church in Lincoln, Nebraska... Later she taught in three women's colleges, Doane College, Nebraska, Lake Erie College, Ohio and finally for twenty years at Mount Holyoke College until her retirement. It was said of her at the Seminary that she could preach better than any man in her class, and she was a most gifted Bible speaker and teacher, and published many noteworthy books of Biblical studies. She received the first honorable mention, awarded by the National Education Association, in 1915, for an essay on "Religious Education in Public Schools." In the same class, Miss Mertie L. Graham won the Hebrew prize and found her field of teaching under the American Missionary Association and as President of Beach Institute in Savannah, Georgia...¹⁰

In addition, the late nineteenth century was also a period of piqued interest in missionary work. Under Hartranft, courses specializing in the field of missions were established and in 1892 a young Scottish scholar by the name of Duncan Black Macdonald (1863–1943) was appointed to teach Old Testament and Semitics.¹¹ His true focus of interest was in Islamics, however, and soon after his appointment, he became best known for his expertise in Islam and Arabic. This was perhaps one of the most fateful decisions that would start a distinct relationship between Hartford Seminary and Islam. This would become a defining characteristic of the institution for almost the next century and a half.

From Continental Missions to Global Missions

The missionary element of education at Hartford Seminary dates back to the earliest period in which it was established. The history of this field of study at the Seminary can be better understood within the context of the missiological efforts of the early Americans in New England at the time. Before 1806, Americans were focused on the conversion of Native Americans and sending missionaries to support new settlements as early settlers from the East Coast started moving westward after the expulsion of the French in 1763 and the establishment of treaties with the British after 1783.¹² The Connecticut Missionary Society was established in the late eighteenth century to fulfill these goals. In 1800 supporters of the missionary movement in Connecticut established the *Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* and Congregationalist pastors extended their teachings towards the Midwest.¹³ Unlike the British whom the Americans viewed as imperialist and global, the American missionaries before the nineteenth century were republican and continental.¹⁴ This focus would shift as the newly independent American nation would navigate through the nineteenth century.

¹⁰ Capen, *Historical Sketch of the Woman's Board*, 5.

¹¹ Setta, *A History of Hartford Seminary*, 82.

¹² Edward Capen, *The Significance of the Haystack Centennial*, (Bibliotheca Sacra, 1906), 710.

¹³ Capen, *The Significance of the Haystack Centennial*, 711.

¹⁴ Emily Krutz-Conroy, *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the American Republic* (Cornell University Press, 2015), 1.

In 1806, a group of young men affiliated with Williams College would meet in Williamstown Massachusetts to commit to forming an organized effort to conduct missionary work beyond the North American continent. In 1808, they formed a society of “Brethren” devoted to these ambitions and by 1810, the center of this missionary organization would shift to Andover Newton Seminary which was established in 1807. Andover Newton drew students from Harvard, Brown, and Union College who were committed to train to work in missions.¹⁵ In 1810, upon the request of these mainly Congregationalist or Presbyterian young men from the Northeast, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was established.

The globalization of American missionary work drew directly at first from the experience which Americans had in their mission to the Native Americans. Early American missions regarded the mission to civilize and convert Native Americans as two interconnected goals that were essential for the dominance of settlers over indigenous Americans. Residential schools that mandated Native American children leave their families and remain as boarding residents were established to implement this goal. Institutions of healing were also used as a means of both charity and conversion.¹⁶ While this approach was not invented by the Puritans nor was it unique to missions only in the Americas, the experience of over a century of missions to Native Americans was an important factor in defining the self-image of American global missions during its earliest phases. The resemblance between the original seal of the ABCFM, which was an image of a half-dressed “native” kneeling in front of a white man handing him a Bible, and the seal of the Massachusetts Bay Colonies that depicted a half-naked Native American crying “Come over and help us!” is significant.¹⁷

Edward Capen (1870–1947) wrote a historical account of the establishment of the ABCFM and its connection to preceding American mission movements in 1906 in his short piece, “Significance of the Haystack Centennial.” This work is significant in that it demonstrates how Capen who became Dean of the Kennedy of School Missions envisioned the connection between early American missions to Native Americans and the beginnings of the global outreach of American missions. He also describes his contemporary missionary efforts of 1906 to be a direct evolution and inheritance from the 1806 decision to form the ABCFM at a monument that marked the site of “the haystack”

¹⁵ When Andover Newton sold its campus and merged with Yale Divinity School, a significant number of Native American and Hawaiian artifacts were a center of controversy in 2017 as questions arose regarding the repatriation of these artifacts to Native Americans in compliance with the Native American Graves Protection Act established in 1990. While this case is of interest on a variety of levels, it also highlights the historically intimate connection between early American missions and their rootedness in the destinies of the Native American inhabitants of the area.

¹⁶ Ronald Niezen, *Spirit Wars: Native North American Religions in the Age of Nation Building* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 29.

¹⁷ Niezen, *Spirit Wars*, 34. Makdisi also discusses this in great length. See: Ussama Makdisi, *Artillery of Heaven: American Missionaries and the Failed Conversion of the Middle East* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), 4.

near Williams College, which was where the pioneers of this movement made their commitments to this cause. In describing early American missions Capen writes:

Education was given a prominent place; for it was necessary to teach persons to read, or the Bible, even in the vernacular, would remain a sealed book. Native helpers and pastors must be educated and the whole community must be enlightened. It was believed by the leaders that the work of civilizing must go on side by side with Christianizing, and among less advanced people instruction in industry and arts was afforded. The missions among the American Indians were from the start markedly industrial. Some years later the expense of such work, and also, it is to be feared, a narrowing in the conception of the missionary purpose, led to the partial abandonment.¹⁸

Capen compares the expanded training that missionaries going overseas were given to the less stringent standards applied to those working with Native Americans saying:

The Board recognized clearly that to prosecute successfully so varied a work called for the most thorough possible training. . . While for the industrial work, and for some the positions in the Indian missions, men and women of limited education were used; yet, in persons designed for the position of missionary, especially in the missions over sea, the best available education was insisted on from the beginning.¹⁹

Thus by the time what would become the Hartford Seminary was first established in 1834, the wave of enthusiasm for global missions in the New England region had a significant influence on the faculty and student body. Even before the Kennedy School of Missions was established, a significant proportion of the early graduates of this institution went on to work in foreign missions by the turn of the twentieth century. A number of classes at Hartford Theological Seminary were established that provided a curriculum for training these students.²⁰ The Kennedy School of Mission's booklet celebrating its 25th year writes:

The Kennedy School of Missions developed from a rich background of missionary devotion which had its root in the religious revival in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Out of this religious revival came the Theological Institute of Connecticut, now Hartford Theological Seminary. It was founded in 1834, and from the very beginning it stood for Christianity with a world vision. A member of the first class, Rev. Mark Ives, went to Hawaii under the American Board. The second class had two missionaries, though one of them

¹⁸ Capen, *The Significance of the Haystack Centennial*, 718–9. For a more detailed account of the Haystack Centennial see: *The Haystack Centennial Ninety Seventh Annual Meeting of the Board*, Boston: American Board of Foreign Missions, 1906.

¹⁹ Capen, *The Significance of the Haystack Centennial*, 720.

²⁰ Courses such as “The theory and methods of Missions,” “The History of Missions,” “Practics,” and up to twelve different languages were offered at Hartford Theological Seminary by 1899. See *Kennedy School of Missions: 1911–1936* (Hartford Seminary Archives), 2.

never reached the field. The third class included Augustus C. Thompson,²¹ who became a leader in the American Board and an authority on missions. The classes of 1847 and 1848 sent three to the reopened Zulu Mission in South Africa. The ten classes 1846–55 sent out 13 missionaries of 22% of the graduates of those years. To the year 1897 ten per cent of the graduates went into service abroad.²²

Much of the perceptions of a hierarchical relationship between the missionaries and their Native American counterparts, as well as perceptions of their inferiority in spiritual, racial, and civilizational status were attitudes that were transferred from one form of mission to another. Missionaries of the time classified the non-Christian world through a framework of “hierarchies of heathenism” as a strategy to facilitate their mission to civilize and convert. Conroy-Krutz writes in her study of early American missions:

As they attempted to evaluate which places in the world were the best locations for their missionary exertion, missionaries created a hierarchy of heathenism to aid them. This hierarchy considered a variety of factors: population size, government style, geographic location, and above all else the level of civilization in a given place. The civilizing impulse was a central, if complex, one to early missionary work. It was not until the middle of the nineteenth century that there would be a concerted effort (although not an entirely successful one) to deemphasize the civilizing thrust of conversion efforts and focus on Christ over culture.²³

Contextualizing Duncan Black Macdonald in this background is critical for a more profound understanding of the methodological shift in the study of Islam which he sparked at Hartford Seminary over the next century. Duncan Black Macdonald was an orientalist with a fascination rather than disdain for the Muslim world and its religion. His framework of studying Islam through a lens of appreciation was a sharp contrast from the approaches of many of his contemporaries as well as the specialists of the past. Not only was his thinking novel and well ahead of his time, Macdonald during his forty-year professorship arguably set the tone of a positive and appreciative relationship of Christians with Muslims that evolved at Hartford Seminary over the next century through his training of numerous prominent students.

David Kerr (1945–2008), who later became Director of the Macdonald Center, made the following assessment:

Christian missionaries to Muslims at the end of the 19th century broadly took one of two alternative views of Islam. Samuel Zwemer, went from Michigan to Arabia, predicted Islam would fall under the impact of western modernity by

²¹ The Hartford Seminary archives currently house a large number A.C. Thompson’s personal collection of books.

²² *Kennedy School of Missions: 1911–1936*, 1.

²³ Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism*, 25–29.

the end of the 20th century, and strove to “occupy” the Muslim world for Christ. Duncan Black Macdonald—who came from Scotland to Hartford—though a distinguished teacher in the Kennedy School of Missions, feared he would never have made a good missionary since he valued Islam highly as an “independent and contemporary commentary on the Bible,” spiritually needful for Christians, and for Muslims their bulwark against the ravages of western secular materialism. His aim was mutual understanding, not conquest. It was Zwemer who founded the *Muslim World* in 1911, but fortunately it was Macdonald who had the more decisive influence on its evolution toward the sort of journal we know today, “devoted to the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relationship in past and present.” Hence its value to the many Christians and Muslims who have been involved in the advance of interfaith dialogue since the middle of this century under the stimulus of Vatican II and the development of the WCC unit on Dialogue with Peoples of Living Faiths.²⁴

In 1903, William Douglas Mackenzie (1859–1936) was appointed as president of the Hartford Theological Seminary. Mackenzie inherited a strong institution that was non-denominational by this time and had a significant portion of graduates motivated by the missionary zeal in New England. He himself, being the son of a prominent missionary in South Africa, was dedicated to this goal. He worked with the Board of Missions to continue to develop classes to train those intending to go into missionary work.²⁵ His important role in the 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference would make Hartford Theological Seminary central in this work and would eventually lead to the establishment of the Kennedy School of Missions.

The 1910 Edinburgh Conference is considered by many to be a watershed event, as Protestant representatives from around the world committed to work across denominational lines to spread Christianity. 1910 was a period of a culmination of missionary zeal and visions of the conversion of the world to what was believed to be salvation through the message of the Gospel. To the many Christians attending this Edinburgh Conference in Scotland, the twentieth century was destined to become the “Christian Century” through their efforts. William Douglas Mackenzie, himself a Scot, was closely involved with this conference and chaired what would be known as the Commission V Report on

²⁴ “Memorandum of David Kerr’s Address to the Trustees of Hartford Seminary,” Wednesday May 4, 1988, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

²⁵ John Mackenzie (1835–1899) was a Scottish missionary who started his work among the Tswana people of Bechuanaland in 1858. Historical accounts differ over his impetus to push for British imperialism in the region. One account is that he regarded that the resistance of the chiefs of the Tswana tribes to the message of the gospel can only be subdued through British imperialism. Whereas, other historians have offered an account that depicts John Mackenzie as an advocate of a “humanitarian” imperialism that would protect the Tswana people and subsequent missionary work in the region from the encroachment of the Boers through the benefits of British protection. John Mackenzie served as deputy commissioner in the newly colonized British Bechuanaland in 1884. He was replaced by Cecil Rhodes one year later. William Mackenzie authors a biography of his father. See: William Mackenzie, *John Mackenzie: South African Missionary and Statesman* (New York: A.C. Armstrong and Son, 1902).

the Preparation of Missionaries. The conclusions which were derived from this study led to the establishment of the Board of the Preparation of Missionaries of which Mackenzie was also selected as chairman.

Mackenzie's work with these boards helped form a new plan for the way missionaries were educated and trained in their fields. Much of the proposed curriculum correlated with the courses already offered at Hartford Theological Seminary due to the vision of Mackenzie. In 1911, the Trustees of the Seminary elected to establish a School of Missions that would be dedicated solely for the purpose of training missionaries abroad. Edward Warren Capen who was also on the Board of the Preparation of Missions with Mackenzie was invited to serve as dean of the school. Soon thereafter, Emma Baker Kennedy²⁶ (1833–1930) made a generous donation on behalf of her late husband to establish an endowment for the school which was renamed the Kennedy School of Missions. Hartford Theological Seminary had now joined with the Kennedy School of Missions and the Hartford School for Religious Pedagogy which focused on training lay clergy. As a result of this corporation, the name Hartford Theological Seminary was changed to Hartford Seminary Foundation.

Duncan Black Macdonald and the Muslim Lands Department

Duncan Black Macdonald was among the foremost experts in both the fields of Islam and Arabic in the United States as early as 1892. Hartford Theological Seminary was unique in its offerings in Islam and Arabic as a result of the esteemed role which Macdonald played in the institution. While he himself was not a missionary, his work played a significant role in training missionaries. When the Hartford School of Missions was established in 1911, Macdonald played an integral role in its organization. The Department of Muslim lands in what would later be the Kennedy School of Missions, became the first and strongest department in the school.²⁷ Hartford Seminary Foundation eventually became known as being instrumental to the evolution of the graduate level study of Islam and Arabic in the United States through the pivotal role played by Macdonald in his years as a professor in 1892–1933.

²⁶ Emma Baker Kennedy (1833–1930) is commonly known by her late husband's name as Mrs. John Stewart Kennedy. She was the daughter of Cornelius Baker who was one of the founders of New York University. Her husband was a wealthy businessman who gave generously to many philanthropic causes. After his death, Emma Baker Kennedy gave large sums of money to a variety of mission causes around the world. She gave large sums of money to schools in India, China, and Lebanon. There was a girl's school dormitory in Beirut named after her. She donated \$500,000 to establish the endowment for the Kennedy School of Missions upon agreement with the then president of Hartford Seminary, William Mackenzie, who promised to raise the same amount and make the endowment one million dollars (see Geer, *Hartford Theological Seminary*, 216–218). In 1918, she, along with Helen Miller Gould Shepard (1868–1938), became the first female vice president of the American Bible Society.

²⁷ *Kennedy School of Missions: 1911–1936*, 6.

Macdonald's professorship in Islamic Studies was supplemented by the expertise of a number of other professors who were specialists in related fields.²⁸ M.H. Ananikian (1875–1924) was added as a specialist in Turkish and Armenian languages at the Kennedy School and W.H. Worrell (1879–1953) was an expert in Arabic and Phonetics.²⁹ Despite the lack of an endowment in the earliest phases of this school, the presence of this trio at Hartford made the Muslim Lands Department difficult to match anywhere else in the United States.³⁰ In 1925, Macdonald left his work at the Kennedy School to devote the entirety of his time to the Hartford Theological Seminary. At that time, William Shellabear (1862–1948) who had done significant work in both Arabic and Malay, replaced Macdonald until 1935.³¹

In 1924–1925 and then 1934–1935 John Kingsley Birge (1888–1952) taught in the Kennedy School of Missions.³² While he was only around for a short period, he was given a rather large piece of cloth from the Ka'ba that was gifted in 1937 to the Muslim Lands Department of the Kennedy School. This cloth is now honored and stands framed on the wall of Hartford Seminary library as a remnant of the institution's deep roots in its

²⁸ *Kennedy School of Missions: 1911–1936*, 6.

²⁹ Madiros Harootioon Ananikian (1875–1924) was born to an Armenian family in Sivas, Turkey. He was raised by his grandfather who was an influential figure in the local Armenian church. He was known to have mastered a number of languages including; Arabic, Turkish, Italian, Hebrew, and Greek. He graduated from Hartford Seminary in 1901 and worked both as an assistant librarian and later an instructor Seminary's Kennedy school from 1905 to 1914. Ananikian also distinguished himself in the Seminary's history for his work in traveling to secure a great many valuable manuscripts from both Islamic and Christian works during the final days of the Ottoman Empire until he fell ill and died in Damascus in 1924. A biography of Ananikian can be found in the Macdonald Center's commemorative booklet; David Kerr, *The Illuminated Manuscripts of Hartford Seminary: The Art of Christian-Muslim Relations*, (Hartford: Hartford Seminary Bookstore: 1994), 19–23. William Hoyt Worrell (1879–1953) taught at the Kennedy School of Missions until 1924 when he accepted an appointment at the University of Michigan.

³⁰ *Kennedy School of Missions: 1911–1936*, 5.

³¹ William Shellabear (1862–1948) was a well known Methodist missionary to Malaysia who translated the Bible into Malay and advocated a positive view of Malay practices and beliefs as a strategy among other missionaries in the field. He was also an advocate of utilizing Malay language and culture as a means to convey the message of Christianity rather than the standard use of English by many of his contemporaries. Also see: Robert Hunt, "The Life of William Shellabear." *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 66, no. 2 (1993), 37–72.

³² John Kingsley Birge (1888–1952) was a missionary stationed in Turkey on behalf of the ABCFM. He completed his Master's degree at Hartford Theological Seminary in 1913. During his time in Turkey he researched various Sufi groups and wrote his PhD dissertation on the Bektashis for the Kennedy School of Missions in 1935. He is also a contributor to the special volume commemorating Duncan Black Macdonald in which he writes about the Turkish mystic poet Yunus Emre. See: J. Kingsley Birge, "Yunus Emre, Turkey's Great Poet of the People," in *The Macdonald Presentation Volume*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1933), 43–60. For a detailed outline of Birge's career see: Cenk Demir, "Türkler Arasında Bir Misyoner: John Kingsley Birge (1888–1952) Hayatı, Misyonerlik Faaliyetleri ve Eserleri," in *Prof. Dr. Abdulkadir Yuvalı Armağanı* ed. Mustafa Öztürk, (Kayseri: Kardeşler Ofset, 2015), 237–262.

relationship with Islam. The following letter dated to 1937 is extant in the Hartford Seminary archives:

27 February 1937

Mr. Donald E. Webster
Bennington, Vermont.

My Dear Mr. Webster:-

This is just a note to acknowledge the receipt on behalf of the Kennedy School of Missions of the piece of the Kiswah or covering of the Ka'bah at Makkah sent through you by the Rev. J.K.Birge, Ph.D. of Istanbul.

You probably know that Mr. Birge's book, "The Dervish Order of Bektashis" is now in the press. We expect it will be well received by orientalists.

Yours very sincerely,
Muslim Lands Department.

Edwin Calverley (1882–1971), who was a student of Macdonald and the first to receive a Ph.D. in the School of Missions later took on the roles of his predecessor.³³ Calverley was a long time instructor as Professor of Islamics at the Kennedy School from 1930–1952. In 1938, Calverley became associate editor of the then *Moslem World*, which Samuel Zwemer (1867–1952) based in Princeton was still running since 1911. In 1948, Zwemer retired and it was Calverley who moved the journal to Hartford Seminary Foundation and became its full editor.

As with Macdonald and many of his students, Calverley had a special interest in al-Ghazālī and translated this scholar's chapter on prayer from his *Revival of the Religious Sciences*. This book was later published with the title *Worship in Islam*.³⁴ Calverley was known for his twenty years of missionary work in Kuwait before assuming his professorship at the Kennedy School. His wife Dr. Elanor Calverley (1887–1968) was as important as her husband, if not more, in their work in Kuwait. She was a doctor who ran a hospital in Kuwait as a medical missionary. When she and her husband returned to Hartford, she too taught at the Kennedy School of Missions as a lecturer in tropical hygiene and related subjects from 1931 to 1952.³⁵

In the 1951–1958, Kenneth Cragg (1913–2012) was appointed Professor of Arabic and Islamics at the Kennedy School. Though, among other things, his methodology of "retrieval" in which he sought to derive Christian roots in Islamic teachings would be deemed problematic by most scholars today, Cragg was an important proponent of positive engagement with Muslims within the particular context of his period. He became a prolific writer publishing around twenty-four books.

³³ Dwight M. Donaldson, "In Appreciation of Dr. Edwin E. Calverley." *The Muslim World* 57, no. 3 (1967), 178–85.

³⁴ Edwin Calverley, *Worship in Islam: being a translation, with commentary and introduction, of al-Ghazzālī's Book of the Iḥyā' on the worship*, (Madras: Christian Literature Society for India, 1925).

³⁵ Woman's Board of Foreign Missions, "The Life Story of Elanor Taylor Calverley, M.D.," (Hartford Seminary Archives).

Generally, in the 1950s and 1960s there was an increasing reliance on visiting professors and fellows who spent a shorter period of 2–3 years at the Kennedy School to teach subjects related to Islam. Finally, Elmer Douglas (1903–1990) was yet another Ph.D. recipient in Islamic Studies from the Kennedy School of Missions in 1945. He spent the years 1927 to 1956 as a missionary to Algeria. In 1956, he was appointed as professor to the Department of Arabic and Islamics. He taught until 1965 making him of the last of the generation of missionaries specialized in Islamics at the Kennedy School before it would be closed only a few years with its approach to conversion and evangelism permanently abandoned.

The Ecumenical Movement and the Post-WWI Shift in Missionary Thinking

Soon after the 1910 Edinburgh conference, the missionary ambitions of its participants were severely challenged by the devastating impact of the first World War and the shift in missionary thinking that followed. The period between the two World Wars is marked by the rise of nationalist movements in parts of the world such as China, India, and the post-Ottoman Empire where much of the American missionaries were posted. A resentment of foreign dominance in these lands reached a breaking point in which a great many nationalist movements, which had been brewing for years, mobilized to resist Western imperialism and demanded self-representation. In addition, the twentieth century saw a rise in the influence of both capitalism and Marxism in these lands that brought with it a growing tendency towards secularism and/or atheism in place of religion.

The missionaries stationed in these locations were considerably impacted by the changing world they were stationed in and found themselves quite often disillusioned and profoundly transformed from their initial perspectives when they first arrived. A great many of the American Protestant missionaries who originally came to civilize and save souls of the heathen found themselves grow deeply empathetic with the peoples and religions of those whom they came to convert. A significant portion of these missionaries and their children who grew up outside of the United States became critical of the roles their own government played in these lands, while many others were complicit actors in maintaining the hegemony of American empire.

Considering that before World War II, missionaries were the main source of information on the outside world for a great many Americans, they were able to exercise quite a bit of influence in the way the rest of the world was viewed. For example, Henry R. Luce (1898–1967), who was the son of the well known Presbyterian missionary to China as well as a Hartford Seminary graduate and professor by the same name, became an American press magnate in which he influenced American culture through his management of *Time*, *Life*, *Fortune*, and *Sports Illustrated* magazines read by the middle class throughout the country. These magazines had a lasting impact on American journalism and played a significant role in influencing public opinion towards the outside world

before television became more prevalent.³⁶ The following reference published by the Kennedy School of Missions in 1936 in its booklet marking its 25th anniversary alludes to many of these new shifts in missionary thinking that the Kennedy School found itself at the center of:

It is difficult to exaggerate the changes that have taken place in the missionary situation during the quarter of a century that has elapsed since the School of Missions enrolled its first students. The World War was still in the future with its aftermath of political, economic, social, and religious confusion. The strong nationalistic spirit had not yet transformed the social atmosphere in which the missionary would have to work. While the secularism of Western civilization was permeating the culture of the East, it had not yet revealed its deadening effects. The development of government education had not yet restricted or supplanted a field of work which had always absorbed much of the time of the missionary and enabled him to exert a great influence and to train national leaders. Modern industry did not yet dominate the centers of Japan, China, and India and had not yet produced its own problems and affected wide areas. While the gold and diamond mining was in full swing in 1911, the great copper mines in the Congo had not yet begun to change native life. The disillusionment regarding western civilization, which had often been identified, in part even by some missionary leaders, with Christianity, had not yet arisen. The phrase "Christian civilization" was still in use and things western were regarded as models to be carried to Asia and Africa.³⁷

The inclusion of this section that highlights some of the major points of debates that began among the American missionary community that became prevalent in the era following World War I indicates the extent to which it appears to have penetrated the life and thinking at the Kennedy School of the Hartford Seminary Foundation. The link between Western civilization and Christianity was called into question as many Christians in non-Western lands sought the indigenization of their churches and freedom from a paternalistic relationship between indigenous communities and Western clergy stationed abroad. The social gospel movement that emphasized a responsibility to alleviate social injustices as a form of Christian ministry also found traction among American Protestants stationed abroad who questioned whether it was appropriate to focus on conversion while the realities of war and the consequences of Western capitalism in lands they imperialized ravaged the lives of much of the poor in parts of the world referenced in the quote above. Many American missionaries also began to revisit assumptions regarding the exclusive nature of salvation through Christ and formed new theologies that incorporated many of the faith traditions they encountered. The publication of *Re-Thinking Missions* would set into writing many of the ideas that were being debated

³⁶ Henry W. Luce (1868–1941), the father of Henry R. Luce, served as professor at the Kennedy School of Missions in 1929–1935, teaching subjects related to China.

³⁷ *Kennedy School of Missions: 1911–1936*, 20.

at the time and would result in an array of additional works expanding upon, tweaking, or refuting many of the premises in this ground-breaking and provocative work.³⁸ David Hollinger writes:

Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry After One Hundred Years mattered greatly for several reasons. It was commissioned, carried out, and publicized by the most empowered groups within American Protestantism's formal establishment, and with rare deliberation. It was conceived by John R. Mott, then the undisputed spiritual and organizational leader of the Protestant missionary project. It was funded by John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Fifteen ecumenical leaders spent nearly nine months in India, Burma, China, and Japan examining missionary practices and interviewing missionary personnel at every level. Mott explained to Rockefeller that missions were caught between indigenous nationalist movements inclined to suspect Christianity as an imperialist tool, and fundamentalists determined to present Christianity in just the ways as anti-imperialist critics insisted was its essence.³⁹

The Scopes trial of 1925 and the fundamentalist-modernist controversy that ensued would be the beginnings of a permanent split between liberal and conservative Protestantism. Liberal Protestantism embraced the ecumenical movement of cooperation among Protestants beyond denominational lines and was characterized by a willingness to think more critically about scripture and interpret aspects of it that seemed to contradict scientific findings in more nuanced terms. They also moved towards a greater openness to engage with individuals of other faith traditions. This approach, which would also be known as mainline Protestantism, was represented in a great many of the thinkers at Hartford Theological Seminary itself. Other seminaries such as Fuller Theological Seminary formed to confront what many conservative Protestants perceived to jeopardize the foundations of their theology.

The World Council of Churches was formed in 1948 by those who embraced the ecumenical movement and its inclination towards liberal Protestantism.⁴⁰ The atrocities of the Holocaust were among the first matters this council deemed necessary to address, as many Christian leaders were compelled to ask difficult questions regarding how peoples

³⁸ William Ernest Hocking, *Re-Thinking Missions: A Laymen's Inquiry After One Hundred Years* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1932). William Hocking was a Harvard philosopher who drafted the findings of the inquiry into the presuppositions and consequences of the missionary enterprise in *Re-Thinking Missions*. It was supported by the leadership of six major Protestant denominations: the Congregational, Episcopal, Dutch Reformed, Northern Baptist, Northern Methodist, and Northern Presbyterian churches.

³⁹ David Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad: How Missionaries Tried to Change the World but Changed America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press: 2017), 69.

⁴⁰ In 1950, the National Council of Churches was also formed from the older Federal Council of Churches for the United States by those from similar streams of Protestant thought.

of other faiths were perceived.⁴¹ What initiated as a dialogue between Jews and Christians in the post-World War II era would broaden to dialogues between Christians and members of other faiths, including Islam.⁴² The WCC formed a unit known as the office of “Dialogue with People of Living Faiths” to focus on these discussions and its first director was Stanley Samartha (1920–2001) who was a PhD graduate of Hartford Seminary. The 1960s marked the beginning of this phase in which the WCC engaged in dialogues with members of different faiths. In 1960, members of the WCC met in Jerusalem for what would be known as the “Jerusalem Consultation.” At this conference members of various denominations in the WCC acknowledged tensions in relations between Christians and Muslims in parts of the world and committed to engage in work that would improve relations between the Protestant ecumenical community and adherents of the Islamic faith.⁴³

Meanwhile, conservative evangelical Protestants reorganized and took over much of the missionary efforts abroad. The meeting of Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization in 1974 started what was known as the “Lausanne Movement” and made permanent the split between conservative evangelical Protestants devoted to conversion around the world and liberal Protestants who grew to view these practices as problematic and as a result abandoned much of the global mission movement aimed at conversion. Hartford Seminary represented the mainline Protestant movement whose evolution inevitably impacted the Seminary in general and enrollments at the Kennedy School of Missions in particular by the later 1960s.

Additionally, in the decades following World War II, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s, the Vietnam War, and the emergence of feminism were all forces that shook the foundations of American Christianity. The roles of religion in promoting racial equality, standing against Western intervention in foreign lands, and the role of women in the clergy were all issues of heated debate in this era. The social upheavals of this period had a dramatic impact on seminaries across the country. Hartford Seminary Foundation felt the impact of the general stagnation in interest in religion of this period in its enrollments and financial support. The three separate units of the Hartford Seminary Foundation in which the main Seminary, the Kennedy School of Missions, and the Hartford School for Religious Education had separate faculty and deans became no longer sustainable. Susan Setta writes:

The sixties had seen the replacement of worship services with activities that had more of a social character than a spiritual one. Encounter groups, consciousness raising groups, support groups often began within the churches. Ultimately, however, these groups did not need the churches and could survive quite well without them. In addition, mainline Protestantism and especially the

⁴¹ Douglas Pratt, *Christian Engagement with Islam: Ecumenical Journeys since 1910* (Leiden, Brill: 2017), 40–44.

⁴² Pratt, *Christian Engagement with Islam*, 46

⁴³ Pratt, *Christian Engagement with Islam*, 46.

liberal component within that larger group was in danger of losing itself to culture entirely. It had lost most of its components and had been substantially eroded. By now medicine, social work, psychology, and religious studies had been desacralized. The seminary had been affected by all but the first. At the turn of the century, social work began moving away from its home, the church. Religious education once the heart of the nation and the locus of much early “public” schooling, was now being called a field whose time had passed.⁴⁴

The Rise of Women and Theologies of Resistance

“In Memory of Daniel Miner Rogers. Graduate of this Seminary. Missionary of Christ in Asia Minor who was Killed at Adana while Ministering Mercy and Peace. April 15, 1909. This Tablet was Erected by his Comrades of the Class of 1906.”

“To the Memory of George Knapp. Graduate of this Seminary. Missionary of Christ in Asia Minor who Died a Martyr at Diarbekir 1915. Greater Love Hath No Man than This. This Tablet was Erected by his Comrades of the Class of 1890.”

“In Memory of Benjamin Woods Labaree. Graduate of this Seminary. Missionary of Christ in Persia who was Wayland and Killed While on Missionary Service. March 9, 1904. This Tablet is Erected by His Comrades of the Class of 1893.”

A tour of the Seminary will often be considered incomplete without a viewing of the collection of plaques mentioned above that were made to memorialize missionaries who died in Muslim lands.⁴⁵ They frequently evoke strong emotions and tell different stories to Muslim and Christian visitors. Muslim visitors commonly exhibit expressions of relief at the failure of missionaries to convert the generation of their not so distant ancestors as well as a number of other sentiments for what is often perceived as an unwelcome foreign intrusion. Whereas, Christian visitors may experience a more mixed set of emotions in reaction to these physical reminders of another way of thinking only a century earlier. An overview of the milieu in which Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary evolved would be incomplete without mention of some of the historical consequences of the work of the graduates of the Kennedy School of Missions in Muslim lands.

As the late nineteenth century exhibited a surge in missionaries to the Muslim World and the 1910 Edinburgh Conference solidified an ecumenical Protestant effort to establish a “Christian Century,” Muslims too were beginning to organize and become aware of what they perceived to be the dangers of foreign missionaries in their midst at a time of weakness. A sense of perplexity was common in parts of the Muslim world as they attempted to understand the causes for the eclipse of Muslim power after over a

⁴⁴ Setta, *A History of Hartford Seminary*, 221.

⁴⁵ There are a number of additional plaques in this collection.

millennium of economic and cultural dominance on the world scene. The attraction to Western lifestyles, as well as the internalized oppression affirming feelings of inferiority that was common at a time when the mission to “civilize” and the mission to convert were undifferentiated goals, alarmed many Muslim thinkers.

A number of Muslim movements formed and several thinkers became prominent in addressing the concerns regarding imperialism and missionary work that were at times as inseparable in the minds of the colonized as they were in the minds of the colonizer. Over the course of more than a century, liberation theologies, Marxism, Sufism, Salafism, liberalism, nationalism, pan-Arabism, and fundamentalism were an array of philosophies of resistance that formed that both divided people and united them in their resolve to resist outside efforts to colonize and convert. Movements such as the Muhammadiyah, the Muslim Brotherhood, and followers of Nursi and Mawdudi had starkly different theologies of resistance over varied periods of time and geographies.⁴⁶

These often involved a variety of strategies of engagement or disengagement. Muslims were generally divided along these lines as some of the most powerful movements believed in creating rival institutions such as hospitals and schools to displace the influence of foreign missionary schools and hospitals which were regarded as utilizing weaknesses of vulnerable segments of Muslim societies as a means of influence. Others believed that the most effective way to keep traditional values intact was through isolation.

In addition, the pivotal role played by women, on both the missionary side and that of its resistance, is a rich field of academic inquiry that has been understudied. It is estimated that the majority of foreign missionaries were in fact women with approximations as high as two thirds. It was mainly missionary women who ran the schools, hospitals, and other facilities that served indigenous populations. In fact, the endowment for the Kennedy School of Missions itself was made possible by the funding of a wealthy woman, Emma Baker Kennedy, who continued to provide scholarships and closely follow the developments of the school until her death.⁴⁷ In regards to women’s roles Hollinger writes:

⁴⁶ See: Beth Baron, *The Orphan Scandal: Christian Missionaries and the Rise of the Muslim Brotherhood* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 135–152; Karel Steenbrink, *Dutch Colonialism and Indonesian Islam: Contacts and Conflicts 1596–1950* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), 124–139; Alwi Shihab, *The Muhammadiyah Movement and its Controversy with Christian Mission in Indonesia* (Dissertation, Temple University: 1995), 279–291.

⁴⁷ Archival material of correspondences between the president of the time, William Mackenzie, and Emma Baker Kennedy reveal that she not only made one donation to establish the endowment but remained closely involved in the Kennedy School for the remainder of her life. She was regularly updated by Mackenzie on the status of its graduates in foreign missions and the achievements of its faculty. In 1916 she was invited to give the commencement address at the Kennedy School. Emma Baker Kennedy was also a supporter of female students looking for scholarships and pledged to build a women’s dormitory. In addition to her establishing the endowment for the Kennedy School, she also gave \$250,000 towards the endowment of the Hartford School of Religious Pedagogy which as mentioned was made up primarily of women seeking to work in Sunday schools and mission field in lay religious leadership.

In the field, about two thirds of missionary personnel were women, either unwed or married to male missionaries. Missions afforded women opportunities to perform social roles often denied to them in the United States. Glass ceilings in the mission field were higher and more subject to exceptions than in most American communities. By the 1950s, nearly half of the missionary physicians in India were female. Women led many colleges in China. . . . Women were sometimes allowed to preach in the missions field, even though Paul the Apostle had told the Christians of Corinth, "Let your women keep silent in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience." While home on furlough, female preachers were often prohibited from speaking from the pulpits of their own denominations, sometimes even in their home congregations. . . . Most denominations had women's missionary boards that exercised strong influence in church affairs and stood among the largest women's organizations in the United States in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁴⁸

Muslim women were equally invested in confronting foreign missions and formed women's wings of various social and resistance movements dedicated to this goal such as those of the Muslim Brotherhood and Muhammadiyah, as well as their own independent women's movements. Muslim women were an indispensable force for turning back the influence of foreign missions through opposing them with their own tactics. They ran a myriad of schools, and to a lesser extent hospitals, that provided a much welcomed alternative to vulnerable Muslim populations. As countless Muslim men were kept under close scrutiny by governments that objected to their activism, women had the ability to work unnoticed through their direct contact with Muslim children and youth whose educational curricula they carefully planned. They transformed a generation of women and children who also had a powerful influence over the men close to them. They formed networks of personal connections that served to further solidify the work of both men and women in their efforts to revive faith and thwart the influence of missionaries in the Muslim world.⁴⁹

Like their counterparts of women missionaries, Muslim women too found that their efforts of resistance had an emancipatory role through opening new opportunities of financial independence and work outside of the home as a result of the many schools and institutions which these women ran. It also became evident to many of the more conservative male-dominated communities whose men were reluctant to send their daughters to school, that the education of Muslim women was essential to the defeat of

⁴⁸ Hollinger, *Protestants Abroad*, 7.

⁴⁹ For examples see: Sadaf Ahmad, "Al-Huda and Women's Religious Authority in Urban Pakistan," *The Muslim World* 103 No.3 (2013), 363–374; Tutin Aryanti, "A Claim to Space: Debating Female Religious Leadership in a Muhammadiyah Mosque in Indonesia," *The Muslim World* 103 No.3 (2013), 375–387; Baron, *The Orphan Scandal*, 128–134; Sarah Islam, "The Qubaysiyat: The Growth of An International Muslim Women's Revivalist Movement from Syria 1960–2008," in *Women, Leadership, and Mosques: Changes in Contemporary Authority*, (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 161–183.

both colonizers and missionaries who commonly used the uplifting of Muslim women as a pretext for their goals.⁵⁰ Bano writes in regards to this topic:

It is therefore not surprising that some of the most respected ‘ulama from some of the largest madrasas in Pakistan actually took the initiative to open female madrasas. . . . With time, not only did the experience of these first few madrasas establish confidence among the ‘ulama community that female madrasas can be managed effectively by involving female members of the family; more importantly with time the ‘ulama realised that, since women are normally embedded within the home and community, they spread the message to other women and family members. This shows in line with the social movement literature (Bano 2012b), that the involvement of women in spreading Islamic education illustrated their comparative advantage: they could reach out to the communities, the mothers, the children. . . . while the ‘ulama deal with men who come to the mosque, these women could work like the Tablighis (an influential Deobandi Islamic propagation movement in South Asia), as they were embedded in the community and could reach out to those who themselves were not going to make an effort to attend the mosque. Further. . . women had one additional advantage that made them even more effective than Tablighis: ‘they could influence the future generation of men as well as women in their roles as mothers.’ Thus, the enthusiasm with which the first generation of female students absorbed these values and the commitment with which they spread them in their homes and immediate communities was central to convincing even the ultra-conservative ‘ulama of the value of promoting Islamic education among women. . . . While most of the cases cited so far were initiated by the male ‘ulama or Islamic minded modern elites, many of the networks that catered to the more elite women were actually started by women. . . .⁵¹

Thus, the story of missions in the Muslim world and the resistance that followed is in large part the story of women who were the true “movers and shakers” behind the scenes on both sides of a struggle as well as an often overlooked, and yet important chapter in women’s history. In the 1990s, either through genius or serendipity, Hartford Seminary would once again find itself in an exceptional position when it would hire its first Muslim professor, Ibrahim Abu Rabi‘ (1956–2011), whose dedication to the academic study of Islamic movements would bring the post-missionary ecumenical

⁵⁰ For example in 1846 Eugénie Allix wrote a letter to the Administrative Council of Algiers to persuade colonial authorities to support her girl’s school by saying the following: “Woman is the most powerful of influences in Africa as in Europe, but even more so in Africa. If you convert to our civilization 100 young native girls in all classes of society and in all races of the Regency, these girls will become, in the nature of things, the privileged wives of the most important men of their class; they will become our guarantee of the country’s submission to our authority, as well as the unimpeachable pledge of its future assimilation. See: Rebecca Rogers, *A Frenchwoman’s Imperial Story: Madame Luce in Nineteenth-Century Algeria*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 65.

⁵¹ Masooda Bano, *Female Islamic Education Movements: The Re-democratisation of Islamic Knowledge*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 149.

movement rooted at the Seminary in intimate conversation with members of the very movements that, in their early foundations, formed formidable theologies of resistance to the missionary work of the institution's past.

Hartford Seminary Foundation Changes Direction

The rapidly changing scene of missionary activity, religious education, seminary training and graduate studies in religion, has obligated the Hartford Seminary Foundation to stay alert, resolutely seeking to find ways by which it could make its maximum contribution to both the theological enterprise and the ministries of the church.⁵²

These were the words of President James Gettemy (1919–2013) during his resignation speech to the Board of Trustees on June 15, 1976 after having served as president from 1958 to 1976 and being at the center of the turbulent years of the Seminary's transition. In 1972, a critical decision was made by the Trustees of the Seminary to sell its enormous campus to the University of Connecticut Law School and place the profits in the Seminary's endowment. Soon thereafter, a new building that was easier to maintain was built across the old campus by the renowned architect, Richard Meier. The new building became a design winning architectural piece and was opened in 1981. In 1981, the name "Hartford Seminary Foundation" also changed to "Hartford Seminary."

There was also a temporary suspension of all degree programs as the Board decided to change direction and to focus on only two programs: the Church and Ministry Program and the Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations.⁵³ This was originally planned to be an "experiment" for five years, after which both programs would be assessed. Since they took until 1974 and 1975 to get underway, the timeline was extended to 1979.⁵⁴

The Islamic studies faculty were relocated to McGill University under an agreement of a joint PhD and MA program in Islamic studies between McGill and the Hartford Seminary Foundation. Notably, the Seminary's journal, the *Muslim World*, was maintained uninterrupted over these years of many changes.⁵⁵ It was also decided that a professional aspect of the Islamic studies department in which the Seminary would engage in non-strictly academic outreach to national and international communities that included conferences and international workshops be established with Hartford as its base. Willem Bijlefeld (1925–2013) remained in Hartford to start what would become the

⁵² *Praxis*, Summer: 1976 (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁵³ *Praxis*, Winter: 1977 (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁵⁴ *Praxis*, Winter: 1977 (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁵⁵ The Seminary's valuable Islamic manuscript collection remained in Hartford and was later sent to Yale University's Beinecke Library and became known as the "Hartford Seminary Collection" during the early years of Heidi Hadsell's presidency.

Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations that focused on this type of work.⁵⁶

In 1978, programs of study leading to a Doctor of Ministry program and a Master of Arts in Religious Studies were developed. 1978 was also when a number of international educational programs lasting weeks at a time were organized by the Macdonald Center under the leadership of Bijlefeld and began to take place in regions of Africa and South East Asia.⁵⁷ In 1979, the joint agreement with McGill was reevaluated and it was decided that the Islamic Studies program of the Hartford Seminary be based entirely in Hartford. The Hartford Seminary faculty who had spent this period in McGill returned to Connecticut as members of the Macdonald Center.

Acting President, Harvey McArthur (1913–2008), wrote in 1976 about the Macdonald Center:

I see that the Macdonald Center, under Dr. Bijlefeld's leadership, has established itself firmly as a Montreal-Hartford program. The major course work is carried out at McGill University, but Hartford continues to serve as a base for the publication of the *Muslim World* and for the biannual summer conferences bringing together Muslims and Christians in dialogue. McGill University reports an excellent response to the course offerings of the Hartford men, and it is significant that a high percentage of the Muslims in those classes will occupy responsible leadership positions.⁵⁸

Two major historical events of the recent past have had a lasting impact on the field of Islamic studies in academic institutions in the United States. The first was the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and the second was the aftermath of September 11, 2001; when a new generation of Muslim Westerners entered the field of Islamic Studies creating an important shift in thinking and research as they were able to more readily contribute both etic and emic perspectives in the study of Islam. Before 1979, departments of Oriental Studies, as they were often called at the time, were rare in American universities. 1979 was a turning point in the study of Islamic Studies as universities across the nation scrambled to keep up with the new found desire for Americans to know more about this region and its faith. Universities opened new departments of Oriental Studies and students were eager to enroll in its courses.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Willem Bijlefeld, "A Century of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary," *The Muslim World* 83 No. 2 (1993), 103–117.

⁵⁷ Bijlefeld, "A Century of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary," 110–111.

⁵⁸ *Praxis*, Fall: 1976 (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁵⁹ Richard Martin writes that both the publication of *Orientalism* by Edward Said and the Iranian Revolution around the same time had a major impact on the formation of Islamic Studies departments and the direction they took across the country. See: Richard Martin, "Islamic Studies in the American Academy: A Personal Reflection." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 78 No. 4 (2010), 896–920.

In 1972, the Seminary newsletter, *The Hartfordian*, has a section dedicated to “Questions and Answers on Islamics at Hartford Seminary.” Upon being asked by the interviewer, “how do you explain this continuing, or even growing, interest in Islamic Studies?” the answer includes the statement: “. . .Second, there are only a small number of programs in the United States offering the opportunity for specialization in Islamics at the Ph.D. level (a recent national survey listed six such programs, with Hartford considered one of the four acceptable ones in the group of six).”⁶⁰

In another newsletter the news story titled “Islamic Agreement with McGill” describes the Macdonald Center’s joint relationship in the following way:

At least nine full-time professors will be involved in the combined program, which will also have additional part-time faculty and, from time to time, more full-time professors on short-term appointments. According to Hartford Seminary president, Dr. James N. Gettemy, this will be the most extensive program of its kind in the Western Hemisphere.” McGill currently has 60 students enrolled in its Institute for Islamic Studies, while Hartford Seminary has about 30 students in its Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. Hartford students entering this fall may spend their first year in Hartford and thereafter will be based on the Montreal campus. . . Dean Bijlefeld said, “This cooperative arrangement will also strengthen those aspects of the program which Hartford will carry out here on the Hartford campus—research projects, the organization of summer courses, and the publication of the “Muslim World,” the seminary’s internationally circulated publication. During one semester of each academic year one of the Hartford faculty members will be involved full time in research on the Hartford campus.”⁶¹

With only six PhD programs in Islamic Studies in the country during the early 1970s, Hartford Seminary found itself in an advantageous position in 1979 with its long track record of the study of Islam at a time when current events stemmed a rush of inquiry into this field.⁶² This sudden interest in Islamics most likely influenced the decision for Hartford Seminary to maintain its own program without continuing in the joint agreement with McGill. Over the next decades as a variety of new current events unfolded, the Macdonald Center continued to be an important resource for media outlets, educational institutions, and global representatives

⁶⁰ *The Hartfordian*, Spring: 1972 (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁶¹ *Hartford Seminary Report*, Vol.1: No. 1, May 1974 (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁶² For example, David Kerr writes posthumously of Byron Haines: “During the 1979 Iranian revolution, he emerged as an able interpreter of events in the Muslim world. From his base at Hartford Seminary, where he served as academic dean, he initiated several national meetings of American Christians and Muslims and became nationally known and admired through his editorship of the NCCC *Newsletter on Christian-Muslim Relations*.” See: Gerald Andersen, *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdsman Publishing Company, 1999), 274.

who sought the expertise of its faculty as Islam and Muslim lands became at the center of discussions.⁶³

During the next twenty year period through the mid-1990s, the Macdonald Center housed a variety of Christian scholars interested in the engagement of Islam and Muslims such as David Kerr, Marston Speight (1925–2011), Wadi‘ Haddad, Yvonne Haddad, Byron Haynes (1928–1990), Steven Blackburn, and Willem Bijlefeld. In the early phases of the Macdonald Center, the approach to the study of Islam at Hartford Seminary could be more accurately described as that of Christian engagement with Islam or as David Kerr later defined: the “pre-dialogue stage of preparation for creative interfaith encounter.”⁶⁴

Willem Bijlefeld started his teaching role at Hartford Seminary in 1966 along with Isa Boullata who started soon after in 1968 followed by Wadi‘ Haddad in 1970. The three men comprised the first team of core faculty at the Macdonald Center. Bijlefeld served as academic dean in 1969–1974. He became director of the Macdonald Center in 1974–1986. Issa Boullata decided to remain at McGill rather than return in 1979 and Yvonne Haddad filled his vacancy at the Macdonald Center for about seven years.

The Macdonald Center was characterized as having a distinct character of its own based on the types of courses that were offered by its faculty such as its “special interest in Quranic studies, Muslim theology, and the history of Muslim-Christian relationships.”⁶⁵ Most important was the clear position taken by the Hartford Seminary and the Macdonald Center faculty by 1972 that it no longer engaged in mission work and had made a permanent and definitive break from the approach taken during the years of the Kennedy School of Missions. This is evident on a number of levels including for example an answer to the question in the Seminary newsletter outlining Islamics at Hartford Seminary: “Does the specific character of Islamic Studies at HSF mean that its degrees are intended only for Christian missionaries?” The response is:

Definitely not. As far as our M.A. and our Ph.D. programs are concerned, our aim is to study Islam as honestly as possible from the perspectives of Muslim believers in the past and present. This means among other things, that the program is open to any Muslim who wants to study here, and several have already applied for admission.⁶⁶

Second, in the 1970s the Macdonald Center formed a close association with the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches (NCC). As previously

⁶³ Macdonald Center meeting minutes reflect discussions regarding which types of media engagements should be fulfilled by core faculty and which by part time faculty during the two Gulf Wars. Hartford Seminary also becomes closely involved in outreach and education following the events of September 11, 2001.

⁶⁴ “Memorandum of David Kerr’s Address to the Trustees of Hartford Seminary,” Wednesday May 4, 1988, 2 (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁶⁵ *The Hartfordian*, Spring: 1972, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁶⁶ *The Hartfordian*, Spring: 1972, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

outlined, these two organizations were formed by the mainline Protestant ecumenical movement and its interfaith councils were created to engage in dialogue with other faith traditions in a distinctly post-missionary phase. Acting president, Harvey McArthur, states in his update on Macdonald Center Developments in 1977:

The Macdonald Center has been approached by the relevant committees of the World Council of Churches and the National Council of Churches to explore whether the Center could function, on their behalf, as the North American base for research and dialogue on Christian-Muslim relations. Further consideration of this possibility must await the return of Dr. Bijlefeld from his conference and lecture tour to India and Pakistan. If the plan can be carried out, the Macdonald Center would function in these matters in a pattern parallel to Selly Oaks College in Birmingham, England. If this new development proves to be feasible it would be centered in Hartford, thus strengthening the local dimension of the Macdonald Center program.⁶⁷

Byron Haines and Marston Speight became the representatives of the NCC who served for a period as adjunct faculty at the Macdonald Center. In 1977, the Seminary and the NCC agreed to form a liaison for the purpose of sharing resources during the Macdonald Center's continuing education program. This joint work was conducted in a way that did not endanger the non-denominational status of the Seminary or impact the independence of the Macdonald Center. David Kerr described the relationship saying, "Completely independent of the National Council of Churches for Christ (NCCC), the Macdonald Center has a voluntary partner relationship with the NCCC office on Christian-Muslim Relations, through which the Center has the opportunity to relate its scholarly resources in appropriate ways to the needs of Christians and Muslims in dialogue throughout the USA."⁶⁸

In retrospect, before the paradigmatic shifts which occurred with the hiring of core Muslim faculty in the 1990s, the framework of discourse and representation at the Macdonald Center was that of mostly Christian clergy with academic backgrounds who spoke on behalf of Islam and Muslims without a significant presence of Muslims speaking in their own voices. While many Muslims were interlocutors and included in the committees of conferences that were organized by the Macdonald Center in this first phase, they were not yet in equal positions of participation as faculty and program directors. This imbalance in dialogical partnership created a relationship that lacked reciprocity and hence focused more on a Christian engagement with and understanding of the Muslim "other" through a Christian centered rubric. The Macdonald Center would evolve from an approach of Christian engagement with Islam to one of a reciprocal relationship among the two faiths as its vision continued to mature over the years.

⁶⁷ *Praxis*, Winter: 1977, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁶⁸ David Kerr, "Position statement on Interfaith Dialogue: Christian Muslim Dialogue," January 1990, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

David Kerr became a forceful advocate of what was becoming more and more evident to many as the need to hire Muslim faculty to the Macdonald Center as equal partners in dialogue and instruction. In his address to the Board of Trustees in 1988 he says:

Christian-Muslim dialogue cannot grow in the Center/Seminary on the basis of one Muslim student in the M.A. program (Islamic Studies) and one in the D.Min. Nor is it probable that the number of Muslim students will increase unless and until we appoint Muslims to faculty, adjunct faculty and other associate positions in the Center. My understanding in accepting the appointment of Director is that the Trustees and Faculty are open to this possibility. I give notice of my intention to pursue it as energetically as the Seminary is committed to affirmative action in gender and color, and to bring first proposals to an early faculty meeting next semester (the goal being to involve indigenous Afro-American Muslims, Muslim women, and immigrant Muslims).⁶⁹

Self-Representation and New Global Outreach

In 1990, Hartford Seminary became the first American seminary to name a woman president through the appointment of Barbara Brown Zickmund. In 1991, Hartford Seminary took another bold step by being the first accredited Christian seminary to hire a Muslim as a full time professor on its core faculty to teach Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations through the appointment of Ibrahim Abu Rabi'.

As previously mentioned, this decision was in the context of larger discussions which had been evolving for the past decades within the Christian ecumenical movement regarding the role of Western ecclesiastic authorities passing their roles to local Christian leaders in communities outside of North America and Europe. This was done in an effort to facilitate indigenous theologies to flourish independently in their own context and in deference to the desire expressed by these local leaders to free themselves of neo-colonialist power structures and attitudes that reinforced foreign dominance in their lands. In this spirit, a similar sentiment which valued the instruction of each faith tradition by its own adherents emerged at Hartford Seminary. Similar to the Seminary's pioneering decision in 1889 to be the first seminary in the country to admit women, hiring Muslims to teach their own faith tradition as equal dialogue partners and core faculty would be a trailblazing decision well ahead of its time.

In 1996, Hartford Seminary further established its commitment to reciprocity in Christian-Muslim relations, through the naming of Jane Smith and Ibrahim Abu Rabi', as Christian and Muslim co-directors of the Macdonald Center. In 1998, the Seminary also appointed Ingrid Mattson as a professor, who became the first Muslim woman to hold a full time faculty position at a Christian seminary. The intentional shift towards both gender balance and religious representation in the Macdonald Center initiated the third

⁶⁹ "Memorandum of David Kerr's Address to the Trustees of Hartford Seminary," Wednesday May 4, 1988, 2, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

phase of the study of Islam at Hartford Seminary from a model of Christian engagement with Islam to one of a relationship based on a dialogical model of equal partnership and self-representation. This thinking was progressive by the standards of its time when many Christian leaders and organizations working to promote dialogue often assumed a paternalistic role in their relationship to Muslim participants.⁷⁰

The faculty of the Macdonald Center is also credited with making an intentional effort from its earliest period to avoid the strategies used by some Christian organizations advocating “dialogue” as a new and/or modified strategy for mission work.⁷¹ One of the common patterns of engagement that emerged in this strategy was in the way these organizations utilized uneven dialogical models when working with Muslims. Christian participants were commonly deeply committed to their faith and even viewed dialogue as a vehicle for “witness” to Muslims. Whereas, Muslim partners were commonly selected not by the members of the Muslim community itself as representatives of a comparable faith commitment, but rather by Christian organizations whose selection criteria often deliberately sought what they perceived to be “secular” Muslims or those whose beliefs diverged from the mainstream.⁷² Unsurprisingly, this strategy created skepticism in the earnestness of the parties organizing interreligious engagements. While who sets the table and how, is a matter of open discussion in the contemporary period commonly influenced by postcolonial studies, the cognizance of the Seminary to this matter before it became a prevalent topic of discussion was critical to its forming important connections with Muslim students and global partners later on.

⁷⁰ Byron Haines writes about this in his piece on strategies for interfaith dialogue maintaining that there must be full equality among interfaith organizations. He writes, “The partnership in equality should extend to the definition of the constitution and objectives of the organization. Paternalistic or gratuitous attitudes of one toward another or of two religions toward a third are to be avoided. Of all the problems that interfaith organizations must confront, the effort to achieve an equality of partnership is perhaps the most difficult.” See: “Concerning Means and Ends: Writings of Byron Lee Haines on Interfaith Relations” ed. Marston Speight (New York: National Council of Churches of Christ, 1994), 16.

⁷¹ For example, see the mission strategy of the Southern Baptist Mission in Lebanon which maintained an exclusivist stance in its relationship to other faiths. Trexler describes this as “abandoning the gospel bomb method for a dialogue of love.” This was in stark contrast to the approach taken by the WCC and NCC and the movements affiliated with it. See: Melanie Trexler, *Evangelizing Lebanon: Baptist Missions and the Question of Cultures*, (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 126–128.

⁷² The view that a strong faith commitment is a deterrent to a people’s receptivity to conversion was not unique to missionary strategy among Muslims. Missionaries used similar strategies among peoples of other faiths. For example, in Sri Lanka it was the strong identification with Buddhism that was viewed as an impediment to conversion and subjugation. Berkwitz writes: “. . . British missionaries encouraged policies to restrict Buddhist practice and encourage immoral behavior in order to weaken the commitment of Sinhala Buddhists to their religion. . . According to him, this stratagem was devised by missionaries to weaken the moral resolve and self-control of Sinhala Buddhists, making them more susceptible to conquest and conversion.” See: Stephen Berkwitz, “Hybridity, Parody, and Contempt,” in *Cultural Conversions: Unexpected Consequences of Christian Missionary Encounters in the Middle East, Africa, and South Asia*, ed. Heather Sharkey (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press: 2013), 115.

Ibrahim Abu Rabi^c had an academic interest in Islamic movements across the globe which would translate into his work connecting the Seminary to a variety of international partners. His contacts often differed from the international demographic which Bijlefeld and David Kerr engaged with who were more closely connected to members of the WCC and their dialogue partners around the world. Abu Rabi^c was able to form new connections within grassroots Muslim networks that were often less centered around the customary rubric of the ecumenical movement. Many of these movements also had links to thinkers who had historically resisted missionary efforts in their lands. As a Muslim faculty member of the Macdonald Center, Abu Rabi^c was able to identify with these communities and build new types of bridges for the Seminary.

Over seventeen years, Abu Rabi^c led countless trips to Muslim countries around the world with various members of the Seminary. In 1995, an important partnership with the Indonesian government was initiated by his visit. This was followed by an official visit by Zickmund and a return visit by several members of the Indonesian government to Hartford Seminary including the Minister of Religious Affairs of the time. The visit by Indonesian officials marked the initiation of a new program for interfaith relations between Hartford Seminary and the Republic of Indonesia.

In the letter of intent signed in December 1996, by Zickmund and Professor H.A. Malik Fadjar, Director General of the Islamic Development Institution of the Republic of Indonesia, the two parties agreed to several forms of cooperation. First, Indonesian scholars, researchers, and religious leaders of diverse religious backgrounds are invited to take advantage of the Seminary's academic, research and library resources. Secondly, four Indonesian students of diverse backgrounds are expected to enroll in a course of study at Hartford Seminary every two years. As a condition of the understanding, students will come in pairs, a Christian and a Muslim, to ensure their interfaith understanding can grow while they are in Hartford and make an impact when they return home. Third, Hartford Seminary and the Republic of Indonesia are planning to co-sponsor an international travel study seminar to Indonesia in May of 1999. Fourth, they are scheduled to hold an international conference on Christian-Muslim relations and interreligious affairs in 1999. Fifth, Hartford Seminary faculty will participate in an exchange program hosting Indonesian faculty in Hartford and enabling Hartford Seminary faculty to lecture in Indonesia. Finally, Hartford Seminary and the Ministry of Religious Affairs will facilitate the dissemination of the scholarly work of the Institute for the Harmony of Religions (an Indonesian organization promoting interfaith education) and the Seminary's Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations in their respective countries.⁷³

1996, however, was still a time in which political realities in Indonesia were unstable and largely autocratic. The following story in the Seminary newsletter is indicative of the

⁷³ *Praxis*, July 1997, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

conversations taking place at the time in which academic freedom as well as the potential harms and benefits of involvement with Suharto's government were issues of concern at the time.

"I believe this is an enormous opportunity to make a real difference in Christian-Muslim relations," said Zickmund. "On one level, this is a controversial step for us because of the religious tensions between Christians and Muslims in Indonesia. Recent civil unrest and longstanding concerns about human rights in Indonesia may lead some people to question our involvement. But as one of the top centers in Christian-Muslim relations in North America, we have a responsibility—a calling—to put our expertise where it is critically needed. If we are to do our job well, we simply cannot ignore the situation in Indonesia. The question is not *whether* we should relate to Indonesia, but *how*."⁷⁴

Among the first results of this agreement was the appointment of a visiting professor by the name of Alwi Shihab who was a leading figure in its facilitation. After the change of government in Indonesia only a few years later, the Seminary found itself once more in an advantaged position as this Hartford Seminary visiting professor was named Minister of Foreign Affairs in the new government of the Republic of Indonesia in 1999.⁷⁵ Hartford Seminary's relationship would be strengthened by these relationships over the course of the next two decades.

Shift to Dialogue and Interreligious Education

In 2000, the Seminary appointed Heidi Hadsell as president. Her tenure would introduce another important phase in the Seminary's history in which the scope of influence of Hartford Seminary would expand significantly beyond its regional community, becoming a prominent voice in dialogue and partnerships worldwide. Hadsell came to the Seminary after being director of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches based in Bossey, Switzerland. She was a keen proponent of incorporating interfaith dialogue and a dialogical approach to the curriculum of theological education as early as 2000, before this became prevalent in many other seminaries in the following decades. She was also exceptionally adept at working in international contexts and had a global vision for the impact of the institution. Within her first two years as president, Hadsell created a planning committee composed of faculty and trustees to develop a

⁷⁴ *Praxis*, July 1997, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁷⁵ See "Alwi Shihab Named to Key Post in Indonesia: Hopes to Help Lead Indonesia into a New Century of Cooperation" *Praxis*, December 1999, (Hartford Seminary Archives). In this article Zickmund is quoted as saying: "...His experience in the Arab speaking world and his familiarity with the United States will enable him to enhance Indonesia's international stature. During Hartford Seminary's negotiations with Indonesia to develop cooperative educational ventures in Christian-Muslim relations, Alwi was extremely helpful. He understands that the fact that Indonesia is the largest Muslim country in the world means that it will play a crucial role in modeling foreign relations among Islamic nations and between Islam and the West."

new mission statement for the Seminary. The Seminary newsletter describes the work of this committee in shifting the emphasis of its vision in the following way:

The committee will recommend a renewed commitment to quality education and research in the new mission statement. But it plans, in a significant shift, to recommend that additional emphasis be given to dialogue, and the expectation that dialogue will permeate all that the Seminary does, and to informing the public. The committee will propose that Hartford Seminary make dialogue central to its curriculum. As an example, the Seminary is hosting a national conference in October on “Embedding Dialogue as a Learning Outcome in Theological Education.” A faculty committee also is examining the Master of Arts curriculum and is moving toward creation of a required core course that includes a component on interfaith dialogue... The goals for dialogue also seek to develop a worldwide perception of the Seminary as a laboratory in and outside the classroom where differences can be encountered in an atmosphere of creativity and safety. And they suggest that the Seminary should seek to effect change among and within people whose attitudes and behavior are influenced by the misunderstanding, misinformation, intolerance, and prejudice which begins in, is rooted in, or results from religious separation. The proposed emphasis on dialogue reflects a commitment to values long held at the Seminary that is dedicated to moving beyond toleration to critical engagement in an environment of trust and that it affirms the common humanity of all people. A second key shift is an emphasis on informing the public. The Seminary would seek to contribute to an understanding of religion and religion trends among the public in a multi-faith, pluralistic world and become a center of information for the public on faith in practice, interfaith relations and religion research. In the aftermath of September 11, it became clear to the Seminary that it had a significant role to play nationally to help the American public understand Islam better and to provide context for the role of religion in society.⁷⁶

This shift to dialogue and openness to other traditions while still affirming religious differences was one that was both a pioneering step in the world of American seminaries during its time, as well as a move that was met with elements of skepticism among some who were more inclined towards traditional Christian seminary models. The success of this novel approach and its openness to work across religious traditions with mainstream practitioners of primarily the Muslim faith was yet to be seen. Based on this model, faithful Christian and Muslim professors taught courses related to their own religious traditions academically, critically, and dialogically. In addition, the general practice that each professor only taught courses related to their own professed faith tradition and spoke on behalf of their own religious community was an important strategy that made it possible to work in common spaces without compromising the distinctiveness of each faith group. The upcoming years proved to be significant in demonstrating that this venture

⁷⁶ *Praxis*, August 2002, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

proposed by Hadsell was not only a successful model that made Hartford Seminary known throughout a much larger network of faith based communities both locally and globally, but it would also eventually influence others who wished to emulate the accomplishments of this interfaith educational model.

According to the 5-Year Report for accreditation composed in 2008, in the academic year 2003–2004 students enrolled in the three Master of Arts tracks were: Religious Studies (not Islamic Studies) (53%), Islamic Studies (21%), and Divinity Studies (26%). These numbers shifted drastically in 2007–2008 to: Religious Studies (not Islamic Studies) (30%) Islamic Studies (46%) and Divinity Studies (24%). The report also states that “the student body at Hartford Seminary has undergone a significant shift in the last five years from one of predominantly older, part-time, Christian and local students to one that has a substantial number of younger, full-time, Muslim, national and international students.”⁷⁷ In the Fall of 2002, the percentage of students admitted into programs other than Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations and Islamic Chaplaincy were 90%. The percentage fell to 36% in the fall of 2007. The report also states that, “This shift in the student body has required that more courses of interest to students in Islamic studies be added to the curriculum and that some courses that were originally designed to have a primarily Western, Christian perspective have been broadened to include interfaith and global perspectives.”⁷⁸

When the financial crisis of 2008 occurred in which enrollments at theological seminaries across the country plummeted due in part to financial concerns in mainline congregations, the significant international and Muslim student population served as a buffer that helped keep the Seminary afloat (among many other factors) during this period of financial uncertainty. The shift towards dialogue and openness not only proved to be a successful model in theological education, but also turned out to be a far-sighted decision that saved the Seminary from a potentially much more devastating impact of the economic crisis of 2008.

Meanwhile, the relationship formed between Hartford Seminary and the government of Indonesia was a watershed event that shifted the direction of the institution’s relationship with the Muslim world on an international level. As mentioned, Abu Rabi’s connections and his presence as a Muslim was vital for the expansion of the Seminary’s ties beyond what may now be considered a somewhat parochial circle of Muslim dialogue partners of the past. Following the model of successful relationship building with the Indonesian government and its educational institutions, more partnerships were built among Muslim leaders in many more countries such as Singapore and Turkey through the combined interactive efforts of the Macdonald Center faculty and the instrumental support of the president.

⁷⁷ “5-Year Report,” 2008, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

⁷⁸ “5-Year Report,” 2008, (Hartford Seminary Archives).

In 2001, Hartford Seminary also established the first accredited Islamic Chaplaincy Program in the country under the directorship of Ingrid Mattson. Muslim chaplains were a novelty in the early 2000s and viewed with some skepticism by various segments of the Muslim American community. There was also a concern about the Christian origins of the term “chaplain” and a program in Islamic Chaplaincy being offered at a Christian institution. Ingrid Mattson’s role as an active member of the Muslim community and her own personal faith commitment helped alleviate some of these concerns as she started to form the program. Her prominence in her role as vice-president and later president of the Islamic Society of North America in the years 2001–2010 also helped bring the much needed attention and credibility to this career option for Muslim Americans at its outset. Ingrid Mattson later became director of the Macdonald Center in 2008 until her departure in 2012. Timur Yuskaev took on the role of directing the Islamic Chaplaincy Program in 2010 until 2013, when the Islamic Chaplaincy Program has since then been directed jointly with Feryal Salem. This program continues to flourish and has become one of Hartford Seminary’s signature programs.

In addition to the development of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program, a number of additional initiatives under Hadsell’s leadership ensured the expansion of Hartford Seminary in terms of diversity and its formation into having a leading role in interreligious education. A Jewish Studies faculty associate by the name of Yehezkel Landau who created a program known as “Building Abrahamic Partnerships” was added to the Seminary teaching staff in 2004. In 2013, a Jewish Studies chair was established to ensure the presence of a Jewish core faculty member. The expansion of the Seminary to include Jewish Studies core faculty was a new development in its history. Additionally, in 2012 a chair in Islamic Chaplaincy was endowed and finally in 2015 another chair was established in Shia Studies to fund a core faculty member focused on teaching Shia thought and doctrine. In addition, a program in “International Peacemaking” was developed to offer one-year scholarships for Christian and Muslim students from regions of religious conflict around the world. Hartford Seminary’s journal, *The Muslim World*, continues to have a wide global readership and remains an essential resource in academically rigorous scholarship on Islam and Christian-Muslim relations under the editorships of Yahya Michot and Timur Yuskaev.

By 2017, Hartford Seminary has come a long way in becoming fully integrated as an interreligious institution in which religious diversity is reflected in its student body that is now approximately 40% Muslim and almost 60% Christian. This diversity also became mirrored in the religiously mixed composition of the faculty and board of trustees. Around 2003, the Seminary adopted the tagline: “Exploring Differences, Deepening Faith” to characterize the evolution of its philosophy of interfaith partnerships in which faithful individuals learn to live together in an environment which is respectful of difference as equal dialogue partners working together for common causes.

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