A CENTURY OF ARABIC AND ISLAMIC STUDIES AT HARTFORD SEMINARY

Introduction

Arabic and Islamic studies is the only academic field that has survived the many and often dramatic changes at Hartford Seminary during the past 100 years. It is true that individual courses in some of the traditional disciplines of American theological seminaries have also been offered at Hartford almost without interruption during this whole period, but they functioned within the context of very diverse programs rather than being for most of the time an integral part of an area of specialization at the graduate level.

It is as important to note the Seminary’s uninterrupted involvement in Arabic and Islamic studies since the academic year 1892-1893 as it is to point to the significant modifications that occurred with respect to the constituencies this program sought to serve and, as a consequence, with regard to the specific disciplines and subject areas emphasized at any given time.

A critical history of these 100 years would go far beyond the space available in this issue, and what we offer here is no more than a somewhat subjective choice of major data and events that deserve special attention. The main purpose is to show the characteristic features of the three periods into which we have divided this overview. These three stages are interrelated with two critical turning points in the history of the Seminary as a whole in the 1960s and the early 1970s. Notwithstanding the undeniable diversity within the first period, 1892-1966 (when for most of the time, namely for 55 years, the program was designated as the “Muslim Lands” department) as well as in the third one, 1973-present (the phase of the Duncan Black Macdonald Center), it seems justified to treat them as coherent time spans because of the element of continuity within each one of them. The short interval from 1967-1973, the time in which Arabic and Islamic studies were pursued within the framework of a multi-faceted History of Religions program, was also the period in which

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1 In February 1981 the institution deleted the word “Foundation” from the designation that had been in use since 1913. The Hartford Seminary Foundation. Hereafter it is mostly referred to as “Seminary” or as “Hartford.”

2 The most recent history of the whole Seminary is Susan M. Setta, “A History of Hartford Seminary,” which will be available at the Seminary Library shortly. Her study deals extensively with the 1972 events that concerned very directly the field of Islamic Studies, but understandably provides few details about the various programs in the area throughout the one-hundred year period. Page references to Setta’s study are to a 1992 draft of her study.
the radical reorientation of the Seminary's programs, in early 1972, led to a thorough rethinking of Hartford's commitment to Islamic studies.

I. The “Muslim Lands” Department and its Prehistory: 1892-1966

Six months before he arrived in Hartford in the fall of 1892 to take up his appointment as Instructor of Semitic Languages, Duncan Black Macdonald gave the Seminary's president advance notice of things to come when he wrote in a letter dated April 21, 1892 that he was convinced "that a thorough knowledge of... [Arabic] was the only sure foundation for Semitic study." While in his first year at Hartford, the emphasis was understandably on the teaching of Hebrew, right from the beginning he introduced Syriac and Arabic as electives. It is not without interest to note that Macdonald, who was appointed to the department of Exegetical Theology, apparently did not advocate the study of Arabic as an auxiliary discipline of Old Testament exegesis, but as an essential aspect of comparative Semitic language studies. Rather than justifying the study of Arabic at a theological school by making it into a "handmaid of [Christian] theology," as had been done in the 18th century, Macdonald went a significantly different way: from the initial justification on the basis of comparative language study, he moved to an explicit recognition of the validity of the study of Arabic in its own right and as an indispensable prerequisite for a serious study of Islam.

5 Ibid., p. 42.
6 His use of Arabic material in his "comparative" studies focusing on data from the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament has raised several critical questions. That he approached in this context Islamic data with an entirely different perspective than that of most Muslims is undoubtedly true. But it is unsatisfactory to interpret this simply as a result of his "missionary" interests, as Pruitt did in his comments on Macdonald's "comparative treatment of the Old Testament prophets and Christianity on the one hand and Islam on the other. He claimed to be an Arabist, an Islamicist, an historian; on this crucial question he became a theologian of missions," Gordon E. Pruitt, "Duncan Black Macdonald: Christian Islamicist," in Orientalism, Islam, and Islamicists edited by Asaf Hussain, Robert Olson and Jamil Qureshi (Brattleboro, VT: Amana Books, 1984), p. 167. In my opinion, Macdonald was firmly convinced that he acted in this solely as an historian. Although he expressed occasionally the desire to understand Islam "from within" (see at note 12), in the "comparative" exercises his starting point was not in data as understood and interpreted by Muslims, but in data he himself observed or reconstructed. One of the most interesting examples of his methodology is his study of the Job legend, "The Original Form of the Legend of Job," Journal of Biblical Literature, XIV (1895), 63-71, and "Some External Evidence on the Original Form of the Legend of Job," American Journal of Semitic Languages, XIV (1898), 137-64.
7 An interest in "comparative Semitics" is admittedly often related to the intent to use Arabic as an aid to Biblical exegesis. See, e.g., Fück's observation of 1955 about the inclusion of a "ballast" of data from other Semitic languages, especially Arabic, in a lexicon intended to serve the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament; Johannes Fück, Die arabischen Studien in Europa (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1955), p. 107.
There was a second argument with which Macdonald rationalized the introduction of Arabic at Hartford. In his "Autobiographical Notes," written towards the end of his life, he reminisced:

I had come to Hartford determined to have a school of Arabic, although I was warned that there was no opening for Arabic in America. I found the way through Missions.8

Elsewhere Macdonald wrote in a very similar way about his discovery "that you could smuggle Muslim studies into a theological school under the guise of training missionaries."9 Bodine rightly maintains10 that these remarks should not be interpreted as an indication that Macdonald lacked a genuine concern for the missionary effort and only used missionary preparation as a pretext for the realization of his ultimate objective, the establishment of "the first real school for Arabic in this country [America]."11

In a study of Macdonald’s total oeuvre and of his place in the history of Western studies of Islam in the early part of the 20th century the issue of his attitude to missions12 and the question of the impact of his theological convictions on his interpretation of Islam13 would obviously need to be analyzed carefully and to be evaluated critically. But in the context of the present survey a more directly germane issue is that of the type and the areas of research which students at Hartford were encouraged to pursue in the first half of this century. This period covers the tenures of Macdonald (who retired in 1932

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9 ibid., p. 46; letter to George Sarton, May 22, 1933, May 23, 1933. H. S. Archives 103-2032-53016
10 ibid., p. 195.
11 ibid., p. 46; note to E. B. Calverley [1937]. H. S. Archives 103-2062-54233. Fick wrote that in Macdonald "the study of Arabic and Islam in America found its first significant representative." Die arabischen Studien, p. 285.
12 The issue is more complex than some critics as well as some applauders seem to realize. His affirmation of the missionary endeavor (see above at note 10 and the editorial he wrote in MIV, XXII [1932], 327-30) was accompanied by a constant awareness that he himself was fundamentally an outsider to the missionary community (see e.g., Bodine, "Macdonald," pp. 48-49, 53, especially the sentence on p. 48: "I think I was for them [the missionaries] a decidedly queer bird and they even suspected me of inclination to Islam, of spying on them and of criticism of them and their methods."). One of the most revealing statements in this connection is his confession in a letter of 1930 to one of his former students: "I am quite sure I should never myself have made a good missionary, I have always been too much interested in knowing what the other man thought and in seeing how he could think that." Elizabeth de Welden Root, "Duncan Black Macdonald," The Hartford Quarterly, III. 1 (1962), 28.
13 By far the most serious flaw in his oeuvre lies, in the eyes of many, in his total failure to do justice to the phenomenon of the Prophet Muhammad. His suggestion of a radical dichotomy in the Prophet's life was a widely accepted view around the turn of the century, but even then it did not remain unchallenged; see my De Islam als na-Christelijke Religie’s (s' Gravenhage: van Keulen, 1959), pp. 119-23 for examples of the rejection of this notion dating from 1876, 1901, 1902 and 1905. For a summary of Macdonald's discussion of Muhammad see Bodine, "Macdonald," pp. 90-99 and Prueitt, "Macdonald," in Orientalism, especially pp. 127-30, 146.
but continued to serve as Honorary Consulting Professor for the next eight years) and Edwin E. Calverley (1930-1952), who had been the first student to complete his Ph.D. work under Macdonald and who in his teaching career unmistakably sought to emulate his mentor’s approach to Islamic studies. From the 36 titles which Kerr lists for the years 1923-1952 (20 M.A. and 16 Ph.D.), only one falls in the “Christian approach” category, and this thesis was written under the supervision of the “India” department and not that of “Muslim Lands.” For this overview, we leave this entry, as well as the thesis submitted to the Psychology Department of the School of Religious Education, out of consideration. The remaining 34 theses can be categorized as follows: 19 are translations of Arabic texts (10 M.A. and nine Ph.D.; among them eight are translations of works by al-Ghazali and four are other sufis texts); eight, or almost one-fourth of the total, are area studies (five M.A. and three Ph.D.); two (both Ph.D.) deal with sufism (not counted here are the translations referred to above) and another two (also both Ph.D.) with Shi’i Islam; of the remaining three one discusses the topic of women in the early traditions of Islam (M.A.), one the millet system in the Ottoman empire (Ph.D.) and one is a detailed catalogue of Arabic manuscripts at Hartford (Ph.D.). The high percentage, for this period, of area studies clearly reflects the composition of the student body in this department deliberately designated as “Muslim Lands.” But the image that emerges from the totality of these data shows a program with significantly different emphases than many people would associate with a “missionary training” institute. At least this field of study at Hartford had its own version of “methodological restraint,” an expression used by Rodinson in his discussion of 19th century Orientalism. The remarks which Macdonald made in 1904 with reference to the study of seventh-century Arabia seem to me indicative of much of his work as a teacher. While fully recognizing the need “for scholarship of the most varied character,” he maintains that the priority which should be given to the study of Arabic brings with it an unavoidable scholarly self-limitation (the person “who studies Arabic and its


15 See the entry under “Daubendick” in Simeon Kerr’s “Bibliography” earlier in this issue. In the next two notes and in all later references to M.A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations at Hartford the data are based on this “Bibliography.”

16 See the entry under “Hussein.”

17 The last mentioned dissertation, by William M. Randall, was completed under Macdonald’s supervision and was submitted not to the Muslim Lands department of the Kennedy School of Missions, but to the Hartford Theological Seminary (see below note 30) at which Macdonald was appointed in 1892, promoted to professor in 1900, and served until his retirement in 1932. He was simultaneously professor at the Kennedy School of Missions for only eleven out of the forty years, 1914-1925; see Bodine, “Macdonald,” p. 50.

literature has small leisure for anything else”) and stresses the necessity of cooperative efforts because of “the absolute fact that little true progress can now be made in the study of the Muslim development without collaboration.”19 “A rigorous purism in scholarship and a meticulous concern for precision,” terms with which Rodinson described the general trend in research in traditional Orientalism,20 marked the work of Calverley perhaps even more than that of Macdonald. But it appears that both warned their students against uncritical generalizations and a premature crossing of the boundaries between various disciplines, encouraging them to focus in their graduate work on the minutiae of a single text or the details of one particular regional situation. The choice of these Islamic texts, primarily in the areas of sufism and theology, and some in Qur’anic exegesis, mirror the special interests of the faculty members of this period and have remained the foci of attention at Hartford throughout this century.

Although Hartford Seminary had accepted responsibility for the publication of The Muslim World as early as 1938 and although Calverley had been (Associate) Editor ever since that time,21 it was not until the arrival of Kenneth Cragg22 in 1951 that the quarterly began to clearly show the stamp of the person who was heading the program of Islamic studies at Hartford. During the five years of his tenure at the Seminary and in the subsequent four-year period in which he continued to carry the overall editorial responsibility for the journal (Summer 1956–April 1960), Cragg published in it a total of ten articles and 28 editorials.23 Some of his contributions belong to the most frequently quoted articles that ever appeared in The Muslim World. The publication’s descriptive subtitle was changed in 1953, replacing the short-lived previous wording “A Quarterly Review of History, Culture, Religions and the Christian Mission in Islamdom,”24 with a formulation that reflects a new phase in the history of the journal, “A Quarterly Journal of Islamic Study and of Christian Interpretation among Muslims.”25

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19 Bodine, “Macdonald,” p. 56; the quotations are from Macdonald’s “The Problems of Muhammadanism,” first published in the Transactions of the Congress of Arts and Sciences at the Universal Exposition in St. Louis, 1904, and reprinted in The Hartford Seminary Record. XV (1905), 77-97 (the quotations are on pp. 79-80).
20 Rodinson, Europe, p. 86.
21 Calverley was Associate Editor until 1947, Editor from 1948-1955, and Co-editor and later Advisory Associate Editor from 1952–April 1967. For his perspective on the journal see his article, “Our Plans for the Quarterly,” MIV, XXXVII (1947), 251-54; in it he announced also the transition from The Moslem World to The Muslim World.
23 See earlier in this issue the Bibliography of Works by Kenneth Cragg.
24 The original subtitle, “A Christian Quarterly Review of Current Events, Literature and Thought among Mohammedans,” was maintained from 1911-1947. The subtitle quoted in the text was introduced in 1948 when Calverley became editor.
25 It was changed once again in 1970; see at note 36.
The years of Cragg's presence in Hartford formed the beginning of a period marked by rapid changes and unsettling developments on the one hand, but on the other by events that some saw as the heralds of a most promising phase in the more than forty years history of the Kennedy School of Missions (KSM) to which the Muslim Lands department belonged. Among the encouraging signs was a ten-year grant from the Carnegie Foundation (1952-1962) which meant not only a deeply appreciated token of outside recognition but also a welcome source of financial support.\(^{26}\) And while the number of students at Hartford Seminary as a whole declined by 15 percent in the 1950s, the KSM succeeded in maintaining its level of enrollment. Although it meant that the steady increase during the period 1936-1950 had come to an end, even by preserving the enrollment numbers of the beginning of the decade, the KSM demonstrated its continuing appeal and a reassuring degree of stability. Before turning next to developments which in the eyes of many threatened the very survival of the KSM, it is only fair to point out—partly as a corrective to notions that became current two or three decades later—that in the 1950s the Muslim Lands section occupied a relatively modest place among the KSM programs as far as the number of students was concerned. An overview of the "Departmental Breakdown" at the school from Semester I, 1951 through Semester I, 1954, lists a total enrollment of 36 students under "Muslim Lands," 92 under "India," and 123 under "Africa."\(^{27}\) The significance of the Africa department was widely recognized. Toward the end of the decade, the external examiners who served in connection with the 1959 self-study noted among the strengths of the KSM not only the "academically splendid resources and guidance for the study of linguistics... and of cultural anthropology," but also "good resources and guidance for the study of sub-Saharan Africa, of the Indian sub-continent and of the Moslem world. For Africa, the K.S.M. contends for first place in the nation."\(^{28}\)

Several external and internal factors led to far-reaching changes at the Seminary during the years of Cragg's successor, Elmer H. Douglas, 1956-1965,\(^{29}\) and Daud Rahbar who served as Visiting Professor from 1961-1965. Important shifts on the scene of American Christianity included: major modifications in patterns of missionary education; the evangelical churches' rapidly growing share in the national missionary enterprise; and the introduction or strengthening of area study programs at several universities. At Hartford itself was a growing awareness that the existing separation between "missionary"

\(^{26}\) See Setta, "A History," Chapter 6, pp. 172-81, also for the data on enrollment figures.

\(^{27}\) The survey, dated January 10, 1955, is in the H.S. Archives, K.S.M. files.

\(^{28}\) Setta, "A History," Chapter 6, p. 177.

\(^{29}\) Elmer Douglas served as Associate Professor from 1956-1962, and was Professor from 1963-1967. Since he was on an extended leave of absence from 1965-1967, we used 1965 as the terminal date of his teaching at Hartford.
and "theological" education could not be justified and that the structure of three separate schools, each with its own faculty and dean, was administratively no longer tenable.

The lack of stability in this time of transition was reflected in various attempts to determine the proper place of the programs of the former KSM in the curriculum of the institution, "unified" since 1961. The catalogue for the academic year 1964-1965 lists the "Muslim Lands" program (the name was maintained until 1967) under the rubric "Regional Studies," and in the next two years the offerings in this area were included under the heading, "Religions and Cultures." Morris S. Scale, appointed as Visiting Professor for the academic year 1965-1966, rendered a major service to The Muslim World which he edited from January 1966-April 1967, but the limitations of this short-term arrangement made it impossible to restore a sense of direction to the degree programs in this field of study.

II. Islamic Studies within a History of Religious Context: 1967-1973

Within a few months after the author had joined Hartford Seminary in September 1966, the president and faculty accepted his proposal to establish a History of Religions program that would eventually encompass the study of the Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist traditions as well as of "Religion in Sub-Saharan Africa." A concentration in one of these fields and a general acquaintance with the discipline of the History of Religions (its history and major methodological issues) were requirements for all students in this area. Moreover, everyone was encouraged to select additional courses, either in another tradition represented in the History of Religions program or in any of the other disciplines offered at the Seminary at the M.A. and Ph.D. levels.

As a result of the very positive response, especially to the concentration in Islamic studies (undoubtedly partly due to the then-prevalent expectation that the number of teaching positions at colleges and universities nationwide would

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30 The Hartford Theological Seminary, The Kennedy School of Missions, and The School of Religious Education constituted at that time The Hartford Seminary Foundation. Because of the unification of the three schools in 1961, the graduation of that year was the last one at which the M.A. candidates were presented in three groups by the deans of the three schools (for the Theol. Sem. the B.D. and M.S.T. candidates), and only the Ph.D. candidates by the Chairman of the Council for Advanced Studies of The Hartford Seminary Foundation. Through 1948 the Ph.D. degree had also been awarded upon presentation by the deans of the separate schools.


32 Morris Scale had also been the Editor in 1964, when he served in the academic year 1963-1964 as Visiting Professor at Hartford.

33 The first proposal was discussed in the Faculty Meeting of February 8, 1967. The nomenclature for the different fields varied somewhat, e.g. from Hindu to Hindu-Buddhist Studies and then to Religion in South Asia in the catalogues of the years 1969-1970, 1970-1971 and 1971-1972.
increase rapidly in the next decade), a second faculty position in this area was established in 1968, filled in the same year by the appointment of Issa J. Boula"., Two years later a third full-time appointment could be made and brought Wadi Z. Haddad to Hartford. The growth of the student body resulted in a steady stream of theses and dissertations. In the six-year period from 1968 to 1974, 14 Ph.D. dissertations in Islamic studies were completed. This number is particularly striking when compared with data from the previous period. One needs to go back almost 40 years, to 1930, to complete a list of the preceding 14 doctoral dissertations in this field. As for the subjects covered in M.A. theses and Ph.D. dissertations in the late 1960s and 1970s, one-third of them deal with various topics in the area of Christian-Muslim relations, and of the remaining studies, just over half discuss 19th and 20th century developments, persons and texts. In both instances this was a much higher proportion than found in preceding years.

For Hartford Seminary as a whole, early 1972 became a major turning point. On January 29th, the Board of Trustees decided to shift the Seminary's focus away from the existing degree programs, M.Div., M.A. and Ph.D., and to devote its resources primarily to (initially non-degree) programs "on behalf of those already engaged in the ministry of the churches"—clergy as well as laypersons. The second part of the 1972 decision, for many not less controversial than the first one, was to continue a program in Islamic studies with three dimensions: graduate work at the M.A. and Ph.D. levels; the ongoing publication of *The Muslim World*, and "a professional dimension."  

What the implementation of the latter part of the Trustees' vote would involve was initially clear only with regard to the publication of the quarterly, which beginning with the 1970 volume had once again modified the articulation of its objectives, now describing itself as "A Journal Devoted to the Study of Islam and of Christian-Muslim Relationship in Past and Present." With regard to the "professional dimension" the Seminary's Planning Committee and its Subcommittee on Islamic Studies affirmed in 1972-1973 at more than one occasion three ways to carry out this part of the assignment. These were: (1) through annual summer courses, focusing on Christian-Muslim relations, to be held in alternate years at Hartford and in largely Muslim parts of Asia and Africa; (2) through research projects also in the area of Christian-Muslim

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34 Four additional doctoral dissertations were still completed in the next few years, the last two in 1979 by Victor Tanja and Yvonne Haddad (see "Bibliography"). We used the 1968-1974 period because any active recruitment stopped after 1972 because of the uncertainties about the future of the program; see below.
35 Minutes, Board of Trustees Meeting, January 29, 1972.
36 See note 25.
37 The decision to establish the subcommittee was made by the Board, on the recommendation of the Planning Committee, on November 15, 1972. It met for its first meeting on December 20, 1972, and several times in 1973, under the guidance and direction of Dr. William L. Bradley, one of the three (later: four) trustees who served on it.
relations, for which every year one faculty member would be set free from teaching responsibilities for a substantial part of his/her time; and, (3) by seeking ways, in close cooperation with all others connected with the Seminary, to help communities of faith and their leaders to see the urgency to come to terms, theologially and spiritually, with the issue of religious diversity in this world and to "break through any form of provincialism in our understanding of the church and its ministry," particularly by "a deeper understanding of the life and work of the church in Asia and Africa."  

In the last part of this survey, dealing with the post-1973 developments, we'll look into the implementation and modification of the "professional dimension" guidelines summarized above. For the two-year period following the January 1972 decision by far the most pressing issue was the first mandate, to continue degree programs in Islamic studies at the M.A. and the Ph.D. level. Those directly involved realized that the Board's decision to phase out graduate degree offerings in all other fields would make it impossible to sustain the scope and quality of the program which in previous years had enabled a student to combine a concentration in Islamic studies with a wider orientation in religious or theological studies. It is not surprising, therefore, that only one month after its formation, the Committee on Islamic Studies concluded that for the degree programs a cooperative arrangement with another institution was the most responsible course of action, and as early as January 1973, the committee began its exploration of five options for relocation.

The prospect that the degree programs would most likely be carried out elsewhere in the near future was one of the reasons why the question arose of the appropriate nomenclature and the most helpful administrative structure for the new, multi-faceted, program in Islamic studies which clearly could not be described simply in terms of a graduate department. There was general agreement that the three dimensions of the program had to be recognized in their diversity and their differing demands, but also, and at least as importantly, had to be carried out in such a way that they would become increasingly interrelated. The discussion of these issues led to the proposal approved by the Board of Trustees on April 26, 1973 "to establish a Hartford-based Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, to implement the three aspects of the program formulated in January 1972."

It may seem rather artificial to use this date as the closure of one period and the beginning of another. The deliberations on the future shape of Islamic studies that had begun early in 1972 continued uninterrupted, largely in the same committees and by the same persons, and the faculty's load of teaching and thesis supervision continued almost unabated for a long time: as late as

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40 Minutes, Board of Trustees, Meeting of April 26, 1973.
May 1976 there were still 19 students working toward the completion of their Hartford degree in Islamic studies.41 Yet it stands to reason to consider April 1973 as the commencement of a new period. The establishment of the Macdonald Center marked the moment that a critical point was reached in the explorations of an interinstitutional arrangement for the degree work and in the planning for the implementation of the “professional dimension.”

III The Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations, 1973-present

The decision to establish the Macdonald Center was only the first part of the above-mentioned motion voted by the Trustees in April 1973. The second part limited the number of institutions with which a cooperative arrangement should be explored to two: Yale University in New Haven, Conn. and McGill University in Montreal, Canada. In the contacts with representatives of these institutions during the next six months the major problem that arose was the interpretation several persons on Hartford’s side gave of the January 1972 stipulation than an evaluation of the new programs should take place before the end of the fifth year. Many concluded from this wording that the Seminary could not commit itself to the support of any type of program in Islamic studies beyond the initial five-year period. The issue played a decisive role in the negotiations with Yale,42 and the Committee on Islamic Studies considered it so crucial that it concluded in its meeting of October 31, 1973, “that the limitations of a five-year commitment exclude meaningful continuation of the exploration of an interinstitutional relationship.”43 In response to this action, the Board of Trustees voted two weeks later “to reopen the deliberations with McGill, removing the five-year restriction as far as the degree dimension is concerned.”44 An Interinstitutional Cooperation Committee was formed, and on its recommendation the Board voted on April 23, 1974 to approve the outlines of the proposed agreement with McGill and four months later the

41 The fact that notwithstanding the long transitional period only five of them completed the requirements for a Hartford degree before the end of 1979 underscores the tremendous problems experienced also in 1972 with regard to other M.A. and Ph.D. programs—resulting from such radical changes in advanced degree programs.
42 The Chairperson of Hartford’s Board of Trustees, John H. Riege, wrote on December 5, 1973, in a letter to Kingman Brewster, President of Yale University that Yale’s requirement that Hartford would “commit itself on a permanent basis to a program in Islamic Studies” was unacceptable: “Our Board is of the opinion that it cannot, at this moment in the history of this institution, commit itself financially without any time limitation to the support of a program in Islamic Studies.”
43 Minutes, Meeting of the Committee on Islamic Studies, October 31, 1973. One of the trustee members of the committee, Robert E. Berkey, addressed a letter to the Chairperson of the Board, dated Nov. 7, 1973, in which he challenged the notion of a five-year commitment and wrote, “I would strongly oppose any implicit or explicit statement by the Board suggesting in any way that we are anticipating a phasing out of Islamic.”
44 Minutes, Board of Trustees, Meeting of November 15, 1973.
Executive Committee authorized President James N. Gettemy to sign the final text of this contract.45 The agreement would come into effect on June 1, 1975 and would "extend over a period of ten years with a re-evaluation thereof to be made before December 31, 1979 and, if then deemed advisable by the parties, a revision to come into effect June 1, 1980."46

By 1979, the Seminary had concluded that it needed to find a place for the total program of the Macdonald Center at its Hartford base, and the re-evaluation led, therefore, to a drastic reduction of the Seminary's share in the McGill program. Hartford withdrew as far as faculty participation was concerned,47 made the commitment to contribute for the next five years a mutually-agreed upon amount as a way to meet its obligations to McGill for continuing the program that had been a joint undertaking in the first five-year period, and transferred to McGill the full ownership rights of the library acquisitions made between 1975 and 1980 from funds contributed by the Seminary.

Several developments at Hartford played a role in the decision not to prolong a program which many recognized as being very attractive because of the exceptional strength of the combined faculty resources and the stimulating challenge of a large international and religiously diverse student-body.48 One of the recent changes in Hartford was that the Seminary had introduced in 1978 a study program leading to an advanced professional degree, the D.Min., and was in the process of regaining its status as an accredited degree-granting institution. In the first year after all Macdonald Center resources were reunited in Hartford, the Seminary's faculty—now including Yvonne Y. Haddad who had been appointed in the vacancy created by Issa Boullata's resignation—developed a M.A. program in Religious Studies of which one component offers the opportunity for a concentration in the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. The first students enrolled in the program in 1981. It has continued ever since, and in the academic year 1992-1993, 22 students are enrolled in the Islamic Studies section.

From the second half of the 1970s one other development needs to be mentioned that led to a stronger emphasis on the Hartford base of the Macdonald Center and at the same time opened up new prospects for the realization of the "professional degree" dimension. On May 27, 1977 an ad-hoc group of persons concerned with Muslim-Christian relations in this country proposed to the National Council of Churches of Christ that it establish a

45 Minutes, Executive Committee, Meeting of August 21, 1974.
46 "Agreement between McGill University and The Hartford Seminary Foundation in respect to the cooperative arrangement between Hartford's Duncan Black Macdonald Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations and McGill's Institute of Islamic Studies," article I.
47 Issa Boullata decided to continue his work in the field of Arabic language and literature in the McGill context, resigned from Hartford and stayed in Montreal as a faculty member of McGill.
48 In 1975 there were 62 students enrolled at McGill's Institute of Islamic Studies, 41 M.A. and 21 Ph.D.
"Task Force on Christian-Muslim Relations," to work in close cooperation with the Duncan Black Macdonald Center in Hartford. The proposal was accepted by the N.C.C.C.U.S.A. on August 1 and was fully implemented by September 12, 1977, when the first meeting of the Task Force took place, under the leadership of Byron L. Haines as the newly appointed director. In that capacity Haïns became simultaneously a member of the faculty of the Macdonald Center. Under his directorship and that of R. Marston Speight as his successor (1988-1992) the cooperative arrangement between the Task Force and the Macdonald Center has facilitated in a great variety of ways the Center’s contacts with Muslim and Christian communities nationwide. A number of national conferences were jointly sponsored, including two in Connecticut, in 1980 and 1983, one in Georgia in 1985, and one near Chicago in 1987. The latter two were also co-sponsored by third parties, the Islamic Science Foundation of Westchester County, New York and the East-West University of Chicago, respectively.

As mentioned earlier, as early as 1972-1973 the organization of annual conferences on issues relevant to Christian-Muslim relations was specified as one of the modes to discharge the “professional dimension” of the Center’s mandate. The accompanying stipulation that these conferences should take place in alternate years in Hartford and in parts of Asia and Africa where Muslims and Christians were living together, underscores the importance given to the Center’s international involvement in those early years. This was clearly reflected not only in the overseas activities to which we’ll turn below, but also in the conferences held in Hartford in 1975 and 1977. At the 1975 conference, e.g., the 25 participants came from 15 countries, including Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Yemen, Turkey, Norway, Denmark and several countries in West and East Africa. Because the two other faculty members in Islamic Studies carried at this time a full teaching load at McGill, the planning of and the participation in overseas conferences, courses and seminars in the late 1970s became primarily the author’s responsibility. In a three-year period, he shared in, among others, educational programs, some of them lasting five to seven weeks, in India, Pakistan, Ghana, Singapore and Indonesia in 1977, in Kenya in 1978 and in Nigeria and Egypt in 1979. All of these programs were co-sponsored by an institute or organization in these countries and the Macdonald Center. Although a significant portion of the funding for these conferences came from special contributions by churches in America and Europe, the Seminary’s share was still substantial and budget restrictions were one of the reasons why in later years the emphasis shifted to national

49 In 1985 the name was changed to “Office on Christian-Muslim Relations,” and in 1990 to “Office of Christian-Muslim Concerns.” See also note 56.
50 In 1975 the theme was “The Idea of History in Muslim and Christian Thought” and in 1977 “Divine Revelation and Human Language.”
conferences as those co-sponsored by the Task Force, and to a rich diversity of lectures, one-day seminars and some extensive lecture series in Hartford. This is not to suggest that the global concern was abandoned and that participation in overseas events came to an end. Indeed, at present the Center takes organizational responsibility for the Seminary's co-sponsorship of a biannual international study seminar at the Ecumenical Institute for Theological Studies at Tantur, near Jerusalem. Other expressions of the Center's ongoing international concern include the large international conference on "Christian-Muslim Encounter" held in Hartford in the summer of 1990 and, especially, the continuing efforts to attract students from the Middle East, Asia and Africa to Hartford's M.A. program. In this context reference should also be made to the ongoing publication of The Muslim World, continuing to be perhaps the Center's most important way to maintain worldwide contacts with persons and institutions concerned with the study of Muslim-Christian relations. While the extent of the Center's direct involvement in study programs overseas is clearly reduced, the issue of Muslim presence in the U.S. has come far more into focus after 1977 than was the case in the first five years of the Center's existence. Of the research projects which Yvonne Haddad pursued while in Hartford, perhaps the most widely known is the two-year study, undertaken together with Adair Lummis, of five Muslim communities in three regions of the U.S. The publication of the results of this study, Yvonne Haddad's bibliography on Muslims in the U.S.A. published in The Muslim World, the statement by David A. Kerr, the Center's Director since 1988, that the Middle East and the U.S. are the regional foci of the Center's present interests, and numerous other indications confirm Hartford's ongoing commitment to this field of inquiry.

Anyone who looks back at the first 20 years of the Macdonald Center is bound to notice on the one hand a high degree of continuity and on the other hand the fact that the Center, in line with the Seminary's tradition, is constantly and creatively changing in response to new demands and new opportunities. A few illustrations must suffice.

The 1972 mandate to continue graduate work at the M.A. as well as at the Ph.D level is now carried out through Hartford's own M.A. program and through an agreement for cooperation in graduate studies of Islam and Chris-

51 Including a nine-lecture series on "The World of Islam," held at Hartford from January 28, 1982-March 25, 1982. These lectures were published in the volume The Islamic Impact, ed. by Yvonne Y. Haddad, Byron Heinze and Ellison Findly (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1984).
52 Yvonne Haddad resigned from Hartford in 1986 to take up her appointment as Professor of Islamic History at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.
55 The statement here referred to and other information on the present situation are found in his "Long Term Planning Document 1993/4, 1994/5," dated May 1993.
tian-Muslim relations with Temple University in Philadelphia. The Center's ongoing involvement in this and all other dimensions of its multi-faceted program is possible because the pattern of three full-time faculty positions, established in 1966-1970, has been maintained throughout these 20 years. Also the last vacancy that occurred, created by the author's retirement in 1990, was filled as expeditiously as possible by the appointment of Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi' in the summer of 1991.

The "professional dimension" statements of 1972-1973 pointed to various activities that are now being pursued, partly with different emphases, under different rubrics: (a) through "public education" events, including among other the Center's active participation in the Seminary's educational outreach program for clergy and laity; (b) through the ongoing relationship with the N.C.C.C. Office for Interfaith relations;\(^56\) (c) through the exploration of the possibility to recruit for the D.Min. program annually "a limited number of candidates with overseas experience of ministry in the context of Christian-Muslim relations"; and through research projects dealing with issues of concern to both Muslims and Christians.

The "non-denominational" character of Hartford Seminary was interpreted already in the 1960s as enabling it to appoint people of other faiths to the full-time faculty. To the Christian-Muslim studies side, Muslims have served frequently as members of the planning committees for the national and international conferences and as lecturers at those occasions. In the 1990s, there is growing evidence that the Seminary, long known for its ecumenical stance, has also fully come to terms with the reality of religious diversity. The 1972 mandate included the task to seek ways in which a concern for the issue of religious pluralism could be built into the Seminary's total program and, through it, become part of the life of the churches with which it is in contact. Two decades later, the objective of the educational program of Hartford Seminary as a whole is described in terms of "seeking to support faithful living in a multi-faith and pluralistic world." Much of what was intended in 1972 seems to have been achieved, through the efforts of several people at the Seminary, including all those connected with the Macdonald Center. The program in Islamic studies, looked upon by many in the 1970s as an "alien" element at the Seminary and a potential threat to the realization of its "real" objectives, has once again become an integral part of the life and work of Hartford Seminary.

\(^56\) As part of its responsibilities, OIFR continues the work began by the Task Force in 1977; see at note 49.
Concluding Observation

The scope and the emphases of the Islamic studies programs have certainly changed over these 100 years, but many characteristics have remained the same. The shortest way to characterize the changes may well be by pointing to the move away from the nomenclature Arabica and Islamic Studies to the since 1973 common wording, The Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. The interest in Arabic has not been abandoned, and the concern for Christian-Muslim relations was there from the beginning, but the shifts in emphasis are important. The main abiding characteristic is Hartford's focus on the faith dimension of Islam. The emphasis on the "specifically religious aspects" of Islamic culture, referred to by H.A.R. Gibb in his 1947 remarks about The Muslim World, is a significant trait of Hartford's Islamic Studies program in general. Islam is not reduced to being a voiceless "object" of an academic study program. As long as the ongoing reality of the living faith of Muslims is one of the Seminary's main concerns, it will continue to recognize that in a decisively important way Muslims are the subjects in as far as their faith perspectives determine the validity of any attempt to interpret their tradition.

South Reading, Vermont

Willem A. Bijlefeld

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57 The emphasis on language study in the first half of this century has already been mentioned. Macdonald's report about the Arabic examinations set for one of his students, Calverley, gives an impression of what the requirements were: "Unseen passages were set from the commentary of Sayyid Murad on the Ji'ar; from Bajdawi's commentary on the Qur'an, from Taltazani's commentary on Nasafi, and from an Arabic historian. A passage also was set for translation into Arabic from De Imitatione Christi." Donaldson, "Calverley," MIV: LVII (1967), 178-79. The appointment of Issa Boulatta in 1968 led once again to a renewal of interest in Arabic language and literature, and the significance of the "Arabic dimension" was also reflected in the nomenclature used in the 1970-1971 and 1971-1972 catalogues of Hartford when the Islamic studies field was designated as "Arabic-Islamic," in distinction from the "African-Islamic" offerings. At present the instruction in Arabic focuses on Qur'anic Arabic.

58 H.A.R. Gibb, Modern Trends in Islam (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947), "Foreword," where he writes that "never a year passes without the publication of several books both in Europe and America, dealing with one or other of the Muslim countries and peoples. To the Western student of the specifically religious aspects of modern Islamic culture, however, most of them offer little satisfaction. The fullest documentation is to be found in the quarterly issues of the Muslim World since 1910." Calverley quoted the same section in his "Our Plans," MIV: XXXVII (1947), 252.