In December 1996, a seminar was held at the Oxford Academy for Advanced Studies on the subject of Muslim graduate studies in the West. Attended by many Muslim academics and scholars, it was to be a catalyst for the formation of a new organisation—the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (UK)—dedicated to the promotion of the Islamic perspectives in various academic disciplines.

At the time, the Association of Muslim Social Scientists in the United States was celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary. Its refereed journal, The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences (AJISS)—a leading academic journal published in co-operation with the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT)—was about to launch its fourteenth volume. A similar association had also been running for over six months in Germany.

The participants in the 1996 Oxford seminar felt that such an association was urgently needed in the UK, as an increasing number of British Muslim students and scholars were specialising in the departments of Arabic or Islamic Studies, their number is rapidly increasing. There is also a steadily growing Muslim participation in the social services and legal institutions, amongst others.

A body was therefore needed that would provide a platform for Muslim social scientists to come together, exchange their creative insights and ideas, and promote among themselves a spirit of co-operation and understanding that might generate and advance scholarly Islamic thought through critical and scientific inquiry. The aim was also to encourage debate among these scholars, and urge them to develop Islamic viewpoints on their particular academic disciplines, so that they do not remain mere consumers of knowledge but—like their predecessors—reach the cutting-edge of academic discourse. This forum is not exclusive to Muslim social scientists, but is open to all those who are interested in pursuing research and study in the social sciences from an Islamic perspective.

If you would like more information regarding the association or to become a member please contact: AMSS (UK), P.O. Box 126, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2UD. Tel: 0181-948 5166 ext.282, Fax: 0181-940 4014.
Sociology of Religion Study Group

Since its foundation in 1975 the Study Group has become the second largest discipline Study Group within the British Sociological Association (BSA). Its annual four-day conferences attract a wide range of specialists in contemporary religious issues and the sociology of religion. Conferences attract not only internationally renowned scholars in the field, but increasingly young academics and post-graduate students. The Study Group would like to hear from Muslim scholars in the field who are interested in becoming members of the Study Group.

For more information contact:
Dr. Sophie Gilliat-Ray
Department of Religious and Theological Studies
University of Wales Cardiff
Humanities Building
Colum Drive, Cardiff CF10 3EU
gilliat-rays@cardiff.ac.uk

Conference in Azerbaijan

A conference for Muslim Social Scientists was organised in Baku, Azerbaijan on 15-16 September 1998 in co-operation with the IIIT (London Office) and the Centre for Social Change in Baku. It was the first ever such seminar for social scientists, and was organised under the auspices of the Deputy Prime Minister, Dr. Ezzat Ramanov and the Minister of Education, Misir Mardanov. The conference was held at the headquarters of the Centre for Islamic Studies in Baku.

A number of papers were presented: ‘The Development of Philosophical Science in Azerbaijan Before and After Independence’ (Prof. Ali Abasov, Director of the Institute of Philosophy and Law at the Azerbaijan Academy of Science); ‘The Teaching of History in Institutes of Higher Education in Azerbaijan’ (Prof. Rafiq Radjabov, Chairman of the Association of Scientists of Azeri History); ‘Islamic Education in Azerbaijan’ (Prof. Gunduz Sariye); ‘The Intellectual Crisis and the Islamisation of Knowledge’ (Dr. Anas al Shaikh-Ali, IIIT, London); ‘The Contribution of Azeri Scholars to Islamic Civilisation’ (Dr. Mehmet Ali, Deputy Rector of Kafkaz University in Baku); ‘Intellectual and Cultural Development in Azerbaijan Before and After Independence’ (Prof. Akif Hasanov); ‘A Critique of the Attempt to Globalise the Social Sciences’ (Dr. Ahmad Davutoğlu, Istanbul); and ‘The Influence of Religious Stories on Azeri Poetry’ (Dr. Aida K. Zadeh).

For more information contact:
AMSS Germany
P.O. Box 600 269
50682 Cologne, Germany

Social Scientists in Germany

The GMSG Association of Muslim Social Scientists in Germany is an independent charitable NGO with headquarters in Cologne. Founded in May 1996, with the support of the Muslim Studenten Vereinigung in Deutschland, Dr. Taha Jabir Alwani (President, School of Islamic Social Sciences) and the Academic Adviser of IIIT’s London Office became their international advisers. The Association, whose first president was the late Professor Abdeljavad Falaturi, has already organised seminars and conferences on various topics, including Islamic Identity in Europe; Education in German Schools; Islamic Sciences in Turkey; and Representation of Muslims in Germany. It has also organised workshops on the media, public relations and also has a bi-annual Newsletter.

For more information contact:
Dr. Sophie Gilliat-Ray
Department of Religious and Theological Studies
University of Wales Cardiff
Humanities Building
Colum Drive, Cardiff CF10 3EU
gilliat-rays@cardiff.ac.uk

Centre Launched Journal of Qur’anic Studies

The new Journal of Qur’anic Studies has been launched by the Centre for Islamic Studies (SOAS). The Journal aims to encourage and promote the study of the Qur’an from a wide range of scholarly perspectives. The Journal publishes articles in English and Arabic, together with shorter items of comment, correspondence, and information on developments in Qur’anic studies and book reviews.

For information contact:
Prof. M.A.S. Abdel Haleem,
Journal of Qur’anic Studies,
Centre of Islamic Studies
SOAS, Thornhaugh Street
Russell Square
London WC1H 9XG
ha4@soas.ac.uk

American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences

The new Summer 1999 issue includes:
‘Who is the Founder of Psychophysics and Experimental Psychology’ –
Omar Khaleefa
‘Islamization of the Curriculum’ –
Rosnani Hashim
Muhammad Akram Khan
‘Islamic Economics: The State of the Art’ –
Muhammad Akram Khan

For subscription information contact:
AJISS, P.O. Box 669
Herndon, VA 22070
USA
Events

27 October 1999
Seminar. 'Sufism' by Dr. Martin Lings. Organised by the Centre of Islamic Studies, SOAS. Tel: 0171-323 6297; cis@soas.ac.uk

1-4 November 1999

3 November 1999
Seminar. 'The Writing Down of the Qur'an' by Salwa El-Awa. Organised by the Centre of Islamic Studies, SOAS. Tel: 0171-323 6297; cis@soas.ac.uk

10 November 1999
Seminar: 'Muslim Architecture, ethics and the Public Context' by Prof. Azim Nanji. Organised by the Centre of Islamic Studies, SOAS. Tel: 0171-323 6297; cis@soas.ac.uk

15-18 November 1999

17 November 1999
Seminar. 'Islam in South Asia: Local Context and Vernacular Expression' by Prof. Azim Nanji. Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Oxford. Tel: 0171-323 6297; cis@soas.ac.uk

17-18 November 1999
Conference. 'Geography and the natural sciences in Islamic manuscripts'. Organised by Al-Furqan Foundation, London. Tel: 0181-944 1633

21 November 1999
Gent, Belgium. 2nd Day of Equal Rights Theme: 'Islam in the Schools in Flanders'. Organised by FoGi vzw, Astrid Casteels. Tel/Fax: +32 (0)9 2225351 or Avdkooij@cit10.wsd.leidenuniv.nl

24 November 1999
Seminar. 'Unity and Diversity' by Prof. Zaki Badawi. Organised by the Centre of Islamic Studies, SOAS. Tel: 0171-323 6297; cis@soas.ac.uk

27 November 1999
Seminar. 'Impact of the Hadith on the Development of Islamic Jurisprudence' by Dr. Taha Jabir Alwani. Organised by the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Oxford. Tel: 0171-323 6297; cis@soas.ac.uk

1 December 1999
Seminar. 'European Scholarship on Islam in the South Asian Colonial Context' by Dr. A. Powell. Organised by the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Oxford. Tel: 0171-323 6297; cis@soas.ac.uk

2-4 December 1999
Conference. Sixth Annual Congress of the German Middle East Studies Center (DAVO), Hamburg, Germany www.geo.uni-mainz.de/davo

8 December 1999
Seminar: 'Forced/ False Marriages' by Ruqaiyyah W. al-Maqsood. Organised by the Centre of Islamic Studies, SOAS. Tel: 0171-323 6297; cis@soas.ac.uk

9-10 December 1999
Symposium Europa-Maghreb. 'The intercultural dialogue and “modernity” in the Maghreb and Europe'. Organised by CIDOB (Barcelona) and Dept. of Comparative Culture Studies (CICI), Ghent. University of Gent, Belgium. Hendrick.pinxten@rug.ac.be

13-16 December 1999
Conference. 'Forging an International Consensus to Ensure Compliance with Non-Proliferation Regimes'. Steyning, East Sussex. http://www.wiltonpark.org.uk or Tel: 01903-815 020

22-16 March 2000
'First Mediterranean Social and Political Research Meeting'. Organised by the Mediterranean Programme Robert Schuman Centre. University Institute, Florence, Italy. svantess@iue.it

27-18 April 2000
Conference. 'Religious Polemics in Context'. Organised by the Leiden Institute for the Study of Religions. Avdkooij@cit10.wsd.leidenuniv.nl

10-12 May 2000
Conference: 'Arbitration in the Arab States and the Shariah'. Organised by the Centre of Islamic Studies, SOAS. Tel: 0171-323 6297; cis@soas.ac.uk

3-6 July 2000
'Fourth Symposium on Language and Society in The Middle East and North Africa (MENA)'. University of Edinburgh. Scotland EIASIME@ed.ac.uk

10-13 July 2000
'Literature and Nationalism in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)'. University of Edinburgh. Scotland. Deadline for registration is 15 December 1999. EIASIME@ed.ac.uk

Useful Websites

EURAMES
http://129.177.211.69/smi/eurames/eurahome. html

The Middles East Studies Center, University of Ghent http://allserv.rug.ac.be/~sdcOMIC/CTWS/ MESC/

Journal of Middle East Studies (MIT EMES)
http://cis-server.mit.edu/mideast/


The ISIM Newsletter is a tri-annual publication of the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World covering the activities concerning the study of Islam and Muslim societies. The newsletter is available free of charge. Please contact them and ask to be placed on their mailing list.
AMSS (USA) 28th Annual Convention

The 28th Annual Convention of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists of North America will be held between 29–31 October 1999 in Leesburg, Virginia, USA. The convention will bring together leading Muslim scholars and panel sessions will tackle a variety of subjects such as Islam in America, American Muslims and American Foreign Policy, Islam and Women, and Islamic Political Economy.

Some of the papers to be presented at the conference include, among others, ‘American Pakistani Activism’ (Salahuddin Malik); ‘Psychological Aspects of Child Development’ (A. Abu Sulayman); ‘Metatheory and Methodology’ (Dinawaz Siddiqui); ‘Critical Thinking’ (Fathi Melkawi); ‘Critical Theory’ (Muqtedar Khan); ‘Deconstructing Islamic Identity: Engaging Multiple Discourse’ (Jasmine Zine); ‘Muslim Women and Political Activism in America’ (Deonna Kelli) and ‘Islamic Political Economy’ (Masud Alam Choudhury).

For information contact:
AMSS 1999, P.O. Box 669
Herndon, VA 20172, USA
Fax: (703) 471–3922
Email: ajiss@yahoo.com

Islam & Peace

The Islam and Peace Seminar will be held in January 2000 in the USA. It seeks to explore Islamic discourses that promote peace and non-violence. Those who are interested in presenting papers or acting as discussants may submit their requests to the seminar coordinator:
Dr. Karim Crow, Islamic Peace Forum, 4545 42nd St. NW #209, Washington D.C. 20016, USA. Tel: 202–244–0951
Email: nonviolence@igc.apc.org

BRISMES Conference

Brismes conference next year will be hosted by the University of Cambridge. It will be held between 2–5 July 2000. The main conference theme will be ‘Writing the Middle East’, and the organisers welcome individual and panel submissions pertaining to the following themes: Islamic Studies; Politics and International Relations; History; Historiography; Anthropology and Cultural Studies; Nationalism; Ottoman History; Topographies in Literature and Philosophy and Law.

The organisers declare their intent to vet all submissions. They suggest that potential participants submit an abstract or a proposal for a panel by 31 January 2000. During the conference there will be a book exhibition and the BRISMES Annual General Meeting.

BRISMES 2000, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge, Faculty of Oriental Studies Sidgwick Av., Cambridge CB3 9DA

Islam in America

A Seminar or a series of seminars are planned to develop a comprehensive research program on the theme ‘Islam in America’. Soon a working paper identifying the research areas and needs will be published here. Based on the working paper, which will list a serious of research questions, a seminar and subsequently a special issue of the American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences will be published.

For details contact:
Dr. Ilyas Bayunus, SUNY, Cortland 4339 Alexandria Dr., Cortland NY 13045, USA

Scholars Gather in Tatarstan

A conference similar to the one held in Azerbaijan (see p.2) took place in Tatarstan on 3 June 1999 at the Academy of Sciences, Kazan. Those attending the conference included Dilyara Shakirova (Rector of the Tatar–American Regional College); Prof. Rinat Nabiev (Council for Religious Affairs); Valiulla Yakub (Deputy Mufti); Mirza Makhmoutov (Academy of Sciences); Dr. Rafik Moukhmetshin (Islamic Research Centre); and Dr. Raphael Khakimov (Adviser to the President of Tatarstan).

If you would like any information regarding academic news, seminars, conferences, or new and forthcoming books, to be included in the newsletter, please send it to:

AMSS NEWSLETTER
P.O. Box 126, Richmond, Surrey TW9 2UD
Tel: 0181–948 5166 Fax: 0181–940 4014
amss@dial.pipex.com