

**Translating Islamic Authority:
Chaplaincy and Muslim Leadership Education in North American Protestant Seminaries**

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation analyzes the education of Muslim leaders in accredited North American institutions. Currently, the only accredited programs that train Muslim leaders in the United States and Canada are Protestant Christian seminaries. Based on ethnographic research conducted at Hartford Seminary (Hartford, Connecticut), Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto (Toronto, Ontario), and Bayan Claremont (Claremont, California), I analyze the impact of multifaith educational models on the development of North American Muslim leaders, such as Muslim chaplains, pastors, and spiritual caregivers. I examine the various rationales provided by the institutions in question for the establishment of Muslim leadership training programs at Christian seminaries, as well as Muslim students' justifications for studying at these institutions. Subsequently, I argue that these programs depend on multiple forms of "translation" that render members of distinct religious traditions comprehensible to one another. These multifaith programs require translations of space in order to accommodate the practical needs of members of diverse religious backgrounds, and to generate experiences of inclusivity. I also examine curricular translations, specifically focusing on translations of "the spiritual," given the centrality of the concept within the professional field of chaplaincy. Finally, I analyze translations of debates about gender and authority in Islam into multifaith classrooms. These various negotiations make apparent that the burdens of translation are not equally shared. Within the Protestant milieus in which these Muslim leadership programs take shape, the work

of Muslim students is ultimately framed and evaluated within a setting where Christianity provides the overwhelming “logic” of the field. This dissertation thus reveals the inculcation of norms of Muslim authority that align with liberal Christian values, including but not limited to: religious individualism, spirituality (versus legalism), democracy, non-hierarchical forms of authority, ecumenism, and interfaith relationship-building.

TABLE of CONTENTS

LIST of FIGURES	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii
PREFACE	xii
INTRODUCTION: EDUCATING MUSLIM LEADERS IN NORTH AMERICA	1
The Question of Authority	1
A Crisis of Leadership?	4
Project Focus	10
Good Muslims, Bad Muslims	13
Chaplains, Pastors, Spiritual Caregivers: Literature Review	16
<i>General Works on Chaplaincy</i>	17
<i>Works on Muslim Chaplaincy</i>	21
Research Methods: Observing Muslims in an Age of Surveillance	27
Positionality	31
Dissertation Roadmap	34
CHAPTER ONE: STUDYING ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP in PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN	
SEMINARIES	37
The Seminaries in Question	39
Mainline Protestant Seminary Education in the 21 st Century	42
Christians and Muslims: The Logic of Partnership	44
Hartford Seminary: Academic Legacies	46
Emmanuel College: Transformative Encounters	51

Claremont School of Theology: “Thy walls shall be sliding doors and thy Classrooms freeways...”	62
Muslim Students Rationales	71
“He Who Pays the Piper Calls the Tune”: Muslim Skepticism of Islamic Leadership Programming in Christian Seminary Settings	81
Conclusion.....	87
CHAPTER TWO: THEORIZING TRANSLATIONS.....	89
Defining Translation	93
Translating the Field.....	96
Translating Professional Standards	98
Translating Curricula.....	99
Translating Courses	102
Theorizing Translation	105
Translating “Mission”	108
Translations and Representations.....	112
<i>“I Don’t Mind Translating...Isn’t That What It’s All About?”: Muslim Translations and Representations</i>	113
<i>“When You Have Hegemony, You Don’t Have To Be Specific.”: Christian Translations and Representations</i>	116
Conclusion.....	118
CHAPTER THREE: TRANSLATING SPACES.....	120
Contesting Space: Pluralism and Territory	124
Multifaith Spaces: the Politics of Sharing Space	125

Translating Physical Spaces	127
<i>Hartford Seminary</i>	128
<i>Bayan Claremont</i>	135
<i>Emmanuel College</i>	141
The Question of Governance	153
Translating Intellectual Spaces	156
Translating “Prayerful” Spaces	163
<i>Interfaith Prayer Service</i>	168
Constructing “Safe” Spaces	178
Conclusion	185
CHAPTER FOUR: SOUL FOOD	186
TRANSLATING “THE SPIRITUAL” in NORTH AMERICAN MUSLIM LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS	186
Spirit Matters: Curricula, Practica, and Requirements	193
Locating the Islamic Roots of Pastoral Care	201
‘The Fusion of Horizons’: Translating Spiritual Discourses	208
Repertoires of the Spiritual	214
The Spirit and the Letter: Facilitating the Spiritual	219
Conclusion: “God Created Us Without Religion.”	226
CHAPTER FIVE: TRANSLATING GENDER	229
The Status of Muslim Women	234
Chaplaincy, Femininity, Authority	243
Chaplaincy and Muslim Masculinity	248

Gender and Curriculum	249
“The Chauvinists Are Entering the Building”: Translating Islamic Notions of Gender in Multifaith Classrooms	252
“I will raise my hand when I want to raise my hand!”: The Politics of Gender in Multifaith Classrooms	255
Conclusion.....	258
CONCLUSION.....	260
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	268
APPENDIX A: ISLAMIC CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM at HARTFORD SEMINARY	287
Customized Program	287
Application and Admission for the Graduate Certificate Program in Islamic Chaplaincy	288
<i>Additional Admissions Stipulations</i>	289
Program Components	289
<i>Master of Arts Degree</i>	289
<i>Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy</i>	289
<u>Requirements/Credits</u>	290
<u>Practical Training</u>	290
APPENDIX B: EMMANUEL COLLEGE MUSLIM LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMING.....	293
Summary	293
Preparation & Orientation	293
<i>Level I Courses</i>	293
<i>Level II Courses</i>	294
APPENDIX C: BAYAN CLAREMONT DEGREE PROGRAMS	296

Master of Arts: Islamic Studies and Leadership	296
Master of Arts: Islamic Education	296
Master's of Divinity: Islamic Chaplaincy	297
Certificate Option	298
Course Options	298
<i>Islamic Studies</i>	298
<i>Interreligious & Intrafaith Studies</i>	298
<i>Arabic</i>	298
<i>Chaplaincy</i>	298
<i>Free Electives (in consultation with Academic Advisor)</i>	299

LIST of FIGURES

Figure 1. The main building of Hartford Seminary, designed by Richard Meier.....	130
Figure 2. The Chapel at Hartford Seminary.....	131
Figure 3. The Martin and Aviva Budd Interfaith Building, home of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Christian-Muslim Relations.....	134
Figure 5. Claremont School of Theology Campus, with Kresge Chapel at center.....	137
Figure 6. The Cornish Rogers Prayer Chapel.....	141
Figure 7. Emmanuel College Exterior.....	144
Figure 8. Emmanuel College Entrance.....	144
Figure 9. Placard Outside of Classroom at Emmanuel College, spring 2012.....	145
Figure 10. Temporary Prayer Space for Muslim Students at Emmanuel College, spring 2012.....	145
Figure 11. Multifaith Prayer Room, Emmanuel College.....	146
Figure 12. A Muslim student demonstrates the new ablutions facility at Emmanuel College.....	146
Figure 13. The renovated Muslim Prayer Room at Emmanuel College.....	147
Figure 14. Artwork in the Emmanuel College Muslim Prayer Room.....	147
Figure 15. Artwork in the Emmanuel College Muslim Prayer Room.....	148
Figure 16: Messages written on the white board by visitors to the Muslim Prayer Room at Emmanuel.....	151
Figure 17. Interfaith Prayer Service at Emmanuel College.....	177

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PREFACE

The seeds for this project were planted many years ago, arguably, in the small mosque in rural northern New York where my family attended prayers and holiday functions on a semi-regular basis. I recall sitting as close as possible to the translucent curtain that separated the men's section from the women's section, straining to hear the words of the community leader (and in later years, the hired *imam*). Sometimes, the *khutba*¹ stirred within me feelings of comfort and inspiration, focused on the mercy of God, the exemplary qualities of the Prophet Muhammad, or the concern with social welfare in Islam. At other times, I viscerally rejected the message that was filtered through the gauzy fabric, whether it had to do with the eternal punishment awaiting unveiled women, the folly of Muslims befriending non-Muslims, or the inherent sinfulness of American culture. And then, still at other times, I had no feelings at all about the content of the sermon, as I could not understand the Arabic or Urdu employed by the speaker of the week, which in and of itself produced a further sense of alienation from my religious community. While I had a loving (if not complex) relationship with Islam, the mosque, and the lack of support and care I felt there, became a site of ambivalence for me, a place of simultaneous belonging and alienation.²

There are glimmers of these childhood experiences and reflections on Muslim leadership, community, and belonging, in my current research on contemporary Islamic authority in North America. The worlds of the personal and the academic intermingle

¹ "Sermon."

² Some of the sentiments expressed here are the subject of recent research about Muslim alienation from mosques and mosque communities. The documentary, "Unmosqued," produced by Atif Mahmud and directed by Ahmed Eid, confronts some of the major issues and challenges faced by North American Muslim communities, often leading to the alienation, or "unmosquing" of Muslims. See: (Mahmud 2012).

here, woven together like the threads of a prayer rug. Generally, this project interrogates the construction of Muslim authority in North America, a context marked by its diversity, both within and outside of the Muslim community. I pursue this topic in an effort to explore the question, who defines Islam in the United States and Canada? What qualities, characteristics, and skill sets do Muslims living in these settings privilege in their leadership? Who is empowered to offer spiritual guidance regarding the practice of Islam, broadly speaking, but also concerning the unique challenges of practicing Islam in North America? And subsequently, what are the distinctively “North American” articulations of Islam advocated by these leaders? These inquiries concerning the formation of North American Muslim authority led me to the development of the field of Muslim chaplaincy, the focus of this project.

INTRODUCTION: EDUCATING MUSLIM LEADERS IN NORTH AMERICA

As a temporal relationship, authority binds us to something beyond ourselves, the same way that love binds us to another person. The binding of love is far from a simple choice, and yet it still feels natural, organic, and spontaneous. We do not choose to love just as we do not choose what compels us, what we consider authoritative.

- Zareena Grewal, "Islam is a Foreign Country," 285

The Question of Authority

Islamic history attests to many different formulations of "Islamic authority," ranging from the Prophet Muhammad himself, to the revelation of the *Qur'an*, to the development of dynastic empires and political leadership. *Mutakallimun*,³ the *`ulama*,⁴ *fuqaha*,⁵ and *qada*⁶ represent other types of religious "experts," masters of specific bodies of Islamic knowledge.⁷ Charismatic figures, such as *awliya*⁸ signify yet another articulation of Islamic authority, deriving their influence from their intimate proximity to the divine. Modern organizations, encompassing a wide range of nonprofits, to advocacy groups, to *fiqh*⁹ councils, denote contemporary authoritative bodies that operate as corporate institutions. This list is far from comprehensive, but indicates that while Islam

³ "Theologians."

⁴ "Religious scholars."

⁵ "Jurists."

⁶ "Judges."

⁷ As Juliane Hammer argues, "The emergence of a class of scholars, trained in one of the more of the traditional Islamic sciences- tafsir, fiqh, or hadith- in the ninth century marked a gradual departure from the previous model of authority and interpretation (based on the Divine inspiration of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions' proximity to him) in that these scholars, the *`ulama*, developed discipline-specific methods for approaching texts, deriving interpretations, and building interpretive communities" (Hammer 2012, 101).

⁸ Sufi saints.

⁹ "Jurisprudence."

is often cited as a religion “without clergy,” varied forms of religious leadership exist, beginning in 7th century Arabia to the present moment. Furthermore, the development of these varied forms of leadership reflect the particular needs and challenges of fluid, complex traditions that span both centuries and geographic locations.

Each of the aforementioned forms of Islamic authority thus relies on the transmission, cultivation, or (in the case of charismatic leaders) experience of certain forms of knowledge. Religious authority in the Muslim world, according to Jocelyne Cesari, has “traditionally [been] conferred by one’s theological knowledge and mastery of the methodologies by which to interpret this knowledge” (Cesari 2004, 123). “Traditional knowledge,” a highly contested and ambiguous phrase,¹⁰ often implies some level of proficiency in subjects such as Qur’anic studies, hadith studies, Islamic jurisprudence, and creeds, amongst others. This project focuses on the education of specific kinds of Muslim leaders in North America, and inquires after the types of knowledge proliferated by this leadership, and the means of transmitting this knowledge.

In North America, a context shaped by a model of congregational religious life,¹¹ the figure of the imam¹² which, within a Sunni Muslim context, generally refers to a

¹⁰ Bagby, et al., clarify that according to their respondents, “The Qur’an and Sunnah (Practice) of the Prophet, which constitute the primary texts of Islam, alone form the basis of religious authority in mosques” (Bagby, et al. 2001, 28). Other significant types of knowledge valued by mosque leadership include knowledge of the example of the “righteous *salaf*,” or the first three generations after the Prophet Muhammad; human reason, which is considered a tool for interpreting primary and secondary texts; and to a lesser extent, knowledge of the classical legal schools (Bagby, et al. 2001, 29).

¹¹ Providing a brief overview of the history of Christian congregationalism in the United States, Winnifred Fallers Sullivan details how American congregations deal with the issue of leadership: “The congregation in the US model is understood...to be a group of like-minded individuals who associate together for religious worship, fellowship, and mutual aid, a group who calls, hires-and fires- a leader for themselves” (Sullivan 2014, 57).

¹² See: (Morgan 2009).

prayer leader,¹³ receives a significant amount of attention in considerations of Islamic authority. The focus on the imam is likely due to a number of reasons, including the importance of the mosque as a central Muslim institution in the United States and Canada,^{14, 15} following the general historical trend of the importance of congregational religious life in America.

The imam's role in facilitating congregational life and worship ties them to the *masjid* and to mosque culture,¹⁶ requiring at the very least knowledge of the Qur'an and the ability to lead congregational prayers.¹⁷ In most cases, however, the responsibilities of the imam extend well beyond the liturgical, including general personal and family counseling, Islamic education, and community outreach, whether or not these leaders are prepared to deal with these additional roles. Thus, in spite of the centrality of the imam in

¹³ The term imam has implied various types of knowledge and expertise in specific historical and geographical contexts. Anthropologist Brinkley Messick, for example, mentions that prior to the 1950s in Yemen, the *imam* was "commander of the 'pen and the sword,' a spiritual and temporal leader who was also, as a trained jurist, the final legal authority in his state" (Messick 1998, 29). Sunni Muslims also employ the term imam in reference to the founders of the four major Sunni schools of law and jurisprudence, or *madhhahib*). *Shi`i* Muslims, on the other hand, consider the imam to be a descendent of the Prophet Muhammad chosen by God to lead the Muslim community. The imams in Shi`ism are infallible, and possess the key to understanding Qur'anic revelation both intellectually and esoterically.

¹⁴ See: (Haddad and Smith 1994, xviii); (Memon 2012, 190); (Leonard 2003, 73-85).

¹⁵ The Pew Research Center reports that about half of American Muslims (47%) attend religious services at the mosque at least once a week, at about the same rate as American Christians (45%). (Pew Research Center 2011).

¹⁶ According to a 2001 report produced by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), "About four-fifths (81 percent) of the mosques [in America] have an Imam." At the time of the publication, CAIR reported an estimate of 1,209 mosques in the United States (Bagby, et al. 2001).

¹⁷ A hadith from the collection of Sahih Muslim, widely accepted by many Muslims as authoritative, specifies the means by which to determine the person most qualified to lead congregational prayer: "Abu Mas'ud al-Ansari reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: The one who is most versed in Allah's Book should act as Imam for the people, but if they are equally versed in reciting it, then the one who has most knowledge regarding *Sunnah* if they are equal regarding the *Sunnah*, then the earliest one to emigrate [to Medina]; if they emigrated at the same time, then the earliest one to embrace Islam. No man must lead another in prayer where (the latter) has authority, or sit in his place of honor in his house, without his permission. Ashajj in his narration used the word, "age" in place of "Islam"" (Muslim n.d., Hadith 1420).

the religious lives of North American Muslim congregations, there is no standardized notion of “imam education,” nor is there any formal process of training or ordination. As such, the term imam potentially signifies individuals with wildly variant skill sets and levels of education, both religious and secular (Grewal 2014, 133).

A Crisis of Leadership?

Although the congregational model impacts the development of Muslim religious life and authority in North America, concerns remain about the authenticity and training of religious authorities like imams. Zareena Grewal explains that after the passing of the Immigration and National Act (or Hart-Cellar Act) in the United States in 1965, which lifted immigration quotas from non-European countries, most Muslim immigrants to the United States were trained professionals, physicians and engineers, rather than religious scholars and specialists:¹⁸ “As skilled professionals, Muslim immigrants to the US in this era were rarely trained in classical religious studies,” (Grewal 2014, 131) and often held “college degrees from secular universities rather than Islamic madrasas and seminaries” (Grewal 2014, 132). This lack of a religiously trained Muslim American and Canadian leadership has produced what some commentators call a “crisis of Muslim leadership,”¹⁹ motivating some Muslim communities to “import” trained imams from the Muslim world. “Mirroring patterns of earlier Christian and Jewish immigrant communities,”

¹⁸ “Immigrants in the decades following 1965 typically have had higher levels of education and professional training than their predecessors. Unlike the foreign Muslim students who arrived after World War II to earn a college or advanced degree and return home, they have been more likely to remain in the United States. Whereas pre-1965 immigrants were often single males who relocated temporarily to the United States for education or employment purposes, subsequent immigrants have included more women and families” (Curtis 2010, 261).

¹⁹ See: (Abdullah 2013); (Abou El Fadl 2001); (Grewal 2014, 285); (Hammer 2012).

Grewal remarks, “Muslim preachers had more authority if they came from ‘back home,’ from the immigrants’ country of origin” (Grewal 2014, 133).²⁰

While the importing of imams provides a solution for some Muslim communities in North America, a common complaint is that leadership from other countries cannot meet the specific needs of contemporary Muslim communities in the North American context. While such figures may be recognized as authoritative based on Islamic education, the question remains as to whether these leaders can meet the needs of their American and Canadian congregations. In spite of the image of Islam as a “universal” religion, these barriers—cultural and/or linguistic—dividing imams from their communities signals for some the development of leadership trained in local contexts.

The desire for Muslim leaders who are at once educated in what is considered “authentic” Islamic knowledge, and also attuned to the cultural specificity of Islam in North America, has led to several interesting movements. The first of these, examined by Grewal, is a movement of Muslim students from the West who travel to the Middle East and other parts of the “Muslim world,”²¹ desiring mastery of what they consider to be

²⁰ Other commentators have interpreted the “crisis” of Islamic authority in other ways. For example, Juliane Hammer discusses different scholars’ takes on the introduction of print culture to Muslim societies, which “democratized access to traditional texts, including the Qur’an itself,” giving access to the authoritative sources of the Islamic tradition. “This democratization of textual access went hand in hand with mass education, which weakened the exclusive knowledge base of the ‘ulama,” which according to some Muslim scholars, such as Khaled Abou El Fadl, created a power vacuum. Hammer quotes Abou El Fadl, ““The vacuum in authority meant not so much that *no one* could authoritatively speak for Islam, but that virtually *every* Muslim with a modest knowledge of the Qur’an and the traditions of the Prophet was suddenly considered qualified to speak for the Islamic tradition and Shari’a law- even Muslims unfamiliar with the precedents and accomplishments of past generations”” (Hammer 2012, 102-103).

²¹ Terms like “the Muslim World,” are highly problematic and reinforce the dichotomization of “Islam” and “the West.” Scholars like Talal Asad challenge the construction of these categorical boundaries. I employ these phrases at different points in this dissertation, however, because it is an opposition often perceived and deployed by my respondents- both Muslim and Christian. For more information, see: (Asad 2003, 168-169).

“real Islam,” who return back to the United States to transmit their “authentic”

knowledge. She explains:

Today the phenomenon of young Muslims traveling abroad for religious study is a common feature across the diverse spectrum of US mosques. The overwhelming majority of American student-travelers abroad plan to return to the US, meaning that their Islamic education abroad is not an end in itself but a means to retrieve tools to help resolve Islam’s crisis [of authority] (Grewal 2014, 35).

To the student travelers, Islamic tradition and knowledge is therefore viewed as “an object that can be found, excavated, and brought home” (Grewal 2014, 36). Grewal thus examines the construction of local and global Islamic intellectual networks and genealogies, and the pursuit of “traditional” and “authentic” Islamic knowledge in modernity.²²

Another approach to the question of Islamic leadership and the transmission of Islamic knowledge in the West involves the construction of Western institutions of Islamic higher education.²³ Some relevant organizations include the American Islamic College (AIC), founded in 1983 in Chicago (Leonard 2003, 115), which offered Bachelor of Arts degrees in Arabic and Islamic studies. AIC closed in 2001 due to economic difficulties, in spite of financial support from international Muslim organizations and

²² Scholars who address the construction of “tradition” and “authenticity” in Islam include: (J. A. Brown 2014); (Chaudry 2013); (Martin and Barzegar 2010); (Moosa 2003); (Safi 2006).

²³ There are numerous types of Islamic educational institutions that are not treated in this dissertation, including Islamic primary and secondary schools (including institutions associated with the Nation of Islam); nonprofit educational organizations, such as the international AlMaghrib Institute (<http://www.almaghrib.org>), the Michigan-based American Learning Institute for Muslims (ALIM) (<http://www.alimprogram.org>); or the Imam Ghazali Institute (<https://imamghazaliinstitute.org/about/>) in Philadelphia. In Canada, some Islamic educational organizations include the Canadian Muslim Association of Canada (MAC) (<https://www.macnet.ca/English>), The Tessellate Institute (<http://www.tessellateinstitute.com/>); and a hybrid in-person/virtual educational networks, Seeker’s Hub (<http://seekershut.org/home/>), based in Toronto.

nations (G. Schmidt 2004, 87).²⁴ The International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), an Islamic think tank and non-profit educational institution, was founded in 1981 by Ismail al-Faruqi and Anwar Ibrahim. IIIT is located in Herndon, Virginia, but has offices and branches in the United Kingdom, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bosnia, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Nigeria, among other places (Leonard 2013, 179). Faruqi and his collaborators believed that Muslim societies were undergoing a civilizational decline, which was due to a “crisis” of Islamic knowledge and authority. The solution to this decline, according to Faruqi, was an “Islamization of Knowledge,” which involved bringing together Islamic scholarship and secular methodologies from the natural and social sciences (Grewal 2014, 142-143). The mission statement of the IIIT claims that the institution is “dedicated to the revival and reform of Islamic thought and its methodology in order to enable the *Ummah* to deal effectively with present challenges, and contribute to the progress of human civilization in ways that will give it meaning and a direction derived from divine guidance” (International Institute of Islamic Thought n.d.). In order to achieve this mission, IIIT offers courses, support researchers in other universities,²⁵ and host conferences and seminars in an effort to develop Islamic thought. In addition, IIIT has also published a double blind peer-reviewed interdisciplinary journal since 1984, called the *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, advocating scholarly research on numerous issues related to Islam and the Muslim world. In the 1990s, IIIT established the

²⁴ Schmidt comments that to alleviate some of these economic challenges, AIC temporarily partnered with the Lutheran Christian community in Chicago as a “survival strategy,” and worked with the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC) to offer classes in Muslim-Christian understanding.

²⁵ For example, by endowing chairs of Islamic Studies. Currently, IIIT supports an endowed chair of Islamic Studies at George Mason University, giving the university a 1.5 million dollar gift. It also supports the Center for Interfaith Studies and Dialogue in Rochester, New York, and Huron College at the Western University of Ontario, Canada. See: (The Fairfax Institute n.d.).

Graduate School of Islamic Social Sciences (reorganized and renamed the Fairfax Institute in 2001), focused on the education of imams and Muslim chaplains (Leonard 2013, 180). Students at the Fairfax Institute can earn a Certificate in Islamic Thought, in addition to a Graduate Certificate in Imam and Muslim Community Leadership.²⁶

In addition to the AIC and IIIT, there have been several other attempts at founding Muslim seminaries or institutions of higher religious learning in the United States, including Darul Uloom in Chicago, the American Islamic University in Detroit, the Islamic Association of North Texas in Dallas, as well as several *Shi`i* institutions: the Imam Ali Seminary (now closed) in Medina, New York (Leonard 2013, 180), and the Ahl al-Bayt Islamic Seminary in Chicago (Ahl al-Bayt Islamic Seminary n.d.). The Institute of Islamic Education (IIE), founded in 1989 in Chicago, and Darul-Uloom Al-Madania (DUM) in Buffalo founded in 1992 represent two Deobandi affiliated seminaries, which link themselves to 19th century Indo-Pakistani reformist movements centered in the Dar al-Ulum of Deoband (Grewal and Coolidge 2013, 253).

Some of the aforementioned institutions have survived in spite of numerous challenges, while others have failed. Either unconcerned with or failing to meet the national standards of higher learning, none of the programs listed above received independent accreditation²⁷ from nationally recognized agencies. While accreditation review is completely voluntary and not required for a school to operate, for the purposes of this study, this status denotes a level of recognition and legitimacy granted by national

²⁶ Offered in partnership with Hartford Seminary, which will be discussed below.

²⁷ As noted above, some organizations, such as IIIT, have partnered with accredited schools (such as George Mason University).

and international bodies, an implicit statement about the reputation of a school in light of wider, mainstream educational values.

On March 4, 2015 Zaytuna College,²⁸ located in Berkeley California, became the first Muslim undergraduate college to receive accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, one of six accrediting agencies that work with the federal government. The college, founded by Hamza Yusuf, later joined by Zaid Shakir, marked an attempt to “revive ‘traditional Islamic education’” (Grewal and Coolidge 2013, 259). The school began as “Zaytuna Institute” in 1996 in Hayward, California, and offered a selection of recreational classes related to the religion of Islam, and launched its pilot program in 2004. While Yusuf originally envisioned the institution as a Muslim seminary, Zaytuna ultimately went in the direction of a liberal arts undergraduate college, launching in 2014 under the leadership of Yusuf, Shakir, and Hatem Bazian, and graduating its first cohort of students in 2014. As a previous version of the College’s website argued: “Islam has never become rooted in a particular land until that land began producing its own religious scholars...There is an essential need for Muslim institutions that can wed Islam’s classical texts with the contemporary context” (Why Zaytuna College? n.d.). As the first accredited Muslim undergraduate institution in North America, Zaytuna College represents an important milestone in the institutionalization of American Islam and the transmission of Islamic knowledge in the West.

²⁸ For more information, see: (Grewal and Coolidge 2013, 259); (Kashani 2014); (Korb 2013).

Project Focus

This project concentrates on accredited graduate programs dedicated to the education and training of Muslim leaders in the North American context. The core of my research rests upon the fact that currently, the only existing accredited graduate programs in Islamic leadership in the United States and Canada are housed in Protestant Christian seminaries.²⁹ Jasmin Zine argues, “Schools are important sites of social and cultural reproduction. Religious schools promote the inculcation of religious beliefs, values, and practices and in so doing reproduce communal norms” (Zine 2012, 183). This project examines the impact of these programs, located in Protestant theological schools and influenced by Protestant educational norms, on North American Muslim conceptions of religious leadership. Given the importance of religious schools as sites of where religious knowledge, values, and practices are instilled, and where communal norms are reproduced, I ask, what is the effect of locating Muslim education in Christian seminaries?

I research three of these seminaries: Hartford Seminary (Hartford, Connecticut), Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto (Toronto, Ontario), and Bayan Claremont: Islamic College at Claremont Lincoln University (Claremont, California). Each of these schools is unique in its history, rationale for implementing such programming, methods and curricula, and goals, as I will explore in the following chapter. Despite the particularities of the contexts, justifications, and circumstances of these programs, they remain the first internationally recognized and accredited graduate programs in Muslim leadership education in North America, each

²⁹ Zaytuna College, while accredited, is an undergraduate college.

intimately connected to a Protestant Christian seminary. I explore both the justifications behind and the impacts of this intriguing structural relationship, and ask several questions including; why educate Muslim leaders at Christian seminaries? What are the investments and stakes of both the Christians and Muslims involved in each of the programs in question? How does this education occur? And finally, what types of scholars and leaders do these programs graduate?

On one level, this project tells a story about the transmission of specific types of religious and professional knowledge, and the subsequent production of leadership norms within North American Muslim communities. If we concede the existence of a “crisis of Muslim authority” in the modern period, particularly in the West, then as Juliane Hammer proposes, “it is possible to argue that this vacuum [of specialized leadership] creat[es] new spaces to claim authority for those previously not represented in circles of authority...” (Hammer 2012, 103). I thus analyze the education and formation of distinct types of Muslim leadership in the West, specifically, Muslim chaplains, pastors, and spiritual caregivers,³⁰ representatives of burgeoning fields in Muslim leadership, and assess how these new professions influence norms of Islamic authority.

Chaplains, pastors, and (to a lesser extent) spiritual caregivers have traditionally been viewed as representative of “Christian” professions. Yet, despite the religious genealogies of these occupations, many of those connected to the fields of chaplaincy and spiritual caregiving locate the bases for these professions in “traditional” Islam, revealing complex negotiations between the notions of tradition and innovation, and between “authentic” Islamic knowledge and practice, and gratuitous additions. The establishment

³⁰ Titles employed both by the programs in question and by my various respondents.

of these professions within Muslim communities, my respondents argue, is an essential step in the institutionalization of Islam in North America, and such, the programs in question shed crucial light on the types of knowledge considered necessary for Muslim leaders in the United States and Canada.

On another level, this research centers on the means through which this religious and professional education occurs. The introduction of Muslims into historically Protestant Christian seminaries requires an analysis of the construction of interfaith relationships, as well the production of these multifaith³¹ educational spaces. The co-education of religious leaders across traditions suggests a blurring, though never an elimination, of conventionally recognized religious boundaries, and perceptions of religious “sameness” and “difference.” Such comparisons influence the planning and execution of these programs. As I explain below, the possibility of interfaith theological education rests on the management of perceptions of sameness and difference, a process I examine through the lens of translation. Translation holds languages (and here, religions) in a simultaneous proximity and distance, and thus describes how Christians and Muslims navigate negotiations over curricula, methods, spaces, discourses, and identities in these settings. While multifaith theological education certainly results in mutual reformulations of the religious “self” and “other,” asymmetrical relationships of power ultimately inform these partnerships, a fact that I will discuss throughout the course of this project in various ways.

³¹ Throughout this dissertation, I use both the terms “interfaith” and “multifaith” somewhat interchangeably. Rabbi Justus Baird of Auburn Theological Seminary proposes the view that “the word *interfaith* is used to mean ‘between faith communities or between individuals of different faiths,’ as in the phrases ‘interfaith dialogue’ and ‘interfaith marriage.’ Auburn uses the word *multifaith* to mean ‘many faiths.’” Multifaith education means education about different faiths- which might take place in an interfaith environment or among people of the same faith. For more information, see: (Auburn Seminary n.d.). Both of these terms apply in different contexts in the field sites I research.

The centrality of these programs in North American Islam's institutionalization compels us to recognize the inculcation of norms of religious authority that align with liberal Christian values, including but not limited to: religious individualism, spirituality (versus legalism), democracy, non-hierarchical forms of authority, ecumenism, and interfaith relationship-building.³² Tomoko Masuzawa, writing about the category of "world religions" as a European intellectual invention (Masuzawa 2005), and the product of comparative efforts, encourages her readers to interrogate the logic of classification, and question the naturalization of the so-called "great religions of the world" (Masuzawa 2005, 2). The discourse of "religion" as a category, she maintains, is "a discourse of othering" (Masuzawa 2005, 20), performed by the European academy. With that idea in mind, this project considers the logics of interreligious partnerships in Christian seminaries, as well as the ways in which Liberal Protestant Christians' partnerships with Muslims allow Christians to transcend their own religious particularity, while still maintaining the "otherness" of Islam.

Good Muslims, Bad Muslims

My research focuses only on accredited Muslim leadership programs, in part, because they provide the opportunity to analyze the ways in which the State both directly and indirectly impacts the formation of religious authority, complicating assumptions

³² As I will explore in the first chapter of this dissertation, while the phrase "liberal Protestantism" is somewhat capacious, scholars like Gary Dorrien explain: "Liberal Christian theology is a tradition that derives from the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century Protestant attempt to reconceptualize the meaning of traditional Christian teaching in the light of modern knowledge and modern ethical values. It is not revolutionary but reformist in spirit and substance. Fundamentally it is the idea of a genuine Christianity not based on external authority. Liberal theology seeks to reinterpret the symbols of traditional Christianity in a way that creates a progressive religious alternative to atheistic rationalism and to theologies based on external authority" (Dorrien 2001, xxiii).

regarding the relationship between church and state in North America. In his work, *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim: America, the Cold War, and the Roots of Terror*, Mahmood Mamdani analyzes political rhetoric after the events of 9/11 and the United States' "War on Terror." He refers to a speech made by President George W. Bush on September 20, 2001, in which Bush distinguishes between "good Muslim" and "bad Muslims."³³

Mamdani explains:

From [Bush's] point of view, 'bad Muslims' were clearly responsible for terrorism. At the same time, the president seemed to assure Americans that 'good Muslims' were anxious to clear their names and consciences of this horrible crime and would undoubtedly support 'us' in a war against 'them.' But this could not hide the central message of such discourse: unless proved to be 'good,' every Muslim was presumed to be bad.' All Muslims were now under obligation to prove their credentials by joining in a war against 'bad Muslims' (Mamdani 2005, 15).

Mamdani thus illustrates how non-Muslim politicians in the wake of 9/11 assume the rhetorical right of determining "genuine" Islam, and implicate all Muslims who do not sufficiently "prove their credentials." "Good Muslims," Mamdani points out, "are modern, secular, and Westernized, but bad Muslims are doctrinal, antimodern, and virulent" (Mamdani 2005, 24). The political pressure faced by Muslims in the aftermath of 9/11 to distance themselves from the actions of terrorists also compels Muslims in the West to conform to specific national standards of acceptability.³⁴

³³ From Bush's speech on September 20, 2001: "I also want to speak tonight directly to Muslims throughout the world. We respect your faith. It's practiced freely by many millions of Americans and by millions more in countries that America counts as friends. Its teachings are good and peaceful, and those who commit evil in the name of Allah blaspheme the name of Allah. The terrorists are traitors to their own faith, trying, in effect, to hijack Islam itself. The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends. It is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists and every government that supports them. (Bush n.d.)

³⁴ While the political context has shifted a great deal under President Barack Obama, similar political rhetoric persists regarding the necessity of Muslims to distance themselves from violence and terrorism. During his first visit to an American mosque in 2016, Obama upheld that the majority of American Muslims were "true Americans," who strengthened the national fabric of the nation. Nonetheless,

It is impossible to ignore the fact that the Muslim leadership programs at the seminaries I research arise and take shape in this political context, and amidst a growing fear of “Islamic radicalization” in the wake of 9/11. Anxiety concerning the role of Muslim leadership in the recruitment of Muslims, particularly Muslim youth, for terrorist and insurgent groups, like al-Qaeda and ISIS, has resulted in extreme scrutiny and surveillance of Muslim individuals and communities in North America in the name of national security. The formation of the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont, and the field of Islamic chaplaincy more generally, are entangled in this reality, and in the construction of “good Muslims,” whether explicitly or implicitly. Concern about the training and standard setting for existing Muslim chaplains gave rise to some of the programs in question.³⁵ Government regulating bodies are thus instrumental in determining who is qualified to serve both in the name of Islam and in federal institutions like prisons and the military.³⁶ At the same

“Muslims around the world have a responsibility to reject extremist ideologies that are trying to penetrate within Muslim communities. Here at this mosque, and across our country and around the world, Muslim leaders are roundly and repeatedly and consistently condemning terrorism... Those voices are there; we just have to amplify them more... There is a battle of hearts and minds that takes place—that is taking place right now, and American Muslims are better positioned than anybody to show that it is possible to be faithful to Islam and to be part of a pluralistic society, and to be on the cutting-edge of science, and to believe in democracy... And so I would urge all of you not to see this as a burden, but as a great opportunity and a great privilege to show who you are” (Obama 2016).

³⁵ Such accusations continue to this day. Most recently, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles Grassley wrote to the federal Bureau of Prisons, calling on the BOP to strengthen the vetting process for Muslim chaplains. Pointing to accusations against that the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), an organization that (amongst many other things) provides ecclesiastical endorsement for Muslim chaplains, Grassley, ignoring the fact that ISNA was never charged or convicted for any terror-related activities, faults the BOP for failing to “ensure that Islamic extremism is stopped at the gates of each prison” (Vlahos 2016).

³⁶ For example, the United States Board of Prisons (BOP) established a de facto hiring freeze after 9/11 due to allegations that certain organizations that recommend Muslims chaplains were linked to terrorist groups. The BOP cited a lack of legitimate Islamic organizations to recommend chaplains as a cause for this freeze, underscoring the need for recognized endorsing bodies for Muslim chaplains. “Facts and Fictions about Islam in Prison: Assessing Prisoner Radicalization in Post-9/11 America.” SpearIt. Institute for Social Policy and Understanding. January 2013 Report, 23. While on the one hand, Muslim chaplains and spiritual caregivers were scrutinized for their potential connections to terrorist groups, there are other examples where the same figures represented hopes for the “de-radicalization” of potential terrorists. In Canada, a

time, Muslim leaders are viewed as potentially important figures in the fight against radicalization. “Good leadership,” it seems, has the power to shape “good Muslims.”

Chaplains, Pastors, Spiritual Caregivers: Literature Review

What types of Muslim authorities do the programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont aim to cultivate? While the following chapter addresses the specific programs, curricula, and degrees offered by the institutions in question, I will also clarify the main subjects of this dissertation and highlight existing scholarship on the field.

I focus on the education and training of specific types of religious professionals, variously referred to by my respondents as chaplains, pastors, and spiritual caregivers. Regardless of the distinctions or nuances of these different terms, which will be explored in subsequent chapters, these authorities are known to “serve the spiritual needs of a large, diverse, and restless population,” usually working outside of traditional religious institutions or contexts and in various public and private institutions, including “airports, colleges and universities, fire departments, prisons, hospitals, the military, unions, and even businesses and workplaces” (Sullivan 2014, x).

group of Muslims known as the “Toronto 18,” were arrested in reference to their plotting a series of attacks against targets in Ontario. Said to be inspired by the terror group, al-Qaeda, the Toronto 18 planned to storm Parliament Hill and bomb the Toronto Stock Exchange, as well as other prominent downtown buildings, in response to Canada’s military involvement in Afghanistan. The case, which represented “the first homegrown cell in Canada charged under anti-terrorism legislation,” raised fears about the impact that convicted terrorists would radicalize other prison inmates. During this time, Prime Minister Stephen Harper also laid off 49 part-time chaplains, including an imam, Ramzy Ajem. A Toronto Star Editorial points out that the loss of these Muslim chaplains runs counter to national security interests: “Prison imams such as Ajem can reach such men through Islamic and Arabic studies, and help them develop a healthier, more moderate, understanding of the Qur’an and its interpretation, and a more tolerant attitude toward other cultures.” See: (thestar.com Editorials 2013).

General Works on Chaplaincy

On the general subject of chaplaincy, Winnifred Fallers Sullivan argues in her work, *A Ministry of Presence: Chaplaincy, Spiritual Care, and the Law*, that one of the main functions of these individuals is to provide a “ministry of presence” (Sullivan 2014, xii), offering companionship to individuals on their personal religious “journeys.” As such, chaplains are ambiguous figures, spiritual “authorities” who dismantle the concept of top-down religious leadership (Sullivan 2014, 13), simultaneously tied to and disconnected from traditional religious communities, bodies, and institutions. These authorities specialize in ministering in varied and complex contexts and in fostering spiritual development.

In what ways, then, do chaplains function as religious leaders? Many of my interlocutors therefore defined chaplains as those who “lead from behind,” privileging the experiences, perspectives, and needs of those they serve within the caregiving experience. Their authority lies in their “spiritual expertise,” as discussed further in this project, as well as their skills in facilitating healthy and fulfilling religious lives.

Sullivan examines the field of chaplaincy as it intersects with the law in the United States, and proposes, “that contemporary spiritual practices in the United States including those of chaplains, are as much the product of law as of the interesting and well-documented negotiations between religion and the rationalism of modern science” (Sullivan 2014, xvi). Chaplaincy, according to Sullivan, represents a shifting conception between the relationship of church and state in the United States. While chaplains once stood as religious figures catering to *particular* religious communities within various institutional settings, recent legal cases demonstrate that the law now views chaplains as

facilitators of a *universal* conception of spirituality. Religion and spirituality are thus increasingly naturalized and regulated by the state, in association with fields such as chaplaincy: “Formal legal administration of governmental and quasi-governmental chaplaincies in the United States combined with the private law of professional associations and education institutions is arguably producing a new religious establishment of sorts in the United States” (Sullivan 2014, 202). Thus, the ubiquity of chaplaincy and pastoral/spiritual care in these diverse settings, as well as the increasingly pluralistic nature of the profession, suggests an essentializing of faith in the American public sphere. Spirituality, she writes, is “understood as an aspect of what it means to be human.” This idea universalizes the need for such experts, necessitates the standardization of professional qualifications, and legitimizes the education and training of such figures within the same environments. Since the skills sets required for spiritual care are understood as ranging across religious traditions, multifaith theological education emerges as a valid objective.

As previously mentioned, chaplaincy and pastoral care grow out of specific religious histories particularly within the context of the Western Christendom, but these professions today are “both recognizably connected to the older history and totally transformed by recent legal and religious changes” (Sullivan 2014, 95). Various scholars, such as Daniel S. Schipani, have examined the increased professionalization of these fields, and the shift from a “‘monopoly’ of Christian pastoral care” (Schipani 2013, 1) to a shift towards multifaith “spiritual care,” a move signifying the inclusion of non-Christian faiths in the field, discussed in Chapter Four of this dissertation. Authors in Schipani’s edited volume focus on the shift from Christian chaplaincy to multifaith

spiritual care, and argue that these professional changes signify spirituality as a universal human concern.

Generally, researchers focused on the field of chaplaincy have tended to focus on the profession within a specific field. There exist a number of works on chaplaincy in the American military. For example, Doris L. Bergan (Bergan 2004), Richard M. Budd (Budd 2002), Alan K. Lamm (Lamm 1998), and Albert Isaac Slomovitz (Slomovitz 1999) focus on the historical development of and issues within military chaplaincies in the United States. In addition, a pamphlet produced by the Office of the Chief of Chaplains of the Army entitled “Church, State, and Chaplaincy” (Applequist 1969) includes essays on the American chaplaincy system. Each of these works documents the history of American military chaplaincies, highlighting key developmental moments, usually linked to specific times of war, such as the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, World Wars I and II, and the Vietnam War. Some of the specific issues they confront include the questions about the constitutionality of the military chaplaincy, given the First Amendment Disestablishment Clause of the American Constitution, the gradual professionalization of the military chaplain, chaplaincy of racial minorities, and the development of Jewish chaplaincy in the military.

Scholars like Seymour A. Smith (S. Smith 1954), and Stephen L. White (White 2005) on the other hand examine the history of American college chaplaincies. Writing in the mid-1950s, Smith, addresses worries that colleges have “capitulated to secular influences of the broader society” (S. Smith 1954, 2), and makes the case that college chaplaincy finds its roots in the early days of American college education, “back at least to 1755 when Yale appointed the Rev. Naphtali Daggett to the Livingston Professorship

of Divinity and made him Yale's and the nation's first college chaplain" (S. Smith 1954, 4). These authors contend with not only the history of the college chaplaincy, but also the duties and responsibilities of a college chaplain, in addition to the challenges faced by chaplains in the university setting.

Research on hospital chaplaincy (Mitchell 1972; Wilson 1972) tends to focus on practical issues for chaplains dealing with pastoral care in times of sickness and death. These works center on topics such as bereavement, spirituality and bioethics, and patient confidentiality. Scholars Raymond de Vries, Nancy Berlinger, and Wendy Cadge, in their article, "Lost in Translation: The Chaplain's Role in Health Care" (de Vries, Berlinger and Cadge 2008), discuss the processes by which hospital chaplains institutionalize their role in the course of professionalization. The authors confront the pressure for hospital chaplains to justify pastoral work as having concrete "health benefits," and the challenges of working in a multifaith setting. In her 2012 work, *Paging God: Religion in the Halls of Medicine*, Wendy Cadge analyzes the work of hospital chaplains and the ways that medical professionals handle faith and spirituality in healthcare settings. She argues, "Despite the prevalence of research about religion's effects on health and the veracity of related debates in health care, participants rarely pay much attention to how religion and spirituality are *actually* present in the day-to-day workings of health-care organizations" (Cadge 2012, 6). Cadge's work challenges this tendency by focusing on these very "day-to-day" dealings with religion that characterize hospital settings.

Scholarly work specifically on the field of prison chaplaincy includes a 19th century text by Rev. Hosea Quinby, entitled *The Prison Chaplaincy and Its Experiences* (Quinby 1873), in addition to more contemporary research such as Dennis Pierce's

Prison Ministry: Hope Behind the Wall (Pierce 2013). Pierce analyzes Christian ministries in prison settings, and interrogates the possibility of applying Liberation theology those facing incarceration. Kevin Lewis O’Neill (O’Neill 2010) contends with the issue of Latin American gang incarceration, and subsequent gang-focused ministries in his research, while Joshua Dubler’s work, *Down In the Chapel: Religious Life in an American Prison* (Dubler 2014), provides an ethnographic analysis of religious life in Graterford Prison, in Montgomery County, outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Works on Muslim Chaplaincy

Relatively little scholarship has been published specifically regarding Muslim chaplaincy given the relative nascent state of the field. Major existing works about Muslim chaplaincy include *Understanding Muslim Chaplaincy* (Gilliat-Ray, Ali and Pattison 2013), published by Sophie Gilliat-Ray, Mansur Ali, and Stephen Pattison, which offers a detailed examination of the “personnel, practice and politics of contemporary Muslim involvement in chaplaincy in England and Wales” (Gilliat-Ray, Ali and Pattison 2013, 2), based on extensive qualitative research. The authors ask: who decides to become a Muslim chaplain, and why? What skills, practical work, and political issues do Muslim chaplains engage and navigate? They argue:

The new involvement of Muslims in chaplaincy work reflects a major shift in relation to religion in British public life. It can no longer be assumed that chaplaincy is a distinctively Christian activity. The degree to which Muslims are now employed as chaplains has reshaped chaplaincy in Britain as a whole, and stamped upon it the hallmark ‘multi-faith’ in a definitive way. Islamic religious practice more often associated with mosques, Muslim homes and other private spaces is now routinely undertaken in prisons, hospitals and on educational campuses. Muslim chaplains have been vital to the gradual institutionalisation [sic] of Islam in many public institutions (Gilliat-Ray, Ali and Pattison 2013, 23).

Their work highlights the historical legacy of chaplaincy as a Christian institution, which through the work of Muslim chaplains and others, is gradually taking on a “multifaith” character. This pioneering work includes one chapter on Muslim chaplaincy in the United States, but otherwise examines the field within the context of the United Kingdom, and how British Muslim chaplains navigate the accommodation of Islam in various public institutions.

Another general examination of Islamic chaplaincy includes a recent dissertation published by Harvey Ronald Stark, which provides a historical overview of the development of Muslim chaplaincy in the United States. In *Looking for Leadership: Discovering American Islam in the Muslim Chaplaincy* (Stark 2015), Stark examines Muslim chaplains working in various institutions, noting the ways these figures, interpret, reinterpret, and negotiate Islamic tradition in constructing Islam as an American religion.

Scholarship on Islamic chaplaincy in prisons includes James A. Beckford and Sophie Gilliat-Ray’s *Religion in Prison: Equal Rites in a Multi-Faith Society* (Beckford and Gilliat 1998), which analyzes the nature of chaplaincy in English and Welsh prisons, and how the Anglican establishment manages the needs of religious minorities, including Muslims. One chapter offers a comparison of prison chaplaincy in the U.K. with the United States, arguing, “Federal and state prison systems have responded to religious diversity in the United States in ways which tend to promote ‘equal respect’ between faith communities more transparently and convincingly than has been achieved in England and Wales” (Beckford and Gilliat 1998, 173). The result of this accomplishment, however, is a “relative lack of flexibility” within the prison chaplaincy system. Beckford and Gilliat-Ray also examine chaplaincy training, and indicate that in the American

context, Jewish and Muslim chaplains “are faced with different entry standards from their Christian counterparts” (Beckford and Gilliat 1998, 197). Muslim and Jewish chaplains, they argue, are formally required to study Judeo-Christian theology, whereas Christian chaplains need not study the particular needs of non-Christian traditions. These educational and professional disparities emerge in different ways throughout this dissertation.

Beckford and co-authors Danièle Joly and Farhad Khosrokhavar, examine in more detail the treatment of Muslim prisoners in France, England, and Wales in *Muslims in Prison: Challenge and Change in Britain and France* (Beckford, Joly and Khosrokhavar 2005). In this work, the authors examine chaplaincy in terms of facilitating Islamic practice in prisons, especially regarding diet, worship, dress, and observation of religious requirements. Comparing English and French prison systems, this work engages how different conceptions of the state (established Anglicanism in the U.K. and the policy of *laïcité* in France) impact the ways in which religion is governed in prison settings. Ultimately, the authors argue, religion and chaplaincy retain a “relatively privileged position” in England and Wales, while “opportunities for the practice of Islam in French prisons are very limited or simply non-existent” (Beckford, Joly and Khosrokhavar 2005, 137). This research therefore highlights how different articulations of the state facilitate or obstruct the work of chaplains and the practice of Islam in prisons.

Felecia Dix-Richardson and Billy R. Close also contribute to the body of research on Islam in American prisons, including inmates’ struggles for “the right to prayer, pork-free diets, the wearing of religious garments, the provision of the Qur’an and other

religious materials, visitations by imams, fasting during Ramadan, and correspondence with religious leaders” (Dix-Richardson and Close 2002). In this study, the authors contend with the topic of Islamic chaplaincy indirectly through an analysis of Muslim struggles for recognition in the religiously pluralistic and state-monitored prison setting. In addition, Aminah McCloud and Frederick Thaufeer al-Deen offer a volume entitled *A Question of Faith for Muslim Inmates* (McCloud and al-Deen 1999), a practical guide for those working as Muslim correctional chaplains, aimed at supporting incarcerated Muslims. This work features Qur’anic and hadith-based opinions on issues that Muslims might face in prison, together with opinions from the *Shafi`i*³⁷ school of legal thought as outlined in an important Shafi`i text, *The Reliance of the Traveler*.

There are few available resources on Islamic chaplaincy in the military, apart from various news articles that document the phenomenon. Generally speaking, most of these articles either affirm the patriotism and loyalty of Muslim American citizens, cast Muslim Americans in the military as a potential threat to National Security, or simply point to the reality of an increasingly pluralistic military.³⁸ In addition to these articles, the book *For God and Country: Faith and Patriotism Under Fire* (Yee and Molloy 2005), by James Yee and Aimee Molloy, documents the case of U.S. Muslim Army chaplain, James (Yusuf) Yee, who served as Muslim chaplain at Guantanamo Bay, and his wrongful accusation of treason, in addition to his subsequent imprisonment and release. This account underscores the difficulties faced by Yee as a Muslim chaplain in a

³⁷ The Shafi`i madhhab is a Sunni school of fiqh, or religious law, found predominantly in Northeast Africa, parts of the Arabian peninsula, and Southeast Asia. The second largest Sunni madhhab after the *Hanafi* madhhab (in terms of numerical adherents), the Shafi`i tradition is named after eighth-century jurist, Abu `Abdullah Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi`i.

³⁸ For example, see: (God and Country 2011); (Jasser 2010); (Tarabay 2008); (Barber 2001).

military context in which Islam was, despite political rhetoric to the contrary, cast as “the enemy” of the United States. Yee struggles throughout the book with the conflict between his religious and national identities, a conflict that he recounts he never had to face, prior to his experiences at Guantanamo Bay.

Wahiba Abu-Ras (Abu-Ras 2010) and Doha Raik Hamza (Hamza 2007) both present sociological investigations of Islamic chaplaincy in hospitals. Abu-Ras offers a study of existing chaplaincy care services available for Muslim patients in New York City hospitals, and argues that Muslim patients’ religious needs may be underserved. Hamza, on the other hand, examines different types of chaplaincy models in hospital settings, including the “chaplain-only model” (only certified chaplains may provide spiritual care to patients), the “volunteer model” (chaplaincies are run exclusively by clergy or volunteers), and the “volunteer-chaplain model” (a combination of certified chaplains and clergy/volunteers provide pastoral care), and evaluates the benefits and drawbacks of each.

On the subject of Muslim chaplaincy in university settings, Shenila S. Khoja-Moolji, a research assistant for Harvard University’s Pluralism Project produced a report in 2011 entitled, “An Emerging Model of Muslim Leadership: Chaplaincy on University Campuses” (Khoja-Moolji 2011). In this article, Khoja-Moolji focuses on college chaplains in relation to gender. She highlights the fact that for Muslim women, who have historically been barred from certain leadership roles in their religious communities (such as the position of the imam), chaplaincy has afforded them the opportunity to assume leadership positions in their religious communities, a topic that I explore in depth in Chapter Five of this dissertation. Aly Kassam-Remtulla’s dissertation, *Muslim*

Chaplaincy on Campus: Case Studies of Two American Universities (Kassam-Remtulla 2013), investigates the development and practice of Muslim chaplaincy at Princeton and Rutgers Universities. Kassam-Remtulla analyzes Islamic chaplaincy in higher educational settings, and the administrative rationales behind these programs.

“Translating Islamic Authority: Chaplaincy and Muslim Leadership Education in North American Protestant Seminaries” therefore builds on existing work on chaplaincy and spiritual care, especially with regard to Muslims in these fields. My focus on the education and training of such figures in Christian seminary settings, however, and my comparative focus on the United States and Canada, offers a distinctive contribution to the field. My focus on the educational process designates the intellectual productions of the students in question interestingly act as both primary and secondary resources for my study. Many of my respondents have written theses on the Islam, spiritual care, and leadership, thus simultaneously constructing and reflecting on the construction of the field of Muslim chaplaincy. Some examples include Master’s Theses of Hartford Seminary graduates, such as Mumina Kowalski’s “A New Profession: Muslim Chaplains in American Public Life” (Kowalski 2011), Amjad Tarsin’s “Commanding the Good & Forbidding Evil: Islamic Chaplaincy Through the Prophetic Model of Pastoral Care” (Tarsin 2012), or Bilal Ansari’s “The Foundations of Pastoral Care in Islam: Reviving the Pastoral Voice in Islamic Prison Chaplaincy” (B. Ansari 2011). I also refer to thesis of Emmanuel College student, Nazila Isgandarova: “Effective Islamic Spiritual Care: Foundations and Practices of Imams and Other Muslim Spiritual Caregivers” (Isgandarova 2011), as well as her published chapter in an edited volume on multifaith spiritual care, entitled “The Crescent of Compassionate Engagement: Theory and Practice

of Islamic Spiritual Care” (Isgandarova 2013). Graduates of Bayan Claremont have also produced theses, including Seyed Hadi Qazwini’s “An Islamic Perspective on Religious Exclusivism, Inclusivism, and Pluralism” (Ghazvini 2014). I therefore rely on the research produced by the students and graduates of the very programs I analyze with respect to the complexity inherent in these relations.

Research Methods: Observing Muslims in an Age of Surveillance

This project is the product of approximately fifteen months of ethnographic fieldwork conducted at three main research sites: Hartford Seminary (Hartford, Connecticut); Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto (Toronto, Ontario); and Bayan Claremont: Islamic Graduate School at Claremont School of Theology (Claremont, California). At each of these sites, I relied on anthropological methods, such as participant observation and in-depth interviewing, to conduct research on Muslim individuals and communities in interaction with members of other religious backgrounds, particularly Christians. I attempt to model the work of scholars such as Saba Mahmood (Mahmood 2005), Charles Hirschkind (Hirschkind 2006), Lila Abu-Lughod (Abu-Lughod 1986), Brinkley Messick (Messnick 1993), and Amira Mittermaier (Mittermaier 2010), who employ ethnographic methods to highlight the social production of meaning and authority in Muslim communities. The methods associated with these works, and with ethnographic fieldwork more generally thus focus on the ongoing discursive construction of subjectivity, the contestations and negotiations, making it easier to resist overgeneralizations and monolithic understandings of the communities

being researched, whether promoted from the inside or the outside. As such, ethnography proves a particularly valuable method in the study of contemporary Muslims and Islam.

I spent fifteen months divided at each of the seminaries and observed classes and relevant events, such as public lectures, movie screenings, and prayer services. In some cases, I was granted permission to sit in on faculty and advisory board meetings. I interviewed over eighty-five respondents, including students (current students and graduates), faculty members, seminary presidents, and advisors associated with each of the programs. Many of my interlocutors spoke with me on multiple occasions, and in the case of Emmanuel College, which had the smallest number of enrolled Muslim students, I was able to conduct several group interviews which included all enrolled in the Master's of Pastoral Studies, Islamic Stream, which afforded me the chance to learn more about the group dynamics of the Muslim student body. Interviews lasted anywhere from approximately thirty minutes to three hours, though the average interview length was one hour. While the majority of the people who spoke with me generally supported the programs in question, some did offer critical perspectives and suggestions for improvement. I did also interview several detractors and students who wished they had pursued different courses of study. In addition to participant observation and interviews, I analyzed programmatic curricula, texts, classroom materials, and intellectual productions, including student theses and faculty publications.

My Muslim interlocutors represent the diversity of North American Muslim communities, generally speaking. The Muslim students, professors, program creators, and board members with whom I spoke consisted of both immigrants to the United States and Canada (from places like Pakistan, Egypt, Syria, Guyana, Malaysia, Turkey, or Albania),

and North American-born Muslims. Some were born Muslims, while others were converts (or “reverts,” as many of them would explain) to Islam. The majority of these individuals were Sunni, although there was a substantial Shi`i constituency, as well. Several of my interlocutors identified as Sufi, or having Sufi-leanings. A small number of respondents identified with Warith Deen Mohammed communities. As a whole, my interlocutors ranged in age from approximately twenty to seventy. Some already worked as imams, matriculating in these programs for specialized training or official certification. Others were freshly out of college, still unsure of their future career paths. A number self-identified as “conservative” in their practice of Islam, while others described themselves as quite “liberal,” descriptors that I will unpack more throughout the pages that follow. In short, my respondents demonstrate the diversity of Muslim communities in the United States and Canada at large.

The complexity of studying Muslims after the events of September 11, 2001, is reflected Shabana Mir’s book, *Muslim American Women on Campus: Undergraduate Social Life and Identity*. Mir discusses the challenges of conducting fieldwork with communities who are not only politically scrutinized but literally under surveillance. A self-identified Muslim, she discloses, “Scrutinizing fellow Muslims in the post-9/11 atmosphere was unspeakably uncomfortable, both ethically and emotionally” (Mir 2014, 7). Outlining her research project, focused on Muslim women on college campuses post-9/11, Mir explains: “In the late summer of 2002, the memories of raids by FBI, customs, immigration, and law enforcement agents at local Muslim homes and offices were still fresh among prospective research participants when I visited the two campuses [Georgetown and George Washington University] for fieldwork” (Mir 2014, 16). This

political reality stands true in the case of most scholars performing anthropological research on North American Muslim communities. Sometimes the methodologies are disturbingly similar— both to the observer and the observed— to those of government and police surveillance. Such programs designed and executed by agencies like the FBI, NYPD, and NSA have been proven to specifically target American Muslims, normalizing a culture of scrutiny within North American Muslim communities. Perhaps more disquieting than the normalization of these practices, justified in the name of national security, is their overwhelming public support. Moustafa Bayoumi cites a Zogby poll, stating, “A troubling 42 percent [of Americans] believe that American Muslims should be profiled by law enforcement, and the same percentage questions their loyalty in government jobs” (Bayoumi 2014, 3). Given these facts on the ground, seemingly inoffensive methods, such as classroom observation, took on a thornier character. Anver Emon levels further critique against the ethnographic method:

The ethnographization of the Islamic or the Muslim reveals a representative liberal-cum-protestant mode of analysis. Representative, in that the views of individual subjects are generalized as applicable to a group. Liberal, in that the ethnographic subject, before being ethnographized, maps neatly onto the atomized rights-holder subjected to state law. Protestant, in that what counts as Islamic is what any given believer says or does, without references to an institutional or clerical authority (Emon 2015).

In spite of the above-mentioned challenges and critiques, I maintain that ethnographic fieldwork has much to offer the study of Islam and Muslims in the North American context. As a methodological approach, ethnography resists over-generalizations, and reveals the diversity and processes of negotiation that occur within the communities in which the researcher works. As mentioned above, these traits have the power to combat uncritical and stereotyped views of people and the profiling allied with surveillance.

Positionality

My position as both a researcher and practitioner of Islam not only distanced me from the “security” driven methods of the surveilling bodies mentioned above, but also generated questions for me, given the “classical” anthropological model of studying the “other.” Writing about the concept of indigenous autoethnography, Paul Whitnui reflects:

It wasn't long ago that the lone ethnographer rode into the sunset in search of his “Native.” After undergoing a series of trials, he encountered the objects of his quest in a distant land. There he underwent his rite of passage by enduring the ultimate ordeal of “field work.” After collecting the data, the lone ethnographer returned home and wrote a “true” account of the “culture” (Whitnui 2014, 467).

This study, like an increasing number of works in the field of anthropology, challenges the conception of ethnography happening elsewhere, involving an “objective” researcher writing about cultural others. The discipline of anthropology, as Lila Abu-Lughod comments, has been built on the “historically constructed divide between the West and the non-West. It has been and continues to be primarily the study of the non-Western other by the Western self, even if in its new guise it seeks explicitly to give voice to the Other or to present a dialogue between the self and other...” (Abu-Lughod 1991, 139). This work interrupts these definitions of anthropological fieldwork through its focus on communities in North America, and also due to my own positionality as researcher.

The social worlds of North American Muslims are hardly foreign or exotic for me as an American Muslim of Pakistani heritage. My fieldwork took place in what were, for me, very familiar settings- in Western institutions of higher education, in coffee shops, in masajid. My emic perspective (Headland, Pike and Harris 1990) was both valuable and challenging, giving me a degree of fluency in the language, references, and worlds of

North American Muslims, and the intimacy of trust that comes from relative belonging to a group. I ate with my respondents, prayed with them, and in some cases, stood with them as they expressed criticisms related to their programs. Nor did I wholly belong to my research communities, such that the divide between “self” and “other” were fully collapsed. Rather, I shared a general *habitus* with my interlocutors which both increased the level of familiarity and closeness that I achieved with my research subjects, but which also surely impacted my research in more complex ways.

For example, to professors and students, both Muslim and non-Muslim, the tight bonds and valued friendships that I forged with many of my student interlocutors cast me as just “another one of the Muslim students.” While I initially attempted to maintain some degree of critical distance as observer, I soon realized that this attempt at distance was impossible. When I tried to sit in the back of the classroom, for example, during a Context and Ministry class at Emmanuel College, the professor urged me to come and sit in the very front with the two other Muslim students, in a classroom otherwise filled with Christian students. In some senses, I had the advantage of getting to know my respondents better and had the opportunity to hear their more private thoughts in whispered comments during class sessions. Over time, however, this proximity also further complicated my identity in the field. I was called on to give answers posed by professors, to offer my opinion on various subjects (both as a Muslim and as a doctoral student in the field of Islam), and, on multiple occasions, was solicited to join the programs in question.

In some instances I felt particularly defensive and protective of the Muslim students, especially in situations where there might have been only one or two Muslim

voices in a class of twenty-five or more Christians, especially when a controversial topic, such as terrorism, came up. I saw on repeated occasions Muslim students put on the spot, clearly uncomfortable with feeling like they had to either define or defend Islam for the benefit of their Christian colleagues. At these moments, it was difficult to remain an observer, and I had to make a choice between remaining silent and interjecting. The Muslim students did not require me to “save” them from the situation at hand. And yet, I knew that simply adding more Muslim voices to the conversation would relieve the sole representative from the burden of speaking on behalf of the entirety of Islam. In these cases, I acutely felt the tension between my role as an academic observer and my role as an activist. In these cases, I usually retained a policy of non-interference, with an occasional added comment or observation at the end of a conversation or a class.

Finally, another difference between this work and more “traditional” ethnographic works is that in very material ways, my respondents are also my colleagues. We attend the same professional conferences, belong to some of the same scholarly circles, and sometimes share our work with one another for feedback. I have bumped into my respondents at the American Academy of Religion (AAR) conference, the American Anthropological Association (AAA) conference, as well as the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) conference. Some have attended my paper presentations and listened to my analyses of their programs. While early ethnographers rarely anticipated that those that they studied would have access to the research and writing produced about them—a reality again tied to the historical relationship between anthropology and colonialism—my research will be accessible to the communities I studied, a reality both exciting and nerve-wracking. Of ultimate importance to me is that my respondents have the power to

speak back to me about the scholarship I produce, to add their voices to this conversation, and to hold me accountable for my analysis of their words and experiences.

Dissertation Roadmap

Chapter One outlines the rationales for the establishment of the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont, affiliated with Claremont School of Theology. I explore the ideological and material reasons (both stated and implied) why these particular Protestant seminaries pursue educational partnership with Muslim communities. For the most part, the seminaries in question locate their motivations deep within their denominational histories, rather than simply a modern “trend,” pointing to a longstanding interest in ecumenism, generally speaking, or a particular interest in Muslim-Christian relations. Muslim participation in these programs consists of practical and ideological justifications as well, ranging from a lack of accredited Muslim institutions, to a firm commitment to interfaith partnership.

Chapter Two centers on the theoretical lens of translation. I argue that various processes of translation make multi-religious seminary education possible. Professors and students in these programs use translation to make theologies, curricula, and identities comprehensible to members of other faith traditions who do not often share the same religious, cultural, or literal languages. I examine the rationales and consequences of these process, in light of the work of translation theorists, including Lawrence Venuti and Talal Asad, particularly as they relate to issues of power. How are sameness and difference managed through translation? I argue here and in subsequent chapters that the

Protestant milieu in which religious and theological concepts are expressed shape the way in which Muslims frame and express themselves.

In Chapter Three, I consider various translations of space required by the formation of Muslim leadership programs at seminaries I research. Some of the issues examined include the alteration of the physical spaces on campus (encompassing art, architecture, aesthetics, functionality), the use of prayer to sacralize the classroom (and the conflicts that arise with the introduction of a new religious community into these spaces), as well as the creation of new intellectual spaces, in which Muslims view these seminaries as mitigating the perceived challenges of studying Islam either in the secular university or in more “traditional” settings. Throughout the chapter I analyze distinct approaches to “inclusivity” employed by each seminary, ranging from models of spatial neutrality to models of pluralism.

Chapter Four focuses on a major curricular “translation,” highlighting the centrality of spirituality in each of these programs, as it relates to the development of Muslim chaplaincy, counseling, and pastoral caregiving. The concept of “the spiritual” occupies an ideological and practical concern of these programs, with many of them requiring at least one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). Learning how to care for individual souls via pastoral/spiritual care is an essential skill for graduates of these programs. I examine how students and faculty translate and employ different discourses of spirituality— Christian, Sufi, and psychotherapeutic— to show the complicated ways in which the universalized concept of the spiritual justifies interfaith (and extrafaith) collaborations. Finally, I argue that the notion of the spiritual works in complicated ways with “the legal,” but that ultimately, Muslim chaplains, pastors, and counselors are

responsible for dealing with individual “spiritual” health, sometimes at the expense of legal “correctness.”

Finally, Chapter Five contends with translations of norms related to gender and religious authority. The establishment of these Muslim leadership programs is often situated in relation to the perceived failures of so-called “traditional” Muslim leadership in their navigation of concerns about gender. I focus specifically on debates I observed about the categorical construction of gendered identities, female religious authority, norms regarding modesty and gender interactions, as they arise in the context of the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan Claremont. The liberal Protestant environment in which these conversations occur further complicates each of these intrareligious debates about gender in Islam.

CHAPTER ONE: STUDYING ISLAMIC LEADERSHIP in PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN SEMINARIES

Field Note:

November 15, 2012: Emmanuel College

Voices in harmony, accompanied by piano. A hymn, maybe, during afternoon worship services in the chapel. I sit on the floor atop a prayer mat next to S., finishing up our prayer, mouths moving soundlessly, our silence broken only by the echoes of music filtering past the heavy wooden door of the small prayer room and the rustle of our clothes as we bend, prostrate, stand back up. I feel comforted by the soothing voices reverberating from the chapel and through the hallway, all the while feeling the strangeness of these juxtapositions. Stained glass, crosses, prayer mats, kneelers, Bibles, Qur'ans, Amens, Amins. They all seem to make sense together here.

Why educate Muslim leaders in Christian seminaries? This question remained mysteriously present and absent during my time in the field; those outside of the programs I research often raised this query, while those on the inside rarely expressed such a concern. Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Claremont School of Theology represent three theological schools with Protestant Christian affiliations or heritages pursuing educational partnerships with Muslim communities, offering coursework and training in Muslim leadership. This chapter explores the logics of these partnerships from the perspectives of both Christians and Muslims, and outlines the programs and degrees associated with these collaborations.

Representatives from the aforementioned seminaries contextualize their decisions to diversify their religious composition and community within their specific denominational histories and logics. Hartford, Emmanuel, and Claremont position themselves as “liberal Protestant” institutions, each with a longstanding general commitment to ecumenism or a specific interest in Muslim-Christian relations. In this way, the addition of Muslims in their educational enterprise, it is argued, expresses a

historical consistency and commitment to religious inclusivity and cooperation, in addition to an enduring interest in interfaith endeavors. At the same time, the less often discussed realities of decreased student enrollment and financial challenges in liberal Protestant Christian seminaries offer further insights regarding the incentives of diversifying seminaries' student bodies.

Muslims respondents, on the other hand, cite diverse rationales for their interest in the programs in question, which, like their Christian partners, range from the pragmatic to the ideological. These reasons include a lack of accredited Islamic seminaries, the chance to benefit from the expertise of firmly established North American Christian communities, and the prospect of working in interfaith settings in preparation for interfaith professions like chaplaincy. Students also describe these programs as offering the opportunity for Muslims to challenge the overwhelmingly negative stereotypes of Muslims to non-Muslim members of the community. Interestingly, some respondents also denote a preference for studying in non-Muslim settings due to various experiences of marginalization in mainstream Muslim communities.

I argue that multiple rationales— both ideological and practical— drive the involvement of both Christian and Muslim partners at the multifaith theological enterprises at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. The confluence of these diverse reasons constructs a complex relationship between Christianity and Islam. Whether those involved premise their collaboration on theological similarity between Christians and Muslims (and sometimes religious “others”), or simply the need for interfaith cooperation in a religiously plural world, the resultant partnership

constructs a cadre of religious leadership equipped to face what is perceived to be an increasingly secular North American society.

The Seminaries in Question

This project focuses on programs associated with three different seminaries: Hartford Seminary (Hartford, Connecticut), Emmanuel College of Victoria University in the University of Toronto (Toronto, Ontario), and Claremont School of Theology (Claremont, California). Each of these theological institutions possesses distinct reasons for undertaking these projects, and yet, these schools also share certain commonalities; firstly, these institutions bear a distinct Protestant Christian heritage. Although Hartford Seminary claimed “non-denominational” status in 1990, the institution is rooted in the Congregationalist tradition. Emmanuel College, which officially came into being in 1928, was established as a result of the formation of the United Church of Canada in 1925, the largest Protestant denomination in Canada. This denomination resulted from the merger of the Methodist Church of Canada, the Congregational Union of Canada, and a portion of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (History of The United Church of Canada n.d.). Lastly, Claremont School of Theology, originally founded in 1885 as the Maclay College of Theology in San Fernando, California, represents one of thirteen official theological schools of The United Methodist Church (About CST n.d.). The histories and legacies of Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Claremont School of Theology are therefore embedded in North American mainline³⁹ Protestant history. Most historians and

³⁹ Elesha J. Coffman explores the rise of the term “mainline,” to describe certain Protestant denominations, highlighting that the term usually points to the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church (USA), northern Baptist churches, the Congregational Church (now part of the United Church of Christ), the United

sociologists associate mainline denominations with ideals such as “liberalism, modernism, ecumenism, formal worship, and activism” (Coffman 2013, 5). David Hollinger describes some of the general characteristics of these Protestant denominations in the 20th century, noting that these highly influential groups were often seen in contrast to the burgeoning evangelical movement. Liberal Protestants, he explains, strove to accommodate Enlightenment thought and ideals with the teachings of Christianity in an attempt to understand “revelation” in light of “reason.” For example, issues such as Darwin’s theory of evolution and Higher Criticism remained at the fore of debates between mainline denominations and more conservative denominations (Hollinger 2013, 4).

Liberal Protestantism remained at the fore of American culture and society until the mid-20th century. “As late as the mid-1960s,” Hollinger explains, “membership in the classic ‘mainstream liberal’ denominations— Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and so on— reached an all time high” (Hollinger 2013, 4). At this point, however, most scholars associate these denominations with a story of decline, experiencing dramatic losses of numbers in their congregations, while evangelical churches continue to rapidly grow into the 21st century (Hollinger 2013, 18). The complexities of this declension are beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, these denominations’ tendency to focus on ideals such as social progressivism, ecumenism, and tolerance earned them the reputation of “diluting” the particularities of the Christian message (Hollinger 2013, xiv). Indeed, these foundational ideals, critics state, made it difficult to distinguish liberal Protestants in society from secular activists. Hollinger frames the issue:

Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Disciples of Christ, although some scholars add or subtract from this list. For more information, see: (Coffman 2013, 4).

Might this [focus] lead outside the faith, to a post-Protestant or post-Christian orientation, influenced by the Protestant tradition but defined by elements of the secular world? Ecumenical leaders had been railing against secularism throughout the 1940s and 1950s, advancing a more genuinely ecumenical Christianity as the only viable alternative to an increasingly secular world (Hollinger 2013, 28).

Ecumenism and activism are thus two important features of liberal Protestantism in North America that rely on the mobilization of “massive constituencies to address social evils” (Hollinger 2013, 22). The “liberalizing Protestants,” as Hollinger calls them, placed less importance on foreign missions and focused instead on social service. In addition, they prioritized ecumenical leadership to meet the challenges and realities of an increasingly pluralistic modernity. The results of this ecumenical focus included the establishment of the World Council of Churches⁴⁰ in 1948, and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.⁴¹ in 1950—movements that promote the goal of interdenominational Christian unity and cooperation.

I argue that while the 20th-century ecumenism and activism discussed above referred to cooperation across Christian denominations, the Muslim leadership programs established at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Claremont School of Theology indicate a continuity of these ideals, expanded to include members of non-Christian faiths. Interreligious partnership (in this specific case, Christian-Muslim partnerships) thus preserves the progressive Protestant ideals discussed above. Rather than fighting to maintain the relevance of Protestant Christianity alone, however, these partnerships

⁴⁰ Founded in 1948 in Amsterdam. This ecumenical organization, growing out of the context of World War I, promotes international unity of Christian denominations. “The World Council of Churches (WCC) is the broadest and most inclusive among the many organized expressions of the modern ecumenical movement, a movement whose goal is Christian unity.” For more information, see: (What is the World Council of Churches? n.d.).

⁴¹ The largest ecumenical body in the United States. An agency of Protestant, Anglican, and Eastern Orthodox denominations resulted from a merger of twelve national interdenominational agencies. The international counterpart of the National Council of Churches is the World Council of Churches.

indicate an interfaith effort to make space for religion, in general, in the aforementioned “increasingly secular world.”

Mainline Protestant Seminary Education in the 21st Century

“Our seminaries are dying and the Master of Divinity degree has been discredited,” writes Frederick Schmidt regarding North American Christian theological education. “A large number of mainline seminaries are selling their buildings and property, cutting faculty, and eliminating degree programs. Those that are not, are competing for a shrinking pool of prospective students and rely on scholarships and lower academic standards to attract the students that they do have (F. Schmidt 2001). This bleak assessment echoes reports published over the last several decades indicating lower student enrollments and decreasing full-time students at some North American Christian seminaries.⁴²

Theological seminaries have traditionally focused on vocational training for those in pursuit of religious ordination.⁴³ Following the Reformation, the goal of Protestant theological education was the production of an educated clergy. As George Marsden argues, “Protestantism promoted a well-educated clergy... The claims of the Reformers hinged on the interpretation of texts and on a science of textual interpretation sufficient to challenge church authority (Marsden 1994, 37-38). This general decline in mainline Protestantism has also impacted the status of the liberal Protestant seminary, which has

⁴² See: (B. Wheeler 2001); (Wheeler and Ruger 2013).

⁴³ Until the 19th century, most Protestant clergy received a liberal arts education in colleges such as Harvard, Yale or Princeton, followed by an apprenticeship of six months to a year. At that point, education of Protestant clergy moves away from the “liberal-arts-cum-apprenticeship” pattern to more specialized vocational education. According to B.J. Bledstein, most theological schools, apart from Roman Catholic institutions, followed these trends of professionalization (Bledstein 1976, 78).

forced many institutions to broaden their mission in recent times, especially following the 2008 economic recession, given the challenges of declining enrollments and high operating expenses. These realities are indeed complex, reflecting shifts in congregational life and religious leadership in Christian communities, a topic beyond the scope of this research. However, this situation nonetheless has raised questions about the relevance of theological education currently in North America.

Studies demonstrate that mainline Protestant seminaries are most affected by the aforementioned challenges in modernity, while evangelical schools and Roman Catholic seminaries generally experienced growth over the last twenty years.⁴⁴ As a result, many theological schools are exploring different methods in pursuit of sustainability. For example, new degree programs have led, in some cases, to increases in enrollment. In addition to offering the standard Master of Divinity degree, some seminaries have begun to offer a wide range of Master of Arts programs,⁴⁵ meant to prepare students for various types of ministry and religious leadership. Other methods include the establishment of part time programs, the inclusion of distance education programs, and recruitment of “nontraditional” students. A report issued by Auburn Theological Seminary states, “Fifty years ago, virtually all students studying for graduate ministry degrees in North America were white men who had recently graduated from college. Today, the average age is much higher; women are present in substantial numbers in most schools and are the

⁴⁴ The reality of growth and decline is of course complex, as even today, all religious groups, including evangelicals, are experiencing declining enrollment patterns. These complexities, which involve economic trends and shifts in higher education, in general, are beyond the scope of this dissertation. For more information, see: (Wheeler and Ruger 2013, 9).

⁴⁵ The ATS Reports, “Nearly two thirds (65 percent) of the 40 schools with double-digit percentage increases have recently implemented new degree programs or new delivery systems or both. The most popular new degree programs are the two-year professional MAs” (Tanner and Brown 2015).

majority in some; and racial and ethnic diversity has increased”⁴⁶ (B. Wheeler 2001, 1). These changes therefore indicate some potential solutions offered by Christian seminaries in the face of contemporary challenges, indicating for many involved the need to deeply examine the relevance of theological education in modern, secular societies. It is in this context that I situate the development of Muslim leadership education at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Claremont School of Theology. The motivations on the part of these Protestant Christian seminaries to expand their religious communities combine the practical, as well as the ideological, as I discuss below.

Christians and Muslims: The Logic of Partnership

Little Mosque on the Prairie,⁴⁷ a Canadian television sitcom created and written by Zarqa Nawaz, deals with the daily lives of Muslims in the fictional town of Mercy, Saskatchewan. The show regularly features storylines regarding the relationship of the newly arrived Torontonians imam, Amaar, and Reverend Duncan Magee, the priest of an Anglican Church that, owing to economic hardship, has been forced to rent out part of their church building as a mosque. This physical proximity provides Amaar and Reverend Magee the opportunity to share clerical advice and humorous bits of wisdom with each other, and illustrate points of commonality and divergence between the two religious communities. In the first episode of the series, Reverend McGee invites Amaar to attend church services: “Come to my Sunday sermon this week. I’m lucky if I can fill

⁴⁶ See also: (Wheeler and Ruger 2013, 11); (Shimron n.d.).

⁴⁷ *Little Mosque* debuted in 2007 on the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC), and ran until 2012. Aliaa Dakroury comments, “...this program is an important part of a conscious, progressive, public attempt to reconstruct Muslim representation within Canadian society by shifting it away from the exotic tales of *One Thousand and One Nights*, on the one hand, and from the stereotyping of Muslims as terrorist, on the other” (Dakroury 2012, 162).

the first two rows. It may have been God that said, “Let there be light,” but it’s me who pays the electric bill (Kennedy 2007).

This fictional scene mirrors the reality of some mainline Protestant Christian congregations and institutions in North America. The above section, focused on the creative approaches of some seminaries to remain both relevant and viable institutions in modernity. In this section, I ask, why do these seminaries intentionally partner with Muslim communities? In part, the Muslim-centered programming at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Claremont School of Theology reads as a practical way of dealing with such material challenges. However, the institutions in question also provide ideological rationales for these interfaith partnerships, referencing the history and theology of the denominations in question, thus demonstrating deep and complex motivations beyond material rationales. Each of these seminaries provides unique justifications based on their distinct histories. However, their shared liberal Protestant Christian heritage unites them in a general framework of ecumenism, expanded beyond Christian unity to include members of other faith traditions. The following sections explore each of the seminaries I researched in terms of their particular historical and theological rationales for establishing Muslim leadership programming in Protestant seminary settings.

As I demonstrate below, Hartford Seminary grounds its current interest in Muslim leadership in an enduring intellectual investment in Islam and Islamic Studies. Emmanuel College, frames its pursuit of such programming based on both a theological interest in healing past Christian-Muslim tensions, in addition to creating relationships amongst two of the largest religious populations in Toronto. Finally, Claremont School of Theology, in

an attempt to build an interreligious consortium known as Claremont Lincoln University, facilitated the creation of Bayan Claremont to act as the Muslim partner in this joint endeavor. While Claremont Lincoln University is no longer affiliated with Claremont School of Theology, the original intention involved the creation of a cadre of religiously literate leaders from various traditions skilled in interfaith engagement. The following section examines the three seminaries' specific investments in Muslim leadership programming in greater detail.

Hartford Seminary: Academic Legacies

The creation of the pastoral Union of Connecticut in 1833 indicated an effort train ministerial leadership for Congregationalist churches. Originally located in East Windsor Hill, Connecticut, this institution moved to Hartford in 1865 and was renamed the Theological Institute of Connecticut. Twenty years later, the institution was again renamed the Hartford Theological Seminary, and became a founding member of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS).⁴⁸ Since its inception, Hartford Seminary has shifted its academic focus several times, but as I repeatedly heard from various research participants during my fieldwork, the study of Islam represents an established institutional focus. As such, faculty and students frame the establishment of Islamic leadership programming, even within the confines of a seminary setting, as a natural progression. Willem A. Bijlefeld, former Professor of Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary, outlines the various stages of the development of Islamic programming at the school in his article, "A Century of Arabic and Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary"

⁴⁸ For more information, see: (Our History n.d.).

(Bijlefeld 1993). He argues that “Arabic and Islamic studies is the only academic field that has survived the many and often dramatic changes at Hartford Seminary over the past 100 years” (Bijlefeld 1993, 103). Focusing on the past century, Bijlefeld outlines three major stages in the Seminary’s development, the first lasting from 1892 until 1966, when Islam-related courses were offered through the “Muslim Lands” department. The establishment of Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary remains closely tied to the appointment of the Scottish Orientalist, Duncan Black Macdonald, as Instructor of Semitic Languages in 1892. After visiting Cairo in the early twentieth century, Macdonald was “shocked by the lack of understanding of Muslim life and culture that he encountered among missionaries [and] urged the Hartford Seminary Foundation to redress this deficiency” (Anderson 1998, 421). Appointed as head of the “Islamics” department, Macdonald mentored missionaries about Muslim culture through written correspondence, while he pursued textual study of “Islamic religious classics.”⁴⁹ Although Hebrew language instruction remained his initial focus, Macdonald also introduced Syriac and Arabic as electives. However, Bijlefeld portrays Macdonald’s interest in pioneering Arabic studies in a seminary environment as rather exceptional for his context; that is, he championed the inherent value of the language, rather than its utility as an auxiliary discipline of Old Testament exegesis:

Rather than justifying the study of Arabic at a theological school by making it into a ‘handmaid of [Christian] theology,’ as it 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 (Bijlefeld 1993, 103).

⁴⁹ One of Macdonald’s lifelong academic projects, for example, was a study of the *Arabian Nights*, “which he found a mine of information about traditional Muslim culture.” See: (Anderson 1998, 421).

Macdonald, in the historical memory of those associated with Hartford Seminary, thus strove to find space for Arabic Studies at the seminary in spite of the fact that such courses were not commonly considered a necessary element of Christian theological education. To this end, he writes in his “Autobiographical Notes,” that he utilized the missionary project to his advantage. He reflects: “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 [I discovered] that you could smuggle Muslim studies into a theological school under the guise of training missionaries” (Bijlefeld 1993, 105). While this quotation in no way dismisses the missionary enterprise outright, it does indicate the potential benefit Macdonald saw in aligning Arabic language study with the goals of Christian proselytization. For many of my interlocutors at Hartford Seminary, the stealthy attempt on the part of this intellectual forefather to “sneak in” Islamic Studies into a Christian seminary has much to say about the reason why such programming remains an institutional focus:

[Macdonald] aimed to cultivate a love of Islam in the hearts of missionaries, as well as an understanding of elements of Muslim faith and practice to which they could relate the biblical message. Without diminishing doctrinal differences, he urged Christians to cultivate spiritual friendship with Muslims in shared witness against the moral decadence of secular materialism (Anderson 1998, 421).

Macdonald is thus remembered as a sincere lover of Arabic and the study of Islam, as well as a rigorous academic, focused on the training of true scholars (Pirim 2010, 369), rather than simply a missionary fixated on proselytization. From 1966 until 1973, the History of Religions program served as the home of studies related to Islam. The Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations was

established in 1973, and since that time, it has been the center of Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary.

In addition to these academic programs, the study of Islam was also promoted at Hartford Seminary with the establishment of *The Muslim World*, a journal focused on Christian-Muslim relations, founded in 1911. Commenting on the nature of the journal, Duncan Black Macdonald acknowledges its missionary purpose, but further clarifies: “There are, however, many ways to be missionary...The periodical can also appeal to the great body of students of Islam, in East and West, in Islam itself and in Christendom, whose object is simply that of the historian and student of theology and philosophy, who is irked by ignorance of any kind and seeks to abate it” (Bijlefeld 2010, 539). In a special issue of the *Muslim World*, commemorating the 100th anniversary of the journal, President Heidi Hadsell explains: “Hartford Seminary is an institution that sees itself as informed by and contributing to dialogue and peace building between our religious traditions. *The Muslim World* is an important part of this effort, as it pertains to encouraging research and spreading knowledge about diverse aspects of Islam, and as it invites Muslims into other shared conversations” (Hadsell 2010, 367).

Those involved in the creation of a program in Islamic Chaplaincy view its development as a logical evolution in Hartford Seminary’s history. The hiring of Ingrid Mattson in 1998 as Professor of Islamic Studies spurred the establishment of the program, which was inspired both by local figures in the Muslim community in New England, including leaders in both immigrant and African American mosques who were aware of Hartford Seminary’s longstanding interest in Islam, as well as individuals volunteering or working in the field of chaplaincy in the prison system. One of the

driving forces of the program, however, was the need for qualified Muslim chaplains in the American military. Qaseem A. Uqdah, affiliated with the American Muslim Armed Forces and Veteran Affairs Council— a certifying agency that recommends Muslim chaplain candidates to the Pentagon— contacted the aforementioned local Muslim leaders and communicated a demand for institutionally vetted Muslim chaplains.

Conversations regarding the establishment of a Muslim leadership program at Hartford Seminary therefore occurred within the context of a need to establish a certified and accredited Muslim chaplaincy program recognized by federal agencies, particularly in the wake of the events of 9/11 and increasing concerns about Islamic “radicalism.” The program launched officially in 2000, becoming the first accredited program for Muslim chaplains in the United States, offering a 72-credit Master of Arts in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations,⁵⁰ as well as a Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy.⁵¹

Interestingly, Mattson explains the significance of the program’s establishment not only in the context of Hartford Seminary, specifically, but in shaping the field of Muslim chaplaincy at large. She states:

When we started, we were not only starting a program. We were really trying to help create this field of chaplaincy. There’d already been [Muslim] chaplains, but there was no literature. There was nothing. And one of the things I’ve told my students, and directed them to do in the Master’s projects is to do things that could be published, that would contribute to the field. That will build a field of Islamic chaplaincy. That means writing, documenting, it means working with colleagues. It means establishing professional associations...It means that they need to also... be very entrepreneurial. There was not a huge demand for chaplains when this program started. We, you know, used certain, you know...we thought very deeply

⁵⁰ Since conducting this fieldwork, Hartford Seminary has added a Ph.D. in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim relations, due to begin in the fall of 2016. For more information, see: (Hartford Seminary Adds Ph.D. to its Degree Offerings n.d.).

⁵¹ For program details, see Appendix A.

about the way to...increase the demand, and we worked on that. And you know, negotiated with institutions, and found ways to help them see that there's a need.

Mattson thus highlights the intellectual contributions of the students at Hartford Seminary in influencing the profession, encouraging them as pioneers in the field to document the process and contribute to an emergent form of Muslim leadership in North America.

Emmanuel College: Transformative Encounters

As the above section indicates, the Muslim leadership programming at Hartford Seminary grew out of an enduring institutional investment in the study of Muslim-Christian relations, in addition to the need for endorsed Muslim chaplains, particularly in the United States Army. The Muslim Studies program at Emmanuel College, a United Church of Canada seminary founded in 1928, arose out of a very different set of circumstances. In fact, the program originated in the collaboration between two doctoral students at the University of Toronto, Susan Kennel Harrison and Nevin Reda. Kennel Harrison, a Mennonite Christian studying at Emmanuel College, and Reda, a Muslim studying at the University of Toronto, met during an extra-curricular seminar called "Reading Abrahamic Scriptures Together" (RAST)⁵² The two had many conversations about their respective religious traditions, including critiques of existing religious leadership.

⁵² Reading Abrahamic Scriptures Together (RAST) is described as a facilitated seminar open to anyone with an interest in "studying Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scriptures. Participants come from all religious and academic backgrounds to participate in a close reading of scripture that opens up new conversations and discovers interesting relationships across the three faiths." Website: (Reading Abrahamic Scriptures Together (RAST) n.d.). Kennel Harrison and Reda acted for a period of time as the Christian and Muslim (respectively) facilitators of RAST, along with Shari Golberg, who acted as the Jewish facilitator.

“The Emmanuel Program came out of a friendship [between] Nevin and I,” Kennell Harrison explains to me. The two colleagues and friends conversed at length about their personal religious views, and specifically about Christian and Muslim leadership. Reda, in particular, had an intensely negative experience with Muslim leaders at a masjid in Mississauga, outlined in greater detail in Chapter Five of this project. Kennell Harrison states, “It was in this context that I said to Nevin, ‘Well, [Emmanuel] already [has] these courses that are training Christian pastors to do this [work]. There’s no reason why imams couldn’t sit in and get this training” (Harrison 2012). In spite of the fact that the religious leaders in question were not Christian, Kennell-Harrison and Reda agreed that one of the main problems was a lack of professional development, and an absence of understanding of the Canadian context, two issues that could be facilitated at a seminary like Emmanuel College.

Kennell Harrison and Reda decided to approach the director of the Toronto School of Theology (TST), Alan Hayes, about the possibility of creating a leadership program for Muslims. The team spent two years in conversations with various potential stakeholders, including members of the TST, and organizations linked to the Toronto Muslim community,⁵³ such as the Canadian Council of Imams (CCI). After this period, Reda and a local Muslim chaplain and member of the Canadian Council of Imams (CCI), Shaykh Habeeb Alli, made a presentation to the TST board, arguing both the need for such a program and for the Toronto School of Theology as a potential programmatic home.

⁵³ For example, the Canadian Council of Imams. CCMW.

While there were many supporters for the Muslim leadership programming, there were also a number of detractors, coming from both the Christian and Muslim communities involved. Kennell Harrison recalls, “Some of the Toronto School of Theology schools were like, ‘Over our dead bodies will we have Muslims here. The only reason to relate to them is to convert them.’ They were that blunt about it at that meeting” (Harrison 2012). Reda mentions that a degree of pushback came from parts of the Toronto Muslim community as well. Although the Canadian Council of Imams generally supported the creation of this programming at Emmanuel, as evidenced by the involvement and cooperation of members such as Habeeb Alli, Reda and Kennell Harrison also recount an incident during a presentation given to the board of TST that involved another CCI member, Imam Hamid Slimi. During this presentation, Slimi, himself a scholar and teacher at another Islamic educational institution in Toronto, the Islamic Institute of Toronto (IIT),⁵⁴ surprised both Reda and Kennell Harrison during the presentation by challenging important aspects of the intended program, such as curriculum and faculty. Reda comments, “He wanted all the work that we had done— the curriculum, all of our involvement— to be put aside, and basically, he would take over” (Reda 2012), (Harrison 2012). Kennell Harrison chimes in: “And it would be his program. CCI would set the curriculum.” Kennell Harrison remarks that after the presentation she left the room and started to cry. “We had brought this program [to them], and they were essentially saying that it had no business being ours, because we were women.” Looking at Nevin, she adds, “*You* certainly heard it that way.” With a nod from

⁵⁴ The Islamic Institute of Toronto, established in 1996, is an unaccredited non-profit, educational institute that offers classes on “traditional” Islamic sciences. The website of the IIT states, “The IIT’s mission is to nurture and establish Islam as a living reality in the lives of Muslims and to enhance the Islamic identity in society at large. The IIT’s curriculum includes: Islamic faith and jurisprudence; Fiqh; Qur’anic Studies; Islamic History; Arabic Language” (About Us n.d.).

her colleague, she continues: “The other thing that was insinuated, that I reacted to, was this assumption that the Christians were offering this space because they were going to...they had a colonialistic...That they were going to determine what kind of Islam could be developed in Canada. He [Slimi] was inferring this kind of colonialist thing.”

The above incidents shed light on various struggles to claim authority in the context of shaping the Muslim leadership programming at Emmanuel. While Reda and Kennell Harrison viewed the project as a labor of love, both view that Slimi’s actions during the presentation to the TST as an attempt to coopt the program and undermine their authority in outlining major goals and constructing curriculum. Kennell Harrison and Reda read this challenge as rooted in their identities as women, and also in the fear of Emmanuel’s investment in the program as a “colonizing” effort, or the belief that the Christian stakeholders were solely motivated to offer this training in Islamic leadership to exert power on the shaping of Muslim ideals of leadership. In this case, the accusation, according to Kennell Harrison and Reda, ignores the fact that the inception of the program as the product of genuine interfaith collaboration and friendship, meant to meet the needs of the Canadian Muslim populace.

In spite of this opposition, the TST board and the Muslim stakeholders came to agree upon the potential benefit of the creation of a Muslim Studies program, and Emmanuel College became the frontrunner in hosting this program. In 2008, Mark Toulouse became president of Emmanuel, and according to Kennel Harrison, “he was really interested in it, and officially extended the invitation [although] it had already been a couple of years in processing” (Harrison 2012). Toulouse undertook the development of the project with great enthusiasm. Emmanuel College announced the creation of the

Muslim Studies program in 2010, which consisted both of a continuing education component, originally aimed at supplementing the education of imams and other community leaders, in addition to an academic component geared at the training of Muslim chaplains. Another result of these changes was the establishment of a professorship of Muslim Studies, “so that a full-time Muslim presence within the academic community at Emmanuel [would] serve to undergird and guide the development of the Muslim Studies program...” (Toulouse 2009, 7). The year 2011 marked the first “official” year of programming for the Master of Pastoral Studies: Muslim Studies, a twenty-credit program that allowed Muslim students the option of specializing in a “Social Service” stream, or a “Spiritual Care” stream.⁵⁵

While Reda and Kennell Harrison laid the foundation for the Muslim Studies program, President Toulouse underscored the ideological justification for its existence at Emmanuel College. An article written by Toulouse entitled, “Muslim Studies in a Christian Theological School: The Muslim Studies Program at Emmanuel College in Toronto,” explains various reasons for the pursuit of this project at a historically Christian seminary, citing several primary rationales: intellectual, demographic, and theological. He first references the figure of Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Canadian historian of religion and scholar of Islam, as a historical forerunner to the Muslim Studies program. Smith,⁵⁶ a renowned scholar of comparative religion, and ordained minister in the United Church of Canada, held many prestigious posts during his career,⁵⁷ but after his retirement from

⁵⁵ For program details, see Appendix B.

⁵⁶ 1916-2000.

⁵⁷ Including the Birks Professor of Comparative Religion at McGill University; Director of McGill’s Institute of Islamic Studies; Director of the Center for the study of World Religions at Harvard University, and the coordinator of the doctoral program in the field of Comparative Religion; McCulloch Professor of

Harvard, he returned to his hometown of Toronto and served as the Senior Research Associate in the Faculty of Divinity at Trinity College, University of Toronto (Hospital 2000, 199). Trinity College, as part of the Toronto School of Theology, is part of a federation of seven colleges that represent different Church traditions, including the United Church of Canada-affiliated Emmanuel College.⁵⁸ Toulouse mentions Smith as representative of the scholarly history of the United Church of Canada:

The initiative in Muslim Studies is...in keeping with the history of scholarship within the United Church of Canada. Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1916-2000), a well-known scholar dealing with the history of religion, a minister within the United Church of Canada, and a member of the Emmanuel College Council during his retirement days in Toronto, spent his entire career, at both McGill and Harvard, dedicated to conversation between Christians and Muslims (Toulouse 2012, 245).

The logic of hosting a Muslim studies program at Emmanuel College, according to Toulouse, remains in line with the comparative approach advocated by Smith, who was both a faculty member at TST and minister in the United Church of Canada. Smith's comparative interest is embedded in the reality of religious pluralism and the encounter of faiths in modernity. He states, "No longer are people of other persuasions peripheral or distant...The more alert we are, and the more involved in life, the more we are finding that they are our neighbors...Confucians and Hindus, Buddhists and Muslims, are with us not only in the United Nations, but down the street" (W. C. Smith 1963, 11). To know a

Religion at Dalhousie University; and Harvard Professor of the Comparative History of Religion, where he also supervised the development of an undergraduate program in religion within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

⁵⁸ The other colleges that comprise the above-mentioned federation include Knox College (Presbyterian); Regis College (Roman Catholic, Jesuit); St. Augustine's (Roman Catholic, Archdiocese of Toronto); St. Michael's (Roman Catholic, Basilian); and Wycliffe College (Anglican, Evangelical).

religion, then, requires contact with religious “others,” and both an intellectual and emotional investment in other human beings.

Acknowledging the ever-increasing religious plurality of Canada, the United Church of Canada reiterates Smith’s vision of the cultivation of interfaith relationships in its 2004 document, “That We May Know Each Other: United Church-Muslim Relations Today” (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004) which, as the title indicates, focuses specifically on the relationship between the United Church and Muslim communities. The title of this document comes from the forty-ninth chapter of the Qur’an, *Surat al-Hujurat*, in which God discloses the divine purpose behind the creation of “tribal” differences:

O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other)). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things) (Qur’an 49:13).

Entitling this document with a phrase from the Qur’an, one that signals divine purpose in the creation of human differences, reaffirms the larger purpose of this document: to explore the relationship between the United Church of Canada and Islam. This goal was set forth at the 36th General Council of the United Church of Canada in 1997, which initially authorized a study on United Church-Jewish relationships. The Sessional Committee recommended that similar studies be conducted with other faith traditions, most importantly, Islam and what is referred to as “Aboriginal spirituality.” The United Church’s relationships with Judaism, Islam, and the First Nations of Canada were decided to be “foundational to the United Church of Canada’s theological understanding of the world’s religious diversity” (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations

2004, v), with each tradition representing a relationship that required “mending,” for various historical and theological reasons. The resulting document was drafted by the Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations of Justice, Global, and Ecumenical Relations Unit (ICIF) of the United Church of Canada, in consultation with various Muslim Canadian individuals and organizations (all of which are listed in the document’s acknowledgments section) (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, v).

“That We May Know Each Other,” a document explicitly referenced by President Toulouse as another source justifying the Muslim Studies Program at Emmanuel College, explains the United Church’s particular motivation for committing to an improved relationship with Islam: “Islam...confronts us with the meaning of a later revelation and the question of differing interpretations of core faith stories. We are ‘cousins’ joined together through the lineages of Isaac and Ishmael. As such, we need to know each other better” (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, v). It is true that the Islamic tradition represents a “later revelation,” and that at times its authoritative texts and traditions challenge both the message and the finality of Christianity. However, the UCC document argues that rather than these differences necessitating an oppositional relationship, the common roots of Christianity and Islam, manifested in the belief in Abraham as the common progenitor of both traditions, validates the pursuit of a closer relationship with the religious other.

Beyond this belief in a common “origin,” however, the United Church of Canada document argues that the creation of a sincere and long-lasting partnership between Christians and Muslims requires that Christians both accept Muslims “on their own

terms,” and affirm the theological legitimacy of Islam in its own right. The legitimacy of Islam thus requires an understanding of what the religion means to Muslims themselves:

This document suggests that the church must encourage its membership to grow in understanding Muslims as they would wish to be understood. But we must also be about searching for new ways of theologically understanding Islam and its relationship with Christianity, new ways of affirming, in the words of a United Church statement from 1966, that ‘God is creatively and redemptively at work’ within Islam. It is through creating such theological acceptance that we believe it will be possible to sustain long-term mutual relationships of respect, trust, and common action for the sake of the world we all inhabit (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, 4).

Sustainable partnerships between Christians and Muslims are made possible through knowledge and understanding of the religious other, and the acknowledgement of the theological legitimacy of non-Christian traditions.⁵⁹ This affirmation contests an exclusivist position to religion,⁶⁰ which requires an unequivocal commitment to Jesus Christ in order to achieve salvation, arguing instead that the belief that God “cannot be

⁵⁹ The explicit acceptance of the distinctive elements of Islam, such as the Qur’an or the prophecy of Muhammad, contrasts with interfaith documents from other branches of Christianity. The Catholic Church document, *Nostra Aetate*, or the “Declaration on the Relation of the Church With Non-Christian Religions,” which passed in 1965 during the 21st global ecumenical council, upholds the unity of the origins of all people. The document states: “The Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in [other] religions,” mentioning specifically that “The Church regards with esteem also the Moslems [*sic*]. They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all-powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to men; they take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God. Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet. They also honor Mary, His virgin Mother; at times they even call on her with devotion. In addition, they await the day of judgment when God will render their deserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead. Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.” While Islam and Muslims are thus given a place of “esteem,” it is only in their points of similarity with Catholicism that they are granted this regard. There is no mention of the unique elements of Islam in the document.

⁶⁰ “That We May Know Each Other” outlines four different ways in which Christianity may be seen in view of other religions: exclusivist, inclusivist, pluralist, and transformationist. The exclusivist approach maintains that the “only path to God and salvation is an explicit confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.” Inclusivist approaches maintain that while the world is reconciled through Jesus Christ, “there is room for salvation of those who make no explicit profession of faith in Christ.” Pluralist approaches acknowledge that “there are many paths to God,” while transformationist approaches argue that “respectful dialogue and mutual learning may lead to transformation for all participants [and that the] Christian faith may be transformed by such encounters in ways that we cannot imagine” (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, 6).

contained within one culture or tradition” (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, 7). Christians must humbly acknowledge the possibility that “there is more than one religious path or tradition in and through which God has chosen to reveal God’s self” (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, 7), leaving space for belief in Islam as a valid religious path to salvation.

According to “That We May Know Each Other,” the partnering of Muslims and Christians, so-called spiritual “cousins,” potentially benefits the world in many ways, given that members of both religions comprise over half of the global population (Toulouse 2012, 236). “We are challenged to explore new ways of understanding each other for the sake of the well-being of our world.” This productive partnership is discussed at length in President Toulouse’s aforementioned article. Toulouse argues that religion shapes worldviews, and has the power to potentially create global conflict. Given that approximately fifty-four per cent of the global population is either Christian or Muslim, particular effort should be made to create conversation between adherents of these two respective religions (Toulouse 2012, 236). These intentional dialogues, based on worldwide demographics, presumably create a foundation of cooperation between the traditions, diminishing the possibility of inter-religious violence. The Canadian city of Toronto, he posits, which boasts a large and diverse Muslim community, represents an ideal location to cultivate such conversations.⁶¹

⁶¹ Toulouse provides information concerning these demographics in detail. Ontario contains approximately 61 percent of the Canadian population of Muslims. Nearly 6 per cent of the entire population of Toronto is Muslim, “making Toronto the city with the highest percentage of Muslims anywhere in North America” (Toulouse 2012, 241). All the same, Canadian acceptance of Islam and Muslims is still relatively low.

Beyond a question of demographics, however, the establishment of Muslim Studies at Emmanuel, according to Toulouse, is a “theological undertaking” for those at Emmanuel College. He writes,

The program at Emmanuel...seeks to bring Christians and Muslims together for theological discussion in a space dedicated to a respectful airing of unique truth claims arising from different meanings found within human experiences of religious faith. All persons of faith are prone to deifying their own notions of God. The study of religion, whether our own or that of others, helps us to understand ourselves. When critically examined, the study of religion enables us to expose the cultural attitudes that affect both how and what we believe. In other words, only through dialogue with others who think quite differently from the way we do can we escape our own cultural perceptions and inclinations and rethink our beliefs about God and the impact those beliefs have for both the meaning and activities that we attach to our lives (Toulouse 2012, 247).

The differences that mark Christianity and Islam as distinct religious traditions, according to Toulouse, are productive means by which one can understand their own positionality more deeply. At the same time, this dialogue prevents one from “deifying” their perspectives, learning from and through the other. Thus, although the spiritual and familial “relationship” between Islam and Christianity, vindicates Muslim-Christian partnership, simultaneously, Toulouse proposes that their distinctiveness is equally valuable in the pedagogical process. Encounter both “mitigate[s] student religious illiteracy about not only other traditions, but their own as well” (Toulouse 2012, 245), compelling all parties to have a deeper understanding of their and others’ religions.

Moreover, in addition to combatting religious illiteracy, interfaith encounters, potentially produce transformations in an individual’s sense of religious self, but also render possible larger-scale revolutions. That is, Christianity, as a whole, is a “constantly evolving expression of faith” (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, 6), and conscious dialogue with Muslims could theoretically contribute to this

evolution. The humility required of being open to this transformation-through-the-other acknowledges a “postmodern” claim that no one religion can “capture the essence of truth” (Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, 7).

The multiple rationales outlined above by Toulouse justify Emmanuel College as the logical home for Reda and Kennell Harrison’s vision for an accredited Canadian Muslim leadership program. As was the case with Hartford Seminary above, the practical tools available for aspiring religious leaders at Emmanuel coupled with the ideological framing of the beneficial partnership between Muslims and Christians serve as the institutional explanation for the establishment of the programs in question.

Claremont School of Theology: “Thy walls shall be sliding doors and thy Classrooms freeways...”⁶²

Claremont School of Theology (CST), initially known as Maclay School of Theology, was named after founder and California state senator, Charles Maclay. The seminary was established in 1885 in San Fernando, California as a Methodist institution. From the years 1900 to 1956, the college moved to the campus of the University of Southern California (USC) in Los Angeles, which was at that time affiliated with the Methodist Church, but in 1956, as USC distanced itself from its Methodist origins, the University of Southern California School of Religion (as it was then called) became an independent corporation, moving once more in 1957 to its present location in Claremont, California (Mission and History n.d.). The college became a member of the American Association of Theological Schools and was fully accredited in 1946. Like the previous

⁶² From the South California School of Theology at Claremont (now Claremont School of Theology)’s “Ten Commandments for a Theological School” (Colwell 1958).

institutions, while Claremont School of Theology was rooted in the specific denominational framework of the Methodist Church, it was also intended to be “interdenominational and ecumenical in spirit, personnel, and outreach” (Colwell 1958, 13). Indeed, the 1958 bulletin of the seminary boasted: “[The school] has prepared ministers and teachers not only for The Methodist Church but for more than twenty other denominations and its faculty and staff is drawn from eight denominations and some eighteen theological seminaries” (Colwell 1958, 13). Subsequent bulletins indicated that this openness extended past Christian ecumenism, and led to the hiring of Jewish faculty as well.

The ecumenical vision of the United Methodist Church, impressed upon the character of Claremont School of Theology, expanded to include an interreligious focus. *The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church* (The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church 2012), a document published after each General Conference since 1968, states the “policy of the United Methodist Church on many current social issues and concerns” (The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church 2012). In the 1980s, *The Book of Resolutions* included discussions guidelines for interreligious relationships,⁶³ using the language of “neighborliness” to justify these encounters:

Scripture gives us many images of neighborliness which extends across conventional boundaries... Today, our Lord’s call to neighborliness (Luke 10:27) includes the ‘strangers’ of other faith traditions who live in our towns and cities... What does it mean to be a neighbor? It means to meet other persons, to know them, to relate to them, to respect them, and to learn about their ways which may be quite different from our own. It means to create a sense of community in our neighborhoods, towns and cities and to make them places in which the unique customs of each group can be expressed and their values protected. It means to create social structures in which there is justice for all and that everyone can

⁶³ These revisions were revised once in 2000 and again in 2008.

participate in shaping their life together ‘in community.’ Each race or group of people is not only allowed to be who they are, but their way of life is also valued and given full expression (Resolution 3141).

Neighborliness is thus required to establish communities in religiously diverse societies.

At the same time, these relationships are not meant to contradict Biblical callings to “witness” Christian faith. In fact, to perform this obligation properly, one *must* commit to building strong interfaith relationships; witnessing requires bridge building, a process that occurs via dialogue. “Dialogue at its most profound level is an exchange of witness...[It] is a demanding process, requiring thorough understanding of one’s own faith and clear articulation of it to the other person. It asks that we ‘translate’ our perspectives to one another with integrity...Dialogue is not a betrayal of witness” (Resolution 3141).

Interfaith relations are thus advocated in the United Methodist church, for the purpose of mutual enrichment, which, when done sincerely, assists in the process of to “witness[ing] and [being] witnessed to” (Resolution 3141).

Jerry Campbell, sixth president of Claremont School of Theology⁶⁴ came into his presidency during a particularly challenging time in the seminary’s history. Indeed, the school was on the verge of losing its accreditation, and was also facing daunting financial issues (Woods 2012). Soon after his appointment, Campbell began discussions with relevant parties concerning plans for an “interreligious” university, which was officially announced on May 16, 2011, and referred to as “The University Project.” This venture was made possible by a fifty million dollar donation from David Lincoln, a Claremont trustee, and his wife, Joan. The Lincoln’s vision was to create a multifaith university based on the tenets of “the Golden Rule” (The United Methodist Church n.d.).

⁶⁴ Beginning in 2006. Campbell was a trustee of the school since the year 2003.

Eventually, The University Project adopted the name, “Claremont-Lincoln University,” (CLU) and created institutional relationships between Christian, Jewish, and Muslim partners: Claremont School of Theology, the Academy for Jewish Religion, California, (AJR) a non-denominational rabbinical school, and a nascent Islamic seminary (later named “Bayan College), tied to the Islamic Center of Southern California (ICSC). Two representatives from each of these institutions were invited to join an initial board of six persons to build CLU from the ground up, in dialogue with each other.

In these early stages, those involved in the formulation of Claremont-Lincoln University envisioned a model of “de-segregated” theological education where each autonomous “home” institution- CST, AJR, and Bayan- would train students in their own faith traditions. At CLU, which would bear mutual “ownership” by members of the participating religious communities, students from different religious backgrounds would focus together on interfaith education and conflict resolution training. When addressing these developments in a 2009 convocation address, President Campbell explains, “...We inherited our new vision, at least in part, from the spirit of John Wesley and United Methodism. Indeed, one can find the seed of our new vision in United Methodist Social Principles” (Campbell 2009). There are many reasons, he articulates, for CST to move from a multi-denominational seminary to an interfaith university. He mentions one specifically, citing an “urgent need to transform religion from being a frequent cause of conflict often with the threat of destroying the world to becoming a means of healing conflict and beginning to repair the world” (Campbell 2009). Like Emmanuel College President, Mark Toulouse, President Campbell thus references global conflict and violence rooted in religion as a motivation for the pursuit of interfaith partnerships.

Former Provost and Executive Vice President of Claremont Lincoln University, Philip Clayton clarifies the vision of CLU in contrast to previous models of interreligious dialogue:

The real change from interreligious dialogue in previous years, which has been text-oriented or theology oriented, and often very abstract and not relevant to practice, is that we're about building partnerships that can *do* something in the world. So the university will interface with leaders in communities, in countries, internationally, with NGOs, and the idea will be to work with secular leaders, and to show what is the value added of interreligious partnerships (Clayton 2011).

Thus, for the founders of CLU, the importance of the model of interreligious education rests on not only in intellectual curiosity and scriptural or theological comparison but on joint activism, particularly given the various problems of religiously-motivated conflict on a global scale. Worldwide interfaith cooperation, according to this vision, requires religious leaders to be trained to deal with other religious traditions, and the establishment of partnerships in these educational settings thus creates networks for future collaboration.

Claremont Lincoln was not the first theological school interested in interfaith partnerships at an institutional level. In New York City, for example, Union Theological Seminary and the Jewish Theological seminary allow students from either seminary to take courses offered at the other institution. In Massachusetts, a similar arrangement exists between students at Andover Newton Theological School and Hebrew College. Graduate Theological Union (GTU) in Berkeley, California, offers Master's degrees in Interreligious Studies, allowing students to take courses at the various religiously affiliated institutions associated with the union.⁶⁵ However, the uniqueness of CLU,

⁶⁵ Including the American Baptist Seminary of the West (American Baptist Churches USA and Progressive National Baptist Convention), Church Divinity School of the Pacific (Episcopal Church), Dominican

according to its founders, remains the equality of ownership felt by each participating partner. Philip Clayton explains, “Claremont Lincoln is the first institution that is fully owned by all three different religious traditions in an equal manner, and has been built from the ground up as a place where partnerships are developed” (Clayton 2011).

Furthermore, the rationale behind this de-segregated model of theological education rests in a humanist desire to better the world. Campbell, discussing David Lincoln’s overall vision, felt that individual religious traditions were paying “too much attention to theology, and not enough attention to how we get along with our fellow human beings” (Sataline 2012). In contrast, the point of theological education at CLU is not simply to train religious leaders within their individual faith frameworks, but to build coalitions to make the world a better place.

While Claremont School of Theology and the Academy of Jewish Religion existed prior to the founding of CLU, there was no standing Muslim institutional partner. Therefore, the creation of CLU prompted the establishment of an Islamic seminary. Campbell initiated discussions with leadership of the Islamic Center of Southern California (ICSC), now the largest Islamic institution in Southern California, which was instituted in 1953. The ICSC, known for its congregational diversity and for its foundational ideals of “equality and inclusion” (O’Donnell 2006, 125), also had a reputation for its “academic” approach to Islam. Jihad Turk, the Religious Director of the ICSC explains: “Academia is my interest, and having served as the director of the Islamic Center for a number of years, I felt that the Islamic Center was a substantial enough

School of Philosophy & Theology (Roman Catholic Church), Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University (Roman Catholic Church), Pacific Lutheran theological Seminary (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), Pacific School of Religion (Multidenominational), San Francisco Theological Seminary (Presbyterian Church (USA)), and Starr King School for the Ministry (Unitarian Universalist Association). For more information, see: (Member Schools n.d.).

institution, and intellectually grounded, and well-positioned to *create* [a seminary]- and that [the founding of CLU] might be the impetus for us doing so” (Turk 2013). The resulting school, named Bayan College, the described by Turk as the “first Islamic Seminary in the United States” (Turk 2015), was to be incubated under Claremont Lincoln University, which in turn was being incubated by Claremont School of Theology. Turk, who became the first Dean of Bayan College, highlights that one of the most crucial characteristics of CLU is its mutual ownership. Although Claremont School of Theology remains at the center of the project, he clarifies:

It’s not a Christian institution that has some Jewish and Muslim aspects. Claremont Lincoln University is completely, equally co-owned... We have complete equality in governance of this institution and in ownership in the institution... That’s [our] brand, to do interreligious studies, in theory and practice (Turk 2013).

As such, Turk distinguishes CLU as an institution representing a unique model of co-ownership, although accreditation and financial support is yet rooted in Claremont School of Theology. Furthermore, the purpose of interfaith collaboration remains community engagement on a local and global scale, rather than a purely intellectual endeavor.

While the initial institutional partnerships at CLU consist of “Abrahamic” traditions, the vision is not limited to these religions. The initial cohorts of students at CLU included Buddhists, agnostics, Catholics, practitioners of Native American spiritual traditions, and Pentecostals, amongst others, and the long-term vision involved the inclusion of other “world religions,” as well. Although Hartford Seminary and Emmanuel College have particular justifications for Christian-Muslim partnerships,⁶⁶ those involved

⁶⁶ It is worth noting that in recent years, Hartford Seminary also introduced a “Building Abrahamic Partnerships” program geared towards Jews, Christians, and Muslims. Dr. Yehezkel Landau, hired in 2002, became the first chair of the Abrahamic Partnerships program at Hartford Seminary, signaling a step

in the planning of CLU envision a more pluralistic partnership. “This will include Eastern traditions as well,” explains Clayton. “I know it sounds huge, even grandiose, but our goal is, as the Jews say, *Tikkun Olam*, to heal the world. To repair the world. And that is our calling” (Clayton 2011). The healing of the world, a need resulting from religiously rooted global conflict, therefore drives the interfaith educational partnerships at CLU. It is not a history of intellectual investment, nor the construction of a relationship of theological similarity that justifies this endeavor, as witnessed in the previously discussed programs, but an expressed need for religiously literate partners willing to work together in the world.

After the period of my field research, Claremont Lincoln University underwent many significant changes that are worthy of note, shifting its focus considerably to the surprise of students and faculty. In 2013, the leadership of CLU transformed radically and abruptly, moving from the previously discussed “interfaith university” with partnerships amongst the aforementioned institutions to an online university offering master’s programs in “ethical leadership, interfaith action, and social impact” (Claremont Lincoln University Website n.d.). I was informed by several student contacts at Bayan and CLU that in the summer of 2013, the existing CLU board was completely replaced, and key administrators were replaced. Students previously enrolled in CLU were not told by administration of these changes, finding out through word of mouth, and demanded

towards an expansion of the Muslim-Christian studies relationship to include Jewish partners as well. As the school’s website explains, “Building on its strengths as an interfaith, dialogical school of practical theology, Hartford Seminary designed this [Building Abrahamic Partnerships] program, led by Landau, to be a resources for Jews, Christians, and Muslims who seek a solid foundation in interfaith ministry.” In this program, participants learn about the tenets of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, study from the sacred texts of each tradition, attend field worship services at a mosque, synagogue and church, and acquire “pastoral skills used in interfaith ministry.” For more information, see: (Seminary Establishes New Chair in Abrahamic Partnerships 2012). While this program suggests interesting reconfigurations of interfaith partnerships at the seminary, at this point, enrollment of Jewish students remains low.

answers about the reasons for these changes, and impact they would have on enrolled Master's and PhD students. After various meetings involving various levels of faculty and administration, students were given the option to remain affiliated with CLU, or to drop out and re-enroll as students of Claremont School of Theology. Hafsa, graduate of Bayan Claremont and current Coordinator of Student Services and Administration of the college, describes the experience:

This [choice] was troubling for a lot of students, who didn't necessarily want a degree from CST. They wanted a degree from a university that was interfaith focused, not one that was Christian. It was definitely not our top choice. It was pretty clear from the outset that Bayan was supposed to be part of Claremont Lincoln, but after all of this happened, we decided as a group that we would stay with Claremont School of Theology... There was a day on campus where [around] seventy-five students all collectively dropped out of Claremont Lincoln, and signed up to be a part of Claremont School of Theology (Hafsa 2013).

While the details of these changes remain rather elusive, the significance of these changes rests in their impact on the shifting relationships of the multiple institutions in question.

Bayan College, initially conceived of as one of several autonomous theological institutions working in partnership with Claremont School of Theology and the Academy of Jewish Religion, is now a Muslim theological school once again hosted by a Protestant Christian seminary. The official separation between Claremont Lincoln and Claremont School of Theology (as well as the Academy of Jewish Religion) occurred in May of 2014. Bayan College remains part of Claremont School of Theology, and receives its accreditation through that institution, but remains financially independent from CST. Other changes resulting from these shifts include programmatic and curricular shifts, with Bayan moving to a hybrid in-person and online format.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ For program details, see Appendix C.

These changes have also impacted Claremont School of Theology, on the whole. The new President of CST, Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan, maintains, “We are not stepping away from our commitment to interreligious education” (Interview with President Kuan. Ecumenical & Interreligious Commitment n.d.), in spite of the termination of the relationship between CST and CLU. However, Hafsa, admits to me that the atmosphere on campus has changed somewhat:

While CLU was being incubated...there was this atmosphere of being very inclusive of people of other faith traditions. Now, it’s not that it’s not inclusive, but the priority for interfaith work has gone down... The outward facing description of CST is that it’s, first of all, Methodist. Then it’s ecumenical. *Then* it’s interfaith (Hafsa 2013) (emphasis in original).

These shifts, explained by Hafsa as a result of the “failure” of the CLU experiment, reorient the founding of Bayan College, in its relationship to CST, requiring renewed understandings of the relationship between these two related, but independent institutions.

While the above sections examine the institutional rationales on the part of Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Claremont School of Theology to invest in the development of Muslim leadership programming, the following sections analyze the various reasons cited by Muslim respondents regarding their interest in the programs I research.

Muslim Students Rationales

This section examines some of the reasons that my Muslim respondents provide in order to justify their participation in Muslim leadership education in Protestant Christian seminaries. The rationales range from the pragmatic to the ideological; in total,

they signal the wide range of motivations underlying Muslim enrollment at Christian seminaries. While some participants underscore the factor of accreditation as their sole or primary reason for attending, others consider the interfaith environment ideal for training to become chaplains, pastors, and spiritual caregivers, who often interact with persons outside of their own faith tradition. Yet others explain that the interfaith milieu provides them with the space to counter stereotypes of Islam prevalent in the West. Furthermore, some students expressed that they felt more “at home” in seminary settings than they did in secular institutions, and that the shared stance of belief overcame the specificity of religious difference. Finally, a portion of my respondents explain that the liberal Protestant setting is, in fact, preferable to them than a “traditional” Islamic setting, given their feelings of marginalization from “mainstream” Islam on a number of controversial issues, such as women’s leadership and same-sex relationships.

When questioning a number of my Muslim respondents about their personal reasons for matriculating in the programs at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan, a common response was that there were no accredited Muslim options. “Why get a degree within this Christian setting? Because there’s nothing else! There’s really nothing else,” explains Taoufiq (Taoufiq 2012)⁶⁸ a Muslim chaplain working in Toronto. Taoufiq, involved in a coordinating position for the Muslim Studies program at Emmanuel College, tells me about how he graduated with a Master’s of Theological Studies from Regis College, a Jesuit institution in Toronto in the 1990s, prior to the establishment of the programs focused on in this research. Thus, Taoufiq’s degree did not involve any formal

⁶⁸ Where possible, I have used pseudonyms for the students of these programs. I have used the real names of students who requested that I do so, in addition to those whose Master’s theses or Doctoral dissertations I reference, as they have presented their views publicly.

coursework on Islam, apart from independent research conducted on his own, with little guidance from faculty unacquainted with relevant research materials. “I was a maverick, someone once called me. ‘You know, you’re the only one doing this stuff.’ It was great, but it was lonely as ever, and it wasn’t easy.” Excitement in being involved in the coordination of the Muslim programming at Emmanuel is partially the result of the difficulties Taoufiq faced in a completely Christian-centric theological program of study. Although these programs are housed in Protestant theological schools, the fact that they are specifically tailored for Muslim students represents a big step for chaplains like Taoufiq.

Idris, a Muslim student enrolled at Hartford Seminary, expressed a similar sentiment regarding the limitations of choice for Muslims hoping to work in specific institutional settings. A Muslim soldier in the United States Army, Idris describes how during his deployment in Iraq, he became somewhat of an “unofficial” Muslim counselor, leading prayers and giving advice to his fellow Muslim soldiers. Seeing his leadership potential, his colonel personally recommended him for the Muslim chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary. “[Hartford Seminary] is the only official school accredited for the Army Chaplaincy program,” Idris tells me, “and the only school affiliated with the Army Program, too” (Idris 2012), which therefore determined where he would pursue his education. The issue of accreditation is a central concern hoping to work in contexts that require federal authorization, such as in the military or federal prison system. To join the Army Chaplain Corps, for example, one must possess a baccalaureate degree, and be enrolled as a “full-time graduate student at an accredited seminary or theological school” (Army Chaplain Corps. U.S. Army Website n.d.). For Idris, Hartford Seminary, the only

accredited school at the time offering Islamic chaplaincy education, was the sole institution in which he could pursue his studies.

While Taoufiq and Idris represent Muslim students pursuing their education in Christian seminaries as a matter of necessity, others viewed these programs as an opportunity to learn from the practical experience of North American Christian communities. Learning how to navigate historically Christian fields such as chaplaincy in seminary settings allows Muslims to benefit from the “wisdom” and the best practices of their Protestant partners. Shams, a graduate of Hartford Seminary, currently working as a university chaplain, explains:

I value the fact that a traditionally Christian seminary is allowing for Muslim students to study topics that are pertinent to their particular faith tradition. They're helping them grow... The Muslim community in America, because it's a much younger community than... Christians and Jews... We have a lot to learn, institutionally, historically, and so forth. And that's why I like the Islamic chaplaincy models, because it's building upon a time-tested religious profession, but making it uniquely Muslim (Shams 2012)

In the above quotation, Shams argues that the relative institutional inexperience of the Muslim community in North America compared to both Christian and Jewish populations, renders multifaith leadership training particularly beneficial for Muslims. Learning from those who have greater familiarity with the fields in question makes these programs appealing for some students, since they feel empowered to simultaneously tailor their education (and the field) for their specific faith tradition.

In a similar vein, many (though not all) chaplains and spiritual caregivers work in multifaith contexts, which means that they cater to a religiously diverse clientele. Sharing classrooms with members of other religious traditions offers Muslim students the chance to familiarize themselves with the reality of the professional field. A religiously

homogeneous environment, as is argued, would not truly prepare students sufficiently. A Muslim student enrolled at Hartford Seminary, Taysir, comments:

I believe that [this] is the best situation for Muslim seeking to be chaplains because this is really the environment that they are going to be placed within. If a person was to be... trained in an all Muslim seminary, they are not going to get that same type of interfaith experience that will help them once they do receive a chaplaincy job. We are surrounded here by people who not only want to be Muslim religious leaders, but [also] Christian religious leaders...I actually kind of worry that once programs do begin at Muslim only seminaries that they will lose that great experience of studying beside Christian leaders (Taysir 2012).

Rather than yearning for the creation of a Muslim institution to educate Muslim chaplains and spiritual caregivers, Taysir views his training at a Christian theological setting to be a constructive and integral element of his edification. Mohsin, another graduate of the program, echoes: “Having that environment at Hartford Seminary really prepares you for a chaplaincy context.” Multifaith theological settings are thus viewed by many of my respondents as preparatory for their eventual professions.

For some students, the benefit of partnering with Christians in the classroom extends beyond the pragmatic. Emmanuel College student, Sakina, explains that she considers Christians to be “the closest people to Muslims,” referring to a verse from the Qur’an that underscores the intimate relationship between the two traditions.⁶⁹ At the same time, although she constructs a relationship of similarity and affinity between Christianity and Islam, there is still benefit to be gained from the interaction of traditions, precisely because of their distinctions. Having been educated both in North Africa and in

⁶⁹ In this quotation, Sakina refers to Qur’an 5:82. “You [Prophet] are sure to find that the most hostile to the believers are the Jews and those who associate other deities with God; you are sure to find that the closest in affection towards the believers are those who say, ‘We are Christians’ for there are among them people devoted to learning and ascetics. These people are not given to arrogance.” (M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, trans.)

Canada at the hands of instructors from the “Muslim world,” Sakina explains why she chose to study at Emmanuel:

I think [that this program] has more attraction to me that it is embedded in a Christian institution...I know what I can learn from a Muslim institution. It has certain parameters for me. I really have no clue what I can learn from a Christian institution and a Christian population. It's almost like it's infinite. And that's where I want to be. Not where [I'm] going to think in a box. There's no space to think in the box anymore (Sakina 2012).

For Sakina, the value added from learning in a predominantly Christian environment is the potential for the unexpected, both in terms of content and pedagogical methodologies. Having experienced elements of a “traditional” Islamic education, she expresses the necessity for innovative thinking and approaches to her work, facilitated by a multifaith educational experience. At the same time, she jokes that “Emmanuel wasn't ‘too Christian’” to be off-putting, exclusionary, or intimidating to her. The liberal and accepting qualities of both the United Church, in general, and Emmanuel College, in particular relieved Sakina of anxieties about feeling overwhelmed or intimidated as a Muslim minority studying religion in a predominantly Christian setting.

Some of the Muslim students I interviewed expressed that their presence in Christian majority classrooms strategically afforded them the opportunity to counter stereotypes about Islam prevalent in the contemporary Western imagination. As such, these students took on a representative role, hoping that the classroom encounter will challenge negative views of Islam and Muslims. “I get a lot of questions,” says Janet, a Muslim student at Emmanuel. “The students, they ask me a lot. And I'm always willing to share...Because of what they're hearing in the media...what they're getting is a lot of misinformation...It's all about information” (Janet 2012). Although her primary reason for being at Emmanuel is her own education, she also appreciates the opportunity to

encourage non-Muslims to learn more about Islam. “Isn’t this what we’re supposed to do?” she asks me. All the same, she hopes for the development of Muslim-specific educational institutions. “I don’t know if this is the right time for it [because of] resources,” she tells me, but for the time being, she is appreciative of Emmanuel’s interfaith environment: “I see [the interfaith setting] as fine because we are all *ahl al-kitab*.⁷⁰ We are believers of the Book. So not only am I part of the Muslim community, I’m part of a larger community of people who believe in monotheism. So, I’m part of that community.” While Janet hopes for the development of Muslim-run institutions of scholarship and professional training in North America, for the time being she is comfortable receiving her education in a wider community of monotheistic belief, echoing the sentiment of Muslim-Christian affinity expressed above by Sakina.

While Sakina and Janet frame their motivations for studying at Emmanuel College via the construction of a theological relationship between Islam and Christianity, other Muslim students couched their decisions to attend the programs under discussion here precisely because they believed a liberal Protestant setting to be a more hospitable environment for them (as opposed to an exclusively Muslim institution). For many of these students, various elements of their belief system or their identities made them feel outside of “orthodox” Islam, and thus produced feelings of alienation in Muslim-majority settings. El-Farouk, Emmanuel student and an out gay Muslim, explains that he feels at

⁷⁰ “People of the Book.” A phrase used in the Qur’an referring to Jews and Christians, the spiritual ‘predecessors’ of Islam: “The Quran itself identifies Jews and Christians as the recipients of earlier revealed books or scriptures, namely the Torah, the Psalms, and the Gospel. These scriptures are believed to have been corrupted by the communities to which they were sent and are thus abrogated and in some senses superseded by the Quran. They are nonetheless held in esteem insofar as they were originally God’s revelation, and the peoples to whom they were given are thus considered in a special category, namely the People of the Book.” Smith, Jane I. “Islam and Christendom: Historical, Cultural, and Religious Interaction from the Seventh to the Fifteenth Centuries” (Esposito 1999, 306).

ease in the United Church-affiliated theological school specifically because of their stance on gender-related and LGBTI issues. Throughout the years, El-Farouk's openness concerning his sexual identity, his work with LGBTI communities, and his goal of advancing "alternative Islamic theologies," particularly regarding gender and sexuality earned him many detractors in the mainstream Muslim community. At one point in the 1990's, Khaki received death threats from several individuals claiming to be associated with Islamic Jihad cells (Geissinger 2012, 82). He explains:

For me as an out gay man it's a lot more comfortable [being in a Christian seminary] than being in a Muslim-controlled environment, to be honest with you, because at least Christian theology has or some Christian communities have been grappling in their theology with issues of feminism and sexuality in ways that Muslims have not systemically and systematically been doing.

The establishment of Muslim leadership programming at Emmanuel provides El-Farouk the opportunity to pursue his professional goals in an environment where he feels safe, due to the United Church's official position of acceptance of same-sex relationships, and of women's religious leadership. "If this [program] was being offered at a Muslim theological school, I most likely would not feel as safe as I do here," he explains.

Although Emmanuel College is a United Church seminary, for El-Farouk, it represents an institution where he can learn the skills to serve neglected and marginalized segments of the Muslim community. "The value system of the United Church is akin to my value system if it is not the same religious paradigm...because [I] don't have to deal with Wahhabi Salafi bullshit."

Relatedly, Jacqueline, a Muslim studying at Hartford, grounds her decision to study at the seminary in response to her concerns about studying in more "traditional" settings as a woman. "The traditional path to Islamic scholarship...I didn't really see a

place for myself, and I didn't see that much of a clearly trodden path for women, so I went this route." While Jacqueline admits that she would consider being "open in the future to studying internationally," at this time, her trepidations about finding a clearly defined course of study as a woman within "traditional" settings led her to the program at Hartford. Furthermore, she comments:

We should be willing to learn from others, and I think that the kinds of Muslims who oppose the seminary, who oppose the Islamic chaplaincy program, are the kind of people who don't engage with the society. So their argument [is] that we are watering down their religion by in fact being part of the Hartford Seminary. And they think that we don't have freedom to learn our religion because we are in a college that is historically Christian. But that is not the case for anybody who visits or gets to know the program and the people who have graduated from it.

Jacqueline is acutely aware that her choice to pursue Islamic chaplaincy at a historically Christian seminary may be met with skepticism from within her religious community. Nonetheless, she argues that the quality of graduates from Hartford Seminary counters any accusations questioning the value of the Islamic and leadership education received in this setting.

Similarly, Emmanuel College student, Junayd, expresses that his feelings of being an outsider in the Muslim community led him to studying at a Christian institution, as opposed to an all-Muslim program. "I've never quite fit in," he says. "I'm basically made to feel, one way or another, that I'm never Muslim enough. Here, it is not even put into question." Feeling marginalized at different points in his life by fellow Muslims, particularly with regard to the regular performance of Islamic ritual requirements, Junayd wonders whether he would feel scrutinized in an all-Muslim environment. "Here [at Emmanuel], they [his colleagues] probably consider sincerity of a prayer more important than performing it five times a day. I don't know if I would get that same sense in an

Islamic seminary.” From the standpoint of “mainstream Islam,” Junayd’s lack of consistency in performing the daily prayers (*salah*), potentially casts doubt for others on his commitment to Islam. However, from the standpoint of his Christian classmates, Junayd assumes that were anyone to make judgments about his faith, they would be premised upon the more internalized notion of sincerity, rather than outward demonstrations. As will be discussed in Chapter Four of this project, the focus on “spirituality,” as opposed to a more law-based or ritual-focused religious life marks an integral part of each of the programs in question.

Finally, Lynda, a Muslim studying at Bayan, summarizes her choice to apply to CLU in relation to feelings of alienation from all-Muslim environments rather simply: “I admire people who can go [to all-Muslim institutions like Zaytuna College], and I think it’s important. But there are people like them, and there are people like me. And I’m better suited for this interfaith environment” (Lynda 2011). In this brief statement, Lynda presents the argument that Bayan represents an educational opportunity for Muslims who, for various reasons, may feel marginalized or out of place in “traditional” settings. El-Farouk, Jacqueline, Junayd, and Lynda thus represent the voices of Muslim students enrolled in Muslim leadership programming at Christian seminaries that prefer religious leadership education in interfaith settings, as opposed to all Muslim environments. The reasons for these preferences are complex and will be explored further in subsequent chapters of this project. However, these students position themselves, each in their own way, as marginalized Muslims who feel more at home and comfortable in their religious identities in interfaith classrooms such as those at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont rather than in “mainstream” Muslim settings.

Nonetheless, each is interested in training to become Muslim leadership, as subsequent chapters demonstrate, in part in order to offer spiritual guidance to other Muslims, many who may also feel marginalized in their respective communities.

“He Who Pays the Piper Calls the Tune”: Muslim Skepticism of Islamic Leadership Programming in Christian Seminary Settings

Although the previous paragraphs highlighted Muslim voices that are supportive of the establishment of Muslim leadership education in Christian seminaries, I did meet several individuals who either had reservations about the model of education in place for Muslims at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont, ranging from the skeptical to the categorically opposed. Many of these individuals offer a simultaneous critique of the seminaries for perceived questionable motivations, as well as the North American Muslim population for not investing the money, resources, and energy in constructing their own institutions of learning. Of the most vehement voices against training Muslims in Christian seminary context is Dr. Jimmy (James) Jones, himself a graduate of the Hartford Seminary Doctor of Ministry program in Christian-Muslim Relations. Acknowledging the relative institutional youth of Muslims in North America, he comments that the development of the profession of Muslim chaplaincy is “part of our Americanization process.” While the fact that Hartford Seminary was historically a “missionary institution,” might be cause for suspicion for Muslims evaluating the program, Jones centers his critique on the Muslim community:

I went to Hartford Seminary. I don't have anything against them, particularly. My issue is with *us*. We have lots of money, we have lots of resources, we are one of the most educated groups of people in the country, indeed, in the world- in some parts of the world. It doesn't make any sense that we would leave the training of

our religious leaders to another faith tradition...I tell people, imagine if I decided that I was going to set up a Hindu training program. Of course it would be a little crazy, because I'm Muslim, so in the same vein...Muslims are about the only ones who wouldn't be upset. I know Christians would be upset if we did it, or if Jews did it to Christians. I'm just a little bit amazed at us (Jones 2012).

Assigning a Christian institution the responsibility and opportunity to educate Muslim leaders, Jones argues, is a dangerous decision, both on an individual and communal level, as it puts non-Muslims in an extreme position of power in shaping the leadership of North American Muslims. 'He who pays the piper calls the tune,'" he says to me, expressively. "I've had this conversation with people. They say, '[but] the whole faculty is Muslim.' But in the final analysis, if there's a budget crunch, if there's a research crunch, you do not make the decisions." Here, Jones problematizes institutional power dynamics, a topic explored in subsequent chapters of this project.

In light of his critique, Jones became involved in the formation of several Muslim-run chaplaincy related organizations: The Muslim Endorsement Council of Connecticut (MECC),⁷¹ the Association of Muslim Chaplains,⁷² and the Islamic Seminary Foundation.⁷³ Each of these projects arose out of meetings of the Muslim Coalition of

⁷¹ Incorporated in 2011 "to provide a structure and process for the official endorsement and support of Muslim chaplains based on Islamic and pastoral principles and to establish a national standard for such endorsement in order to develop consistency and integrity in the field of Islamic chaplaincy." For more information, see: (About MECC n.d.).

⁷² Founded in 2011 in light of the "pressing need for an organization that could provide Muslim chaplains with the opportunity to come to know each other for mutual support, nurturing, and encouragement to each other's professional growth in accordance with Qur'anic ideals." For more information, see: (Association of Muslim Chaplains n.d.).

⁷³ Amongst those Muslim chaplains who were involved in the establishment of MECC and AMC included a group that believed that in addition to these developments, there was also a long-term necessity to create an American Muslim seminary. "After consulting Muslim academics, national Muslim organizations and some non-Muslim entities, the decision was made to try to establish a Muslim American seminary, as a separate but related initiative." For more information, see: (About MECC n.d.). At this point, the Islamic Seminary Foundation has put on six conferences at Yale University on various relevant topics, and are hoping to launch a full program in the fall of 2016. In addition, they are in the process of establishing an academic journal, entitled the *Journal of Islamic Faith and Practice*, in the fall of 2016.

Connecticut,⁷⁴ where Jones explains “a group of us were concerned that it seemed that most of the training and standard-setting for Muslim chaplains, which would affect the imams and other leaders, was being done by non-Muslim institutions.” While these projects, given their nascent state, are not yet a viable alternative to Muslims wishing to study at accredited Muslim leadership programs, they present an interesting development in the process of North American Muslim institution building.

While Jones’ criticisms fall mostly on the North American Muslim community for entrusting the training of their religious leaders to non-Muslim institutions, he does raise questions about Hartford Seminary’s role in the partnership, as well. He states:

Hartford Seminary is, by and large, a progressive institution, and the Muslim community, at least the ones that pray in the masjid, are by and large, a traditional, conservative institution. There’s a little bit of a problem there with fit. Particularly if you are training imams...That’s problematic, as far as I’m concerned. It’s not that they’re progressive, it’s that in their progressivism, they’re generally far ahead from the average Muslim populace.

From Jones’ perspective, the progressive character of Hartford Seminary fails to align with what he sees as the relative conservatism of the North American Muslim community. The primary concern remains, for him, one in which religious leadership trained in liberal Protestant settings cannot meet the Muslim community where they are on certain issues.

In spite of the practical rationales and good intentions motivating both the creation of the Muslim leadership programming, and Muslim student interest in such

⁷⁴ “The Muslim Coalition of Connecticut (MCCT) was founded in 2004 by a group of local leaders in an effort to provide an alternative to the negative illustrations of Muslims. The leadership of the Berlin, Waterbury, and Hartford Muslim communities came together with other activities to establish an organization that would focus on educating the public on Islam and Muslims and building alliances with other faith communities in Connecticut through social activism and collective civil programming.” See: (Muslim Coalition of Connecticut n.d.).

programming, there is a fundamental problem with interfaith theological education according to Jones; Ultimately, both Christianity and Islam are proselytizing religions, and therefore, Christians and Muslims alike are invested in converting “the other” to their own faith. While Christianity and Islam may have many similarities, and many pragmatic rationales for educational collaboration, their fundamental evangelistic goals complicate collaborative relationships. Jones explains: “Christianity and Islam, at their base, are missionary religions. You might want to make nice, but really, *really*- when you really scratch them, you think the other person is going to hell... You can’t make it sound nice.” Here, Jones contends that in spite of any argumentation that casts Christians and Muslims as “natural” collaborators given practical circumstances of the construction of intimate theological relationships, members of these traditions are ultimately working toward different ends.

Although Jones represents one of the most fervent voices in opposition to the Muslim leadership education programs in Protestant theological schools, he was not the only detractor. I spoke with Shaykh Ziyad, an imam at a mosque in Orange County, California, who dropped out of the program at Claremont Lincoln University. While generally supportive of equipping North American imams with the proper tools to lead their communities religiously while understanding this particular cultural context, Shaykh Ziyad nonetheless expresses skepticism that models like the one offered at Bayan Claremont make the most sense for those wishing to be leaders in the Muslim community. Indeed, he contends that the construction of Muslim leadership programs is “reinventing the wheel,” in a number of respects. Instead, he advocates the pursuit of Islamic education at long-established centers of learning, such as al-Azhar or the Islamic

University in Madinah, after which graduates should return the North America and continue to take professional development courses that meet the needs of their specific community. He states, “I would say this about Hartford. I would say this about [Claremont] Lincoln [and] Bayan... You are limited in your resources, as far as finances are concerned. However, you are reinventing wheels that have been running and turning for such a long time.” Reflecting on his brief period as a student at Claremont Lincoln, Shaykh Ziyad states,

I was the only Muslim student. I was paying out of pocket. Nobody was supporting that... I truly believe it is much easier to outsource. We’re talking about schools in South Africa, schools in the Middle East, schools in India, schools in Pakistan, that can really give these students the scholarship they need, and then once they come back, what I need to do is reorient them so they are the best of services to us here (Ziyad 2013).

At the same time, for those specifically aimed at gaining skills in chaplaincy, Shaykh Ziyad sees no need to study abroad, nor does he believe there is such a demand for Muslim chaplains as to warrant the creation of Muslim-run chaplaincy programs. “There are [already] places where these people can go to and get the training that they need in order to become chaplains in the field.” As such, the programs at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan, according to Shaykh Ziyad, are redundant.

Other Muslim students currently enrolled in the programs in question also expressed varying degrees of skepticism, concerning a number of issues related to the establishment of Muslim leadership programming at Christian seminaries. For example, Adina, an Emmanuel College student, admits, “A part of me wants to be suspicious, like, they are trying to breed docile Muslim subjects... But I think that the efforts, from what I’ve seen so far, seem sincere. I don’t think there’s any hidden agenda. Chaplaincy is

something that's needed in the Muslim community." Likewise, Naureen, a student at Bayan College, shares:

It's...tricky to not fall into Orientalist patterns when you have a Christian seminary with all of these other religious groups that fall underneath [it]. How much of [this] is Claremont collecting all of these different religious traditions, just to talk about how great and pluralistic they are...rather than them attempting a real solid foundation for us and our religious tradition? (Naureen 2013)

The following chapters of this project will explore some of these students' concerns in greater detail in light of specific issues or situations.

While some students express a level of skepticism regarding the intentions of the Christian institutions in question in the formation of Muslim leadership education, many find the outright rejection of the programs based on their location with Christian seminaries overly simplistic. Responding to such criticism, Khadijah, a graduate from Hartford Seminary, states:

You have to be careful with [those criticisms], because if you go to Harvard University, that was a Christian university. Nobody thinks about that anymore though, because the institution evolved. Chaplaincy is a little bit more confusing, because it's religious, but it's a field of study that has really become normatively interfaith (Khadijah 2011).

In the above quotation, Khadijah counters critics of Hartford Seminary's Muslim-focused programming, pointing to the Christian heritage of many renowned universities in North America, such as Harvard.⁷⁵ In this way, Khadijah gestures to the possibility of institutional evolution, and the prospect that Hartford Seminary, in spite of its Christian past, may move into an increasingly pluralistic future.

⁷⁵ For more information, see: (Grubiak 2014); (Marsden 1994).

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the various rationales provided by Protestant Christian seminaries for the establishment of Muslim leadership programming, as well as Muslim articulations for their interest in the programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. These justifications are rooted materially in the decline of student enrollment in liberal Protestant seminaries, and ideologically in historical investments in Muslim-Christian relations (in the case of Hartford Seminary), in denominational values and an effort to heal past tensions, (in the case of Emmanuel College), and in the drive to create a cadre of religiously literate leaders and activists to combat global religious conflict (in the case of the now defunct Claremont Lincoln University.) As such, each of these institutions shares a general openness and appreciation for ecumenism, which has expanded from a sense of interdenominational unity to a broader interfaith cooperation.

Likewise, Muslim students demonstrate a multiplicity of rationales for their matriculation in Protestant theological schools, including a lack of alternative accredited “Muslim” seminaries, an appreciation for the experience of Christian institutions knowledgeable and proficient in the education of chaplains and spiritual caregivers, and the view that interfaith education prepares future chaplains for the multifaith nature of the profession. In addition, other students voices a preference for studying Muslim leadership in a “non-Muslim” setting, given their experience of marginalization from mainstream Muslim communities. While the majority of respondents view the programs in question positively, voices of skepticism surface, questioning the wisdom of participating in these interfaith educational projects.

Both institutional rationales, and the perspectives of the Muslim students involved in these institutions reveal complex constructions of the relationship between Islam and Christianity, between Muslims and Christians. The following chapter examines the concept of translation as a potential means of understanding the means by which this interfaith theological education occurs.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORIZING TRANSLATIONS

The translator seizes a moment of intercultural 'thinking.' He is participant and midwife in language's perpetual process of rebirth in the encounter with other languages.

- James Clifford, "The Translation of Cultures," 15

The most urgent question facing the translator who possesses this knowledge is: What do I do? Why and how do I translate?

- Lawrence Venuti, "Translation as Cultural Politics," 209

"Perhaps it's to my advantage to be a convert."

Leaning back and adjusting her *hijab*, Janet smiles. Her blue eyes look past the glass pane of the coffee shop window into the distance momentarily as she collects her thoughts, while taking a sip from the cup of herbal tea that sits in front of her. Janet is a white Canadian woman in her forties, dressed in a thick, grey *abaya*, warm enough for the cool Toronto spring. She has recently returned to school to pursue a Master's degree in a new Muslim leadership program at Emmanuel College, a United Church affiliated seminary in Toronto. We sit in a small, dimly lit cafe in the financial district of downtown Toronto, moving easily from topic to topic, when Janet shares the story of her conversion to Islam. The conversion was a gradual process, she explains, the product of years of a spiritual exploration of different religious traditions. The media coverage of the Iranian Revolution deeply affected her, the spark that ignited her interest in Islam. Janet embarked on a study of the religion in university, engaged with local Muslims in her small Canadian border town, and traveled to India to learn more about Islam, all of which led to the declaration of her *shahada*, her affirmation of faith as a Muslim.

After working for many years in the legal sector, Janet decided to go back to school part time when she heard about the Muslim Studies program at Emmanuel

College. Always believing herself to be a “hand holder,” she was intrigued by the development of the field of Muslim chaplaincy, and first considered moving to the United States to attend the only existing Islamic chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary. Finances and family obligations, however, prevented her from pursuing this option. As a resident of Toronto, the creation of the Masters of Pastoral Studies, Muslim Stream, at Emmanuel College finally allowed her to pursue her goal.

Returning her gaze to me, Janet continues her thought; “Or perhaps it’s to my advantage to have studied Islam through the Orientalist perspective. I am able to translate what’s put before me into Islam. To say, you know what? We have the same thing [in our religion].” The mention of translation piques my interest, having frequently heard it employed by numerous students, teachers, and organizers of the Muslim leadership programs I research. Sensing my curiosity, she offers an example of her translational efforts:

In Catholicism there’s *examen*⁷⁶, which means that you reflect on God. ‘What did I do wrong? Please help me with this.’ Well, Muslims do this five times a day! We pray and we ask God for forgiveness. Right after your prayer, after your *salah*, you say, ‘*Astaghfirullah, astaghfirullah, astaghfirullah.*’ ‘Forgive me, God, forgive me, God, forgive me, God...’ That, in the broad concept, is the examen, right? No different. Just a different word. So, I say to the people, how is this different? (Janet 2012)

Having grown up in a predominantly Catholic community in Ontario, Janet’s personal and experiential knowledge of Christianity facilitates her ability to translate across traditions and observe parallels with her chosen faith, Islam. As a Muslim student studying at a predominantly Christian seminary, this is a skill that helps Janet navigate

⁷⁶ Examen of Consciousness: a prayer ritual developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556). Meant to be recited twice daily as a reflection of one’s daily activities.

the program at Emmanuel College. Her “fluency” in Christianity, Islam, and “Orientalist” approaches to the study of Islam (a way of gesturing at an academic, “outsider” approach to the religion), advances her educational experience. Ultimately, Janet hopes that her ability to translate, and think in terms of translation, will help her succeed as a student and as a professional.

This chapter surveys the theme of translation as a central element of Muslim leadership education programs housed in Christian seminaries, specifically Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. These institutions each present distinct rationales for multifaith theological education,⁷⁷ thereby constructing relational logics that justify Christian-Muslim partnership, at times focused on religious similarity, and at other times centered on religious distinctiveness. It is the combination of similarity and difference, therefore, which creates productive interreligious encounters. There must exist ample resemblance to justify (and render possible) these partnerships. At the same time, the existence of difference contributes to constructive pedagogical experiences. That is, students learn *about* “others,” and about themselves *via* others. It is within this set of circumstances that translation then acts as a means by which these different religions are held in simultaneous proximity and distance. The ability to translate, as exemplified by Janet, is therefore an asset in these multifaith educational spaces. Her liminal positionality, both as a Catholic convert to Islam and a student of Islam in the secular academy, provides her with multiple religious “vocabularies” to navigate multifaith classrooms. Translation thus assists in the conveyance of distinct religious selves (often resulting in the students’ assumption of a “representative” role for their

⁷⁷ See Chapter 1.

respective faith traditions), as well as the formation of a broader “interreligious” subjectivity.

While Janet discusses translation as a technique of interaction with her Christian classmates and professors, a way of expressing her religiosity in comprehensible ways to religious “others,” translation is also necessary at a broader, institutional level. The very existence of the programs in question makes the claim that the profession of chaplaincy is, in fact, translatable from its Christian origins to an Islamic context. They argue not only that the profession itself is translatable, but, accordingly, that the existing curricula for the education and training of Christian chaplains, pastors, and spiritual caregivers, can also be meaningfully translated for Muslim students. As indicated above, these professional and institutional translations thus communicate and create both the possibility and utility of these multifaith educational collaborations.

Consequently, I argue that the work of translation being done by and within these institutions warrant further attention and that translation theory sheds valuable light upon the *dynamics* of the translational processes that undergird the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. I draw from the work of Lawrence Venuti and Talal Asad to investigate the stakes of the various translations at play. Translation, an interpretive act and a social practice, carries with it certain costs, as I will explore below. However, as evidenced in Janet’s above description, the work of translation theorists reveals that the burdens of translation are not equally shared. Within the Protestant milieus in which these Muslim leadership programs take shape, the work of Muslim students is ultimately framed and evaluated within a setting where Christianity provides the overwhelming “logic” of the field. This chapter

also thus explores the potential risks and hazards of translation in contexts of asymmetrical power.

Defining Translation

Throughout the years, philosophers, interpreters, linguists, and historians, amongst others, have offered various perspectives on the process and the purpose of translation. The term's etymological roots, "*trans* (across) and *latus*, the past participle of *ferrer* (to carry)- suggests a transportation of meaning, a physical displacement" (Bermann and Wood 2005, 5). Most generally, the contemporary usage of the term represents "the process by which meanings are conveyed from one language to another" (Asad 1995, 325).⁷⁸ The field of translation studies developed as an interdisciplinary academic subject over the past century, with substantial institutional developments occurring in the last thirty years, connecting research in linguistics, history, philosophy, anthropology, and psychology, economics, and literary study (Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* 1995, vii). Scholars from diverse fields have analyzed practices of translation and interpretation, contributing to what we now refer to as the discipline of translation studies. Whether focused on literary or cultural translation, such scholarship asks questions concerning mediation, interpretation, and representation. What is the best way of rendering speech or writing from a "source text," or the original text that is being translated, into a "target text," in a different language? Theorists therefore debate about the prioritization of linguistic "equivalence" versus "function," the

⁷⁸ Asad indicates that in ecclesiastical usage, translation denoted "the removal of a saint's remains, or his relics, from an original site to another... (So, too, the transfer of a cleric from one office to another, or of a feast from one date in the calendar to another)... The transfer of relics involved the retention of something essential despite the change of location" (Asad 1995, 325).

former indicating a concern with the “accuracy” or “fidelity” of a translation, and the latter relating to “the potentiality of the translated text [to produce] a response comparable to the one produced by the source text in its own culture” (Venuti 2000, 5).⁷⁹ Other translation theorists examine the social and institutional dynamics of translation, and analyze translation as a cultural process, an interpretive act, and a site of individual and institutional invention.⁸⁰ Indeed, translation has meant many different things to many different people. Elizabeth Castelli surveys a diverse body of scholarship on translation and presents a composite definition:

Translation is variously described as a process of interpretation; as not a process of interpretation; as rhetorical exercise; as a process of transmission; as a process of creation; as *mimesis* or *aemulatio*; as communication; as alchemy; as narcissism; as a combination of guilt and longing; as aggression and violence; as representation; as access to one’s own past (and by implication, as political); as crucial to any gesture toward reform; as the desperate movement of fallen beings toward the *logos*, and *Ursprache*, the language of God... (Castelli 1990, 29-30).

This varied (and sometimes contradictory) list of descriptions showcases the complexity and capaciousness of translation, and signals both the rhetorical, theological, and political stakes involved in the process.

In what ways, then, does an examination of translation benefit research on Islamic leadership programs in North America? Translation, a world of movement, boundaries, and exchanges, tells us about the way we imagine and construct sameness and difference. The source and target “languages,” (or in this case, religions) require the construction of a translational bridge that overcomes their distinctions. Therefore it is *through* translation

⁷⁹ For more information, see the following essays (included in this edited volume): (Schleiermacher 2012); (Nida 2012); (Steiner 2012).

⁸⁰ (Asad, *Genealogies of Religion* 1993); (Bermann and Wood 2005); (Budick and Iser 1996); (Dingwaney and Maeir 1995); (Niranjana 1992); (Soliday 1994); (Spivak 1993); (Venuti 1993); (Venuti 1995); (Venuti 2000).

that a relationship between the two languages (or religions) is formed. “Translation,” Antoine Berman writes, “establishes a relationship between the Self-Same (*Propre*) and the Foreign by aiming to open up the foreign work to us in its utter foreignness” (Berman 2000, 240). But what types of relationships between “source” and “target” does translation foster? Is a translator to privilege intelligibility in the target language, at the expense of the particularities of the source language? Or should they maintain the integrity of the source language, while diminishing fluency in the target language? “In my opinion,” writes German theologian and philosopher, Friedrich Schleiermacher, “there are only two possibilities. Either the translator leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him” (Schleiermacher 2012, 49). These examples gesture towards the complicated dynamics of power involved in the process of translation. In the case of Muslim and Christian participants in multifaith theological education, who is left in peace, and who makes the move towards comprehensibility? Is the burden of intelligibility equally shared? As I argue further in this chapter, both the professional and curricular standards of the field of chaplaincy, as a historically Christian vocation, as well as the institutional setting in which leadership education occurs, namely, the Christian seminary, construct imbalances in the translational responsibilities required within the programs I research.

The following section examines the translation of chaplaincy and spiritual caregiving from its historically Christian origins into Muslim (and other) religious contexts.

Translating the Field

This project questions how non-Christian communities, in particular, Muslim communities, are incorporated into particular vocational fields like chaplaincy. Scholars such as Sophie Gilliat-Ray explore the historical development Muslim chaplaincy in the United Kingdom, and argue that “the gradual incorporation of Muslims into chaplaincy roles around the world has also contributed to an evolving perception that chaplaincy is no longer a distinctively Christian activity. Chaplaincy is now a ‘multi-faith’ endeavour” (Gilliat-Ray, Ali and Pattison 2013, 6). Although the field of chaplaincy may currently be perceived as a “multifaith” effort, with chaplains hailing from various religious traditions⁸¹, the Christian roots of the profession are undeniable. My Muslim respondents freely acknowledge this institutional history, and express that they see no major conflict between the Christian heritage of chaplaincy and their identity as Muslim religious leaders.

The 2013 Islamic Society of North American (ISNA) convention in Washington D.C. reflected the growing acceptance of chaplaincy as a Muslim profession, featuring several panels on topics in Muslim chaplaincy. During the question-and-answer session of one of these panels, an audience member asked each presenter to comment on the Christian origins of the profession, and how they located themselves as Muslims within the field. One of the presenters, a young, male university chaplain of South Asian heritage replied:

Obviously, the term “chaplain” has Christian roots in this country, just as much as this nation is rooted in Christianity...But I don’t think that that should make us

⁸¹ There are efforts to establish official networks for secular humanist and atheist chaplains, as well. See: (What is a Humanist Chaplain? n.d.); (Dao 2011).

think that somehow chaplaincy is then not [also] indigenous to our religious tradition. Because if you look at what chaplains do, which is offer compassionate care, and to offer a presence of compassion in different institutions, this is something that is from the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, and from within this tradition [of Islam]. Whatever term we end up using is loaded...[But] there have been things like this in our Muslim history. It's not something completely new.

The above quotation highlights the perspective that, despite the ostensibly “Christian” history of the field of chaplaincy, the profession is translatable to an Islamic context, because the values and skills required of and promoted by the field are in fact shared by both traditions. The “essentials” of the vocation, namely compassionate care, are embodied in the figure of the Prophet Muhammad, one of the most important sources of authority in the Islamic tradition after the Qur'an itself. Therefore, it is only the professional elements of the field of chaplaincy, rather than the heart of the vocation itself that are dictated by historically Christian norms.

Another ISNA panelist, an African American male prison chaplain, likened the Muslim pursuit of fields like chaplaincy to the universal adoption of the Arabic-numeral system. “If you ask the average American who brought about the number system that we use,” he posits, “most of them wouldn't know. Yet we use that system. So for me, it's not really important who are the originators of something that we benefit from. The question is, is it a benefit to humanity? [...] Are you a helper? That's what the Prophet was.” This quotation emphasizes the potential good that the field offers to Muslim communities, in spite of its Christian origins. Community needs may necessitate the adoption of “foreign” interventions. Furthermore, the example of Arabic-numerals indicates the possibility of a culturally specific system becoming universalized and beneficial globally.

Those working to establish the institution of Muslim chaplaincy in North America therefore acknowledge the Christian legacy of the field, but argue that the same ideals are already found within Muslim sources, in which case, the translation involved is primarily professional, keeping fundamental religious values intact. In this way, translation simply expands the religious boundaries of chaplaincy, opening the field to non-Christian individuals and communities.

Translating Professional Standards

The assumption that chaplaincy and related fields are translatable from a Christian to a Muslim context invites consideration of how practitioners in those fields are trained. What kinds of translation are required in order to design and implement programmatic curricula and professional requirements for these translated fields? As examined in Chapter One of this project, the foundation of Muslim chaplaincy and leadership programs was in part the product of demand for vetted Muslim chaplains to serve in institutions such as the army or in federal prisons. In order to achieve this level of recognition, Muslim chaplains are required to follow the same professional standards as Christian chaplains, as are chaplains of other faith backgrounds. As such, there is a standardization of the field based on particularly situated conceptions of religious authority. When referring to the employment guidelines of the United States Federal Bureau of Prisons, for example, chaplains must demonstrate:

1. Ordination or membership in an ecclesiastically recognized religious institute of vowed men or women;
2. Current ecclesiastical endorsement by the recognized endorsing body of the faith tradition;
3. Willingness to provide and coordinate programs for inmates of all faiths;
4. Necessary credentials and the ability to provide worship services in his/her faith tradition (Chaplain: Qualifications n.d.).

While such standards generally fit within the logic of Christian contexts, translating these requirements into an Islamic framework results in some complications. Given that Islam has no formal “ordination” of religious authority, or a recognized and centralized authoritative body that can grant ecclesiastic endorsement, meeting the requirements for employment in federal prisons may prove difficult. The assumption of translatability, in this case, represents the imposition of Christian norms and standards of leadership on other religious traditions that do not necessarily operate in parallel ways. Nevertheless, currently, in order to receive recognition from national certifying bodies, Muslim and other non-Christian communities must negotiate with the existing institutional requirements, in spite of what may be “lost in translation.” The programs at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan, developed in concert with such standards, thus attempt to provide Muslims seeking federal employment as chaplains with recognizable credentials to support their application, an act of leaving the “reader” in peace, and moving the text toward her.⁸²

Translating Curricula

How do the founders of Muslim leadership programs in Christian seminaries determine curricular standards? How are existing course and practica requirements translated for Muslim students? Once again, there exists a dialogue between the

⁸² The Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) currently acts as the ecclesiastical endorsing agency for American Muslims. Before receiving ISNA’s endorsement, applicants must be reviewed to prove that “an individual is spiritually, doctrinally, educationally, and professionally qualified to represent his/her faith community in a specialized setting (beyond the local masjid) ministering to all in a religiously diverse context” (ISNA Chaplaincy Services Department (ICSD) n.d.). Federally recognized professional standards thus shape and contribute to the influence of Muslim institutions in North America. This role as ecclesiastical endorsing agent contributes to ISNA’s institutional vision to be “an exemplary and unifying Islamic organization in North America” (Mission & Vision n.d.).

nationally recognized standards of the field and the local decisions of the program planners and faculty members of the seminaries. On the national level, for example, the United States Federal Bureau of Prisons demands that chaplains who work in their facilities demonstrate a certain number of training hours in theology, sacred writings, church history or comparative religions, and ministry. In addition, they expect two years of “autonomous experience as a religious/spiritual leader in a parish or specialized ministry setting” (Chaplain: Qualifications n.d.). As discussed above regarding professional standards, these subjects generally reflect the norms of Protestant seminary education.

While almost all of my respondents voiced their general satisfaction with the courses offered and required by the schools in question, there were two main points of curricular contention voiced on a regular basis. The first was the lack of a strenuous Arabic language requirement, given the opinion that legitimate Muslim leaders should have facility in the language of the Qur’an and other primary sources of Islam. Mehdi, a student at Bayan Claremont, reflects: “Arabic is important, you know? CGU [Claremont Graduate University] has an Arabic program. But I think Bayan really needs to work on that. Arabic is very important. Especially to understand the texts, [like] the Qur’an” (Mehdi 2013). Likewise, Emmanuel student, Sakina comments, “[Arabic] would definitely make the program a lot richer. A lot that can be reflected about the culture by learning the language...I think the way that words reflect the society that they’re embedded in is a really powerful tool when you’re getting to know a different society, a different culture” (Sakina 2012). Perhaps the most critical perspective I heard in my interviews came from an anonymous graduate of Hartford Seminary:

Arabic is the *lingua franca* of the Muslims worldwide, and it's the language of the holy book of the Muslims, and Muslims believe that it's the language of Paradise. And to have people get a degree, to have somebody to graduate as a religious leader in the Muslim community, and not be able to pick up the Qur'an and read it in Arabic, I think is problematic. In many ways, the Muslim community is like the Jewish community. That is to say that people expect their rabbis to be fluent in Hebrew. [pause] No, not fluent. They expect them to be able to *read* Hebrew. So...you're coming from Hartford Seminary, you should expect this thing. If you've got [Arabic proficiency] before, good. And sure, they *have* Arabic there, but it's not a requirement to graduate from the Islamic chaplaincy program (Anonymous 2012).

Making a comparison with Jewish leadership programs, this Hartford graduate puzzles at the exclusion of an Arabic language requirement in any type of Muslim leadership training. When asked about the rationale for this curricular gap, those involved in designing the programs referred to both a lack of resources and an excess of other programmatic requirements, which, as explained above, are often tied to nationally-recognized standards of the field. In crafting a realistic program that meets professional requirements, Arabic language requirements remain secondary, highlighting the prioritization of other skill sets in Islamic chaplaincy.

Similarly, many students expressed a desire for more courses in “traditional Islamic sciences.” For example, Bayan College student, Mehdi, who previously received an education in a Shi'i seminary in Iraq, laments what he sees as gaps in Muslim leadership training. As part of the Claremont-Lincoln University Consortium, he was able to take a course on the Qur'an at Claremont Graduate University. However, Mehdi argues that faculty of Bayan should offer their own course on the subject:

When we're talking about Islamic Studies and Muslim contexts...you really can't have an Islamic Studies or leadership program without at least some courses on the Qur'an. I think that's important. And then also more depth into the issue of the hadith. And that goes along with Arabic, of course. Because I think hadith and the sunnah is important, but how to get to the authentic sunnah and the authentic hadith is [also] very important. The science of hadith, which includes the science

of what they call *rijal*...the science of “men,” or “narrators”... You know, basic courses like that, I think, are very important. Especially because I would assume that the majority of those who are participating in the program probably don’t have a ‘traditional’ training (Mehdi 2013).

Mehdi’s experience at a “traditional” seminary in Iraq highlight what he feels are gaps in Islamic leadership education at Bayan. While the planners of the programs in question are aware of such criticisms, they maintain that their aim is not to train “imams,” and as such, in depth knowledge of certain “traditional” subjects in the Islamic sciences are not required.

The above contestations indicate that “traditional” Islamic seminary curricula do get translated into the programs at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan. As Mattson explains, “We [are] able to provide the kind of things they [the students] would benefit from, but not over-promise. Not promise that we’re going to make people...who knew nothing at all about Islam, into imams and shuyukh or scholars” (Mattson 2012). The programs in question do not purport to be training traditionally trained Muslim scholars. However, students like Mehdi and Sakina communicate a desire to translate some coursework related to the Islamic sciences into curricular requirements. Such students argue that proficiency in Arabic, the Qur’an, hadith studies, and other such subjects are foundational to any type of Muslim authority, scholars and chaplains alike.

Translating Courses

While the previous section examined the ways in which broad curricular standards established for Christian students are translated for Muslim students, this section looks at the dynamics of operating individual multifaith classes. Dr. Johanna Selles, Associate Professor of Christian Education at Emmanuel College, speaks with me

about her experience incorporating Muslim students into her classes. At Emmanuel, as was the case at Claremont, professors teaching primarily for Christian students, were asked over a relatively short amount of time to open up their classrooms to Muslim students. As such, existing courses that were aimed solely at a Christian audience required a degree of creative revamping. She tells me about her course, “Education and Faith Formation,” which previously had the adjective, “Christian,” at the beginning of the title. I ask her, “How close to the beginning of the semester did you find out that this [the addition of Muslim students] was happening?”

“Oh,” she laughs, “I think they just showed up to the first class. I didn’t know that they were coming.” Given the short notice of this rather significant change in her classroom composition, I ask her to tell me about her process of translating the course goals and material to a now multifaith audience. Her syllabus consisted entirely of books written by Christian authors and grappled exclusively with themes relevant to the Christian community. When she found out there would be Muslim students in her class, she explains, “I didn’t have a heavy-handed agenda. We had all agreed that we would work it out together somehow and so I didn’t tell them where to sit, or who to talk to, or try to facilitate. It was more of like, let’s see where this goes” (Selles 2012). This rather extreme scenario of Muslim students simply “showing up” to a class without the instructor’s foreknowledge, is the result of “growing pains,” according to Selles, but is nonetheless an opportunity to question the level of consideration taken in translation of a previously “Christian” course to a “multifaith” course.

Some of Selles’ colleagues were not so keen about the changes taking place at Emmanuel. While they were open to having Muslim students take their classes, she

explains, they were not keen on restructuring their courses to include an Islamic component. “But I was really fretting about it,” she told me. “Even though my syllabi didn’t change that much, I thought about how I could make what was there relevant to the Muslim students. I can’t change the course content [at this point], but how can I be inclusive?” Johanna’s efforts to translate her existing course into a form that would be beneficial to both Muslim and Christian students is thus an admitted “work in progress,” which, in the future, she sees as involving changes to required readings, assignments, and general class structures. For the time being, she explains, she sees a parallel between the inclusion of first Muslim students at Emmanuel and the first female students who studied in seminaries:

It’s like when women first came into the universities, they were there as guests. They were escorted out of the classrooms. They were monitored and they knew that their behavior was being judged at all times. So you know when you’re a minority of one or two in a classroom of twenty to forty and the curriculum, you know, is not a required course or you know, at this point, there’s still a lot of making due if what is rather than intentional development of curriculum and experience. So I realized that that guesting is still superficial in a certain way but I saw movement and I think being in the same class, it forces a conversation at some point. . . You know, having a check on people’s language and assumptions is already—I already see the fruits of that. It’s like, let’s not say ‘we’ because who’s ‘we’ here? Whose belief are we talking about? And yet, what do we do in common? (Selles 2012).

Here, Professor Selles raises some of the challenges and benefits of introducing Muslim students into previously Christian-focused classrooms, and translating the language, content, and structure of existing courses for a wider audience. The presence of religious “others” forces reconsiderations of community, and a reconceptualization of who is meant by “us” and “them.”

The sections above outlined the translations of the profession of chaplaincy, together with chaplaincy standards and curricular requirements, from a predominantly

Christian context to a Muslim context. The following section introduces translation theory as a tool for analyzing the dynamics *within* the interfaith classrooms at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont.

Theorizing Translation

How can we understand translation as a social and political practice? What are the stakes of this type of work? How do these practices construct, uphold, or shift the boundaries between religious groups? Translation theorist, Lawrence Venuti, addresses such questions in his article, “Translation as Cultural Politics,” in which he examines the political aspects of textual translation. The act of translating, after all, is the imposition of an interpretation, or as Elizabeth Castelli explains, “a kind of creative labor performed *on the texts of others*” (Castelli 1990, 28). Given the imposition of meaning and cultural significance involved in translation, Venuti asks, what are the potential dangers involved with this act? What violence is committed when “foreign” texts are rendered intelligible to their readers through the act of linguistic domestication? He explains:

The reconstitution of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs, and representations that pre-exist it in the target language, always configured in hierarchies of dominance and marginality, always determining the production, circulation and reception of texts. Translation is the forcible replacement of the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text with a text that will be intelligible to the target-language reader (Venuti 1993, 209).

Venuti therefore draws attention to the dangers of this process of “insidious domestication” (Venuti 1993, 214), by which the translator attempts to eliminate difference between source language and target language through a reconstruction of the latter via the former. A tone of fluency, then, is a “discursive sleight of hand” (Venuti 1993, 213), concealing the translator’s interpretive work, or the construction of the

translation in compliance with target-language cultural values. The “ethnocentric violence” (Venuti 1993, 214) associated with this process is concrete, manifested politically, and tied to imperialist projects, to racism, and a general state of “cultural narcissism” (Venuti 1993, 221), all the while hidden behind concerns for fluency, naturalness of expression, and linguistic fidelity. Venuti argues that the development of an *ethics* of translation abates the potential harmful effects of the process, premised on the question, “...Why and how do I translate?” (Venuti 1993, 209).

Hiding the interpretive element of translation behind the concept of “fluency,” results in what Venuti calls a “translator’s invisibility” (Venuti 1995). An assumption of translatability of leadership values and conceptual frameworks legitimizes the profession of Muslim chaplaincy, in addition to the development of relevant accredited educational programs. Presumably shared notions of religious leadership and organizational structures make it possible for Muslim and Christian students to participate in collaborative theological education, sharing educational space in seminary classes and receiving the same degrees with minor “tweaking,” to curriculum and programmatic structure. And yet, examples such as the employment guidelines of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, mentioned above, highlight the incommensurability of standardized competencies for religious leadership across traditions. In broadening the field of chaplaincy to include non-Christian traditions, the burden of translation rests upon the newcomers to the field. As Venuti points out above, the act of translation is “always configured in hierarchies of dominance and marginality” (Venuti 1993, 209), and as such, we must acknowledge the political nature of theological comparison, and of the power

involved in the construction of religious similarity and difference. An analysis of this power renders what was previously invisible, visible.

Talal Asad meets the concept of translation from a different angle, namely, that of anthropology. Social anthropology, argues Asad, has long involved the translation of cultures from so-called “primitive” societies to their “Western” readerships.

Ethnographers, after all, give their readers access to and understanding of the beliefs and practices of unfamiliar cultures and societies. The translation in question here, then, is both the translation of language and culture, made possible by institutional structures such as the Western Academy. In highlighting the centrality of institutions, Asad indicates the discursive nature of translation, moving beyond the acts of a single translator (in this case, the anthropologist):

...the matter [of translation] is largely something the translator cannot determine by individual activity...it is governed by institutionally defined power relations between the languages and modes of life concerned. To put it crudely, because the languages of third world societies- including, of course, the societies that social anthropologists have traditionally studied- are seen as weaker in relation to Western languages (and today, especially to English), they are more likely to submit to forcible transformation in the translation process than the other way around (Asad 1993, 190).

The question of linguistic translation is relevant to the ethnographer, who conducted ethnographic fieldwork in the “foreign” language of their research subjects, but the metaphorical translation of cultures, and the privileged position of the anthropologist in such translations remains central to Asad’s work. Here, Asad stresses how the translational processes upon which anthropology depends, and the structures that support it, reinforce particular hierarchies of power. Asad thus focuses on the power of institutions, in this case, the academy, as translational centers, mediating intercultural

education. As such, we can view Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont as sites for the institutionalization of these translational efforts.

Both Venuti and Asad thus portray the translation of languages and cultures as a practices linked to institutions of power, and tied to the ethical transmission of meaning. Furthermore, both theorists contend with the issue of representation and its role in constructing relationships of similarity and difference. I bring them into this discussion on Muslim leadership programs in Christian seminaries to highlight the political nature of the translational work upon which these programs rest. While multifaith classrooms are certainly sites of cooperation and coalition-building, in other ways, they also match the description of what Mary Louise Pratt refers to as “contact zones,” or “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today” (Pratt 1991). Institutionalizing interfaith encounters for the sake of theological education therefore requires an analysis of these intercommunal power dynamics.

In the pages that follow, I introduce several classroom exchanges that occur in the theological institutions I research. Each of these examples highlights the different dynamics at play in multifaith classroom spaces.

Translating “Mission”

It’s a warm September day in Toronto, during the first week of fall classes at Emmanuel College. I’ve just returned to Toronto after spending the previous spring semester at Emmanuel, and as I sit down on this Tuesday evening to observe a course

entitled “Mission and Religious Pluralism,” I recognize a few friendly and familiar faces. The classroom, on the third floor of the gray stone, Neo-Gothic seminary, holds about thirty students, mostly white, thirty-somethings to fifty-somethings, milling around and chatting about their summers.

Jim, the professor, looking fresh and ready for a new semester, hands out syllabi in the front of the room. I sit down at a desk between two students, Junayd and Sakina, in the front row, and wonder for a moment why these two Muslim students are taking a course entitled, “Mission and Religious Pluralism.” Unlike some of the other predominantly Christian courses taken by the Muslim MPS students, like “Context and Ministry” or “Care and Community,” this class is specifically about Christian mission, and the process of reconciling the contentious legacy of this project with a less exclusivist and proselytism-centered present. How can this topic, burdened with very particular histories of imperialism, colonialism, and violence, ranging from the Crusades to the colonization of the Americas, bear import for Muslim students? I lean over, giving into my curiosity. “Why are you taking this course?” I whisper to Sakina. To my surprise, she replies, “It’s a requirement.”

At break, Sakina turns to Junayd, and points to several spots on the freshly-printed syllabus. “He only uses the word ‘church.’” Junayd, a thirty-year-old Pakistani-Canadian, glances at the syllabus and reassures, “By ‘church,’ he just means ‘community.’” But Sakina, a forty-one-year-old old Canadian-Egyptian, is not yet at ease, and she pulls Junayd to the front of the room to approach Jim. The professor apologizes sincerely for Sakina’s discomfort, and admits that he was only told recently that the course would be a requirement for the Muslims, and that while he’s out of his

element when it comes to teaching about Islam, he is happy to learn and is open to the students' suggestions. He also includes me (though I'm not sure if this is because I'm an academic or a Muslim) in this petition for help, and asks us if there is an equivalent for the term mission in Islam. The students ponder momentarily, and Junayd, translating for the second time tonight, offers the word, *da`wa*, an Arabic term meaning "invitation," often used to indicate the process of inviting people to Islam, or proselytizing efforts. At this point, however, break is over, and we return to our seats.

This brief example illustrates the rich and complex dynamics at play with the introduction of Muslim seminary students in a predominantly Protestant Christian environment. Attuning oneself to the different processes of translations at work highlights the ways in which conceptions of religious selves and communities collaborate and clash. In this situation, we witness the complications of translation on several levels, firstly, in terms of curriculum. The process of negotiating the conditions of program for the new Muslim students is clearly still ongoing, to the point that faculty and students are both surprised at the ever-changing course requirements. On one level, as described above in the case of Professor Selles' class, this seems simply an issue of bureaucracy and administration. But more deeply, these negotiations expose the difficulties and debates over translating the existing programmatic requirements for the Christian Stream of the MPS into the new Muslim context. What benefit, one may wonder, does a class aimed at unpacking the complicated and specific history of Christian mission offer to Muslims in community leadership positions, particularly given that Muslims have frequently been the subjects of these missionary enterprises? Is the presence of the minority students in the classroom simply an exhibition of the "pluralistic" world that members of the United

Church are preparing to meet? What is the added benefit- for both Christian and Muslim students- of requiring this class of future Muslim leaders?

Sakina's concern over the usage of the word "church," in the course syllabus and in Jim's introductory remarks, as opposed to a more inclusive statement ("church *or* mosque") or a neutral designator ("religious community"), demonstrates her apprehension about inclusivity, and about making intellectual and communal space for the Muslim students in a predominantly Christian class. Her contentions represent a Muslim student's anxiety about the relevance of the course material for her purposes, planned by a Christian professor with relatively little Islamic knowledge, and with only a Christian student body in mind. The conversion of a United Church seminary's curricular requirements into a stream for Muslim leadership education, the linguistic exclusion (and subsequent inclusion) of non-Christian religious communities into the course syllabus ("church" and "mosque"), and the search for an Arabic (and hence, Islamic) equivalent of the word "mission" into "da`wa," each illustrate the social and dynamic processes of translation.

This case, however, also points out some of the potential dangers suggested by Venuti and Asad, associated with the translational act. Both the larger, institutional dynamics (requiring a course designed for Christian students without a significant redesign to include Muslim students), and the smaller classroom dynamics (asking the Muslim students what they should be taught and superficially equating terminology) reflect the potentially negative consequences of equating Christian and Muslim theological discourses. These ideas, "mission" and "da`wa" may in fact be concepts worth comparing in a multifaith classroom in productive ways for both Christian and

Muslim students, *through* an acknowledgment of each term's specificity and context, but they are not equivalent terms or concepts and treating them as such only reifies the power dynamic at work in this contact zone.

In a later interview, Jim clarifies that his goal in this particular course centers on religious traditions' "complicated relationship with the 'other'" (Jim 2012), a relevant and important topic for Christians and Muslims alike. The historical and contemporary context pertaining to this matter, however, varies drastically from one tradition to the other. The assumption of equivalence imposes a logic relevant to Christianity upon the Muslim students, reinforcing an imbalance of power in these multifaith educational spaces.

Translations and Representations

The following sections examine the relationship between translation and representation, as evidenced in the classroom spaces of the institutions I research. Over the course of my time at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont, I noticed repeated examples in which Muslims were asked to "translate" Islamic concepts, figures, and practices to their non-Muslim colleagues, often in relation to Christianity. These translations subsequently often led to the Muslim student(s) acting as a representative for the tradition of Islam. Such examples thus connect the act of translation to the subject of representation. However, as the following sections demonstrate, this result applies unequally to the Christian and Muslim students observed. More often than not, Christian students were able to speak as individuals, while Muslim students came to

speak on behalf of the entirety of their tradition, once again pointing out the varying translational burdens exhibited in these multifaith classrooms.

“I Don’t Mind Translating...Isn’t That What It’s All About?”: Muslim Translations and Representations

I meet with Emmanuel College student, Janet, in her apartment in a high rise in the suburbs outside of Toronto, wide windows providing a view of downtown Mississauga. I sit cross-legged on her couch, while she prepares snacks and tea in her kitchen. We chat amicably, as I comment on the pile of books that I see stacked on her dining room table. It’s finals season, and Janet has been researching diligently for her term papers. I initiate a conversation regarding a moment I observed in a class at Emmanuel, during which Janet attempted to translate the class content into a context relevant to her. The class focused on the performative nature of sacred texts. Both times she spoke in class, Janet brought up an example from Islamic history, but the predominantly Christian class exhibited little interest in her contributions. I say to her, “I noticed a couple of times that you would bring something up, and the class conversation would sort of...” *Thud*. I slam my hand on the coffee table, illustrating the sense of classroom conversation falling violently flat. “Do you find that that’s a common experience?”

“That’s a common experience inside and outside of class,” she admits. “People are not sure how to respond, because of what they’re hearing in the media. They’re getting a lot of misinformation. When the first thing you hear about is that some guy put a bomb in his shoe and tried to blow up a plane [and is a] suspected terrorist...” She sighs,

leaving her thought unfinished. Janet contextualizes her classmates' response, or lack thereof, to a sense of cognitive dissonance. The image she presents of Islam is markedly different than that presented by the mainstream media, she argues, which she interprets as confusing for the general non-Muslim public. Janet declares that she will continue contributing to class discussions, however, because she feels a sense of duty to offer a different representation of Islam. This strikes me as somewhat of a heavy burden, so I ask her how she feels acting as a "representative of Islam."

I love it. I think it's important. Isn't that what we're supposed to do? The moment that you put yourself out there, even *before* you put yourself out there, you have to ask yourself, "Am I ready for this?" This is a responsibility, as a religious leader. As a woman wearing *hijab*, this is a *big* responsibility. Even if I wasn't going to be a chaplain. I'm putting my faith out there for everybody to see... I don't mind translating. You know, our Prophet, at the time he got his first revelation, there were very few people [who were open to his message.] By the time he passed away, there's probably only like a hundred Muslims, you know? So my experience is minor compared to his... So as a Muslim chaplain, I don't mind translating. I don't mind being an ambassador. I knew that going in. Isn't that what it's all about? (Janet 2012).

For Janet, and for many of my respondents, the process of translation is intimately connected to religious representation. Her classroom contributions allow her the opportunity to present a different image of Islam to her non-Muslim colleagues, countering the widespread negative images and stereotypes of Muslims in contemporary society.

While Janet's experience involved a lack of demonstrated interest on the part of her Christian colleagues, I witnessed many other examples where Christian students actively sought the opinions of their Muslim classmates regarding Islamic belief and practice. These examples nonetheless reinforce the representative role of Muslims in multifaith classrooms. Furthermore, in many of these cases, most Christian students

assume the correspondence of Christian ideas and themes with Islamic equivalents. A few examples include:

- A conversation in a class on Islamic Theology, Philosophy, and Mysticism at Claremont-Lincoln, where a Christian student asked his Muslim classmates, “Is there a Muslim equivalent for [the Biblical figure] Isaiah?”
- An instance at Hartford Seminary, in a class entitled “Dialogue in a World of Difference,” in which a Methodist student posed a question about shaking hands with Muslims of the opposite sex: “I’d like to know from my Muslim friends, what is appropriate in terms of touching?”
- A discussion at Emmanuel College in Classical Islamic Thought, during which a Lutheran student asked the Muslims in the class, “Do progressive Muslims tend to be *“sola Qur’an?”*”

These types of exchanges stood out as significant, due to the fact that the Muslim students of the class, by virtue of the fact of their religious identity, became not only an educational resource to their non-Muslim colleagues, but a representative authority, as well.

In other cases, Muslim students offered explanations or interpretations of Islam to the class, unprompted by questions from their non-Muslim colleagues. Many of these examples began with the phrase, “As Muslims, we believe...,” followed by statements regarding various aspects of the tradition. Examples to this effect include:

- A discussion in a Hartford Seminary class, “Dialogue in a World of Difference,” regarding interactions between different genders, during which a Muslim student stated: “One thing to keep in mind about Islam is that marriage the only way [a man and a woman] can have a legitimate relationship.”
- A conversation between several students at Emmanuel College, in which a Muslim student explains to her Christian colleagues that Qur’an “does not allow for female imams.”
- A moment in an Islamic Bioethics at Claremont-Lincoln University, during which a Muslim student opined that hospital employees shouldn’t allow Muslim inpatients to fast. “If they are sick enough to be hospitalized,” he argued, “they should also not be fasting.”

Rather than focusing on the answers to the above questions, or the veracity of the aforementioned claims made by the Muslim students, I point to these dialogues as illustrations of the Muslim assumption of a representational role in the multifaith classrooms I research. As demonstrated in the above examples, this role is at times adopted willingly by the Muslim students, and at times imposed upon them by their Christian colleagues, signaling the potential for this responsibility to be at once empowering and burdensome.

"When You Have Hegemony, You Don't Have To Be Specific.": Christian Translations and Representations

While translations by Muslim students like the examples described above were a ubiquitous element of my fieldwork in multifaith seminary setting, they occurred significantly less on the part of the Christian students. I witnessed occasional instances in which a Muslim student asked their Christian colleagues for explanations about some element of their religious tradition. In one such example, a Muslim student at Emmanuel College asked her Christian classmates, "In Christianity, is there a reward for memorizing the text of the Bible? In our tradition, we are encouraged to memorize the Qur'an, in Arabic." In another seminar conversation about Salafi Islam at Claremont Lincoln University, a Christian student observed that he saw parallels between Salafism and the Protestant Reformation (yet another translation of a specific Islamic movement into a Christian context). In light of this statement, a Muslim classmate responded, "Excuse my ignorance, but what does that mean: 'It's like the Reformation'"? As stated above, these moments were much rarer than cases in which Muslims performed translational work.

This imbalance in the frequency of such exchanges is perhaps unsurprising in light of the theories of Venuti and Asad. Not only were many of these classrooms predominantly Christian; resources and texts, particularly related to the development of professional chaplaincy skills, were often written from a Christian perspective.

These translational imbalances highlight important intercommunal dynamics, reflective of larger societal realities. Christian students are required to translate with less frequency precisely because Christianity provides the overwhelming “logic” of the institutions in question. In addition, the cultural dominance of Christianity in North America impacts the dynamics of the multifaith classrooms in question. I discuss this issue in an interview with Emmanuel College professor, Dr. Natalie Wigg-Stevenson, who comments on the ways in which Christian norms shape Canadian culture:

Here in Canada, in Toronto, the ‘ways of being’ are shaped towards Christianity. You still get free parking on a Sunday morning until noon, and that means that when I go to church I can drive to church, and I can park for free, and that as soon as church is up, I drive home and I’m done. I don’t think there would be any other religious tradition in the city that gets free parking. There are still these weird ways that the city is structured to Christian practice. They have benefitted the Christians, and they don’t call the Christians to open ourselves up to change. And what that means is that the patterns of living for people who are *not* Christians change. Sunday morning brunch culture can thrive because there is free parking. Part of my family is Jewish, and I can see the ways Christianity has impacted the way that they [practice] Judaism because they live in a culture shaped by Christianity (Wigg-Stevenson 2012).

I propose that the imbalance of translational efforts reflects an assumed awareness and intelligibility of Christianity. The unevenness of these exchanges indicates that in these dialogical settings, the bulk of the translational burden rests upon the Muslim students. The intelligibility of Islam, then, depends upon its mediation via Christianity.

While the translational burden thus falls primarily to the Muslim students in these interfaith classrooms, the Muslim presence nonetheless raises issues of religious

representation for the Christian students, as well. I asked Professor Kathleen Greider of Claremont School of Theology to discuss the impact of the presence of Muslim students in her courses on spiritual care on her Christian students, to which she responded:

Being in multi-religious contexts causes Christians to be more conscious of how difficult it is to represent themselves as Christians. It has different edges for different Christians, but sometimes what happens is that they find themselves admiring and even feeling jealous of people from other traditions who can speak pretty easily and naturally about what their religious tradition means to them. You know, so people will say, ‘As a Muslim...,’ or ‘In my school of Buddhist meditation...’ And there’s a kind of particularity and transparency about what someone’s religious identity means to them that a lot of Christians, especially in a progressive Christian environment, have tended not to do (K. Greider 2013).

Dr. Greider’s statement highlights the double-edged nature of religio-cultural dominance. Christian seminary students, rarely put in a position to articulate the specificity of their religious identity, experience difficulty in representing themselves “as Christians.” As such, the Muslim presence in these classroom spaces impels Christian students to consider the particularities of their religious subjectivity in ways that would not be possible in a mono-religious setting. As Hartford Seminary Professor, Dr. Lucinda Mosher framed the issue: “When you have hegemony, you don't have to be specific” (Mosher 2012).

Conclusion

This chapter used the lens of translation to examine the processes by which professional standards, degrees, and curricula historically rooted in Christianity are made relevant in an Islamic framework. Translation thus represents a technique by which distinct elements are simultaneously held in proximity and at a distance. The work of translation theorists such as Lawrence Venuti and Talal Asad highlight the potential

dangers of these efforts, underscoring the argument that translation is always configured hierarchically, reinforcing dynamics of dominance and marginality. The discussions above accentuate the words of Friedrich Schleiermacher, mentioned earlier in this chapter, on the subject of translation: “In my opinion there are only two possibilities. Either the translator leaves the writer in peace as much as possible and moves the reader toward him; or he leaves the reader in peace as much as possible and moves the writer toward him” (Schleiermacher 2012, 49). This chapter pursued the question, who is left in peace and who does the moving in the case of the multifaith classrooms at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont?

CHAPTER THREE: TRANSLATING SPACES

“We are...confronted by an indefinite multitude of spaces,” argues French philosopher Henri Lefebvre, “each one piled upon, or perhaps contained within, the next: geographical, economic, demographic, sociological, ecological, political, commercial, national, continental, global” (Lefebvre 1991, 8). This capacious definition facilitates rich analyses of spaces including but not limited to the physical. Space, according to Lefebvre, is active, operational, and instrumental; it is a production of society, and simultaneously guides the production of society. This chapter analyzes constructions and translations of various kinds of spaces— physical, intellectual, and devotional— in the context of the multifaith seminaries I research, including Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont.

What is so important about space, particularly the multifaith spaces that I research? On the one hand, multifaith spaces are becoming increasingly normative in the religiously plural landscapes of North America and Europe (Bender, *The Architecture of Multi-Faith Prayer: An Introduction* n.d.). In spite of their growing popularity, Courtney Bender proposes that there is also something strange about such spaces and asks, “Why does [the construction of multi-faith spaces] *not* seem like an impossible task? Or rather, why does it appear to be a necessary one?” (Bender n.d.). In the case of Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont, the inception of religious leadership programming for students of different faiths, primarily Christian and Muslim, transforms these historically liberal Protestant institutions into complex multifaith environments. This chapter questions the ways in which previously homogeneous

religious spaces are translated for multifaith use, and examines some of the ways in which students, faculty, and administration negotiate these translations.

My research focuses on historically Protestant Christian seminaries in the United States and Canada that, for various reasons, are diversifying their student body to include members of other faith traditions.⁸³ The existence of Muslim leadership educational programs in historically Christian seminaries presents an argument about the relationship between Christianity and Islam, specifically, and about religious pluralism, more generally; These programs advance the logic that it is possible for Christians and Muslims to receive religious leadership training together, that they should learn together, and that space (both physical and rhetorical) must be made to do so. I view these spatial considerations, which include translations of physical space, intellectual space, and prayerful space (explained below) among the necessary translations⁸⁴ that make possible multifaith theological education. I observed two main methods of managing multifaith educational spaces at play in these seminaries; neutrality, in which the creation of multifaith spaces involved eliminating markers of religious distinctiveness; and specificity, in which distinctive elements of each tradition are kept intact and held together.

First, I analyze these seminaries' translations of physical spaces in considering their diverse student bodies. In what ways are the material spaces of Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont transformed, altered, renovated, or kept intact to meet the needs of the multireligious community? How are the logics of neutrality and

⁸³ See Chapter One.

⁸⁴ See Chapter Two.

specificity balanced to make space for religiously diverse student bodies, producing functional and welcoming spaces for all students? In a very concrete way, these theological schools themselves become models— living testaments to the possibility of interreligious cooperation in a religiously plural world.

Secondly, I examine the construction of intellectual spaces associated with Muslim leadership programs I research. For many of my respondents, these programs provide spaces in which to critically study Islam in an academic environment, while occupying an “insider” perspective, thus bridging the scholarly and the confessional. Muslim students that I interviewed expressed fears about studying Islam in the secular academy, which they view as “tainted” by the histories and legacies of Orientalism. Secular universities leave no room for a person of faith to study their religious tradition, particularly those from a Muslim background. At the same time, these students express simultaneously articulate a desire for a more intellectually rigorous and “critical” approach to Islam not found in more traditional seminary settings, whether at home or abroad. These programs therefore represent unique spaces for Muslims in North America to study Islam— as insiders—while employing the academic methods and rigor of the secular university. Interestingly, anxieties about the legacy of Orientalism within the secular academia, in relation to the dissemination of knowledge about Islam, did not appear to be a concern for Muslim students studying in the Christian seminaries. In spite of the historical relationship between the academic study of “the Orient” and Christian missionary work in “the Orient,” Muslim students communicate that the presumption of shared religious belief renders these theological schools more hospitable places in which to study Islam than the secular academy.

Following this discussion, I analyze what I will be calling the translation of “prayerful spaces.” Rather than “prayer spaces,” (which I examine as a type of “physical space”), I consider attempts to sacralize seminary space through prayer, whether formally or informally, in classrooms and in chapels, as a method of creating “prayerful spaces.” These acts manifest as an important element of seminary life, a key signal in marking this type of education as distinct from secular studies. They act as a means of blessing the pursuit of education, a way of foregrounding religious identity, and a method of re-centering and reminding students of their ultimate goals as seminarians, whether or not their ultimate goal is to work within their faith communities. While the act of praying in seminary classrooms is a long established practice, I ask how the introduction of Muslim students into these religious environments complicates these acts, raising again questions about the balance between neutrality and specificity. Generally, I observed that Muslim students tended to pursue a model of neutrality when participating in prayer-related activities with their Christian colleagues, while Christian students retained the privilege of inhabiting the particularity of their faith. These divergent methods of constructive prayerful spaces, I argue, underscore the asymmetrical power relationships that define multifaith classrooms housed in Christian seminaries.

This observation brings me to the final section of this chapter, which considers the larger politics of translating seminaries into multifaith spaces. Given the previously discussed perils of translation,⁸⁵ I ask, is it possible to create genuinely inclusive, “safe spaces” for Muslims in predominantly Christian seminaries? What are the implications and the outcomes, intended or unintended, of such endeavors?

⁸⁵ See Chapter Two.

Contesting Space: Pluralism and Territory

In religiously plural environments, space has often been identified as grounds for interreligious conflict and contestation, as well as for potential collaboration. In his article, “Worlds in Space: American Religious Pluralism in Geographic Perspective,” Bret E. Carroll proposes that any examination of religious pluralism in the United States requires a consideration of spatial politics. Understandings of space, Carroll notes, are central to religious experience and the construction of religious identity, and are often deployed in moments of interreligious conflict:

The annual government publication *Hate Crimes Statistics* (Federal Bureau of Investigation and Department Justice 2010) regularly suggests that most religiously motivated hate crimes are directed against property rather than people, and *Racial and Religious Violence in America: A Chronology* lists numerous acts of arson and vandalism in its 650-page list of acts of violence (Carroll 2012, 309).

Given this overwhelming statistic, it is easy to see why understanding religious pluralism in North America requires one to explore competitions and conflicts concerning space. Introducing his article with the example of New York City’s Park51 mosque (known by its critics as the “Ground Zero Mosque”), Carroll argues that the production of sacred spaces in pluralistic settings often results in contestations and conflict, given the reality of the limitation of physical space.

While Carroll focuses primarily on spatial contestations as revealing what scholar Diana Eck calls the “fault lines” of American pluralism (Eck 2006), he also briefly mentions some examples of interfaith spatial cooperation. For instance, Congregation Beth El, a Jewish congregation in New London, Connecticut, shared its worship space with the then newly established Islamic Center of New London while the Muslim community sought its own space (Carroll 2012, 332). And in Fremont, California, St.

Paul's United Methodist Church and the Islamic Society of the East Bay held a joint groundbreaking ceremony to commemorate the building of their church and mosque, side by side (Carroll 2012, 334). These examples indicate a cooperative spatial dynamic amongst different religious communities.

Multifaith Spaces: the Politics of Sharing Space

A growing body of scholarship explores the architectural and social significance of “multifaith spaces.” Found in various places, such as airports, hospitals, prisons, universities and shopping centers, these spaces, “unlike chapels, churches, synagogues, and mosques- all of which are designed for particular ritual activities and draw on or speak to specific theologies and religious histories...must make it possible for individuals or groups with diverse theologies, rituals, and symbols to pray” (Bender n.d.). For example, Sophie Gilliat-Ray examines the construction of sacred spaces in various public institutions, and in particular, examines transformations in chapel worship in prisons and in hospitals in Britain. An increase in religious diversity in the United Kingdom, along with general societal changes, contributes to a number of changes in the organization, management, and spaces of religious worship within these institutions. She remarks:

We have seen a decline in corporate worship, and often a reduction in the *quantity* of space given over to religion. In some prisons and hospitals, there has been a ‘neutralising’ of the space so that it can be used ‘by People of all faiths, and none’, and alongside this process some Chapels have been re-named (Gilliat-Ray 2005, 291).

Spaces previously referred to as “chapels” (indicating Christian heritage and focus) are increasingly becoming known by new terminology, such as “prayer rooms,” “quiet

rooms,” and “multifaith rooms,” and physical spaces are adapted or altered to meet the religiously diverse clientele.

Wendy Cadge analyses the institution of hospital chaplaincy, as well as the spaces of hospital chapels in the United States. She notes how in the American context these public chapels have shifted from accommodating a predominantly Protestant Christian clientele to an increasingly diverse religious body, thus requiring either a more neutral or flexible space. She observes:

While seemingly inclusive chapel spaces could be multifaith and include objects from a range of religious and spiritual traditions, it is notable that they increasingly do not. Instead, these generic, often blank-walled rooms point to a particular response to religious diversity that is less about recognizing and naming various religious or spiritual beliefs and practices, and more about efforts to remove such symbols and create generic spaces intended to accommodate people and not offend (Cadge 2012, 54).

Cadge’s research thus demonstrates how secular hospitals in America shape understandings of and make arguments about religious pluralism and approaches to inclusivity.

While Gilliat-Ray and Cadge ask “how to create a genuinely inclusive space” (Brand 2012, 219) in public institutions, my research raises similar questions about spaces already marked as “religious.” How do Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Claremont School of Theology, historically Christian theological schools, make space for their Muslim student bodies? Does the logic of neutrality, observed by both scholars as the increasingly accepted mode of managing religious diversity in public spaces, function in spaces defined by religious specificity?

Translating Physical Spaces

My research examines liberal Protestant seminary campuses, overtly “religious” institutions, and how translations of space signal complex changes in the conceptualization of relationships specifically between Christianity and Islam, and more generally amongst “Abrahamic” traditions. I argue here that translating predominantly Christian seminaries into multireligious educational institutions requires considerations and accommodations of physical space. Sophie Gilliat-Ray notes in her examination of the historical transformation of chapel spaces in public institutions, one common method of dealing with increasing religious diversity is to “neutralize” space by de-emphasizing religious distinctiveness, so that the space may be used “by people of all faiths, and none” (Gilliat-Ray 2005, 291). An alternative method for dealing with religious diversity that I observed in the field, unexamined in depth by Gilliat-Ray, involves the conscious inclusion of multiple distinct traditions through architectural choices, décor, and the provision of different types of ritual spaces and objects. The seminaries I research each do in fact utilize a combination of strategies of neutrality and inclusivity. The latter method of “inclusion through honoring distinctiveness” is the result of the fact that these institutions, as opposed to the public institutions that Gilliat-Ray examines, are indeed religious institutions, founded precisely upon the basis of religious identity. The neutralization of religious identity in such a space is therefore undesirable, unnecessary, and arguably impossible while maintaining the integrity of the seminary’s mission. Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Claremont School of Theology thus create, renovate, and decorate physical spaces to symbolically and practically cater to multiple

religious traditions. I ask, how do these negotiations of space unfold, and what are their implications? What visions of religious pluralism do they convey?

This section concludes with an in depth examination of Emmanuel College as a case study, given the fact that during my field research, the school undertook a major renovation project to accommodate their new Muslim student population, as well as the general Muslim population of the University of Toronto a whole. I therefore witnessed some of the processes of translation first hand, and was privy to the justifications of such changes, as well as their immediate impact.

Hartford Seminary

The physical space of Hartford Seminary utilizes both strategies of spatial neutrality as well as particularity to foster religious inclusivity on campus. Given the longstanding presence of Muslim (and Jewish) students at the seminary, “Muslim space” on campus appears long established, producing little if any contestation. In 1972, Hartford Seminary moved from being a “traditional residential divinity school for the Protestant ministry,” to an “interdenominational theological center” (Meier n.d.). Given this institutional shift in identity from Congregationalist seminary to “ecumenical hub” (Hartford Seminary n.d.), Hartford Seminary made the decision to sell the existing campus and “build a single structure to house all its activities and project a new image of scholarship and service” (Meier n.d.), and hired architect Richard Meier to execute their vision. The fruit of Meier’s work, completed in 1981, stands now at 77 Sherman Street in Hartford, a stark white building, comprised of porcelain panels on a steel foundation, a striking building surrounded by Victorian houses and the Gothic Revival style buildings

of UConn School of Law, which were actually original home of Hartford Seminary.⁸⁶ “Over the years,” a page on Hartford Seminary’s website states, “the local community has named this building *the refrigerator, the icebox, the igloo, and the UFO*” (Hartford Seminary's Iconic Meier Building Restored n.d.), denoting the uniqueness, and the eccentricity of the structure. The building contains library, a chapel, a bookstore, classrooms, workspaces, offices, and a large meeting room (Meier n.d.). Meier’s website explains that the aim of his design was to reflect the shifting identity of the seminary itself:

The building’s concept addresses the seminary’s dual role as an introverted institution devoted to contemplation and scholarship, and an extroverted one engaged in fostering religious understanding in the world at large. It consists of a partially cloistered, inward-directed organization of spaces, a place for peaceful gather and quiet study. At the same time, it is intended to be the center of a larger domain that reaches out to the public, informs it, and invites it to take part. As such, the building’s only organizational hierarchy is the architectural distinction made between public and private areas of activity: public spaces dominate private ones (Meier n.d.).

The introspective gaze of the seminary is conveyed architecturally along with outward reach. Part of this outreach, for which Hartford Seminary is best known, is its work in interfaith engagement, beginning with the efforts of Duncan Black Macdonald, an Orientalist scholar who spearheaded the Seminary’s Islamic Studies program, and for whom the Center for Christian-Muslim Relations derives its name.⁸⁷ This interfaith leaning also produced yet another shift in the institution’s identity throughout the years, namely, a change in focus “from proselytizing to dialogue” (Hartford Seminary n.d.). The modern, nontraditional white building, with no obvious markers of the seminary’s

⁸⁶ See Figure 1.

⁸⁷ See Chapter One.

Christian heritage, stands in sharp contrast with the more traditional Neo-Gothic buildings of the old seminary across the street, and signifies a more religiously “neutral” image.



Figure 1. The main building of Hartford Seminary, designed by Richard Meier

The chapel, a bright, open space with large windows, white walls, and a light wood floor and housed inside the main building, also reflects the general neutral style.⁸⁸ There are no fixed religious markers or symbols in the room, although there was a large, movable cross and Muslim prayer rugs stored in different areas of the chapel. The main objects in the room included an upright piano, potted plants, and lightweight, movable chairs. According to Dr. Timur Yuskaev, while the chapel was intended to be an

⁸⁸ See Figure 2.

ecumenically friendly, non-denominational Christian prayer space, the Jewish population at Hartford Seminary uses the space as well. In addition, Muslims on campus use the space on Friday afternoons for Jum`ah prayers. A community prayer schedule is available at the seminary, denoting the contact person in charge of worship on any particular day, the type of service being offered, and the level of formality and inclusivity to be expected by the audience.



Figure 2. The Chapel at Hartford Seminary

This flexibility of usage amongst diverse religious communities that entail a broad range of religious practices reflects an attitude that the increasing religious pluralism at the seminary is best met through the neutralization of space. Describing similar spaces in hospital contexts, Wendy Cadge explains, “these spaces point to a particular response to

religious pluralism in American life that is less about recognizing and naming diverse religious beliefs and practices, including none, and more about efforts to remove religious symbols and create generic spaces that will accommodate people and not offend” (Cadge 2013, 202). This method of dealing with pluralism may make sense in the context of public institutions such as hospitals, but what is the significance of such neutralization in Christian seminaries?

In spite of the main building’s aura of neutrality, there are other spaces on Hartford Seminary campus that reflect a more multireligious character. In 2009, Hartford Seminary purchased a building at 60 Lorraine Street, and named it the Martin and Aviva Budd Interfaith Building to commemorate the donors who made possible the acquisition. Martin Budd, former chair of the board and trustee, illustrates his commitment to the vision of Hartford Seminary as an interfaith institution, rather than simply an ecumenical Protestant seminary, stating, “Relations between Christians and Muslims may be the most important of the century” (Hartford Seminary Expands Campus 2009). According to President Heidi Hadsell, The Budd building, home to the Macdonald Center for the Study of Christian-Muslim Relations, signals the seminary’s “commitment to further implement [their] vision of theological education in which interfaith dialogue is a critical part” (Hartford Seminary Expands Campus 2009). In addition to providing space for faculty for the Macdonald Center, the Budd building also houses the “Building Abrahamic Partnerships” Program,⁸⁹ the offices of several faculty members in interfaith relations, a

⁸⁹ Since 2004, Hartford Seminary has sponsored an interfaith training program for Jews, Christians, and Muslims. The program consists of an eight-day intensive course designed to impart basic conceptual frameworks, which is then followed by advanced-level training. This program was developed by Dr. Yehezkel Landau, Hartford Seminary’s first full time Jewish faculty member, appointed in 2002. Landau writes, “The success of BAP [Building Abrahamic Partnerships] is partly due to its setting, the United States in general and Hartford Seminary in particular. The Seminary’s history of sponsoring interreligious encounters, studies, and events is one conducive factor. Also, Hartford is situated in the heart of New

student lounge, a prayer room, archive space for *The Muslim World* journal, as well as office space for visiting scholars (Hartford Seminary Expands Campus 2009).⁹⁰ The space of the Budd building, although it was purchased, and not constructed with the same intentionality as the main building, conveys the religious diversity of the student body and faculty. Unlike the main building, there is less of an emphasis on neutrality, and more of a focus on “multifaith” representation (Cadge 2013, 202). Inside of the glass paned doors of the Budd building, one sees enclosed shelves holding various religious and decorative objects, as well as photos and books.⁹¹ Various styles of crosses and a Communion chalice sit underneath a Jewish prayer shawl and a *yarmulke*, while books published by Hartford Seminary faculty line the bottom shelf. Paintings on the wall include a photograph of a mosque, as well as several photos from a manuscript: images from *Surat al-Fatiha*, the opening chapter of the Qur’an,⁹² and two portraits: the first, a portrait of St. John dictating to a seated disciple, and the second, a portrait of St. Mark with writing implements.⁹³ The large seminar room in the Budd building likewise features built-in shelving with similar decorative or ritual objects from the various Abrahamic faiths, as well as photographs of previous students and faculty at the

England- a general liberal and tolerant region- making it accessible to students along the east coast...” (Landau n.d.). The general rationale of the project, as Landau outlines, is that “all our faith communities need help to overcome mutual ignorance and estrangement. Because this is a painful process, we need trained clergy, educators, and facilitators to help us confront the exclusivism and triumphalism that have, at times, turned each of our sacred traditions into a weapon of unholy war” (Landau n.d., 5).

⁹⁰ See Figure 3.

⁹¹ See Figure 4.

⁹² The photos of the Qur’an manuscripts were donated to the seminary by Former Seminary President, Barbara Brown Zikmund (Former President Barbara Brown Zikmund Donates Framed Qu’ran Manuscripts n.d.).

⁹³ In 1994, Hartford Seminary published a full color book, *The Illuminated Manuscripts of Hartford Seminary*, which reproduced photos and information about Armenian and Qur’anic manuscripts that were once held by the seminary. See: (Kerr 1994).

seminary. These aesthetic decisions construct a multifaith space through the inclusion of varied symbols and material objects from Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.



Figure 3. The Martin and Aviva Budd Interfaith Building, home of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Christian-Muslim Relations

Muslim presence on Hartford Seminary campus is not just cultivated aesthetically, but functionally, as well. One of the rooms in the Budd building serves as a dedicated prayer space, which was part of the original plan of the building once Hartford Seminary purchased it. I observed this space used frequently by students and faculty in between classes or during class breaks. In addition, the bathrooms of the Budd building come equipped with spouted water vessels, employed for the purposes of ritual ablutions (*wudu*'), as well as instructional posters on the walls illustrating the correct performance

of wudu'.⁹⁴ The Budd building not only represents the religious diversity of its student and faculty population aesthetically, but practically, as well.



Figure 4. A display in the Budd Building showcases material objects associated with Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, as well as scholarship produced at Hartford Seminary or by Hartford Seminary faculty⁹⁵

Bayan Claremont

“What would be the good of learning without love- it would puff us up. And love without learning- it would go astray.” These inspirational words, attributed to Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, medieval French abbot, stand out in gold letters on a matte black

⁹⁴ The inclusion of these instructional posters raises questions about for whom these images are intended. The performance of ritual ablutions represents basic ritual knowledge for Muslims who pray. It therefore appears odd to include this information in seminary bathrooms for Muslims wishing to perform salah. One therefore must entertain the possibility that the posters are for non-Muslims sharing these washroom spaces with Muslim classmates and colleagues.

⁹⁵ Image from Hartford Seminary website (Macdonald Center Contact n.d.).

plaque on the side of a building at Claremont School of Theology. It is not without irony that I consider the words of Bernard of Clairvaux, preacher of the Second Crusade, preserved on the edifice that now houses a Muslim college. Bayan Claremont, the Islamic Graduate School at Claremont School of Theology, is relatively new, having begun in the year 2011 and still navigating its position and relationship with the seminary.⁹⁶ Spatial negotiations also factor into life at Bayan Claremont, which is housed on the campus of Claremont School of Theology. Edward Durell Stone — designer of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City and the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., amongst other iconic American buildings—⁹⁷ designed the current campus in 1963 in the “International Style.” This style, developed in the early 20th century, is characterized by “rectilinear forms; plane surfaces that are completely devoid of applied ornamentation; and open, even fluid, interior spaces” (International Style of Modern Architecture n.d.). The campus of CST does indeed evoke a sense of openness and brightness, nestled in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. While the architectural style differs from that of Hartford Seminary, both convey an air of neutrality and ecumenism.

Kresge Chapel stands in the middle of the campus of Claremont School of Theology, an architectural indicator of its centrality in the seminary’s identity.⁹⁸ A towering building named after American entrepreneur, philanthropist, and Methodist, Sebastian Kresge, founder of the K-Mart Corporation (Torres n.d.), Kresge Chapel is used for weekly ecumenical chapel services, meditations, and musical concerts. In

⁹⁶ See Chapter One.

⁹⁷ See (Hunting 2012).

⁹⁸ See Figure 7.

addition, Jewish students employ the space on Fridays for Shabbat services (Hodges 2015). I observed, however, that Muslim students on campus tended to perform their salah in the Cornish Rogers Prayer Chapel, a small room on the West side of campus.⁹⁹ Prior to having access to this space, Muslim students prayed outdoors on the chapel lawn. The chapel, named after longtime CST professor of pastoral theology, Reverend Cornish Rogers, is small, with plush, dark green carpeting and sliding glass doors, which feature a stained glass sunburst at the very top. Blinds cover the glass to offer privacy to those using the space from passersby, and a row of about ten blue chairs lines the edges of the room.



Figure 5. Claremont School of Theology Campus, with Kresge Chapel at center

A white cupboard sits in the corner of the room, which opens to reveal stacks of different-colored Muslim prayer mats, and several round, maroon *zafus*, or meditation

⁹⁹ See Figure 8.

cushions. Meditation mats, *zabutons*, sit on the top of the white cupboard, and on the ground leaning on the outside, rests a cross, about three feet tall, fashioned from thin pieces of bark, and decorated with square gems of blue, green, white, gold, and red. A post-it note remains tucked into the split piece of wood, noting, “PLZ. DO NOT REMOVE,” the emphatic nature of the capital letters hinting that perhaps such an action had taken place in the past. Unlike Hartford Seminary, which focuses primarily on the “Abrahamic” traditions of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, the space at Claremont School of Theology clearly reflects the presence of Asian traditions, as well, in part due to the large East Asian student population on campus, the general impact of Pacific culture on Southern California, and the presence of several Buddhist students on campus.

A bookshelf across from the sliding glass doors holds an assortment of religious literature, including a Bible, a copy of the Book of Mormon, and a brochure on Chondogyo, an indigenous Korean religion. The majority of the texts, however, relate to the Islamic tradition, including a copy of the Qur’an, a book on Prophetic supplications, an encyclopedia on Muslim prayer, and a pamphlet dealing with caregiving for terminal Muslim patients. Lastly, a book entitled *The 99 Beautiful Names of God for All the People of the Book*, by David Bentley an “interfaith” examination of the *asmaa’ al-husna*, “names” of God found in the Qur’an and the sunnah, written with the goal of “mutual understanding” (Bentley 1999, xi). At any given time, fliers for relevant events find their way into the room. During my fieldwork, I saw an advertisement for an Interfaith Seder, sponsored by the Claremont Interfaith Working Group for Middle East Peace, as well as a poster for a presentation entitled, “Jesus the Jew: Why his Jewish identity matters today,” an event sponsored by the Academy for Jewish Religion

California, in collaboration with Claremont Lincoln University, Claremont School of Theology, and Bayan Claremont. Visually and practically, the Cornish Prayer Chapel thus acts as a prayer, meditation, and quiet space for members of different religious backgrounds on the campus of Claremont School of Theology. While the space itself is aesthetically neutral, ritual objects and reading materials indicate the multi-religious functionality of the space. In my observations, however, it was Muslim students, rather than members of other traditions, that most frequently trafficked the space to conduct ritual prayers.

Program founders initiated conversations early on in the existence of Bayan Claremont about a potential large campus redesign, in the hopes of architecturally altering the Methodist seminary into a more visually inclusive space. A committee comprised of faculty, architects, and a student representative was created to brainstorm the project. Jihad Turk explains:

We have had some movement with the university in developing the master plan for the campus. We've brought in an architectural firm that it looks like we're going to be working with to begin the process of possibly redoing the entire campus from scratch to make it state of the art and it would incorporate Islam, Judaism, and Christianity in architectural design, and meet the needs of the student body and the programming as we envision it will be part of the design. It will have prayer spaces and other things if we're able to secure funding for things like Islamic arts and architecture, and music, [making] space for that (Turk 2013).

This plan was formulated with the vision of Bayan College as part of the Claremont-Lincoln Consortium, conceived of as the world's first interreligious university in an attempt to, in the words of then President of Claremont School of Theology, Jerry Campbell, "desegregate religious education" (Sataline 2012). Since that time, Claremont-

Lincoln's goals and identity have changed significantly,¹⁰⁰ and Bayan has chosen instead to remain affiliated with Claremont School of Theology. However, during the time of my fieldwork, I spoke with the student representative on the campus redesign committee, who informed me that Stanford University served as the model for the redesign conception. The Center for Inter-Religious Community, Learning and Experiences (CIRCLE) at Stanford, the home of the Office of Religious Life features a common room, seminar room, lounge area, library, offices, and an interfaith "sanctuary." The CIRCLE website explains:

As the shape itself connotes- open and inclusive- the CIRCLE is a safe haven for diversity, worship, ritual, meditation, reflection, spiritual and intellectual growth. It is a welcoming space where religious and spiritual communities can deepen understanding of one another and in common ground together while embracing the particular aspects of their traditions and practices... The hope and vision is that it continues to be a life-giving and nourishing center for gathering and fellowship- a place that transcends religious boundaries and fosters a multifaith community (CIRCLE: Center for Inter-Religious Community, Learning and Experiences n.d.).

In a conversation with the student representative of the campus redesign, I was informed that the Stanford model of distinct worship spaces joined by a common interfaith sanctuary seemed to appeal most to the committee as a whole. "They have got one room dedicated to each religious tradition that's on campus, basically, and they have an interfaith prayer space in the middle. So a lot of campuses [that] are thinking about interfaith space- the ideal interfaith space, will think about Stanford's interfaith space and want to bottle it. Bottle up whatever that is and bring it here." The desire to translate the physical space on campus into a multifaith environment, both aesthetically and functionally, speaks to a concern for inclusivity and an effort to create spaces for genuine

¹⁰⁰ See Introduction and Chapter One.

interfaith collaboration. At the same time, this model also expresses a desire to maintain distinct, exclusive religious spaces.



Figure 6. The Cornish Rogers Prayer Chapel

Emmanuel College

In this section, I offer a more in depth look at the process of negotiating physical space for Muslims in a predominantly Christian seminary. I began my fieldwork at Emmanuel College during the spring of 2012, just one term after the inaugural semester of the “Master’s of Pastoral Studies, Muslim Stream.”¹⁰¹ When I arrived, I was shown a classroom in the basement of the college, which acted as a temporary prayer room for Muslim students, available while classes were not in session.¹⁰² A large, plastic container sat in the left hand corner of the room, with a paper taped to the lid, marked “prayer

¹⁰¹ See Figures 7 and 8.

¹⁰² See Figures 9 and 10.

rugs,” while a sign hung by the classroom door, indicating the *qibla*, or the direction of the *Ka’ba* in Mecca, towards which Muslims face during prayer. But apart from these indicators, the room appeared to be a normal seminar room. Large tables were pushed together at the center of the room, surrounded by rolling chairs. For one to perform their prayers, this furniture had to be moved out of the way, and a prayer mat laid on the hard linoleum floor.

However, even from the earliest days of the program, the President of Emmanuel College, Mark Toulouse, hoped to create a more permanent prayer space both for the Muslim students in the MPS, but also for the larger University of Toronto Muslim community. While U of T’s sprawling St. George campus offers several different prayer spaces,¹⁰³ many students complained of the lack of accessibility to prayer rooms on the east side of campus, where Victoria University is located. During an interview with President Toulouse, he explained his vision to me: “I believed that on the University of Toronto campus- *not* to have an ablutions facility and a prayer room somewhere in this area of campus, when you have 4,000 or something undergraduate Muslim students- is really a problem...” On one level, then, the creation of a dedicated prayer space for Muslim students fulfilled a campus-wide need on the part of the large Muslim population at the University of Toronto. Of course, President Toulouse expressed a particular concern for meeting the worship needs for present and future Muslim students at Emmanuel College, as well. He states, “If we are going to do a genuine Muslim studies

¹⁰³ The University of Toronto’s Muslim Students Association website lists different spaces on campus where Muslim students may pray, including Robarts library, Bahen Centre for Information Technology, the Leslie Dan Pharmacy Building, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and the Sussex Clubhouse. Each of these buildings offers a private or semi-private place for Muslim students to offer their ritual prayers. In addition, the Multi-Faith Center is equipped with ablutions facilities, as well as a prayer space. See: (Prayer Spaces on Campus n.d.).

program we really needed a space for [prayer] for our students' sake.” The inclusion of Muslims in the Emmanuel community necessitated providing for their ritual and worship centered needs, which, in this case, meant according them a space to perform salah. This dedicated prayer space, renovated from the classroom mentioned above, would exist in addition to the Emmanuel College chapel, located on the third floor of the building, as well as a small multifaith prayer room adjacent to the chapel, “open to all persons of all faiths for quiet meditation and prayer.”¹⁰⁴

The commitment to building a permanent prayer space for Muslims at Emmanuel involved a renovation of approximately twenty thousand Canadian dollars, twelve thousand of which was contributed by different donors from the local Toronto Muslim community, including The Canadian Jaffari Muslim Foundation, the Islamic Foundation of Toronto, the Islamic Institute of Toronto, Muslim Chaplaincy at the University of Toronto, University of Toronto Muslim Students' Association, and the Canadian Dawn Foundation.

¹⁰⁴ Sign posted on the door of the Prayer Room. This room is equipped with prayer mats, kneelers, Bibles, and Qur'ans, and is reserved at different times during the week for Emmanuel College community worship. See Figure 11.



Figure 7. Emmanuel College Exterior



Figure 8. Emmanuel College Entrance



Figure 9. Placard Outside of Classroom at Emmanuel College, spring 2012



Figure 10. Temporary Prayer Space for Muslim Students at Emmanuel College, spring 2012



Figure 11. Multifunctional Prayer Room, Emmanuel College



Figure 12. A Muslim student demonstrates the new ablutions facility at Emmanuel College



Figure 13. The renovated Muslim Prayer Room at Emmanuel College



Figure 14. Artwork in the Emmanuel College Muslim Prayer Room

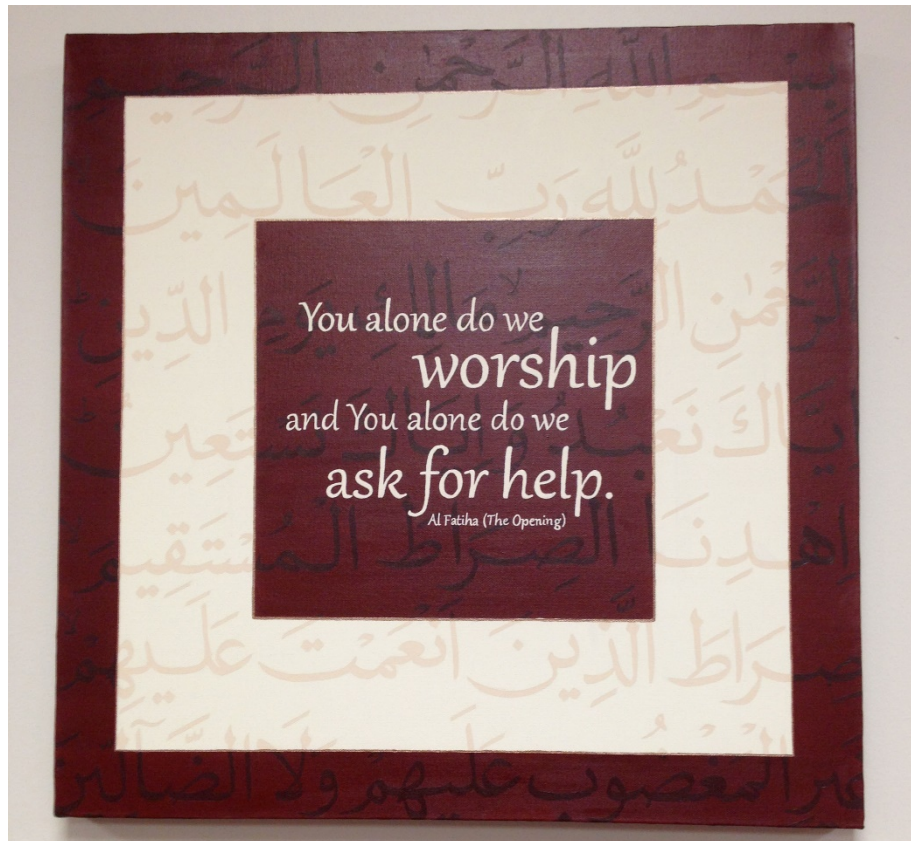


Figure 15. Artwork in the Emmanuel College Muslim Prayer Room

These donors represent a wide swathe of Muslim organizations, including both Sunni and Shi'i institutions, signifying broad support for the project. In addition to these donations, Emmanuel College and Victoria University put forth 90,000 dollars to construct two brand new ablutions facilities, one for men and one for women, a few doors down the hall from the Muslim prayer room.¹⁰⁵

The construction of the ablutions facilities and the renovation of the Muslim prayer room was complete by January, 2013. The renovation of the former classroom involved installing a new hardwood floor, purchasing plush Oriental carpets, erecting a wall at the entrance to avoid disrupting those in prayer, and installing shelving to store

¹⁰⁵ See Figure 12.

shoes and prayer mats.¹⁰⁶ Final additions included repainting, the addition of wainscoting, and the procurement of artwork, discussed below. In all, the project of creating a functional and aesthetically pleasing prayer room signaled the seminary's dedication to making physical, ritual, and symbolic space for Muslim students at Emmanuel College. The Muslim prayer room at Emmanuel not only provides a spacious and comfortable place for Muslims to perform their ritual prayer; it also signals a distinctly *Muslim* space within the seminary's walls. This is done in several ways, beyond the practical and functional uses the room serves. Firstly, it is marked with various recognizably Islamic visual cues, including several pieces of artwork adorning the room's walls. One of these pieces hangs at the entrance of the prayer room, featuring a Qur'anic verse from *Surat al-Hijr* in Arabic calligraphy with the English translation beneath, reading "Enter here in peace in security,"¹⁰⁷ greeting the visitor with a (Qur'anically referenced) reassurance that the area is a "safe space." Interlaced star polygons frame the text, harkening to a traditional Islamic form of artistry; the geometric symmetry and mathematical balance of these patterns were used throughout Islamic art and architectural history to reference God's perfection.¹⁰⁸ Another portrait hangs on the side wall of the prayer room, foregrounding a box of text which features an English translation of a verse from *Surat al-Fatiha*, "You alone do we worship and You alone do we ask for help,"¹⁰⁹ floating on a backdrop of the ghost of the original Arabic script. Both of these pieces of art, in terms of

¹⁰⁶ See Figure 13.

¹⁰⁷ Qur'an 15: 46. See Figure 14.

¹⁰⁸ For more information, see: (Lee 1987).

¹⁰⁹ Qur'an 1:5, see Figure 15.

content and style, mark the room as “Muslim space,” using recognizable aesthetics to reinforce the feeling of welcome, security, and belonging found at the room’s entrance.

One of the most interesting elements that I observed of the Muslim prayer room at Emmanuel College is a simple white board mounted on the back wall. On this white board, visitors began a practice of leaving messages with dry erase markers to the providers of the space, as well as each other, constructing a sense of religious and interreligious community. Before the prayer space was renovated, the white board existed simply as part of a normal classroom tool. “I was going to take that white board that is down there completely out,” President Toulouse told me, “But...it is so heavily used...It is an expression of their spirituality” (Toulouse 2012). He therefore decided instead to replace the original white board with a larger encased board with doors, allowing visitors to continue this practice. Throughout my time at Emmanuel, I saw a steady increase in the use of the white board. Initially, I noted a few messages written in Arabic, common Islamic phrases, such as “*al-hamdu lillah*,”¹¹⁰ as well as the Islamic declaration of faith: “*la illaha ila Allah Muhammad ar-Rasul Allah*.”¹¹¹ However, over time the messages became more numerous, more complex, and personal. Figure 16 (below) documents one phase in the life of the white board. Some of the Islamic formulae persist in this image, along with other Arabic expressions, including the phrases “*barak Allahu feekum*,”¹¹² and “*jazak Allah khayr*,”¹¹³ both communications of thanks.

¹¹⁰ “All praise is due to God.”

¹¹¹ “There is no God except for God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God.”

¹¹² “God’s blessings be upon you all.”

¹¹³ “May God reward you with good.”

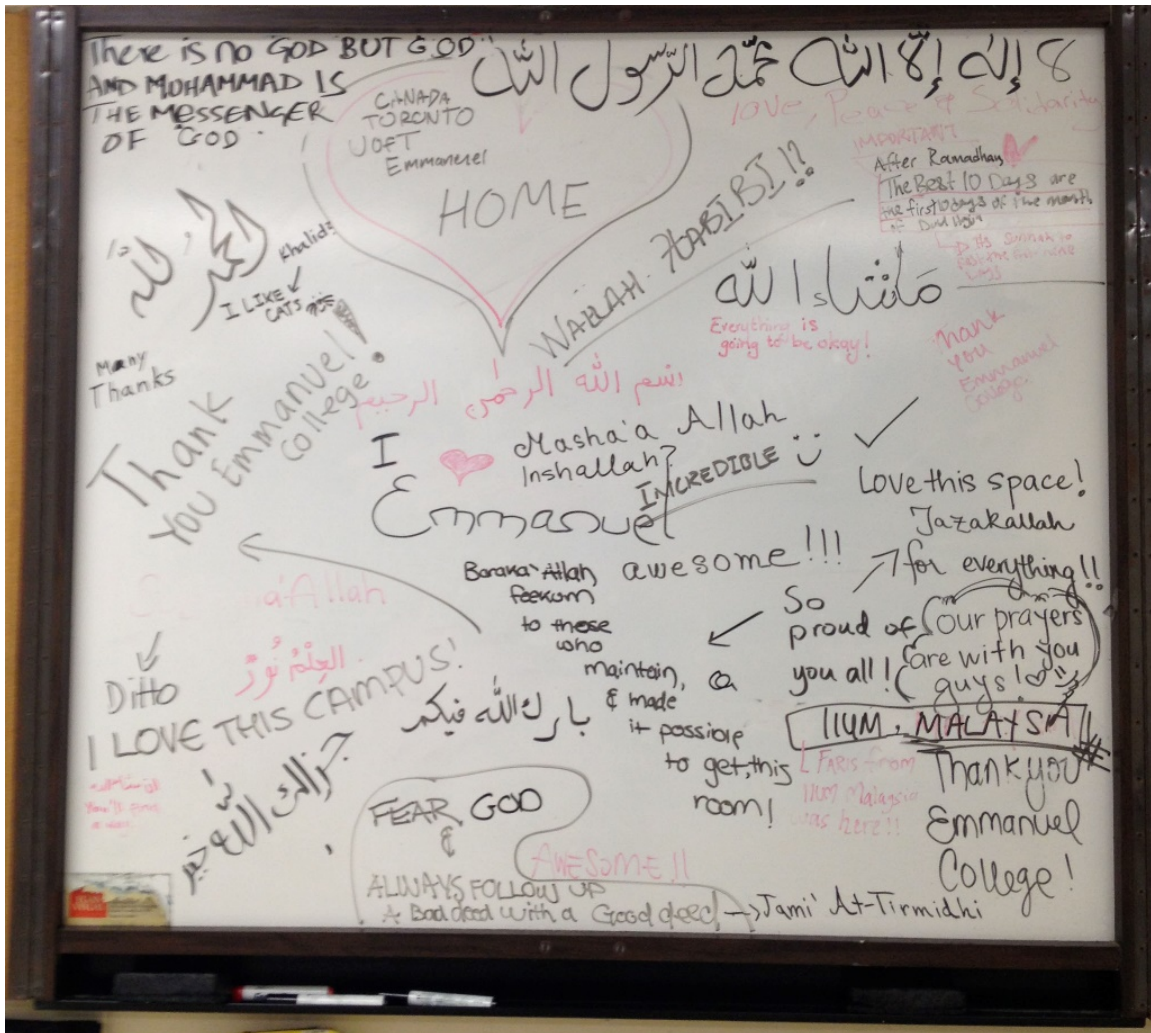


Figure 16: Messages written on the white board by visitors to the Muslim Prayer Room at Emmanuel

Generally speaking, the majority of messages at this time follow in this theme of gratitude, expressing thanks to Emmanuel College for the provision of prayer space. Significantly, a central image sketched on the board consisted of an outline of a heart, enclosing the words “Canada,” “Toronto,” “U of T”, “Emmanuel,” and finally, in capital letters, “HOME.”¹¹⁴ What is communicated in this message is both the desire for and— at least to a certain extent— the achievement of a space of acceptance for Muslims locally,

¹¹⁴ See Figure 16.

as well as nationally in the Canadian context. In this case, Emmanuel College as an institution is in part responsible for constructing such a space, thereby cultivating a “home” for Muslims in a predominantly Christian seminary.

One winter afternoon, after performing afternoon salah in the Muslim prayer room, Sakina, an Emmanuel student, walked over to the white board, picked up a marker, and wrote the question, “How does communicating with God make your day better?” She enclosed her question in a cloud shaped bubble. Noting the “pastoral” tone to the question, I was eager to see what kind of responses, if any, she would receive. Over the next week or two, with almost every trip to the prayer room, I noticed a new reply to Sakina’s question, creating a dialogue amongst the community of visitors via the white board. First, it was “5 times a day- remind yourself what really matters,” followed by “Communicating with God [is] supposed to keep us away from sinful thoughts and deeds. May Allah (SWT)¹¹⁵ guide us all.” Another visitor added, “Reminders of how many blessings we are given!” At one point, however, I noticed the addition of a less optimistic answer. The message left was simple: “It doesn’t.” A day later, there was a response to this note: “I’m a counselor. Email me if you want to talk,” followed by an email address that I recognized as Sakina’s. In this example, the physical white board provided a concrete space for communication about theological, psychological, and spiritual issues. Strangely reminiscent of a Facebook “wall,” the board made space for dialogue between parties without requiring their simultaneous physical presence. The construction of the Muslim prayer room and ablutions facilities at Emmanuel thus illustrates the translation of physical seminary space and the welcoming of Muslim

¹¹⁵ Abbreviation of the phrase, “*subhanahu wa ta`ala*,” meaning, “Glory to Him, the Exalted.”

students at Emmanuel and University of Toronto, more generally. The negotiations of such space appeared to occur without much controversy, with overwhelming support from the faculty, staff, and students to whom I spoke. In this case, religious inclusivity is performed through the creation of “Muslim spaces” within the college, rather than an attempt to neutralize the seminary space. These spaces signify the equal partnership of Christians and Muslims, reflective of the multifaith programming at the school. Although spaces like the prayer room and the ablutions facilities contribute to making space for Muslims in Emmanuel College, the following section explores how the governance of these spaces complicates the vision of an equal partnership between these two religious communities.

The Question of Governance

I turn now to an important factor expressive of the complexities of multifaith spaces, namely the issue of governance. In her research on sacred spaces in public institutions, Sophie Gilliat-Ray states, “Decisions [about shared religious spaces] are made by real people about *how much* space will be allocated for religion, *where* that space will be located within the boundaries of the institution, *what* it will look like, *how* it can be used, *what* it will be called, and *who* can exercise power over the space” (Gilliat-Ray 2005, 298). In the case of these institutions, it is clear that the ultimate authorities answering these questions are the Christian seminaries themselves, reinforcing the Christian administrations’ power over the Muslim minority.

The establishment of the Muslim Studies program and the renovation of space at Emmanuel coincided with the hiring of a Muslim chaplain at the University of Toronto, a

graduate of the Islamic Chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary, Amjad Tarsin. The Muslim chaplaincy project at U of T was spearheaded and made possible by the fundraising efforts of the university's Muslim Students Association. As a gesture of good will, President Toulouse offered Tarsin office space in the basement of Emmanuel across from the Muslim prayer room, although he also has office space in the Multi-Faith Centre across campus. The Muslim Chaplaincy at the University of Toronto website describes the facilities available at Emmanuel College: "Right around the corner from our office is the beautiful Muslim Prayer Room and the excellent Ablution Facilities, making our floor the perfect home for the [Muslim Chaplaincy]."¹¹⁶ Given this convenient location, Tarsin regularly leads congregational prayers, hosts classes and events, and holds meetings in the prayer room.

Given the multiple players involved with the Muslim prayer space, I wondered about the management of potential conflict over space-related issues. Common causes of tension within Muslim communities regarding prayer space often concern governance, gender segregation and the use of barriers, or sectarian issues.¹¹⁷ I asked President Toulouse how he anticipated Emmanuel College might handle any disputes that arose regarding the use of the space. His response acknowledged the need for negotiation amongst the invested parties, but ultimately affirmed Emmanuel College's authority over the spaces in question:

[Any conflict would probably be] managed between the Muslim chaplain's office and my office... We don't have a formal agreement of any kind, but I think there is a high degree of trust... I think that because the prayer space and the ablution facility are in our building, we obviously know their governance falls under our

¹¹⁶ See: (Our Home n.d.).

¹¹⁷ See, for example the following documentary: (Nawaz 2005).

offices. But I wouldn't do anything arbitrarily to either of those spaces...[If] any kind of conflict related to the two rooms came up my first visit would probably be to the chaplain's office and we would talk about the best strategy to mediate any concerns about either of those two spaces (Toulouse 2012).

During the course of my fieldwork, I observed that Muslim chaplaincy events upheld mainstream norms concerning ritual prayer: it was always led by a male (most often the chaplain himself), and always gender segregated, with men in the front of the room and women in the back of the room. However, the cohort of Muslim students enrolled in the MPS at Emmanuel during this time, often pushed the boundaries of these prayer-related norms.

On several occasions, I visited the prayer room with the Muslim students at Emmanuel College for congregational prayer, joined sometimes their professor, Nevin Reda, an advocate of the woman-led prayer movement.¹¹⁸ This group, consisting of both male and female, one openly queer, would often stand shoulder to shoulder, demonstrating their rejection of the idea of gender segregation, each individual taking turns leading prayers, including the women. I asked El-Farouk, student and leader of a queer friendly, gender-egalitarian community in Toronto, if this practice ever caused any tensions with other Muslims using the prayer room. "Well, I'm sure they are not thrilled by it," he laughs, but up until that point, no conflict had occurred. Emmanuel College, as a United Church of Canada seminary, and thus, a queer-affirming institution,¹¹⁹ creates a safe space for him as an openly homosexual Muslim. In fact, he expresses apprehension about Emmanuel shortchanging these values in an attempt to demonstrate their inclusivity of the "mainstream" Muslim community:

¹¹⁸ See Chapter Five.

¹¹⁹ See: (Robinson 2012).

My concern is that Emmanuel College would want to cater to “mainstream Muslim” theology or perspective, which to me is counter-intuitive to it as a queer friendly, gender-affirming church, that it would then host a Muslim program that was also not gender equal and queer-affirming. And if they are going to be doing that, the reality is that it’s not “those kinds” of Muslims that will be coming to a Christian seminary to get a Muslim certification... Why would they come here to Emmanuel College to get a Muslim education? The only reason they would do that is because it gives us a sense of a safe space and of expanding their theology (Khaki 2013).

In the above quotation, El-Farouk raises the intriguing point that his choice to attend Emmanuel was partially predicated on their theological and social stances on sexual identity.¹²⁰ The possibility that Emmanuel would compromise their ideological stance on the issue to partner with “mainstream” Muslim groups, even by remaining neutral to such issues, thus represents a concern for him. The politics of spatial governance thus reveal the complex nature of the relationships between United Church of Canada seminary, the Muslim student body at Emmanuel, and the wider Muslim community at the University of Toronto. This example thus clarifies the larger theological and political negotiations and contestations of power that arise from considerations of space.

Translating Intellectual Spaces

While architectural translations mark an effort to make physical space for Muslims and religious others on seminary campuses, the innovative programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont also construct novel intellectual spaces in which to study Islam within Western institutions. These programs function as unique spaces for Muslims to study Islam from a position of belief within the context of accredited North American institutions, given the lack of accredited Islamic seminaries in

¹²⁰ See Chapter One.

the United States and Canada. At the same time, each school also promotes a critical, academic approach to the study of Islam, influenced by pedagogical methods from the humanities and social sciences. Perceptions of the ideal balance between “critical” to “confessional” existed in a spectrum, but regardless of individual preferences, students and faculty were united in their belief that partnering with Christian seminaries opened up a space to study Islam with a larger community of “believers,” while allowing a degree of critical distance that enriched their religious studies.

The relationship between theological study and critical scholarship has a complex history in North America. George M. Marsden argues that many of the most elite academic universities in the United States, which today we consider secular, are built upon a Protestant foundation. As such, his historical work reveals “a much larger connection between establishmentarian Protestantism and the construction of American universities” (Marsden 1994, 3) of which many Americans are unaware. In their formative period, North American Protestant seminaries faced questions about balancing the cultivation of a confessional disposition while grappling with the Enlightenment’s innovative intellectual ideals. Exploring the development of American theological education, Church Historian Glenn T. Miller writes:

Protestant theological education in the colonial period and the early nineteenth century struggled with the question of how the creeds and confessions of the churches could be reexpressed in the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment worlds. In a profound sense this was ‘confessional’ education, as Presbyterians, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Baptists, Methodists, and a host of emigrant churches struggled with the twin issues of theological integrity and intellectual clarity (Miller 2007, ix).

Examining the period between 1870 and 1970, Miller argues that general changes in education also impacted the character of theological institutions: “The new specialized

university with its highly developed academic guilds,” along with developments in “the biological and physical sciences and new engineering, the historical critical approach to the Bible, the new sociology and psychology, and the dynamics of industrialist and capitalist society” (Miller 2007, xi), all shaped theological education in new “scholarly” ways. Miller subsequently looks at the ways in which modern scientific and social outlooks were incorporated into the more traditional world of the Protestant seminary.

The effects of this process appear to have impacted the study of Islam in Protestant seminaries, as well. Many Muslim students I interviewed expressed their excitement at being able to earn a degree while studying Islam from both a confessional standpoint, yet with a scholarly lens. A student featured on a promotional video about Hartford Seminary articulates a common sentiment I observed in the field: “I was excited about having the opportunity not only to study my faith from an academic, rigorous perspective, but also to be able to walk into a classroom and not be asked to leave my faith at the door” (Picture Yourself at Hartford Seminary- Khalil Abdullah 2015).

Students that I interviewed expressed concerns both about the Western academy and more “traditional” forms for Islamic education. In the case of the former, some students voiced their own suspicion, or the suspicion of the wider Muslim community, regarding the legacy of Orientalism in secular academia.

Since the publication of Edward Said’s monumental work, *Orientalism* in 1978, critiques concerning discourse about Islamic Studies and Middle Eastern Studies in the academy have become commonplace. The foundation of such disciplines, according to Said, relied on the production of knowledge by Orientalist scholars, who often essentialized and denigrated “the East.” Said demonstrated how such studies, which

“seemed to be morally neutral and objectively valid...[and] seemed to have an epistemological status equal to that of historical chronology or geographical location” (Said 1978, 205), rather distilled “essential ideas about the Orient- its sensuality, its tendency to despotism, its aberrant mentality, its habits of inaccuracy, its backwardness- into a separate an unchallenged coherence” (Said 1978, 205). Given this legacy, many Muslims I interviewed voiced a high degree of skepticism about the secular study of Islam in Western academic institutions. Emmanuel College student, Janet, who studied Islam in her undergraduate program in Canada, tells me about the common reaction she receives when she tells other Muslims about her undergraduate degree in the humanities: “They would squirrel up their face and give me that wrinkly nose, and, say, Ew...Orientalists!” (Janet 2012). Likewise, Hanan, a graduate of the program at Hartford Seminary, discloses the difficulties she experience studying Islam in a secular college in the United States. Working now as university chaplain, she comments that she is in a position to help Muslim students who are taking classes on Islam in university, who may be encountering both a level of critique of their religion that they have never met before, as well as problematic essentializations of Islam that remain the legacy of Orientalism’s hegemony in the academy:

I think [that as a university chaplain] that I could open up the gates to other students who, maybe for the first time ever, decide to take a class on Islam, and they’re whole faith tradition is really put into question. And it’s coming from a secular perspective. It’s coming with a critical lens, and sometimes it’s coming from an Orientalist lens. How can you stay grounded and principled while receiving all of this criticism and information? (Hanan 2012).

The conflation of “secular academic” with “Orientalist,” voiced by Janet and Hanan demonstrates a general suspicion on the part of my Muslim respondents regarding the study of Islam in university settings.

Is the implication, then, that Christian seminaries immune from the legacy of Orientalism in the minds of these Muslim students? The majority of my respondents acknowledge that the institution of the seminary, so intimately tied to the “secular academy,” is equally implicated in the production of Orientalist scholarship on Islam. For example, Duncan Black Macdonald, for which the Hartford Seminary Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations is named, is one of America’s most famous Orientalist scholars. Indeed the production of Orientalist scholars on Islam, illustrated through the example of Macdonald,¹²¹ often worked in concert with the work of Christian missionaries in the Muslim world. How then, do these students view the study of Islam in Protestant Christian settings any less implicated in the legacy of Orientalism than the secular academy?¹²² What mitigates this heritage of Orientalism in the seminary context, according to many of the students and faculty to whom I spoke, is the ability to critically study Islam from a position of religious belief, a reality shared also by their Christian colleagues.

“This is not something you talk about in university,” comments Professor Abdul Aziz Sachedina, leading a seminar at Emmanuel College. Although Dr. Sachedina had been discussing the life of the Muslim philosopher, al-Ghazali,¹²³ he pauses to tell the small class of under ten students, the majority of whom are Muslim, a story about turning

¹²¹ See Chapter One.

¹²² In his article, “Secularism,” Gil Anidjar makes the contentious argument that Orientalism and Christianity (and by extension, secularism) are actually one in the same. “Orientalism is secularism,” he states, “and secularism is Christianity (Anidjar 2006). Anidjar examines how the histories and legacies of these three apparently distinct forces— Christianity, Orientalism, and Secularism— are enmeshed and mutually constitutive.

¹²³ Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad al-Ghazali (d. 1111 C.E.). Hugely influential Muslim theologian, philosopher, mystic, and jurist. Author of the famous work, *Ihya’ Ulum al-Din* (“The Revival of the Religious Sciences) and many other celebrated works.

to the Qur'an and prayer for guidance during a difficult situation in his life. "You can't talk about it. But Ghazali does talk about the power of prayer. You open the Qur'an and it talks to you. It's talking to me, but as a modern, I'm [often] not willing to submit. In the academy, as opposed to the seminary, they do not allow you to use the language of faith." Seeming to enjoy the freedom to discuss his personal beliefs in light of the course material, addresses his pupils: "I see you still struggling...When I was a student, I had suffered [too]. In many of my papers I tried to defend my religion... It's a challenge to be a Muslim in academia. There's a lot of suspicion, both in the Muslim community and from the university itself, too." In this conversation, which occurs as an aside, Dr. Sachedina conveys the difficulties mentioned above reconciling religious identity with the Western academic study of religion. I observe the students nodding in agreement, seeming to gain some comfort in this shared experience. Both Muslim students and faculty therefore acknowledge the creation of a space to study Islam at an accredited Western institution from a position of faith.

At the same time, some respondents voiced criticism of "traditional" Islamic education as well. The reasons for this critique varied. In terms of pursuing education abroad at various institutions or with qualified instructors, many cited the impracticality of leaving their homes, jobs, and families for a great length of time. Women, in particular, mentioned inaccessibility to recognized scholars' (the majority of who are male), due to a general belief in gender segregation. And yet others expressed intellectual opposition to elements of madrasa style education,¹²⁴ citing their desire to study Islam with a more critical lens and desire to promote a more objective approach to Islamic

¹²⁴ For more information on the development of madrasas in the Muslim world, see: (Moosa 2015); (Makdisi 1961); (Melchert 1997); (Tibawi 1962).

studies. In these cases, there is a general acceptance of the methodology of the Western academy, but once again, with an underlying presumption that one's religious identity is not only acceptable, but also foundational to the educational experience. Hartford Seminary graduate, Hanan, mentioned above, describes her educational motivations: 'I'm just doing this to be a better Muslim, to understand my religion, to have access on it, and not just to rely on the 'rock-star imams...' I wanted to get to the source, [and ask], how can we frame the American Muslim model that is not culturally imbued with the baggage from the East?'

The seminaries I research therefore represent innovative educational and intellectual spaces in which Muslim students and faculty express their ability to rigorously study their religious tradition in accredited institutions without the need to compromise the integrity of their religious beliefs, a pressure that many felt within secular institutions of learning. The presence of believers from different faith backgrounds, according to my interlocutors, only enriches theological discussion, particularly given the common threads shared by Christianity and Islam. Nevin Reda, professor at Emmanuel College, outlines the difference between teaching religion in a seminary environment as opposed to teaching it in secular university settings: "When you read [religious texts] in an interfaith dialogue environment, people actually interact with the text. The text becomes alive, so you are engaging with a living text, as opposed to a very neutral text in an academic environment." Like the Protestant seminaries that house them, these Muslim leadership programs are negotiating intellectual spaces in which faith and critique coexist in productive and practical ways. These negotiations, as a common experience, further contribute to the cooperation between Muslims and Christians within

these institutions. The following section explores the act of prayer as contributing to the creation of multireligious space of “belief.”

Translating “Prayerful” Spaces

“Mother Theresa taught us about the value of silence. God fills in during the silence of the heart. And in this process, you are led to speak. In the silence He speaks to our souls. Our prayer life suffers so much because of all of our talk. I invite you now to listen to the spirit in any way that you understand to speak to you.” I sit in the back of the classroom during a course on the topic of spiritual care at Claremont School of Theology. As it goes every week, the professor asks a student to begin the class with a prayer. This week, the student volunteer encourages the entire classroom, which consists mostly of Protestant Christians and Muslims, to reflect on the words of a Catholic nun, and allow themselves be guided by the spirit of her message.

Below, I analyze the ways in which acts of prayer, an important element of seminary life, negotiate the boundaries of community at these predominantly Christian institutions. Beyond the academic or intellectual, how do these practices connect the different religious bodies in these schools as part of the same community? Formal celebrations of mass, liturgy, and worship services take place in seminary chapels, as do private devotionals. Weekly group meditations and reflections, music-centered worship sessions, and readings of sacred scripture and inspirational writings flourish in the halls of the seminary, marking spaces of prayer and devotion in these institutions. In addition, as demonstrated by the example above, classrooms themselves often also become spaces of prayer. Here, I examine prayer as a translational tool in making space for Muslim

students in predominantly Christian settings. In particular, I survey how two different forms of prayer, relatively spontaneous classroom blessings and formal multifaith prayer services, reflect different visions and approaches for nourishing religiously plural environments. More often than not led by seminary students, these acts of prayer parallel the work of the physical spaces discussed above, at times employing a model of neutrality, and at other times, upholding religious specificity.

The practice of beginning and ending a class with prayers appeared as a common custom in the context of some of the courses I observed, particularly larger required classes. These prayerful acts were sometimes the only thing that distinguished these seminary classes from those in the secular academy, conveying a sense of gravity and also fostering a community of belief amongst the students and professors. Given that many of these supplications occurred in larger courses with a predominantly Christian student composition, how did the introduction of Muslim students impact this apparently longstanding practice?

At times, the prayers related to the topic being addressed that day. For example, during a Context and Ministry class at Emmanuel College in which two prison chaplains visited as guest speakers, a student offered the invocation, “Creator God, Almighty, ever loving. Help us feel compassion for prisoners.” At other times, blessings were said for specific people in the class. When the wife of a student at Claremont School of Theology went into labor, a student volunteer offered a prayer at the beginning of a practical theology course: “Let’s focus on Jason’s wife for a moment, and on getting Jason to the hospital safely.” On other occasions, students offered prayers of thanksgiving for their teachers and their colleagues. In a course entitled “Building Abrahamic Partnerships” at

Hartford Seminary, a student gave the benediction, “Praised are You, Lord our God. Thank you for our teachers and for the gift of meeting each other. Thank you for diversity. Thank you for showing Your face in the faces of all those around this table.” Each of these prayers was uttered by a member of a different religious tradition: Christian, Muslim, and Jewish. In these cases religious specificity was generally downplayed, or made relevant to a more general audience (as was the case with the example of Mother Theresa above). Nonetheless, these supplications stressed unity across religious traditions through a focus on God, and on certain themes such as thankfulness, compassion, or inspiration. These elements bridged the gap between Christians and Muslims (and Jews, in some cases), foregrounding similarities across religions.

There were other cases, however, in which religious specificity was retained in these classroom benedictions. Most often, however, this particularity was maintained by Christian students in classrooms that were overwhelmingly Christian. I observed a student at Claremont School of Theology encouraging the entire class to participate in an Easter prayer: “I come from a very participatory church, so I hope when I say, ‘He is risen,’ you will say, ‘He is risen indeed.’” As the majority of the class participated, chiming in at the appropriate moments, I watched the few Muslim students in the class remain quiet, but respectful, casting their eyes to the ground. In some instances, more generically “spiritual” prayers (like those mentioned above) were ended with a traditional-specific conclusion: “In Jesus’ name, we pray, Amen.”

In very few cases did I witness a Muslim student lead a class in prayer in such a way as to alienate their colleagues from another religion. Most often, these prayers were

spoken in English, with Arabic words like “Allah” substituted with the English, “God.” I spoke with Firdaus, a Muslim student at Emmanuel, about her feelings on this issue:

[When they would] say, ‘In the name of Lord Jesus.’ I would just keep quiet. But at some point, someone asked me. ‘Is that okay with you?’ I told him, ‘No, really, it’s not. It would be much, much more okay with me if you said ‘The Lord.’ Because that goes for Jesus, it goes for God, it goes for me, it goes for you. It’s much more generally applicable.’ And I found that mostly, people are happy to do something to make you included. But I did feel a little bit awkward about it. I felt like I had to justify at first, and say, ‘You know that Jesus is a very dear prophet to us. We have, you know, we have a whole chapter about Mary and how she’s very dear to us.’ I had to kind of give them justification that ‘we love Jesus, but not in the same way... When you pray to Jesus, I don’t pray to Jesus. So making that a known point ...made a lot of people change the way they pray. And they did leave the word ‘Jesus’ out. But some people chose to leave it in. And that was...a personal choice and personal comfort level. At first I kind of wondered-what is that? Is that antagonistic to Islam? Is she trying to say something? [...] But I found that people...in this population of faithful, whether they’re Christian or Muslim- they’re usually very open to inclusivity (Firdaus 2012).

Firdaus’ discomfort with the tradition-specific language of Christianity in classroom prayers exhibits her expectation of more inclusive language in communal events. She interprets the continued utilization of such terminology after her expression of discomfort, as a pointed effort to antagonize Islam and subject her to the dominance of Christianity. At the same time, her understanding of Emmanuel as a community of belief mitigates the disquiet she feels at being excluded from these prayers. Regardless of the fact that the majority of her colleagues are Christian, she feels more at ease about being in a seminary, rather than a secular institution. She confesses,

I would feel [more] like an outsider if some of the class members were non-believers, or very superficial in their beliefs. But I feel like everybody here is very faithful. They love God. They know God is out there. They want to try to do something to better their relationship with God, and to me, that’s all I need. That’s a community that I can feel a part of (Firdaus 2012).

Firdaus' feelings of exclusion linked to these acts of prayer in the classroom are moderated by her experience of a larger community of belief at Emmanuel College, linked together with a mutual belief in God and a desire to improve themselves because of this belief. Although she would prefer these communal prayers to encompass the range of traditions now represented in the multifaith classrooms, Firdaus admits that she is still more comfortable in these spaces as opposed to purely secular classrooms.

These examples raise the question, is it possible to create genuinely multifaith spaces in seminary classrooms, while retaining the fullness of one's religious identity? What is the impact of neutralizing the specificity of beliefs and expressions of religiosity in an effort towards inclusivity? Should an insistence on specificity be interpreted as a rejection of the goal of translating these seminaries into multifaith educational institutions, or a way of attesting to the possibility of fully inhabiting one's religious identity in the presence of religious others? When evaluating the dynamics of these prayerful translations,¹²⁵ the above examples indicate the asymmetry of these translations once again. In almost all cases, Christian students retained the ability to *chose* a neutral or specific method of prayerful expression, while Muslims almost always neutralized their tradition-specific language in classroom benedictions. The following section explores a more formal effort to utilize prayer to create a more religiously expansive sense of community in seminary settings. Here, acts of prayer organize and demonstrate religious difference in more formal ways than the relatively spontaneous classroom prayers discussed above, and the question of neutrality versus specificity is confronted and negotiated together by Christian and Muslim seminary students.

¹²⁵ See Chapter Two.

Interfaith Prayer Service

“We’re cognizant of the fact that Emmanuel is not just a Christian college anymore.” Megan, a young, twenty-something student and member of the United Church of Canada, sits on a couch across from Sakina and Junayd, two of her Muslim colleagues in the student lounge at Emmanuel College, at the beginning of the fall semester of 2012. The three students sit facing one another, the two Muslims on one side and their Christian colleague opposite them, on the red armchairs in the spacious lounge, sunlight filtering through the panes of glass of the large neo-gothic windows. Other students chat on the other side of the room at a large dining table, warming up their lunches in the microwave or popping change into the vending machine in the corner. My eyes rest momentarily on a sheet of paper taped to a blackboard in the lounge, entitled “Blessings,” with all of the letters of the alphabet listed down the page, followed by a blank space. Someone has penned in a different blessing for each letter: “A” for “Abraham,” “E” for “Emmanuel College,” “I” for “Inclusivity, even successfully filling in the space after “X” with “Christ.”

Megan is one of this year’s student worship coordinators at the college, who, with the aid of faculty and the directors of chapel and music, is responsible for organizing the various types of services that take place in the chapel on a weekly basis. These devotions typically include two midday prayer services on Tuesdays and Thursdays, as well as a weekly celebration of the Sacrament of Communion on Wednesday. Today, Megan has asked to meet with Sakina and Junayd to discuss the possibility of organizing an interfaith prayer service, as a way of incorporating the new Muslim students into the Emmanuel community through prayer. “Interfaith dialogue important for many reasons,”

she tells them. “It’s an important part of the U.C.C., as a way of acknowledging that the truth of God exists outside of religion. But it’s also important for relationship building. Having you two in my classes has enriched my conception of prayer.” This pluralistic vision that Megan cites as an important element of the United Church of Canada is reflected in the 2004 document, *That We May Know Each Other: United Church-Muslim Relations Today*.¹²⁶ In this document, an exclusivist approach to religion and worship is questioned, and space is made for a more pluralistic or transformationist vision:

[We start with] the humble acknowledgement that it is possible there is more than one religious path or tradition in and through which God has chosen to reveal God’s self... Scripture teaches us that the Word and Wisdom of God is not limited to Christians, and the Spirit of God is free and faithful. Such a starting point opens us to the discovery of truth and wisdom in the other (The Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, 7).

The acknowledgment of a multiplicity of legitimate paths to God allows for the possibility of gaining insights about divine truth through a religion other than Christianity. Megan’s comment that the two Muslim students have helped “enrich [her] conception of prayer,” denotes that there is something potentially transformative about interaction with religious “others,” while on one’s own spiritual journey. The U.C.C. document continues, “With this expectation, the purpose is not to collapse the differences between traditions but rather to affirm and cherish the differences because ultimately they are each gifts of God, which can be life-giving and transformative” (The Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Relations 2004, 7). An interfaith prayer service therefore represents a chance to strengthen relationships across Emmanuel’s multi-religious student body, and also sets the stage for a potentially transformative worship-oriented dialogue

¹²⁶ See Chapter One.

across traditions. Without changing the entire system of community worship at Emmanuel, Megan and her fellow coordinators decided to consult some of their Muslim classmates, along with several Unitarian students studying at Emmanuel, to plan an interfaith prayer service once or twice a semester.

Sakina seems excited at the prospect of coordinating this venture: “I am ready to work with whatever you’ve got to make it more inclusive,” she offers. The meeting proceeds as a brainstorming session, the first topic of concern being location. “I want to have it outside of the chapel so it’s more neutral,” Megan proposes. Junayd and Sakina look at each other, momentarily, before Sakina questions, “Well, do Unitarians use chapels?” Megan answers in the affirmative, which appears to give Sakina more confidence to offer her opinion. “I’m just wondering then, when we try to take something traditional [and change it], it becomes diluted. You don’t need to take the service out of the chapel for Muslims. We recognize synagogues and churches. Our only problems are with pictures of Jesus and crucifixes.”

“Well,” Megan laughs, “you won’t get that here.” True to the Protestant aesthetic, Emmanuel, as a United Church of Canada Seminary, is rather austere in its décor, particularly in comparison to the Catholic or Orthodox Churches. While there are crosses displayed in various parts of the college, there are no portraits of Jesus, nor are there crucifixes. Although Megan admits that there is little to “offend” her Muslim colleagues in the chapel, she remains unconvinced of its propriety as the site for an interfaith prayer service. She attempts one more to relay her sensitivity: “God is everywhere. We don’t need to have worship in a chapel.”

This time, Junayd speaks up, once again bringing up a fear of “diluting” religion for the sake of dialogue. “I’m just afraid that I’d be doing a disservice to my Christian colleagues by asking them to change the way they worship for me.” Here, the two Muslim students express anxiety about watering down of sincere expressions of devotion to accommodate their presence, and once again offer reassurance that “Christian” spaces are recognized and respected by Muslims. Megan finally relents, and the group moves on to discuss some ideas for the content of the service.

Sakina: We could pick a theme. Like joy, or sadness, or anger. Or rain. And find pieces about that topic in the Bible and the Qur’an, and just talk about it from three different traditions. That kind of approach makes our unity very obvious.

Megan: Does it make sense to put the three traditions side by side? Or should we be striving for more direct points of convergence?

Sakina: I think it works really nicely if passage from Qur’an, I read Arabic, and have a non-Muslim read the translation. We can have a visible Muslim read the Bible verse. Add a bit of reflection, and comment and exchange between people of different religions. So you don’t have to... [*wags index finger*] “This is what we believe.”

In the above exchange, Sakina interprets the interfaith prayer service as an opportunity to demonstrate the unity between Christianity and Islam, although her thoughts on Unitarianism as a distinct tradition remain unclear. Her proposed method for conveying such unity rests in a focus on scripture as a bridge across religious lines. After some more brainstorming, however, Megan raises another possible focus for the service: silence.

Megan: Silence is an important part of Christian worship.

Sakina: Yes, silence is important in Islam, too. It allows a degree of individuality. It doesn’t require translation. I remember one time in my CPE training a colleague offered a Christian prayer and I had to translate the prayer into my context.

Megan: It's interesting, what you're saying about translating. Maybe we could make a space for prayer that's most silent, or maybe something simple, but that people could translate for themselves.

Sakina: I guess what made it easy for me to translate in that case was that the words were simple. Like, asking God to make it a successful day. So, yeah. Simplicity.

Megan: And maybe end with an exchange of peace?

Sakina: That sounds very "Islamic" to me.

Junayd: Maybe we could all say it in ways that represent each of our religions. That's something that always gets me, when everyone says something in unison. Whether it's amen or *amin*, it's just the one word that everyone says, and the resonance of the sound takes you over. It's a connecting moment.

While Sakina's initial proposal looked to themes in sacred texts as a connecting point between Islam and Christianity, Megan's follow up suggestion relies more on the poignancy of silence to service the purpose of worship and community building. The latter method emphasizes the simplicity of human concerns (for example, having a good day), rather than a comparison of Biblical and Qur'anic takes on a theme. The burden of translation, and the fear of "dilution," it appears, diminishes with the subtraction of words. Meanwhile, Junayd acknowledges the importance of words and sound, the reverberations of a phrase spoken in unison, in conveying congregational unity.

As this preliminary meeting draws to an end, George, the director of worship, sticks his head in the door of the lounge, waves at the Muslim students, and comments cheerily, "Thank you for your participation!" Sakina smiles and replies, "Thank you for your inclusivity."

The chapel at Emmanuel College, a walk down the hall from the lounge in which the students meet, was originally a boardroom. There were hopes to build a separate

structure to house the chapel, but a lack of funding resulted in the conversion of the third-floor boardroom into a space for worship. It continues in the neo-gothic style, a rectangular space covered with wooden wall paneling, with three arcaded windows on two opposite sides of the room. Wrought iron chandeliers suspend from solid wooden joists on the ceiling, and lightweight chairs rest in stacks against the walls, ready to be arranged in whatever configuration is necessary. On a raised dais, a simple wooden altar stands, adorned with a carved flower, holds a large Bible, with a lectern to its left. Behind the altar hang two cheerful light blue quilted banners, decorated with the words “Christ is Risen,” and “Hallelujah,” as well as a large white cross, the silhouette of a winged angel, and several colorful butterflies. A single wooden cross stands on display to the left of the altar, flanked by a wooden post carrying a white taper candle. Bookshelves lined with the Book of Common Worship, a liturgical text used by the United Church of Canada, and some Bibles sit at the back left corner of the chapel, across from a black baby grand piano and a small pipe organ. The space is unquestionably constructed and designed with a liberal Protestant aesthetic and purpose, with a focus on scripture and an absence of images of Christ crucified. And yet, while there are crosses and specifically Christian decorative markers, the chapel also includes wall hangings depicting trees, paintings of mountains, and images of landscapes.

The first interfaith worship service happens on a Thursday afternoon in October. I walk into the chapel as a man sits on the bench of the baby grand piano, playing a flute,¹²⁷ I see Junayd, Sakina, Megan, as well as the two Unitarian students, Sam and

¹²⁷ The permissibility of certain musical instruments is debated within Muslim circles. Generally, most scholars agree that wind instruments are permissible. Questions of soundscape are also important spatial considerations in planning interfaith prayer services.

Sherry, standing at a lectern at the front of the room, talking as people enter through the chapel doors. The room fills with around twenty people, and I observe a table by the lectern holding a bowl, a small cross on a stand, and a copy of the Qur'an. As people take their seats, Megan begins the service: "Welcome to our first time of Muslim, Christian, and Unitarian readings and prayers. Feel free to position your hands and bodies however you feel comfortable." People settle in their chairs, and Megan continues, "We are not isolated beings, but connected." She speaks the words slowly and ponderously, leaving much room for silence, and then offers a short benediction, addressed to the "God of new beginnings," highlighting the significance of spearheading this interfaith worship service. Following her prayer, Sakina stands, and melodically recites a segment of the Qur'an in Arabic, from *Surat al-Hadeed*, her voice resonantly echoing off of the chapel walls. After her striking recitation, Junayd stands and translates the verses into English:

Whatever is in the heavens and earth exalts God, and He is the Exalted in Might, the Wise. His is the dominion of the heavens and earth. He gives life and causes death, and He is over all things competent. He is the First and the Last, the Ascendant and the Intimate, and He is, of all things, Knowing. It is He who created the heavens and earth in six days and then established Himself above the Throne. He knows what penetrates in the earth and what emerges from it and what descends from the heaven and what ascends therein; and He is with you wherever you are And God, of what you do, is Seeing. His is the dominion of the heavens and earth. And to God are returned all matters. He causes the night to enter the day and causes the day to enter the night, and he is Knowing of that within the breasts.¹²⁸

Several members of the congregation respond with respectful nods, while others close their eyes, taking in the words. After Junayd sits, a heavy silence and stillness fills the chapel, and it is after several moments that Megan stands again. She tells the room that the word Gospel means "Good news," and then reads a section from the Gospel of John:

¹²⁸ Qur'an 57:1-6

Another of his disciples, Andrea, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" Jesus said, "Have the people sit down." There was plenty of grass in that place, and they sat down (about five thousand men were there). Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, 'Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted.' So they gathered them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. After the people saw the sign Jesus performed, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself.¹²⁹

Once she finishes her reading, Megan announces, "Here lies wisdom," to which the majority of the congregants, understanding the performative cues, reply, "Praise be to God."

Finally, the two Unitarian students, Sam and Sherry, stand and walk to the lectern. Sam informs the audience that they would like to share a poem by Richard S. Gilbert, a Reverend in the Unitarian Universalist Church, entitled "Life is Always Unfinished Business." The two take turns reading:

In the midst of the whirling day,
In the hectic rush to be doing,
In the frantic pace of life,
Pause here for a moment.

Catch your breath;
Relax your body;
Loosen your grip on life.

Consider that our lives are always unfinished business.
Imagine that the picture of our being is never complete.
Allow your life to be a work in progress.

Do not hurry to mold the masterpiece.
Do not rush to finish the picture.
Do not be impatient to complete the drawing.

¹²⁹ John 6:8-14

From beckoning birth to dawning death we are in process.
And always there is more to be done.

Do not let the incompleteness weigh on your spirit.
Do not despair that imperfection marks your every day.
Do not fear that you are still in the making.

Let us instead be grateful that the world is still to be created.
Let us give thanks that we can be more than we are.
Let us celebrate the power of the incomplete.
For life is always unfinished business (Gilbert 2012, 10).

Before leaving the lectern Sam instructs the congregation, “Allow your life to be a work in progress.” The two return to their seats, and the room sits for several minutes in silence, allowing time and space for each of the readings to come together, and for personal reflection. The congregation sits, some with heads bowed, others still closing their eyes. After this period of silence, the readers stand, Megan quietly announces, “Peace be with you.” Sakina answers, “*Asalaamu alaikum.*” Junayd responds, “*Wa alaikum salaam.*” With this exchange of peace, the flautist resumes, people stand, shake hands, and the service concludes.¹³⁰

¹³⁰ See Figure 17.



Figure 17. Interfaith Prayer Service at Emmanuel College

The interfaith prayer service outlined above demonstrates a formal effort to utilize prayers and practices from United Church, Muslim, and Unitarian perspectives, to create a more religiously expansive sense of community in seminary settings. Here, acts of prayer organize and demonstrate religious difference in more formal ways than the relatively spontaneous classroom prayers discussed above, and the question of neutrality versus specificity is confronted and negotiated together by Christian and Muslim seminary students. Thus, while a chapel remains the setting of the service, considerations are given to aesthetics, to imagery, to sounds. While the ponderous solemnity of religiously neutral silence framed these readings and supplications, the content of the service itself highlighted specific articulations of religious identity, coexisting together. As such, the interfaith prayer services I examine here exhibit a conscious effort to construct a genuinely collaborative space in which students from different religious

backgrounds come together through a common sense of belief, while retaining the specificity of their religious identity.

The content of the benedictions offered by the different religious representatives, however, underlines the tensions discussed above regarding the Christian privilege of specificity. While the Muslim and Unitarian prayers consist of very general images and reflections, potentially meaningful to members of a wide array of religious backgrounds, Megan's selection is very specifically situated in reference to the life of Jesus and his followers. The Islamic tradition does indeed acknowledge the miracles of Jesus, and therefore her reading is not necessarily exclusionary. However, this example, along with those discussed in the previous section, underscores the freedom of the Christian students to leave their religious particularity untranslated, a privilege that does not appear to extend to the non-Christian members of these partnerships. The comprehensibility of the Christian example is assumed, leaving Muslims (and Unitarians, in this particular case) to carry the translational burden.

Constructing "Safe" Spaces

In this final section, I explore further the politics of the various spatial translations. While I discussed previously some issues of governance relating to the Muslim prayers space at Emmanuel College, here I address how the overarching geopolitical climate bears on the multifaith seminary spaces I research. Thus far, I have analyzed how various spaces inside seminary walls are translated in an effort to be inclusive of other religious traditions, particularly Islam. But what of the world beyond the seminary? How does the political state of affairs around the world impact the lives of

those involved in these programs? In short, what are the blind spots of pluralism made visible in the process of creating religiously diverse seminaries in North America? In a time where debates abound concerning the use of “trigger warnings” in classrooms, scholars and intellectuals consider the possibility and desirability of the construction of “safe spaces” in the academy, the following section examines a specific case that occurred during my fieldwork at Bayan Claremont that reveals the challenges of such projects.

On March 19, 2013, as I wrapped up another day of fieldwork at Claremont, I noticed an email in my inbox from a doctoral student at Claremont School of Theology with a link to a story from the *Los Angeles Times*, published several days earlier. The linked article was entitled, “From Student to Spy, and Back Again” (Sahugun 2013), which featured the story of Fernando Jarra. “Fernando Jarra was...a student who converted to Islam before 9/11,” a summary underneath the article’s title explains: “Wanting to help root out terrorists, he went undercover and overseas. It changed him in many ways ” (Sahugun 2013). The article tells a story of struggle and “spiritual redemption,” describing Fernando’s journey of conversion to Islam four years before the events of September 11, 2001. However, after the events of 9/11, Jarra “converted” once again. As the article puts it, “he went from zealous Muslim to radicalized American” (Sahugun 2013). This surge in patriotic devotion after the attacks led him to contact the C.I.A. and offer his assistance in the War on Terror. The CIA hired Jarra as a contract employee, trained him, and sent him to Afghanistan, and later to Yemen, to infiltrate the Taliban and other extremist networks. Playing the part of a conservative convert to Islam, he gathered intelligence for the American government for five years before his cover was

blown in Sana, Yemen, and subsequently returned to the United States in 2006. Jarra faced a number of challenges upon his return, including a struggle with PTSD, which the article focuses on as the foundation for Jarra's path to "redemption." In the wake of these traumatic experiences, Fernando co-founded a nonprofit organization, Rockhill Farm, a rehabilitation program for former felons, drug addicts, and gang members. He later matriculated as a student at Claremont School of Theology, pursuing a Master's of Divinity and leaving the past and his former Muslim identity behind. The article concludes with the then dean of faculty of Claremont, Philip Clayton: "Ask me what redemption means, and I will point to Rockhill Farm rather than the Nativity scene" (Sahugun 2013).

Claremont School of Theology provided links to the article on its website and various forms of social media, promoting Fernando's "success story" with little comment. However, CST's uncritical promotion of said article, spoke volumes to the Muslim students at Bayan, as well as others. Failing to recognize the problematic nature of the story itself, as well as the potential repercussions the article's publication might have amongst students on the consciously multifaith campus, indicated a glaring blind spot on behalf of the Claremont administration. This incident exposed for students and faculty alike not only the necessity of internal communication and transparency in the construction of multifaith educational programming, but also underscored the political nature of these programs. The world of the seminary is not separate from the larger geopolitical reality. As expressed by my interlocutors, the failure of the administration to see the problematic nature of promoting this story reaffirms the Christian privilege of the

institution as a whole, calling into question the authenticity of the multireligious partnerships at stake.

In the following days and weeks, I spoke with various members of the Claremont student body and faculty about their reactions to the so-called “L.A. Times Incident,” and heard a wide variety of reactions from both Muslim and non-Muslims members of the community. Haseena, a Muslim Master’s Student, was particularly troubled by the way that the situation unfolded. As a member of the Community Life council, she was made aware of the article prior to its publication, and asked the administration to alert the Muslim students about it, given the sensitivity of the subject. Sharing classroom space with a former CIA operative, she argued, was likely to make some Muslim students (and likely, some non-Muslim students) uncomfortable, particularly given the level of intimacy required of some of courses, particularly those devoted to subjects like pastoral care and counseling. In a post-9/11 America, the climate of surveillance surrounding Muslim individuals and communities has garnered much criticism and accusations of discrimination¹³¹ Given the original goals of Claremont Lincoln University to create an intentionally multireligious educational space, Haseena criticizes not only Claremont administration’s lack of sensitivity in the promotion of Fernando’s story, but also their negligence to prepare members of the student body and faculty who might be affected by the article’s publication. She explains to me:

This will be an interreligious campus... to the extent that we can talk about things. Like, oh look- we all have compassion and hospitality as shared values, but when it comes to someone trained by the U.S. government to whom we all pay taxes, going into other parts of the world and pretending to be Muslim in order to kill Muslims, that’s when it’s perfectly fine to present that as part of CST,

¹³¹ For more on this subject, see: (Davidson 2014); (Greenwald and Hussain 2014); (Shamas and Arastu n.d.).

but not fine for us to talk about...Part of you having us [Muslim students] here is that you bring in all of that political stuff. Claremont as a campus is not ready to deal with and I think that's something that I know in the maybe five or six students that I have spoken to about the article were probably more ready to talk about it than administration is (Haseena 2013).

In this quotation, Haseena criticizes the Claremont administration for their thoughtlessness in promoting the *L.A. Times* article with the relatively newly introduced Muslim student body on campus. The promotion of Fernando's "success story" came at a cost, according to Haseena. For those with whom I spoke, this incident damaged the perception of Claremont campus as a safe space for the Muslim students.

Those in charge of Claremont's social media eventually took down the article. The administration, at the urging of some students and faculty, hosted a community discussion in response to the incident. However, the event, which drew around thirty Claremont community members from various religious traditions, avoided directly addressing the article and its repercussions, and instead involved small group discussions about the portrayal of religion in the media and in the role of religion in the public sphere. It was only in the "Question and Answer" session that the article in question was addressed, although Fernando (who was invited, but not in attendance) was never named specifically. While a representative of the Bayan faculty asked whether CST had assessed any potential threats to the physical safety of those on campus in response to the publication of the article, another CST student pointed the last few remaining moments of the discussion elsewhere: "My concern is beyond physical safety. It's more about the psycho-spiritual security of our community. I feel unsafe now. Why would it not occur that there is a spiritual care element to this? There are significant implications from my perspective...How well do we really know each other?"

How did the publication of the *L.A. Times* article alter the space of Claremont campus? For some students, specifically Muslim students, it compromised their feelings of safety to have a former C.I.A. operative sharing their classrooms. Some non-Muslim students expressed fears about some of the groups Fernando infiltrated retaliating against him and committing an act of terrorism on campus. But in addition to the question of physical safety, the graduate student above asks incisive questions about the construction of a psycho-spiritual environment for all those on campus, forcing the community as a whole, and administration in particular, to consider how well their treatment of the incident created a truly safe multireligious space. In what ways did CST's promotion of Fernando's story point to their unpreparedness in anticipating the needs and responses of the new Muslim segment of their community in their midst? In an interview Dr. Kathleen Greider, Professor of Practical Theology, Spiritual Care, and Counseling at CST, she addresses this very issue: "Given the diversity of our community and the particular issues around violence with weapons and violence against Muslims, [we must ask] what *is* the role of Christian dominance in that story? I mean, [in Fernando's] story, but I mean, more broadly, the whole political sphere and how Muslims are treated by a Christian nation" (K. Greider 2013).

The so-called "*LA Times* Incident" thus demonstrates the challenges of constructing safe multireligious spaces that meet the psycho-spiritual needs of different religious actors in a highly charged political climate. The inability of Claremont School of Theology to anticipate the discomfort of Muslim students in their promotion of the news article indicates for many community members a level of unpreparedness to accommodate the religious diversity that had been invited on campus with the

construction of the Claremont Lincoln consortium. In addition, it reflects a lack of institutional transparency and communication required of any organization, but particularly one whose mission involves the fostering of positive relations amongst different religious communities. Greider further reflects,

The stakes are higher with regard to the integrity of our mission. So if part of your mission is to further communications between people of different religious traditions, and you're not doing it on your own campus, then you're not living out your mission even close to home, where it's arguably easiest. So, in some ways, that's most disturbing about...the L.A. Times incident [is that]....You could say that when we were Claremont School of Theology alone, our campus communication didn't matter a whole lot relative to our mission. But now it seems to me it's a case in point. It's a practice. It's a way to teach people who aren't part of this community that sharing information is sharing power. And sharing power is one of the way of using your power on behalf of the empowerment of people further down from you in the structure, is one of the ways of reducing the amount of harm we do to each other. So I think the stakes are *much* higher for the CLU project (K. Greider 2013).

The above example thus indicates the necessity of acknowledging both the local and the global power discrepancies that exist across traditions that impact the multifaith programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. While these spaces are meant to model the possibility of multifaith cooperation and collaboration in religiously pluralistic societies, the examples above point to concrete examples of the perpetuation of Christian dominance and normativity. The seminaries I research are contact zones, according to the definition offered by Mary Louise Pratt: "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (Pratt 1991, 34).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I identified space as a central consideration in the development of Muslim leadership programming in predominantly Protestant Christian seminaries. I examined different ways in which space is translated, constructed, and negotiated in the production of the multifaith programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. I considered the translation of physical spaces, the fostering of intellectual spaces, and the enactment of prayerful spaces as a means of analyzing the various ways in which conceptions of community within seminary settings are expanded to include members of non-Christian traditions. Each of these institutions strives to create collaborative multifaith communities, where Muslims and Christians learn how to inhabit their specific religious identities together, enriching their understandings of both themselves and “the other.” However, the asymmetrical power relations that underlie the spaces in question indicate the complexities of viewing these programs as truly “multifaith.”

CHAPTER FOUR: SOUL FOOD

TRANSLATING “THE SPIRITUAL” in NORTH AMERICAN MUSLIM LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

I sit under the fluorescent lights of an Arabic restaurant and café on Yonge Street in Toronto. The energetic pulse of Arabic pop music blasts from the mounted wall speakers, while couples and groups of friends share *hookah*. Recollecting sitting in similar spots in various cities across the world, from Montreal, to Fez, to Cairo, and Brooklyn, I momentarily feel the ambivalent comfort and distress of globalization. I could be anywhere at this moment, watching young men play backgammon, blowing smoke rings in the air, as the latest Arabic pop singer dancing on the glowing, wall-mounted television screen. Across from me, Emmanuel College student, Junayd, enjoys a halal burger while telling me about his career aspirations. When he tells me that he wants to be a “Muslim pastor,” I grow confused.

“What is a Muslim pastor, exactly?” I ask. “Is that the same thing as a Muslim chaplain?”

Junayd tilts his head to the side. “I’m not sure.” After pressing him, he answers: The best I can explain it is that I feel that Islam is like a big farm, and each masjid, each, you know, school of thought, each...group has its own barn, and there’s a plethora of barns on the farm. And each farmer, imam or shaykh is taught to feed his flock a certain type of food for spiritual sustenance. And some of them are better at it than others. And every once in awhile something happens, and one of the flock leaves the farm. Not just the barn, but the farm altogether, and they go out into the field. And there’s this... idea that...there’s nothing wrong with the food, there’s nothing wrong with the imams. There’s something wrong with the flock. Or there’s something wrong with the person if they leave the farm...If somebody leaves the farm, then it’s their *own* fault...I’ve heard time and time again, where people are either abused or there isn’t space created for them...they’re basically missing something. They’re not spiritually fulfilled in

this system. And so they leave the farm, and they go out into the field. And the field itself is a dangerous place... And I guess pastoral theology, to me, is... that person, or that figure who is going to be in the field. Not working for the farm, but working for the... working for the flock, who's out there, and just giving them a place to...giving them a place to sort of feel as a collective, if they wish- basically making sure that they're not out wandering out on their own, and at risk. And I'm not necessarily going to take them back to the farm. I'm not going to feed them the same food. I'm going to see...I'm going to do my best to maybe help them...help them find spiritual sustenance in what is out there in the field. There are other types of soul food... that are Islamic (Junayd 2012).

Junayd's reflections about the spiritual dimensions of Islamic "pastoral theology" contribute to this project's exploration of new forms of Muslim authorities in the North American context. What indigenous forms of Islamic authority are taking shape in the United States and Canada? What connects these authorities to and separates them from "traditional" leadership? In what directions, religious, political, and social, are they taking North American Muslim communities, and how are these movements constructed as authentically "Islamic"?

This chapter explores the concept of the "spiritual," as used by students and faculty affiliated with the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. Junayd represents just one of many voices that links these newer forms of Islamic authority, including Muslim chaplains and pastors, with the pastoral obligation of spiritual care. An emphasis on the spiritual is reflected in curricular requirements, often carried over from existing requirements for Christian students, and guided by competencies constructed by nationally recognized certifying bodies, such as the American Association of Pastoral Counselors (AAPC) or the Canadian Association of Spiritual Care (CASC). Coursework and practica thus aim to give students both academic and practical knowledge in spiritual matters.

In this chapter I ask, what do those involved with the programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont mean by “the spiritual,” and why does it occupy such a central position in the training of North American Muslim leadership? The term, employed frequently by my interlocutors, is rather vague. For example, in the abovementioned quote, Junayd speaks of “spiritual sustenance,” “spiritual fulfillment,” and “soul food,” and levels criticism at so-called “traditional” leadership for being unable to provide North American Muslims with this nourishment. But Junayd does not clarify what any of those terms mean, practically. The “fuzziness, indistinctness, and multiplicity of definitions” (Bender 2010, 5) of the term “spiritual” requires further clarification. As Courtney Bender argues, spirituality, “whatever it is and however it is defined, is *entangled* in social life, in history, and in our academic and nonacademic imaginations” (Bender 2010, 5). Discourses about “the spiritual” – as defined and deployed in these educational spaces – reveal important facets of the construction of North American Muslim leadership.

For students, graduates, and faculty of Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont, the spiritual functions in multiple ways, and draws from Christian, Muslim, and psychotherapeutic discourses. Translating across these discursive boundaries is at times conscious, at other times unconscious, and signals both distinct Muslim, Christian, or psychotherapeutic understandings of the term, as well as its more generalized universal intelligibility, that is, its capacity to be understood in meaningful ways by all. My respondents agree that there is an indigenous Muslim understanding of “spiritual care,” as evidenced by the Qur’an, the Prophetic example, ritual practices, and Sufi traditions, and they draw from these sources in the classroom and at work; these are

distinct from Christian or secular psychological understandings of the concept. This rootedness in accepted sources of the Islamic tradition establishes the legitimacy of Muslim authorities whose purpose is to provide for the spiritual well being of their community. Despite the particularity of “Islamic” formulations of spirituality and spiritual care, my respondents also affirm the practicality and advantageousness of drawing from other sources of spiritual growth and education, like studying at historically Protestant Christian seminaries and fulfilling required units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

In her book, *Talk of Love*, sociologist Ann Swidler examines the utilization of culture in peoples’ everyday life, and presents it as diverse “tool kit” or “repertoire” (Swidler 2001, 24-25), from which social actors strategically deploy certain elements, depending upon their circumstances, rather than a coherent and consistent set of values motivating action. I draw from her work to attempt an understanding of the multiple spiritual discourses I observe at the seminaries I research. According to my interlocutors, the multifaith classroom and curricula prepares them for the reality of a religiously plural world, particularly given the ethnic and religious diversity of North America, and specifically for fields such as chaplaincy, which require ministering to individuals of all faiths (or no faiths at all). In a sense, the pastoral method of spiritual nurturing transcends religious specificity, justifies multifaith seminary settings, and provides a way for members of different religious traditions to talk to each other in productive and meaningful ways. As Claremont School of Theology Professor Duane Bidwell told me, “religion has been a mighty destructive force...Only by learning side by side and encountering the religious other in a vulnerable way...are you really going to be able to

practice interfaith cooperation...If religion is to be a force primarily for good, leaders of various traditions have to know about each other” (Bidwell 2013).

I contend therefore that multifaith seminary settings use and privilege the concept of “the spiritual” in religious leadership training, and contribute to the development of a type of Islamic authority whose primary responsibility is the nurturing of the spiritual lives of individuals and communities. This leadership draws from an expansive repertoire of the spiritual, including Islamic, Christian, and psychotherapeutic sources, and emphasizes the universality of “spiritual concerns,” which makes multifaith education and collaboration possible. The universalization of spiritual concerns and spiritual care, as demonstrated by the programs in question, thus depends both on amorphousness of “the spiritual,” and on its construction as a practical orientation, a means of approaching existential questions. Particular religions’ approaches to spirituality are valid and powerful, but simply are just that: particular approaches. As such, the spiritual is a means of both maintaining and building bridges across religious difference.

Finally, while acknowledging the multiplicity of spiritual discourses at play within the contexts of the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Claremont, it is necessary to point out that these conversations, translations, and contestations still take place within contexts of asymmetrical relationships of power, a fact of which Muslim students and faculty are well aware. Not only are these programs located in historically Protestant Christian seminaries, with the majority of students identifying as Christian, but the field of spiritual care are established and shaped by mainline Protestant norms. These programs, among others, have made efforts to incorporate other religions in the field of spiritual care in order to deal with the reality of

religious pluralism in North America. However, the universalization of spiritual care leads to the privileging of individual, internal, and private expressions of religiosity – values often associated with Christianity. At times, these “universalized” models of the spiritual remain in tension with more external, communal, and ritualistic concerns, such as religious law, elements understood as integral to the practice of Islam. While these concerns are still acknowledged as important, the students trained in these programs are, first and foremost, nurturers of the spirit, rather than legal specialists. I offer an examination of how some students have managed these tensions in their work, offering a picture of the complex and ambivalent ways in which Muslim leaders in training navigate “the spiritual” and “the legal.”

The spiritual—however fuzzy it is—was on full display in classrooms and conversations, like one exchange I witnessed on a warm, September morning in Toronto, in a seminar entitled “Religious Thought and Spirituality in Islam.” The small class at Emmanuel College, consisting of five students (three Muslim and two Christian), listens intently as the professor, Nevin Reda, goes through the syllabus, which concentrates heavily on the topic of Sufism. She explains that Sufism focuses on the heart, and tends to privilege the more esoteric, inner dimensions of Islam. Sakina, an Egyptian Canadian with a counseling background, chimes in, “This all sounds very psychological to me: the connection between the mind, the heart, the soul.” Reda nods, but then presses the class: “What do we mean by the word, ‘spirituality’? What comes to mind?”

Junayd jumps into the conversation quickly. “These days? It’s a cop out for actually believing in something doctrinal, something more solid.” The class pauses, seemingly unsure of how to respond to Junayd’s dismissiveness, and I wonder at the

difference between this presentation of the spiritual and the one he offered me in the above conversation. Sakina offers a more considered claim: “It depends on who’s using it. Are we talking about New Age, unscientific methods of healing? Or are we talking about it *in* the context of religion?” “New Age” spirituality, for her, offers little concrete evidence of effectiveness. But spirituality within the context of a religious tradition, represents something altogether different.

Tom, an Episcopal priest, offers another perspective. “I think spirituality is a yearning to be grounded in a practice, but not wanting to be attached or bound to one religion.” Spirituality in this case transcends the limitations of individual religious traditions. Following Tom’s comment, Junayd once again takes the floor: “I think the religion that [some] people are trying to avoid is the historico-political version of the religion. The one focused on doctrine, rules, earthly things.” Evelyn, a retired seminary librarian auditing the class, offers an explanation of why some might be preferred to be classified as “spiritual,” rather than “religious”: “It’s a rejection of an institution and hypocrisy they see in institutions, see themselves as oppressed by other peoples’ demands on them. It comes from hurt, [but acknowledges] something greater than themselves.”

Qamar, a female Muslim chaplain studying at Emmanuel, quietly offers an insight that seems to silence the rest of the class in tacit agreement: “Spirituality is a moon, and religion is a finger pointing at the moon.” Her comment ties together the diverse remarks of the class. According to this image, different religious traditions direct our gaze toward the horizon of spirituality, but are limited, and not to be mistaken for the horizon itself. While each student has their own personal thoughts and experiences regarding

institutionalized religion, it is the moon of spirituality that draws their gaze to the same place, and that brings them together despite their differences.

Spirit Matters: Curricula, Practica, and Requirements

The curricula and educational requirements at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont demonstrate the programmatic centrality of pastoral and spiritual training.¹³² When asking the three programs' founders about the development of curricular requirements, each mentioned the necessity of working with the existing strengths and the resources of the seminary, as well as meeting the expectations of several key bodies: national accrediting agencies, such as the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC); various federal institutional bodies, such as the Bureau of Prisons and the Military; as well as fulfilling the needs of local Muslim communities. As founder of Islamic Chaplaincy Program at Hartford Seminary,¹³³ Ingrid Mattson explained to me:

We weren't going to become an Islamic Seminary with a full curriculum to bring people from nothing up to being a religious leader... The idea that it would be a chaplaincy program was really more compelling to me. That would allow for men and women, it would allow us to offer both academic preparation, in terms of sort of understanding the Muslim community from a sociological, religion perspective, congregational studies, Arts of Ministry. We would be able to provide the kind of things that they would benefit from, but not over-promise (Mattson 2012).

¹³² Further in this chapter, I discuss the significant implications of employing the term "spiritual" as opposed to "pastoral." While I argue that the terminology of the field is transitioning from the more "Christian" term, "pastoral," to a more "inclusive" term, "spiritual," I employ both to reflect the language of all of the programs I research. Hartford Seminary, for example, seems to retain the language of "the pastoral," in its documents and in classroom spaces, more so than Claremont, where the language of "the spiritual" is more common.

¹³³ The Islamic Chaplaincy Program at Hartford Seminary consists of a 48-credit Master of Arts degree, with a focus on Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations, as well as a 24-credit Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy. For more information, see: (Program Information n.d.).

In addition to fulfilling her desired ideological objectives, such as gender equity,¹³⁴ Mattson highlights the importance of balancing both academic and practical training in designing the program. Working with the resources of Hartford Seminary, Mattson designed a program based out of the seminary's Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. It stressed both the academic study of Islam, as well as what she refers to as "Arts of Ministry:"¹³⁵ practical elements of religious leadership training, including (but not limited to) pastoral care and counseling, preaching and worship, religious education and spiritual development, as well administration and community governance.¹³⁶ The possibility of gaining a full "Islamic seminary" education at Hartford Seminary was neither possible nor desirable, according to Mattson, given practical constraints. However, establishing a chaplaincy program both met community needs,¹³⁷ and drew upon the institutional strengths, including training in pastoral care and spiritual development. The founders of the program at Hartford Seminary therefore aim to strike a balance between the academic study of Islam and practical training for religious leadership, with special attention to pastoral care.

Training in the field of pastoral care has increasingly become an important component for those working in the field of chaplaincy, regardless of religious

¹³⁴ See Chapter Five.

¹³⁵ This phrase, at one point used on Hartford Seminary's Islamic Chaplaincy website, has been changed on web-based materials to "Practices of Ministry" (Program Information n.d.). The Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy from Hartford Seminary requires 18 credits in Islamic "Arts of Ministry," and 6 credits in field education/practica.

¹³⁶ The phrase "Arts of Ministry" was not universally recognized by my interlocutors, but the categories of courses mentioned above were distinguished as the more "practical" elements of ministry. Some respondents included other fields, such as the study of theology, scripture, liturgy, and history in this list.

¹³⁷ See Chapter One.

background. Based on Biblical imagery of shepherding a flock,¹³⁸ early Christian conceptions of pastoral care involved finding a means for a sinner to cope with sin, and live in “right relationship” with God through faith-based internal transformation.¹³⁹

William A. Clebsch and Charles R. Jaekle, authors of *Pastoral Care in Historical Perspective*, a commonly utilized text in classes on pastoral care and counseling, outline four main pastoral functions: “healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling” (Clebsch and Jaekle 1983, 32).¹⁴⁰ While the means and methods in which these functions have been performed have varied over time, the so-called care of souls has remained an essential practical component of ministerial training. In *A History of Pastoral Care in America*, American Church Historian, E. Brooks Holifield, presents evidence that Protestant seminaries in the United States reflected the importance of pastoral theology. Significant theological schools, such as Princeton, Andover, Harvard, and Auburn, amongst others, founded positions in pastoral theology from the early 19th century (Holifield 1983, 119).

¹³⁸ Some examples include: Gen: 48:24; Revelation 7:17; Psalm 23; Psalm 78:70-72; Hebrews 13:20; Isaiah 53:6; Ecclesiastes 9:8; John 10:14; Matthew 18:12; Luke 15: 3-7.

¹³⁹ The various Protestant denominations developed different methods of caring for the soul, and expanded the field of pastoral care from the sacramental actions of a priest to “priesthood of all believers.” It is worthy of note that the concept of “repentance” (*tawba*), coupled with the practice of seeking forgiveness from God (*istighfar*) are central to the cultivation of a virtuous life in Islam, as well. However, as I will explore further in this chapter, although both Protestant Christianity and Islam center the process of repentance within the individual (not requiring the sacramental mediation of clergy as in, for example, Catholic penance), Islamic practices of repentance differ from Protestant methods of maintaining “right relationship” with God. According to some hadith, the prescribed means of contending with sinful behavior is to “cover up” past transgressions, rather than to admit to them in front of other human beings, with the knowledge that only God has the power to forgive. By this logic, an individual has no right to “uncover” secrets about one’s past that God has chosen to remain hidden. As I will explore further in this chapter, the logic of keeping sinful behavior hidden complicates the pastoral relationship, which is based on openness and honesty, particularly with regards to one’s spiritual weaknesses.

¹⁴⁰ For a detailed description of each function, see: (Clebsch and Jaekle 1983, 32-66).

In the twentieth-century, the psychological sciences profoundly influenced the field of pastoral theology (Hunter 1990, 843). Pastoral care and counseling was impacted by insights and methods from the nascent field of psychology, but also struggled to compete with the new, “secular” approach to the understanding of human beings and human distress. The Pastoral Care movement of the twentieth-century, particularly influential in Protestant denominations in the United States, “attempted to refine ministry by drawing upon the findings of modern medicine, psychotherapy, and the behavioral sciences” (Holifield 1990). The inception of what eventually became known as “clinical pastoral education” (CPE) marks one of the clearest influences of medicine and psychology upon pastoral care. In 1920, Richard C. Cabot, a physician and ethicist at Harvard medical school, wrote an article entitled “A Plea for a Clinical Year in the Course of Theological Study,” which called for a practical element in the training of the ministry. Massachusetts Reverend Anton T. Boisen, in conversation with Cabot, and another physician, William S. Keller, established the first long-term supervised clinical pastoral care program in 1925 at Worcester State Hospital. This training involved an encounter with men and women in hospitals, prisons, and social agencies (Holifield 1983, 231-232), and therefore stressed the pastor’s ability to deal with those in crisis situations.¹⁴¹ CPE thus grew to become a mainstay of theological training, designed to equip pastors to deal with those in situations of distress, spiritual or otherwise. The influence of the psychological sciences thus expanded the notion of pastoral care beyond

¹⁴¹ Holifield explains: “The purpose was not to discover new methods of pastoral counsel but to reshape the Protestant ministry. The founders of clinical training deplored the cultural image of clerical prissiness and were of the opinion that seminaries failed to train ministers to deal with a messy world, or even to understand religion within it. They did not set out to train pastoral counselors; they intended to jolt the church” (Holifield 1983, 231-232).

its solely Christian roots, situating the field not only in a particular theological world, but also within the more “universal” social sciences.

When I asked Timur Yuskaev, current Director of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program and Assistant Professor of Contemporary Islam at Hartford Seminary about the pastoral requirements of his program, he pointed to the increasing necessity of CPE for anyone working in the field of chaplaincy, regardless of religious background:

[Our graduates are] not going to be hired unless they demonstrate training in pastoral care. CPE has that pastoral component... They need to distinguish themselves for the outside agencies as well as for the Muslim institutions, Muslim communities. They need to distinguish themselves as a particular type of religious professional. If you talk to chaplains... One of the lines is, ‘chaplains are not imams.’ Why? One of the lines that has been developed by Muslim chaplains, including our graduates... is that a chaplains’ day to day work is more focused on pastoral care, and therefore, they need the training in pastoral care. Their presence is different [than that of an imam] (Yuskaev 2013).

Yuskaev thus brings to light the institutional demands that thus shape the training of Muslims working as chaplains and in related fields. A distinguishing characteristic of a Muslim chaplain is her or his ability to offer pastoral care, or “care for the souls,” to their community, as demonstrated by practical training, including units of CPE.¹⁴² These requirements draw attention to the structuring of the field of chaplaincy based on the legacy of Christian training standards, regardless of the multi-religious nature of the profession today.

The chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary centers specifically on the education of a particular type of Muslim professional, namely, the chaplain. Both Emmanuel College and Bayan Claremont, which offer broader categories of degrees, include an emphasis on spiritual matters. Muslim students at Emmanuel College graduate

¹⁴² One unit of CPE at Hartford Seminary equals three credits.

with a Master of Pastoral Studies (MPS), which “prepares graduates to be leaders in lay ministry, or for careers in the non-profit sector and a variety of ministry settings” (Master of Pastoral Studies: Christianity n.d.). Modified from the Master of Pastoral Studies for Christian students, the “Muslim Studies” stream requires students to either specialize in “Social Service” or “Spiritual Care.” The latter “is a professional master’s program that prepares graduates to be certified with the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care as persons who provide pastoral counseling and/or spiritual care (public chaplaincy) in hospitals, educational institutions, prisons, congregations and the armed forces” (Master of Pastoral Studies: Muslim Studies n.d.). Principal of Emmanuel College, Mark Toulouse, highlights the importance of working within the parameters of the Canadian Association of Spiritual Care (CASC), Canada’s major regulating body for pastoral practices. He states:

We have worked closely with the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care to see what they would like graduates to have... The whole course development for this program was done in consultation with that organization because they tend to certify chaplains, and when they certify a chaplain, the Canadian government generally feels comfortable that this is a person we can have in a public context with confidence that they are going to do good work... There is nothing like this [program] in Canada, so I think that CASC is thrilled that they can have the confidence that any Muslim who comes through a program like this is going to have so much more than any Muslim chaplain who exists right now (Toulouse 2012).

Emmanuel thus represents the first program of its kind in Canada with degrees in Muslim leadership, once again basing its requirements on existing Christian curricula and nationalized standards of the field.

Bayan Claremont offers a Master of Arts in Religious Leadership in Muslim Contexts, which aims to “strike a careful balance between theory and practice for students interested in positions of leadership in Muslim contexts,” and offers a

concentration in “Spiritual Counseling” (MA in Islamic Studies and Leadership n.d.). Like the previously mentioned programs, Claremont School of Theology, Bayan’s institutional host,¹⁴³ also prides itself on its synthesis of research and practice, with professors trained both as academics and clinicians, and offers various degrees related to pastoral and spiritual care.¹⁴⁴ In recent years, the seminary, which has a long-standing interest and strengths in training in pastoral counseling (Greider, Clements and Lee 2006), has acknowledged the “limitations of the westernized psychotherapeutic model that had dominated pastoral counseling” (Greider, Clements and Lee 2006, 186). An increasingly diverse student body reveals the necessity to broaden approaches to care:

As the diversity of our applicants and students has increased, and as the clamor for spiritual growth and nurture grows, our formation is centered more on rooting ourselves in study and practices related to soul-care... Students of all cultures are more and more likely to be seeking clinical training that is less psychologized and caregiving that is more holistic. Our diverse students- seminarians, congregational pastors, chaplains, CPE supervisors, spiritual directors, other religious leaders, ‘secular’ therapists, Christians and persons of other affiliations- tend to want clinical training not in psychotherapy but in spiritual care. Our teaching is getting re-centered in religious, theological, and spiritual resources that assist careseekers (and caregivers) to move beyond emotional growth to spiritual maturity, from health to abundant life... Our students work in the most religious diverse region of the world. Pastoral care and counseling faculty at Claremont can no longer assume that all our students will be Christian, much less than that their careseekers will be Christian” (Greider, Clements and Lee 2006, 188-189).

The Claremont model argues that a focus on spiritual care counters the limitations of approaching care solely from a Western, psychotherapeutic angle, in an effort to meet the needs of an increasingly plural student body and clientele. While the incorporation of the psychological sciences previously expanded the sources and reach of pastoral care, as discussed above, Claremont makes explicit that a strict psychotherapeutic approach to

¹⁴³ See Chapter One.

¹⁴⁴ At both the Master’s and Doctoral levels. For details on degrees, see: (Degree Programs n.d.).

care is potentially insufficient and limiting, whereas spiritual care is constructed as more inclusive.

Wendy Cadge, whose work focuses on chaplaincy in hospital settings, has also addressed the universalization of the concept of spiritual care. She argues that demographic changes in the late twentieth-century in America led to a more religiously diversified patient base in hospitals. Previously, hospital chaplains hailed predominantly from Protestant Christian backgrounds, and catered to a predominantly Protestant Christian clientele. However, with demographic shifts, chaplains encountered a more religiously and ethnically varied clientele, thus requiring the diversification of their care-giving approaches. One of the changes resulting from this change was a shift in language from “pastoral” care to “spiritual” care.¹⁴⁵ The translation from the ostensibly more Christian term, “pastoral,” to the broader, “spiritual” signals a move towards inclusivity, and the incorporation of non-Christian religions and actors into the expanding field of spiritual care.

The influence of Christian ideas in the fields of chaplaincy and pastoral or spiritual care is not a surprise to any of the Muslim students or faculty involved in the programs I research. The curricular requirements at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont indicate an emphasis on training in pastoral and spiritual care, highlighting the centrality of the spiritual matters in these new forms of Muslim

¹⁴⁵ Beyond the hospital setting, other organizations devoted to the field of pastoral care have likewise demonstrated a movement to include non-Christian religions into their institutional framework. The aforementioned Canadian organization, the “Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education” (CAPPE), established in 1994 and devoted to the training, certification, and standard setting of the field of pastoral care and counseling, changed its name in 2011 to the Canadian Association for Spiritual Care/Association canadienne de soins spirituels (CASC/ACSS). Although the mission and goals of the organization largely remained the same, the shift in nomenclature indicates a larger transformation in the field, more generally speaking, to include individuals from non-Christian backgrounds in the field of “caring for souls.”

authorities, such as Muslim chaplains. Each of the programs discussed work from pre-existing curricular norms and standards for Christian students, based on the requirements of national accrediting and licensing bodies, whose qualifications also derived from the Christian legacy of pastoral care. Most of the Muslim students or faculty I spoke with readily admit that the contemporary field of chaplaincy initiated in Christian communities. However, they recast spiritual care as an indigenous qualification of Islamic leadership, found in authoritative religious sources. The ways in which Muslims affiliated with the Muslim leadership programs in question have navigated and redefined “the spiritual”—and differentiate between the work of chaplains, pastors, and imams—is specifically addressed below.

Locating the Islamic Roots of Pastoral Care

Many of my interlocutors, confronted with the centrality of the pastoral component of the Muslim leadership training programs at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan Claremont questioned the location of the pastoral and the spiritual within the Islamic context. Either overtly or implicitly responding to accusations by detractors, both real and imagined, that “pastoral care” is alien concept, imposed upon by Christian individuals and institutions to “Christianize” Islam, these students look to the uncontested sources of Islam, in particular, the Qur’an and the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, to indicate its Islamic roots. While there is some admission that the profession of chaplaincy itself is embedded in Christian history, these students argue that *practice* of pastoral or spiritual care is thoroughly “Islamic” (even if Muslims today may be ignorant of this tradition).

Bilal Ansari works as a Muslim chaplain at Williams College in Massachusetts. We meet up at the annual ISNA convention in Washington D.C., finding a momentarily empty conference room before the next panel on Muslim chaplaincy begins. He tells me about his rich and varied “Islamic education” as the son of an imam in the Warith Deen Muhammad community, as a volunteer prison chaplain, and as a student of Imam Zaid Shakir in Northern California. With this rich background of both formal and informal education, he decided to matriculate as a master’s student in the Islamic Chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary. He reflects, “Hartford Seminary was very good in the sense that I started to learn the language of academia, of pastoral care, pastoral counseling. What does that mean from an Islamic perspective?” Ansari gestures here toward the translational skills that he learned through his education at Hartford,¹⁴⁶ and indicates that his pastoral interest was prompted at a guest lecture at Hartford by Professor of Islamic Studies at Cambridge, Timothy Winter. During this lecture, “[Winter] framed ‘The Revival of Religious Sciences,’¹⁴⁷ by Imam Ghazali as pastoral theology manual. So that really started to trigger thoughts in my pursuit” (B. Ansari 2013). The reference to one of the most famous classical Islamic texts by one of the most important medieval Muslim scholars, Abu Hamid Ghazali as a pastoral theology manual inspired Ansari to dig deeper in search of the roots of Muslim conceptions of pastoral and spiritual care.

Ansari’s story sheds light on an important question for Muslims training to be chaplains or spiritual caregivers, and one with which almost all of my respondents

¹⁴⁶ See Chapter Two.

¹⁴⁷ *Ihya `Ulum al-Din*. A text to which Muslims refer to this day. In this work, Ghazali covers almost all fields of the Islamic sciences, including fiqh (jurisprudence), kalam (theology), and tasawwuf (mysticism).

grappled: Is pastoral care an “Islamic” concept? Is it, as some detractors of these programs state, a Christian concept imposed upon Muslim students studying in predominantly Christian settings?¹⁴⁸ This linkage between scholarship of a renowned and widely accepted philosopher such as al-Ghazali with work on pastoral theology is, in part, what motivated Ansari to write his Master’s thesis on “The Foundations of Pastoral Care in Islam” (B. Ansari 2011). In his thesis, he identifies the Qur’an and the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad as the authoritative sources indicating the importance of the pastoral in an Islamic context. Ansari argues, “Muslims generally have lost awareness of Islam’s pastoral voice as well and little if any systematic work has been done to maintain this voice or to develop its practice” (B. Ansari 2011, 17), and positions his thesis as a corrective to this lack of knowledge. Noting that “Allah sent no prophet unless they first shepherded sheep” (B. Ansari 2011, 18),¹⁴⁹ Ansari discusses the Prophet Muhammad’s experience working as a shepherd (B. Ansari 2011, 18), and also argues that a metaphor employed by the Qur’an is that of Allah acting as Muhammad’s shepherd, directly “aiding, guiding and supporting Muhammad’s role as prophet” (B. Ansari 2011, 19). The

¹⁴⁸ As mentioned in a previous footnote, one of the main arguments against the pastoral model (and general psychotherapeutic models, for that matter) in an Islamic context relates to hadith that advise the “covering” of past sinful behavior. Those who openly talk about sinful behavior, even in a “therapeutic” context, might be viewed as violating this tenet. The prevailing logic at play is that discussing past sins may be interpreted as normalizing or lauding immoral behavior, and may indeed encourage others to wrongdoing. There are of course exceptions to this general rule (for example, discussing such issues with one’s shaykh in order to receive moral guidance). However, even in these cases, it is advised that one should speak as generally as possible, and omit specific details of sinful activity. The following is an example of a relevant hadith: “Abu Huraira reported Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) as saying: All the people of my Ummah would get pardon for their sins except those who publicize them. And (it means) that a servant should do a deed during the night and tell the people in the morning that he has done so and so, whereas Allah has concealed it. And he does a deed during the day and when it is night he tells the people, whereas Allah has concealed it. Zuhair has used the word *hijar* for publicizing.” Sahih Muslim. Book 42. Hadith 7124

¹⁴⁹ Quoting Muhammad Husein Haykal. 1976. *The Life of Muhammad*. American Trust Publications, who quotes Bukhari.

symbolism of a shepherd guiding for and caring for her or his “flock” founds the exploration of pastoral themes in an Islamic context.

Apart from the Qur’an, Muslim students refer to the prophetic example, or sunnah, as another basis for Islamic spiritual care. A graduate of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program at Hartford Seminary and current Muslim chaplain at the University of Toronto, Amjad Tarsin, discusses example of the Prophet Muhammad as integral to situating his work within an Islamic framework. In his thesis, Tarsin argues that Muslim chaplains are actually upholding the example of the Prophet Muhammad, the “quintessential spiritual guide” for Muslims (Tarsin, *Commanding Good & Forbidding Evil: Islamic Chaplaincy Through the Prophetic Model of Pastoral Care* 2012, 31), in their employment of three foundational “pastoral care practices: active listening, unconditional positive regard, and giving counsel” (Tarsin 2012, 32). These techniques of engagement with other human beings, involving listening intently, abstention of judgment, and offering *nasiha*¹⁵⁰ link the Prophetic example with the modern-day Muslim spiritual care giver. Tarsin provides examples from the *hadith* and *sirah*¹⁵¹ of Muhammad to demonstrate the roots of Islamic pastoral and spiritual caregiving.

The importance of locating the pastoral in the authoritative sources of Islam also features in the work of Nazila Isgandarova, a graduate of the Doctorate of Ministry in Spiritual Care and Counseling Program at Wilfred Laurier University and current Doctor of Theology student at Emmanuel College. In her dissertation, Isgandarova analyses the Qur’an as a spiritual care text, in its reference to different kinds of spiritual ailments and

¹⁵⁰ “Sincere advice.”

¹⁵¹ “Biography.”

their potential cures. She writes: “The Qur’an addresses various diseases, especially of the heart, which often lead to direct or indirect physical and mental ailments” (Isgandarova 2011, 11). These diseases of the heart have the potential to lead to physical, moral, or ethical “illnesses,” which, without the proper care, can seriously affect an individual’s well being. By this rationale, one’s external state depends upon the nurturing and purification of one’s soul, or *tazkiyat an-nafs*. The process and means of purification remains a subject taken up by Muslim thinkers and practitioners through out history. Isgandarova also mentions a few noteworthy classical Muslim scholars, including al-Razi (d. 925), al-Kindi (d. 873), Ibn Sina (d. 1037), al-Dhahabi (d. 1348), al-Jawiziyyah (d. 1351), and al-Suyuti (1445-1505), who “produced literature on effective spiritual care” (Isgandarova 2011, 29). Spiritual care, in these cases, according to Isgandarova, concerns the relationship between religion, health, and healing.

Many of the concepts to which Isgandarova refers are central to the tradition of Islamic mysticism, or Sufism. Historically, Orientalist scholars and insiders to the religious tradition alike have viewed the domain of the spiritual within Islam as the primary concern of the *mutasawwifun*, or Sufis, practitioners of Islamic mysticism (Ernst 2011). Seyyed Hossein Nasr argues that Sufism represents “the most accessible source of the inner dimension of Islam,” in that it represents, “a science for the cure of the ailments of the soul, for untying the knots that entangle the soul and prevent it from becoming wed to the Spirit” (Nasr 1987, xxi). The purpose of spirituality, therefore, is the removal of any obstacles within a human being that prevent her or him from realizing the nature of the soul and its relationship with the Divine. The various “diseases of the heart,”

mentioned by the Qur'an,¹⁵² which both result from and contribute to an incorrect understanding of reality, each have a cause and a cure.¹⁵³ Scholars throughout Islamic history, from al-Muhasibi,¹⁵⁴ to al-Ghazali (mentioned above),¹⁵⁵ to Ibn Taiyimiyyah, as well as to contemporary thinkers such as Hamza Yusuf (Yusuf 2004) amongst many others, treat the concept of spiritual obstructions and healing, and offer practical insights about the process of tazkiyat al-nafs (Picken 2005). While each approach to this process of purification differs, sometimes vastly, the overarching connection remains: a belief in the need for spiritual discipline and nurturing to combat internal ailments that prevent a human being from achieving self-realization, as well as the realization of ultimate reality.

I discuss *tasawwuf* and Islamic spirituality, more generally speaking, with Ozgur Koca, Bayan Claremont's first full-time Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies. Professor Koca, a young, Turkish man who was working at the time on his dissertation on metaphysics in the thought of al-Ghazali, Ibn al-Arabi, and Said Nursi, has an interesting educational history. Having previously spent a decade studying and teaching physics, mathematics, and astronomy in various countries around the world, he decided to shift his research focus to examine the relationship between science, philosophy, and religion. I regularly observed his class, "Islamic Philosophy, Theology, Mysticism," where the classroom conversation frequently turned to the topic of Islamic conceptions of spirituality. On one such occasions, Koca explains:

¹⁵² Qur'an 2:10; 5:52; 8:49; 9:125; 22:53; 24:50; 33:13; 33:60; 47:20; 47:29, for example.

¹⁵³ Qur'an 83:14; 10:57; 17:82

¹⁵⁴ Kitab al-Ri'aya li Huquq Allah (wa'l Qiyam biha)

¹⁵⁵ Ihya `Ulum al-Din

It is correct to say that mutasawwifun, Sufis, see themselves as inheritors of the spiritual aspects of the Prophet... On the one hand, you have jurisprudential traditions. On the other hand you have theological traditions, on the other hand you have *kalam* [systematic theology]... And they think that one group of people are inheriting and continuing the tradition of jurisprudence. The other group is focusing on *kalam* and carrying the *kalam*- the theological message of Islam... Tasawwuf prioritizes spirituality without denying other aspects. Jurisprudence would prioritize law without denying other aspects. Or a theologian would prioritize doctrinal aspects of Islam without denying other aspects- spirituality and jurisprudence. There, then, we can see a relation of prioritization. They prioritize one aspect without denying the others.

This approach to the religion, balancing the legal, the theological, and the spiritual represents the ideal for Koca, but he adds quickly that this balance primarily exists *theoretically*. "I'm talking about an ideal situation here," he admits. In reality, the balance between the juridical, the spiritual, and the theological often remains more elusive.

In the contemporary period, a complex host of factors including, but not limited to European imperialism in the Muslim world, enforce a polemical dichotomization particularly between the legal (external, public) and the spiritual (internal, private). While the details and reasons behind this polarization are beyond the scope of this chapter, I stress Koca's portrayal of the degradation and constriction of the spiritual approach to Islam, particularly in relation to other approaches to the tradition, such as the legal or the theological. As a professor at Bayan Claremont, Koca hopes to educate his students about the spiritual elements of the tradition, not only in terms of Sufi thought, but also referring to the way in which all Muslims, regardless of affiliation, may approach their practice.

I think we need to resuscitate or revitalize that [spiritual] tradition. Religion without spirituality, or spiritual aspects, [becomes] dry and reduc[es] itself to do's and don'ts very quickly. We need that [spirituality]. By saying we need this, I don't mean that we have to invent it anew. We have to rediscover what was always there. Re-discovery of the lost, profound, very balanced spirituality, is what I'm talking about... There are practices every Muslim can agree on... The five daily prayers, or the five pillars of Islam are deeply spiritual acts if you think about them. They have that spiritual content. If I can discover them and focus on

them, it's a deeply spiritual act, and every Muslim, I think, could agree with that. Imitation of the Prophet, following the sunnah of the prophet is another aspect of the whole thing, and this is also a very spiritual act. Recitation of the Qur'an is a very spiritual act... Every Muslim, regardless of their affiliation... enjoys these practices and while practicing them they can actually acquire a deep spirituality by practicing them (Koca 2013).

Here, Koca portrays generally accepted acts of Islamic ritual practice as potentially spiritual actions, given the proper mindset. Furthermore, this spiritual potential is recognizable across religious "affiliation," and thereby relevant to Muslims of varied sects, including Sunni's and Shi'is, rendering the spiritual as a bridge across intra-religious difference.

I share the above examples not only to emphasize the weight given to the spiritual within Islam by my respondents, but also to underscore their efforts to locate pastoral and spiritual traditions within the primary sources of Islam, including the Qur'an, the sunnah, and classical thought. While most of my interlocutors admit that spirituality remains until today a vital component of Sufi traditions, they express a desire to "reclaim" these resources for all Muslims, regardless of doctrinal affiliation. The training of Muslim spiritual care specialists therefore becomes a means of restoring the spiritual to its proper place within the everyday lives of all Muslims.

'The Fusion of Horizons': Translating Spiritual Discourses

The previous section considered my respondents' efforts to authenticate the Islamic roots of spiritual and pastoral care, in order to simultaneously situate the profession of chaplaincy (and related fields) within the Muslim tradition, and also to restore the tradition's "lost" spiritual vitality and resources. The construction of Muslim discourses of spirituality thus appears to be a foundational justification for required

training in spiritual and pastoral care found at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. And yet, given both the history of the field of chaplaincy, as well as the predominantly Christian setting, Muslim discourses of the spiritual are, of course, not the only ones present in these educational spaces. Presently, I consider the ways in which Muslim students and faculty in these seminary settings interact primarily with mainline Protestant Christian and psychotherapeutic discourses of the spiritual.

Nazila Isgandarova is an impressive woman. Born in Azerbaijan, she moved to Turkey for her education, where she received a degree in Islamic Theology. As a *muhajjaba*,¹⁵⁶ however, she was forced to leave Turkey when the government banned the headscarf for those working or studying in the public sector. Eventually settling in Canada, Nazila went through clinical pastoral education (CPE) training, earned a Doctor of Ministry degree from Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario, and became the first certified Muslim woman chaplain in Canada. She was hired by Emmanuel College to teach classes for the “Canadian Certificate in Muslim Studies,”¹⁵⁷ a non-degree continuing education program, and is simultaneously enrolled as a student at Emmanuel in their Doctor of Theology program.

Nazila has invited me to her house in the suburbs of Toronto, where we chat about her education and her chaplaincy work in the health care setting, over tea, dried fruit, and Turkish Delight. Unlike the current Muslim Master of Pastoral Studies students at Emmanuel, her seminary education was not designed to accommodate students from a non-Christian background. In order to receive the proper credentials to work as a certified

¹⁵⁶ One who wears a hijab, or headscarf.

¹⁵⁷ For more information: (Continuing Education in Muslim Studies n.d.).

chaplain in Canada, however, she matriculated at a Christian seminary and worked with professors to tailor the existing program to her specific needs as a Muslim professional. Nazila, and those who went through similar educational experiences, are known and upheld by many of my respondents as “ground breakers” who paved the way for current programs like the one at Emmanuel, specifically designed for Muslim students. Her experience, immersed in a completely Christian environment and curriculum, was challenging, she tells me, but made possible through her efforts to translate¹⁵⁸ the material in meaningful ways for herself.

Through her own translational efforts, Nazila transformed potentially problematic elements of Christian theology that she encountered in her education, such as the doctrine of incarnation, into pedagogically productive tools, drawing both from her understanding of Islam and her experiences working as a chaplain:

Charles Gerkin’s incarnational theology,¹⁵⁹ for instance [uses] very heavily Christian language, because ‘incarnation’ comes from Christian theology... But I interpreted [it] to my theology. Incarnational theology. What’s that? [...] When you go to the patient, you don’t take God with you to the patient. God is already in that room. You just meet God with the patient there. *Both* of you reveal God there. That comes from the Bible- Matthew: 25.¹⁶⁰ But there is also a *Qudsi*

¹⁵⁸ See chapter on “translation,” in this dissertation.

¹⁵⁹ Charles V. Gerkin, (d. 2004), a pastoral theologian and family therapist, who wrote primary texts in the field of pastoral care and counseling, such as: *An Introduction to Pastoral Care* (1997); *Widening The Horizons: Pastoral Responses to a Fragmented Society* (1986); *Living Human Document: Re-Visioning Pastoral Counseling in a Hermeneutical Mode* (1984); *Prophetic Pastoral Practice: A Christian Vision of Life Together* (1991).

¹⁶⁰ Matthew 25: 31-46. “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply,

*Hadith*¹⁶¹ about that. One of the Qudsi Hadith says that God on the Day of Judgment will say, ‘Oh, son of Adam, I was hungry, you didn’t feed me. And man will say ‘Oh, God, when you were you hungry and I didn’t feed you?’ And then God will respond that, ‘So and so was hungry and you didn’t feed him. So and so was sick and you didn’t visit him.’¹⁶² So, this is a kind of incarnational theology in that *hadith*. So every time, in this kind of situation, I try to find something similar in my religion [and] it helped me to incorporate ideas. That is the ‘fusion of horizons’¹⁶³ for me. And on the other hand, Anton Boisen’s¹⁶⁴ idea of living human documents, I really liked it... What is that? It is the idea that every human being is a scripture, a holy scripture. As we read the holy scripture we also need to read every human being... We have a similar idea too; All the universe is a holy book, and the Qur’an is a minor book in that universe. It is a part of that big, big, big revelation, so all people or animals or everything we see in this universe is the kind of revelation, is a kind of scripture. We have to read it. So I learned a lot, I think that strong Qur’anic background also helped me to understand the other books, the scriptures: The Bible, the Torah, so I think it really helped me (Isgandarova 2013).

‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’ They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’ He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’ Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.’

¹⁶¹ *Al-Hadith al-Qudsi*: “Sacred Hadith.” A type of narration (*hadith*) whose words express the perspective of God. While these *hadith* are supposed to express God’s views transmitted in the Prophet Muhammad’s words, they are yet distinct from the Qur’an, which is thought to be the literal word of God.

¹⁶² Hadith Qudsi 18. On the authority of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), who said that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) said: Allah (mighty and sublime be He) will say on the Day of Resurrection: O son of Adam, I fell ill and you visited Me not. He will say: O Lord, and how should I visit You when You are the Lord of the worlds? He will say: Did you not know that My servant So-and-so had fallen ill and you visited him not? Did you not know that had you visited him you would have found Me with him? O son of Adam, I asked you for food and you fed Me not. He will say: O Lord, and how should I feed You when You are the Lord of the worlds? He will say: Did you not know that My servant So-and-so asked you for food and you fed him not? Did you not know that had you fed him you would surely have found that (the reward for doing so) with Me? O son of Adam, I asked you to give Me to drink and you gave Me not to drink. He will say: O Lord, how should I give You to drink when You are the Lord of the worlds? He will say: My servant So-and-so asked you to give him to drink and you gave him not to drink. Had you given him to drink you would have surely found that with Me. It was related by Muslim.

¹⁶³ A phrase employed by Gerkin: “Gerkin’s incarnational theology, with its own horizons, fuses with the various horizons of the written texts on clinical pastoral supervision in developing a transformed praxis, a new horizon” (O’Connor 1998).

¹⁶⁴ Discussed above. A leading figure in the development of Clinical Pastoral Education.

Here, Nazila's encounter with Gerkin's concept of incarnational theology, although "heavily Christian," gains traction when she translates it into an Islamic context, specifically via the concept of pastoral care. While "orthodox" Islam rejects the concept of divine incarnation as *shirk*,¹⁶⁵ compromising the radical monotheism of God (*tawhid*), Nazila translates the "spirit" of the incarnational theology by establishing a parallel with an existing hadith. Despite the widely divergent conceptions of incarnation in the historical development of Islam and Christianity, the concept of caring for the sick creates a relationship between the two traditions. Likewise, she sees Boisen's concept of "living human documents," or the view that the human experience is a source of theological wisdom as much as any sacred text, as compatible with Islamic theology. While the Qur'an does encourage humans to view all of creation as a sign of God,¹⁶⁶ individual human experience is not often upheld as part of God's revelation in the same way that the Qur'an is believed to be the literal word of God. However, considering this perspective in light of its pastoral relevance, ministering to human beings based on their experience, rather than abstract theological conceptions, gives a Christian theological principle traction within the Islamic framework.

Nazila's translation of Christian theological and pastoral concepts into an Islamic context is only possible because of her pre-existing knowledge of Islam. She cites her strong familiarity with the Qur'an as the basis for her ability to see the wisdom and connections with Biblical texts and concepts. This translational burden then rests upon Muslim students, as the minorities in educational settings intended for Christian students,

¹⁶⁵ "Associating" partners with God. Considered to be the one "unforgivable" sin in Islam.

¹⁶⁶ For example, Qur'an 27:93; 40:81; 2:164; 3:190; 6:99; 10:67; 13:3; 13:4; 14:33.

and represents part of the justification for specialized programs for Muslims. All the same, Nazila demonstrates an ability to find theological parallels between Christianity and Islam, in these cases, relating to the concepts of pastoral and spiritual care. She demonstrates full consciousness of the impact of Christian theology and concepts on her education, and at the same time, showcases their relevance both to deepening her understanding of Islam, as well as fostering a theological/practical relationship between Islam and Christianity.

In her doctoral dissertation, Nazila also points out the use of “psychological theories” (Isgandarova 2011, 44), by Christian ministers, and argues that Muslim leaders should learn from their example. She argues, “the insights of psychology and social sciences are a necessary part of Muslim spiritual care...[because] there is an integration of body, mind and spirit in Islam” (Isgandarova 2011, 61). Indeed, while there exist sources for Islamic spiritual care within the Muslim tradition, “the resources of the social sciences such as developmental theory, grief theory, and gender studies are also important to know” (Isgandarova 2011, 123). Advocating the inclusion of health sciences in the curriculum of Islamic theological schools (Isgandarova 2011, 102), Nazila explains that new fields of Islamic spiritual care and chaplaincy “requires the Muslim spiritual caregiver to be well-versed in both Islam and social sciences in order to look after the pastoral, spiritual and religious needs of the sick” (Isgandarova 2011, 103). Promoting the expansion of Islamic notions of spiritual care to include various elements of the social sciences, including psychology and gender studies is central to Nazila’s aspirations as a Muslim chaplain.

Repertoires of the Spiritual

How can we understand this deployment of multiple spiritual discourses evidenced by the previous sections, even when seemingly incongruent? How do they come together, and where do they diverge? What is the significance of these discourses in analyzing the culture of the educational settings I research? Sociologist Ann Swidler confronts similar questions in her book, *Talk of Love: How Culture Matters*, an ethnographic examination of discourses about love. In so doing, she looks at “how culture actually works when people bring it to bear on a central arena of their daily experience and especially how culture is (or is not) linked to action” (Swidler 2001, 1). During the process of interviewing her respondents, she:

Began to realize that most people do not actually have a single, unified set of attitudes or beliefs and that searching for such unified beliefs was the wrong way to approach the study of culture. Instead of studying the views of particular individuals, I came to think of my object of analysis as the cultural resources themselves- the traditions, rituals, symbols, and pieces of popular culture- that people drew on in thinking about love. I wanted to know how much people stretched the limits of the cultural traditions they brought to bear on experience, and how they combined or reappropriated elements of different traditions (Swidler 2001, 4).

In this work, Swidler offers a theoretical argument about the nature of culture, and its role in promoting social action, proposing that people use culture, sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously. That said, very few people live completely “ideologically pure” lives (Swidler 2001, 5), and instead possess an expansive “repertoire” of culture.

She explains:

Perhaps we do best to think of culture as a repertoire, like that of an actor, a musician, or a dancer. This image suggests that culture cultivates skills and habits in its users, so that one can be more or less good at the cultural repertoire one performs, and that such cultured capacities may exist both as discrete skills, habits, and orientations and, in large assemblages, like the pieces a musician has

mastered or the plays an actor has performed. It is in this sense that people have an array of cultural resources upon which they can draw. We can ask not only what pieces are in the repertoire but why some are performed at one time, some at another (Swidler 2001, 25).

As many contemporary theorists (such as Foucault and Bourdieu) (Swidler 2001, 12), have previously argued, culture, while extremely important in influencing social action, is rarely consistent. Swidler's contribution to these arguments against coherence remains a focus on how actors navigate among competing "systems," or "how the polysemy and multivocality of cultural symbols might shape the ways people actually bring culture to bear on experience" (Swidler 2001, 13). One of Swidler's primary contentions is that a person's "available strategies of action shape the kinds of goals he or she pursues, instead of the other way around" (Swidler 2001, 83). With this statement, she places the emphasis upon the "means," rather than "ends"¹⁶⁷ of social action, signaling the importance of one's "repertoire," rather than a set of pre-existing values.

I invoke Swidler to make sense of the numerous discourses about the spiritual and spirituality at play in the programs I research. How is that the spiritual can be so central, and yet so ambiguous within the scope of these settings? What is the relevance of affirming the "rootedness" of spiritual within the foundational sources of Islam, while simultaneously incorporating Biblical and social scientific ideas and methodologies regarding the spiritual? What is it about the spiritual that is able to reveal connections between the various traditions at play? In short, how and why are different "cultures of

¹⁶⁷ Swidler argues: "The assumption that culture shapes people by shaping their values is not supported by evidence. If deep, enduring values were dominant factors individual behavior, we should expect people in changed circumstances to continue to pursue traditional values, perhaps using new methods to achieve their goals. In fact, we observe precisely the opposite. People change their ends relatively easily in new circumstances- for example, immigrants seeking individual wealth and prestige in market societies, while they may have sought family continuity and family honor in their homelands. What tends to have more continuity is the style or the set of skills and capacities with which people seek whatever objectives they choose" (Swidler 2001, 80).

spirit” used in the programs at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan, and generally in the field of chaplaincy? If, as Swidler notes, “people use culture to learn how to be, or become, particular kinds of persons...[equipped] for action both by shaping their internal capacities and...helping them bring those capacities to bear in particular situations” (Swidler 2001, 71-72). I ask, what kind of persons are those who are affiliated with these programs learning how to be?

The multiplicity of spiritual discourses validates Muslim chaplains and pastors as legitimate Muslim authorities, at once embedded in Islamic sources and traditions while still incorporating and inserting Muslims into existing Protestant, North American forms of religious leadership. The multifaith seminary settings that I research represent sites in which Muslim students, as well as students of other religious backgrounds, are required, through coursework, practica, and informal interactions, to expand their cultural repertoires, in this case, enlarging their notions of the spiritual. The process of translating the spiritual into different religious and social scientific contexts, both inside and outside the classroom, makes possible multifaith education and collaboration, with the construction of a perceived common spiritual language and culture. That said, in this the work of translation, as mentioned above, the burden of translation falls primarily on the Muslim students and faculty to find points of connection across traditions.

Keeping this translational asymmetry in mind, I ask, what is it about the spiritual that fosters these translations, that makes interfaith education and collaboration possible? I argue that it is precisely the nebulousness, the expansiveness, the utter vagueness of the spiritual and spiritual care that allows it to hold meaning for members of various religious traditions, that allows students and faculty alike to speak of it at once in the specificity of

religious contexts (for example, Sufism), and as a universal concern. The universalizing ethos, discussed earlier in this chapter, advances the assumption that humans are essential spiritual beings. Duane Bidwell, Professor of Practical Theology, Spiritual Care, and Counseling at Claremont, contends:

Human beings have shared experiences of limits, or boundary situations: death, illness, joy, relational difficulties, questions about meaning or purpose, and those are often framed as existential questions...but the line between existential and spiritual is sometimes hard to establish...How do you discriminate between what is life-giving and holy, and ultimate, from what takes away from life, and is not sacred...? I think those kind of questions are universal. The way we operationalize them, the ways we engage them, the ways we make sense of them are not (Bidwell 2013).

According to Bidwell, these significant questions, falling somewhere between “the spiritual” and “the existential,” are relevant to all human beings, but their “operationalization,” that is, the ways in which they are handled and managed, are specific to different traditions.¹⁶⁸ The varied religious approaches to spiritual matters are thus simply particular approaches to universal problems. In keeping with this idea, we might view the spiritual, generally speaking, as an orientation, a disposition, an attunement to “human” questions of ultimacy, and its polysemy supports the maintenance of both religious difference and interfaith collaboration. Muslims, the argument goes, can thus receive training in the practice of spiritual care at a predominantly Christian seminary without compromising their Islamic legitimacy. Likewise, Christian seminaries can theoretically open their classroom doors to students of other religious traditions, including Muslims, without renouncing their religious values or identities. The

¹⁶⁸ As Daniel Schipani, editor of the volume, *Multifaith Views in Spiritual Care*, writes: “We adopt the understanding of faith as a human universal...Thus understood, faith may or may not find expression in terms of specific religious traditions and content. Spirituality in this light is the overarching construct connoting a fundamental human potential as well as a need or longing for meaning, communion, existential orientation, and a disposition for relationship with a transcendent power” (Schipani 2013, 2).

universality of the spiritual thus makes training in spiritual care relevant for all religious leaders, and renders possible multifaith educational collaboration.

While different religions have specific “takes” on the spiritual, as argued above, there exist certain iterations of religiosity that stand in opposition to spiritual well being. A recently published volume, *Multifaith Views in Spiritual Care*, edited by Daniel Schipani, Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling, features two essays written by scholars affiliated with the programs I research.¹⁶⁹ In this volume, Schipani argues that “spirituality...is the overarching construct connoting a fundamental human potential as well as a need or longing for meaning, communion, existential orientation, and a disposition for relationship with a transcendent power” (Schipani 2013, 2). He identifies the potential danger of some particular types of spirituality on the individual human psyche, setting up the bifurcation between “good” spirituality and “bad” spirituality:

Toxic spirituality, in the form and content of sternly judgmental religiosity...can seriously undermine mental health. And the healing of the spiritual self- also known as *inner healing*- by the experience of grace and forgiveness, for example, always positively affects the psychological self (Schipani 2013, 162).

Certain types of religiosity, therefore, poison human spirituality, inflicting harm upon an individual’s interior life. “Good spirituality,” then focuses on internal processes of healing, aided by such pastoral/spiritual tools such as grace and forgiveness. “Bad spirituality,” on the other hand, centers on externalized, “judgmental” types of religious expressions. The spiritual therefore becomes a tool that helps identify “good” and “bad” articulations of religiosity.

¹⁶⁹ See: (K. J. Greider 2013); (Isgandarova 2013).

By this point, it should be clear that a focus on the spiritual privileges particular articulations of religiosity, spiritual “health” equated with internally focused, individualistic, practices. This approach is quite congruent with Protestant Christian religious ideals, as demonstrated in the work of Pamela Klassen, who analyzes the relationship between North American liberal Protestantism and modern discourses of healing (Klassen 2011). But how does this conception of “good” spirituality, constructed in opposition with “the legal,” fare within the context of Islam, which has a robust legal tradition? As mentioned before, many of my respondents affirm the necessity of a balance of the “spirit” and the “law.” According to them, conflicts should never arise between the two when they are in balance, since fulfillment of one’s legal obligations is an element of maintaining spiritual health, and vice versa. All the same, many of my interlocutors mentioned situations in which they confronted some level of conflict between the two. The following section presents several cases in which my respondents negotiate, theoretically and practically, the relationship between the spiritual and the legal. When facing a conflict between facilitation of spiritual wellbeing and the fulfillment of legal obligations, most of my respondents privilege the spiritual over the legal, confirming their role as spiritual authorities.

The Spirit and the Letter: Facilitating the Spiritual

Amjad Tarsin stands at the front of a University of Toronto classroom of approximately forty students. It’s a brisk, November evening, and a kettle of tea bubbles at the back of the room. A few students grab a cup of tea and some cookies as Amjad delivers a lecture for his weekly class, “Being Muslim.” A graduate of Hartford

Seminary, Amjad was hired to be the first Muslim chaplain at the University of Toronto. I met him while he was still a student at Hartford, and find our paths once again crossed in Canada. This class is one of the programs he instated as chaplain in an effort to fill gaps in Muslim students' knowledge of their religion that is "understandable and relevant."

Tonight's topic is *ihsan*, an Arabic word literally meaning "excellence," or "doing what is beautiful" (Murata and Chittick, *The Vision of Islam* 1994, xxxii), to achieve this excellence. More commonly, people often say that it refers to perform all actions, sacred or mundane. An oft-cited hadith, often referred to as "The Hadith of Jibreel," is the focus of tonight's lecture, and notes that the Prophet Muhammad characterized *ihsan* in such a way: "That you worship Allah as if you are seeing Him, and in case you fail to see Him, then observe prayer (with this idea in your mind) that (at least) He is seeing you" (Muslim, Hadith 4). The PowerPoint slide projected behind Amjad showcases a pie chart with three equally divided pieces, labeled, "Islam, Iman, and Ihsan." These three elements, which he associates accordingly with "practice, faith, and spiritual cultivation," should work together to achieve a harmonious religious life. As an interesting aside, Amjad remarks, "Religious extremism occurs when there is an imbalance between the three. But when all three work in synergy, balance is achieved," and the full potential of Islam realized.

Amjad's master's thesis from Hartford Seminary also reflects a concern for balancing different approaches to Islam, particularly the "legal" and "the pastoral." Preceding the first chapter of the thesis, he includes an epigraph from the Qur'an from *Surah Taha*, in which God commands the Prophet Moses and his brother to confront

Pharaoh about his wrongdoings: “God said, ‘Moses...Go, you and your brother, with My signs, and do not weaken in remembering Me. Go, both of you, to Pharaoh, for he has exceeded all bounds. Speak to him gently so that he may take heed, or show respect” (Tarsin, *Commanding Good & Forbidding Evil: Islamic Chaplaincy Through the Prophetic Model of Pastoral Care* 2012, 10).¹⁷⁰ This short passage highlights some important themes regarding the relationship between “the legal,” signified by Islamic law (*shari`a*), and “the ethical,” indicated by pastoral care. Moses, representative of “the law,” is ordered by God to confront transgression where he sees it, but to moderate his judgment in such a way as to increase the potential for Pharaoh’s receptivity. Modeled after this prophetic ideal, the Muslim chaplain, pastor, or spiritual-caregiver does not work outside of religious law, according to Tarsin, but upholds it in a way that may productively influence positive changes in peoples’ lives.

But how can one in a position of authority navigate an issue in which spiritual care conflicts with the legal prescripts of Islam? Tarsin explores the potential tension between the offering of unconditional spiritual support, and the holding of individuals accountable for their actions, a duty specified by the Islamic injunction to command the good and forbid evil” (*amr bi’l ma’ruf wa nahi `an al-munkar*). When I speak with him, Amjad gives me an example of such a conflict:

So for example, if a student comes and says that they have homosexual proclivities, the vast majority, I think, of Muslims would know that they somehow have a problem. If I’m a Muslim and I’m feeling this way, there’s something that’s not right here, and that’s why I’m coming to the Muslim chaplain. A Muslim chaplain...would say, ‘What is the ruling under Islamic law?’ and maybe make that clearer for the person. But also, that Muslim chaplain would seek to provide a sort of companionship, or an environment in which that person, in many cases, if they went to an imam or to someone else in the community, might feel

¹⁷⁰ Quoting from Qur’an 20:36, 42-44.

ostracized, right? ‘Oh, that’s how you feel? We don’t want you around us anymore.’ Whereas a Muslim chaplain would actually try to find the solution that would bring about some sort of practical result in which that person could still feel part of the community, still feel connected to their faith, still pray five times a day, still fast the Ramadan, and you know, find a way to maybe deal with that particular issue, and I really can’t give a solution off the top of my head, but at least be there and be a source of support and strength for that person in their faith, rather than someone who’s judgmental, and say, ‘You’re a sinner. You need to fear Allah, or get out of my face.’ Then, we push out a lot of people that way. A Muslim chaplain wouldn’t seek to do that (Tarsin 2012).

The pastoral approach to Muslim leadership, indicated by Tarsin, takes into account the potential damage that an extreme focus on legality might have on one’s internal state, and defers (rather than dismisses) questions of halal and haram, or permissibility and impermissibility for the sake of spiritual assistance. In this way, Muslim spiritual caregivers practice the duty of enjoining “right behavior” in a strikingly distinct from a traditional legal approach, “with the desire for mercy for the person...and the advice should be given with that in mind...” (Tarsin, *Commanding Good & Forbidding Evil: Islamic Chaplaincy Through the Prophetic Model of Pastoral Care* 2012, 28).

In his thesis on Islamic prison chaplaincy, Bilal Ansari, mentioned above, offers a different perspective on the relationship between religious law, secular law, and pastoral care. Presenting the case of female Muslims prison inmates, he highlights how certain interpretations of shari`a may conflict with the spiritual interest of care-seekers.

Documenting the case of “Khawla,” a forty-five year old Black woman in a United States federal prison, Bilal examines her requests for Friday (*Jum`ah*) congregational worship services. Prison administration, accepting “traditional scholarly consensus” (*ijma`*) that congregational prayer is not obligatory for women (B. Ansari 2011, 42), relied on Islamic law to justify denying Khawla’s petitions, and interpreted repeat requests as passive-aggressive protest, “causing her extended stays in segregated housing units, and frequent

humiliating strip searches in retaliation to silence what were perceived as unwarranted religious pleas without a foundation in Islam” (B. Ansari 2011, 6). Bilal notes, however, a double-standard in the interpretations of legal opinions (*fatawa*) about congregational prayer for men and women, as classical legal conditions for valid congregational prayer for men cannot be met in North American prisons, either (B. Ansari 2011, 27-47).

As such, he sees the uneven interpretation of Islamic legal rulings, as performed by secular prison administration, in violation of both the constitutional rights and spiritual well being of female inmates. The Muslim chaplain must therefore navigate the fields of religious and secular law to ensure the pastoral well-being of their clients: “The problem of inequity in female Muslim pastoral care in prison seems to be primarily a problem of Muslim legal reasoning...Chaplains must be able to analyze *fatwas* by identifying false premises, opening closed legal precepts, and facilitating the highest ethical and equitable standard of care for all” (B. Ansari 2011, 36). The Muslim chaplain, in this case, employs principles of “pastoral care” to negotiate tensions between the letter of the both secular and religious law, and the spiritual well being of an individual.

Bilal tells me about another conflict he faced in his work as Muslim chaplain at Williams College. We catch up over Skype, continuing a previously unfinished conversation about Islamic pastoral care and spirituality. Leaning back in his office chair, he tells me about a young female Muslim student approached him, questioning why women, in most Muslim communities, have to pray behind males during congregational salat, ritual prayer.¹⁷¹ ““Why do the women have to pray behind the men? Why can’t we pray beside them?”” Her question about the legal norms regarding where women stand in

¹⁷¹ For a common explanation of why Muslim women pray behind Muslim men in congregational prayers, see: (U. Z. Ansari 2012).

ritual prayer speaks to her anxiety about where they stand as individuals within the tradition of Islam. Sensing her concern, Bilal narrates his response: “I said, ‘Yeah. That’s a good question. Why can’t we?’ And so the men gave all their reasons, ‘boom, boom, boom, boom’ [Imitating their delivery of various reasons]. I said, ‘Okay. All those are legal answers. But you’re not speaking to her spirit.’”

The Muslim chaplain’s response to the legalistic rationales provided by the males of the campus community involved pointing out the injury done to the spiritual life of the young woman. The standard placement of women behind the men in ritual prayers, according to Bilal, produced distress and anxiety in the young woman about the equal status of women in Islam. “So I turn to her,” he relates, “and I said, ‘Did that make you spiritual feel welcome? At home?’ ‘Well, no.’ [she said]...” Aware of the gravity of this issue, Bilal considers his options. He continues:

So then one night we’re praying the prayer and I turn around and I said [to the young woman], ‘Do you want to pray right here? On the same row? But not arms touching? Just you right there?’ She said, ‘Yes!’ There were other girls who said no. But she prayed there, and then I turned around after the *tasleem*,¹⁷² after the *du`a*.¹⁷³ And I asked her, ‘So how was that for you?’ She had tears in her eyes, and she said, ‘That was the best prayer I have ever made.’ And then I turned towards them [the men], and I said, ‘And how was that for you, to see that? To see her touched? To see your sister who you say you love and you care for...to see her, for the first time, experience a prayer...’ And they said, ‘We have no words. We’re happy’ (B. Ansari 2013).

This story is the perfect example of a chaplain’s successful negotiation of conflict and facilitation of spiritual life. Confronting a student’s spiritual distress, as well as the legal

¹⁷² The conclusion of ritual prayer (salah) that involves turning one’s head first to the right and then to the left, twice reciting, “Peace and blessings of God be unto you.”

¹⁷³ “Invocation.” The act of making supplications to God.

concerns of the rest of the community regarding gender segregation and ritual prayer, Bilal facilitated a way to resolve the conflict while respecting all parties involved.

While Bilal's solution would not likely have been acceptable to those invested in the maintenance of strict physical boundaries between women and men, he still maneuvers within the framework of Islamic law.¹⁷⁴ All the same, his primary concern, and the rebuttal he presents to the more "legalistic" minds of the community remained how does one meet the needs of the spirit? The situation afforded not only the female student an opportunity for spiritual fulfillment, but also emotionally impacted the men who realized the significance of praying side by side for their sister. Moving past the "legality" of their initial refusals, Bilal facilitated their awareness of the importance of one's internal life, both for the individual woman and the group of men.

Considering his actions in this situation, Bilal connects his pastoral method with a spiritual goal, highlighting again the importance and distinctiveness of the chaplain's approach:

I was being pastoral, right? I was targeting in on that case a spiritual need... To be mindful of that and create an environment that feeds everybody's soul is having a... a proper pastoral approach. You may be legally qualified. You may even belong to a *tariqa*, and you think... you are spiritually higher than me. But if you're not meeting the spiritual needs of those who are around you, I don't call that spiritual... [As a chaplain] you are obliged to embody the First Amendment right. You're not here to establish any one religion, right? But you're also here to provide the Free Exercise thereof of *all*. And if you're religious interpretation, your dogmatic, creedal, locked interpretation of religion is prohibiting anybody from free exercising their religion, you are a problem. You are *not* fulfilling the

¹⁷⁴ While the model of men and women praying side-by-side is certainly not normative within Muslim circles, it is not without precedent. Debates on "adjacency" (*muhadhat*) within different schools of Islamic law concern the validity or nullification of prayers conducted when a woman prays next to or in front of a man, particularly in light of barriers or spaces left between the genders. See: (Sadeghi 2013, 51). Most mosques in North America today are constructed with women's sections either behind men's sections, or with women in a different space altogether, usually in upper floor balconies or in basements. Notable exceptions, exist, however, including the Noor Cultural Centre in Toronto, which follows the adjacency model.

ethics of a chaplain. Perhaps you are fulfilling the ethics of an imam of a certain particular ilk. But I question even that (B. Ansari 2013).

Once again, the metaphor of feeding the soul stands out as the primary goal of the Muslim caregiver. Bilal also raises the importance of the chaplain's function as facilitator of one's First Amendment rights.¹⁷⁵ In this case, the combination of a pastoral approach, focused on the spiritual well being of one's "flock," and the concern to uphold the civic right of Free Exercise of religion result in a resolution to a conflict between the spiritual and the legal.

Conclusion: "God Created Us Without Religion."

As Bilal Ansari exemplifies, the spiritual is central in both the training and practice of new types of Muslim leadership in North America. The Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont all identify the spiritual as a chief component of their chaplaincy and pastoral programs. I propose that training in spiritual matters is a defining characteristic of these new types of Muslim leaders, such as chaplains and pastors, differentiating them from existing leadership, who are criticized for neglecting this important component of Islam. This field is indeed impressed by its Christian historical legacy, as well as the current Christian influence on the field via curricular standards, and increasingly institutionalized occupational standards. However, I have tried to demonstrate that the Muslims involved in these programs are well aware of this legacy and influence, and working in creative ways to demonstrate at once that spiritual care is a foundational part of Islam in need of reviving,

¹⁷⁵ In the United States' context. In Canada, chaplains uphold the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which includes the concept of freedom of religion.

and that Muslims can benefit from the wisdom of other religious traditions, as well as the social sciences.

In analyzing the polysemy of the spiritual, I have argued that the terms amorphousness is precisely what makes it possible to uphold particular religious spiritual traditions while supporting the idea of a “universal spiritual,” relevant to all human beings. This “unity in diversity” represents a strong justification for multifaith education, as students can acknowledge the spiritual legitimacy of all traditions without compromising their particular beliefs. These educational settings produce religious leaders who understand the necessity of multifaith collaboration, and are prepared with the skills and language to engage in these efforts. As mentioned in a previous quotation from Claremont professor, Duane Bidwell, this interfaith cooperation is portrayed as a way to use religion as a “force primarily for good” (Bidwell 2013), countering the countless examples of religion as a tool of violence.

Finally, the construction of “bad spirituality” and “good spirituality” highlighted in this chapter puts into question the role of the legal in religious traditions. Although overly legalistic interpretations of religion are grouped under the category of toxic spirituality, the Muslims affiliated with the programs I research demonstrate the importance of the legal within the Islamic context. Their role as facilitators of spiritual life does result in their privileging of the spiritual over the legal in situations of conflict, but they espouse the idea that both are necessary components of Islam.

As a closing example, let us return to Nazila, who summarizes the perspective of many of my respondents. She comments, “God created us without religion. We came to this world as humans first...Religion is a way to make meaning of life and our human

experience, and our human experience of God. We do that in an Islamic way. Others do it in a Christian way, and all are divine. Sacred” (Isgandarova 2013).

CHAPTER FIVE: TRANSLATING GENDER

The so-called woman question is central to both anti-Muslim polemic and the apologetic counter-discourse that adopts a terminology of liberation to describe the way “true” or “real” Islam respects and protects women, despite the existence of potentially oppressive ‘cultural’ practices.

- Kecia Ali, “Sexual Ethics and Islam: Feminist Reflections on Qur’an, Hadith, and Jurisprudence,” xii

Even more difficult to escape is a sense of evolutionary hierarchy in which feminist projects and ideas are measured against a scale of developments in Christian and later Jewish feminism in which they [Muslim feminists] can only be in a perpetual state of being behind.

- Juliane Hammer, “American Muslim Women, Religious Authority, and Activism: More Than a Prayer,” 9

There is no aspect of Islam that is gender-neutral; everything is gendered, from sacred texts, theology, ethics, legal theory, jurisprudence to mystical expressions and the embodied experiences of believers. So although the topics of ‘Islam and women,’ ‘the treatment of women in Islam,’ and ‘the role of women in Islam’ are often bracketed out as special topics in seminars and lectures, as if ‘Islam’ as a discrete entity must be made to speak to or about ‘gender’, in fact, Muslim men and women the world over can interact with Islam only in a gendered way.

- Ayesha S. Chaudhry, “Domestic Violence and the Islamic Tradition: Ethics, Law, and the Muslim Discourse on Gender,” 1

“Growing up, you’re just taught that a woman covers her hair, a man is the maintainer of the woman, and the protector, and the women usually are caregivers for their children and their family. And these are specific roles that the Prophet valued and the *Qur’an* values, and Islamic history has valued.” Lana, a young Muslim woman, shrugs, her shoulder-length brown hair moving gently in the Southern California breeze. One of only a handful of Muslim women enrolled at Bayan College, she talks to me about the ways in which her Muslim community in Orange County, California spoke about and dealt with gender-related issues, which deeply affected and troubled her relationship with her religion as she grew up. Lana tells me that the solution to her discomfort involved “muting” traditions and perspectives that bothered her. “I’ll literally

let things [in the *Qur'an*] go muted that I don't think are relevant to my life" (Lana 2011). She simply silenced conflicts that arose within her, pertaining to related yet distinct elements of her identity.

A consequence of enrolling at Bayan, Lana tells me, was that she was forced to "unmute" many of those conversations in her courses, dealing with difficult topics that she had previously ignored, and to revise her well-established practice of compartmentalization. Classes on Feminist Ethics, Islamic Ethics, and The Qur'an and Its Interpreters dealt with issues like marriage and divorce, dress and modesty, prescribed gender roles in families, and women's legal status in matters of inheritance and testimony. As a result, Lana opened up to different interpretive and exegetical possibilities that allowed her to re-examine gender-related issues in a new light.

Continuing with her previous statement, Lana explains:

And then, coming to [Claremont Lincoln] where you are provided all kinds of authors [with] different, various interpretations on those verses makes you realize, okay, that's not necessarily something that has to stick *for all time*. Because women's roles are changing. They're becoming professionals. They're becoming educated. Maybe the Dads are staying home. Maybe the Moms are going out into the workforce. So does that mean issues of [Islamic] inheritance still stays the same [with] the whole division being more to the man than to the woman?¹⁷⁶ But what if she's the caregiver, the primary caregiver? So there are things that need to be re-examined and have been opened up to me via scholarship (Lana 2011).

This conversation foregrounds several key issues treated in this chapter regarding the constructions of gender, the "status of Muslim women" (Ali 2013, xii-xiii), and the

¹⁷⁶ Here, Lana refers to the apologetics surrounding the Qur'anic verses dealing with the issue of *mirath*, or inheritance. The Qur'an (4:11-4:12), as interpreted within Sunni schools of Islamic law, appears to favor men over women with regard to inheritance. She raises a common argument that this favoring of men regarding inheritance did not address the inherent value of a woman, but rather supported the existing patriarchal system in which husbands provided financially for their wives. From Lana's perspective, changing social realities, including shifting conceptions about a woman's ability to work outside of the home, requires a revisiting of such legislation.

related issues of tradition and authority in Islam, as demonstrated in the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. As indicated by the above quotation, these programs raise questions related to gender in ways that come to bear on the development of new forms of Muslim leadership in the North American context.

I argue that the programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont construct new forms of Muslim authority in the North American context in part through debates about gender in Islam. My research therefore supports Juliane Hammer's contention that "Debates about authority, authenticity, and tradition cannot meaningfully take place any longer without taking gender issues into account" (Hammer 2012, 11). This chapter engages the gender component by examining the following issues: firstly, the foundation of these programs rests, at least in part, on critiques of existing North American Muslim leadership, particularly as they relate to the treatment of women. The people shaping the Islamic Chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary and the Muslim programming at Emmanuel College specifically cited the treatment of Muslim women and the marginalization of "women's issues" by many "traditional" or "neo-traditional"¹⁷⁷ Muslim authorities as being part of what drove them to establish the

¹⁷⁷ Ayesha S. Chaudhry categorizes different scholarly and historical understandings of Qur'an 4:34, a verse that arguably permits a husband's use of physical "discipline" against his wife in particular circumstances. She outlines several heuristic categories of approach regarding to this particular issue and in terms of the general construction of patriarchal cosmologies in an Islamic context, including "traditionalist," "neo-traditionalist," "progressive," and "reformist" approaches to this topic. She explains, "The 'traditionalist' approach unambiguously privileges a patriarchal idealized cosmology over an egalitarian one and thus maintains the right of husbands to physically discipline their wives. In doing so, traditionalist scholars adhere to the 'Islamic tradition,' defined here as the pre-colonial legal and exegetical traditions. The 'neo-traditionalist' strategy also favors a patriarchal idealized cosmology over an egalitarian one, allowing husbands to hit their wives in increasingly restricted circumstances. All the while, neo-traditionalist scholars seek to portray the patriarchal Islamic tradition as just, equitable, and mostly harmonious with an egalitarian idealized cosmology. 'Progressive' scholars ultimately prefer an egalitarian idealized cosmology over a patriarchal one, denying husbands the right to hit their wives in any circumstance. However, they seek to portray both their position and the larger egalitarian idealized

programs. These programs thus contest the treatment of Muslim women by what they see as the majority of existing leadership in North American Muslim communities.

Secondly, the programs in question highlight debates internal to Muslim communities about the concept of female authority in Islam. Fields like chaplaincy arguably open new spheres of religious authority to women, providing them with new opportunities to serve publicly as Muslim leaders. It may be assumed that these new leadership roles for women indicate a groundbreaking reconsideration of gender distinctions and authority in Islam. My findings, however, reveal much more complex results. For some students and faculty, the creation of these programs does, in fact, go hand in hand with a direct challenge to the exclusivity of male privilege and ritual authority. For others, however, chaplaincy offers women new leadership roles without compromising traditionally recognized understandings of Islamic authority (unlike the more controversial example of woman-led mixed gender congregational prayer).¹⁷⁸ For many of these respondents, an essentialized view of women's natures actually supports their pursuit of professions like chaplaincy and spiritual caregiving, based on the argument that women are inherently sensitive, empathetic, and patient, and are therefore

cosmology as compatible with traditional views, even if they rest their authority upon minority or even singular pre-colonial opinions. By anchoring their own perspective in the inherited tradition—even if in minority or imagined opinions—progressive scholars hope to retain authority in mainstream religious communities. The 'reformist' approach opts for an egalitarian idealized cosmology over a patriarchal one and categorically forbids husbands from ever hitting their wives. Reformist scholars are willing to sacrifice any authority that might be garnered through an association with a patriarchal tradition in order to maintain the integrity of their egalitarian idealized cosmology" (Chaudry 2013, 139).

¹⁷⁸ In examining the March 18, 2005 woman-led prayer in New York City, Juliane Hammer explains how this prayer differed from established Muslim prayer practices: "The imam was a woman, who also delivered the khutbah; the congregation she addressed and led in prayer was not separated by gender; and the *adhan* (call to prayer) was pronounced by a woman. It is in these three departures from established ritual practice that the March 18 prayer became an embodied performance of gender justice in the eyes of its organizers and participants. They symbolically challenged the exclusively male privilege of leading Muslims in ritual prayers and at the same time blurred the lines of gender segregation in ritual prayers (Hammer 2012, 15).

naturally qualified to serve in these professional roles. That said, the presence of many male Muslim chaplains, however, begs consideration of Muslim male masculinities in light of this vocation's development. While a number of my female respondents consider their female-ness an asset to their work, Muslim men locate their caregiving paradigm in the example of the Prophet Muhammad. The creation of Muslim leadership programs open to Muslim women thus emphasizes intra-communal debates concerning the development of female authority in Islam, constructions of masculinity and femininity, and the impact of such expansions on conceptions of exclusively male-dominated forms of authority.

Thirdly, this chapter analyzes several examples of how gender-related topics are handled within the classrooms of the seminaries in question. It is here that these conversations about gender are translated from the intracommunal to the broader, multifaith context, and include the voices and perspectives of predominantly Christian classmates and colleagues. The liberal Protestant seminary context in which these intrareligious Muslim deliberations about gender and sexuality occur highlights a complicated element of these multifaith educational spaces. What does it mean to air controversial gender-related debates in a predominantly liberal Christian space? Of course, the "status of women" in Muslim communities has historically justified colonial projects in the Muslim world, as demonstrated by scholars including Lila Abu-Lughod (Abu-Lughod 2013), Leila Ahmed (Ahmed 2012) (Ahmed 1992), and Meyda Yegenoglu, illustrating the alleged superiority of Christianity above Islam, and the "incompatibility of Islam with Western models of modernity and reason" (Yegenoglu 1998, 100). The performance of intrareligious debates concerning the treatment of Muslim women and

questions of gender and religious authority in and amongst religious Christian communities historically associated with mission and colonialism, complicates the dynamics of the multifaith classroom. In such settings, as stated in the above epigraph, it is “difficult to escape... a sense of evolutionary hierarchy in which feminist projects and ideas are measured against a scale of developments in Christian and later Jewish feminism in which [Muslims] can only be in a perpetual state of being behind” (Hammer 2012, 9).

The Status of Muslim Women

On March 8, 2014, Shaykh Abu Eesa Niamatullah, a popular British *imam*, commemorated International Women’s Day by posting what was meant to be a humorous meme of himself on social media with the heading, “Don’t try to understand women. Women understand women and they hate each other.” Dubbing March 8th as “*Bakwaas* Day,”¹⁷⁹ Abu Eesa, an educator affiliated with the internationally renowned Islamic educational organization AlMaghrib Institute, founded by Shaykh Yasir Qadhi, continued to post what termed “jokes” on his Facebook page throughout the day on the topics of women, female genital mutilation, and rape (Safi 2014).¹⁸⁰ He maintained that his contention was with feminism, rather than women. He stated, “I absolutely believe that feminists – with all the nuances of that title...are the enemies of Islamic orthodoxy, and that to refute them is a rewarded act” (Eesa n.d.), These provocative assertions about the

¹⁷⁹ A Urdu-Hindi word meaning “nonsense” or “rubbish.”

¹⁸⁰ Interestingly, one of the scholars referenced by Safi in the aforementioned link, Suhaib Webb, who initially condemned Abu Eesa’s statements, later retracted his criticism, and asked for Abu Eesa’s forgiveness. This incident illustrates the both the longevity of the discussion, in addition to the stakes of publically criticizing authority. See: (Webb 2015).

redundancy and irrationality of Western feminist projects for Muslim women, generating a great deal of debate both on and offline, divided Muslim communities in the U.K. and abroad, leading to heated discussions about Muslim male authority, sexism, and misogyny. Many called for Abu Eesa to step down from his position at AlMaghrib, or appealed for AlMaghrib to disassociate itself institutionally from Abu Eesa. Several Muslim leaders, activists and scholars weighed in on the issues,¹⁸¹ including Ingrid Mattson, founder of the Islamic Chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary, who stated on Twitter, “If a non-Muslim made ‘jokes like this almaghrib teacher we’d have every Muslim civil rights org sending out alerts” (Safi 2014). Here, Mattson points out the hypocrisy characterizing Abu Eesa’s “jokes,” surmising that if the same statements were made by a non-Muslim individual, they would no longer be viewed by Abu Eesa or others as simple jests, but as offensive slurs propelling legislative action. In the end, Abu Eesa did not step down from his teaching position at AlMaghrib, Yasir Qadhi did not censure Abu Eesa, and life went on.¹⁸²

“Abu-Eesa-Gate,” as it was later termed by Yasir Qadhi (Qadhi 2014), exemplifies some of the controversies regarding “traditional” or “neo-traditional” contemporary male Muslim authorities, and the creation of Muslim leadership programs to combat the perceived shortcomings of these leaders, particularly regarding gender-related issues. This conversation brings up critical debates within the Muslim community

¹⁸¹ For example, Hind Makki, Imam Suhaib Webb, and Abdullah Antepli.

¹⁸² Qadhi issued a statement several days after the controversy, chastising Abu Eesa for making such jokes, but ultimately declaring: “Abu Eesa is a dear friend to me *because* he is a loving, caring, gentle, sincere scholar. I would trust my life and my family's life to him – and I don't say that merely as a figure of speech. He is no misogynist, he is no woman-hater, he is no racist. If he truly *were* any of these, I would not be a friend to him. I know that he will not like me saying this, but as a family friend I *know* that he treats his wife like a queen, that he is a loving and caring father to his daughters, and that he is a dutiful son to his mother. And *that* is the actions of 'feminism' that Islam calls for, and Abu Eesa lives up to (even if he despises the word!)” (Qadhi 2014).

about the status of Muslim women, as well as the responsiveness (or lack thereof) of mainstream (male) Muslim leadership with regard to gender-related issues.

The inclusion of women was one of several ‘hard lines’ expressed by Dr. Ingrid Mattson regarding the establishment of the Muslim chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary.¹⁸³ “I wasn’t going to develop a program that excluded women” (Mattson 2012), says Dr. Ingrid Mattson, Professor of Islamic Studies and then Director of the Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian Muslim Relations.¹⁸⁴ Her comment underscores the centrality of gender in the construction of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program at Hartford Seminary. Mattson was hopeful that Hartford Seminary would be an ideal center to pursue her vision of developing leadership programming for Muslim communities, in part due to the seminary’s focus on religious leadership education within other “minority” communities. “It made me really excited, because I saw what [Hartford Seminary was] doing with [their programming on] urban African American leaders, Hispanic ministries, the women’s leadership program. So this idea of developing programs for people who are marginalized by the existing education structures or endorsing structures, I just really love that idea.” Here, Mattson underlines the need for leadership programming that cater to Muslim women, a marginalized subsection within the more generally marginalized Muslim community in North America.

¹⁸³ Mattson also mentions that in designing the Islamic chaplaincy program at Hartford Seminary, she considered it incumbent upon her to create a program that would serve the specific needs of the local Muslim communities in New England, and that would make the best use of existing curricular strengths of the seminary.

¹⁸⁴ Mattson worked as Professor of Islamic Studies at Hartford Seminary from 1998-2012, during which she developed the Muslim Chaplaincy Program as Director of the Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations. I interviewed her in 2012, before she left to develop another Islamic Studies program at Huron University College at the University of Western Ontario, in London, Canada.

Recognized as the first woman to be elected Vice-President, and then President of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA),¹⁸⁵ Ingrid Mattson has argued that the subject of woman's leadership requires attention, in part, because;

Many Muslim women...feel that religious authority has too often been used to suppress them. It is the rare Muslim woman who has not had some experience of being excluded from the mosque, having had to listen to demeaning sermons, or having been subjected to patronizing marriage counseling by religious leaders...When few or no women in a community have recognized spiritual authority or positions of leadership...there is a good chance that the women of that community will experience religious authority negatively (Mattson 2005).

The lack of Muslim women in publicly recognized leadership positions, Mattson posits, contributes to their alienation, and even their subjugation in Muslim communities. She states, "When women are not in leadership positions in their communities, they are often assigned inadequate prayer spaces (if any), they are cut off from much vital religious education, and they have few means to access the rights they possess in theory" (Mattson 2005). She contends that these disparities lead to unfavorable views of existing leadership, a decline in community participation, and the perpetuation of ignorance of women's religious rights and responsibilities.¹⁸⁶

While some Muslim women and men petition for the empowerment of women as *imamahs*, or prayer leaders,¹⁸⁷ Mattson contends that focusing on this one form of leadership may be misguided. In response to the 2005 women-led prayer event in New

¹⁸⁵ Mattson served as Vice President (2001-2006) and then President of ISNA (2006-2010). In addition to being the first woman Vice President and President of the organization, she was also the first non-immigrant and first convert to occupy these positions (About Dr. Ingrid Mattson n.d.).

¹⁸⁶ Zarqa Nawaz, Canadian documentary filmmaker showcases and critiques many of the issues raised here by Mattson in her documentary, *Me and the Mosque* (2005), co-produced with the National Film Board of Canada.

¹⁸⁷ For more information on gender discourses related to woman-led prayer in America, see: (Hammer, American Muslim Women, Religious Authority, and Activism. More than a Prayer. 2012).

York City, during which Amina Wadud led a mixed-gender congregation *Jum`ah* service,¹⁸⁸ “the tendency in American Muslim communities has been to concentrate religious authority in the office of the imam, who is also expected to perform multiple, distinct functions for the community” (Mattson 2005) including leading prayers, delivering Friday sermons, drafting marriage contracts, adjudicating divorces, organizing youth and adult education, governing prayer spaces, distributing charitable donations, and representing the Muslim community in larger communal settings. Rather than conserve this model of “concentrated” leadership, Mattson explores the possibility of asserting influence in more diffuse and democratic ways, determined by the local community. Through such negotiations of communal authority, Mattson arrives at the possibility of new professional fields like chaplaincy to decenter the figure of the imam, and to open up new leadership opportunities for women, which I discuss in more detail in the following section.

Whereas Mattson situates the founding of Hartford Seminary’s Islamic Chaplaincy Program as intertwined with a broader effort to empower Muslim women, Nevin Reda, one of the founders of the Masters of Pastoral Studies for Muslims at Emmanuel College, directly references the failures of local mosque leadership as prompting her desire to establish training programs for Muslim authorities sensitive to gender-related issues. In an interview, Reda told me that as a regular attendee of a masjid

¹⁸⁸ Hammer writes that this “2005 prayer, itself part of a larger trajectory of events, debates, and developments, focused and changed existing intra-Muslim discussions and reflections on issues ranging from women’s interpretation of the Qur’an, leadership, mosque space, and religious authority to gender activism and media representations” (Hammer 2012, 1).

in Mississauga, Ontario¹⁸⁹ she “did not have access to the imam. There was a barrier in order for me to speak to the imam. I had to go through the difficulty of crossing the barrier, dealing with all the men between me and the imam, and that was not easy to do.” On top of this lack of access to the mosque leadership, she mentions hearing troubling statements related to gender being preached during several *Jum`ah* sermons, which prompted her to complain to the leaders and board of the masjid. On one of these occasions, the imam told his congregation that women were forbidden from speaking to men without the permission of their husband or father. On a separate occasion, another speaker attacked the work of female Muslim scholar, Dr. Laleh Bakhtiar, who was at that time working on a new translation of the Qur’an.¹⁹⁰ Reda seems to have the imam’s words emblazoned in her mind, quoting his views on Bakhtiar, a female Qur’an translator, to me: ““She is disobeying God. This is not my word, this [is the word of] God and the Prophet.”” Reda continues, “What really set me off, was he [said], ‘*Do something about these Muslim woman feminists, because they are disobeying God.*’”

After several unsatisfactory exchanges with the mosque board and with the imams themselves, Reda’s concern reached new heights when she learned that several days after one of these *Jum`ah* incidents, a sixteen-year-old Muslim girl named Aqsa Parvez was murdered by her father and brother in Mississauga.¹⁹¹ The media described the crime as

¹⁸⁹ A suburb outside of Toronto with a large Muslim population. A 2013 study estimates that Muslims comprise 8-9% of the population in Mississauga, with over twenty-two Islamic Centers and mosques in the city. See: (Facts and Figures n.d.).

¹⁹⁰ In 2007, Bakhtiar published the first translation of the Qur’an by an American woman (Bakhtiar 2007).

¹⁹¹ Aqsa Parvez was strangled to death in her home on December 10, 2007. Her father, Muhammad Parvez, and brother, Waqas Parvez, pleaded guilty in 2010 to second-degree murder and were sentenced to life imprisonment. See: (Aqsa Parvez’s father, brother get life sentences 2010).

an “honor killing,”¹⁹² tied to Parvez’s refusal to wear the hijab and traditional Pakistani dress. However, as Jasmin Zine articulates, “this version of the story conflicts with reports from the family friends with whom she was staying, who stated that her problems with her parents were based on broader desires for autonomy- not unlike what many non-Muslim teens experience” (Zine 2012, 49). While there was no causal link established between the murder and the above statements made at the mosque, Reda nonetheless saw an ideological connection between the violence enacted against Parvez and the imam’s petition to the congregation to “do something” about Muslim women feminists. “If Aqsa Parvez’s father and brother heard the sermons,” she mused, “what kind of effect would it have had on them, if that is the effect that they had on me?” In reality, given the number of mosques in Mississauga, it seems unlikely that Aqsa’s family was in attendance at Reda’s mosque on the day in question. However, for Reda, the murder of Aqsa Parvez was indicative of the failings of Muslim male authority. As Eve Haque explains:

In such incidents as the death of Aqsa Parvez, Muslim women’s bodies become the battlegrounds which clearly demarcate the line between the civilized secular modern nation and premodern religious fundamentalisms. In the context of an officially multicultural Canada...in fact, Muslim women’s bodies in these

¹⁹² It is worth noting here the highly contested nature of the phrase, “honor killing,” which often refers to the murder of an individual by members of their own family or community, after the victim purportedly brings shame upon the collective. These crimes are predominantly carried out against women, and associated with the objectification and commodification of women’s bodies, which are seen as the repositories of the collective’s honor. Scholars have argued, however, that the phrase is highly racialized, and only applied in the case of certain religious and racial minorities, most notably, in the case of crimes by Muslim men against Muslim women. This tendency thus furthers the view of Islam as inherently and uniquely misogynistic and violent. Dr. Sherene H. Razack, for example, argues that the murder of a wife by a husband outside of these specifically racialized contexts is termed a “crime of passion,” rather than an “honor killing.” She writes, “A crime of honour is a crime originating in culture/race, whereas a crime of passion originates in gender (abstracted from all other considerations). A crime of honour thus involves body, emerging as it does as a cultural tradition, and a crime of gender is mind, a distinctly individualized practice born of deviancy and criminality. The honour/passion distinction not only obscures the cultural and community approval so many crimes against women have in *majority* culture, but it reifies Muslims as stuck in premodernity while Westerners have progressed as fully rational subjects with the capacity to choose moral actions, even if the choice is a bad one” (Razack 2008, 128).

incidents are always the limit case for tolerance of the Other within the nation (Haque 2010, 80).

While Haque refers here to non-Muslim Canadian concerns about Muslim women as the “limit case for tolerance of the Other within the nation,” Reda reaches similar conclusions, linking this individual case to a larger problem with Islamic authority.

Reda discussed these issues with her friend and colleague, Susan Harrison, a Mennonite Christian and doctoral student at the Toronto School of Theology, who had longstanding experience in the field of interfaith dialogue with the Muslim communities in Toronto. Empathetic towards Reda’s disappointments and fears regarding mosque leadership, particularly on the topic of gender, Harrison suggested approaching the Toronto School of Theology (TST) to establish an *imam*-training program. As detailed in Chapter One of this project, Reda and Harrison approached the board of TST, brought together different stakeholders in the Toronto Muslim community,¹⁹³ and proposed an educational program for Muslim leaders, which eventually developed into the program at Emmanuel College.

While issues related to gender and authority are not as explicitly tied to the creation of Bayan College as they are in the cases of Hartford Seminary and Emmanuel College, they still represent a major concern for the founding figures and faculty associated with the program. In a promotional video for the college, Dean of Bayan College, Jihad Turk, states: “Bayan Claremont aims to produce intellectuals. Religious leaders and scholars that are well prepared and very qualified to be relevant to our youth, to integrate women into our communities, and to best represent Islam and Muslims to the

¹⁹³ Such as representatives from the Canadian Council of Imams, as well as the Canadian Council of Muslim Women.

society in which we live” (Claremont 2015). Turk, mentions the integration of Muslim women within their communities as one of the main goals of the college. Turk also flags the issue of woman-led prayer, for example, as relevant to Bayan’s long-term goals. “We are hoping to develop a think tank and we are hoping to start tackling some of these issues [related to women and authority], and do it in a way that does not alienate the institution [from Muslim communities]... That is a long term policy...but part of our vision” (Turk 2013). Turk’s concern over “alienating” mainstream Muslim communities regarding women’s ritual authority, sheds light on deeply entrenched assumptions about the controversial nature of female religious leadership, namely, that the issue of woman-led prayer is an alienating subject for most Muslim communities. Further, those hoping to transform norms regarding gender and ritual authority in Islam must proceed with caution, so as not to estrange those invested in upholding existing norms.

Both Mattson and Reda cite the failures of existing Muslim leadership to combat the marginalization of Muslim women as central to the establishment of the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary and Emmanuel College respectively, while Turk voices a long-term desire to shift intellectual perspectives on the idea of women’s religious authority as a major goal at Bayan Claremont. With some exceptions, of course, the general sentiment conveyed to me by my respondents is that current mainstream Muslim leadership either does not meet the needs of marginalized Muslim women, or actually condones violence, at least ideologically, against them. The Muslim leadership programs I research thus attempt to offer a corrective to this perceived crisis of leadership, particularly in terms of training in gender sensitivity.

Chaplaincy, Femininity, Authority

The above section demonstrates how the marginalization and subjugation of Muslim women contributes to the founding of the Muslim leadership programs I research. In the following pages, I ask, what do these programs reveal about Muslim conceptions of female religious authority, generally speaking? Do the programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont indicate groundbreaking and innovative perspectives on gender and authority in Islam? I argue that for some, these programs are groundbreaking opportunities for Muslim women to change perspectives on gender and leadership in Islam. For others, however, supporting the profession of female Muslim chaplaincy in no way challenges prevailing stances on the exclusivity of male ritual leadership, and instead reinforces underlying gender constructions and norms.

Some discourses about Muslim chaplaincy emphasize the revolutionary nature of the developing profession in its legitimation of women as religious authorities. Shenila Khoja-Moolji examines the institution of Muslim chaplaincy on American university campuses as part of The Pluralism Project sponsored by Harvard University. She argues that, “Muslim chaplaincy...provides a remarkable opportunity for women to exercise *public* religious leadership” in a unique and innovative way. Khoja-Moolji clarifies that while Muslim women have certainly historically occupied positions of religious authority in Muslim societies, such as religious teachers or spiritual counselors, the profession of chaplaincy grants a level of formal and public recognition to female authority. As chaplains, women are public religious leaders and in some cases, leaders of mixed-gender communities, as well. This research thus frames chaplaincy as providing revolutionary leadership opportunities to Muslim women, as is argued by some of my respondents. For

example, Laura, a Muslim student at Hartford Seminary, told me that she pursued a degree in chaplaincy because there “was no clearly trodden path for women” in Muslim leadership (Laura 2012). According to this perspective, this groundbreaking profession helps to forge new paths for Muslim women.

An Emmanuel College student, Roya, upholds the profession of chaplaincy as offering women innovative opportunities to exercise religious knowledge and leadership. She views mosque-based leadership as both limited and limiting. Chaplaincy opens up new opportunities for Muslim women beyond the enclosed space of the masjid: “To me,” Roya states, “[being an imam] is not a very important thing...If you go and work in the mosque, you are limited. You cannot achieve independence. But if you work outside of the mosque, you are more independent, you have more of a chance to reach society” (Roya 2012). Empowering women in positions of authority, according to Roya, should not necessitate the pursuit of “traditional” forms of leadership. Instead, she argues that “We have many Muslim women [who] are [a] really great source of knowledge. How [can we] make the community benefit from this knowledge?”

At the same time, other respondents view chaplaincy as upholding traditional and essentialized conceptions of gender and religious authority. As mentioned above, Ingrid Mattson calls her own approach to Muslim authority “conservative,” because it maintains certain norms about the “relational” and “contextual” requirements of prayer leadership in an attempt to follow the Prophetic sunnah or example. The institution of chaplaincy allows women public positions of religious leadership, but in no way challenges dominant structures of male ritual authority. There exists little resistance to the idea of Muslim women serving as chaplains, since chaplains and spiritual caregivers are

considered “facilitators” of religious life, and do not necessarily function in ritual capacities. “I am keenly aware,” Mattson states, “of the possibility of eliciting suspicious or negative responses from some Muslims because of the conservative principles I have identified as so important in Islamic thought. This is particularly true when it comes to worship, where adherence to the prophetic sunnah is essential” (Mattson 2005). This statement implicitly addresses the fact that Mattson never overtly advocates woman-led prayer outside of very specific contexts (including all-female congregations or mixed-gender congregations within one’s household), given what she considers a lack of textual support for this practice.¹⁹⁴ Mattson thus seemingly leaves the question open for discussion within Muslim communities themselves. In the development of women’s “alternative” authoritative structures, Mattson upholds the dominant and normative understandings of ritual leadership as the domain of male authority. Latifah, a graduate of Hartford Seminary, summarizes this perspective succinctly: “Why chaplaincy? Well, I can’t be an *imam*. This is the next best thing” (Latifah 2013).

I talked about the relationship between gender and chaplaincy with Hanan, female university chaplain who works in New England. She told me that one of her male colleagues wanted to hire a female Muslim chaplain to work with him. Initially, I assumed that this goal stemmed from a desire to provide specialized spiritual care to the Muslim women on campus, but Hanan quickly corrected this misinterpretation. “Not for the sisters, but for the brothers, because sometimes he feels like brothers can open up to sisters a whole lot easier...because when you’re with a guy, you have to talk about guy

¹⁹⁴ Mattson does admit that certain pillars of Islamic “tradition” were, at one point, “innovations,” (*bid`a*), including but not limited to the writing of religious books, *madrasas* (religious schools), and *ribat* (religious retreats), thereby leaving room for the establishment of beneficial innovations that develop into defining characteristics of the religion.

things. It's kind of like, well the woman is not interested in football, or talking about video games, and so they are kind of forced to start speaking about themselves" (Hanan 2012). The presence of female chaplains therefore compels Muslim men to "open up" and discuss their emotions, and move beyond what Hanan portrays as stereotypically "male" points of connection.

Hanan tells me that the board involved in her hiring, composed of non-Muslims, asked whether she was interested in promoting the woman-led prayer movement. Her response, however, was negative, that this was a cause in which she was not invested, although she could train the Muslim male students to act as prayer leaders and sermon givers. Once hired, she composed a document outlining the proper format for a Friday sermon, or khutbah by which to instruct the male students. "But they do send me the khutbah beforehand," she tells me, "just to make sure that everything is sound." In this way, Hanan acknowledges herself as a knowledgeable authority, well versed not only in the legal injunctions required to conduct congregational prayer, but also equipped to evaluate the content of religious sermons. Yet, at the same time, this religious knowledge does not necessitate her assuming ritual authority over her male students. Hanan thus upholds the stance that salah must be led by men, but exercises her authority and influence through the training and education of male student leaders. For her, this approach is not simply about gender and religious legalities, but rather, a pastoral technique of empowering her students to act as leaders of their own community. Her actions here decouple the ideas of ritual leadership, intellectual scholarship, and pastoral caregiving.

In the above example, Hanan positions the profession of chaplaincy as a means by which Muslim women may occupy authoritative and public religious roles, while- for some of my respondents- perpetuating the traditional and neo-traditional prohibitions against female ritual authority. As insinuated by Hanan's statements above, the profession of chaplaincy, which requires the qualities of sensitivity, empathy, and compassion, is thus framed by some of my interlocutors as a natural choice for women, requiring what they view as basic "female" characteristics, always defined against essential male qualities. The common understanding that the Qur'an portrays "*essential* distinctions between men and women reflected in creation [and] capacity and function in society" (Wadud 1999, 7)¹⁹⁵ underscores the potential to view chaplaincy in line with essentialized visions of "femininity."¹⁹⁶ This perspective is best phrased by Latifah, mentioned above. She states, "We [women] carry the love. We are hardwired for it. [With Islamic chaplaincy], now we can be credentialed for it" (Latifah 2013). For some, the institutionalization of fields like chaplaincy thus mobilizes essentially "feminine" characteristics and qualities, and grants them a level of previously unavailable public authority.

¹⁹⁵ While Wadud herself does not view these distinctions to be *essential* to the genders, she contends, "The Qur'an acknowledges the anatomical distinction between male and female. It also acknowledges that members of each gender function in a manner which reflects the well-defined distinctions held by the culture to which those members belong" (Wadud 1999, 35).

¹⁹⁶ Aysha Hidayatullah analyzes Muslim feminist readings of the Qur'an, and argues that even in the cases of these feminist interpreters, "The exegetes have generally ignored theoretical issues around gender essentialism, binaries, and social construction. On the whole, they appear to use 'gender' as a synonym for 'women,' neglecting to address the male gender or the 'queering' of gender. In neglecting an examination of gender, they do not deconstruct the processes by which the male subject has been universalized in the first place and the kinds of masculinity and femininity (and their relational formation) that persistently inform the verses of the Qur'an they are responding to; rather they seem to take them for granted" (Hidayatullah 2014, 129-130).

Chaplaincy and Muslim Masculinity

Given the perspectives of some of the interlocutors mentioned above, the profession of chaplaincy requires the performance of stereotypical and essentialized feminine traits, such as patience, compassion, and empathy. But what does this argument imply for male Muslim chaplains and conceptions of Muslim masculinity? Are men excluded from working in these fields? While several of the above examples view their strengths in the field of spiritual care as rooted in their nature as women, Muslim men training to become or working as chaplains explain their connection to the field via the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, also known as his *sunnah*. Rather than root their professional pursuit in gendered constructions, they cite the traditionally accepted customs of the Prophet of Islam as authenticating their work. Aadam, a graduate of Hartford Seminary, tells me that his source of inspiration regarding the pursuit of chaplaincy was the Prophet Muhammad:

He would listen to his companions. Just the way that he would even go about doing that... These practices are found within the *sunnah* of the Prophet... And even when the Prophet, peace be upon him, when he would deal with people, even if they were sinning, or even if they were doing something that was a heinous mistake, he would not come down on them hard. He would oftentimes not even cite religious law, but he would give them advice in a way that would teach them that what they were doing was wrong, and they would desire to leave it. And then lastly, basically, that advice, *nasihah*, creating an environment, creating the conditions that allow for a person to be able to feel comfortable speaking to a chaplain, and then comfortable to accept their religious counsel or practical counsel (Aadam 2012).

In the above quotation, Aadam refers to the practices and traits of the Prophet Muhammad as substantiating the profession of chaplaincy. Rather than referring to essentialized gendered traits as did Hanan and Latifah in the above examples, he looks to the prophetic example to find his place in the field. That said, the abilities of the Prophet

Muhammad that Aadam emphasizes in the above quotation- his listening skills, his gentleness, and his mercy- are not typically considered “masculine” qualities in a gender essentialist framework. As argued by Amanullah De Sondy, the example of the Prophet Muhammad, as well as other Qur’anic prophets, thus presents complex expressions of masculinity to which Muslim men can relate. De Sondy explains that “the lives of the prophets are used as examples to human beings, but God made sure to present prophets and messengers best suited to the environment. Their lives tell us much about ethics and morality but little about a uniform Islamic masculinity” (De Sondy 2014, 118).

Gender and Curriculum

As explored above, gender-related issues were of central concern for those founding the programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. However, when it comes to curriculum matters, none of the programs in question actually require coursework on the topics of gender and sexuality. Classes on relevant topics are readily available at the seminaries and affiliated institutions¹⁹⁷ and may count towards student degrees in various ways, but students in these programs are never required to explicitly focus on these issues in coursework. For example, Hartford Seminary offers a course entitled “Maidservants of Allah: The Spirituality of Muslim Women,” which examines topics like the female companions of the Prophet Muhammad, the roles played by women in various historical Islamic institutions, and current issues in female spirituality. Emmanuel College likewise advertises a course entitled “Women, Gender, and Islam.” Bayan Claremont does not offer any courses specifically related to gender for

¹⁹⁷ For example, the University of Toronto in the case of Emmanuel College and Claremont Graduate University [CGU] or Claremont School of Theology [CST] in the case of Bayan Claremont.

the regular on-campus Master's program, although during my period of research, several students took a class at CGU entitled "Women and Islam."¹⁹⁸ Depending on one's specific research interest, students may also think about questions related to gender more deeply in either their practica or in the context of their thesis research.

Some of my respondents offered the perspective that they wished that gender issues were treated more self-consciously or explicitly in their classes. Naureen, a student at Bayan Claremont, told me that she was advocating for the requirement of at least one Women's Studies course to graduate from the program. While she herself was enrolled in such a course at Claremont Graduate School, she was disappointed that many of her Muslim colleagues, the majority of who were men, did not express interest in taking such a class. She reflects,

I think a lot of them talk about women and gender studies, but they don't really know how. They do have their perspectives on things, but I think that it would be nice to have them in a space where they can also share some of their perspectives, but also feel challenged... Wouldn't it be great if we just had a class where we actually read philosophy around gender? (Naureen 2013)

Naureen's experience in the classroom (which will be discussed later in this chapter) indicates to her a need to explicitly require Women's Studies courses for those students training to become Muslim leaders at Bayan Claremont. At times, however, Naureen expresses that gendered assumptions in the classroom reflected a level of traditionalism that she found problematic. She speaks specifically about one class in particular, "Religious Leadership in Muslim Contexts," in which the majority of students were male and already working as *imams* in the Muslim community. Although the course's title

¹⁹⁸ In addition, the "Hybrid Intensive" program at Bayan Claremont offers a class called "Marriage, Family, and Ethics of Gender Among Muslim Americans," but this program, which developed after my research period, is not the focus of this dissertation.

reflects a broad conception of Muslim leadership, Naureen admits that the class content and discussions revolved around very traditional understandings of authority. “It was really hard to speak up as a woman in that class for at least the first three or four sessions, mostly because everything that we were talking about was like, ‘When you are an imam, you will have to do ‘xyz.’” From Naureen’s perspective, the focus on *imams* automatically excluded her from the class, since neither her male classmates nor the male instructor considered Muslim women eligible for such a position. She, however, seems open to that possibility. As such, Naureen comments, “I never said that I am not going to be an imam of any congregation. Who even knows what’s going to happen? [...] I resented the idea that [the professor] wouldn’t have included [the women] in this idea of what an imam is.” Here, Naureen expresses dissatisfaction with the program’s preservation of gendered constructions of Islamic authority in the classroom.¹⁹⁹

The following section analyzes an example from my fieldwork that raises the complexities and challenges of dealing with the subjects of gender, tradition, and authority in multifaith classroom settings.

¹⁹⁹ Even for those who uphold the legal stance that women are not allowed to act as imams of mixed gender congregations, most schools of *fiqh* uphold the permissibility of women leading all-female groups in prayer. There is some debate, however, about the permissibility of women leading even female only congregations for the purposes of *Jum`ah* prayer. The establishment of the Women’s Mosque of America in 2015, however, represents the first women-only mosque (hosting woman-only *Jum`ah* prayers) in the United States. This community testifies to the opening up of new possibilities of ritually based religious leadership for Muslim women. The creation of this *masjid* community in Los Angeles points to the potential need for trained imamahs and complicates the stark opposition between parties in favor of woman-led prayer as “anti-tradition,” and those against women led-prayer as “pro-tradition.” For more information, see: (The Women's Mosque of America n.d.).

“The Chauvinists Are Entering the Building”: Translating Islamic Notions of Gender in Multifaith Classrooms

“Female and male. Gender has transcendental roots in the divine qualities of God, *Jalal*²⁰⁰ and *Jamal*²⁰¹ ... They are not the same, but they complete each other.” Professor Koca, an instructor at Bayan College in Claremont, California, stands at the front of the classroom, lecturing to a room of twenty-or-so students, roughly evenly split between Muslim and Christian, in a class entitled “Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Spirituality.” The lecture, focused on Islamic ethics, explores the concept of “complimentary egalitarianism,” or the belief that men and women are categorically different, with essentialized characteristics, but that they were made by God to complement one another. Dr. Koca uses the example about gender to explain the non-dualistic nature of the Islamic ethical system. The material and the spiritual, seemingly in opposition to one another, are actually intimately related and dependent upon one another. The same, he argues, goes for men and women; their natures, according to Islamic philosophical tradition, are inherently different, but the beauty of their complementarity reflects the perfection of divine creation.²⁰² This statement initiates a rather heated classroom conversation, with Muslim and non-Muslim seminary students debating the implications of gender constructions rooted in the divine.

“If they are both qualities of the divine, how is there justification of males being the ‘head’ of females?” asks Marcia, a Christian student, referring to a verse in the

²⁰⁰ “Majesty.”

²⁰¹ “Beauty.”

²⁰² See: (Murata 1992)

Chapter Two of the Qur'an²⁰³ that mentions men have a “degree” above women.

Hammad, a mature Muslim student who also works as an imam of a local masjid in Southern California, interjects, “It depends on the context. In carrying a child, a woman becomes superior to a male. The Qur'an says that men should be responsible [financially] for women, and women should be responsible for the home.” The argument here, according to Hammad, is that sameness does not necessitate equality. Male and female each take the lead in different arenas of life. Emphasizing this point, Dr. Koca adds, “Each is perfect in their own way, and these perfections cannot be compared.”

Another Christian student, Claire, jumps into the conversation, her tone betraying some frustration on her part with the topic at hand. “But let's say a woman earns fifty thousand dollars and a man earns fifty thousand dollars. Does the woman still have to answer to him as head of the household?” With this question, Claire interrogates how Islamic norms and understandings of gender-based responsibilities may be translated to a context in which both men and women are employed, whether by choice or by economic necessity. At this point, various voices in the class simultaneously sputter from different corners of the room, some agitated, some defensive, some angry. I hear diverse remarks, coming from all directions:

Zia: “It's so hard to talk about this topic in this society!”

Carrie: “What does that mean!?”

Becca: “Why do women wear hijab when men can walk around bare chested?”

Hammad: “You have the choice to obey God or not obey God. It's up to you.”

Mahdi: “If you had children, you'd see the difference between boys and girls.”

²⁰³ Qur'an 2:228- “Divorced women remain in waiting for three periods, and it is not lawful for them to conceal what Allah has created in their wombs if they believe in Allah and the Last Day. And their husbands have more right to take them back in this [period] if they want reconciliation. And due to the wives is similar to what is expected of them, according to what is reasonable. But the men have a degree over them [in responsibility and authority]. And Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise.”

Luqman: “Are we ready to give this up? The ‘If she’s a girl, don’t hit her back or ‘holding doors open for her’ stuff?”

Jimmy: “This reminds me of the 1950s. Separate but equal.”

This moment of relative chaos, which generates an almost tangible divide between the vocal Muslim males of the class and several critical Christian students, concludes with a male Muslim student, Luqman, (half-jokingly) challenging Naureen, the only Muslim female student in the class, to an arm-wrestling match. While this gesture may be read simply as a playful challenge, it also gestures towards Luqman’s dismissal of the argument of the essential sameness of men and women. As the class settles down, Brian, a Christian seminarian reflected, “I noticed that no Muslim woman spoke up during this discussion.” At this comment, all eyes fell upon Naureen.

“Well, the Qur’an says males and females came from a single soul,” Naureen, reflects, clearly put on the spot. “There *are* biological differences, yes, but where is the jump to character differences?” At this point, Dr. Koca announces that it’s time for the class break, and students begin to stand up, gathering together in small groups. On his way out of the classroom, Luqman says with a smile, “The next time we hear a noise in the house and my wife says, ‘Go check it out!’ I’m gonna say, ‘No, you check it out!’” While he makes the comment lightheartedly, there is a tension left hanging in the room. I remain in the classroom during break, observing different groups of students, clearly affected by the discussion. In hushed tones, a few Christian students find their way to Naureen and tell her how offensive they found the comments of the Muslim men, most of whom had left the room for break. In spite of their words of support, it seems to me that Naureen is uncomfortable, and I make note to ask her about this experience at a later point (discussed below). A moment later, however, the Muslim men re-enter as a group,

one of them remarking sarcastically, “The chauvinists are entering the building.” This exchange concerning philosophical constructions of gender complementarity in Islam, quickly escalates, setting different pockets of the classroom in opposition to one another.

“I will raise my hand when I want to raise my hand!”: The Politics of Gender in Multifaith Classrooms

My interview with Naureen lasts close to four hours, drawn out by the number of rich insights concerning her experience as one of a handful of female students at Bayan Claremont. She reflects on a recurring issue in one of her classes, documented in the above example. “I am kind of an internal processor,” Naureen explains, “so I like to think about things before I present them to the class. [But there’s this] thing that some of the other Christian students will think they’re doing to help me out, which is to be like, ‘Oh, well, we have a Muslim woman in the class. Why don’t they speak up?’ And I’m like, ‘Why are you doing this to me? I will raise my hand when I want to raise my hand!’” (Naureen 2013). Naureen laughs as she concludes her statement, but this issue clearly weighs on her. At times, she acknowledges, the male Muslim students dominate classroom discussion, while she, one of only a few Muslim women on campus, becomes sidelined from the conversation. That said, Naureen still expresses extreme discomfort with the actions of her Christian classmates:

I think that a lot of things from their perspective are also like, ‘look at these conservative Muslim men oppressing Naureen right now.’ And I don’t want them to think that either, because they don’t really understand the nuances of what the Muslim students are like as a cohort...So I think, on the one hand I really want to defend a lot of the Muslim students and be like, ‘No, it is not all like that. I don’t need you to advocate for me. I can advocate for myself.’ And on the flip side, I just want to be like, ‘Look at all these Christian students who grew up Christian

and aren't crazy about gender like you guys are! Come on, can you guys get it together, please?' (Naureen 2013)

In this quotation, Naureen communicates feeling trapped in her experience as a Muslim woman in these interfaith classrooms, in which highly gendered dynamics with Muslim men are observed and commented upon by Christian colleagues. She acknowledges a need to address gender-related issues within Muslim communities, as well as the internal dynamics of the classroom. Yet Naureen also voices discomfort with the perceived policing of these issues by the non-Muslim students in the class. She concludes:

I can't really translate the gendered problems that I have in Muslim settings to a non-Muslim setting and not have a racialized response come from the other students...So, I sometimes don't know how to bring up those gendered interactions, because really, I don't want people to get the wrong idea...Can you even say that they [the Muslim males] are oppressing me more than you are right now? (Naureen 2013)

This poignant commentary points to just some of the complications of contending with intra-religious contentions within multifaith settings, particularly in light of questions of race and power, and within a context of Islamophobia. In this example, Naureen confesses to being caught in between a critique of patriarchy within her own community, and reinforcing stereotypes of Muslim men as inherently oppressive in the interfaith classroom.

In what ways does Naureen's presence in the multifaith classroom illustrate the complexity of bringing Muslims and Christians together for theological education? Miriam Cooke examines the ways in which both non-Muslims and Muslim men utilize "the Muslimwoman"- a purposefully unhyphenated neologism- as a visible representative of Islam. "The Muslimwoman," she explains, "is both a noun and an adjective that refers to an imposed identification the individual may or may not choose herself" (Cooke 2007,

140). Caught between non-Muslims and what she refers to as “Islamist” men, who compete to employ her for their exclusive purposes, the Muslimwoman is reduced to a cultural standard, either attesting to the alleged glory or humiliation of Islam. Cooke states:

This identification is created for Muslim women by outside forces, whether non-Muslims or Islamist men. Muslimwoman locates a boundary between ‘us’ and ‘them’ and signals Muslim women’s interstitial outsider/insider status. As *women*, Muslim women are outsider/insiders within Muslim communities where, to belong, their identity is increasingly tied to the idea of the veil. As *Muslims*, they are negotiating cultural outsider/insider roles in societies where Muslims form a minority or they are under threat (Cooke 2007, 140).

Cooke’s concept of the Muslimwoman provides a useful lens through which to view the example discussed above. Muslim women- whether spoken of philosophically (as in the classroom discussion) or particularly (in the case of Naureen)- function as “a canvas for inscribing...political objectives” (Hammer 2013), a complex consequence of shared Muslim-Christian classrooms. This classroom encounter forces us to ask the question: what are the politics of these encounters, particularly when it comes to the issue of gender?

Naureen’s statements remind us that these interfaith classrooms are contact zones, “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power- like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they lived out across the globe today” (Pratt 1991, 4). As such, the translation of intra-Muslim debates about gender into multifaith educational spaces carries with it the weight of imperial histories and logics, as well as current political realities around the surveillance of Muslim communities. What is insinuated from the above exchange is that liberal Christianity, which has allegedly “progressed” past the so-

called “woman problem,” is uniquely positioned to positively impact the development of Islam, which is still “stuck” in backwards and irrational conceptions of gender and its poor treatment of women. Muslim women, the logic goes, thus require saving from Muslim men.²⁰⁴ In other words, “The politics of rescue of Muslim women is...steeped in liberal concepts of individual, autonomy, and choice that shaped a binary and neo-Orientalist world view” (Maira 2009, 641), represented here by liberal Protestant Christianity. As Cooke contends, “imperial logic genders and separates subject peoples so that the men are the Other and the women are civilizable. To defend our universal civilization we must rescue the women. To rescue these women we must attack these men” (Cooke 2002, 227). The intersectional tensions experienced by Naureen thus indicate the politicization and racialization of gender issues in the multifaith classrooms I research.

Conclusion

This chapter highlights the centrality of discourses concerning gender in the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. Founders of these programs offer critiques of existing mainstream Muslim leadership regarding the marginalization and subjugation of Muslim women from communal life. While the profession of chaplaincy creates new opportunities for Muslim women’s public religious leadership, it does not necessarily challenge prevailing ideas that public ritual leadership remains the domain of men.

²⁰⁴ See: (Abu-Lughod 2013).

An examination of the classroom dynamics at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont further highlights the problematics of translating gender-related debates internal to Islam to multifaith educational spaces. In her analysis of Muslim feminist readings of the Qur'an, Aysha A. Hidayatullah argues that Muslim women have 'never had the luxury of developing their ideas free of the discursive operations of colonial and neocolonial powers,'” (Hidayatullah 2014, 43) an idea reinforced through the previously discussed example of Naureen, torn between her critiques of Muslim patriarchy and liberal Christian paternalism.

CONCLUSION

At the end of September 2012, during fieldwork at Emmanuel College in Toronto, Ontario, I attended a book launch for a publication entitled *Three Testaments. Torah, Gospel, and Quran* (B. A. Brown 2012). The text, entirely in English, is a unique assemblage of sacred texts of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, held together by introductory essays, commentaries, reflections, and illustrations by scholars and researchers of each respective faith, including Emmanuel College Professor, Nevin Reda. At the helm of the project is Brian Arthur Brown, a United Church minister and author, who considers project a way of combatting religious illiteracy in these turbulent times. Ignorance of the world's religions, he contends, leads to violence.

Amir Hussain, author of the foreword of the text, asserts that with this “revolutionary” book, “we have here a model for a Christianity that can coexist peacefully and fruitfully with its neighbors” (Hussain 2012, xi). Indeed, Brown argues that in order for members of these religions to understand one another, “the most basic approach is to go to each others’ Scriptures” (Swan 2012). Understanding— gained through interaction with sacred texts— results in peaceful relationships. “It’s an antidote to the burning of the Quran,” Brown argues (Swan 2012), contrasting his project with the destructive efforts of Pastor Terry Jones, another Christian leader with a very different approach to Islam.

In the prologue of *Three Testaments*, Brown outlines that one of the major goals of the project involved turning a “long-standing Jewish-Christian dialogue into the trialogue including Islam” (B. A. Brown 2012, 7). While Christianity and Judaism have endured centuries of “devastating turmoil and spectacular triumphs” in relation to one

another, this history is not in place in relation to Islam. “We acknowledge a certain sensitivity at the beginning of this process,” he admits (B. A. Brown 2012, 7), and says that this project is a chance to “let the scriptures speak for themselves” (Swan 2012). Indeed the epilogue of the book refers to this work as “the Book of the People,” (B. A. Brown 2012, 603), a play on the Qur’anic notion of “People of the Book,” advancing an argument that these—the “scriptures of Abraham’s family”—(B. A. Brown 2012, 603) should be read together. Indeed, they are understood best in relation to one another. As Nevin Reda states in her introductory comments at the book launch, “One cannot fully grasp the one [religion] without the other” (Reda, Three Testaments Book Launch 2012). These texts are mutually enriched through engagement with each other, and are indeed interdependent. “There are real differences,” Brown admits, “but that doesn’t mean we can’t stand side by side and listen to one another” (Swan 2012).

In many ways, the *Three Testaments* echoes some of the major themes of this dissertation. What is the utility of bringing and holding different religions together? What are the rationales for creating such dialogues? What relationships are constructed through these collaborations? And finally, what are the consequences of these partnerships, intended or unintended? While Brown privileges this work within the world of sacred texts, the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont makes similar claims with regard to multifaith theological education. The very existence of these programs conveys the argument that Muslims and Christians, just like the texts of the Torah, Gospel, and Qur’an, are enriched in conversation with one another. Knowledge of the “other” is not only beneficial in its own right, it also contributes to a more peaceful world, as well as a deepened understanding of one’s own

faith. When translated into a commonly understood “language,” each religion is rendered comprehensible in light of the other. Muslims and Christians are thus logical partners in interfaith seminary classrooms.

In the first chapter of this project, I examined the specific rationales offered by those spearheading the Muslim leadership programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont. The question, “Why offer Muslim leadership education in Protestant Christian seminaries?” provides a wide-ranging and complex set of answers from different players involved these collaborations. The theological schools root their interest in constructing these programs in longstanding interests and investments in ecumenism, with some specific focus on Christian-Muslim relationships. Additionally, economic and material realities faced by liberal Protestant seminaries must be taken into account in the development of this innovative programming. The Muslim students and faculty, on the other hand, frame their participation in various ways, including the lack of accredited programs in Muslim institutions, the belief in benefiting from the professional and institutional expertise of North American Christian communities, in addition to the experience of comfort in studying within overtly “liberal” religious communities.

I discussed translation, the focus of the second chapter of this project, in considering how texts, and in the case of this research, religions, are made comprehensible to those outside of the tradition, a necessary element of the multifaith programs I researched. The ubiquitous phrase, “interfaith dialogue” implies the possibility and productivity of such conversations. As Claremont School of Theology Professor, Najeeba Syeed-Miller articulates, “Tragically, I find that far too often we talk about each other and not to each other” (Syeed-Miller 2012, 110, Ali 2013) and that

consequently, interreligious engagement is about “developing the skills to engage productively across lines of differences” (Syeed-Miller 2012, 111). This chapter focused on the process of how these dialogues occur, and questioned the costs of the translational work required of these programs. Translation serves, therefore, as a theoretical lens that reveals the dynamic processes that construct sameness and difference. More often than not, these processes demonstrated that the burden of translation rests mainly upon the Muslim students and faculty within these seminaries, in which Christianity provides the overwhelming institutional “language” of religiosity and authority.

Chapter Three analyzed the translations of space—both physical and rhetorical—resulting from the construction of Muslim leadership programming at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan Claremont. These spatial translations were governed by two major logics, namely, the logic of neutrality (making space for diverse religions through the cultivation of religiously neutral space) and the logic of specificity (making space for diverse religions through upholding the particularities of each tradition). Negotiations of space centered on the physical spaces of the seminaries themselves, intellectual spaces within the classrooms, as well as “prayerful” spaces—the spaces of religious belief created by the act of prayer itself. The theological schools I research highlighted different conceptions of creating and governing religiously plural spaces, and argued that these different models cultivate peaceful collaborations and partnerships. In short, these spaces provide members of different religions the opportunity to learn how to inhabit their distinctness together. Once again, the lens of translation emphasized the challenges associated with the politics of these spatial negotiations, given that each of these programs are housed in and ultimately governed by the Protestant Christian institutions.

Chapter Four analyzed a central curricular translation, underscoring the importance of “the spiritual” in the programs I research. I examined how the universalization of the notions such as pastoral care via the notion of the “spiritual,” impacted understandings of spirituality in Islam for the Muslim students studying at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan Claremont. The idea of the spiritual is not simply a Christian notion transplanted into a Muslim context, but instead reflects conversations and negotiations with psychotherapeutic ideas, in addition to Islamic conceptions of tasawwuf. This curricular focus, essential to the training of chaplains of all religious backgrounds, at times conflicts with Islamic notions of the legal, reinforces the idea of the figure of the Muslim chaplain as a “spiritual” authority, rather than a legal or scholarly authority.

The final chapter of this project focused on conversations tied to gender, and linked the formation of the Muslim programming at Hartford, Emmanuel, and Bayan Claremont to an expressed desire to train Muslim leaders attuned to gender-related concerns. Furthermore, I analyzed the profession of chaplaincy as a position of public religious leadership open to Muslim women, and the subsequent debates tied to constructions of gender, authority, and authenticity in Islam. I questioned the impact of the translation of these intrafaith debates into the predominantly liberal Christian spaces, which reinforce the image of a paternalistic, “progressive” Christianity, well positioned to help Islam “evolve” in light of the values of modernity.

While this project centered primarily on the relationship between Muslims and Christians at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont, more work is required in analyzing the place in which Jewish partners involved in these programs (or

members of any other faith traditions, for that matter). This lacuna is partially the product of the relative few numbers of Jewish students enrolled in these institutions. I encountered one or two Jewish students both at Hartford Seminary and at Claremont Lincoln University, but none at Emmanuel College. This fact is undoubtedly tied to the existence of well-established, accredited Jewish rabbinical schools in the United States and Canada, including Jewish Theological Seminary (New York); Yeshiva University (New York); Hebrew Union College (Cincinnati, Los Angeles, New York); Hebrew College (Newton Centre, MA); Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies (Los Angeles); and the Academy for Jewish Religion (California),²⁰⁵ amongst others. Indeed, some of the Muslim detractors to the programs at the Christian seminaries I research cited the proliferation of these rabbinical schools as a worthy model of emulation for Muslims in North America. The model of the Jewish seminary offers an alternative example of a religious institution of higher learning for some of my respondents, particularly given the emphasis on language development and legal studies. Many Muslim students that I interviewed found these particular elements, which are emphasized in traditional forms of Islamic education, lacking at the Protestant seminaries I researched.

In spite of the small numbers of Jewish students enrolled in the seminaries I studied, discourse about “Abrahamic” relationships remained rhetorically central to the development of these programs. Attention to this relatively new configuration in Western imaginations concerning the relationships between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (that is, moving “beyond” the “Judeo-Christian” to better reflect a more inclusive modernity) (Hicks 2013) potentially yields productive insights. If, as the rhetoric implies, Abrahamic

²⁰⁵ The former “Jewish partner” in the Claremont Lincoln Consortium. (See introduction).

relationships serve as the groundwork of these programs, what does it mean that there are so few enrolled Jewish students? What is the importance of this relational understanding, and what work does it do in legitimizing the programs in question?

Since the conclusion of my research, Zaytuna College's social media page indicated a collaborative venture with Hartford Seminary. The Facebook page of Zaytuna College posted a photo of Hartford Seminary representatives, Uriah Kim, Heidi Hadsell, and Feryal Salem, sitting with Zaytuna College's Imam Zaid Shakir, along with the announcement that Zaytuna College "signed a memorandum of understanding with Hartford Seminary [which provides] an opportunity for interested Zaytuna students to pursue the Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy."²⁰⁶ While the details of this collaboration are yet unclear, it represents for some the hope of Zaytuna officially partnering with Hartford to act as a Muslim ecclesiastical endorsing agency. This aspiration, also expressed in the creation of nascent Muslim institutions such as the (yet to be accredited) Islamic Seminary Foundation (ISF) and the Muslim Endorsement Council of Connecticut,²⁰⁷ indicates that while for some Muslims, multifaith theological education benefits their professional pursuits, others are still invested in constructing recognized autonomous Muslim institutions focused on the training of North American Muslim leaders.

This project began with a simple question; what does Muslim leadership in North America look like? Chaplaincy is but one form of Muslim authority taking root in the North American context. At this point, the profession of Muslim chaplaincy is

²⁰⁶ Zaytuna College Facebook Page. Posted September 30, 2015.

²⁰⁷ See Chapter One.

fundamentally attached to Protestant Christian institutions. This research thus necessitated an examination of the impacts of this collaboration, the mediated construction of Muslim authority via Christian theological schools, curricula, pedagogies, and professional norms. Recently, a colleague asked me about my thoughts on the future of Islamic chaplaincy in North America. Will the programs at Hartford Seminary, Emmanuel College, and Bayan Claremont survive? What does the future look like for the graduates of these programs? In short, is there a viable market for Muslims in this field? I admitted then, as I do now, that the future of Islamic chaplaincy is unknown, open to a great number of possibilities, and dependent on a number of complex factors. However, many of my respondents are quite hopeful about the future of their profession. I conclude with a quotation from Nawal, a graduate of Hartford Seminary's Islamic Chaplaincy Program: "I feel really strongly that Muslim chaplains are at the cutting edge of Islam and society today, because we're working on the boundaries... We're the public face of Islam to clients in all these [different] public institutions, and Muslim communities are becoming more aware of what we do" (Nawal 2011). As Nawal indicates, Muslim chaplains, pastors, and spiritual caregivers, while relatively new forms of Muslim leadership, are fast becoming central to the development of contemporary North American Islam.

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APPENDIX A: ISLAMIC CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM at HARTFORD SEMINARY²⁰⁸

The Islamic Chaplaincy Program at Hartford Seminary is a 72-credit program that combines study and practical training. The Islamic Chaplaincy Program consists of two components:

1. The 48-credit Master of Arts degree with a focused area of study in Islamic Studies and Christian Muslim Relations.
2. The 24-credit Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy consisting of 18 credits in Islamic “Practices of Ministry” and related courses and 6 credits of field education/practical application and training.

Integral to the rationale for developing and offering the Islamic Chaplaincy Program are the strengths already in existence at Hartford Seminary which include which include:

- The strong academic curriculum available through the current Master of Arts degree program with a focused area of study in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations;
- The interfaith orientation, work and scholarship of the Duncan Black Macdonald Center for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations; and
- The expertise of the Hartford Institute for Religion Research in working with active faith communities.

Customized Program

In consultation with the Co-Directors of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program, each student’s program will be customized to meet his or her particular educational needs and professional/vocational objectives within the formal guidelines and criteria established for the Islamic Chaplaincy Program at Hartford Seminary. Depending on the

²⁰⁸ All information listed is from the Hartford Seminary website. <http://www.hartsem.edu/macdonald-center/islamic-chaplaincy/program-information/>

application's previous education and experience and the applicant's future goals and work setting, the applicant may be required to complete both components of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program or just the Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy.

Application and Admission for the Graduate Certificate Program in Islamic Chaplaincy

Admission to the Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy requires a bachelor's degree (or its educational equivalent) from an accredited institution, and extensive knowledge of Islam, which may have been acquired in various ways. Ideally, students applying to the Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy will have completed a Master's degree (or its educational equivalent.)

Preference will be given to students who are working or will be working as chaplains in the U.S. or with a U.S. agency, organization, or institution. International students who require visas will, in rare cases, be considered for admission; however, all documents necessary for the I-20 (financial statement and sponsorship, etc.) and a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of 550 (written version), 213 (computer version) or 80 (internet version) or higher are required.

Note: The United States Armed Forces expects students who want to be military chaplains to earn both the Master of Arts in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations degree and the Graduate certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy.

Additional Admissions Stipulations

Admission to a Graduate Certificate program of study does not constitute or guarantee admission to the Master of Arts degree program;

- Coursework that was taken for credit as a special student at Hartford Seminary prior to admission may be applied toward the 24 credits required for the graduate certificate; however, at least 6 of the 18 course credits (field education credits are excluded from this requirement) must be taken after official notification of admission to the graduate certificate program.
- No transfer credit from other institutions will be allowed to count toward the graduate certificate;
- Advanced Standing credit may be granted by the Academic Policy Committee only toward three of the six field education/relevant life experience credits as stipulated above.

Program Components

Master of Arts Degree

The Master of Arts degree requires the successful completion of 48 credits. The Master of Arts degree with a focus in Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations is designed to provide students with foundational knowledge in the major disciplines of Islamic religious thought and practice, historical and contemporary perspectives on Islamic societies, and theological and social interaction between Islam and Christianity. Students choosing this area of focused study are strongly encouraged to take Arabic

Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy

The Graduate Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy is designed to provide Muslim religious leaders and chaplains with basic skills in pastoral care, practices of ministry, theology and ethics, dialogue and interfaith relations needed to serve as chaplains in a

variety of settings. The areas of knowledge and skill acquisition provided by the 24-credit graduate certificate are:

- The responsibilities of Muslim chaplains/religious leaders surrounding life events such as birth, death, marriage, and loss;
- The rituals surrounding these same life events;
- Examination of Islamic law, which undergirds all Islamic rituals and includes ethics and morality;
- The application of Islamic law to daily life;
- Exposure to and understanding of chaplaincy skills in multifaith settings; and
- Understanding of faith traditions other than one's own.

Requirements/Credits

- Introduction to Islamic Law (ET-640) or Contemporary Islamic Ethics (ET-655): 3 credits
- Courses in Practices of Ministry, Theology and Ethics, Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations: 15 credits
- Practical Training: 6 credits

Students completing the certificate will also be expected to have acquired basic skills in Qur'anic recitation as well as the foundational Islamic knowledge needed to function successfully as Muslim Chaplains.

Practical Training

All students in the graduate Certificate program in Islamic Chaplaincy must complete six credits of practical training. In most cases, this practical training will consist of three credits of Clinical Pastoral Education and three credits of field education.

Clinical Pastoral Education (3 credits): All students are required to take one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). When the student has completed the unit of CPE,

he/she must submit an Advanced Standing petition to the Academic Policy Committee which requests three credits and include a copy of his/her CPE certificate. No tuition is charted by the Seminary for CPE.

Field Education (GC-580- 3 credits): The content and setting of field education will vary according to the needs of the student. Normally, students are expected to work in a Muslim or non-Muslim institution 8 hours a week for 30 weeks for a total of 240 hours in a capacity that corresponds with the skills required in a specific area of chaplaincy, such as prison ministry, hospital, university, military, or community work. Students must register for GC-580 Field Education when they begin their field education placement and are charged tuition for three credits.

All field education placements must have an on-site field education supervisor (in most cases this will be one of the Co-Directors of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program). Supervisors and students will be required to sign an agreement that specifies their mutual rights the duties. The field education supervisor, the student, and the Hartford Seminary field education supervisor (Co-Director of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program or designee) will meet (on-site or virtually if necessary) a minimum of once each semester during the field education experience. In rare instances, students may be permitted to fulfill the field education requirement outside the New England area with the consent of the Co-Directors of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program and with the assurance of appropriate means for assessing the nature and quality of the supervision.

Students with an extensive background in religious leadership may apply to the Academic Policy Committee to be granted three credits of Advanced Standing (in lieu of GC-580) for previous religious leadership experiences relevant to their intended field

within Islamic Chaplaincy (ex. Military, university, correction facility, hospital, etc....). Petitions for Advanced Standing need to be made in accordance with the “Advanced Standing Guidelines of Hartford Seminary” and will be acted on by the Academic Policy Committee in consultation with the Director of the Islamic Chaplaincy Program.

Islamic Chaplaincy Colloquium: All students are required to attend the annual Islamic Chaplaincy Colloquium throughout their studies. The Colloquium is designed to facilitate collegial sharing, peer education, spiritual formation and networking among students, alumni and practitioners in the field of Islamic Chaplaincy. Students who are currently carrying out their Field Education are expected to prepare presentations and facilitate workshops at the colloquium that reflect on their experience of working in particular areas within the field of chaplaincy. A fee for the Colloquium will be automatically added to the account of each student in the Islamic Chaplaincy program.

APPENDIX B: EMMANUEL COLLEGE MUSLIM LEADERSHIP PROGRAMMING²⁰⁹

Summary

A total of 20 credits, with required core courses and electives aimed at specialization in Social Service and Spiritual Care. Many courses in this program are specifically for Muslim Studies, but all courses are open to all students in all degree programs. While some courses will emphasize one religious perspective or another, all courses endeavour to respect perspectives.

Preparation & Orientation

Preparatory work and entrance Orientation event are required for all entering students.

Level I Courses

Common to both Social Service and Spiritual Care Streams.²¹⁰

- EMJ 1285: The Qur'an: Spirit and Form OR EMT 18XX: Qur'an: An Introduction.
- EMT 3101: Biography and Thought: Study of Muhammad
- EMT 3607: History of Islamic Thought: Classical Age
- Elective (open)
- EMP 1601: Context and Ministry
- EMJ 1286: The Qur'an: Reading and Transformation OR EMT 28XX: Qur'an II: Islamic Thought and Bible
- EMT 3873: Law, Ethics and Society
- EMT 3610: Religious Thought and Spirituality in Islam
- EMT 3608: History of Islamic Thought: Modern Age

²⁰⁹ All information listed is from the Emmanuel College Master of Pastoral Studies Brochure (2012-2013).

²¹⁰ Course offerings during the 2012-2013 academic year.

- EMP 1741: Care in Community
- One Colloquium required as part of Level I

Level II Courses

Muslim Studies: Social Service

- EMF 3020: Contextual Education (Fall)
- Elective (Open)
- Elective (Open)
- Elective (Social Service)
- Elective (Open)
- EMF 3020: Contextual Education (Winter)
- EMT 3451: Mission and Religious Pluralism
- Elective (Social Ethics or Social Service)
- EMP 3XXX: Professional Ethics
- TSX 3090: Integrative Paper
- One Colloquium required as part of Level II

Muslim Studies: Spiritual Care

- EMF 3020: Contextual Education (Fall)
- Supervised Pastoral Education [SPE] + Elective (Open)
- Elective (Life-Stage Ministry – e.g., Gerontology, Youth or Spirituality)
- Elective (Spiritual Care)
- EMF 3020: Contextual Education (Winter)
- Supervised Pastoral Education
- EMT 3451: Mission and Religious Pluralism
- EMP 3XXX: Professional Ethics
- TSX 3090: Integrative Paper
- One Colloquium required as part of Level II

Social Service streams are non-professional degrees and are usually pursued for personal enrichment. Graduates of these streams may be leaders in lay ministry and community or pursue careers in social service and community-based agencies and organizations.

The *Spiritual Care* streams are professional master's programs that prepare graduates to be certified with the Canadian Association of Spiritual Care as persons who provide pastoral counseling and/or spiritual care (public chaplaincy) in hospitals, educational institutions, prisons, congregations and armed forces.

All MPS students in Muslim Studies are required to take all the Level 1 courses. Those doing Spiritual Care are required to take the courses in Level II that are listed on

the right side of the page. Students are required to take EMT 3610 Religious Thought and Spirituality in Islam, which covers a kind of history of spirituality within Islam, the range of the practices and thought associated with it, and the diversity of spirituality represented in various expressions of Islam. In terms of pastoral care, the requirements of the program include courses like EMP 1601 Context and Ministry (not spiritual care per se, but teaching how to read contexts, which is necessary as prerequisite for knowing how best to provide spiritual care), EMP 1741 Care in Community (a course specifically dealing with spiritual care); EMP 3XXX Professional Ethics (dealing with the ethics of care); and students must take a year of EMF 3020 Contextual Education (this is done in a setting in Toronto related to a student's vocational goals, so those interested in spiritual care can be connected to a location like the MultiFaith Centre or a mosque or a University Chaplain's office where they will have oversight and some connections to the practices of providing spiritual care); the program also requires a year of Supervised Pastoral Education, or Clinical Pastoral Education – these require work in a specialized setting. For example, students primarily interested in chaplaincy are best served to take CPE in a hospital setting for a full year (this can also be taken during the summer). In addition to the above listed requirements, students may elect to take a range of courses dealing with care for the elderly, or any number of courses dealing with spirituality, or understanding care in the range of different life stages, etc).

APPENDIX C: BAYAN CLAREMONT DEGREE PROGRAMS²¹¹

Master of Arts: Islamic Studies and Leadership

- 48 units. Can be completed on a full-time basis in two academic years.
- This 2-year 48-unit Master's degree program equips men and women with a firm grounding in Islamic thought and cultivates practical skills for leadership in a variety of religious context and professional settings.
- The program features courses in Islamic studies, including Sirah (Prophet biography), themes of the Qur'an, Islamic history, theology, jurisprudence, philosophy, and mysticism. Additionally, students benefit from courses in ethics, leadership, and Interreligious studies. Additional courses provide training in such areas as spiritual care, youth development, civic engagement, and community organizing.
- Proficiency at the intermediate level of university Arabic is required for graduation. This may be achieved by passing Arabic 2A/B at Bayan or alternative qualified institution, or by passing a Bayan administered exam.
- The degree is achieved upon completion of a thesis paper or culminating integrative project.
- Certificate Option: Take four courses for credit at your own pace to earn a Certificate in Islamic Studies and Leadership. Later on, you can count these courses towards the 48 units required to earn the Master's degree.
- Credit Distribution:
 - Islamic Studies: 15
 - Intermediate Arabic: 6
 - Interreligious/Intrafaith Studies: 6
 - Electives: 18
 - Summative Thesis/Project: 3

Master of Arts: Islamic Education

- This 2-year 48-unit Master's degree program equips men and women with a firm grounding in Islamic educational thought and cultivates practical skills for teaching in an Islamic school or non-profit environment.
- The program features courses in Islamic studies, including Sirah (Prophetic biography), themes of the Qur'an, Islamic history, theology, jurisprudence, philosophy and mysticism. Additionally, students benefit from courses in Interreligious and intra-faith studies.
- Five courses in the concentration of Religious Education are offered in an Administrator's track and a Teacher's track. Students in both tracks

²¹¹ Bayan Claremont. Degree Programs. Bayan Claremont Website:
<http://www.bayanclaremont.org/academics/degrees/>

take three courses in common, and administrators take two additional courses tailored to their professional needs, while educators do likewise.

- Proficiency in Arabic is not formally required for graduation, though students are encouraged to take Arabic as an elective.
- The degree is achieved upon completion of a thesis paper or culminating integrative project.
- Credit Distribution:
 - Islamic Studies: 15
 - Interreligious/Intrafaith Studies: 6
 - Islamic Education: 15
 - Electives: 9
 - Summative Thesis/Project: 3

Master's of Divinity: Islamic Chaplaincy

- This 3-year 72-unit Master's of Divinity degree program equips men and women with a firm grounding in Islamic thought and cultivates practical skills in spiritual care, cultural sensitivity, religious leadership, and chaplaincy.
- The program features courses in Islamic studies, including Sirah (Prophetic biography), themes of the Qur'an, Islamic history, theology, jurisprudence, philosophy and mysticism. Additionally, students benefit from courses in ethics, leadership, and Interreligious studies. Additional courses provide training in spiritual care, religious leadership, interfaith and intercultural understanding, and chaplaincy.
- Proficiency at the intermediate level of university Arabic is required for graduation. This may be achieved by passing Arabic 2A/B at Bayan or alternative qualified institution, or by passing a Bayan administered exam.
- The degree is achieved upon completion of a thesis paper or culminating integrative project.
- Credit Distribution:
 - Islamic Studies: 15
 - Intermediate Arabic: 6
 - Interfaith/Cultural Competencies: 9
 - Spiritual & Chaplain Formation: 6
 - Chaplaincy/Spiritual Care: 15
 - Electives- Chaplaincy/Spiritual Care: 9
 - Electives: 6
 - Summative Thesis/Project: 6

Certificate Option

- If you already have a Master's degree, you can take eight specified courses in chaplaincy/spiritual care for credit to earn a 24-unit Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy. This combination could be recognized as sufficient educational preparation by prospective employers, as many chaplaincy positions expect at least 72 units of course work (typical for the M.Div.).
- If you don't yet have a Master's degree, you can count these courses towards Bayan's 72-unit Islamic Chaplaincy M.Div. if accepted into the degree program; an alternative would be to combine Bayan's 48-unit M.A. in Islamic Studies & Leadership with the 24-unit Certificate in Islamic Chaplaincy.

Course Options

Islamic Studies

- Islamic Leadership and Spirituality
- The Quran: Composition, Collection, and Teachings
- History of Islam
- Islamic Law and Legal Theory
- Islamic Theology and Philosophy
- Islamic Ethics

Interreligious & Intrafaith Studies

- Interreligious Dialogue & Leadership (offered by CST)
- Abrahamic Faiths in Conversation
- Sunni-Shia Relations & Intrafaith Issues
- Muslim Spirituality Among the Religions of the World
- Understanding Islam in the American Religious Landscape

Arabic

- Intermediate Arabic 2A (first semester)
- Intermediate Arabic 2B (second semester)

Chaplaincy

- Theories and Practices of Spiritual Care
- Self-Development and Self-Care
- Chaplaincy in Contexts

- Facilitating Life Cycle Rituals
- Counseling Muslims
- Counseling Muslim Youth
- Marriage, Family & Gender among Muslim Americans
- Care and Counseling for Bereavement
- Crisis Intervention

Free Electives (in consultation with Academic Advisor)

- The Life, Times and Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad
- Preaching and Public Presentation of Islam
- Global Islamic Movements and Ideologies
- Islam and Mysticism
- Advanced Hadith Studies
- Islam, Medical Ethics and Spiritual Care
- Community Organizing for Muslim Leaders
- Social Integration and Civic Engagement
- Spirituality in Islamic Arts
- Race, Culture and Identity Among Muslim Americans
- Courses offered at Claremont School of Theology (CST), Academy for Jewish Religion, CA (AJRCA), University of the West (UWest), Claremont Graduate University (CGU)