DALE F. EICKELMAN

The AKMI¹/ISIM Summer Academy brought together 20 nationalities at the Yildiz Technical University in Istanbul. For eleven days and nights, from early morning until late evening, the core of this group the invited participants (pre-doctoral candidates and recent Ph.D.s),2 and tutors, together with several of the locally invited lecturers - listened to and commented on lectures, presented and discussed one another's projects, and visited local research centres.

> The Summer Academy blocked out sessions for thematic discussions generated by the participants and tutors. 'Recreation' was also project related: a brilliantly managed walking tour of old Istanbul with Turkish intellectual Murat Belge, a visit to Bursa, and a visit to an Alevi Cem on the outskirts of Istanbul. In the old Soviet Union, the organizers and participants would have been called Stakhanovites, workers who vastly exceeded production quotas. In this case, however, the pace was mostly voluntary.

Forerunners

Today such summer academies are taken for granted, but they are a recent - and significant - contribution to academic globalization. The first one took place in June 1987 in Tangier, Morocco, under the auspices of the now-defunct Joint Committee for the Comparative Study of Muslim Societies of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the American Council of Learned Societies. Then called a 'dissertation workshop', this first 'summer academy' had the explicit goal of encouraging new scholars to build into their first publications the sort of interdisciplinary perspectives and comparative experiences normally achieved only mid-career. They also acquired a better sense of how to write for wider audiences interested in studies of the Muslim-majority world and Muslim communities elsewhere - as well as firsthand experience in a Muslimmajority society other than their country or region of direct scholarly concern. In some privileged fields, such as mathematics and physics, seasonal academic gatherings, begun in the late 1940s, took place in such locales as Swiss resorts and attracted mainly scholars at the summit of their careers, together with their chosen graduate protégés. The Tangier venue in 1987 was the Tangier-American Legation Museum, located in the old medina - a down-at-the-heels former diplomatic establishment. Participants stayed at the crumbling Grand Hotel Villa de France. best known for its gardens, already reverting to jungle, and for Room 35, in which Henri Matisse produced many of his paintings. A local journalist was proud to show us everything from the main border smuggling routes near Ceuta, the Spanish enclave, to the homes and quarters of Tangier's rich and famous.

on strategies of Soon after 1987, other SSRC committees oral and written scholarly followed the example of the Comparative communication. Muslim Societies committee, creating sum-

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Local Production of Islamic Knowledge An Ethnographer's View

mer workshops and institutes of their own, and other foundations also soon got into the act. The criss-crossing of workshops and summer academies available since the late 1980s have enabled a succession of doctoral candidates and recent graduates to situate their work in wider contexts and to offer comparisons that might otherwise have not been possible until much later in their careers. It also made communication among peers and faculty from throughout the world as easy (or in some cases perhaps easier) as communication with thesis advisers.

The Istanbul Summer

The Istanbul Summer Academy was light years away from its predecessor in Tangier. Preparations were considerably more elaborate, including, for example, a 400-page reader containing not only Islam-related readings, but also representative selections from the mainstream sociology of knowledge. Even if not always thoroughly read or assimilated, the document showed a working consensus on the range of relevant readings. The tone and style of the various sessions were collegial, with tutors also making original presentations. There were four types of sessions: lecture presentations by tutors, project presentations in three parallel working groups, thematic discussions (usually divided into three groups), and presentations by outside speakers.

Tutors and participants developed informal mechanisms to share perspectives and information. The working relations developed early in the programme meant that comments and criticisms flowed from the outset and without personal frictions. The 'tutorial' lectures were generally short and informal, leaving lots of time for discussion. The same was the case for project presentations, ranging from dream interpretation in contemporary Muslim contexts (Knut Graw) - interesting to rethink in context of the dreams in the Bin Laden video released on December 13 – to Alevi ideas of tradition in Turkey and Europe (Elise Massicard) and the educational networks of Fethullah Gülen in the different national contexts of Turkey, Albania, and Germany (Bekim Agai). My opening presentation, 'Twenty Years Later: The Study of Islam in Local Contexts', took off from where my 1982 article stopped and was intended to frame changes in intellectual approaches since then.

Because of the parallel working groups, each participant heard only seven other presentations. Our schedule also included working sessions at both Turkish and foreign research centres and meetings with both secular and religious-minded intellectuals in a variety of settings.

The ties that bind

The second week opened with two stunning reminders of how fragile are the bonds of civility and trust, on which we base our work and lives. The first intrusion of the

world beyond scholarship occurred on Monday, September 10. Some of us, walking through Taksim Square on our way to the Swedish Research Institute on Istiklal Caddesi, heard a loud explosion on the other side of the square. A suicide bomber – a secular leftist recently released from prison had blown himself up together with several policemen, and injured many others to protest the treatment of political prisoners. The news of the bombing was rapidly reported on Turkish radio and television and in the next morning's press, but attracted little attention in the mainstream media outside of Turkey. In retrospect, it was a grim prelude to Tuesday's 'September 11' news, which reached us as we returned from Yildiz Technical University to our hotel.

By consensus - not by formal meeting tutors and participants decided to carry on with our Summer Institute tasks. That evening Orhan Silier, director of the Tarih Vakfi, explained the foundation's work. Later we learned that all commercial US air traffic was grounded, the White House evacuated, and the President removed to an undisclosed location. Then the massive scope of what had happened began to sink in. None of us slept uninterrupted over the remaining days, but we shared our anxieties only at the edges of our scheduled main concern, the discussion of participant projects. On our last working day, Thursday, September 13, we devoted another session to the public responsibilities of scholars. Some French participants expressed their misgivings about la littérature grise - government-requested policy reports. Some European participants felt that participation in these should be avoided at all costs, because one never knew the uses to which they would be put. Another view was that such writing and discussions. whether in a time of crisis or in 'normal' times, should be open and never secret – at least for university-based scholars with a commitment to the open communication of scholarship. The issue was not about refraining from contributing to policy discussions and debates, but rather how such communications should occur. Speaking to the press and public might take time, but is an obligation as we engage our various publics in the classroom, in print, and elsewhere. As with any activity, too much of such activities can circumscribe scholarly potential. So can too little. The Summer Academy achieved its primary goals. The main vehicle of communication was peer learning, both for the tutors and the participants. Everyone gained a better sense of how to sustain - and benefit from - international scholarly communication. One of our major challenges in the years ahead will be to maintain the fragile ties of scholarship and intellectual discourse with the Middle East and with Muslim communities elsewhere. The 'public sphere' of international scholarship, like all other 'global' ties, will endure especially harsh challenges in the months and years ahead. The Summer Academy served as a poignant re-

minder that ties of civility and communication cannot be taken for granted, but must be actively sustained both in our immediate spheres of activity, and in wider and less predictable spaces. The 'local production of Islamic knowledge' is not just the theme of an academic meeting; it addresses immediate and long-term issues vitally affecting the wider societies in which we take part.

Directors:

Martin van Bruinessen (ISIM) and Altan Gokalp (Centre Marc Bloch, Berlin)

Tutors and Istanbul faculty:

- Fulya Atacan (Yildiz Technical): 'Changing Patterns of Islamic Groupings in Modern
- John Bowen (Washington University in St. Louis): 'What is "Local" about Paris Islam?'
- Ayse Çaglar (Freie Universität Berlin): 'The
- Concept of Hybridity and its Discontents' Dale Eickelman (Dartmouth College): 'Twenty Years Later: The Study of Islam in Local
- Anke von Kügelgen (Universität Bern): 'The Production of Local History in Bukhara at the Turn of the 19th Century
- Ayse Öncü (Bogazici University): 'Negotiating the Boundaries between Religious and Secular on Commercial Television in Turkey'
- Jorgen Nielsen (University of Birmingham): 'The Human Rights Discourse and the Religious Rights of Muslims in Europe'
- Kemali Saybasili (Yildiz Technical): 'Nation and Citizenship'
- Günter Seufert (Orient-Institut): 'The National Attribute in the Turkish Republic's Teach-

Other lectures and presentations were organized by the Institut Français d'Etudes Anatoliennes, Orient-Institut der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft, Swedish Research Institute, the Tarih Vakfi, and the Türkiye Diyanet Vakfi.

The lecturers included: Meropi Anastassiadou (IFEA), Murat Çizakça, Stoyanka Kenderova (National Library, Sofia), Jean-François Perouse (IFEA), Tord Olsson (Lund University), Leif Stenberg (Lund University), and Johann Strauss (Strassbourg University).

Coordination:

Georges Khalil (AKMI) and Dick Douwes (ISIM)

Notes

- 1. Berlin-based Working Group Islam and Modernity, Institute for Advanced Study Berlin.
- 2. Published in Istanbuler Almanach 5 (2001), and also found on the ISIM website (www.isim.nl/isim/activities).

Dale F. Eickelman is Ralph and Richard Lazarus Professor of Anthropology and Human Relations at Dartmouth College, USA, and member of the ISIM Academic Committee.

E-mail: dale.f.eickelman@dartmouth.edu