1 TRANSFORMATIONS
IN THE LATE OTTOMAN HIJAZ

LONG BEFORE the advent of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the twentieth century, the Hijaz was already well established as a destination for pilgrim scholars and students from across the Islamic world. The mosques, madrasas and Sufi lodges that hosted these migrant seekers of knowledge served as nodes in a cosmopolitan religious economy, encompassing circulations of knowledge, qualifications, funds, and pedagogical techniques from as far afield as West Africa and Southeast Asia. These transactions occurred against the backdrop of a shifting political landscape, as control of the region passed repeatedly among an array of powers. The Hijaz first came under Ottoman authority in 1517, when the Ottoman Empire, under Sultan Selim I, defeated the Mamluks in Egypt and secured suzerainty over their erstwhile dependents, the Sharifs of Mecca.[1] The Ottomans remained broadly in control through their Sharifian proxies until the early nineteenth century. At that point, their hold over the Hijaz was challenged by the first Saudi emirate, founded just a few decades earlier on the basis of a pact between the emir Muhammad ibn Sa'ud and the religious reformer Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab. This agreement would set the basic template for the relationship between the Saudi political establishment and the Wahhabi scholarly community which has survived to this day. Having initially occupied Mecca in April 1803 and been driven back shortly afterwards, Saudi forces re-entered that city and also took Medina in 1805, and annexed the Hijaz that same year.[2] In 1811, the ruler of Egypt, Muhammad 'Ali, responded with a military campaign which, although ostensibly launched on the wishes of the Ottoman

sultan, was in practice also intended to cement his own political standing and imperial ambitions. By 1813, his forces had taken Mecca and Medina, as well as Jidda and Ta'if. They subsequently forayed into Najd, capturing the Saudi capital al-Dir'iyya in 1818 and razing it before withdrawing to the Hijaz. Authority over the Hijaz passed back to Istanbul only in the 1840s.[3] The Ottomans continued to rule through their Sharifian proxies until the early twentieth century, their compact temporarily surviving the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and the drive for centralization that followed.[4] However, at the height of the First World War and supported by the Entente Powers, the then Grand Sharif Husayn ibn 'Ali threw off Ottoman control in the Arab Revolt starting in 1916. The region was then administered by an independent Sharifian state until the time of the next Saudi occupation in the 1920s, which would eventually lead to the incorporation of the Hijaz into what is now Saudi Arabia.

Historians have offered conflicting evaluations of the standing of Mecca and Medina as centers of religious learning throughout this period. Abdullatif Abdullah Dohaish has spoken of a "decay" in religious instruction in the Hijaz from the sixteenth century, in part due to "the discovery of the new sea route round Africa, leading to the dwindling of the age-old economic function of the Near East, as a zone of transit between the Indian Ocean and Europe."[5] Certain European travelers who passed through the region in the early nineteenth century—including the Spaniard Domingo Badia y Leblich, who visited under the pseudonym 'Ali Bey al-'Abbasi in 1807, and the Swiss Orientalist John Lewis Burckhardt, who visited in 1814—gave unflattering accounts of the scholarly scene at that time. Burckhardt commented: "I think I have sufficient reason for affirming that Mecca is at present much inferior even in Islamic learning to any town of equal population in Syria or Egypt."[6]

In contrast, the historian Atallah S. Copty has celebrated an increase in the status of Mecca and Medina as centers of learning, which began in his estimation under the Mamluks and continued under the Ottomans. He puts this down to funding made available by both dynasties, along with improvements in shipping which allowed greater numbers of scholars to visit the Holy Cities.[7] Contemporary accounts by the likes of Leblich and Burckhardt are also called into question by information offered by Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje, a Dutch scholar-spy who at least nominally converted to Islam and spent a year in Jidda and Mecca from 1884. Differences between Hurgronje's evaluation and those of earlier European visitors may have been due in part to changes occurring in the Hijaz in the intervening decades. However, it is more likely that his lengthy

stay simply afforded him a better opportunity to observe and understand. Hurgronje himself made the point that someone like Burckhardt, visiting the Hijaz as a pilgrim during the period of massive disruption brought about by the hajj season, could never have hoped to see a fair representation of the scholarly activity that occurred in the Holy Cities throughout the course of the year.[8] Hurgronje's uniquely detailed account, when set alongside fragmentary information available from earlier periods, in fact indicates the existence of an often quite vibrant religious educational scene spread across a host of different institutions and sites.

The Haram Mosque in Mecca, also known as the Grand Mosque, served as the most prestigious setting for instruction in the region. In this, the holiest site in Islam and the focal point of the annual hajj pilgrimage, Islamic scholars disbursed knowledge and qualifications in study circles, or *ḥalaqāt*. Hurgronje tells us that at the time of his visit in the late nineteenth century, a total of perhaps fifty or sixty scholars were engaged in convening regular *ḥalaqāt* in the mosque's courtyard and colonnades.[9] The Prophet's Mosque in Medina had also long been an important site of religious education. That said, at around the same time, the scale of teaching there appears to have been significantly more limited than in the Mecca mosque. According to Dohaish, Ottoman records for one point in the first half of the 1880s listed only eighteen teachers working in the Prophet's Mosque at that time.[10]

A further arena of religious education was overseen by Sufi orders (*ṭuruq*, sing. *ṭarīqa*) and scholars. Sufis had for centuries been both numerous and influential in the Hijaz, and their activities may well have constituted an even more energetic religious educational sphere than that which existed in the major mosques. At least forty different *ṭuruq* were represented in Mecca and Medina in the seventeenth century.[11] As many as seventeen continued to operate in Mecca alone in the nineteenth century, maintaining a total of fifty-three lodges, known as *zawāyā* (sing. *zāwiya*).[12] Major orders with a presence in Mecca at that time included the Sanusiyya, the Naqshabandiyya, the Qadiriyya and the Shadhiliyya. Some *zawāyā* included residential quarters, while others were used only as meeting places. Sufi shaykhs and their followers also operated out of private residences, sometimes living together in the same building. These homes were used for "dhikr meetings [devotional gatherings], weekly meals, [and] money doles for poor brethren," as well as monthly feasts to mark the death of an order's founder. *Ṭuruq* which had no access to any such site of their own used mosque space for daily gatherings. While there were sometimes

tensions between these Sufi circles and the 'ulama' establishment, there was also considerable overlap. Many prominent scholars had affiliations with particular Sufi orders, and Hurgronje reports that the Haram Mosque itself was used for instruction in Sufi "mysticism" on quiet days.[13]

Other important sites of instruction included dedicated religious schools, or madrasas. These institutions had initially developed elsewhere in the Islamic world starting in the eleventh century, teaching such subjects as *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *tafsīr* (Qur'anic exegesis), hadith and grammar, "alongside more secular disciplines such as history, literature, rhetoric, mathematics and astronomy."[14] They began appearing in the Hijaz in the twelfth century and were commonly located in the immediate proximity of the Haram Mosque.[15] Richard Mortel has identified twenty-three madrasas in Mecca prior to the arrival of the Ottomans in 1517.[16] Dohaish has identified at least a further five founded in the Ottoman period up to the eighteenth century.[17] However, by the end of the nineteenth century this traditional madrasa system had collapsed.[18] Hurgronje claimed that mismanagement had sent all such schools into decline, with administrators and officials then moving in or letting them out as lodgings.[19] Dohaish confirms that none of the sources that survive from this period speak of the survival of any of these institutions.[20]

The status of Mecca as the destination for the hajj ensured that educational settings in the region attracted religious migrants from across the Islamic world. A cohort of important 'ulama' who were based in the Holy Cities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries included some, such as the hadith specialist 'Abd Allah ibn Salim al-Basri (d. 1722), who had been born locally.[21] However, many others had arrived there following long journeys. They included Ibrahim ibn Hasan al-Kurani (d. 1689), who was born in Shahrazur in the Kurdish region of what is now Iraq and whose son Abu Tahir Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Kurani (d. 1733) also became an influential figure in the Hijaz.[22] They also included the prominent hadith scholar Muhammad Hayya al-Sindi (d. 1750), from the town of Adilpur in what is now Pakistan.[23] The Holy Cities continued to attract influential figures from afar well into the nineteenth century. Particularly notable examples included the Sufi figurehead Ahmad ibn Idris (d. 1837), who was born on the Atlantic coast of Morocco but settled for several decades in the Hijaz in the early part of the nineteenth century.[24]

Indeed, this period saw a rapid improvement in transportation to the region, particularly with the growth of steamship routes from South Asia from the 1830s. Where performance of the hajj by Muslims from distant lands had

previously been a privilege largely limited to elites, it increasingly became a mass phenomenon. The total numbers taking part in the pilgrimage each year rose from 112,000 in 1831 to 300,000 in 1910.[25] By the time Hurgronje arrived towards the end of the nineteenth century, those teaching in Mecca included 'ulama' who had either been born in or traced their family histories back to Egypt, Central Arabia, the Hadramawt, the Caucasus, India, Central and Southeast Asia, and no doubt many other locations besides.[26] Scholars in the region often maintained connections with communities far beyond the peninsula, receiving and responding to solicitations for advice. Hurgronje observed that during his visit, the most senior scholar in the Haram Mosque, who was affiliated with the Shafi'i school of jurisprudence, received such correspondence from "the Shafi'i parts of India, the East Indian Archipelago, or from Daghestan."[27]

These migratory circuits gave rise to cosmopolitan religious educational settings, characterized by interactions not only between scholars but also between students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds.[28] Those who studied in the Hijaz under figures like al-Basri, al-Sindi, and Ibrahim and Abu Tahir al-Kurani in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries included migrant students from as far afield as West Africa, the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. Again, this eclectic mix of students remained a feature right up until the late nineteenth century. Describing those attending lessons in Shafi'i jurisprudence in the Haram Mosque at that time, for example, Hurgronje noted that "the great majority . . . come from abroad," including from "Shafi'i parts of India (Malabar and Coromandel), from the East Indian Archipelago, and from Daghestan."[29] Foreign students would often study for several years in Mecca with a scholar from their country of origin, frequently in private homes, until they acquired sufficient mastery of Arabic to join *ḥalaqāt* in the Haram Mosque.[30] The Sufi *ṭuruq* in Mecca also mostly served religious migrants, particularly "Malays, Turks and Indians," and Hurgronje noted that "pilgrims who stay only a few months are also in large numbers recruited for the *tarîqahs*."[31]

Scholars from far afield brought to the Hijaz reserves of spiritual capital—including knowledge, skills and qualifications—accumulated not only in their countries of origin but often also in many other locations besides. By the time of his arrival in Medina in the seventeenth century, Ibrahim al-Kurani had already studied not only in his hometown of Shahrazur but also in Baghdad, Damascus and Cairo. Along the way, he had acquired learning in hadith, Arabic language, Sufism and history, as well as in the jurisprudence of all four of

the mainstream Sunni schools of law and in works of theology associated with each of the Ash'ari, Maturidi and Salafi traditions.[32] Similarly, the West African hadith scholar Salih al-Fullani (d. 1803)—born in what is now the Republic of Guinea—had studied in Mauritania, Timbuktu, Tamgrut, Marrakesh and Cairo before settling in Medina, where he lived out the remainder of his days. As well as Meccans and Medinans, his students included Syrians, an Egyptian, a Kurd, and a Moroccan and other West Africans.[33] Such flows of spiritual capital into Mecca and Medina through migratory circuits of scholars made them rich destinations for aspiring students. In settings such as the Haram Mosque, it was possible to accumulate knowledge of and certification in subjects as varied as *fiqh*, legal methodology (*uṣūl al-fiqh*), hadith, speculative theology, the fundamentals of religion (*uṣūl al-dīn*), *tawḥīd*, *tafsīr*, grammar, "style and poetic," and logic.[34]

The cosmopolitanism of these settings also contributed to considerable diversity in the content of religious instruction within the terms of many of these subject areas. In the late nineteenth century lessons were available in the *fiqh* of all of the four major Sunni *madhāhib* (schools of law, sing. *madhhab*) in the Haram Mosque, with students typically gravitating to a teacher from their own legal tradition. Teachers affiliated with the Shafi'i *madhhab*, which had historically prevailed in the Hijaz, were most common. They numbered perhaps twenty or thirty out of the total of fifty or sixty individuals offering regular lessons in the mosque, and many of them had been born in Mecca. Scholars from the Hanafi *madhhab*, which was favored by the Ottomans, appear to have made up nearly the same proportion. They included individuals not only from Mecca and other parts of the Ottoman Empire but also from India and Russian-ruled parts of Asia. Malikis were fewer and we are not told where they hailed from, although it is likely that they included scholars from the regions of North and West Africa where this *madhhab* predominates. Fewest of all were the Hanbalis, who numbered only one or two and were exclusively from Central Arabia.[35] For all this diversity, also reflected in the wide range of *ṭuruq* present in the Hijaz, there is evidence of a greater degree of conformity within the 'ulama' establishment with regard to matters of creed. Existing historiography suggests that there was entrenched discrimination against the Shi'a, including those communities which existed as permanent residents of the Hijaz.[36] Furthermore, Hurgronje observed that "in dogmatic doctrine practically all [those involved in instruction in the mosque] are Ash'arites."[37] Historically, the Ash'ariyya has been the dominant creedal tradition within Sunni Islam.[38]

Arrangements for instruction in the Hijaz during this period were seemingly largely personalized and informal, defined more by custom than by any explicit system of regulations. Hurgronje offers a uniquely rich description of practices in the Haram Mosque at the time of his visit, which may, cautiously, be treated as offering insights into the social technologies of education which had likely prevailed in that mosque and in other settings in the region for some time prior to his arrival. Study circles, or *ḥalaqāt* (sing. *ḥalaqa*), would come together after each of the daily prayers, with particular subjects associated with particular times of day.[39] Teaching often took place in the mosque courtyard in the morning, shifting to the shaded colonnades as the sun rose higher in the sky, and then continuing by lantern light into the evening.[40] This arrangement persisted throughout most of the year, bar some minor disruption in connection with commemorations of the Prophet's birthday (*al-mawlid*) and his ascension to Heaven (*al-mi'rāj*). It was only seriously disrupted during Ramadan and then in the run-up to and during the hajj season, when teaching ground to a complete halt.[41]

In the context of any given lesson, a scholar would take his place on a cushion facing the Ka'ba, the black cuboid structure in the centre of the mosque. His students would sit on prayer rugs arranged in a circle around him. Each would have before him a copper inkstand, reed pens, penknives, writing paper, and a "portfolio holding several sheets of the text treated in the lecture." A session would sometimes begin with an older student, known as the *muqri'*, "chanting" the end of the previous lesson. Occasionally, the teacher would offer "some rhymed prose sentences in praise of the theme," which would then be repeated by the *muqri'*.[42] Discussing the teaching procedures which followed with reference to the example of instruction in Shafi'i law, Hurgronje suggests that all such lessons were based on commentaries by scholars like "Ibn Hajar, Sharbînî and Ramlî" on texts by earlier authorities like "Abû Shujâ, Râfi'î and Nawawî":

> A professor of to-day has . . . to choose one of the following methods: 1) to recite to his scholars one of the above mentioned commentaries with the glosses of a famous bygone professor, so that the sole advantage of oral instruction consists in precise vocalisation and occasional clearing up of small difficulties, 2) to make the reading of the commentary fruitful by oral exposition which he derives from several of the best glosses, or 3) to make and publish out of those glosses a new compilation.[43]

The first method was common. The second was more difficult, since it required "full mastery of Arabic speech," particularly if students were allowed to intervene with questions. The third approach was particularly rare.[44]

By the time of Hurgronje's visit, the arrival of printed texts had already had a significant impact on teaching. A government press had been opened in Mecca in 1883, prior to which books had come mostly from Cairo.[45] According to Hurgronje:

> All students now bring to lecture printed copies of the text which is being treated, which circumstance has entirely changed the mode of instruction. Formerly the teacher had first to dictate the text, in the margin of which the students then noted down his glosses. Now, on the contrary, the student notes down only a few oral remarks (taqârîr) of the professor, and often has nothing to write at all.[46]

Anyone could join these lessons and students were free to come and go as they pleased, with no need to register.[47] Most were male, though there was some limited provision for female seekers of knowledge, and instruction in the Hijaz had at times also involved influential female scholars.[48] Students who committed themselves to a sustained period of study would acquire the capacity to engage with complex religious texts, learning how to vocalize them accurately or developing new understanding of their content through commentary offered by the scholar. Rote memorization was also a valued mode of knowledge acquisition in this context.[49] In addition to these embodied capacities, students could also accumulate spiritual capital in the objectified form of *ijāzat* (sing. *ijāzā*), or certificates of qualification. These were traditionally issued by a scholar to affirm a student's mastery of a particular subject or text, or several of each. The certificates reflected the personalized nature of education at this time, typically deriving their authority from the fact that they included a list of the individuals through whom the knowledge in question had been transmitted, starting with the current teacher, then his teacher, and so on, back into history.[50]

Far less information is available concerning the modes of pedagogy which prevailed in other settings in the Hijaz, and the forms of spiritual capital exchanged and accumulated in those settings. However, for the period when madrasas still existed in the region, students of those schools were also free to choose the subjects they wished to study and the teachers from whom they would take their knowledge. As in mosque *ḥalaqāt*, there was no fixed time period defining the start and end of a course of study.[51] *Ijāzāt* in the subjects of

fiqh, tawḥīd, tafsīr and hadith were also issued to students who undertook studies in the context of Sufi *zawāyā*.[52]

Just as spiritual capital flowed into the Hijaz through circuits of migrant scholars, and came to be distributed there and accumulated by new actors through the arrangements described above, so did education in these settings give rise to outward flows of spiritual capital as migrant students returned to their communities of origin or traveled on elsewhere, bearing new embodied capacities and certificates of qualification. Many migrants who undertook at least some of their education in the Hijaz went on to become influential figures in their own right, embarking upon religious, social and political projects with significant ramifications in locations around the world. Students of the seventeenth-century Hijaz-based scholar Ibrahim al-Kurani, for example, included one Shaykh Yusuf, who would later lead a religiously-framed uprising against Dutch colonizers in what is now Indonesia. Al-Kurani's students also included an Achehnese named 'Abd al-Ra'uf (d. 1690), who became "a major influence in the revival of orthodox Sufism in Sumatra."[53] Those who studied in the Hijaz with al-Kurani's son Abu Tahir in the eighteenth century included the Delhi-born Shah Wali Allah al-Dihlawi (d. 1762), who later achieved fame as a major religious reformist in South Asia.[54] Students of Muhammad Hayya al-Sindi in Medina around that time included Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab (d. 1792), who subsequently established the revivalist tradition in Najd that would come to be known as Wahhabism.

Connections of this kind have led historians such as John Voll to hypothesize that the Hijaz represented a key focal point in an interconnected wave of religious revival and reform spanning the Islamic world in the eighteenth century, broadly characterized by a synthesis of hadith studies, a socially activist brand of Sufism, and rejection of the practice of imitating the rulings of the established schools of law (*taqlīd*) in favor of derivation of legal rulings by independent interpretation on the basis of direct access to the source texts (*ijtihād*).[55] Such claims are contested by other scholars, who emphasize the enormous differences that existed between the projects of the array of reformists in question.[56] They have rightly underlined the need for more research into the content of these reformists' programs, taking into account the importance of the particular social, cultural and political contexts in which each of them operated.[57] While this debate is ongoing, what does seem clear is that knowledge, skills and qualifications accumulated in the cosmopolitan setting of the eighteenth-century Hijaz in at least some instances contributed to both informing and

lending legitimacy to major reformist projects around the Islamic world. It is particularly worth noting that there is a strong case to be made for the claim that Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab's studies with al-Sindi in Medina influenced his shift towards criticism of *taqlīd* and many popular religious practices, a stance that would become characteristic of his revivalist legacy.[58]

Transactions which occurred in educational settings in the Hijaz continued to have comparable consequences into the nineteenth century. It was following his studies with the Moroccan Sufi scholar Ahmad ibn Idris in the Hijaz and Yemen, for example, that the North African Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Sanusi founded the Sanusiyya order in Mecca which later spread to North Africa and played an important role in the struggle against European imperialism there.[59] Others returning to their communities of origin following time spent studying in the Holy Cities in the nineteenth century participated in projects including socio-moral reform, state-building and anti-imperialist militancy in locations as distant as Senegambia, Somalia and the Caucasus, trajectories which appear to have related at least in part to their initiation in the Hijaz into Sufi orders like the Tijaniyya, the Qadiriyya and the Salihiyya.[60] Again, while it would certainly be naïve to suggest that such projects were simply a product of influences and symbolic resources flowing outwards from the Hijaz, the least that can be said is that knowledge, qualifications and other forms of capital accumulated there fed into a host of dynamics involved in shaping and legitimating them.[61]

The religious economy within which the educational settings of the Hijaz were situated prior to the twentieth century thus encompassed migrant scholars and students; the forms of spiritual capital which they brought, exchanged, accumulated and took away with them; and social technologies which facilitated these transactions. The final element that made up this economy was of course material capital, necessary to provide for the upkeep of settings for instruction, to allow the production and purchase of goods such as manuscripts and printed texts, and to cover the subsistence costs of scholars and students.

These material resources were made available in part by the Ottoman authorities. William Ochsenwald has gone so far as to argue that religious actors and institutions in the Hijaz in fact drew most of their income "in one form or another from the Ottoman government." He notes that revenues from religious endowments (*awqāf*, sing. *waqf*) were managed by a specialized official treasury and that funds of this kind which benefited the Hijaz, and were based both in Egypt and locally, were endowed by Ottoman sultans as well as by the Sharifian emirs and private benefactors. He also highlights the role of

"imperial charities," which channeled far greater quantities of resources to the Hijaz directly from Istanbul.[62] In total, Ochsenwald estimates that some 2,000 people were employed in the Haram Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque alone, undertaking roles as diverse as cleaning and lighting candles, carrying water and sweeping floors.[63] At least some of the Sufi orders present in the Ottoman Hijaz also drew on *awqāf* monies or material resources made available by the Ottoman authorities.[64]

During the period when the old madrasa system still existed in Mecca, the Ottomans had also invested in that sphere of education. Madrasas founded in the Ottoman period included at least one established by the then sultan, Sulayman al-Qanuni, in the sixteenth century.[65] Prior to the arrival of the Ottomans, funds for such institutions had come from investments by rulers and other elite actors across the Islamic world, at least partly as a marker of prestige and to display political influence in Islam's holiest city.[66] The madrasas identified by Mortel in pre-Ottoman Mecca included institutions founded by an Egypt-based Syrian merchant, an Ayyubid governor of Aden, a manumitted female Abyssinian slave, the ruler of Irbil, Mamluk elites, Rasulid sultans of Yemen, and assorted Indian rulers.

The Ottoman state's role as an investor in the religious economy which ran through the Hijaz contributed to a capacity to exert significant leverage. At the time of Hurgronje's visit in the late nineteenth century, the state authorities exercised some measure of control over who could offer instruction in the Haram Mosque through the figure of the Shaykh al-'Ulama', who was "appointed like other guildmasters by Government."[67] Little is known about this post and how exactly it related to the Ottoman and Sharifian frameworks.[68] However, Hurgronje tells us that the holder was usually a mufti and we know that the muftis of Mecca and Medina were appointed from Istanbul.[69] While qualification to teach in the mosque was in theory conferred by examination, Hurgronje suggested that in practice the Shaykh al-'Ulama' appointed scholars to teach "according to his pleasure."[70] He could call upon the eunuchs employed to guard the mosque or even the "Government police" to eject any interlopers.[71] Discussing the latter part of the nineteenth century, Ochsenwald reports that the qadi of Mecca—who represented the Ottoman state—also played a role in arbitrating in conflicts between the representatives of the four *madhāhib* within the Haram Mosque.[72] Similarly, Ottoman state involvement in education in the Prophet's Mosque in Medina seems likely to have been facilitated by the fact that it was common for the Shaykh al-'Ulama' of that mosque in the nineteenth century to concurrently

hold the post of governor of the city on behalf of Istanbul.[73] Since the first half of the nineteenth century, there had also existed the post of chief Sufi shaykh. The holder of this office, who was assisted by an advisory council, mediated between the Ottoman state and the many *turuq* in the Hijaz. He sometimes had enough sway to appoint individuals to head particular *turuq*, and Istanbul was even on occasion able to do so directly.[74]

In addition to exercising leverage through investment, states which ruled the Hijaz also had the capacity to intervene coercively in the religious sphere. As far back as 1633, Istanbul had banned Shi'a from undertaking the hajj and it was also the case that Wahhabis were prevented from doing so up until the point when the Saudis occupied Mecca in the early nineteenth century.[75] During their own brief stint in control of the Holy Cities at that time, the Wahhabis tore down domes adorning tombs, put an end to the practice of the imams of the four *madhāhib* each leading the members of their own *madhhab* in prayer, destroyed Sufi texts and works on the discipline of logic, and blocked the arrival of pilgrims from Egypt and Syria.[76] There were also coercive interventions in the religious sphere by the Ottomans in the nineteenth century, particularly against migrants from India. In 1849, representatives of the 'ulama' establishment in Mecca, along with the *vali* (provincial governor) and deputy emir, secured Istanbul's approval for the exile of Indian Muslims accused of offences including renouncing the mainstream Sunni *madhāhib* and denying miracles performed by saints. Similar moves against Indian pilgrims occurred in 1874, 1883, 1885 and 1886.[77] At least in the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, coercive state interventions of this kind against non-Indians were apparently rare.[78]

In addition to providing for some degree of influence within the religious sphere, material investment on the part of the Ottoman authorities also allowed the state to draw upon the world of religious scholarship and instruction for legitimacy. This could occur in quite direct ways, such as when officials demanded fatwas from the Shaykh al-'Ulama' and other top scholars to legitimate political decisions.[79] Similarly, Hurgronje noted that the Sufi orders were courted by statesmen, who "vie for the favor of sheikhs who have at their disposal such troops of disciples."[80] Examples of the Ottoman state's use of the *turuq* for political purposes include the role played by members of the Naqshabandi order in raising funds for the construction of the Hijaz railroad and in lending their backing to the pan-Islamic policies of Abdülhamid II.[81]

However, the leverage exercised by the Ottoman state within the religious economy which ran through the Hijaz—both as an investor and as a coercive

regulator—appears to have been subject to certain limits. For a start, alternative data set out by Dohaish, while they do not necessarily contradict Ochsenwald's claims about the scale of Ottoman investment, at the very least raise questions concerning the quantities in question.[82] Dohaish notes that only 54 scholars out of a total of 270 who were listed as teaching in the Haram Mosque in the official Ottoman yearbook for the Hijaz for 1303 H. (1884–1885) were in receipt of a stipend from the state. In itself, this is consistent with Hurgronje's claim that only around 50 to 60 scholars were actually engaged in regular teaching in the mosque at that time. More importantly, however, Dohaish observes that even in those cases the sums involved were nominal. While the amounts in question varied, even the maximum payment of 500 piastres made to the most senior scholars once every year was less than the 600 piastres paid out on a monthly basis to a teacher in an Ottoman state school in Jidda around the same time. Moreover, the teacher's salary used here for comparison would itself have been "barely sufficient to cover his basic daily needs."[83] From the existing historiography, it is not immediately clear whether these token stipends paid out to scholars may have been commonly supplemented with other kinds of support controlled more or less directly by the Ottoman authorities, such as payments in kind, state-administered *awqāf*, or access to subsidies of grain and money disbursed to residents of the Hijaz every year.

Moreover, the extent of the leverage that could be exercised by the Ottoman state by virtue of its investments seems likely to have been limited by the fact that many of those involved in the sphere of religious education also had access to alternative sources of income. Scholars who taught in the Haram Mosque sometimes engaged in "various trades which make them independent" and received valuable gifts from students or other admirers. They could also draw on donations made to the mosque teaching body collectively by wealthy pilgrims, particularly those from India, although the state may have exercised some control over such funds by virtue of the fact that they were distributed by the Shaykh al-'Ulama'.[84] Other sources of income for those involved in the religious sphere included "performing marriages, notarizing documents, rendering judgments outside regular court service, [and] opening the Ka'ba or sections of the Harams outside regular hours," while muftis were also able to charge foreign pilgrims for the service of authorizing their adoption of Arabic names.[85] Finally, Hijaz-based 'ulama' toured other parts of the Islamic world to seek funding, although it was apparently the state-appointed Shaykh al-'Ulama' who nominated individuals to go on such travels,

and they sometimes carried letters of reference from the Ottoman sultan.[86] Beyond the sphere of the 'ulama' establishment, the Sufi orders similarly had access to substantial autonomous sources of funding—from a large residential Naqshabandi *zāwiya* in late nineteenth-century Mecca, the cost of which was "entirely borne by the brethren," to Sufi shaykhs whose residences were "filled to overflow with the costly gifts of their venerators."[87] It is also likely that at least some students had access to private sources of income, including income from family members and business activities.

Besides the question of funding arrangements, the capacity of the state to exercise leverage in the religious sphere either as an investor or as a regulator appears likely to have been limited somewhat by the informal and personalized nature of education at the time. While scholars might be appointed to teach in the Haram Mosque by a "precise order" from the state-appointed Shaykh al-'Ulama', Hurgronje noted that individuals could also come to be considered qualified to give lessons there as a result of more diffuse customary factors.[88] Furthermore, it is not at all clear that there was in practice any particularly close supervision of teaching in the mosque. Scholars appointed to offer instruction there were customarily expected to convene at least one lesson per day; however, they could apparently absent themselves for many months without that hiatus even coming to the attention of the Shaykh al-'Ulama'.[89] Describing part of the role of the Shaykh al-'Ulama' as being "to direct the order of teaching in the Mosque," Hurgronje qualified this by observing, "That is to say so far as there can be 'order' in things Mekkan, for his authority like that of all the other authorities is limited by custom, or alleged custom. The 'custom' is the more readily accepted by all because every one can interpret it at will."[90]

Hurgronje's perception of what apparently seemed to him a certain laxity in the arrangements for teaching in the Haram Mosque cannot be explained away entirely as a reflection of a European colonialist's disdain. Similar attitudes are found in an account of studies in the Prophet's Mosque in Medina in the early twentieth century, for example, this time penned by a former student in that mosque. The author, 'Abd al-Haqq Naqshabandi, lamented the absence of "written regulation or responsible administration or supervision or organized examinations."[91]

Arrangements similar to those described here represented a valued mode of pedagogy, which had served the purposes for which it was intended for many centuries and which would persist in mosque settings for a long time to come. However, these personalized and informal methods of instruction came over

time to be seen by many local observers as traditional and somewhat disorderly in comparison with new modes of education which began to appear in the Hijaz from the late nineteenth century. These new, increasingly rationalized and bureaucratized social technologies were geared towards creating spaces in which administrators could exercise more sustained monitoring and control over teaching. By the same token, they would lay the foundations for new modes of state regulation of the religious sphere. These developments traced back to cross-border flows of people, ideas and resources, on the one hand and, on the other hand, the arrival in the Hijaz of the gradually expanding Ottoman state schooling system.

BUREAUCRATIZING EDUCATION

While the extension of state-led education had been a concern for the Ottoman authorities since the Tanzimat reforms several decades earlier, it was only during the reign of Abdülhamid II, from 1876, that these efforts really took off. With developments such as the emergence of mass education at the primary school level, the empire "came into its own as an 'educator state' with a systematic program of education/indoctrination for subjects it intended to mould into citizens."[92] Recent historiography has challenged the longstanding view that these state-led initiatives represented part of a broader process of "Westernization" of Ottoman cultural and political life. Rather, as Benjamin Fortna has shown, elements of European-style schooling were actively appropriated and assimilated into the particular social, cultural and political frameworks that prevailed within the empire. In this way, they were put to new uses—including forging a political community capable of resisting threats perceived as emanating from minority populations and neighboring states, as well as from missionaries and other forms of European encroachment.[93]

The Ottoman state education system was late in arriving to the Hijaz. It was not until 1874 that the first state school was founded in the region, a *rushdiye* (advanced primary) school established in Jidda.[94] Although legislation introduced in 1869 had provided for the establishment of education councils to administer schools in the provinces, it seems that no such body was established in the Hijaz until 1891, and there is reason to think that it may not have become properly functional until 1908.[95] Even by 1908, there were apparently just four schools at the *ibtidai* (lower primary) level, four at the *rushdiye* (advanced primary) level and a single one at the *idadi* (secondary) level serving the entire region.[96] It was only in that year that the first teacher training college was

opened in the Hijaz, making it and Basra the last provinces to receive such facilities.[97] One reason for the delay in rolling out state education in the Hijaz may have been the weakness of Ottoman administrative structures there and the consequent difficulty of collecting the taxes that would usually fund these new apparatuses.[98]

Nonetheless, this fledgling Ottoman schooling system created new spaces for education which, apart from being more geared towards instruction in secular subjects, were also in many other ways quite different from the mosque study circles and other arenas that had long prevailed in the Hijaz. In contrast with the informality of the mosque study circle, in which students came and went as they pleased and studied for as long as they desired or could afford, the Ottoman system divided schooling into a set number of consecutive, chronological stages, according to the age and ability of pupils. Ottoman schools were also expected to operate according to fixed, state-approved curricula, delineating the precise forms of cultural capital which students were to accumulate throughout the course of their attendance. Annual examinations were to be used to gather information about students' acquisition of the knowledge and competencies in question, and to determine their progress through the system. At least in principle, the new Ottoman schools were also to operate within the terms of a hierarchical administrative framework which would provide for regular inspection of each institution.[99] Given the delays in establishing the latter administrative framework in the Hijaz, it is perhaps little surprise that other provisions were also not effectively implemented there. Although detailed syllabuses existed, there is evidence that these were not actually adhered to in some schools. Moreover, with instruction in Turkish, such Ottoman schools as existed appear to have catered largely for the children of state officials.[100] Nonetheless, in terms of ideals even if not always in practice, this system marked a new drive by state actors to create sites of education amenable to direct and sustained monitoring and control; investment in such sites could allow for targeted interventions in the cultural sphere.

The expansion of the Ottoman schooling system intersected with a host of other continent-spanning connections to foster the parallel emergence of a new generation of private schools in the Hijaz around the same time. These schools became another arena for the development of similarly rationalized, bureaucratized styles of education. The first of them, the Madrasa Sawlatiyya, was established in Mecca in 1875, very soon after the founding of the first Ottoman state school. In Mecca alone, there subsequently appeared the Madrasa

Fakhriyya (est. 1879), the Madrasa Islamiyya (est. 1886), the Madrasa Khayriyya (est. 1908) and Madrasat al-Falah (est. 1911).[101] There were also four new private schools founded in Jidda over roughly the same period; probably at least twelve in Medina, and perhaps considerably more; and possibly two in Ta'if.[102] While the content of teaching in these institutions varied, instruction commonly included a very strong religious component alongside secular subjects like grammar and arithmetic, and occasionally history and geography. In at least some cases, the new schools made use of European-style classroom arrangements and innovations in pedagogy, including fixed syllabuses and regular examinations yielding quantified results.[103] From the time of its founding, for example, the Sawlatiyya operated according to a curriculum which would take students at least ten years to complete in full. It was built around detailed lists of the particular texts which were to be studied at each stage in the process. It stipulated that *fiqh* classes, for example, were to be taught from a series of specific works associated with the Hanafi school.[104] In these administrative arrangements, such schools differed significantly from the madrasas which had existed in the Hijaz in earlier periods, and which by this time had anyway entirely disappeared.

Dohaish notes that the appearance of this new wave of private institutions was driven in large part by antipathy towards the Ottoman schools, which were resented in particular for their use of Turkish as the main language of instruction. In response, and also desirous of "catching up" with developments in nearby locations like Egypt and Syria, he suggests, local actors strove to develop new Arabic-language alternatives. They drew for inspiration on the traditional Qur'an schools of the region (*katātīb*, sing. *kuttāb*) but also on the "improvements" witnessed in the new Ottoman system.[105] However, as the details of the accounts offered by Dohaish and others attest, this narrative of local actors simultaneously resisting and appropriating aspects of an apparatus of imperial intrusion tells only part of the story. It was also the case that these new private schools were very much tied up with the cross-border flows of migrants, social technologies and resources that had long defined the religious economy of the Hijaz. The seminal Madrasa Sawlatiyya was in fact established by the Indian scholar Rahmat Allah Khalil al-'Uthmani, who had arrived in Mecca in 1857 as an exile fleeing the aftermath of that year's uprising against the British in his country of origin. It was named after the benefactor who provided the funds necessary for its launch, a wealthy woman from Calcutta named Sawlat al-Nisa' Begum, who had come into contact with Rahmat Allah while in Mecca

on hajj.[106] Of the other schools that were founded in Mecca, all had either direct links to the Sawlatiyya or strong cross-border connections of their own. The Madrasa Fakhriyya was founded by a former teacher at the Sawlatiyya, 'Abd al-Haqq Qari', partly on the basis of donations by Indian benefactors.[107] The Islamiyya was established by another Indian immigrant to Mecca, 'Abd al-Khaliq Muhammad Husayn al-Banghali, apparently at the suggestion of the Sawlatiyya founder Rahmat Allah.[108] The founder of the Khayriyya was Muhammad Husayn al-Khayyat, a Mecca-born graduate of the Sawlatiyya.[109] Finally, Madrasat al-Falah was established by Muhammad 'Ali Rida Zaynal, described by Dohaish as a "widely traveled merchant" who "had been particularly impressed by the spirited attempts made to extend education in India and Egypt, and . . . accordingly decided to set up schools in the whole of the Hijaz."[110] In at least some cases, these schools catered not only for Hijazi students but also for significant numbers of Indians, Indonesians, Iranians, Iraqis, Bukharis, Yemenis and Hadramis.[111]

A history of the Madrasa Sawlatiyya suggests that at the time of its founding this influential institution operated "in the style of al-Azhar and the old Islamic schools of India."[112] Muhammad Qasim Zaman has observed that the approach to education employed there had much in common with the Deobandi madrasas of the subcontinent.[113] The Hanafi leanings of the Sawlatiyya, in addition to being amenable in the Ottoman context, may well have related to that school's connections with India, where the Hanafi *madhhab* also prevailed. Moreover, sources from the time offer specific evidence of Indian influences at work in shaping the social technologies in use in this new wave of Hijazi private schools. In a speech at an event organized by the Sawlatiyya in 1912, a teacher noted that examinations that year had proceeded according to methods "known to the scholars of India." At the same event, it was announced that the school's director had recently traveled to India partly with a view to observing the results of educational reforms there, particularly those developed by the Indian reformist school the Nadwat al-'Ulama', "upon which we pinned great hopes."[114] Known for its emphasis on the Arabic language, the Nadwat al-'Ulama' movement had ties to Middle Eastern reformists, including Muhammad 'Abduh, going back to the late nineteenth century.[115] In the years preceding this visit, its members had established a new college in Lucknow known as the Dar al-'Ulum, which was intended to forge a "middle way" between the approaches of two other major Indian educational projects of this period—the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh and the flagship school in Deoband, which became the

model for "Deobandi" madrasas across the subcontinent.[116] While the former was self-consciously modernist, the latter employed contemporary pedagogical methods but structured the content of its teaching around the influential *dars-i nizami* curriculum, which dated back to the eighteenth century.[117]

The bureaucratized modes of education described here—including the use of preapproved syllabuses, fixed-length courses of study, regular examinations, hierarchical systems of inspection, and so on—were thus far restricted to Ottoman state institutions with limited local uptake and to privately run schools, influenced both by the Ottoman system and connections with locations as distant as India. However, it was not long before political actors seized upon these new social technologies in ways that would lay foundations for more sustained monitoring and closer control over key sites of religious instruction. In late November 1913, apparently acting on an order from Grand Sharif Husayn ibn 'Ali, a committee of 'ulama' approved a document formally outlining an overhaul of teaching arrangements in the Haram Mosque in Mecca.[118] Once again, the arrangements described in this document differed sharply from the quite autonomous, informal and personalized system witnessed by Hurgronje. Where the latter had emphasized the prevalence of custom in combination with the personal oversight of the Shaykh al-'Ulama', the new document— which Dohaish indicates was the first of its kind in this context—outlined detailed regulations geared towards instituting a much more bureaucratized and rationalized system.

According to the letter of the new regulations, teaching in the mosque was to be limited to a fixed list of subject areas.[119] It was to be overseen by a council headed by the Hanafi mufti and including also the muftis of the three other main Sunni *madhāhib*, along with three teaching scholars.[120] The actual work of teaching was to be undertaken by the four muftis, along with fifteen salaried teachers (*mudarrisūn*) and an unspecified number of adjunct teachers (*mulāzimūn*).[121] The latter do not appear to have drawn a regular salary but did have the right to a share in donations made to mosque staff, which were to be divided amongst all the teachers and adjuncts "according to the old arrangement."[122] Where previously scholars offering instruction in the Haram Mosque had enjoyed a great deal of freedom to come and go as they pleased, salaried teachers were now in principle expected to give a minimum of three lessons per day and were required to seek prior permission for any absences.[123]

Students would be allowed to progress in their studies only by passing an annual examination, which would take place in the month of Rajab.[124] In a fur-

ther sign of efforts to effect a shift away from the old personalized arrangements and towards a new institutionalized framework, they were now expected to be issued not with *ijāzāt* by individual scholars but with pro forma certificates displaying a record of their exam grades and bearing the stamps of the four muftis and members of the mosque committee.[125] Examinations were also to be used to determine students' attainment of the status of adjunct teacher or their appointment to a post as a salaried teacher.[126]

Significantly, the system as a whole was geared towards the systematic gathering of information about all of those involved, both teachers and students. In addition to the teaching body, the mosque was also to employ a team of salaried administrative staff, comprising two inspectors and a clerk.[127] The inspectors were to report to the Hanafi mufti all texts being taught, noting the title of the text in question, the name of the individual teaching it, and the dates on which that teaching began and ended. Although the document did not include a specific fixed syllabus, the inspectors were to draw attention to any individual who "teaches [texts] corrupting of morals and creed, [which are] other than the books of Ahl al-Sunna wa-l-Jamā'a."[128] They were also to note any lack of punctuality and the presence of unlicensed individuals attempting to offer instruction. Information gathered through this system of surveillance was to be fed up a hierarchical administrative framework which was ultimately headed by the emir himself.

According to Dohaish, teaching in the Haram Mosque proceeded according to this new system following the displacement of Ottoman power by the Sharifian state that was ushered in with the Arab Revolt of 1916.[129] Many of the new private schools had already shut down by this time, while others were converted into state schools by the Sharifian regime. Some, however, including the Sawlatiyya, the Fakhriyya, the Islamiyya and branches of Madrasat al-Falah in both Mecca and Jidda, survived as independent institutions.[130] An initial extension of schooling for Hijazi boys under the Sharifian state—with teaching now in Arabic, rather than in Turkish—was eventually reversed as Husayn grew increasingly wary that the expansion of such opportunities might provoke political instability.[131]

.   .   .

At the time of their arrival in the mid-1920s, the Saudis thus took control of a region which had long been thoroughly integrated into a continent-spanning religious economy. For centuries, pilgrim scholars who had accumulated spiri-

tual capital in their communities of origin and often in many other locations besides had brought these resources with them to the Hijaz. In the context of mosque study circles and comparable arrangements in madrasas, Sufi lodges and private homes, this capital was distributed in the form of knowledge, skills and certificates of qualification. Migrant students in turn took reserves of spiritual capital acquired in the Hijaz back into cross-border circulation, sometimes putting these resources to work in the service of religious, social and political projects with far-reaching ramifications. The transactions which sat at the heart of these cross-border patterns of exchange were sustained by long-distance flows of material capital, including investment by the Ottoman authorities and endowments made available by private benefactors many thousands of miles away. The Ottoman state exerted significant influence within this economy, both coercively regulating transactions seen as politically problematic and also leveraging its investment through the appointment of intermediaries.

Yet by the time of the Saudi occupation, the religious educational sphere had fragmented. On the one hand, many mosques, Sufi lodges and other settings likely continued to operate according to more or less informal, autonomous and personalized modes of pedagogy similar to those which had long prevailed in the region. On the other hand, as a result of imperial state-building and flows of ideas and practices through private channels from locations as distant as India, a distinct set of bureaucratized arrangements had emerged in a new generation of private and state-run schools. Although we know little about how teaching actually proceeded on a day-to-day basis in the Haram Mosque in this period, it is clear that core elements of this bureaucratized system had also made their way—at least at the level of ideals—into this historical bastion of religious instruction. In principle, techniques such as the imposition of explicit regulations, regular examinations and hierarchical systems of inspection offered means for state officials to gather information on the activities of students and scholars, exclude undesirable religious actors, and veto the exchange and accumulation of particular forms of spiritual capital in newly systematic and intrusive ways. In the hands of the Saudis, these social technologies would prove equally valuable as a basis for targeted investment in the extension of Wahhabi influence.

3 NATIONAL POLITICS
AND GLOBAL MISSION

THE ESTABLISHMENT of the Islamic University of Medina (al-Jami'a al-Islamiyya bi-l-Madina al-Munawwara) in 1961 represented the beginning of a new era, one in which Saudi state actors' efforts to mold religious belief and practice within the territories over which they exercised sovereignty would be accompanied by novel initiatives geared towards exerting religious sway beyond the kingdom's own borders. Over the subsequent decades, the IUM would sit at the heart of cross-border flows of actors, resources, ideas and practices. It would take shape on the fringes of an education system born out of cross-fertilization between the Wahhabi traditions of Najd, the bureaucratized pedagogies of the Hijaz, and the contributions of migrant teachers, scholars and administrators. It would itself come to host large numbers of staff from across the Middle East and beyond, whose diverse qualifications and backgrounds would help to legitimate and shape its operation. Through its provision of fully funded, Wahhabi-influenced instruction to thousands of students from all over the world, it would contribute to forging new connections within and between far-flung locations. However, even as the IUM drew upon and in turn influenced this overlapping array of cross-border flows and formations, it was at the same time deeply imbricated in the Saudi political and economic sphere. Its genesis cannot be understood in isolation from the geopolitical rivalries, domestic politicking, and projects of state- and nation-building which preoccupied the Saudi monarchy in the middle years of the twentieth century. By the same token, over the decades that followed, its fortunes would ebb and

flow with those of the Saudi economy and the regime in Riyadh. Mapping the story of the first decades of the IUM onto Saudi history reveals how dynamics at the national and international level played out in this particular institutional context, and contributed to driving the university's intervention in far-reaching dynamics of religious transformation.

Both the official historiography of the IUM and contemporary coverage in the Saudi press tend to frame the founding of the university in 1961 as a straightforward manifestation of the piety of the royal family. Saudi monarchs are presented as having launched this missionary endeavor purely on the basis of an earnest desire to offer Muslims across the world the gifts of enlightenment, knowledge of eternal truths, and the capacity to live their lives in line with God-given moral imperatives. There is no doubt that many of those who would become involved in the university were indeed driven by the belief that it could serve such ends. Yet to be fully understood, the project must also be situated in relation to the particular historical juncture in which it emerged. This was a time when the Saudi royals were mired in serious crisis, facing challenges to their legitimacy and stability from actors both at home and abroad, as well as deep divisions within their own ranks. In this context, the founding of the IUM stood to serve a variety of political ends.

On the regional stage, there had emerged various modes of radical republicanism which at least in principle were committed to sweeping away what were seen as retrograde dynasties like the Saudi monarchy. While particularly influential political projects of this hue took shape in Syria, Iraq and later also in Yemen, in the 1950s relations with Egypt were especially critical. The King of Saudi Arabia at this time, Sa'ud ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, had initially made the pragmatic decision to recognize the new regime brought to power in Cairo by the Free Officers coup of 1952. He maintained friendly relations with Gamal Abdel Nasser after the latter emerged as leader of the new Egyptian republic, both of them sharing a view of Hashimite Iraq and Jordan as adversaries. Riyadh subsequently backed Cairo's opposition to the 1955 Baghdad Pact, fearing the consequences of Iraq and Iran joining the British-led military alliance. It also supported Egypt during the invasion by Israel, France and the United Kingdom which followed Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956.[1] However, this honeymoon of sorts did not last long. As early as 1955, an attempt by Egyptian-trained Saudi officers to topple the Saudi monarchy underscored the gravity of the challenge emanating from Cairo.[2] Relations soured in the second half of the decade, particularly in the wake of allegations of another

Egyptian-backed effort to bring down the Saudi regime in 1957.[3] In 1958, Sa'ud was in turn publicly accused of conspiring to have the Egyptian president assassinated.[4] Following the toppling of the imamate in Yemen in 1962, the two countries fought a proxy war there, with Egypt sending troops to support the new republican regime and Saudi Arabia backing the royalists. A rapprochement between the regimes would come about only with the new strategic situation that arose with the 1967 conflict against Israel, and particularly following the death of Nasser in 1970.[5]

Against the background of these developments, competing constructions of political authority and legitimacy took on new significance in regional politics. The socialist, pan-Arab and republican politics of Nasser's Egypt struck at the very foundations of Saudi dynastic rule, and were promoted with considerable success across the region by Cairo's Voice of the Arabs (Sawt al-'Arab) radio station from 1953. Voice of the Arabs initially focused its attention on questions of neo-imperialist interference in the Middle East, including the presence of British troops in the Suez Canal Zone; the role of the British head of the Arab Legion in Jordan, John Glubb; and the British-led Baghdad Pact. From the end of the 1950s onwards, however, with these salient issues to some extent resolved, its energies were increasingly directed at "reactionary" regimes in the region, like the Saudi monarchy.[6] The late 1950s also saw a peak in a covert campaign of subversion undertaken by the Egyptian intelligence services, with Saudi Arabia being a prime target of such efforts.[7]

The expansion of the horizons of leftist political projects in this period did not directly result only from such state-run initiatives. As John Chalcraft has shown, it was also the case that "pan-Arab, secular, republican, liberal, and Leftist" values were transmitted and put into practice through the grassroots agency of migrants who took up employment, sought refuge as exiles or otherwise spent time in the states of the Arabian Peninsula in the 1950s and 1960s, as well as through citizens of those states who returned home after studying or working elsewhere in the Middle East.[8] According to research by Gerasimos Tsourapas, Nasser's regime in fact promoted and funded the secondment of Egyptian teachers to take up jobs in countries across the region specifically because this was viewed as a useful way of extending Cairo's political influence.[9] Moreover, circuits of students making the journey from their countries of origin to Cairo for studies at al-Azhar were understood at the time to represent yet another conduit for the diffusion of Nasserist politics.[10] In June 1961, just a few months before the IUM opened its doors, the Egyptian regime tightened its

grip on al-Azhar. Apart from paving the way for faculties teaching secular sub-jects like medicine, engineering and business administration, new legislation introduced at this stage also ensured that the holders of top posts at al-Azhar would be government appointees.[11] This move thus consolidated the control exercised by Nasser's republican regime over an institution which exerted con-siderable ideational sway both within Egypt and across the Islamic world.

Tensions with Egypt were bound up with the second major threat facing the Saudi monarchy at this point in history, which was the jostling that had begun among three factions within the royal family itself: one centered on the incum-bent King Sa'ud; another mobilized by his brother Crown Prince Faisal; and a third consisting of a group of younger princes, including Talal ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz, who shifted their loyalty between Sa'ud and Faisal according to circumstances and leant somewhat towards Nasserist politics.[12] The public scandal surround-ing Sa'ud's alleged plot to assassinate Nasser in 1958—at a time when the latter enjoyed immense popularity across the region and considerable support within Saudi Arabia itself—was one step in a string of events that led to Faisal wrest-ing de facto power from his brother in March of that year.[13] It exacerbated what were already much more entrenched tensions relating to Sa'ud's failure to rein in spending during a period of financial difficulty, and unresolved issues concern-ing the balance of power between the king and the Council of Ministers which had been created just prior to the death of 'Abd al-'Aziz in 1953.[14] In March 1958, Sa'ud was forced to grant Faisal extensive sway as prime minister. Through a mixture of obstruction and alliance-building, the king managed to claw back authority from his brother in December 1960.[15] However, he prevailed only until March 1962, at which point he once again had to pass effective power back to Faisal.[16] Sa'ud was eventually formally deposed in favor of Faisal in 1964.

Throughout this period, the various actors seeking to secure the stability of the Saudi state and to consolidate their own positions within it sought ways to bolster their political legitimacy both at home and abroad. The founding of the IUM must be understood in relation to this maneuvering. With Egypt and other states in the region proactively promoting radical republican politics beyond their own borders, and with Nasserist ideas diffusing abroad through conduits including cross-border religious educational circuits centered on al-Azhar, the IUM stood for the possibility of confronting these dynamics; it formed part of a Saudi-led counter-project asserting alternative forms of po-litical authority grounded in claims to religious authenticity and calls for Is-lamic solidarity. Efforts to pursue such a strategy would gather pace through

the 1960s and beyond, with Saudi Arabia taking a leading role in initiatives including the founding of the Muslim World League in 1962, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference from 1969, and the World Assembly of Muslim Youth in 1972. The religiously-framed style of foreign policy that such projects repre-sented would come to be associated especially with the figure of Faisal.[17]

In the Cold War context, the Saudis' investment in the IUM and other state-backed missionary endeavors also dovetailed with the Middle East policy of the kingdom's ally the United States. The years immediately preceding the found-ing of the IUM were marked by Washington's commitment to the Eisenhower Doctrine, promising US military aid to any country in the region seen as threat-ened by communist influence. Washington was keen to bolster Saudi Arabia as a bulwark against Nasserism and other forms of leftist politics, the spread of which was viewed as undermining US interests in the Middle East. As Nathan Citino has observed, it was anticipated that religion would play a certain role in this initiative; in 1956, US president Dwight Eisenhower expressed the je-june hope that, given Saudi sovereignty over Mecca and Medina, the then king Sa'ud might usefully be "built up as a spiritual leader." This reflected a broader "Islamic strategy" envisioned for the region, which Citino locates within a US policy establishment imbued with the Orientalist prejudice that "religious faith was the essential, defining characteristic of Muslims and that a monolithic 'Islam' could somehow be manipulated to shape the political future of the Mid-dle East."[18] A view prevailed in some US policymaking circles that "Western" advances had left the Middle East in a state of "social fragmentation," by eroding the firm foundation formerly provided by religious faith and institutions. If left unchecked, this supposed breakdown of social and moral order might leave the region's hapless peoples quite unable to resist the seductions of communism.[19] Faith-based projects like the IUM were just the sort of prophylactic measures required. In this light, it is worth noting that the IUM continues to be viewed in some quarters in Saudi Arabia as having originally emerged as a creature of the Cold War, shaped by "the international struggle against Soviet atheism."[20]

It is revealing that in 1956, shortly before the IUM project began to gather momentum, British officials were themselves engaged in discussions over the possibility of establishing a directly comparable initiative, which they hoped might receive material support both from the United States and from Britain's Baghdad Pact allies in the region. What they had in mind was the founding of a Centre for Advanced Islamic Studies "in a British or at least politically reliable territory," with Aden, Sudan, Libya, Pakistan, and British colonial dependencies

in East Africa all mooted as possible locations. The hope was that such an institution might compete with al-Azhar as a center of religious learning for students from across north and east Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and perhaps beyond, with the provision of a scholarships program suggested as one way of bolstering its capacity to do so. The purpose of the plan was explicitly to counter "Egyptian nationalism, in its present expansionist stage"; the latter was understood to represent "a threat to Middle East stability only second to Soviet pressure," and was specifically seen as imperiling "the security of those British dependencies and protectorates in East Africa and the Arabian Peninsula where the inhabitants are either wholly or in large part Moslems." The problem, as these British officials viewed it, was that the effects of Egyptian radio "propaganda" were bolstered by Cairo's capacity to use its "virtual monopoly of training facilities for advanced Islamic studies" to build a far-reaching network of "influential sympathisers on the ground":

> At present, for lack of alternative, students wishing to pursue the higher Islamic studies necessary to qualify them as teachers in Moslem schools, Qadis etc. must go to El Azhar, or to lesser but hardly less notorious centers, where no effort is spared to indoctrinate them. They return thence to take up posts in British territories with a wide range of local influence, providing the direct contact required. An already serious situation seems likely to take a particularly sinister twist if the U.S.S.R. succeeds in gaining its intended foothold in Cairo.[21]

It is not clear that these British ambitions to counter Nasserist influence through the establishment of an alternative center of religious learning ever came to fruition, and it is certainly the case that concerns were raised at the time about the expense and practicality of such a project. Against this background, these same officials would surely have taken some succor from the founding of an equivalent initiative like the IUM, sponsored by a Saudi administration which maintained close relations with Washington and which was soon to resolve its longstanding rift with London over border disputes with British protectorates in the Gulf.[22]

From the perspective of Riyadh, in addition to serving political ends beyond Saudi Arabia's borders, the IUM also stood to bolster the domestic standing of individual dynastic actors and the Saudi state system as a whole. For one thing, at a time when the monarchy looked distinctly fragile, the new university represented a prize for the Wahhabi religious establishment, whose political support was so important to Saudi rule. While a large proportion of staff would

ultimately be drafted in from outside Saudi Arabia, key posts at the IUM—particularly in the early days—would go to leading Wahhabi scholars, affording them an opportunity to extend their influence and authority over ever greater audiences. While the use of state funds to make a gift of this kind to the 'ulama' was characteristic of the long-standing patronage relations which bound this important political constituency to the Saudi monarchy and helped to ensure its members' ongoing support for Saudi rule, the timing of this particular move is noteworthy. Judging by local press coverage, plans for the IUM appear to have really gathered pace around 1958, just as Faisal seized effective power from his brother Sa'ud and the conflict between the two became particularly fractious. The views and loyalties of the 'ulama' were an important factor that had to be taken into consideration and managed by all parties to this power struggle in the upper echelons of the monarchy. Sa'ud's victory in reclaiming control from Faisal in December 1960 followed a year in which he had toured the kingdom, meeting and distributing patronage to an array of constituencies. This included regular meetings with scholars and the provision of funds for the construction and maintenance of mosques both at home and abroad.[23] Sa'ud's relationship with the 'ulama' became more tense after he took back power that year and brought reformists like Talal ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz and the nationalist 'Abd Allah al-Tariqi into his new government. The Grand Mufti Muhammad ibn Ibrahim Al al-Shaykh saw the need to reassert the authority of the scholarly establishment, writing to the king to remind him of "the mufti's right to examine all laws and government orders before they came into effect and to give rulings on whether they corresponded to the *sharia*," and he secured concessions on significant issues including labor legislation.[24] The 'ulama' subsequently joined princes in pressuring the increasingly unpopular Sa'ud to reappoint Faisal to the post of prime minister in 1962.[25] During the endgame of the power struggle, senior scholars initially dragged their heels on whether or not to back the outright removal of Sa'ud—a king who had over the years tended to fold quite readily to their demands—before eventually being persuaded to issue fatwas lending important legitimacy to the handover of effective power to Faisal, and then ultimately to Sa'ud's deposition.[26]

In this context, the award of the IUM to the Wahhabi establishment stood to shore up the relationship between the 'ulama' and the Saudi monarchical regime, at a time when the latter was at its most vulnerable and was deeply in need of support. It has been suggested that the IUM was offered to the 'ulama' as compensation of sorts for the founding of the University of Riyadh in 1957, which

was expected to be a broadly secular institution.[27] It is plausible to go further and to speculate that the new Islamic university may have been backed by one or other of the individual actors who were then vying for influence within the state framework, as a way of bolstering his own personal standing. Press coverage from the period overwhelmingly attributes credit for the IUM project to Sa'ud, and it is certainly the case that the formal royal decrees which confirmed the founding of the IUM in September 1961 were issued in Sa'ud's name and at a time when he had temporarily managed to claw power back from Faisal. However, the fact that Faisal exercised so much authority for much of the period leading up to the launch of the new university, and the lack of source materials offering insights into the murky behind-the-scenes wrangling of this period, means that any such suggestions must remain speculative. It is worth noting that Faisal paid personal visits to the IUM in its early years, once prior to becoming king and again immediately after he secured the throne at the expense of his brother.[28]

In addition to serving a function in the negotiation of relations between the monarchy and the Wahhabi scholarly establishment, investment by state actors in the IUM also stood to affirm narratives of Saudi political legitimacy directed at broader constituencies within the kingdom. The ways in which the founding of the university was bound up with the promulgation of such narratives is plain to see in the contemporary Saudi press.[29] The years immediately prior to the opening of the IUM saw a series of public calls for the establishment of just such an institution, concentrated particularly in the Medina-based newspaper *al-Madina al-Munawwara*. These were written by a number of individuals, most if not all of whom appear to have been Hijazis by birth and family background. It cannot be ruled out that these articles were choreographed to pave the way for a plan that had already been put in motion by state actors, perhaps to help secure local legitimacy for an institution which was to be dominated by the Najdi Wahhabi establishment. However that may be, they offer insights into the ways in which the new university was at the time presented to audiences within Saudi Arabia, and the kinds of political rewards that state actors could hope to reap from their investment. Above all, they illustrate how the founding of the IUM was framed simultaneously in terms of narratives of Saudi dynastic beneficence—generosity, pious leadership, religious mission, and the guardianship and nurturing of the Holy Cities—and also of national pride.[30]

Many of these threads are illustrated in two linked articles published in consecutive issues of *al-Madina al-Munawwara* in May 1960, written by 'Abd Allah al-Fasi.[31] Al-Fasi claimed to have been the originator of the campaign

to found an Islamic university in Medina at this time, and he was certainly one of the most prolific of the authors writing in support of such a project.[32] A Mecca-born graduate of the Saudi Scholastic Institute, he had also studied in Egypt and had subsequently penned volumes of poetry and worked in various roles for the Saudi state in the Hijaz, including for the government printing house and radio.[33] The headline that tops these two pieces, "The Concern of the Father of the People for the Founding of the Islamic University," reflects the fact that most press coverage at the time depicted Sa'ud himself as personally responsible for establishing the IUM.[34] It also captures the prevailing tendency to portray this act as one of paternal munificence, to be received with gratitude by the king's subjects.[35] Elsewhere in these same two articles, al-Fasi weaves the trope of benevolent paternalism with that of the pious ruler, linking the IUM project to Sa'ud's role as "the father of the people, the guardian of its renaissance, the vigilant protector of the eternal Islamic heritage, and the combatant fighting for the defense of the essence of the [Islamic] religion and the widening of its *da'wa*." He also invokes another very common theme, Sa'ud's guardianship over the sacred geography of the Hijaz and the importance of returning to Medina its historical status as a hub for the spread of Islam to the peoples of the world. He celebrates Sa'ud's recognition of

> the necessity of restoring the glory of these lands, and not simply their glory but what they were like in the era of the Prophet and his Companions. That is to say that His Majesty will make [these lands] into a centre of radiation [of the Islamic *da'wa*] once again; that His Majesty carries the flag and lights the torch, that flag and that torch which were carried by Muhammad and his Companions.

In this way, Sa'ud is presented as the inheritor of the religious mission first launched in Medina by the Prophet himself.[36] The themes of sacred geography and the need to emulate the example set by the Prophet are in turn interwoven by al-Fasi with the invocation of national pride. In this mode, he uses vocabulary like "we" and "our" to frame the call for an Islamic university in Medina in terms of a sense of collective identity, privilege and responsibility distinct from the appeals to the individual person of the king. Expressing his own hope that such an institution would itself then be in a position to open institutes in other, disadvantaged Islamic lands, al-Fasi asserts:

> I know that we are more deserving than any Arab country to assume this mission and to carry it out. Some Islamic states have stirred up the issue of these remote lands, and some of them have sent missionaries to the True Religion,

while some have opened institutes in those countries. I saw and read about this and I said to myself that we are more worthy and that the constitution of our king is that our lands [once again] assume the standing that they had in the era of the Prophet and his Companions.

In an ironic twist, given the contempt with which the religious establishment of the Ottoman empire had long been viewed in Wahhabi circles, several authors suggested that the founding of an Islamic university in Medina by the Saudis would represent the fulfillment of plans that had first been put in place in the last years of Istanbul's rule over the Hijaz.[37] On April 19, 1913, the then Ottoman sultan, Mehmed V, had decreed the establishment of the Salah al-Din al-'Ayyubi University in Medina, which was intended to exist alongside similar institutions in Baghdad, Damascus and Yemen.[38] While the intention was for the university to recruit primarily from the graduates of a secondary school in Medina, it also received applications from as far afield as Morocco, Algeria, Iraq and Syria. Its mission was "to spread the knowledge of Islam," although it was also to include colleges offering training in agriculture and commerce. The individual lined up to take charge was 'Abd al-'Aziz Shawish, an Egyptian graduate of al-Azhar and Cairo's Dar al-'Ulum who had previously been selected to work as a professor of Arabic literature at Cambridge University. He had been jailed in Egypt for his public stance against the British occupation and would go on to co-found the Association of Muslim Youth.[39] Other prominent figures involved in the project included Shakib Arslan, a Lebanon-born activist who based himself in Switzerland and whose platform has been characterized as "Islamic nationalist."[40] In the end the eruption of the First World War in 1914 ensured that the plans for the Salah al-Din University came to naught. It thus remained for the Saudi state, some of the authors of these newspaper articles suggested, to make good on these ambitions on the part of their predecessors in Medina.

Again, the connection between the hoped-for Saudi initiative and these earlier Ottoman plans could be presented as an issue of national pride. The writer Amin Madani, for example, invoked a comparison between the stature and capacities of the contemporary Saudi polity, on the one hand, and those of its erstwhile Ottoman competitor, on the other:

> If Constantinople responded positively not long ago to the idea of founding the university in the Home of the Revelation [i.e., Medina], we today are worthier of bringing this idea to fruition, with the widest scope and the strongest system [possible] to achieve its great objective.

For Madani, the need for this project was all the more pressing in the Cold War context in which he was writing. Giving an account of the recent history of the Arab world, marked by colonialism and the encroachment of "destructive socialism from the East and Zionist capitalism from the West," he underlined the importance of resisting both of these two competing frameworks. Tying the founding of the IUM now to Arab nationalist themes, he asserted that the idea to establish the university

> was built on a profound study of the history of the Arab world, which will not achieve strength and dominion, just as its nationalism will not have significance or sovereignty, until the Arabs adhere to Islamic principles and proceed according to the guidance of the Muhammadan legislation.[41]

It is thus clear that the decision by Saudi state actors at this point in history to develop plans for a project that was primarily intended to effect religious change abroad was bound up with political developments that were playing out within and around the Saudi national sphere. The founding of the new university was tied to the need for the Saudi monarchy as a whole—and also for individual actors who were competing for influence within the monarchy—to build alliances with key constituencies within this national space, and to communicate broader claims to political legitimacy. It was also linked to struggles between states, as those in power in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and elsewhere mobilized the resources at their disposal to advance antagonistic projects of political leadership as part of a high-stakes regional competition for authority and influence. In fact, this intimate relationship between Saudi politics and the IUM project would continue to play out over the decades that followed, the evolution of its global mission being shaped to a significant extent by its imbrication in the Saudi state framework and national economy.

RESOURCES AND REGULATION

From the time of its founding, the Islamic University of Medina was in principle subordinated to the Saudi political authorities. It was reliant for resources upon dynastic elites and the national state, and bureaucratic frameworks were installed to ensure that state actors and their allies within the Wahhabi establishment maintained oversight of the processes by which their material investment was to be put to use under IUM auspices. The university was formally established on September 6, 1961, by a royal decree attributed to King Sa'ud. Setting the first annual budget for the project at 3 million Saudi riyals (SR),

the decree noted that the institution would draw its resources from "our royal property."[42] It had earlier been announced that the IUM would be housed in a palace donated personally by Sa'ud. The king was thus explicitly projected as the provider of the economic resources upon which its operation depended. The quantities of material goods required for any educational project to oper-ate were multiplied by the missionary nature of this particular endeavor and its global ambitions. There would be all the usual expenses associated with maintaining premises, purchasing equipment, paying staff, and so on. There would also be the additional costs involved in recruiting students from across the globe, facilitating their travel to and from Medina, and paying out stipends such that they would be able to remove themselves from economic markets for the several years required to complete their education there. The provision of the necessary funding by national state actors set the terms for a clientelistic relationship between those state actors and the university.[43]

The decree founding the IUM was followed by another on September 19, 1961, which approved a statute outlining how the institution would function.[44] This statute again situated the IUM firmly as a royal project, undertaken by King Sa'ud out of his "consideration for the affairs of Islam and his striving to champion the fortunes of Muslims in the East and in the West."[45] As "the founder of the Islamic University and the guarantor of its resources," King Sa'ud was named personally as its supreme president.[46] This title not only gave him symbolic sovereignty over the institution but also came with substantive powers. He in principle retained the right to review recommendations made by the university's Advisory Council—made up of prominent Islamic person-alities from around the world, who were to offer expert guidance on its op-eration—before passing them on for further action. He also had the right to ratify the appointment of the initial cohort of teaching staff, and to approve the initial distribution of places to students from different countries.[47] Fur-thermore, his input would be required in the event that any changes were to be made to the university statutes themselves.[48] In addition to outlining this personal role for the king, the same founding document also defined the IUM in national terms—as a "Saudi religious scholarly foundation"—and set up regulations that would serve to stitch it more broadly into the apparatus of the national state.[49] The university's revenues, no matter what their source, were to be treated as public funds; its staff were to be subject to the same rulings as government functionaries; it was to be headed by the nation's Grand Mufti, as university president; and the latter's powers in relation to university personnel

were explicitly described as equivalent to those of a minister in relation to the employees of his ministry.[50]

Although the university statutes were amended substantially in September 1966 and again in August 1975, senior royals and other state actors retained far-reaching oversight powers.[51] From the time of the 1966 statutes, the IUM was described as receiving its funding not from the king personally but from "that which the state allocates to it in its general budget."[52] By the time of the revisions introduced in 1975, organs within the university had taken charge of certain important tasks. This included drawing up syllabuses, whereas the original statutes had themselves included a pre-approved program of study. By 1975, the university was also permitted to supplement the funding allocated to it by the state with monies derived from sources such as *awqāf*, bequests or donations.[53] Moreover, the formal status of the king—at that time, Khalid ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud—in relation to the university was now reduced to honor-ary president, a title which in itself conferred no clear powers. The institution's Advisory Council was replaced by a new Supreme Council, which, while it still included a significant proportion of prominent figures drafted in from outside the kingdom, was now granted a certain amount of executive power. These de-velopments notwithstanding, state actors retained scope for a very considerable degree of influence. Royal decrees were still required for key matters, including filling the important post of university president and approving the university budget.[54] For other issues, such as the allocation of financial support to asso-ciations and organizations that worked in cooperation with the IUM, approval was required from the country's Council of Ministers.[55] Moreover, the choice of international figures to sit on the university's Supreme Council was to be ratified by the king, and the council itself was to be headed by a supreme presi-dent, with Crown Prince Fahd duly appointed to this post by royal decree.[56] In practice, Fahd attended only a handful of council meetings in all the years that this body existed, with others usually deputized to attend on his behalf.[57] Nonetheless, his role as supreme president was symbolic of the continuing pre-rogative of Saudi state actors to exercise influence over the university insofar as they chose to do so.

Besides being subject to oversight by actors and institutions at the heart of the royal family and the state framework, it is also the case that the IUM was from the start put in the charge of key figures from amongst the loyal Wahhabi 'ulama'. Though there was reportedly some debate early on about who should take over the running of the project, the post of university president in the

end went to the then Grand Mufti of Saudi Arabia, Muhammad ibn Ibrahim.[58] No mere state functionary, the latter was in religious standing also the preeminent Wahhabi authority of the period.[59] In practice, however, the real task of managing the IUM fell to the person appointed as his deputy, ʿAbd al-ʿAziz ibn Baz, a scholar whose own standing in Wahhabi circles and whose close relationship with the regime were enough to ensure that he too would later be appointed Grand Mufti.[60] Meanwhile, the post of secretary general—with responsibility for the university's administrative staff—went to Muhammad ibn Nasir al-ʿAbbudi, who had previously headed a state-run Scholastic Institute in the Wahhabi stronghold of Burayda.[61]

Muhammad ibn Ibrahim remained president of the IUM until the time of his death in 1969, with Ibn Baz then formally promoted to the presidency later that year. The latter remained in that post until October 1975, when he left to take charge of one of the top Saudi state religious agencies, the Permanent Committee for Scholastic Research and Legal Opinion.[62] In the years that followed, he retained a degree of involvement in the university as a member of its Supreme Council, over which he frequently presided in place of the formal head of that body, Crown Prince and later King Fahd.[63] From the time that Ibn Baz departed as university president, the IUM was run for four years by ʿAbd al-Muhsin al-ʿAbbad (b. 1934), who had taught at the institution since it first opened and had until this time been Ibn Baz's deputy. Hailing from the town of Zilfi, north of Riyadh, al-ʿAbbad had studied as a young man in new-style educational institutions overseen by the Wahhabi establishment in the capital, and he counted Ibn Baz amongst his teachers.[64] The IUM was subsequently run by a series of less well-known Saudi graduates of the system of Islamic universities which had grown up in the kingdom by this time.[65]

It is thus clear that the IUM project was from the start in many ways woven into the Saudi national state apparatus. It was founded by state actors using dynastic and national resources. From the position of strength afforded by their access to the material capital necessary for the project to function, those state actors were able to map out bureaucratic regulations which at least in principle gave them considerable sway over the processes by which this investment was to be put to work, translated into spiritual capital, and distributed beyond the borders of the kingdom. They ensured that the university was at least initially put in the charge of scholars from the heart of the loyal Wahhabi establishment. Though the backgrounds of later IUM heads varied, they had in common that they were all royal appointees. This close relationship ensured that the fortunes

of the IUM's missionary project rested to a significant extent on those of the regime, a dynamic that is clearly illustrated when one compares the institutional expansion of the university in the first decades of its existence with key developments on the Saudi national stage.

When it first opened, the IUM had consisted of only a school-level Secondary Department and a university-level Higher Studies Department. In 1963, the latter department was renamed the College of Shariʿa and 1966 saw the addition of a separate College of Daʿwa and the Principles of Religion. Around this time, the IUM also absorbed two educational institutions which had already been in existence for several decades prior to its own founding. The first of these was a school in Medina known as Dar al-Hadith, which was placed under the umbrella of the IUM in 1964. Offering a ten-year program starting at primary level, it had originally been established in 1931 by Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Dihlawi, a scholar from Delhi who had settled in the Hijaz in the wake of the Saudi occupation of that region.[66] In 1971, the IUM absorbed another school also known as Dar al-Hadith, located in Mecca. It had been founded in 1933 by the same Ahmad al-Dihlawi, this time in cooperation with ʿAbd al-Zahir Abu al-Samh and ʿAbd al-Razzaq Hamza, two of the Egyptian Salafi associates of Rashid Rida who were also involved in the Mecca-based Saudi Scholastic Institute.[67] In this way, educational initiatives which were in themselves very much a product of the cross-border circulations and connections of an earlier period were brought under the centralized control of a state-administered project. Conversely, the IUM also extended its institutional networks outwards, beyond the kingdom, by cooperating with the Muslim World League in the running of a Saudi state-funded Institute of Islamic Solidarity (Maʿhad al-Tadamun al-Islami) in Mogadishu, Somalia. The Mogadishu school used the same syllabuses prepared for the IUM's secondary-level institute in Medina, and the strongest of its students, the first cohort of whom graduated in the early 1970s, were given scholarships to study at the university.[68] In the early years of the IUM's existence, it was also the case that pre-university-level training came to be divided between a secondary institute and an intermediate institute geared primarily towards students from countries where opportunities for Islamic education were lacking at this basic level. In addition, a stand-alone department offered Arabic language instruction to non-native speakers.[69]

Despite these early steps to expand the university's institutional apparatus, what is really striking is a series of developments which occurred around the time of the 1970s oil boom. The oil embargo put in place by Saudi Arabia and

other Arab states against the United States and Europe in 1973, in solidarity with Egypt in the conflict that had erupted with Israel that year, led to a sharp rise in oil prices. This in turn provided an enormous boost to the Saudi economy, which translated into a marked increase in public spending across the board.[70] It is unlikely to be a coincidence that these events played out synchronously with a rapid acceleration of the IUM project. Having risen only gradually since the early 1960s, the IUM's annual budget suddenly grew nearly fivefold over the space of just two years in the mid-1970s, from not much more than 40 million SR to over 196 million.[71] This sharp increase in funds went hand in hand with the opening of new departments, the hiring of much larger numbers of staff, and a significant growth in student numbers. Between 1974 and 1976, the university established three new colleges—the College of Qur'an and Islamic studies, the College of Arabic Language, and the College of Hadith and Islamic Studies—as well as a new Department of Higher Studies, which would go on to offer training at the master's and doctoral degree levels.[72] The IUM as a whole went from employing 33 professors and lecturers in the early 1970s to a total of 234 professors, associate professors, assistant professors and lecturers, in addition to 142 teaching assistants, in the early 1980s.[73] The total number of students in the university's colleges, which had grown from 85 at the time of its founding to a little under 600 just before the oil boom, reached well over 2,000 by the end of that decade.[74] It is certainly the case that expansion of the IUM had been in the offing for some time. An article published in the university journal at the end of the preceding decade had outlined an ambitious ten-year plan that was already in place at that stage, which included the construction of accommodation for 4,000 students.[75] Of course the IUM, even by the end of the 1970s, remained a modestly sized institution; it was certainly dwarfed by the kingdom's other major universities, which catered mainly for Saudis.[76] Nonetheless, the timing of these moves offers compelling evidence that the sudden availability of petrodollars was the proximate cause of what by any measure represented a significant scaling up of the IUM's missionary project.

The shifting fortunes of the university in the years that followed continued to suggest how closely its operation was bound up with the Saudi political economy. Having dipped somewhat in the late 1970s, spending on the IUM again shot up suddenly in the early 1980s, with the university's annual budget leaping over the space of three years from a little over 180 million SR to a peak of over 381 million SR, which would have been equivalent to nearly 111 million US dollars according to the exchange rates of the day.[77] The scale of student

recruitment also hit new highs at this time, with the total number enrolled in the IUM's colleges reaching over 3,100.[78] It was surely no accident that this second massive boost in the IUM budget coincided with a period of soaring revenues and public spending nationwide, at a point in time when oil prices were again ascending in the wake of the Iranian Revolution of 1979. It also came in the context of a renewed emphasis on religious discourse in the public sphere and increased spending on religious projects across the board in Saudi Arabia around this time.[79]

These latter moves were intended to burnish the image of the monarchy and shore up its foundations in the face of a host of dramatic new challenges. The first of these was the revolution in Iran, which gave rise to a regime that was stridently critical of the Saudi monarchy and its alliance with the United States. It became common for Iranian pilgrims to mount protests and to clash with Saudi police during the hajj season, with one particularly serious incident in July 1987 resulting in the deaths of more than 400 pilgrims and injuries to thousands more.[80] At the same time, the Iranian regime was also intent on promoting its revolutionary politics amongst Shi'a across the region, including the sizeable Shi'i population in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province.[81] The revolutionary politics emanating from Tehran represented one dynamic feeding into a major uprising by Shi'a of the Eastern Province in 1979, even if these events were more fundamentally rooted in entrenched grievances stemming from socioeconomic inequities, cultural discrimination and political repression. Neither the Saudi authorities' initial response of brutal military suppression nor their subsequent promises of reforms were enough to put down the unrest, which continued with riots in 1980 and the mobilization of the dissident Organisation of the Islamic Revolution.[82]

A distinct challenge arose with the occupation of the Haram Mosque in Mecca in 1979 by a militant Salafi group led by a Saudi figurehead, Juhayman al-'Utaybi, who charged the royal family with corruption and impiety. Juhayman himself had in fact previously attended classes at the IUM-affiliated Dar al-Hadith. Furthermore, prior to embarking on a militant trajectory, he had started his activist career in a proselytizing and vigilante movement known as the Jama'a Salafiyya Muhtasiba (Salafi Group That Commands Right and Forbids Wrong), which had ties to major IUM scholars including Ibn Baz and the Algeria-born Abu Bakr al-Jaza'iri.[83] In the wake of the Haram Mosque siege, the IUM journal ran a number of articles on the events, including one by Ibn Baz himself condemning the actions and ideology of Juhayman and his

comrades.[84] Nonetheless, the IUM was viewed in some quarters as a part of the problem, its very project of drawing in foreigners for missionary purposes seen as being inherently bound up with the potential for religious and political corruption.[85] Such views notwithstanding, the peak in IUM budgets at this time suggests that the university at least initially benefited from the regime's broader strategy of seeking to address these new challenges at home and abroad by upping financial backing for actors and institutions in the religious sphere, with a view to bolstering its alliances with key parts of its support base. In the years that followed, the IUM's budget dropped sharply over a period corresponding with the recession that hit Saudi Arabia from 1982 before broadly leveling out in the mid-1980s, around the same time that the most dramatic phase of that economic crisis came to an end. Following these same trends in the national economy, national public spending and IUM budgets, student numbers in the university's five colleges dropped off to a little over 2,000 in the depths of the recession before creeping up again to some 3,500 by the late 1990s.

.   .   .

The institutional history of the IUM in the first decades of its existence underscores the importance of Saudi national state actors and resources within the broader transnational religious economy that is the subject of this book. From the time of its founding, the IUM was deeply imbricated in a political and economic sphere that was distinctly Saudi, in both the dynastic and the national senses of the term. It was established and maintained using state resources, by actors who were devoted to shoring up the Riyadh regime and their own places within it. The founding of this new missionary project served their interests in relation to a range of concerns, from the geopolitical maneuvering of the Cold War and the rivalry with Nasser's Egypt, to the negotiation of relations with the politically important Wahhabi establishment, to the promulgation of narratives of dynastic and national legitimacy for broader domestic audiences. Moreover, the university's evolution and growth over the subsequent decades clearly maps onto the shifting fortunes and interests of the Saudi monarchy. Most notably, the circumstantial evidence afforded by timings strongly suggests that dramatic shifts in the oil economy from the 1970s onwards and a series of challenges to the royal family which arose at the end of that decade were directly implicated in the rapid expansion of the university's global mission which occurred at that time. In all of these senses, the transactions in material and spiritual capital which occurred on the IUM campus—and thus the transnational religious

economy within which it in turn was located—were integrated with and shaped by the Saudi political economy. Moreover, in managing their relations with the IUM, Saudi state actors ensured that they enjoyed a certain position of strength in relation to others involved in the IUM project by virtue of their access to and control over the material capital necessary for its functioning. This status was consolidated insofar as the bureaucratized, rationalized modes of organizing education which had emerged in the Saudi context in previous decades facilitated efforts to stipulate, monitor and otherwise exert administrative influence over the processes by which these actors' material investment would be put to work within the university's ambit.

Yet while funding made available by state actors played a crucial role in the project of religious expansion institutionalized in the IUM from the early 1960s, a series of further transactions would be required in order for this material wealth to translate into cross-border dynamics of religious transformation. The remainder of this book explores how these funds provided for the accumulation and distribution of new reserves of spiritual capital, the injection of which into a globe-spanning religious economy would contribute to the construction of new relations of religious authority within and across national borders in far-flung locations. In the process, the IUM's missionary project would come to draw on a far broader range of resources than material wealth alone, and its impact would come to be mediated by the agency of a far more diverse array of actors than just Saudi political and religious elites.