

# 10: Islamic education in Myanmar: a case study

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## **Introduction**

'Islam', which literally means 'peace' in Arabic, has been transformed into a faith interpreted loosely by one group and understood conservatively by another, making it seem as if Islam itself is not well comprehended by its followers. Today, it is the faith of 1.2 billion people across the world; Asia is a home for 60 per cent of these adherents, with Muslims forming an absolute majority in 11 countries (Selth 2003:5). Since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, international scholars have become increasingly interested in Islam and in Muslims in South-East Asia, where more than 230 million Muslims live (Mutalib 2005:50). These South-East Asian Muslims originally received Islam from Arab traders. History reveals the Arabs as sea-loving people who voyaged around the Indian Ocean (IIAS 2005), including to South-East Asia.

The arrival of Arabs has had different degrees of impact on different communities in the region. We find, however, that not much research has been done by today's Arabs on the Arab–South-East Asian connection, as they consider South-East Asia a part of the wider 'East', which includes Iran, Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Indeed, the term 'South-East Asia' is hardly used in modern Arab literature. For them, anything east of the Middle East and non-Arabic speaking world is considered to be 'Asia' (Abaza 2002).

According to Myanmar and non-Myanmar sources, Islam reached the shores of Myanmar's Arakan (Rakhine State) as early as 712 AD, via oceangoing merchants, and in the form of Sufism. The conversion of local inhabitants to Islam was more by choice than coercion, and the same phenomenon was also the trend for all South-East Asian nations, such as Malaysia and Indonesia (Jilani 1999:63). There were no Muslim attempts to invade Myanmar from outside or to proselytise within (Thiker 1959:338). At the same time, Myanmar, unlike Malaysia or Indonesia, did not present a religious vacuum (Hall 1959:131). What is more, the islands of South-East Asia are easily accessible by sea and presented a very lucrative business and commercial environment (Moshe 1972:105).

## **Different Myanmar Muslim groups**

Muslims in Myanmar are mostly Sunni, of the Hanafi sect, with a small and ever decreasing number of Shi'ite sect followers. Today, Muslims could constitute

as much as 13 per cent of the total population, although some experts on Myanmar assume them to constitute about 4 per cent or less, as stated in the official Myanmar census.<sup>1</sup> Although the census insists that Muslims represent no more than 3.8 per cent of the population (MOFA 2005), the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA 2005) states that they represent 4 per cent. Myanmar Muslims themselves estimate that they number approximately eight million.<sup>2</sup> It is not unusual for Muslims residing in non-Muslim countries to feel that the real Muslim census figures are underestimated. Thai Muslims complained about the 1960 Thai national census that recorded 1.5 million Muslims, when their number could have been double that, if not more (see Suthasasna 1983–84).

Muslims in Myanmar can be categorised into four different groups, omitting some significant Muslim minority communities: Pantay (Selth 2003:5–6), the largest group, includes the Rohingya of Rakhine (Arakan) whose members number approximately one million throughout the country; Bamar who converted to Islam in the time of Bamar kings and who call themselves 'pure Bamar Muslims'; Indian Muslims born in Myanmar of two Indian Muslim parents; and the Zerbadees, who are the children of mixed marriages between Indian Muslim fathers and Burman mothers (Matthews 2001:5). Each group has very different relationships with the Buddhist majority and with the regime of Myanmar today (Selth 2003:5).

## Madrasahs in Myanmar

Madrasahs (Islamic religious schools) remain the only alternative for educating Myanmar Muslims in Islamic education, since the national school system does not cater for any particular faith or belief with the exception of Buddhism, the faith that more than 70 per cent of people profess. Throughout Myanmar, hundreds of madrasahs are operating, financed by domestic and foreign donations. It is a recent phenomenon that Bamar Muslims have endeavoured to be in touch with their wealthy counterparts in the Arab world to balance the influence of the Indian subcontinent's Islamic ideology.

Madrasah students attend for about 10 or more years, from standards one to 10, after which they pursue further studies in India, Pakistan or Bangladesh. In some unusual cases, students are sent to the Arabian Peninsula. There is no specific age for enrolling in a madrasah, but students as young as seven years are commonly accepted. Some would choose to spend about two to four years to memorise the 30 chapters of the Holy Qur'an without understanding the Qur'anic texts or their interpretations. Once the student completes the whole of the Qur'an, he would be called '*Hafiz*', which would later become a prefix of his name.

He could continue his studies in the field of *Mawlawi*, in which he learns *Fique* (Islamic jurisprudence) and Arabic language, its grammar and the interpretation

of the Qur'an. Although every student would have to go through standards one to 10 to complete a *Mawlawi* education, a *Hafiz* could start from standard three, four or five depending on his capability and the teachers' assessment of his capability to cope with his studies. On completion of his studies to standard 10, he would be called '*Mawlawi*', which would later become a prefix of his name.

It is a tradition that a man has to be either a *Hafiz* or *Mawlawi* to lead the five daily prayers in a mosque. It is normal to find a *Hafiz* or *Mawlawi* in almost every Muslim family, as this is regarded as a great honour. As far as the hereafter is concerned, Muslims of Myanmar postulate a reported saying of the Prophet that one who memorises the Holy Qur'an can save 10 of his family members from hell-fire when the Day of Judgment comes. Therefore, one among every 10 family members must be a madrasah graduate to save himself and his family from hell-fire.

Most Myanmar madrasahs are boarding schools exclusively for male students from all over the country. A Muslim boy can enroll in any madrasah irrespective of his ethnic background. In some cases, obtaining a recommendation from a reputable Muslim clergyman ('*Ulama*) or religious person is needed to smooth the enrolment process. At the same time, new madrasahs welcoming young adult female students in *Tahfiz* (memorising the Qur'an) and *Mawlawi* courses are being established in Yangon and throughout the Yangon division.

Madrasahs choose to adopt either Burmese or Urdu as their language of instruction and reading Arabic grammar is compulsory, along with reading the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (*Hadiths*). Graduates of madrasahs can translate Arabic religious texts in either Myanmar or Urdu language, but none of them can communicate fluently in conversational Arabic. In some cases, these Islamic-school graduates are indoctrinated by their respective '*Ulama*' and lose a sense of rationality. Neither mathematics nor science subjects are taught in those madrasahs, although attempts are made to introduce English-language courses in some schools.

Some schools actively support *Tabligh*, the movement that aims to revive Islam among Muslims through a spiritual/personal approach, but they are not interested in converting non-Muslims to Islam.<sup>3</sup> It is compulsory for a graduate to spend a *Chillah* (40 days) with *Tabligh* by travelling to different parts of Myanmar to regenerate Islam. The *Tabligh* movement postulates that the reason for the fall of Islam was Muslims' failure to uphold the true teaching of Islam in its true form. Today, this noble movement has also become an institution of 'rehabilitation' to which disappointed parents send their mischievous youth with the aim of their sons becoming better Muslims.

The Myanmar administration has never made any serious attempt either to reform madrasahs or to incorporate them into the mainstream of the national education system, as has been the case in Thailand and Malaysia. The absence

of an authoritative body governing Islamic schools within Myanmar encourages the mushrooming of madrasahs based on certain thoughts and ideas that seem to be Islamic. At times, differences of opinion about certain ideas on Islamic thought become so prevalent among Muslims that sometimes the State has to intervene to defuse tension among various Muslim communities. In one case, the authorities closed one Myanmar-speaking madrasah boarding school outside Yangon when its Muslim supporters were unable to resolve their own internal conflict.

## Curriculum of madrasahs in Myanmar

Most madrasahs' curriculum and teaching systems are similar if not identical to those of the Indian subcontinent. There is no difference of any kind in the teaching textbooks and curriculum until standard four, after which the texts begin to vary. For example, one madrasah might adopt *Sharah Wiqayah* as a text for *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) while another might choose *Kanzad Daqa 'iq* as its teaching text for the same subject.

There is 95 per cent consistency in the textbooks used for Arabic grammar in all madrasahs. The texts vary again, however, in standard 10, the last year of studies. Some madrasahs will adopt the *Mishqad* book *Sahih Bukhari* (the traditions of the holy prophets compiled by Imam Bukhari), *Sahih Muslim* (the traditions of the holy prophets compiled by Imam Muslim), *Abi Dawood* (the traditions of the holy prophets compiled by Imam Abu Dawood), *Ni Sa'i'* (the traditions of the holy prophets compiled by Imam Ni'sa'i'), *Tirmizi* (the traditions of the holy prophets compiled by Imam Tirmizi) or *Ibnu Majah* (the traditions of the holy prophets compiled by Imam Ibnu Majah). Some madrasahs teach *Tahawi* (purification according to Islam) while others use *Muwatta' Imam Malik* (the traditions of the holy prophets compiled by Imam Malik). The selection of texts will vary according to the instructors' different opinions of the significance and relevance of the questions in the various books.

## Languages used in Myanmar madrasahs

Myanmar Muslims are divided not only over different ethnicity and race, they are divided over different languages used in madrasahs. Indeed, this gap has been significant since the 1930s. In some cases, local communities consider this to be an irreconcilable problem.

Myanmar-speaking Muslims always point to the story of how the first Arab Muslims arrived in Mottama (Martaban) in Lower Myanmar in 1055 AD. An Arab merchant's two sons were rescued by Buddhist monks after their ship capsized near the Mon Kingdom. Today, those two Arab brothers are Byattwi and Byatta, two of the 37 *nats* (spirits), as known by Burman Buddhists (Mohiyuddin 2005:68). Myanmar Muslims are proud that a Muslim teacher educated the son of King Anawratha, King Saw Lu (Naing 2000:6). They also

recall the oppressive King Bayinnaung (1551–81 AD), who forced Muslims to convert to Buddhism and forbade the slaughtering of cattle on Islamic holidays. On the other hand, he appointed Muslim translators in his palace and had contacts with King Akhbar of India (Naing 2000:7). King Tar Lun (1629–48) sent Muslim prisoners captured in Pegu, Yangon and Arakan to Central Myanmar, who then settled there.

Bamar Muslims persistently argue that they served under numerous Bamar kings in various capacities, such as teachers, horse riders and soldiers. Some Bamar kings were very fond of them and King Mindon (1853–78) is known to have given religious freedom to his people throughout the country. He built Masjids for Muslims serving his army and residing in his kingdom and appointed Kabul Mawlawi as a religious authority on Islamic matters, allowing him a gold-coloured umbrella (*shwe htee*), gold bowl (*shwe yae tauk phalar*) and gold spittoon (*shwe htawe khan*) (Lay 1971:67). Bamar Muslims also served the last king of Myanmar, King Thibaw (1878–85) (Lay 1971:78).

Bamar Muslims were therefore of the opinion that the Myanmar language should be used in all madrasahs, whereas Indian Muslims, who dominated the management and financed madrasah maintenance, imposed Urdu, the language used in Indian madrasahs.

In fact, an official request was made to teach Myanmar as the major language in all Islamic schools at the Bamar Muslim Education Conference held in Bago (Pegu) in December 1929. Bamar Muslims were offended by the statements made by the then chairman of the Burmese Maulawi Association, Maulana Ismail Ibnu Mohammed Bismillah, who gave the following reasons for Urdu to be maintained as the medium of instruction in all Islamic schools:<sup>4</sup>

- if Urdu was replaced by Myanmar (a language forbidden by Allah), the Muslims of Myanmar would witness a possible stagnation of Islam in the country
- Urdu was the language of Islam in India
- there was a great possibility that Islamic religious knowledge would eventually become extinct if Myanmar replaced Urdu.

As a result, the Bamar Muslim Education Conference, attended by more than 200 delegates and held at Yamethin on 28–29 December 1930, decisively outlined the difficulties faced by the Bamar Muslims and their reasons for wanting to change the language:

- there were no *Mawlawi* (preachers of Islam) who spoke Myanmar fluently
- many people were unable to understand what the Indian *Mawlawis* preached
- the way the *Mawlawi* preached Islam was difficult to follow in practice—so much so that many wanted to convert to other religions

- Muslims learned no modern languages—that is, Myanmar and English—while they learned Urdu and Arabic from a young age with no comprehensive understanding, making them no use in later years.

The delegates of the conference also proposed that the Bamar (Burman) Muslims should have at least one *Mawlawi* who could preach in every Myanmar town and it selected young Bamar Muslims to be sponsored to study Islam in Myanmar and English, not in Urdu and Arabic (Lay 1971:172–6). At the national level, in February–March 1937, Bamars endeavoured to make Myanmar the language of the House of Parliament despite protests from European and Indian members (Chakravarti 1971:156). Soon afterwards, Bamar Muslims formed the Burma Muslim Independent Organisation, which adopted the following slogans:

- Bamar race: our race
- Bamar language: our language
- Bamar writings: our writings
- Bamar nation: our nation
- Independence: our religion
- Peace: our discipline
- Capitalism: we don't need
- *Mawlawi*-ism: we don't need.

Later, Bamar Muslims also formed Bamar (Burman) Muslims Noe Kyar Yae<sup>5</sup> Association (BMNKYA) and Bamar (Burman) Women Muslims Noe Kyar Yae Association (BWMNKYA), with several objectives such as forming a separate identity for Bamar (Burman) Muslims, including a separate register in the Myanmar census.

Today, madrasahs from Yangon, Mawlamyaing, Rakhine and Ayeyarwady—where the majority of non-indigenous and non-Bamar people live—use Urdu extensively in translating Arabic texts, with a few Myanmar words in unavoidable circumstances. It is interesting to recall that the differences about which language to use once caused serious division among the Muslims of Myanmar. Burmese-speaking Myanmar Muslims called for their Urdu-speaking counterparts to demonstrate their undivided loyalty to Myanmar by speaking Burmese and not Urdu, while Urdu-speaking Muslim '*Ulama* maintained that Urdu had been the religious language in India and those who spoke Burmese in Islamic matters were '*Muslim bodies with Buddhist souls*'.

On the other hand, Pyaw Bwe, Yamethin, Meiktila, Lat Pan, Su Lay Kone, Mandalay, Bone Owe, Shwebo, Kanbalu and many other towns in Upper Burma translate all texts into Myanmar.

It is therefore a common assumption that madrasah graduates from Upper Burma are weak in Urdu and in some cases could not even converse well with their counterparts from Lower Burma. What is more, those madrasah graduates face

numerous obstacles securing a job as a madrasah teacher in Lower Burma as they are unable to converse in the language that Muslims from Lower Burma consider the 'Islamic [religious] tongue'. In many instances, they have to undergo Urdu-language courses before being appointed as madrasah teachers. On the other hand, madrasah graduates from Lower Burma easily find jobs in madrasahs in Upper Burma, despite their limited Myanmar-language skills.

## Ideologies

Bamar Muslims from Upper Burma do not have Arabic (Muslim) names, unlike their counterparts in Lower Burma. Some of the latter keep their Muslim names for private use and prefer to be addressed by their Myanmar name. Some have been fighting vigorously against the Indian style of Islam by adopting Myanmar names and wearing Myanmar national dress. Most writings of Bamar Muslims focus on Bamar Muslim activities and seek to disassociate their community from non-Bamar Muslims, especially those of Indian descent. Some have gone to extreme lengths to differentiate themselves from Indian Muslims by saying, for example, that there is no difference between Bamar Buddhists and Bamar Muslims, except that Bamar Muslims consume no pork (see Chaye 1986).

Myanmar Muslims from Upper Burma are considered to be more liberal in Islamic thoughts and more accommodating towards different ethnic groups and other faiths. Madrasahs in this area teach students to be more open-minded than those in other areas, and no particular form of dress is considered 'pious'. Madrasahs in Lower Myanmar, however, make it compulsory for their students to dress in Indian style, wearing '*kurta*' and '*fez*'. All madrasah teachers in Lower Burma wear pious *kurta* and *fez* dress.

Any madrasah student or teacher who is not in 'pious' dress is considered to be a 'follower of deviate teachings and the servant of Satan' or anti-*Hadith* (against the traditions of the Prophet and against accepting the Qur'an as the only revealed source of Islam). Whatever the case is, assumptions about pious dress are meant only for madrasah teachers, not for the general Muslim public.

No text written by any native Myanmar Muslim is used in any madrasah anywhere in the country. The textbooks used are the same as those used in Indian and Pakistani madrasahs, emphasising faith and cultural matters, and leaving out social relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims, politics, psychology, sociology and philosophy. There could be several reasons why Muslims are not welcome in the civil service and state-controlled government institutions, the police or the army, but no madrasah graduate ever thinks of working along with their fellows of the Buddhist faith. At the same time, their qualifications would not allow them to join the civil service domain, as madrasah certificates are not recognised by the regime.

The concept of jihad is loosely translated as striving for one's best to achieve something that God wishes—not declaring war on non-Muslims over various preconceived notions. Since the September 2001 attacks, Myanmar's authorities have been increasingly concerned about the nature and establishment of madrasahs and the sources of donations and textbooks used in them. During some critical periods, madrasahs in and around Yangon and other places have been instructed to shut down and order their students to return to their respective homes until tranquility is restored in the country. Similar instructions are sometimes given to other schools as well.

The regime imposes restrictions on importing Islamic religious books and other texts from the Indian subcontinent and the Middle East, although its media proclaims that no such restrictions apply. In two cases, books in Urdu sent by Myanmar Muslim students studying in Pakistan were confiscated at the Yangon International Airport<sup>6</sup> and some bundles of books in Arabic donated by Myanmar Muslims living in Saudi Arabia were stored at the Thai–Myanmar border to be smuggled into Myanmar, if circumstances allowed.

## Famous and reputable madrasahs in Myanmar

Myanmar is home to 759 Islamic schools, according to the official records of the regime. Madrasahs can be placed in two categories: madrasah (school) and *jami'ah* (university)—although all began as the former before transforming themselves into the latter. Some institutions adopt *jami'ah* and madrasah in their title, with no apparent explanation. Of all these institutions, some are well known for their academic staff, curriculum and discipline and management (selected madrasahs are listed in Appendix Table 10.1). The story of the establishment of two famous mosques and madrasahs provides an example of the respect with which their founders are still held.

### Darul 'Uloom (Tarmwe)

A Muslim named Ibrahim purchased 17.5 hectares of land in Tarmwe, Yangon, in 1919, of which 19 square metres were allocated on which to build a mosque and the rest became a Muslim cemetery. The headmaster of this madrasah was Maulana Mufi Mahmud Daud Yussuf, who was born in Yangon in 1916. At the age of five, he was entrusted to Maulana Abdul Majid of Shah Jahan Puri, India, to learn Islam. He was later sent to the school of Randeniah to study English. After 1929, he undertook further studies at the school of Mazahirul 'Uloom in Saharan Pur and obtained a Mufti's (expert on Islamic jurisprudence) degree in 1936, the year he married his cousin. He performed the *Haj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) along with his teacher, Maulana Abdul Rahman. On his return from Mecca, he reluctantly accepted the post of the chairman of Surti Mosque, Yangon. Later, he was assigned to take charge of the Muslim cemetery and became the headmaster of the madrasah until his death. Today, the authorities have closed

this Muslim cemetery and no new burials are allowed. Maulawi Saleh from Mawlamyaing now heads this madrasah.

### Sufia (Botahtaung)

In 1957–58, Hakim Abdul Aziz set up a *Yunani* medicine shop in Bohtataung, where he noticed many Muslim children had no knowledge of Islam. Offering them sweets and snacks, he invited them to his medicine house, where he taught them about Islam. During a journey to Bago, he met Adbullah in Waw and Muhammad Saleh, Ahmad, Wali Ahmad, Yusuf Ali, Muhammad Qasim and Muhammad Ali, all of whom headed to Madauk. Here, they met Habibul Rahman, Muhammad Ismail, Muhammed Yakob (big) and Muhammad Yakob (small). They all continued their journey to Nyaunglaybin, where they met the sons of Maulana Abdul Ghafur, Abdul Majid, Abdul Manar and Mu'min. All of them, including Yusuf from Pyun Ta Zar, drove to Yangon and began a small school with 15 students.

### Challenges faced by madrasahs in Myanmar

There seem to be no clear-cut rules and regulations for what a madrasah can do or cannot do in Myanmar. All rules and laws change from time to time. Every Muslim is aware that madrasahs are being closely watched and monitored by the regime, and they behave in the safest way possible. The US *Religious Freedom Report* and Human Rights Watch have on numerous occasions reported incidents involving the arrest and jailing of some Muslim teachers in state schools, who were teaching students how to read the Qur'an at home.

According to the Myanmar Government's own publications, Islam and its related affairs are controlled, regulated and managed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Myanmar, working through five Islamic associations (ibid.:69):

1. Islamic Religious Affairs Council
2. Muslim 'Ulama Association
3. All Myanmar Mawlawi Association
4. All Myanmar Young Muslim Youth
5. Myanmar Muslim League.

The Islamic Religious Affairs Council (IRAC) is the most active Islamic association as it has the blessing of the regime. The Islamic Centre of Myanmar (ICM), set up by the Bamar Muslim U Ba Chit,<sup>7</sup> acts as a mouthpiece for the IRAC and is active in interfaith dialogue. All its executive members adopt only Myanmar names with the prefix '*Al haj'*',<sup>8</sup> such as Al Haj U Khin Maung Myint, Al Haj U Tin Nyunt and Haji Ma Daw Hla Shawe. Likewise, none of its committee members, including the daughter of its founder, U Ba Chit, Haji Ma Dr Sandar Chit, has a Muslim (Arabic) name (see ICM 2003).

The government allows publication of Islamic books and numerous magazines, especially by the ICM, such as *Al Irshad (Guidance)*, *Milardun Nabi (The Birth of the Holy Prophet)*, *Al Noor (The Light)*, *Al Balaq (Spreading)*, *Al Hilal (The Crescent)*, *Al Falah (The Success)*, *Al Minar (Minaret)*, *Nurul Islam (The Light of Islam)*, *Lisanul Islam (Language of Islam)*, *Islam Myet Won (The Eye of Islam)* and *Al Munadi (The Call)*.

All magazines are informative in nature and highlight local and global news about Islam, including the lives of Muslims in the United States, the winners of the King Feisal Award and feature poems and short stories. Also included are articles about science and Islam, the history of early Bamar Muslims, Muslims in ancient Myanmar, the impact of the Internet on modern youth, the danger of homosexuality and HIV/AIDS. Advertising is accepted from Ahamdiah Muslim Jammah, the organisation termed by the traditional 'Ulama as an 'out-of Islam group'.<sup>9</sup> The ICM also conducts summer Islamic classes for Bamar Muslims.

Muslims in Myanmar usually believe that they are discriminated against and are treated badly by the regime compared with people of other faiths. Muslims are unhappy that there are only two public holidays for Muslims, Aidil Fitri and 'Idil Adha, of which only one is a gazetted public holiday, while Buddhists celebrate numerous religious public holidays. At the same time, many Muslims complain that the regime refuses to grant land or *waqf* (donations of land or property by a Muslim) to set up either a madrasah or a mosque in newly established towns such as Hlaing Thayar and South and North Dagon in Yangon Division.

The lack of an authorised Islamic or neutral news agency in Myanmar has provided fertile ground for all types of Islamic organisations. *Ahmadiyah* (anti-*hadith* groups) are gaining more strength among less-educated Muslim urban youths. The traditional 'Ulama's attempt to prohibit quoting any Qur'anic verse or *hadith* is confronted by a handful of modern youths who spent a few months learning Arabic at Azhar University in Cairo. These youths argue that Islam is for everyone and proclaim that 'Ulama must not be allowed to monopolise it'.

At the same time, the traditional 'Ulama have failed to inculcate a sense of Islamic identity in Muslim youths. Many Myanmar Muslims tend to hide their identity and prefer to classify themselves as Buddhist in some situations. Madrasahs will, however, remain in Myanmar into the future as there is no other alternative to the state education system available for Myanmar Muslims.

## Appendix

**Appendix Table 10.1 Famous and reputable madrasahs in Myanmar**

Name	City/town
Darul 'Uloom	Tarmwe, Yangon
Sufia	Botahtaung, Yangon
Jamiatul 'Ulama	Kanbalu
Jamiat Arabia Mazahirul 'Uloom	Pyaw Bwe
Madrasah Nu'maniah	Yangon
Jamiatul Arabia Islamiah Ta'leemul Qur'an	Thingangyun, Yangon
Isha' Atul 'Uloom	Mawlmyaing
Imdarul 'Uloom	Kyaikmayaw
Madrasah Husseiniyah	Maung Gan, Mawlmyaing
Madrasah Mahmudiah	Thingangyun, Yangon
Madrasah Arabia Hidayatul 'Uloom	Yamethin
Madrasah Furqaniah Hafizul Qur'an	Thingangyun, Yangon
(Arabic University of) Madinatul 'Uloomul	Yin Daw, Pyaw Bwe
(Arabic University of) Madrasah Azziziah	Nan Daw Kone, Meiktila
(Arabic University of) Madrasah Khaliliyah	Letpan, Kyaukse
(Arabic University of) Miftahul 'Uloom	Bone Owe, Mandalay
Madrasah Zammiriah	Kywe Chan Kone Mawlmyaing
Madrasah Hakimiah	Laputtar
Jami'ah Qasimiah	Ma Kyar Nwe Zin, Mandalay
(Arabic University of) Jamia'h Furqaniah	Thathon
(Arabic University of) Jami'ah Arabiah Shamsul 'Uloom	Letpan
(Arabic University of) Bisthanul 'Uloom	Pyin Oo Lwin
(Arabic University of) Jami'ah Huseiniyah	Aung Lan
Jami'ah Arabiah Imdadul 'Uloom	Myitkyina
Jami'ah Nurul Islam	Kaw Ka Rate, Kayin State
Jami'ah Ashrafal 'Uloom	Kaw Ka Rate, Kayin State
Jami'ah Arabiah Madinatul 'Uloom	Su Lay Gone, Kyaukse
(Arabic University of) Muhamadiyah	Taung Myint, Mandalay
Jami'ah Arabiah Nadwatul 'Uloom	Kan Tar Kone, Shwebo
Jai'ah Arabiah Nadwatul 'Uloom	Myint Nge, Mandalay

**Appendix Table 10.2 Number of monasteries, churches, mosques and madrasahs in Myanmar**

State/division	Monasteries	Churches	Mosques	Madrasahs
Kachin State	655	389	20	23
Kayar State	147	95	2	5
Karen State	1014	605	48	69
Chin State	100	898	1	3
Sagaing Division	7666	148	94	38
Tanintharyi Division	1189	53	76	47
Bago Division	5689	146	56	55
Magwe Division	5870	44	29	29
Mandalay Division	8640	62	200	107
Mon State	2457	37	94	68
Rakhine State	2716	51	1238	105
Yangon Division	4109	221	171	111
Shan State	4695	343	85	35
Ayeyarwady Division	6240	173	152	64
<b>Total</b>	<b>51 187</b>	<b>3265</b>	<b>2266</b>	<b>759</b>

**Source:** Ministry of Defence of Myanmar 1997, *Tha Tanar Yang War Htun Say Phoe (Shining the Bright Light of Religion)*, March, Yangon, pp. 48–73.

**Appendix Table 10.3 Location of mosques within Yangon Division**

Township	No.
Lathar	1
Lanmadaw	4
Pabedan	11
Kyauktada	8
Botahtaung	10
Ahlone	2
Sanchaung	1
Pazundaung	2
Dawbon	2
Insein	6
Thingangyun	6
South Dagon	-
North Dagon	-
Thanlyin	10
Tone Kwa	1
Kayin	3
Kwan Chan Kone	3
Twantay	7
Seikgyi Khanaungto	2
Dala	6
Than Ta Pin	1
Mingaladon	5
Thaketa	9
North Okkalapa	2
Shwepyithar	1
Hlegu	5
Kaw Mu	1
Taikgyi	8
South Okkalapa	5
Hlaing	4
Tarmwe	6
Kyeemyindaing	1
Mayangone	3
Mingala Taungnyunt	18
Hmawbi	7
Kyauktan	2
Yankin	1
Kamaryut	2
Hlaing Thayar	-
Coco Island	-
Sate Kan	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>

Source: Ministry of Defence of Myanmar 1997, *Tha Tanar Yang War Htun Say Phoe (Shining the Bright Light of Religion)*, March, Yangon, pp. 48–73.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Selth (2003:5) also noted a few who believed that Muslims could constitute 16 per cent, or eight million, of the total population, although most statistics for Myanmar are unreliable and this matter is not an exception. It is said that representatives of faiths other than Buddhism often mistrust the official religious statistics; see Matthews (2001:5).

<sup>2</sup> Speech delivered by Maung Ko Ghaffari, 12–15 February 2005, Cheongpyeong, Korea, cited in *Lisanul—Islam Magazine*, May–June 2005, Yangon, p. 86.

<sup>3</sup> The movement was founded by Mawlana Ilyas from India in the early 1940s with the noble intention of bringing the Muslims of India back to Islam. Today, the movement is widely accepted by the people of the Indian subcontinent. It does not publish any books and does not involve itself in any business activities. It shuns politics and refuses to join any activities that bring men to power, which is often misused to subjugate others.

<sup>4</sup> Speech by Mawlana Ismail Ibnu Mohammed Bismillah delivered at the Bamar Muslim Education Conference held in Pegu in December 1929.

<sup>5</sup> This literally means 'to be quick to hear while asleep, to awake easily, to be on alert, to be vigilant and watchful'. See Judson's *Burmese–English Dictionary* 1988, p. 586.

<sup>6</sup> An interview with one of the students in Pakistan, who requested his name not be revealed for security reasons.

<sup>7</sup> *Heartiest Acknowledgement to U Ba Chit*, published by the Islamic Centre of Myanmar, Yangon.

<sup>8</sup> Islamic term referring to someone who has performed the *Haj* pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia.

<sup>9</sup> An advertisement for Ahamdiah Bookstore in *Pyi Ar Man* magazine, October 1998, Yangon, p. 154.