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THE STUDY OF RELIGIONS IN SPAIN*

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ABSTRACT: The academic interest in religion has grown notably in the last few years in Spain. While there are no Departments of Religious Studies at the Spanish universities, effective initiatives have been taken to increase and diffuse the study of religions. For example, there have been established a University Institute for the Study of Religions and a Doctoral Programme in Religious Studies. Research, on the other hand, has reached a high level in the last decades, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. This article surveys the past and present study of religions in Spain.

Keywords: Study of Religions, religion, Spain.

RESUMEN: El interés por el estudio de las religiones se ha desarrollado notablemente en los últimos años en España. Aunque no existen departamentos universitarios de Historia o de otras disciplinas relacionadas con el estudio de las Religiones, se han llevado a cabo iniciativas muy eficaces para impulsar y difundir esta disciplina. Así, la creación del Instituto Universitario de Ciencias de las Religiones en la Universidad Complutense y, en el marco de éste, un Programa de Doctorado ya consolidado. Por otra parte, la investigación ha alcanzado un alto nivel en las últimas décadas, tanto en términos cualitativos como cuantitativos. El presente artículo ofrece un estado de la cuestión del pasado y el presente del estudio de las religiones en España.

Palabras clave: Estudio de las religiones, religiones, España.

In 1994, Francisco Diez de Velasco, Professor of the History of Religions at the University of La Laguna (Tenerife), wrote the following about the study of religions in Spain: «The History of Religions in Spain is today at a crossroads, facing the beginning of the process of its acceptance into the group of fully-fledged historical disciplines. For it to succeed two conditions have to be fulfilled: 1) its full insertion into the range

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of subjects that are taught in the different levels of university education; 2) the production of a sufficient volume of academic research in the field, reflected in the material at the disposal of the various research centres in the discipline» (Diez de Velasco 1995: 51)¹. A decade later it can be said that the History of Religions, and the study of religions in general², still has not reached the status of a fully-fledged academic discipline, at least by the first of Diez de Velasco's criteria. Although new fields of education have been opened up in a variety of areas, religious studies does not appear on one single University educational programme, not even among degrees in the Humanities and Social Sciences. At the same time there is an increasing number of optional degree and doctoral courses which have the word 'religion /religions' in their title. The first part of this article will thus focus upon both the past and the present study of religions in Spain.

The academic study of religions has grown notably in the last decade, both maturing and diversifying in its methods. Research, in particular, has reached a high level, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. Moreover, effective initiatives have been taken to increase and diffuse the study of religion, such as the establishment of a University Institute for the Study of Religions, at the Universidad Complutense of Madrid, and a multidisciplinary Doctoral Programme in Religious Studies. These matters will be discussed in the second part of this article, together with the prospects for the future of the study of religions in Spain.

*The past of the study of religion(s) in Spain:
historical reasons for a failure*

«Every country reaches modernisation according to the path indicated by its religious history.»

(Giner and Sarasa 1993: 51)

In 1954 when Francisco Franco's regime was becoming more open to nascent forms of modernisation, a chair in History of Religions was established in Madrid by the Minister of Education of the day, Joaquín Ruiz Giménez (1951-1956). He wished to give a new stimulus to the University system encompassed in the framework of a tolerant Catholicism (see Diez de Velasco and Teja 2002). The chair was occupied by Angel Álvarez de Miranda (Diez de Velasco 2007), who had been introduced to

1. Diez de Velasco, who has written many other articles (listed at <<http://webpages.ull.es/users/fradive/>>) on the study of religion at its various distinct academic levels, is referring here to the History of Religions, but his observations are equally valid for other forms of Religious Studies. On Religious Studies in Spain see also Casanova 1994, 75-91.

2. The phrase «study of religions» is used here in a broad sense covering the different fields of approach to religion and religions, such as those of history, philosophy, philology, sociology, anthropology, etc.

the History of Religions in the school of the great Italian scholar Raffaele Pettazzoni. But Álvarez de Miranda, who studied ancient religions, was a firm Catholic and did not accept fully the historical-religious method of the so-called «School of Rome» (see Massenzio 1994, chap. 1; Filoramo and Spineto 2002). Álvarez de Miranda's early death in 1957 deprived him of the time to create a school in the field in Spain³, and his chair was left vacant. It was never to be filled, «not for lack of suitable candidates, but as a veto against one of the characteristics of the discipline: the pluralism that makes Religious Studies different to Theology» (Diez de Velasco and Teja 2002: 112 f.). The dismissal in 1956 of Ruiz Giménez caused a reversal in the trend towards modernisation in the field of education. That chair was the first and only one in History of Religions that has existed in Spain until 1996, when Diez de Velasco became Professor of the History of Religions at the University of La Laguna⁴.

The strong influence of the Catholic Church throughout the modern history of Spain, its involvement in almost all the spheres of political and social life, and its final alliance with Franco's regime (1939-1975)⁵—sometimes called «national Catholicism»—explain why the Spanish University system has not followed the approach of other European countries in the study of religion⁶. There is no room here to rehearse the history of the Church in Spain over the last four or five centuries. Suffice it to remember that the Counter-reformation was especially strong in Spain. After the expulsion of the Jews and the remaining Muslims, along with the strong suppression of any religious dissent, Spain transformed itself into one of the most homogeneous Catholic societies in Europe, a situation that the modernising liberal trend of the nineteenth century was not strong enough to change (Callahan 2003). The Spanish Church remained isolated from the dynamism and the dialogue with modernity found elsewhere in Western Europe. At the beginning of the twentieth century Spain, which had been plunged into the crisis and was isolated from Europe in the fields of political, cultural, and scientific development, had not shared the secularising tendencies of France, and had not experienced the anticlerical debates found in Germany or Holland. Under the protection of the State, the Church had ensured official recognition of the Catholic religion as well as an important presence

3. Much of his work was published posthumously (Álvarez de Miranda 1959, 1961).

4. Although trained as an ancient historian and teaching in a department of Ancient History, F. Diez de Velasco is who comes closest to being a scholar of religions, able to formulate an all-embracing methodology and history of the field. Among his many publications, see 1995b, 1995c, 1998, 2000a, 2000b.

5. There are hundred of titles on the role of the Church in Franco's regime. Casanova 2005 (with further bibliography) is a clarifying approach, based on a rich dossier of primary sources.

6. An overview on the study of religions in Western Europe in Stausberg 2007 and 2008.

for itself in the educational system, which suffered from the effects of the Church's lack of interest in academia and from its reactionary character. Attempts by the leaders of the Second Republic (1931-1936) to make Spain a secular country by separating the Church and State and by prohibiting the participation of religious orders in the educational system failed because of the brevity of the life of the Republic.

During Franco's regime, the Church received special treatment. Religious education was restored in the schools. A decree of January 26, 1944 made the study of religion compulsory at University during the first four years of study, and chairs of Religion were established at all universities. These chairs were entrusted to priests and were limited themselves to the teaching of Catholicism, with the aim of giving their students a cultural background that allowed them to interpret classic Spanish literature, a framework of ethics, and an education in «the most deep-rooted secular traditions [of the nation], informed by the spirit of our triumphant Crusades and the noble ideals of our most glorious past» (Official State Bulletin [BOE], February 8, 1944: 1106-1107). The University system was identified with Catholicism, and professors were for the most part Catholic. Many intellectuals went into exile during the post-war years, emasculating the scientific and cultural progress achieved by the end of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth centuries. As the sociologist Salvador Giner has written of the state of the University sector under Franco: «The (Civil) War had a devastating effect on Spanish culture. Many chairs were occupied by incompetent individuals, and in such a manner that it was without precedence (... in the forties and fifties) the University system had reached its lowest level in modern history: highly bureaucratic, corrupt, hostile to expansion, rigid, and, the worst of all, dogmatic and intellectually poor» (Giner 1977: 309, 312).

The rapid growth of universities and of the student population in the sixties and seventies, paralleling Spain's economic expansion, did not change much. Opus Dei dominated the government and its educational policy. Interested in promoting higher education, the members of this Catholic, semi-lay organization occupied the most prestigious chairs in state universities and promoted the establishment of private institutions to develop its educational programmes. Although under the influence of the Opus Dei the budget for education grew, especially in technical areas, shortage of funds⁷ and the lack of academic specialisation have remained the perennial handicaps of the Spanish University (Peset Reig 1985; Carreras Ares and Ruiz Carnicer 1991).

7. In 1966 Spain spent only 2,46 % of its GDP, the lowest percentage in Europe (Giner 1977: 333).

The recent history of the study of religions in Spain

Only after the transition to democracy in 1975-1978, and especially since the period of the Socialist government of 1982-1996, has Spain begun to emerge from its intellectual isolation within Europe. The number of universities has multiplied and today there are more than seventy, of which eighteen are private. The number of students has increased notably in democracy. Spanish scholars now have exchange programmes with their foreign colleagues, and the most recent generation of scholars have been trained (normally at postdoctoral level) abroad in Europe or the USA, reaching an academic level comparable with that found in the rest of Europe.

In the last twenty years, the study of religion has become the specialisation of an increasing number of scholars, even though they have developed their work in a relatively isolated environment. At the same time the study of religion still does not form part of the University curriculum. None of the reforms of University study programmes —neither the one undertaken by the Socialist government in 1984 nor those that took place in 1993 and 2000, nor the current Bolonia process of creating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)— has changed this situation. When a group of scholars proposed establishing a degree in Religious Studies, the proposal was rejected, as we shall see.

The Catholic Church continues to be very influential in Spanish education. Although some efforts are being made by the current Socialist government to include courses at the primary and secondary school levels on other religious creeds, mainly on Islam, the Church continues to have a total control on the teaching of religion. In higher education some matters, such as Church History, continue to be the patrimony of theologians, who do not know or else reject scientific methodology. It is only in very recently that Church History has found a place in state universities where it is part of historical studies⁸. Nevertheless, the Church no longer attempts to influence the universities, as it had done through Opus Dei during the last years of Franco's regime, and it has chosen instead to concentrate on its own universities⁹, of which there are about ten in Spain today.

But the social and political influence of the Catholic Church is not responsible for the current situation of the academic study of religion. Other, more immediate factors explain the failure of Religious Studies to establish itself in the Spanish University system. The first factor is the internal organization of Humanities and Arts Faculties which are divided into departments and research groups according to chronological, rather than topical, criteria (Prehistory, Ancient History, the Middle

8. However, in other European countries this process has already been completed, see Ricardi 2002.

9. This is not the case in primary and secondary education, where the course on religion is taught by teachers chosen by the local Bishop.

Ages, Modern and Contemporary History). This division has promoted specialisation in particular epochs and prevented, or marginalised to a great degree, the study of religions as an all-encompassing, autonomous discipline¹⁰. Today in Spain the study of religions fulfils what Peter Antes (2002) has called «a functional help to other disciplines», i.e. it has a mere secondary role in programmes in history, philology, philosophy, anthropology, law, sociology, and philosophy. Secondly, the failure to establish Departments of Religious Studies can be explained by the increasing marginalisation of Humanities and Social Sciences in Spanish Education policy in favour of investment in scientific and technical studies which absorb most of the available research budget—a budget that continues to be below normal European levels—. The demographic decrease of the last few years (Spain has one of the lowest birth rates in Europe) along with a drastic reduction in the number of students entering universities, has contributed to this crisis. Faculties of Humanities and Arts, always in a minority, are even more so today. They are unable to recruit more teaching staff and have no opportunities to renew research contracts. Many young scholars who have completed their postgraduate studies in foreign universities find their future frustrated when they wish to return to work in the University sector in Spain and so choose to look for a position in the more flexible market of the United States.

The precarious situation of Humanities and Social Sciences is aggravated by the great number of universities in Spain, established as a consequence of the University Reform Law (LOU) of 1983. This law granted the self-governing regions (some of which are very small) the powers to plan and manage Higher Education. Each region has established its own universities and research centres, scattered now all over the country, and in many cases poorly financed. The rigidity of the University system, which does not allow scholars' mobility, and the extraordinary difficulties encountered in creating interdisciplinary groups and research programmes have prevented those working in the field from establishing formal collaboration with one another. Only in big cities, such as Madrid, where there are five state universities and a Centre for Advanced Academic Research (CSIC), has been real interdisciplinary contact among scholars from different fields possible. A group of scholars in the field of religious studies have, however, collaborated in the establishment of an Institute for the Academic Study of Religion and an Inter-University Doctoral programme, which will be referred to below. The recently announced policy of the Ministry for Science and Innovation that it will be given prior financial support to interdisciplinary research groups, gathering scholars from different universities and research centres, also from abroad (see *BOE* 12-31-2008), will favour collaboration and it is expected to change the current situation.

10. A study of the effects of the process in Islamic Studies can be found in M. Abumalham 2002.

*Teaching and research in the field of religion
at Spanish universities: an overview*

In spite of this bleak picture of the past history of Religious Studies in Spain (which can be explained as a result of a combination of historical factors, intellectual habits, and educational and University policies), the present and the immediate future is brighter, as it is reflected by the volume of publications, the growing number of conferences and seminars, and by the increasing presence of the subject in degree and doctoral programmes. It is in this last area that the advance of the academic study of religion can be most clearly appreciated

It is not possible here to give a complete account of research and teaching in the field, but an overview of University programmes and research in Departments, Institutes, and other academic centres allows us to get a general view¹¹. I shall not discuss here the programmes of the Catholic universities, which have special characteristics of their own and, while using the title «academic/scientific study of religion» in their courses, in fact they deal with theology and Catholic ethics¹². An exception to this is Deusto University (in the Basque Country), run by the Jesuits, which has an Advanced Institute for the Academic Study of Religion that offers an interesting Graduate programme in Religious Studies. The Chair of Theology and Religious Sciences Ignacio Ellacuría at the University Carlos III of Madrid, chaired by the theologian J. J. Tamayo, also organizes seminars on the History of Religions, Philosophy, Sociology and Anthropology of Religion¹³.

Humanities and Social Sciences

The study of religion in Spain is centred in Faculties of Humanities and Social Sciences, especially in History and Humanities degrees. The Ancient World Departments stand out in offering a wide variety of optional subjects related to religion. In nearly all Spanish universities courses

11. A list of degree and doctoral courses is found in the appendix.

12. There are eleven private Catholic universities in Spain, some of which are very old such as the Pontifical University of Salamanca, founded in 1254, but the majority are recent foundations. The Pontifical University of Comillas (Madrid) offers a Masters degree in the Academic Study of Religion which has a multidisciplinary approach to religious matters as determined by a Catholic perspective. It is not taught by University academics. The University of Navarra, an Opus Dei Institution, has had since 1997 an Institute for the Academic Study of Religion linked to its Faculty of Theology, whose purpose is to train teachers of the Catholic religion for the different levels of the education system. Similarly, the Catholic University of Santa Teresa de Jesús de Ávila has an Institute for the Academic Study of Religion which teaches Christian Theology and awards degrees in the Academic Study of Religion. There is also an Institute for the Academic Study of Religion in the Faculty of Theology at the University of Granada.

13. Full details are found at the website of the Institute: <www.uc3m.es/uc3m/instituto/BC/catedrateo.htm>.

on Ancient polytheistic religions, Christianity, and Judaism are offered. The study of *Greco-Roman Religion* in particular has a long tradition, stretching from the previously-noted works of Álvarez de Miranda, those of José María Blázquez (1975, 1977, 1994, 1998), who was the author of a voluminous output on Pre-Roman and Roman religion in Spain, up to those of the recent generation of historians and philologists dealing with Greek religion (Bermejo 1979, 1982-1986, 1996, 2002; Bernabé 1998b, 2003, 2007; González Wagner 1993, 1994; Suárez de la Torre 1994, 1998, 2000, 2006), mystery cults (Alvar 1995, 1996, 2000, 2008), and Roman religion (Montero 1994, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2007; Marco 1988, 1996, 2002). *Early Christianity and Judaism* constitute an area of research which has developed rapidly in the last few decades (see Piñero 1982, 1994, 1995, 1998-2000, 2007; Treballe 1993, 1996, 2001, 2008; Girón 1992, 1998, 2005; Alonso Schökel and Sicre 1983, 1985; Díez Macho 1971, 1972, 1982-1987) as has the study of the social history of Early Christianity (Teja 1990, 1999; Fernández Ubiña 2000; Fernández Ubiña-Marcos 2007; Escribano 1988, 2005; Herrero de Jáuregui 2007; Vilella 1990, 2007; Acerbi 2000, 2001; Marcos-Teja 2008; González Salinero 2000, 2003; Martínez Maza 2000), and Women's Studies in Early Christianity (Marcos 1990, 1994, 2004; Martínez Maza 2003; Torres 1990, 1995a, 1995b).

The relevance of the academic study of religions in the Classical World reflects the relevance of religion in ancient societies, but is also explained by the absence of ideological pressure by the Catholic Church in this field, which has thus been able to develop independently. The situation has been very different for other, more recent, historical periods. The closer we come to the present, the less significant the amount of research in religion is. In University programmes (see appendix) there is a decreasing number of courses on religion and, above all, an impoverishment in the diversity of methods used and subjects studied. The history of the Church in Spain along with its attitude towards dissidents (heretics), Jews, and Moriscos has been the main subject area studied in the *Medieval and Modern History*. Publications in this field are abundant: a bibliography compiled in 1995 on relations between Church and State from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries contains 575 articles in academic journals published between 1975 and 1995 (Andrés and Mendoza 1995) and the number of titles has increased notably since then. The study of religion in *the current world* has very weak presence in History and Humanities Degrees. It seems that historians have left the subject to sociologists and anthropologists.

The CSIC (the Spanish Institute for Advanced Academic Research, based in Madrid) has a Department of Spanish Church History, which in the last few decades has orientated its research towards the history of Christianity and its relation with other creeds, dealing with topics such as the Judeo-Christian relations in Spain from the fourth century up to the present-day, Islamic influence on the Spanish monarchy, popular

religiosity in Modern Age, and the sociology of the clergy. This Department publishes a journal, *Hispania Sacra*, with articles on Church History ranging from the early Middle-Ages to the present day.

Jewish Studies

Jewish Studies constitutes an exception in the field of Religious Studies, as they have a very old tradition in Spanish universities. At present such studies are found in departments of Philology and Semitic Studies. Some universities, like the Complutense in Madrid, University of Barcelona, Salamanca, and Granada, possess large, well-established research groups that deal with a wide range of topics from ancient Judaism to Judaism in the contemporary world¹⁴. The CSIC has an Institute of Philology with departments of Biblical Philology, Hebrew Studies, and Sefardic Studies, with the latter paying special attention to the history of the Jews in Spain during the Middle-Ages. The University of Granada has published the *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebreos* («Miscellany of Arabic and Hebraic Studies») for more than five decades —number 50 (2001) is a special monographic volume, it being a bibliography on Hebraism in Spain in the last fifty years, and is a good place to get an idea of the huge volume of academic publication on this topic—. Teaching in this field is not, however, widespread and it is limited to the universities mentioned above, with courses on «Religions of the Ancient Near East», «History of the Bible», «Classical Judaism», and «Dead Sea Scrolls». The Complutense University offers a Doctoral Programme in Semitic Studies with some courses related to religion (Hebrew and Jewish Literature, Classical, Medieval, and Modern Judaism, History of the Bible, The Jews in Spain).

Islamic Studies

Islamic Studies is incorporated into the departments of Arabic Studies and Islam which are found in Faculties of Philology. Islam itself, however, is seen to be only a secondary subject, as the main field of study deals with language and with literature, with special attention to the Arabic presence in Spain and to the world of the medieval Al-Andalus, following an historiographical tradition that goes back to the nineteenth century. The study of Islam serves, even more than in other fields as «a functional help to other disciplines». Because of their proximity to North Africa, some universities in the south of Spain, such as those of Cádiz and Córdoba, have developed courses on Berber and contemporary Arab culture and religion. At the Autónoma University of Madrid, University of Granada, and Sevilla courses on «Islamic Mysticism» and

14. The Spanish Association for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, founded in 1997, has published a bibliographical bulletin since 2003 listing recent publications in Spanish.

«Koran and Hadiz» are offered, and at the Complutense University of Madrid there is a course on «Ethical and Religious Arabic Texts and Islamology». Islamology is also taught at the Universities of Barcelona and Granada. This is a rather narrow range of subjects when we bear in mind that thirty-two universities offer studies in Arabic Philology.

According to Abumalham (2002: 35 f.), an Arabist at the Complutense University, two names stand out in Islamic studies in Spain: Félix M. Pareja and Mikel de Epalza, Professor at the University of Alicante (see Epalza 1971, 1992, 1999), and recently deceased. Juan Vernet, from the University of Barcelona, is the author of one of the most highly regarded translations of the Koran into Spanish (published in 1980). Apart from these exceptions, the study of Islam has not had a strong tradition in Spain, as can be seen from the fact that the School of Arabic Studies of Granada, a branch of the CSIC founded in 1932, does not include the study of Islam among its research areas. In 1993 the Spanish Society for Arabic Studies was founded. Its web site provides information about research groups, a directory of scholars, and a list of publications and journals.

The Sociology of Religion

The Sociology of Religion is little studied in Spain¹⁵, and teaching is equally scanty. Only two universities (Granada and La Laguna) have courses on the Sociology of Religion, and only one (Sevilla) has a Doctoral programme on «Society and Religion». Nevertheless, some topics, such as the role of religion in the recent history of Spain (mainly the relationship between the Catholic Church and the State), have drawn the attention of sociologists in the last three decades. Relevant scholars in the field are Díaz Salazar (1996, 1998), Giner (1993), García Hernández (1992, 1993, 1997), Mardones (1994, 1998, 1999), Mardones and Mate (1998), Gil Calvo (1996), and Sánchez Nogales (1997, 2003). In 1974 a research group on the Sociology of Religion (ISOR), directed by J. Estruch (1995, 1996, 1998), was established at the Autónoma University of Barcelona, working on the analysis of contemporary religious organizations, and the influence of the mass media on modern religiosity. A group of scholars at Deusto University, directed by Garmendia, works on Religion, modernity and society taking a multidisciplinary approach, but as of yet they have published very little.

Religion and Law

Religion and Law is also a field not much explored in Spain, an important exception being the research group directed by Suárez Pertierra (Department of State Ecclesiastic Law at the Open University-UNED),

15. The most relevant Spanish sociologist of religions is José Casanova, Professor of Sociology at Georgetown University. Among his many publications, see *Public Religions in the Modern World* (1994).

working on Religion, Human Rights and Multiculturalism in Spain. Research is under way on several doctoral theses and members of the group have published an extensive number of books and articles in academic journals (Llamazares 1997, 1999, 2001; Fernández-Coronado 2002). The Department of State Ecclesiastical Law at the Open University offers also a Doctoral programme on «Freedom and Religious Discrimination» and «The Constitution and Religion».

The Anthropology of Religion

Religion has been one of the most popular areas of study for anthropologists in Spain, reflecting a tradition that goes back two centuries. Most publications, however, are limited to the fields of folklore, ethnology, and ethnography in a regional or local context¹⁶. Anthropology is not a distinct discipline in the University, but rather a postgraduate study area integrated into Faculties of Social Sciences. Only a few universities have a programme in Anthropology and research is today below the level found in other European countries. The anthropology of Religion, nevertheless, is a field which has been developing rapidly in the last decade and nearly all departments where studies of Anthropology exist have one or more scholars working on religion (Lisón 2004; Duch 1984, 1997, 2001; Delgado 1999; Prats 1996, 1997; Rodríguez Becerra 2000; Alvarez Santaló 1998).

The University Institute for the Science of Religions (Instituto Universitario de Ciencias de las Religiones)

The University Institute for the Science of Religions (IUCR) was founded in 1992 at the Complutense University of Madrid under the direction of Julio Treballe, Professor of Hebrew Studies, and it is the only Research Institute dedicated to the academic study of religion in Spain¹⁷. About thirty scholars from different departments and Faculties of the Complutense University (Philology, Geography and History, Philosophy, Political Sciences, Sociology and Psychology) collaborate in the Institute along with scholars from other institutions, such as the Centre for Advanced Academic Research in Madrid (CSIC). Montserrat Abumalham (2002: 121) describes the Institute as «a pioneer institution which has brought together under the same roof and enabled synthesis of related subjects which are scattered across the different programmes of study

16. Jimeno and Martínez 1999 collects the bibliography of Spanish work on the Anthropology of Religion, excluding regional and local studies.

17. Full information can be found at <www.ucm.es/info/iucr/>. On the history of the Institut see Díez de Velasco 1995, Abumalham 2002, Wiegers 2002. See also Díez de Velasco in the present volume.

in the Humanities and Social Sciences. [The Institute] has brought these to life and created a forum which has helped to fill the gap in this academic discipline where, since the Complutense University foundation, some areas of its field have been the subject of teaching and research, but where others, either because of the distant nature of their object of study or through a lack of a tradition of studying this field in Spain have been neglected».

The IUCR organises symposia, seminars, and lecture series with scholars from other universities and research centres in Spain and abroad, and it has turned into a forum for encounter and debate between scholars who normally teach and research in isolation. Some of the Institute's courses are aimed at a non-university audience and to the elementary and middle school teachers, and so it has assumed the role of propagating religious studies among a wider audience. Members of the IUCR collaborate with other institutions and take part in fora outside the University ambit, giving advice to the mass media and other public and private organisations. The dynamic character of the Institute, its presence in contemporary debates, and the reputation that it has acquired in the academic and non-academic world is due, to a great extent, to the intellectual quality and enthusiasm of its past directors, Julio Treballe, Montserrat Abumalham, José Antonio Álvarez Pedrosa, and its present one, Santiago Montero, who have given it a fully interdisciplinary character. Today, the IUCR is the entity in Spain which comes closest to the idea of a University department of Religious Studies.

In the field of education, the most relevant activity of the IUCR is its Doctoral Programme in Religious Studies with an interdisciplinary character. It has earned a «Mention of Quality» from the Spanish Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA)¹⁸. The Programme for 2008-2009 consists of 32 basic courses on theory and method, Indo-European religions, the polytheistic religions of antiquity, monotheistic religions throughout history, philosophy anthropology, comparative religious law, and religion in the contemporary world (see the full programme on <www.ucm.es/info/iucr/>).

Since 1995 the IUCR has published an annual Journal for the Academic Study of Religions, *'Ilu*. Although this is not officially a publication of the Spanish Association for the Study of Religions (SECR), which since 2007 has its own Journal (*Bandue. Revista de la Sociedad Española de Ciencias de las Religiones*)¹⁹, *'Ilu* and the SECR have had a close rela-

18. The ANECA is a state foundation created by the Ministry for Education, Culture and Sport to evaluate and publish performance data for Higher Education.

19. The Spanish Association for the Academic Study of Religions (SECR) was founded in 1993 under the Presidency of Raimon Panikkar, who's still its honorary President. The SECR holds a biannual conference, the first of which was held in Madrid in 1994, with its proceedings being published as volume 0 of *'Ilu*, and the latest one corresponding to Valladolid 2008. Only some of the proceedings of the SECR conferences have been

tionship. Some members of *Ilu*'s editorial board, such as Abumalham, Montero, and Trebolle, are founder members of SECR and many of the authors of articles published in *Ilu* are also active members of the Association. *Ilu* publishes contributions on all fields which have a bearing on the subject of religion, especially dealing with Christianity, Judaism, and Islam in Spain. Bibliographic reviews are also included in the Journal, which also supports a monograph series (*Ilu. Annexes*).

The Latin-American Encyclopaedia of Religions

Editorial Trotta²⁰ has undertaken the publication of an Iberoamerican Encyclopaedia of Religions (EIR), edited by Trebolle and with an editorial board comprising of Spanish and Latin-American scholars. In the introduction of its inaugural volume (2002)²¹ the editor explains the purpose of this project as follows:

The Iberomerician Encyclopaedia of Religions aims at offering the best and most up-to-date research on religion and religions in Latin America in all its forms and expressions, ancient and recent, from a specifically Latin-American perspective to be conducted in a pluralist, interdisciplinary fashion. Of the many themes connected with religions, the EIR will pay special attention to the historical, anthropological, and social study of pre-Christian religions, to acculturation, syncretism, popular religion, Afro-American cults, rites of passage, symbols and the process of symbolisation, myths and religious conservatism and mutation.

The inaugural volume, entitled *El estudio de la Religión* (Diez de Velasco and García Bazán 2002) is a collaborative work involving thirteen authors. It is aimed to establish a methodological basis for the study of religion, to define concepts, and emphasize the multiplicity of methods and approaches to the field. Six more volumes have been published to date: *Religión Maya* (De la Garza and Nájera Coronado 2002), *Religión y Género* (Marcos 2004), *Religiones andinas* (Marzal 2005), *Mitologías amerindias* (Ortiz Rescanieri 2006), *El judaísmo en Iberoamérica* (Mate, Foster 2007), *La religión de los pueblos nahuas* (Limón Olvera 2008).

published. I will not deal here with the history of the SECR, studied by Diez de Velasco in the present volume- the third issue of *Bandue*.

20. Editorial Trotta (Madrid) is at present the most important publishing house in Spanish in the field of religion. Awarded the National Prize for best publisher, it was founded in 1990 and since then has published both original work in Spanish and books in translation. Two of its series of publications are dedicated to religion: «Paradigms: Library of Science of Religions» and «Religion», many of the titles by Spanish authors.

21. One or two volumes had been published every year, with forty being the envisaged final number for the collection.

The prospect for the future: The project to create a Degree in Religious Studies

In 1995, the University Institute for the Study of Religions proposed the creation of a Degree in Religious Studies, but the project did not materialise. Abumalham (2002: 121) explains why the proposal failed: «The project did not have the necessary academic support to succeed. On the contrary, it faced (sometimes secret) rejection or indifference from academic and religious institutions. The members of the Council of the Institute, comprising a score of scholars from different departments and research centres, think that the scanty enthusiasm with which this project was received by the academic and political authorities is inexplicable in a world such as ours, which seems badly in need of knowledge as to the ideological foundations of movements seemingly produced by certain religious traditions. In spite of the fact that this project has not prospered, the Institute is re-formulating it in line with the new general directives on the University study programmes and intends to submit it again to the competent academic authorities».

In effect, the project was reformulated with the new title of «The History and Academic Study of Religions» to be submitted to the Council for University Coordination (Consejo de Coordinación Universitaria) along with an accompanying memorandum in support of its acceptance. For the first time in Spain a formal proposal to establish a degree in Religious Studies has been made, based on a solidly-devised framework, academically viable in terms of the resources and staff available. The Academic Study of Religion is in demand from University students, it is needed by society at large, and, moreover, it is possible to create the degree by drawing on a well-established academic tradition and on scholars more than efficiently qualified to carry out both teaching and research in the field. In July 2003 the project was submitted to the Council, getting a negative response on the basis that the Bologna Process was about to be launched, and that it might be discussed in the new framework. But the proposal has not been considered in the process of establishment of new degrees in the framework of the European Higher Education.

Conclusion

Although the study of religions does not still constitute a specific field of study at University level and in spite of the fact that there are no departments of the History of Religions or Religious Studies in Spain similar to those which exist in other European countries and the USA, many things have changed in the last two decades. In a wide number of subject areas in University educational programmes religion has developed as a research field and as an optional subject both at undergraduate and doctoral levels. The delay in Religious Studies establishing itself

as a discipline in Spain compared to other European countries is finally being surmounted both in the methods of its study and in the volume of academic production, but the approach to the field is still limited in many respects. With the exception of the Ancient World, the study of religions in Spain deals mainly with religions *in* Spain and/or *in* Europe. Religions other than Christianity are given little attention and are totally absent from educational programmes, with the exception of Islam, in which interest is growing at present.

The development of research and the demand on the part of students and other social groups for the non-confessional and academic study of religion would require the creation of an autonomous discipline, but this will not occur in the next future. In spite of increasing Arabic and Sub-Saharan migration, Spain is hardly a pluralist society and remains full of prejudices with regard to the social value of the study of religions. The worst enemy of teaching religion as a distinctive subject is not the crisis in the Humanities and its underfunding, but the absence of any realisation on the part of the political and academic authorities of the value of studying religions in the modern academic world and its usefulness in understanding global and local phenomena both in the present and the past. Opposition to Franco's regime created an anti-religious intelligentsia, inclined to identify religion with Catholicism and the Church (see Díaz Mozaz 1976: 121 ff.; La Parra López and Suárez Cortina 1998). The anticlericalism still remains powerful among intellectuals and has wide popular support in the rest of a society that, despite being for the most part Catholic, shows little appreciation for the ecclesiastic institutions or, by extension, for «the things religious». Spain continues to be a very homogeneous country in religious matters. Only the recent international events, such as the Balkan War, September 11th, the clash between Israel and the Palestinians, and especially the terrorist attack in Madrid, March 2004, with their constant presence in the mass media, have provoked interest in «other religions» and taken the debate on religion to a wider audience. Today scholars of religion are in demand by the media, which seek to obtain qualified opinions on the role of religion in culture and international policy. Scholars of religion are beginning in Spain to become a visible presence.

APPENDIX

THE TEACHING OF RELIGIONS IN SPAIN. DEGREE COURSES
AND GRADUATE PROGRAMMES²²1) *History, Humanities, and Classical Philology*

General subjects: Phenomenology of Religion (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid); Religion and Society (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid); History of Religions (Universidad de A Coruña, Universidad de Deusto, Universidad de Córdoba, Universidad de La Laguna); Basic Texts for the Study of Religions (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona); Church History (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Universidad de La Laguna); History and Phenomenology of Religion (Universidad Ramon Llull de Barcelona).

Ancient World: History of Religions in Antiquity (Universidad de Cantabria, Universidad de La Laguna, Universidad de las islas Baleares, Universidad de Vigo, Universidad de La Rioja, Universidad de Málaga, Universidad de Barcelona, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad de Santiago, Universidad de Valladolid, Universidad de Zaragoza, Universidad de Huelva, Universidad de Valencia); History of Thought and Religion in the Ancient World (Universidad de Las Palmas, Universidad de Oviedo); Religion in Eastern Mediterranean (Universidad del País Vasco); Introduction to Christian Archaeology (Universidad Ramon Llull de Barcelona); Religion and Society in Greece and Rome (Universidad de Salamanca); Rural and Urban Religion in Roman Spain (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha); The Origins of Christianity (Universidad de Córdoba, Universidad de Cádiz, Universidad de Salamanca); History and Foundations of Christianity I and II (Universidad de Vigo); Judaism and Ancient Christianity (Universidad de Granada, Universidad del País Vasco).

Middle Ages: Spirituality and Religion in the Middle Ages (Universidad de Barcelona); Religious History and Mentalities in the Middle Ages (Universidad de Oviedo); Church History in the Middle Ages (Universidad de Cantabria, Universidad de Murcia, Universidad de Granada, Universidad del País Vasco, Universidad de Alicante, Universidad de Burgos, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Universidad Complutense de Madrid); History of Medieval Religiousness (Universidad de Valencia).

Modern Age: Religion, Church and Society in Modern Spain (Universidad de Alicante, Universidad de Granada); History of the Modern Church (Universidad de Alcalá); Religion, Politics and Tolerance in Modern Europe (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid); Religious Conflict and Plurality of Creed in Modern Europe (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid); Inquisition, Church and Monarchy (xvth and xvth centuries) (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid); Jews and Moriscos in Modern Europe (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid); History of the Modern Churches (Universidad de Barcelona); The Reform of Religious

22. 2005 data.

Orders in the xvth Century (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha); The Church in Modern Spain (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha); Church and Religiousness in Modern Europe (Universidad Complutense de Madrid); Church History in America (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad de Sevilla); Culture and Religiousness in the Modern Age (Universidad de Huelva); Religiousness and Collective Mentality in the Modern Age (Universidad de Málaga, Universidad del País Vasco); Modern History of Christian Churches (Universidad Rovira i Virgili de Tarragona); History of Medieval Religiousness (Universidad de Valencia); Ecclesiastical History and Religious Behavior in the Modern Age (Universidad de Sevilla).

Contemporary Age: Contemporary Church History (Universidad de Alcalá); Religion, Society, and State in the Contemporary World (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona); History of Contemporary Church (Universidad de Alcalá); Religious Debate in Spain from the 1898 Crisis to the Early Franco Regime (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha); History of Religions in the Contemporary World (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad de La Laguna); Religion and Society in the Contemporary World (Universidad del País Vasco).

Postgraduate Programmes

Archaeology and Religion (Universidad de Sevilla); Religion in Prehistory (Universidad de Barcelona); Greek Religion (Universidad de Alicante); Greek and Byzantine magic (Universidad Complutense de Madrid); Mythical tradition and mythology in Greece (Universidad Complutense de Madrid); Religiousness and myth in the Classical World (Universidad de Granada, Universidad de Málaga); Social and religious auctoritas of the bishop in the ancient city (Universidad de Cádiz); Religion and law in the Roman Empire (Universidad de Cantabria); Spirituality and religiousness in Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages (Universidad Rovira i Virgili de Tarragona); Church and religiousness in northwestern Spain in the Middle Ages (Universidad de Santiago de Compostela); Acculturation, inculturación and religious dissent in Medieval Europe (Universidad de Santiago de Compostela); Heresy and Inquisition in the Middle Ages (Universidad de Sevilla); Ethnic and religious minorities: Jews and Muslims living under Christian rule in Spain (Universidad de Sevilla); Muslims, Christians and Jews in Al-Andalus (Universidad de Alicante); The First Crusade and the conquest of Jerusalem (Universidad de Zaragoza); Theology of the Reform of the xvth century (Universidad de Barcelona); Devotions and popular religiousness in Modern Galicia (xvth-xviii centuries) (Universidad de Santiago de Compostela); Church and religiousness in the Hispanic monarchy (Universidad de Alicante); Religious and political fundamentalisms in contemporary Europe (Universidad Rey Juan Carlos I de Madrid); Church and State in Europe between the First and the Second World War (Universidad de Alicante); Church, Society and State in Contemporary Spain (Universidad de Alicante); New Religious Movements (Universidad de Alicante); Religious minorities in the western Mediterranean (Universidad de Barcelona); Religion and society in Latin America (Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha); Globalization, identities and syncretic religions (Universidad de La Laguna).

Hebrew Philology

Degree courses: Religions of the Ancient Near East (Universidad de Barcelona); Judaism in Catalonia (Universidad de Barcelona); History of the Bible (Universidad de Granada); Classical Judaism (Universidad de Granada); The Dead Sea Scrolls (Universidad de Granada); Jewish, Christian and Islamic thought (Universidad de Granada); The world of the Bible, ancient and contemporary Judaism (Universidad de Granada); Beliefs of the Near East (Universidad de Salamanca).

Postgraduate programmes: Organization of the Spanish Jewish community in the Middle Ages (Universidad de Barcelona); Jewish thought in the Middle Ages (Universidad de Barcelona).

The Complutense University of Madrid offers a Doctoral programme on Semitic Studies with some courses on Judaism: Hebrew and Jewish literature, Classic, medieval and modern Judaism, History of the Bible, The Jews in Spain.

Arabic Philology

Degree courses: Islamic mysticism (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid); Koran and Hadiz (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Universidad de Granada); Islamology (Universidad de Barcelona, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad de Granada); Ethical-religious Arabic texts (Universidad Complutense de Madrid); Spain's Islamic legacy (Universidad de Córdoba); History of Islam (Universidad de León); The Koran (Universidad de Sevilla).

Postgraduate programmes: The Arab world and Islam (Universidad de Sevilla); Contemporary Islamic movements (Universidad de Santiago de Compostela); Islamic thought and interreligious relations (Universidad de Alicante); Islam, Judaism and peace (Universidad de Granada); Arab-Islamic civilization and culture in Sub-Saharan Africa (Universidad de Granada).

2) Faculty of Law (Department of State Ecclesiastical Law)

Degree courses: Religious freedom in the European Union (Universidad de Alcalá); Objection of conscience and religious beliefs (Universidad de Alcalá); Church-State relations (Universidad de Alicante, Universidad Carlos III de Madrid, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Universidad de Sevilla); Catholic and other Family Law systems (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, Universidad de Oviedo, Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha, Universidad de Vigo); The legal status of religious minorities (Universidad Europea de Madrid); Religious marriage in the Spanish Law (Universidad Pompeu Fabra de Barcelona); History of the Inquisition (Universidad de Vigo).

Postgraduate programmes: State Ecclesiastical law (Universidad de Barcelona); Religious freedom and juridical integration of Muslims (Universidad Carlos III de Madrid); Law, State and proselytism in Spain (Universidad de Girona); The Spanish Constitution and religion (Open University-UNED); Freedom and religious discrimination (Open University-UNED); Freedom of conscience in the Spanish Constitution of 1978 (Universidad Rey Juan Carlos de Madrid); Multiculturalism in the Spanish Constitution (Universidad de Sevilla).

3) *Sociology*

Degree courses: Sociology of religion (Universidad de Granada, Universidad de La Laguna, Open University-UNED).

Postgraduate programmes: Society and religion (Universidad de Sevilla).

4) *Anthropology*

Anthropology of Religion (Universidad de Barcelona, Universidad de Sevilla, Universidad de Cantabria, Universidad Rovira i Virgili de Tarragona); The legitimization of religious groups (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona); The Anthropology of Religion in Spain: Selected themes (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona); Anthropology of Religion, language and knowledge (Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona); Religious organizations and new religious movements (Universidad de Barcelona); Symbolic Anthropology and Anthropology of Religion (Universidad de Extremadura); Interculturality and Religion (Universidad Rovira i Virgili de Tarragona).

The University of Barcelona offers a Master's degree in Religions, which includes instruction in the mythology, Ancient religions, anthropology, literature, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Pre-colombian religions, African religions, Chinese and Japanese religions, and New Age religions.

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