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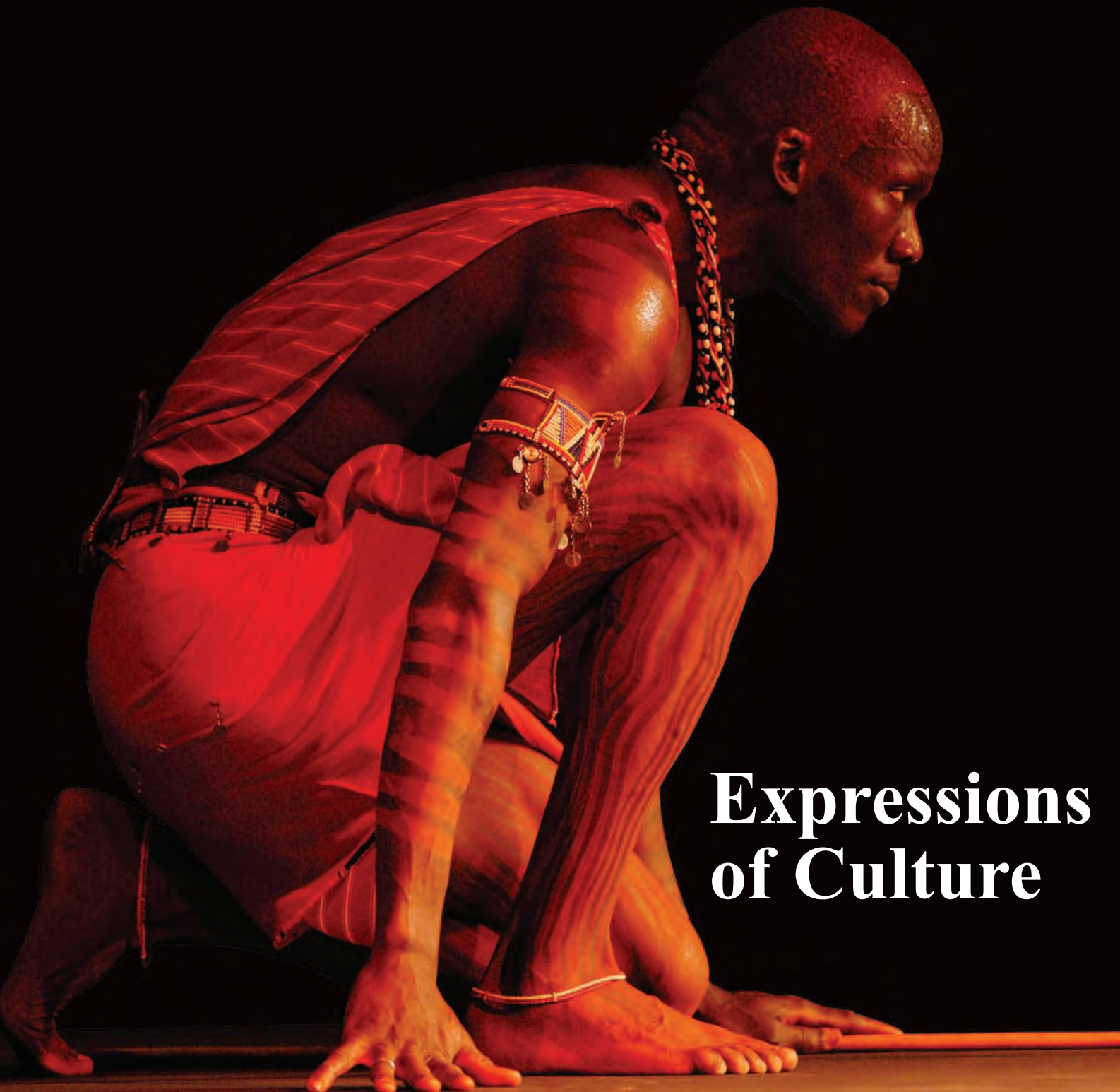
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THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY
Newsletter



Spring 2010

Vol. 11, No. 1



**Expressions
of Culture**

Small Idea, Big Impact



Lady Health Workers pay regular visits to communities in Karachi to assist mothers in understanding the proper nutritional and dietary needs of children under two.

Gary Otte

Turning ideas into action. Enter the World Bank's South Asia Development Marketplace and its award to the University's Department of Community Health Sciences (CHS) to explore an idea that could deliver better nutrition to infants and young children under two – the most critical period for a child's physical and mental growth – as part of Aga Khan University's focus on Early Human Development.

Undernutrition matters. Ask Razia who has two sons: seven-year old Salman is 3 ft 7 in and 18 kg while Razzak, at three, is 3 ft 2 in and 15 kg, almost as big as his much older brother. Both have grown up in Rehri Goth, one of the many squatter settlements in Karachi, but with one major difference: diet. "I breastfed Salman for three months and then started feeding him rice with milk," said Razia. "I didn't know any better. With Razzak, things were different. I followed the Lady Health Worker's (LHW) advice and fed him my milk for six months,

before feeding him any solid food. Even then I continued to breastfeed him till his second birthday."

Height as a growth indicator is only the tip of the iceberg. A systematic review of undernutrition research in *The Lancet* points out that stunting affects a child long-term. Stunted children perform poorly at school and are less productive as adults, affecting a nation's development and economic growth. The World Bank estimates that a 1 per cent loss in adult height from stunting means a 1.4 per cent loss in productivity. This has serious implications as worldwide 178 million children under five are stunted – that is one in every three children. Worse, nearly 90 per cent of these children live in Africa and South Asia, and the window of opportunity is small – from conception through to the first two years of life.

In some of Karachi's peri-urban squatter settlements, more than half – 6 out of 10 – one to two-year olds are shorter than expected, according to the

University's research. The problem starts both before birth and at birth: from babies with low birth weight that need special care to poor infant and child feeding practices. Mothers breastfeed for too short a time, bottle feed with diluted baby milk powder, wean too early or inappropriately – introducing water, tea, cereal, rice pudding, semolina, glucose biscuits with milk and diluted juices to a six-month old – and follow poor household hygiene. Often, young children under two are not fed meat, a rich source of zinc and iron, important nutrients that can help reduce stunting.

The AKU-CHS project will introduce chicken liver – a readily available and affordable food in the country – to children being weaned in Gadap Town, Karachi. “Meat is not considered a child-friendly food in our country,” explains Dr Neelofer Sami, Senior Instructor at CHS and lead investigator on the study. “People believe it is too rich or heavy to feed to a six-month old baby. We are trying to change that perception, and see if chicken liver can provide the iron and zinc required for a child's optimal growth.” In a two-pronged approach, older women from the community, opinion leaders, are being trained to counsel mothers to add liver to infant diets while team members are following up with families to ensure that 2 to 3 oz is fed to babies at least three times a week – they will train mothers on how to buy, hygienically prepare, cook and feed the liver to their child. The project team will monitor 300 six-month old infants for a year to evaluate the effect of complementary feeding on stunting.

Food is not the only focus. The project includes health awareness and education as one of its key components. To that end, CHS is partnering with the NGO HANDS (Health and Nutrition Development Society) to engage influential women of the community in spreading the message on improved child feeding habits and hygiene practices. HANDS' involvement offers the potential to scale up the initiative as it has ongoing health projects throughout Sindh.

Government programmes have also been targeted, including the Family Planning and Primary Health Care programme which manages LHWs, the front line responders. While these programmes provide dietary counselling and iron supplements to pregnant women and promote appropriate breastfeeding and weaning practices, they do not offer advice that would improve the nutritional status of children under two. Through the

AKU-CHS project, a select group of LHWs will be trained to counsel mothers and family members in hygiene – the safe preparation of weaning food and better sanitation practices, including hand washing and toilet training for infants. With community members, they will focus on preventive health measures, on raising awareness of the importance of vaccinating children on time, and on appropriate management and timely referrals for diarrhoea and acute respiratory tract infections.

Dr Sami is hopeful that such interventions can make a significant impact. “If the pilot intervention is successful, the outcomes can be shared not only with national nutrition programmes in South Asia but also through the University's related programmes elsewhere,” she says.

Undernutrition robs a child of their future. But this idea may ensure that every child born stands an equal chance of securing a better future.



Introducing chicken liver as a supplementary food has the potential to reduce stunting in children.
Fahim Siddiqui

The World Bank South Asia Development Marketplace is the regional programme of a competitive grant programme that identifies and funds innovative, early stage development projects with high potential for impact and replication. This annual competition is open to development organisations from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

In 2009, the competition

focused on nutrition. Of the 60 finalists, 21 were chosen for an award of up to \$40,000 granted over an 18-month period. The University's Department of Community Health Sciences was one of two chosen from Pakistan. Another Aga Khan Development Network organisation, Aga Khan Education Service, India, was also a winner.

In Translation: Muslim Civilisations Abstracts

Would the world still be the same if Machiavelli's *The Prince* was only available as *Il Principe*, Marx Engel's *Communist Manifesto* as *Manifest der Kommunistischen Partei* and Al-Khwarizmi's *Al-Kitab al-Mukhtasar fi Hisab al Jabr wa-al-Muqabilah* as *Liber Algebrae et Almucabala*? Without access to these thinkers and

Civilisations in London. It aims to make the dynamic range of scholarly works undertaken in Muslim societies accessible to scholars, students and the public at large. To that end, research on many aspects of Muslim civilisations published in the Muslim world as well as China, India and Russia – countries with long-established Muslim communities – will become widely



philosophers, algebra may not have been as ubiquitous, political science may still be a mystery, and communism an alien concept.

While the contributions of Muslim scholars from the past is well acknowledged, the scope and vibrant array of scholarship currently being published in the Muslim world remains largely unknown, not only in Europe and America but within the Muslim world itself. Scholarship about Muslim societies has proceeded almost without taking into account the pluralistic discourse in these countries themselves, creating an urgent need for equal and ready access to scholarly resources and intellectual exchange.

One step to bridge this gap is the Muslim Civilisations Abstracts (MCA) project launched by the University's Institute for the Study of Muslim

ly available through an innovative reference catalogue of annotated bibliographies and abstracts, organised thematically.

"We have a three pronged objective: to dissipate misunderstanding on Muslims and the Muslim world by conveying the view of people from the area; showcase the diversity of the Muslim world by presenting views from across North Africa and Asia as well as the Muslim regions of Europe; and, enhance the objectivity of research in Europe and North America by adding Eastern perspectives," said Dr Aptin Khanbaghi, Senior Researcher and Project Team Leader, AKU-ISMC.

There are few publicly available bibliographical resources that effectively disseminate the intellectual output of Muslim scholars to the rest of the world. While the *Index Islamicus* published by the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies focuses on studies published about Islam or the Muslim world since 1906, it does not contain listings in non-European languages. Other such resources lack informative abstracts – a summary of the contents of an academic paper – that could save researchers valuable time.

Language has also been a major barrier for many scholars outside Europe to promote their work to a broader audience around the world. Indeed, it has been an obstacle for even interested scholars across neighbouring countries such as Turkey, Iraq and Iran. As a result, most researchers in West Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia tend to rely on Anglo-American

publishers to distribute their work, even in countries where English is not the language of communication and education. Worse, if a researcher's work is not available in English, it is most likely to be unknown in other parts of the world.

Under the MCA project, contributors can review material published in any language of the Muslim world, including African and Asian regions with significant Muslim communities. However abstracts have to be submitted in Arabic, English, French, Indonesian or Malay, Persian, Russian, Turkish or Urdu. If written in a language other than English, abstracts will be translated first into English, the lingua franca of the academic world, before being subsequently translated into a select number of other languages.

Besides promoting multilingual abstracts, the project encourages diversity in scholarship. "The objectivity of research can only be enhanced if the perspective of all scholars, Muslim and non-Muslim, are taken into consideration," said Dr Khanbaghi. "Religious and ethnic minorities in the Muslim world often have views that are ignored or considered 'less prominent'. The MCA initiative encourages pluralistic thought and offers smaller communities an equal opportunity to offer their unique perspective to the rest of the world."

Enthusiasm about the MCA project is very encouraging as a network of over a hundred contributors across many countries – Turkey, Armenia, Indonesia, Australia, Lebanon, Spain, Uzbekistan and Hungary amongst others – have already begun to identify and abstract literature published in the last 200 years. "The study that I have carried out for Muslim Civilisations Abstracts project was a great opportunity for me to collaborate with diverse researchers specialised in the area and call attention to the academic research created in Muslim countries," says Dr Sezim Sezer, an independent scholar from Turkey involved with the project.

ISMC's first volume in the MCA series is on encyclopaedias published during the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries, with abstracts in English, Arabic and Turkish. The *Encyclopedias about Muslim Civilisations*, published in partnership with the Edinburgh University Press, catalogues over 200 encyclopaedias produced over the past 150 years about the Muslim world. It taps into the extraordinary movement taking place in Muslim societies who are organising and cataloguing their knowledge by producing encyclopaedias; many of these projects are extremely ambitious, employing hundreds of scholars.

Upcoming volumes in this series include *Cities: Two Centuries of Scholarship from Muslim Contexts*, discussing the architecture, infrastructure and social culture of urban settlements; *Scholarship about Law and Ethics from Muslim Societies* with topics such as the origins of law and jurisprudence – the theory and philosophy of law; and *Historical Moments in the Muslim World*, showing how important episodes have been perceived and interpreted.

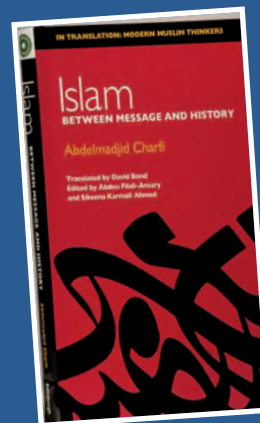
The MCA project aims to serve as a catalyst for a renaissance of Muslim scholarship. The availability of these abstracts will hopefully lead to an increase in Muslim scholars' citations in future research studies and writings, further strengthening the understanding of Islamic heritage and societies for both Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

The Edinburgh University Press (EUP) has a long standing history of publishing important volumes in the field of Islamic Studies including the *Edinburgh Papers* and the *New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys*, which has published over 30 volumes and is now in its 29th year.

EUP has also published several other AKU-ISMC books. The *Exploring Muslim Contexts* series publishes proceedings from seminars and conferences held by AKU-ISMC that seek to address the key challenges faced by Muslim societies in a rapidly globalising world. Two volumes published include *The Challenge of Pluralism: Paradigms from Muslim Contexts* edited by Abdou Filali-Ansary and Sikeena Karmali Ahmed, and *Development Models in Muslim Contexts: Chinese, 'Islamic' and Neo-liberal Alternatives* by Robert Springborg.

Abdelmadjid Charfi's *Islam: Between Message and History*, translated by David Bond for the *In Translation: Modern Muslim Thinkers* series is also available. This series aims to broaden current debates about Muslim realities by identifying and translating seminal works of innovative and critical thought that showcase the diversity of views expressed by contemporary Muslim thinkers and which need to be better known in the West. Charfi is a renowned Muslim thinker who has

written extensively about the founding moments of Islam. Until his retirement in 2002, he was Professor of Arabic Civilisation and Islamic Thought at the University of Manouba, Tunisia.



Salman Ahmad – World Without Borders

The first time Salman Ahmad – musician and UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador – came to AKU was 20 years ago. He was a budding guitarist and his band Junoon had been invited to perform at a concert.



This time when Ahmad returned as a guest speaker at AKU's Special Lecture Series, he came armed with a variety of global experiences. Junoon had become a cultural phenomenon from South Asia, bridging differences around the globe by promoting dialogue through music. He himself had travelled the world delivering a message of peace, symbolised in particular by his performance at the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize ceremony. In 2009, he organised a Concert for Pakistan at the United Nations General Assembly Hall to raise funds and spread awareness about the plight of internally displaced people in the country. The concert projected an image of a Pakistan seldom seen – a country with a rich cultural history and passion for music.

Salman's personal journey was initially inspired by a quote from the 13th century Persian poet, Jalaluddin Rumi: "if you follow the music, it will show you the way." Drawn to music as a child, it was only after medical school that Salman took a year off to discover his talent as a musician. From that point on, he has never looked back. Ten years later, his group, Junoon made history with its fusion of Western rock and roll and Eastern music, a seamless blend between the guitar and the *tabla*, underpinned with lyrics from the likes of the 17th century mystic poet, Bulleh Shah. With a rousing

ensemble of instruments, and the powerful, soulful voice of lead singer, Ali Azmat, Junoon brought the message of peace first expounded by the ancient Sufi sages to a new global audience. For Salman, the Sufi mysticism expressed in his music is a powerful reminder that understanding one's own self is a path to knowledge of the Divine. While music helped him to unlock his identity and strengthen his beliefs, it also led him to his profound conviction that music can be the bond that transforms different cultures into a richer, universal mosaic – real *junoon* (passion) is about using music to bring people together.

As a fierce advocate of inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and promoting the message of tolerance, Salman dispelled the myth that modernity must come at the cost of cultural identity, stressing that there is no clash between the two. The key to initiating dialogue and making it meaningful involves what he calls the 'four Cs': communication, compassion and creativity, which together can help lead to social collaboration. He spoke passionately about sharing ideas, exchanging knowledge and cooperating on new ventures. It was a vivid reminder that pluralism within societies with an understanding between peoples of different faiths and languages is key to human progress.

When asked whether music can bring together people who do not see it as a dignified art form, Salman played *Jazba-e-Junoon*, one of Junoon's most influential hits, asking the audience to clap and sing in unison. The auditorium was soon reverberating with the sound of music, casting a spell of harmony among the assembled, which Salman said was the only way to answer the question.

For an audience consisting mostly of students and academics, Salman Ahmad's emphasis on the primacy of knowledge and the importance of its acquisition in Islamic history resonated well. Salman left a lot of nodding heads in his wake, most of them young people, eager to find role models who could offer them substance through real life experiences and not just hollow words.

Addressing a group of students after the lecture, Salman referred to history and mentioned how the subcontinent had prospered only under rulers who understood the value of openness and diversity. "Islam has diversity at its core. Minorities have always played a vital role in enriching Muslim culture," said Salman. It was when Mughal emperors "monotheised" the culture at their courts that their empires slipped into decline. He also reminded them that the first word revealed in the Holy Quran was *iqra* or 'read', which is the first step towards knowledge.



CONVOCATION

“More than ever our country today needs citizens and leaders who make public service the hallmark of their endeavours and commit themselves single-mindedly to address the terrible burdens of poverty, disease and deprivation. It is often the desperation in people’s lives that leads them to desperate, even violent acts, and it is this desperation and hopelessness in our society that, you and I, must become active participants to transform. We must help in whatever way we can those who are less fortunate among us.”

*Chief Guest Dr Maleeha Lodhi
Former Pakistan Ambassador to the US and UK*



Dr Taimur Saleem became only the eighth recipient of the University's Gold Medal, awarded to a student who tops three of the four certifying examinations including the final. Dr Saleem achieved the highest aggregate score in all four certifying examinations.

“It was over two years ago that as an embryonic cohort we were gathered at ISMC for formal introductions to the course of study ahead. The message, to be honest, was a bit daunting. We were warned the Master of Arts (MA) would be very demanding in all its aspects. This was necessary, we were told, given the Institute’s vision. A part of that vision was to approach the study of Muslim cultures in order to support two arguments. The first is that the cultural expressions of Muslim societies over

And finally, perusing over the titles of our dissertations also illuminates the mosaic of relevant themes of interest in and for Muslim societies. Our areas of inquiry ranged from a political and philosophical examination into the notion of freedom in the late *Qajar* period of Iran to a contemporary and ethnographic case study of ritual and religious practice at a shrine in Pakistan. Indeed, while debating notions like freedom and introspections into religious life are germane to Muslim contexts, they also



Nadia Bettega

time and space have been and continue to be extremely diverse. Secondly, while many of the expressions of Muslim cultures are particular, so much of it and the processes that govern cultural production are also common to human societies and world civilisations. As a student of an Institute espousing these arguments and the approaches thereof, I felt both trepidation and eagerness.

From our academic courses to cultural excursions and from the Arabic language to the language of field work, endeavours into each have illustrated that so many Muslim societies, including their neighbours and predecessors, are so profoundly interesting precisely because they are far from homogenous. And at the same time, our in-depth study into one group of cultures exemplifies its role and place as a part of world cultures.

From the different literary and diasporic outputs of East Africa’s coastal communities to variable anthropological readings into Balinese culture and from divergent views on the impact of ancient Mesopotamia on today’s world religions to contesting developmental and gendered perspectives useful to studying contemporary societies, our courses revealed the diversity of cultures from within while pointing to some of the common social, political, and economic processes that underpin all cultural manifestations.

Our cultural trips ranged from visiting museums and galleries in London to strolling through the *suqs* of Tunis; from being inspired by century-old castles in Edinburgh to touring the very modern Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris; these visits attested to the multifarious ways in which Muslim and non-Muslim lifeways are exhibited and studied.

underpin the perennial efforts of scholarship into a countless number of other societies.

But equally instructive as these tangible engagements with the components of the MA has been our own engagement with each other, as a class of individuals from many parts of the world, Muslim and otherwise, has been formative. From India to Indonesia, from Northern Pakistan to its southern counterpart, from one end of the Persian speaking world to the other, and from both sides of the Canadian-US border, our own diversity serves as a microcosm to that of the Muslim world and beyond. And our convergence at ISMC to study and understand Muslim cultures also serves as an example of one of the instrumental exercises that can translate diversity into the production of something positive. Our divergent intellectual and cultural views provided the background upon which new ideas, friendships, and collaborations came to the fore. These rewards were not borne easily however; at times, our engagements felt like conflicts. But then perhaps such growing pains are necessary to the process of constructing new possibilities from diverse beginnings, and from the important balance that is to be made between the particularities of our selfhood and the aspiration for coherence.

Today, as we proudly stand as AKU graduates, I find myself holding feelings nearly identical to those held some two years ago. Trepidation, because we are now responsible to contribute to the realisation of an important vision. Eagerness, because we have been empowered to do so.”

Fayaz Noormohamed
Valedictorian Address
AKU-ISMC Graduation 2010



“An honourable and successful career demands even more discipline than that of a student. During your student life ... you had to stay in one class for a whole year before you moved on to the next. But in real life there are people who will try to persuade you to accept that there are shortcuts to success. Do not be gullible.”

Honourable Chief Justice Augustino Ramandi, Tanzania

Alkarim Pirmohamed



Samuel Nyakondo

Megapix



“There is a clear link between education and development as evidence abounds that countries that have achieved high levels of development also have a corresponding highly trained and educated population. A good education therefore brings with it added benefits and limitless opportunities. It is the key to unlocking individual potential and solving the challenges that confront us.”

*His Excellency Honourable
Dr Stephen Kalonzo Musyoka,
Vice President,
Republic of Kenya
and Minister for Home Affairs*



“The health status of Ugandans will also benefit from a change in attitudes with people encouraged to adopt a healthier lifestyle and avoid actions harmful to health. This requires health education. As professionals on the front line of delivering health services in Uganda, the graduates of this University will understand the need to change public attitudes towards health and have an important role to play in bringing this change about.”

Professor Emmanuel Tumusiime Mutebile, Governor, Bank of Uganda

A Conversation with Louis Ariano, University Registrar

With 25 years of experience in university structures and governance, Louis R. Ariano joined AKU in April 2008 as the first Registrar of the University.

What was the need for a Registrar's Office?

Those familiar with the student services model in use for the first 25 years of the University's history will know that this model utilised essentially an individual student affairs or academic administration office to provide student and academic administrative services to the University's various entities. What this meant for the University was that each entity marched to the beat of its own drummer. For the University's early years, this model worked quite well. However, as the University grew in size and its international scope, it became evident that a different service model was required; one that would address the needs of a comprehensive international university.

Thus, AKU's leadership determined that a centralised Registry would best serve the University's constituents. In creating the Registrar's Office, all academic administrative services: outreach; admissions; registration; academic record keeping; enrolment, statistical analysis and reporting; verification of records; academic policy development; issuing and maintenance of diploma and degree parchments; the University's convocation exercises; student services; University academic committee support; and Alumni Affairs, have been situated under one office with a University-wide mandate. In essence, the Registrar, as the head of the Office, has become the drum major for the University's academic administrative services and upholder of quality in the delivery of these services.

What do you hope to introduce or change in the next 2-3 years?

Given AKU's future plans and directions, of major importance to the University is the development and implementation of a University-wide student information system. A centralised student information system will allow the University to bring together all aspects of the student journey – outreach, admissions, registrations, convocation and alumni – under one structure. The student information system will serve as a focal point for Aga Khan University's goals to meet and exceed quality assurance standards for all of the University. This is the number one priority for the University's leadership and it will be the Registrar's Office, working closely with the Information Systems Department and the academic entities, that will lead the charge in this initiative.

In addition – and the Registrar's Office has already started down this road – there is a critical need for the University to introduce a consistent identity to the University's official documents, in particular its degree parchments and transcripts. As an international university with campuses on three continents, there is a great need to ensure that these documents are recognised by employers and other post-secondary institutions as verifiably originating at AKU, regardless of the campus location, or the programme of study completed. This is an international standard that we must meet – and have now met. In the same vein, once the student information system has been implemented, the Registrar's Office will be developing a common transcript for all of the University's academic entities. Both of these initiatives are of paramount importance to ensuring that the University meets international standards in providing our students with official records of their achievements.



Gary Otte

The Registrar's Office also plans to introduce new services for the University's more than 8,000 alumni. It is our plan to actively pursue services that our alumni are telling us they would like to have: for example, access to the AKU library and the Sports and Rehabilitation Centre; an AKU e-mail address that they can use for life; and introducing opportunities for alumni to give back to their alma mater in new and innovative ways.

What are the challenges of running a Registrar's Office that has units spread across several locations?

AKU's structure is certainly a distinctive model in post-secondary education. From my previous experience as Registrar at McMaster University and Brock University in Canada, I have experience in dealing with Registrar's Office units and members of my staff being in different parts of the same campus and even the same city – this creates its own challenges – but having constituent components in five different cities spread across three continents is a new, and I believe, unique challenge.

In addition to the challenges associated with developing and implementing a University-wide student information system and creating uniquely AKU documents, I think a major challenge is the issue of communication between the Registrar's Offices in East Africa, Pakistan and the UK. I have always taken great pride in meeting weekly with my assistant and associate registrars and to having an open-door policy for students, staff and faculty. However, it is quite difficult to maintain any kind of regular meeting

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schedule or to have an open-door policy when our campuses are so spread apart. Exacerbating this challenge are the time zones: East Africa is two hours behind Karachi and the UK is, most of the time, five hours different. Of late, my staff and I have tried to employ different communication models: conference calls, Skype, and chat services to bridge the gaps. It's still difficult but we're learning how to make this work.

Another challenge is the process of planning. As we continue our move towards a unified Registrar's Office and the implementation of a centralised student information system, there is an ever-increasing need to make plans that involve Karachi, Nairobi, Kampala, Dar es Salaam and London and additional locations in the future. Without bringing individuals together for co-ordinated planning sessions, it is very difficult to ensure that everyone is on the same page. An example of this is the planning of the convocation ceremonies. While Karachi and London have their own ceremonies and are planned on their own, the three convocation ceremonies for East Africa must be coordinated so that they do

not conflict with the President's, the Provost's or the Chairman's schedule; with Kenyan, Ugandan or Tanzanian public holidays; external examination schedules; Christian and Muslim religious days; and the schedules of high profile chief guests and availability of appropriate venues in each location. None of this is anything I have ever had to consider at any of the previous universities at which I have worked as a Registrar.

EVENTS

May to November 2010

May 28, 2010

International Day of Action for Women's Health
Stadium Road Campus, Karachi

July 19 to 30, 2010

AKU-ISMC International Summer Programme
Expressions of Diversity: A Contemporary Introduction to Muslim Cultures
Simon Fraser University, Vancouver

October 14 to 16, 2010

International Health Sciences Conference
Advancing Comprehensive Heart and Cancer Care
AKU, Nairobi

October 12 to November 4, 2010

Exploring Muslim Cultures: Level 1
Every Tuesday and Thursday
AKU-ISMC, London

‘Habari, What’s the News?’

In response to the growing concern about the competence of media professionals in the developing world, Aga Khan University is establishing a new Graduate School of Media and Communications (GSMC) in East Africa in 2011 – the first of many planned graduate professional schools. This decision was announced by the University Chancellor, His Highness the Aga Khan, at a Pan Africa Media Conference in Nairobi in March organised during the 50th anniversary celebrations of the Nation Media Group, founded by His Highness, and which has grown into the largest independent media house in East and Central Africa.

The School’s first and foremost commitment will be to quality, advancing excellence in media performance and strengthening ethical media practices in the continent and the developing world. The goal? An African institution working with some of the most respected media enterprises in the world, reaching out to urban audiences as well as rural, marginalised communities.

Five core programmes, each supporting a distinct, identified need in African media largely unmet by existing initiatives, are to be offered. At the centre is graduate education through a Master’s programme in journalism, open to professionals with varying levels of experience, from recent university graduates to mid-career journalists. For those interested in upgrading skills and professional development, short courses will be offered to enhance and foster media skills and values such as the quality of communications and reporting, and stakeholder accountability.

The School’s Centre for Media Enterprise Management and Entrepreneurship will be the first of its kind in the developing world, designed to strengthen the quality and capacity of media ownership and management, and to encourage entrepreneurship. It is meant to develop more robust media institutions that can be financially self-sufficient, a pre-requisite if the media is to report freely and fairly.

To strengthen an understanding of the role of media in young democracies, the School will also create an African Global Forum for Media and Society. Intended to be a platform for public discussion, the Forum will support dialogue in the East African region, especially on how media can better inform citizens and work more effectively with different sectors of society.

As part of its public service efforts the School will, among other initiatives, develop and share Africa-



Gary Otte

specific academic material with African media education institutions.

The GSMC will further AKU’s vision to be a university of the developing world, as its curriculum and research will be centred around concerns in the region. Pedagogically, the School will introduce the case-study method to journalism – emulating law and business school practices – drawing on actual events faced by the African media while reflecting on global best practices. These will include recurring issues in the media such as: crisis management, how African media leaders should respond during times of crisis;

trivialisation, recognising and reflecting positive African initiatives rather than inconsequential stories; incompetent analysis, moving from shallowness to a higher level of constructive discourse and intellectual coverage; and corruption, learning to separate away from those with self-serving agendas.

As new technologies continue to reshape the media landscape, the School will aim to work on the cutting edge of social media and online technologies. The rapid spread of mobile phones and advances in broadband availability means that Africa has the capacity to employ new media substantially and the School will further invest in initiatives that will dramatically expand the delivery of quality content to the diverse societies – both linguistically and geographically – of East Africa.

The School’s principal campus will be in Nairobi. It will work with local, continental and international media organisations to develop and deliver the programmes that meet the needs of the African media sector. It will also ally itself with AKU’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Arusha, Tanzania and the other graduate professional schools, particularly the Graduate School of Management, leading to inter-disciplinary studies in medicine, economics and law, among others. Journalists must understand the fields on which they report – from medical and environmental sciences, to economic and financial disciplines, to legal and constitutional matters – and a link with other AKU academic units will allow them to gain such knowledge.

“Spirited debate, intelligent inquiry, informed criticism, principled disagreement,” said the Chancellor, “these qualities must continue to characterise a healthy media sector. At the same time, advancing the cause of media responsibility, grounded in professional competence, is nothing less than a moral imperative.”

“Emergency! All Hands on Deck”

Every city has a ‘moment’, when a single event calls for action by individuals and institutions, functioning together as one.

27 December 2009: Crowds of people, including Rahim, 32, had lined the road to witness the Ashura jaloos – the religious procession commemorating the martyrdom of Imam Hussein. All he can remember is hearing a huge blast before finding himself in an ambulance on the way to hospital.

5 February 2010: Shahid, 48, had decided to check the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) emergency room to see if anyone he knew had been injured in the bomb blast that hit a bus carrying people to the Chehlum procession, marking the 40th day of mourning after Ashura. He was walking towards the JPMC gate when another bomb went off.

It was the second time, in a span of 40 days, that Shujah Saleem Khan, a final year medical student had barely come home before rushing back to the University Hospital, to volunteer during the emergency recall. And he was not alone. Many of the medical and nursing students living on and off campus, off-duty doctors and non-essential staff turned up in the emergency room to assist the injured as the news of the blast began filtering through.

At Aga Khan University Hospital (AKUH), the emergency plan kicked in and the established protocol to deal with bomb blast incidents went into action: an orange alert – disaster and influx of patients expected – announced, a call to ‘action’.

AKUH staff arrived very quickly; having learned from the *Ashura* experience, they had already been warned to stay alert to the situation and as Dr Nadeem Ahmed, Interim Chief Operating Officer, AKUH pointed out, “people answered the call to duty even when getting out of the house was a risk.” Initially, few casualties arrived, but when the first bus blast was followed by a second bomb explosion outside the emergency ward of JPMC, the city’s largest public hospital, AKUH braced itself for a flood of arrivals.

Over the course of the evening and the next few days, a total of 70 casualties arrived at the AKUH emergency room – the largest number the University Hospital has handled from a single disaster, surpassing its previous high of 55 victims after the *Ashura* blast. While the emergency room, surgery and nursing staff were at the front-

line of action, many more worked behind the scenes. Facilities management kept essential utilities such as electricity, water and medical gases flowing; the clinical laboratories ensured the availability of blood; the pharmacy, and medical and surgical teams replenished supplies; food services stocked the cafeterias and arranged extra meals; information technology kept communication services ‘live’ and the public affairs department provided information to the media as necessary. “We had AKU staff and others lining up to give blood and we even received calls from individuals, including the media, on whether they could come to donate blood. We were so overwhelmed with offers that we actually had to turn people away” says Sohail Baloch, Administrator, Clinical Laboratory,



Moments after the bomb blast, ambulances arrive at the scene.

Fahim Siddiqui

AKUH. As the emergency unfolded, the University Hospital managed to achieve its own rhythm, vividly demonstrating the ability and clinical skills to carry out the required medical interventions.

The provincial government has declared AKUH a category III hospital. In other words, in a disaster, it is expected that casualties would first arrive at government hospitals, then at semi-public hospitals and finally at private hospitals, each with a registered number of emergency patients that they can handle. In an actual disaster such as

that on *Ashura* and *Chehlum*, however, this policy is not followed and victims can turn up at any hospital at any time, particularly since few formal coordination mechanisms exist. “We get in touch with the directors of other emergency departments to assess the situation”, says Dr Junaid Razzak, Chair, Department of Emergency Medicine, AKU. “On the day of the *Chehlum* blast, I heard about patients coming from Jinnah Hospital to AKUH from a colleague at JPMC.” Forty casualties later, the hospital started to guide ambulances to the adjacent Liaquat National Hospital. This allowed the emergency room to regain capacity, after which additional casualties were accepted.

Inevitably, the hurt and wounded attracted large crowds at the hospital, many emotionally charged. But the situation was managed effectively by security personnel with the help of volunteers from external organisations who worked in tandem to calm people down.

Following the second blast at JPMC, additional security measures at AKU Stadium Road campus were stepped up to ensure the safety of those on site. “We had to provide access to the casualties and our hospital staff, while ensuring that access to potential perpetrators and unwarranted persons was limited,” said Colonel (R) Salim Rehman, AKU’s Director of Safety and Security. Non-essential entrances to the campus were closed for the remainder of the day, vehicular traffic to the emergency room was limited to ambulances, and body and baggage searches were enhanced.

The University Hospital is equipped to handle such situations as there are regular practice emergency drills. As is often the case, disasters require improvisation but knowing the answers to certain scenarios always pays off. “Disasters are called dis-

asters for a reason – they stretch and stress the system,” says Dr Razzak. In the last two emergencies, AKUH’s systems were seriously tested by the sheer number of casualties it received. Learning from these latest experiences, the AKU emergency plan is being carefully reviewed and upgraded to better manage a larger number of casualties, improve crowd control and enhance security.

With an increasing frequency in acts of terror in Pakistan, and especially Karachi, emergency

responses will need to be scaled up and better coordinated. Dr Razzak emphasises the need for a city-wide initiative, to improve initial response at the scene during the ‘golden hour’, the first hour after any incident. Usually, chaos erupts at ground zero and the lack of a central command structure to organise rescue and medical relief efforts exacerbates the situation.

Emergency management systems and processes require that an incident command system be set up at the scene of the disaster, headed by an incident commander who can coordinate the first responders – police, firefighting and ambulance crews – and any other necessary services. In terms of medical assistance, what is needed is immediate triage, to separate those who require urgent attention from those who can wait for care. As ambulance staff is often the first to arrive at a scene, ambulance services need to define a code of

conduct, a way of working together in a disaster. Equally important is the need for well-meaning volunteers to understand their role in crowd control and to provide the first perimeter of security. Also, as incidents vary so much, local disaster management authorities need to continuously plan and practice scenarios.

The key lesson learned from the two recent emergencies is clear: there is an urgent need for additional investment in emergency medicine in the country. The University can assist by sharing its experiences in emergency planning and by providing training personnel in emergency medical services to deliver the best possible care even in the most trying of times.



Fahim Siddiqui

“Disasters are called disasters for a reason – they stretch and stress the system,” says Dr Junaid Razzak, Chair, Department of Emergency, AKU. In the last two emergencies, AKUH’s systems were seriously tested by the sheer number of casualties it received.

A Journey in Sound From Africa to Asia

“Mahaba, jamani, yananiatile”

A woman’s deep voice chants in Swahili, backed by a *bung’o* horn. A bamboo *bansuri* flute trills out and merges in with the beats, complemented by the male vocals of a *qawwal*, performing a traditional song of devotion from South Asia.

Fusion music is not new but Karachi was hearing *tarabu* tunes from the Swahili coast mixed with Sufi melody for the first time. It was harmonies blending in a potent reminder of the historical connections that Africa and Asia share – and of a universality that straddles two continents with the potential to create something entirely new in pedagogy and practice for the region.

At the concert, apart from the palpable mosaic of sound and colour brought to life by Njane Mugambi and Nizar Lalani, and their fellow musicians from Kenya and Pakistan, Nighat Chaudhry and Fernando Anuanga presented a marriage of completely different traditions of dance, *kathak* and Masaai. The classical *kathak* of the Indian subcontinent – derived from the word *katha*

or story – has been codified over the centuries into an art that blends drama, dance and music. The *kathakas* of yesteryear were originally travelling story-tellers who recounted mythical tales. It was the Mughals who brought this dance to the royal court and nurtured it into an art form representing a fusion of the cultures of Persia and the subcontinent. On the other side of the ocean, in Africa, the Masaai dance to celebrate the important rites of passage in life. Young Masaai warriors, the *morani*, perform before the whole village, leaping into the air to demonstrate their strength and agility. At the height of each jump, they shimmy their shoulders to the accompaniment of rhythmic chanting – their music is all vocal, with the exception of a *kudu* horn blown at special events. On this occasion, Chaudhry’s intricate footwork and delicate move-

ments of the hands and face were supplemented and contrasted with the vigour and masculine strength of Anuanga’s dance and singing, an unusual courtship between two cultures and a vivid testimony of creativity.

If the concert was an appeal to the senses, two workshops held earlier in the week



were meant to energise the intellect. Lalani and Mugambi ‘unpacked the journey’ they had started much earlier in Nairobi and which eventually culminated in Karachi. Free to explore and experiment with the musical traditions of the other, they learnt that it was through dialogue, collaboration and creating the space for improvisation that artistes can share their musical heritage. The duo also discussed the role of music in the intellectual growth of a society as well as in the academic life of a university – particularly important as AKU’s new Faculty of Arts and Sciences in Pakistan and East Africa plan to incorporate programmes in music and dance, theatre and film, art history and studio art.

Academics were also part of the discussion in the second workshop on the importance of conserving folk music. Dr Regula Burckhardt Qureshi, Professor Emerita, Ethnomusicology at the University of Alberta and Director, Canadian Centre for Ethnomusicology, remarked that “music creates a *taaluq*, a connection between the global worlds” and is a doorway to understanding other cultures, especially in a country like Pakistan which lies at the crossroads of three historically rich civilisations. Music and poetry in Pakistan are oral art forms, passed from one generation to the other. Archiving this music, and particularly folk music, is a means of ensuring its transmission, of keeping it alive and relevant for future generations. If this music can be collected, there is the opportunity for it to be studied and ‘rediscovered’, to be woven into contemporary music that would introduce otherwise lost melodies to a new generation of music enthusiasts.

Art and music – makes time both visible and audible as it captures identity and memory. It is a reminder to society of the rich diversity of the past, of the intermingling of many cultures from the crossroads of history that together have created the present mosaic. It is only then, by understanding and appreciating their cultural and historical heritage, can people create a richer future.



All photos by Kohi Marri

