



Message from the Director

During his Address at the 25th Anniversary Graduation Ceremony of The Institute of Ismaili Studies on 19th October 2003, Mawlana Hazar Imam addressing the alumni and graduates, said:

Many of you, with your prior qualifications, have the capacity to pursue different paths in life but, by joining this programme, you have opted to undertake a systematic study of your heritage. I hope that you will feel that this choice has not been in vain, and that what you have learnt will be a source of inspiration and satisfaction in your life, whatever professional path you follow.

One of the questions that gets raised about the mission of our Graduate Programme and the future careers of our graduates, is one that is asked of any major university: What is the value of a humanities degree that is based on the principles of a broad civilizational, cultural and Liberal Arts vision of education?

In the global, pluralistic environment in which we live today, the most critical questions facing us are not just about how technology, science and business might contribute to civilizations, but also what kinds of questions about such a society do we need to ask:



- What values will govern it?
- Will the fact of our difference and diversity be a source of conflict or a resource for peace?
- How can we give to people in society a sense of identity and self-worth that validates their particular heritage?
- How is change to be mediated?

A major purpose of higher education is to equip students to enhance their quality of life and of those amongst whom they will live. Viewed from this perspective, the education you have received and the intellectual tools that the Programme engaged you in and with, have become an internal, life-long 'tool kit'. This 'life of the mind' is what makes you true ambassadors of the Institute and its vision – indeed a proud heritage, of which to be a part.

Message from the Alumni Relations Officer

It is with a great sense of joy and accomplishment that I write this message for the IIS' first Alumni Newsletter. It has been a long journey to reach this far and yet I feel that we are just at the beginning.

Over the course of the past 20 years, more than 200 individuals have completed a number of human resource development programmes through the IIS. I too am a proud graduate of the Institute's Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities. We come from numerous countries and speak many languages amongst us, but all of us share at least one common interest-to critically engage in the study of our heritage. The IIS has given us the space and impetus to carry out this exercise.

Currently, IIS alumni live in 19 countries around the globe, from Austria to Syria, and Germany to

Uzbekistan. Hopefully, the Alumni newsletter will provide a forum for the alumni body to keep abreast of new research and developments at the IIS as well as what we, the alumni, are doing around the world.



In 2005, the IIS established the Alumni Association with chapter groups in North America and Europe. Next year, we hope to create a chapter group in Asia. We will be launching the Alumni Domain on the IIS website in 2006 and I would encourage you to make the most of it. The success of our Alumni Relations Strategy and all its various programmes depends on us-the alumni. Let's enjoy the journey together.

The IIS Library

Founded in 1979, the Library of The Institute of Ismaili Studies contains collections of manuscripts, printed and audiovisual materials in Islamic studies, including outstanding and often unique resources for the scholarly study of the history, thought and traditions of the Ismailis.

The collections include some 1,500 rare manuscripts in Arabic, Persian, Gujarati and the Khojki script; four catalogues describing the Arabic manuscripts in the Institute's Library have been published to date. Besides over 15,000 items comprising reference works, books, journals, periodical articles and theses on various aspects of Islamic history, theology, philosophy, law, art and literature, there is a specialised holding of nearly 2,000 printed items on Ismaili studies. There is also a significant collection of audio-visual materials, including over 400 music CDs from all areas of the Muslim world, from Tajikistan to Morocco, as well as Qur'an recitations by renowned reciters from many different countries of the world. The Library has also expanded its collection of films with the acquisition of a number of DVDs and videos of Iranian films; these will be especially useful for students learning Farsi. Certain reference works, such as *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, are now available on-line in the Library and further titles in digital form are scheduled.

The Library's printed and audio-visual materials have been classified using a modified version of the Library of Congress Cataloguing Scheme. The Library provides its services to researchers and students of IIS, as well as to qualified scholars from outside, most notably by provision of access to the collections through an on-line catalogue, reference assistance and inter-library loan.

Beyond the acquisition of books, manuscripts and audio-visual materials for the Library's varied collections, the Library is also engaged in other exciting projects. The project to identify, acquire and catalogue all articles relating to Ismaili studies is progressing very

well; it is intended to complete this project by the end of 2006. The Library has also begun arranging and cataloguing the Anne Marie Schimmel Collection of books in Sindhi, Persian, Urdu and Western languages (English, German, French, Italian, Russian, Dutch, Czech and Latin); the collection, which will be kept intact within the library, contains 1,076 volumes of books and journals in those languages.

The Library is presently engaged in a number of projects relating to Ismaili manuscripts. In this respect, Mr Alnoor Merchant spent two weeks in Badakhshan during September 2005 meeting with leaders and members of the *Jamat* to ensure that the literary heritage of the *Jamats* of Badakhshan is properly preserved. Two staff with an intimate knowledge of Ismaili and Sufi texts are presently cataloguing the manuscripts that have been located.

New ventures include a renewed emphasis on the collection of Shi'i materials in the broadest sense. In this the Library will work in collaboration with the Institute of Islamic Studies at McGill University, which is also planning to offer new courses in the Shi'i tradition. The Library is also preparing an audio-visual listening room where students may listen to CDs from their collection and watch films; this should be ready by early next year. Finally, the Library is working to prepare an exhibition on Islamic architecture, in collaboration with the Royal Institute of British Architects and the Victoria and Albert Museum, for 2006 as part of the Festival of Islam project.

As an alumnus of the IIS, you are entitled to borrow up to five books from the library for a pre-agreed period of time.



Department of Education - Secondary Teacher Education Programme

It is fair to state that a successful educational environment is the product of many, varied and effective resources. Among these, the quality and dedication of teachers stands out as vital to meeting the increasingly high standards we set for ourselves in schools and school systems today. This principle holds true both in the wider, secular school environment as well as in the education programmes of our own institutions at the grass roots level and across our communities. However, the need for a sustainable pool of quality teachers often remains a constraint.

At the IIS, we are currently working to turn this constraint into an opportunity. With the introduction of a new and advanced secondary curriculum, we will need a cohort of excellent professional teachers who are proficient curricularists, culturally sensitive and informed pedagogues, effective education leaders, and collaborative mentors and community partners. Fortunately, we have in our community a rich pool of skilled and practicing secular teachers and others with backgrounds well-suited to becoming quality teachers from which to draw.

The Secondary Teacher Education Programme or STEP (expected to be launched in April, 2007) is a two-year course of study for both practicing and prospective teachers leading to a professional teaching qualification or a master's degree in Education and a further master's level qualification. We are currently in discussions with our partner academic institution – The Institute of Education, University of London - to create a specifically designed academic programme which, we hope, will be an exciting path of study that offers an integrated academic training in education, the humanities and social sciences. The programme is expected to prepare individuals for careers as teachers in various contexts, such as ITREBs, Aga Khan Academies, the AKES schools network and wider, secular school systems.

The heart of the programme lies in the unique confluence of academic rigour with practical training; the development of teachers who are able to make the multifaceted and exciting content of the secondary

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curriculum, and the subjects of Islamic civilizations, the humanities and social sciences understandable to young people.

The Programme has four main goals: (1) to fill the need for professionally-qualified secondary teachers within the *Jamat's* religious education system; (2) to deliver the new secondary curriculum that is being developed; (3) to build a cadre of leadership with expertise in curriculum development and educational management; and (4) to provide a viable career path in teaching for those members of the *Jamat* who wish to make a significant contribution to the education of young people.

The STEP is an ideal means for Ismaili educators who currently work in the wider, secular school environment to acquire a deeper, theoretical background in Islamic humanities and civilizations that will enhance their practice and enable them to make more meaningful contributions as educators in the wider community. It is also an ideal path for future teachers to develop professional teaching skills within a framework which integrates their personal and cultural heritage with present realities.

IIS Alumni, with their solid knowledge of the Muslim faith and history, could contribute greatly to the programme while gaining valuable pedagogical skills to effectively communicate these perspectives to youth audiences in religious education settings as well as other school environments.

Planning for the launch of the STEP pilot programme is underway at the IIS. Course descriptions and detailed programme information are expected to be available mid-2006. For further information, please contact Dr Munir Vellani, Project Director (mvellani@iis.ac.uk) or Zamiha Virjee, Project Officer, Marketing and Recruitment (zvirjee@iis.ac.uk)



Department of Academic Research and Publications (DARP)—Research Agenda

The Department of Academic Research and Publications, headed by Dr Farhad Daftary, is the largest department at the IIS with over 20 Research Associates, Research Assistants, Research Fellows, Visiting Fellows and Editors. DARP aims to promote scholarship on Islam, with an emphasis on Shi'ism in general and the Ismaili tradition in particular. To this effect, DARP's scholars are engaged in a range of academic research projects, in addition to attending conferences, teaching courses and publishing articles in journals and encyclopaedias. Some of the research projects currently underway include the following:

Dr Jalal Badakhchani (editor and translator of *Paradise of Submission*) is working on an edition of *Poems of the Resurrection (Diwan Qa'imiyat)* by Hasan Salah Munshi, a contemporary of Nasir al-Din Tusi, and a new edition and English translation of Tusi's three short treatises on Ismaili-related topics, including *Aghaz wa anjam (The Beginning and the End)*, *Tawalla wa tabarra (Solidarity and Dissociation)* and *Mathub al-mu'minin (Desideratum of the Faithful)*.

Dr Nader El-Bizri acts as the Managing Editor of the multi-authored, multi-volume Arabic critical edition and annotated English translation of the *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa'* (*The Epistles of the Brethren of Purity*, c. 10th century, Iraq). He is also coordinating the IIS Texts and Translations Series, together with a collaborative project with the Institut Français du Proche Orient in Damascus.

Mr Hamid Haji is finalising an annotated English translation of al-Qadi al-Nu'man's *Iftihah al-Da'wa* entitled *Founding the Fatimid State: The Rise of an Early Islamic Empire*, which will be published as part of the Ismaili Texts and Translations Series. This work is an important primary source for early Fatimid history and its publication will present the first integral translation of the work into any language.

Dr Zulfikar Hirji is completing an edited volume on *Plurality and Pluralism in Muslim Contexts* which will be a series of essays from the Muslim Pluralism Seminar Series held at the IIS in 2002/2003. Dr Hirji has also completed an article on 'Modern Ismailis' with Professor Nanji for the *Encyclopedia of Iran (IRANICA)*. He is also coordinating the publication of an *Illustrated History of the Ismailis*.

Dr Faquir M Hunzai (editor and translator of *Shimmering Light*) completed the translation into English of Nasir Khusraw's *Wajh-i Din* in 2002 and is presently working on its new Persian edition. He is using manuscripts obtained recently from St. Petersburg, Iran and Tajikistan to update the earlier edition of Gholam-Reza Aavani (1977).





Dr Nouha Khalifa is completing her work on *al-Fatarat wa al-Qirnat* by Ja'far b.

Mansur al-

Yaman. The book

discusses a range of

issues including the

beginning of creation,

astronomy, prophets, historical events, *jinn*s and human beings, secrets of letters, appearance of the Mahdi and worship. It ends with a discussion on the Day of Resurrection.

Dr Arzina Lalani (author of *Early Shi'i Thought*) is currently working on a critical edition and translation of Ahmad Naysaburi's *Kitab Ithibat al-Imama* (*Degrees of Excellence*) and a monograph on *Exegetical Perspectives on the Imamate*. She is also a board member and contributor to *The Qur'an: an Encyclopaedia*, edited by Oliver Leaman and Fiona MacLean.

Dr Abdeali Qutbuddin's research is focussed on the *Majalis Mu'ayyadiyya* of al-Mu'ayyad al-Shirazi on Reason, Revelation, and the Divine Guide. Dr Qutbuddin will examine al-Mu'ayyad's arguments on reason and epistemology, and the sources and purpose of revelation based on the collection of 800 lectures in eight volumes known as *al-Majalis al-Mu'ayyadiyya*.

Dr Reza Shah-Kazemi has just completed the text of *Justice and Remembrance: Introducing the Spirituality of Imam Ali*, which is to be published in 2006. He is also working on a book, co-authored with Muhammad-Reza Jozi, on Imam Ali and the Qur'an; and also a new, annotated translation of the *Nahj al-balagha* of Imam Ali.

Dr Samira Sheikh is working on two inter-related projects on religious conversion in Gujarat and the Mughal state and its relationship with religious groups in Gujarat, c. 1600 onwards. These projects will feed into a monograph on the relationship of religion and politics.

Dr Suha Taji-Farouki (editor of *Modern Muslim Intellectuals and the Qur'an*) is currently exploring aspects of the legacy of the celebrated 13th century Andalusian Sufi Ibn 'Arabi in the modern world. Among the issues she will examine is the place of Ibn 'Arabi in contemporary Damascus, adopting his mausoleum-mosque complex there as focal point of the analysis.



Arifa Sultani, IIS alumnae class of 2003, writes about her experience as a Visiting Fellow in Tajikistan.

Since its independence, Tajikistan has gone through profound cultural changes and new foundations for identity are emerging as citizens face broader political, social and cultural horizons. In my role, as the Humanities Visiting Fellow at the Aga Khan Humanities Project (AKHP), I assist in the development and implementation of an interdisciplinary humanities curriculum that is intended to serve as the basis for the preparatory programmes for the three campuses of the University of Central Asia (UCA), and the AKHP Centres in Dushanbe and its 12 partner universities in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

As post-Soviet Union students are reaching into their past in their search for building and creating new identities in an emergent independent country, I, as their supervisor, facilitate critical thinking, cultural interpretation and the promotion of ethical and civic values through the analytical reading of texts and active student-centred discussions.

I am currently supervising an AKHP course entitled *The Individual and Society* consisting of a variety of texts, produced by authors from the

Muslim world, Europe, the Americas and East Asia. This course encourages students to think about the relationship between the individuals and their societies. Notions of personal rights, the role of women, the place of science and knowledge, and our relationship to others with respect to society, religion and the natural environment are explored in greater depth through critical analysis of and reflection on the texts.

A course that I have designed is *Politics, Democracy and Civil Society*. This course provides a broad-based training in the social sciences, history and philosophy through a critical analysis of relevant literature, through the explicit and focused study of a wide range of texts, both from Muslim and non-Muslim authors exploring the relationship between 'Islam' the 'West', democracy and politics, and its implications on shaping and enriching civil society. The course also explores multiculturalist and pluralist theories in order to analyse the critiques of liberalism and democracy.

It is truly inspiring to facilitate the promotion of pluralism, social capital and citizenship within the classroom environment so that these students are well-prepared for their future and well-equipped to give back to their societies. With my time at AKHP, I have encountered many challenges with respect to bringing students to the domain of critical thinking. However, the art of interpretation is a difficult skill which my students are attempting to cultivate and develop. It gives me great satisfaction and pleasure to be a part of the journey with them.



Vafo Navkarov, IIS alumnus class of 2002 and PhD scholarship recipient, writes about his research

My area of interest is Legal, Moral and Political Philosophy. My PhD thesis deals with the issues of distributive justice and social equality within the domestic sphere. Essentially, I argue against modern 'economic egalitarianism' by showing that the 'economic equalization' of 'resources' or 'primary goods' does not warrant equal consideration to each person. Instead, I propose that egalitarians best serve their cause by embracing a 'pluralist account' of justice without giving lexical priority to any specific value. In

doing so, I hope this will contribute to the broader debate on the study of how we *can* and how we *ought* to live with each other.

In Tajikistan I had the opportunity to take courses in Philosophy and Political Theory, which spurred my interest in European political philosophy. The fall of the USSR devalued the basic concepts of the state in the light of the new world that



Spotlight

emerged from it. In fact, it is not only the concern of post-Soviet republics to face such an urgent need to rethink basic concepts of the political community but also Western thought that has to be reshaped in its own way. I began to develop an interest in such rethinking when I started my studies at the IIS in 1999. From this angle, I believe, my study at IIS was instrumental, in the sense that it not only exposed me to critical issues relating to Islamic history and intellectual thought, but also gave me an opportunity to think critically about modern political institutions and their overriding impact on people's lives.

In the future I would like to undertake post-doctoral study. In undertaking such study, I would want to focus on the philosophical foundations of human rights and their broader ramifications for international relations. In particular, I would like to explore the resurgent trend in the legalization of human rights and its implication for the nature, foundation and application of human rights at the global scale. In doing so, I would hope to expose current misconceptions about the nature of human rights as distinct from constitutional rights. This, in turn, will question the foundational basis of modern political, legal and economic institutions.

This section highlights some of the works our alumni have published in 2005 and those which are forthcoming in 2006.

Shams Alibhai

The Changing Tapestry in Central Asia, The Centre for Intercultural Learning, Canadian Foreign Service Institute, Summer 2005 (<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/cfsi-icse/cil-cai/magazine/magazine-en.asp?txt=4-1&lv=4>)

Yahia Baiza

'The Concept of 'Ilm in the Writings of Nasir Khusraw', in *Nasir Khusraw: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, ed. Sarfaroz Niyozov and Ramazon Nazariev. (Khujand, Tajikistan: Noshir Publishing House, 2005).

Perwaiz Hayat

(Contributor) 'Dara Shukoh', in the *Encyclopedia of Religion*. (Detroit: MacMillan Reference, 2005).

Abdulmamad Iloliev

'Mubarak-i Wakhani's contribution to Nasir-i Khusraw's Tradition in Pamir', in *Nasir Khusraw: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, ed. Sarfaroz Niyozov and Ramazon Nazariev. (Khujand, Tajikistan: Noshir Publishing House, 2005).

Dr. Karim-Aly Kassam

'Human Ecology', in *Encyclopaedia of the Arctic* (3 volumes). ed. Mark Nuttal. (New York: Routledge, pp. 892-896).

'Hunting, Subsistence', in *Encyclopaedia of the Arctic* (3 volumes). ed. Mark Nuttal. (New York: Routledge, pp. 899-902).

'Muslim Presence in Alberta: Contributions and Challenges', in *Chinook Country Remembered*. (Calgary: Chinook (Alberta) Historical Society, pp. 183-195).

In Print

Otambek Mastibekov

'The Concept of Knowledge in Nasir Khusraw's and Nasir al-Din Tusi's Thought', in *Nasir Khusraw: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, ed. Sarfaroz Niyozov and Ramazon Nazariev. (Khujand, Tajikistan: Noshir Publishing House, 2005).

Amin Rehmani

Majmoa-e Nazm-o Nasr. (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Dr Fahmida Suleman

'Ceramics', 'Gifts and Gift Giving', and 'Kalila wa Dimna' in, *Medieval Islamic Civilization: An Encyclopedia*. 2 vols. edited by Josef Meri. (New York: Routledge, forthcoming/2006).

Word of God, Art of Man: The Qur'an and its Creative Expressions, Selected Proceedings from the International Colloquium held in London. 18-21 October 2003, edited with an introduction by Fahmida Suleman. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, forthcoming/2006).

'From Shards to Bards: Pottery Making in Historic Cairo', in *Living with the Past: Historic Cairo*, edited by Farhad Daftary, Elizabeth F. Fernea and Azim Nanji. Texas: University of Texas Press, in association with The Institute of Ismaili Studies, forthcoming/2006).

The current Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities was launched in 1994, graduating its first 13 students in 1997. As part of this programme, students spend two years at the IIS, including one summer immersion course in Arabic and a summer field research project. In this section, we will highlight those graduate students who have just completed their field work and are beginning their third year of study at various universities around the globe.

Zafar Aligulov, from Tajikistan, completed his BA from Khorog State University before coming to study at the IIS. He spent this past summer, with fellow student Anisa Virji, working on a project entitled *Human Interactions with the Built Environment: Observation of the Asian and European Shores of the Bosphorus Strait, Istanbul*. He is currently pursuing his MSc in Law, Anthropology and Society at the London School of Economics.



Rafiq Rahim Ajani, from Pakistan, completed his BSc in Computer Systems Engineering at GIK Institute of Engineering Sciences and Technology. Rahim spent the summer in Iran and is currently pursuing his MA in Philosophy at the University of Warwick.



Syayesteh Ghofrani, from Iran, completed her BSc in Textile Engineering at the Polytechnic of Iran. She spent the summer in Iran and is currently reading for her MA in Philosophy at the University of Warwick.



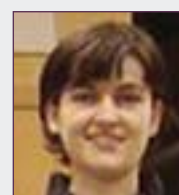
Bekhruz Gulruzov, from Tajikistan, completed a BA at Khorog State University and a BA in Law from the American University Central Asia, in Kyrgyzstan, before coming to study at the IIS. Having completed his field work in Toronto examining *Refugee Self-Identity in their New Host Societies*, Bekhruz has joined the London School of Economics to pursue his Masters in Law.



Wafi Ahmed Momin, from Pakistan, received his BBA from Hamdard University before joining the IIS Graduate Programme. He spent the summer in Dar-es-Salaam, with fellow student Qudsia Naunehal Shah, working on a field project entitled *Toward Understanding the Identity of the Ismailis in East Africa with a special reference to the Ismailis of Dar-es-Salaam*. He is currently reading for his MA in Islamic Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.



Gulsifat Sadigulova, from Tajikistan, was awarded her BA in Linguistics, English and French from Khorog State University before she joined the IIS Graduate Programme. She recently spent the summer in Toronto where she conducted her field research on *Muslim Faith Schools in Toronto*. Currently she is pursuing her MA in Comparative Education at the Institute of Education, University of London.



Qudsia Naunehal Shah, from Pakistan, received her MSc in Economics from Quaid-e-Azam University before moving to London to join the IIS Graduate Programme. She travelled to Dar-es-Salaam this past summer, with fellow student Wafi Ahmed Momin, working on a field project entitled *Toward Understanding the Identity of the Ismailis in East Africa with a special reference to the Ismailis of Dar-es-Salaam*. She is currently reading for her MA in Social Anthropology of Development at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.



Anis Siddique, from India, completed his BA in Sociology from BKD University and received an Advanced Diploma in Human Resource Management from Seneca College before joining the IIS' graduate programme. Anis recently spent the summer in Syria where he worked on his field project entitled *Art: A Matter of Choice*. Anis is currently pursuing his MSc in Human Resources Development at the University of Manchester.



Sehreen Noor Ali, from the USA, received her BA in Development Studies from Brown University, during which she also had the opportunity to study abroad in Jordan. She carried out her field work in Syria where she examined the perceived dichotomy between tradition and modernity through art. She is currently pursuing her MA in International Education Policy at Harvard University.



Anisa Virji, from India, received her BA in International Relations from Brown University before she joined the IIS Graduate Programme. She spent this past summer in Turkey, with fellow student Zafar Aligulov, working on a project entitled *Human Interactions with the Built Environment: Observation of the Asian and European Shores of the Bosphorus Strait, Istanbul*. Anisa is currently pursuing her MA in Journalism at Goldsmiths College, London.



Faculty File

Professor Eric Ormsby

Professor Eric Ormsby

was appointed Chief Librarian at The Institute of Ismaili Studies in August 2005. Prior to this, Professor Ormsby has held positions with several university libraries and collections in North America including: Director of Libraries at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. from 1983-86; Director of Libraries at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, and Associate Professor in McGill's Institute of Islamic Studies from 1983-86; and from 1996 to 2005, full Professor and Director of the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University.

Professor Ormsby received his BA *summa cum laude* from the University of Pennsylvania where he majored in Oriental Studies (Arabic and Turkish). He received his MA and PhD degrees in

Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University with a specialisation in Islamic theology and philosophy. He also studied at the University of Tübingen, Germany, with Professors Josef van Ess and Manfred Ullmann. In 1978, he received a Masters of Library Science from Rutgers University while working as Bibliographer and later as Curator of the Near East Collections at the Princeton University Library.

He has published widely on the topic of Islamic thought. His published books include *Theodicy in Islamic Thought* (Princeton University Press, 1984), *Handlist of Arabic Manuscripts (New Series) in the Princeton University Library* (1987), and *Moses Maimonides and His Time* (Washington, D.C., 1987). In addition to publishing many articles and reviews on different aspects of medieval Islamic theology and mysticism, Professor Ormsby has published widely as a poet in such magazines as *The New Yorker* and *The Paris Review*, and has authored five collections of poems as well as a book of essays on poetry and literature, including Arabic literature.



Dr Abdeali Qutbuddin

Dr Abdeali Qutbuddin is currently a Visiting Research Fellow with the Department of Academic Research and Publications at the IIS. Dr Qutbuddin received his PhD at the University of Manchester in Fatimid law, with his dissertation on its sources, and its application in the Dawoodi Bohra community today, examining specific case studies. He received a full University and ORS scholarship award for his studies from 1996 – 2000. Prior to this, Dr Qutbuddin studied for his BA at the American University in Cairo and his MA is from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. He has also lectured on Fatimid law, literature, history and philosophy to students in the Arabic Academy in Mumbai since 1998.

In addition to his research project (see NEWS), Dr

Qutbuddin is involved in many other activities at the IIS. He delivered a lecture on Fatimid law to students of the Graduate Programme. He also delivered a lecture on *wa'z* in the Dawoodi Bohra community today to *waezeen* during their workshop at the IIS.

Dr Qutbuddin also gave tutorial in Advanced Arabic in the Institute's Graduate Programme (2004-5) and is in the process of submitting an article to the *Encyclopedia Iranica* on Khawj bin Malak.



Highlights

Academic and Professional

Omar Ali-de-Unzaga (class of 1997) successfully defended his PhD thesis with no corrections in February 2005. The title of his thesis is *The Use of the Qur'an in the Epistles of the Pure Brethren (Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa')*. Earlier this year, he was appointed as Academic Coordinator of the Institute's Qur'anic Studies Unit.

Laila Halani (class of 1998) completed her doctoral studies and successfully defended her thesis in June 2005. The title of her thesis is *Discourses of Religion and Development: Agency, Empowerment and Choices for Muslim Women in Gujarat, India*. She will be joining the University of Edinburgh in January 2006 as a Research Fellow in the Department of Community Health Sciences.

Perwaiz Hayat (class of 1987) was appointed Lecturer to the Department of Comparative Religion, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia and is currently teaching courses on World Religions, Islam and Comparative Mysticism.

Dr Karim H Karim (class of 1984) was appointed Associate Director of the School of Journalism and Communication at Carleton University, Ottawa, in July.

Jan-e-Alam Khaki (class of 1983) successfully completed his PhD in Education from the University of Toronto in June.

Jasmin Mamani (class of 2000) relocated to London in December 2004 to take up the position of Website Content Editor at the IIS.

Sharmina Mawani (class of 2002) co-founded and is the Vice-President of the Gujarat Studies Association (www.gujaratstudies.org)

Gurdofarid Miskinzoda (class of 2002) is currently a PhD Student at the Department of History, Near and Middle East at SOAS and is in the final stages of completing her thesis entitled *Mughullāy ibn Qilij and his Biography of the Prophet Muhammad*. She is also a Teaching Assistant for the course *Origins and Early Development of Islam* in the History Department at SOAS.

Amin Rehmani (class of 1983) has been appointed as Assistant Manager for the Aga Khan University Examination Board. This new venture of the Aga Khan University was established in August 2003.

Suman Shanshoeva (class of 2000) is currently working in Darfur, Sudan, with UNFPA as emergency coordinator/head of mission in South Darfur. Before this mission, she was UNFPA regional coordinator in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, while working with UNFPA Afghanistan emergency programme.

Famida Suleman (class of 1997) was appointed as Administrative Coordinator of the Qur'anic Studies project at the IIS.

Hanif Virani (class of 1983) is back in Vancouver after having completed two years with AKF Tajikistan working as Institutional Development Advisor to the Institute for Professional Development; a government teacher education centre that serves the in-service training needs of all primary and secondary teachers in Gorno-Badakshan.

Personal

Karim Javan (class of 2004) and his wife Beheshteh are proud to announce the birth of their son Kavian born on Saturday 5th November 2005.

Mumtaz Chunara-Sylvester (class of 1987) and James Sylvester are proud to announce the birth of their daughter Alima Jennifer Chunara-Sylvester born on Thursday, 5th May 2005. Alima Jennifer weighed 6 pounds and was 19 inches tall.

Events 2006

Conferences

- **American Oriental Society Conference**
Seattle, WA, USA
17th-20th March
- **International Congress on Medieval Studies XLI**
Kalamazoo, MI, USA
4th-7th May
- **Gujarat Studies Association Conference**
Birkbeck College, London, UK
19th-20th May
- **The 2nd World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES)**
Amaan, Jordan
11th-16th June
- **In the Age of al-Farabi: Islamic Thought in the 4th/10th Century**
Warburg Institute/Institute of Classical Studies, London, UK
15th-17th June
- **Esoteric Interpretations of the Qur'an**
Cambridge University, UK
17th-19th July
- **Faith Politics and Society, BRISMES**
Birmingham, UK
23rd-26th July
- **The International Society for Iranian Studies (ISIS)**
Oxford, UK
3rd-5th August
- **The Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA)**
Boston, MA, USA
17th-20th November
- **The American Academy of Religion (AAR)**
Washington, DC, USA
18th-21st November

Events

- **Festival of Muslim Cultures**
A year-long festival of arts, humanities, education and discourse that seeks to increase understanding and respect for Muslims.
United Kingdom
www.muslimcultures.org

Exhibitions

- **Tiraz: Early Islamic Textiles**
Brooklyn Museum,
New York, NY, USA
Through February 2006
- **Morocco: Art and Design 2005**
Wereldmuseum, Rotterdam,
The Netherlands
Through 5th March 2006
- **The Golden Age of Arab Science**
Institut du Monde Arabe,
Paris, France
Through 19th March 2006
- **Viewing Text, Reading Image: Examining a 16th Century Manuscript**
University of Pennsylvania
Museum, Philadelphia, PA
Through 26th March 2006
- **Mummies: Death and the Afterlife in Ancient Egypt**
Bowers Museum, Santa Ana, CA
Through 15th April 2007
- **Arts of the Islamic World**
Shangri La, Honolulu, HI, USA
Permanent
- **Fountains of Light: Islamic Metalwork from the Nuhad Es-Said Collection**
Sackler Gallery,
Washington, DC, USA
Permanent

IIS Programmes

- **Summer Programme on Islam**
Department of Community Relations
5th-13th August
- **Waezeen Workshop**
Department of Community Relations
4th-10th November
- **Core Curriculum Writers workshop**
Department of Community Relations
4th-8th December

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