



IIS Alumni

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This has been another exciting year which has witnessed the launch of a number of new initiatives to enhance the IIS' relations with its alumni.

Message *from the* Editor

In March 2006, the IIS launched the Alumni Internship Programme. During the year, we were able to place 15 alumni in various institutions across the globe including both Jamati and Imamat agencies as well as other not-for-profit organisations. At least four of these internships are likely to be converted to full-time positions.

The first Alumni Academic Seminar was held at the Ismaili Centre, Lisbon in June. We were very pleased with the response from the alumni, sixty of whom applied for the thirty places on the programme. We are planning to organise such seminars annually and look forward to continued support from the alumni.

In July we launched the Alumni Website. This site has the potential to become a virtual meeting point for our alumni to learn about activities at the IIS and to share with one another their research, achievements and milestones in their lives. As with all new endeavours, we are still working on enhancing the functionalities and wish to thank all alumni for their patience.

Various committees have been set up to help with the development and management of Alumni-related initiatives: the Alumni Website; the Alumni Newsletter; and the Alumni Academic Seminar. We are grateful to the alumni who are currently involved in these committees and look forward to broader participation in the future.

The Alumni Association Chapter Groups have been busy strengthening the foundations of this nascent organisation. It has been a pleasure, indeed, to have had the opportunity to participate in the European Chapter Group's 'Meet and Greet' event and the North American Chapter Group's annual meeting. I look forward to visiting Mombasa early next year for the Asian Chapter Group's annual meeting.

In November, Dr. Zulfikar Hirji and Miss Arifa Sultani resigned from their positions as President and Secretary of the European Chapter Group as they will both be residing outside of the United Kingdom. The Central Executive Committee of the Alumni Association appointed the runners-up from the 2005 elections to complete the remainder of the term until the 2007 elections, which will be held in May. We congratulate Dr. Anil Khamis on his appointment as President and Mr. Shah Hussain on his appointment as Secretary, and thank them for accepting these positions.

On behalf of the Alumni Relations Unit at the IIS, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all alumni for their on-going support. We look forward to working with all of you in 2007.



Selina Kassam Ramji
Alumni Relations Coordinator

Parvis Bhatia (class of 1989) has for the past year been teaching at the Harbin University of Science and Technology, China, to prepare students to attend Business Administration and Animation courses at Capilano College in Vancouver, Canada.

Karim Gillani (class of 2002) is currently pursuing his doctorate in an interdisciplinary programme between the Departments of Music and Religious Studies at the University of Alberta. In November, he presented a paper entitled 'Message of Islam in the Sacred Songs of Ismaili Ginans: Contemporary Challenges, Transmission and Standardization' at the Annual Society for Ethnomusicology conference in Hawaii. In addition to his academic pursuits, Karim performs Sufi music at various academic and cultural fora in Canada. He is also serving as a teaching assistant for the Indian music ensemble at the University of Alberta.

Alum

Dr. Abdulmamad Ioliev (class of 2002) successfully completed his doctorate in Islamic Studies from Cambridge University.

This qualification builds on his MPhil in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies at Cambridge which he completed as part of the Institute's Graduate Programme in Islamic Studies and Humanities. The title of Abdulmamad's PhD thesis is 'Poetic Expression of Pamiri Ismailism: The Life and Thought of Mubarak-i Wakhani, a 19th Century Mystic Poet and Religious Scholar'.

Dr. Shainool Jiwa (class of 1984) is now the Head of the Department of Community Relations at the IIS, which addresses the outreach and continuing education functions of the IIS in regard to the Jamat globally. The department also undertakes

anthropological and textual studies on themes of relevance to the Jamat and provides a range of programmatic initiatives and resources to foster the intellectual understanding of various constituencies within the Jamat. Dr. Jiwa has also been involved with the International Baccalaureate Organisation since 1998 and has been its Chief Examiner for Islamic History since 2002.

Jasmin Mamani (class of 2000) provides professional faith-specific and intercultural guided tours to booked groups at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London. The museum has extensive collections from South Asia, the Far East and the newly-opened Jameel Gallery of Islamic art. It also has collections rich in European and Judeo-Christian cultures, many on show in the recently-opened Sacred Silver and Stained Glass Gallery.

in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) training which is an initiative launched by Aiglemont with the National Conciliation and Arbitration Boards.

Dr. Sharmina Mawani (class of 2002), co-founder of the Gujarat Studies Association (GSA), was pleased with the tremendous success of the 1st biennial Gujarat Studies Association conference, held in May 2006 at SOAS, and attended by over 100 delegates from the academic sector, as well as the Gujarati community. Preparations for the 2008 conference are currently underway and the call for papers will be circulated in Spring 2007. In November 2006, GSA was granted charity status by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Farrah Musani (class of 2005) obtained her Masters in Public Policy in June from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, after which she completed a three-month IIS internship, conducting policy research for the Aga Khan Foundation, Canada in Ottawa. She has recently been appointed Programme Officer with the Stabilization and

Rahim S. Rajan (class of 1997) is Collections Development Manager at Aluka (www.aluka.org) - a not-for-profit initiative of Ithaka and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Aluka's mission is to create a sustainable digital library of scholarly resources from and about the developing world, beginning in Africa. Rahim works with a diverse group of scholars, technical advisors, governments, universities, museums and libraries in Africa, Europe and North America.

Dr. Nargis Virani (class of 1983) has recently accepted a tenure-track position in Arabic and Islamic Studies at the New School in New York City. Nargis was Assistant Professor of Arabic Language and Literature at Washington University in St. Louis since fall of 2000. During her tenure there, Nargis headed the Arabic programme, which quadrupled in student and faculty numbers. As part of her responsibilities, she formalised four Arabic Study Abroad options in Cairo, Fez, Ifrane and Beirut for Arabic programme students.

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FIELD



Otambek Mastibekov (class of 2002) is a third-year PhD student at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). The title of his PhD thesis is 'Leadership and Authority in Ismailism: A Case Study of The Badakhshani Ismaili Community in Tajikistan'. After completing his PhD, Otambek hopes to open a School of Devotional Poetry (Maktabi Madihahkhwoni), in Badakhshan, Tajikistan.

Hadi Mirshahi (class of 1983) is the Manager of Project Tajikistan at the IIS in which capacity he coordinates the programmes and activities of ITREC Tajikistan. More recently, he has been actively involved

in Reconstruction Task Force (START) Secretariat at the Government of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Inayat Nurmohamed (class of 2000) was recently promoted to the position of Senior Labor Economist for the Kansas Department of Labor. Besides serving as an associate director for the Labor Market Information Services Department, his primary responsibilities include researching, analysing and interpreting economic data, specifically labour market data, that serves as a basis for major policy decisions, private business initiative, and economic development within the state of Kansas.

YOUR Chapter Group

in 2006

ASIA: The Asian Chapter Group of the IIS Alumni Association was formed in April 2006, following a one-day IIS alumni reunion meeting in Dubai. With over 30 alumni from 15 countries, the Asian Chapter Group represents alumni dispersed over a wide geographic area.

Plans for the chapter group in its first year of inception include building a knowledge network between

The first Asian Chapter Group retreat is being planned for May 2007 in Mombasa, Kenya. The retreat plans to bring alumni together to meet each other and to participate in discussions, share recent research, and have alumni-led workshops on various topics. Speakers will also include AKDN colleagues and IIS faculty who will be invited to

EUROPE: The Alumni Association in its inception year has been a hive of activity. As part of the ongoing mandate to establish academic and social events for the alumni that will help establish a strong foundation for years to come, the European Chapter Group has begun to develop an organisational structure and programmatic events.

After the appointments of Dr. Anil Khamis (President) and Shah Hussain (Secretary) in November 2006, three ad hoc committees have been established: Communication; Logistics; and Planning. These committees are led by interested Alumni and we expect to share the fruits of their labour at the Annual General Meeting to be held in May 2007.

Programmatically, we have been busy with a schedule of events that incorporate learning opportunities, careers development and advice, and social activities. Below are a few highlights.

On Friday August 4, 2006, ten alumni and their guests



alumni, allowing alumni to virtually connect, getting to know one another and to begin having in-house discussions on topics of interest and relevance. The objective of the knowledge network is to allow alumni to share and exchange information on similar topics, build capacity among alumni, discuss new and relevant topics of interest and share research.

share new developments and opportunities at the IIS and within the network.

Efforts are also being made to collect profiles of all alumni and introduce them to the AKDN and Jamati Institutions, with a view to facilitate networking and greater interaction between the alumni and institutions of the AKDN and the Jamat.

President Rahmat Ghassmi
Secretary Farzana Karim-Haji

attended an exhilarating performance by Dimi Mint Abba and ensemble, and Radio Tarifa, at London's Royal Albert Hall as part of the BBC Proms. Dimi is widely regarded as Mauritania's best-loved female griot (storyteller in Western Africa). This was followed by music from the other side of the Strait of Gibraltar, with Spain's Radio Tarifa drawing together foot-thumping music from Iberian, Moorish, Yiddish, North African and Middle Eastern traditions. Early September saw the arrival of the first-year graduate programme students to IIS. On October 21, 2006, we hosted – what we hope will be an annual event for new and continuing

students – a fun-filled and informative evening or the IIS Meet and Greet event followed by a more relaxed pace for conversation was experienced over dinner.

The events calendar continued in December 2006 with an opportunity for Alumni to consider career prospects in the field of education both school based and non-school based. A panel of IIS Alumni who have successful careers in education gave detailed and instructive information to alumni aspiring to an education-related career in England and Wales. The panel, chaired by Shahida Karim (Head teacher in London Borough of Newham), comprised of: Alzim Karim (Religious Education co-ordinator in a state school), Majida Thobani (Science teacher in a state school in Harrow), Sameer Huda (Maths teacher in a state school); and Izzat Muneib (trainer with the London Metropolitan Police).

ITREB for their material and moral support at the inception of the Alumni Association.

The European Chapter's next event will be "IIS Alumni and ITREB Opportunities" scheduled for Saturday, March 17, 2007 at North London Jamat khana. We hope as many alumni as possible will come to the event and help in the development of a strong and vibrant Alumni Association.

President Dr. Anil Khamis
Secretary Shah Hussain

NORTH AMERICA: The IIS Alumni Association's North American Chapter Group was formed in late 2005. Much of the work in 2006 has been foundational: looking at its mission and mandate, budget and by-laws, membership lists, procedures and communication pathways.

process, challenges in relation to alumni involvement were also identified and a formal report and statistics were submitted to ITREB USA upon their request.

Continuing education activities have included informal discussions and sessions at the Local Chapter level as well as formal conferences. This year, alumni participated in the IIS Alumni Academic Seminar in Lisbon, Portugal as well as a chapter group meeting held in Houston, Texas.

In an attempt to continually highlight exciting professional opportunities for alumni, contact has been established with the AKDN recruitment manager for North America, the project director for the IIS Secondary Teacher



The event further served to share post-IIS experiences of a number of graduates and their search for suitable careers. In this regard, the event helped to build trust and bridges across the generations of alumni, particularly those who have their origins in the sub-Continent and East Africa with those from the Persian-speaking jamats (Afghanistan, Iran, and Tajikistan). The event concluded with an offer by the panel to assist and mentor aspiring educationalists. This event benefited from a fruitful collaboration with the UK National Council's Legal Committee, which was on hand to provide much appreciated individual and confidential consultations to the 25 member audience. We should like to convey thanks to the Council and

These are now all in place. One of the most significant goals achieved in 2006 was the establishment of a relationship and pattern of work-flow between the chapter and the Alumni Relations Unit at the IIS.

The mandate created for the Chapter Group included enhancing involvement of alumni with the Jamat; encouraging and assisting alumni in their continuing education endeavours; and highlighting and facilitating opportunities for the professional involvement of alumni with Jamati and AKDN institutions.

Responding to the first objective, there is now a continuing dialogue with ITREB Canada and ITREB USA. As a result, opportunities for alumni involvement with ITREB programmes are formally identified and circulated to alumni. During this

Education Programme (STEP) and the Director of the Aga Khan Academies of Excellence. Representatives from the first two initiatives addressed alumni at the meeting held in Houston in December.

Local branches were formed in Texas, USA, and British Columbia, Canada, and a clear mandate was prepared for them. Extensive support was also extended to each local branch especially in its formative phase.

Linkages between the North American Chapter Group and the chapters groups for Europe and Asia were strengthened during the meeting of the Central Executive Committee in Lisbon. An exchange of common challenges and information between the chapters takes place on a regular basis.

President Hanif Virani
Secretary Ruksanah Pirani

Warm memories of winter days

An IIS Alumnus returns to McGill

Written by Dr. Zulfikar Hirji



IIS Alumni who were part of this programme include Ms. Shams Alibhai, Mrs. Farida Gabrani-Juma, Dr. Parveen Hassanali, Mrs. Aziza Hayat, Mr. Perwaiz Hayat, Mrs. Salma Javed, Dr. Salha Salim Jeizan, Dr. Shainool Jiwa, Dr. Karim H Karim, Mrs. Sabrina Kassam-Jan (d. 2002), Mr. Alnoor Merchant and Mrs. Salma Veerani.

This year the IIS held its annual Summer Programme in Montreal, Canada, at McGill University, my undergraduate alma mater. As one of the lecturers on the programme, I returned to McGill after two decades. Walking up Rue Peel, I see the McGill campus which floats above Centreville as it did all those years ago. Groups of tourists and summer students picnic on the grassy areas that surround the main campus. I recall that quite unlike this balmy summer day, when I arrived at McGill in the winter of 1986 it was bitterly cold and snowing. I remember wearing shoes that leaked after a couple of hours of walking and a light rain-coat, the zipper of which stuck after a few weeks, probably due to the cold. I quickly purchased a pair of warm boots from a shop on Blvd. St. Laurent and a long black wool coat that had buttons and a belt. The boots are no longer, but I still have that coat, which looks exactly as it did all those years ago.

Montreal's winter weather and the clothes and footwear that combat it still provide

talking points for those of us who arrived from warmer parts of Canada and abroad. Finding ways to keep out of the cold and preserving a completely intact snow-flake crystal on your jacket sleeve for as long as you could, were our rites of passage. For some of the Ismaili students at McGill, the cold weather provided other challenges and shared experiences such as navigating the underground labyrinths of the university campus without a coat to reach the prayer room in the library building, and making it on time to the main Jamatkhana at Brossard on Fridays via the Metro during an impending winter storm. After a year or so, I took up mini-bus duty, which meant driving students and locals from Centreville to Brossard on freshly-cleared roads which were constantly in danger of forming black ice. I survived all this, as did others. Eventually, we all managed to acquire our winter legs, just in time for the spring thaw and the sticky, hot summers that followed.

The stories of Ismaili students at McGill are not likely to appear in the university's official history, but we have had a presence at the university since at least the early 1970s. Of course, the resident Ismaili community in Montreal has always sent a number of its sons and daughters to McGill. But remarkably, from the IIS' perspective, McGill has educated many of its alumni, academic staff and senior management, including its present director, Professor Azim Nanji. McGill's attraction to students undertaking Islamic studies and comparative religions stems from it housing one of the most renowned centres for the study of Islam in the Western world, and having amongst its faculty some of the pioneers in the study of religion such as Wilfred Cantwell Smith.

I began my undergraduate degree at a time when the IIS was sending students to McGill as part of its human resource development programme. This programme was aimed at training select groups of Ismailis from around the world to work in the ITREBS in their home communities. Whatever the IIS' intentions, for me, and I assume for others, the presence of these students in my day to day life put a face on the IIS. Indeed, most of what I learned about the IIS came from these student ambassadors. In addition, over time, the subjects they were studying and the knowledge they were acquiring began to filter through into our social conversations and penetrated

In the past, the IIS and McGill University had a joint programme leading to an MA in Islamic Studies. The programme was concerned with the balanced study of Islam—involving faith and culture—throughout its history and geographical spread, recognizing its diverse dimensions and manifestations. It also attempted to understand how Muslims seek to deal with issues of concern to their societies and how they seek to relate their heritage to the conditions of the modern world.



our informal discussions. All of a sudden, those of us who had never heard of Ibn al-Arabi's concept of the 'Perfect Man' or the 'intellects' of al-Kirmani, began to ape and absorb this vocabulary voraciously. Unwittingly, we all benefited from the IIS' programme.

Along with the IIS' 'batches' of sponsored students, there were others who had continued on from the IIS programme to undertake their PhDs on various topics in Islamic Studies. Then there were students like myself, who had found their own way to McGill and were studying a range of subjects in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences. It should also not go without mentioning that while McGill was an important centre of learning for Ismaili students, there were also those who were studying at Concordia University and University of Montreal, whose campuses were also located in downtown Montreal.

But McGill served as a centre for all of us. The main reason: it had an on-campus prayer hall which was effectively the only official Ismaili prayer space in downtown Montreal. This tiny room, close to the library, enabled us to fulfill our daily spiritual duties and needs. It also oriented and facilitated our interactions with other Ismaili students. At times, the room's proximity to the library stacks served to regulate our study patterns. For example, if you had classes until 4 pm, you could clock up three hours of study at the library, meet to pray, grab your dinner and be back in the library until it closed. It would not be too bold to suggest that because of the prayer hall, many Ismaili newcomers and tourists visiting Montreal, regardless of their affiliation to the university, eventually found their way to McGill. Likewise, the prayer hall was also a place you could take your own parents when they visited, assuring them that despite being away

from home, you were still in touch with your community and faith on a daily basis.

For some parents, however, this university-centered community probably seemed like an odd bunch: French-speaking locals from Paris and Madagascar, IIS-sponsored students (whom they referred to as 'waezeens') from far-flung places such as Hunza, and young impressionables such as myself, who having left home for the first time were just beginning to find their way in the world. Perhaps, it was precisely this combination of differences that sparked the camaraderie that I still feel when I meet those with whom I spent so much time during my undergraduate years. For me, this realisation is doubly ironic considering that I was charged with lecturing on the IIS' Summer Programme at McGill in 2006 on plurality and difference in Muslim and Ismaili contexts, particularly as the place I experienced such differences so acutely was as part of the Ismaili student community at McGill.



The IIS Summer Programme on Islam was held in August 2006 at McGill University's campus, in the heart of Montreal, Canada. Thirty-seven participants, from Afghanistan, Canada, India, Pakistan, Russia, Switzerland, Syria, Tajikistan United Kingdom and United States brought a mélange of cultural and social backgrounds to the discussions and seminars of the programme. IIS Alumni who played a key role in the delivery of the programme included Mr. Fayaz S. Alibhai, Dr. Zulfikar Hirji, Dr. Shainool Jiwa, Mr. Farouk Mitha, Mr. Farid Panjwani and Dr. Fahmida Suleman.

From 23rd-26th June, the IIS held an annual academic seminar for alumni on *Trends in Contemporary Muslim Thought*. Thirty-one alumni from ten countries traveled to Lisbon, Portugal to participate in this seminar which is part of an on-going initiative by the Institute to provide continuing education opportunities for its graduates.

Reflections *from* Portugal

Annual Academic Seminar for IIS Alumni



From 23rd-26th June, the IIS held an annual academic seminar for alumni on *Trends in Contemporary Muslim Thought*. Thirty-one alumni from ten countries traveled to Lisbon, Portugal to participate in this seminar which is part of an on-going initiative by the Institute to provide continuing education opportunities for its graduates.

The objective of the Seminar was to enable participants to think critically and engage in discussion of issues relevant to the *jamat* and the wider Muslim societies in contemporary times. To that end, the content of the workshop was concentrated around specific themes and case studies which enabled participants to deliberate

upon aspects of contemporary Muslim thought in the areas of Ritual and Practice; Law and Ethics; and the Qu'ran.

The four-day seminar was held at the Centro Ismaili in Lisbon and focussed on significant developments in Muslim thought in the contemporary period. Professor Mohammed Arkoun, an IIS Governor and a Senior Visiting Fellow at the Institute, delivered the introductory address, setting the context for the discussions during the seminar. In his remarks, he systematically deconstructed the title of the seminar, word by word, helping participants to appreciate the need to carefully consider the meanings associated with the terms. Professor

Arkoun was present throughout the seminar and delivered the keynote address on the fourth day, sharing his perspectives on a wide range of issues. Participants were inspired by his charisma and passion.

Professor Carl W. Ernst, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, spoke about Muslim Rituals and Practices. He explored the significance of rituals and practices amongst Muslim communities and how they acquire meaning in both the past and the present. He also discussed the impact of ritualisation of Islam. A variety of audio-visual resources used by Professor Ernst helped alumni to see the manifestations of the subject in diverse environments.

On the second day, Professor Ebrahim Moosa, from Duke University, delivered a session on Ethics and Law, illustrating through examples how law has been one of the vehicles of ethical ideals in Islam. His style of delivery was dynamic as he examined the breadth of legal and ethical thought in Islam and discussed the practical applications of ethical principles in contemporary societies. Professor Moosa also provided an introduction to the ethico-legal traditions of Muslims, examining the historical development of the schools of law (Sunni and Shi'i) and the Shariah.

The third day's session focussed on the Qur'an and was facilitated by Dr. Walid Saleh of the University of Toronto. During this session, he explored how the Qur'an is used by individuals and societies to reaffirm particular events and beliefs relevant in today's context. He also discussed the concept of revelation and the variety of perspectives on it amongst Muslims. Participants found Dr. Saleh's approach to the Qur'an refreshing and inspiring.

Professor Azim Nanji was also in attendance and delivered a session to the participants on the opportunities that are open to the alumni that could have a significant impact on the educational activities of the global Ismaili Muslim jamat.

This was the first academic seminar of its kind organised by the IIS Alumni Relations Unit for the alumni. Feedback received from participants was positive. The Institute hopes to offer such seminars every year for its alumni and looks to them for support to make this possible.

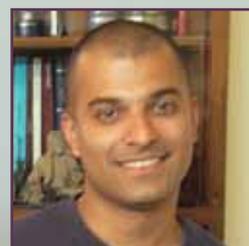
Faranaz Keshavjee (Class of 1997, European Chapter Group)

"I learnt quite a few important things regarding elements that are central to this divine message (the Qur'an) and which will always be part of my research references... I would like to further explore if and in what contexts does Jesus appear as a Muslim in the Qur'an, as he seems to be one of the most important prophets in the Abrahamic faith who is cited most in the Qur'an."



Rizwan Mawani (Class of 2000, North American Chapter Group)

"Many Muslims relate to the Qur'an ... as a source of perennial wisdom and behaviour; as a template for the way the world ought to be; as a source of comfort and solace; and most importantly as the vehicle through which God Almighty communicates with humanity. This type of engagement rather recognises and celebrates time. The Qur'anic text itself addresses and references history and mytho-history within its chapters and verses. What are we afraid of, then? Is it not time that Muslims choose no longer to float on the words of the Qur'an but rather swim deep in its ocean?"



Amin Rehmani (Class of 1983, Asian Chapter Group)

"I was particularly interested in Dr. Saleh's article entitled Death and Dying in the Qur'an which made for fascinating reading. He showed us how the Qur'an challenged Arab pagan notions of life and death. I would like to explore other perspectives on the concepts of life and death in the Qur'an, for example those held by Sufis and other esoteric interpretations."



Dr. Walid Saleh

"My first reaction, having arrived at The Ismaili Centre in Lisbon, was my complete surprise at the magnitude of the presence of Ismaili Muslim community in Portugal. This was an established community, with one of the most beautiful centres I have ever seen. I found the most important aspect of the workshop to be the atmosphere. At no time as a Sunni Muslim did I feel like an outsider, and at no time did any of the participants make me feel that somehow I was less of or a different Muslim."



Al-Karim Dattoo (class of 1998) is currently pursuing his PhD in Sociology of Education at McGill University, Montreal, Canada. His research focuses on the interplay between globalisation, cultural (re)production and school knowledge in Pakistan. His research draws upon sociological and anthropological perspectives of globalisation, critical theories of education/curriculum and post-colonial perspectives.



Prior to his doctoral studies, Al-Karim received a graduate certificate in Islamic Studies and Humanities from The Institute of Ismaili Studies and an MSc in Educational Research Methodology from the University of Oxford.

Al-Karim has actively contributed to debates around national curricular reform processes in Pakistan and has presented several papers at national and international conferences and seminars on themes related to his areas of research interest. He was also invited to McGill University as a guest speaker on an MA course where he presented a talk on school curriculum and theories of socio-cultural reproduction. In addition, he has co-authored with J. Rettalick a chapter entitled 'Transforming Schools into Learning Communities: Focus Pakistan' in *Transforming Schools in Pakistan* (ed. J. Rettalick and I. Farah, I.), Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Louay Ismail is a producer, presenter and broadcaster at the BBC Arabic Service. As a producer, he prepares various packages and interviews for a daily live show for BBC Xtra. On occasion he has the opportunity to edit what other colleagues have prepared for the day's programme. When Louay goes live, he not only conducts but also directs how the show runs during the edition. When he sits behind the microphone to present the show, he discusses the day's topics with listeners and experts while also conducting interviews with studio guests.

The projects that excite Louay the most are identifying topical issues and finding interesting ways to cover them. In order to do this successfully, he says that one needs to be able to identify what is important and pursue it. This might require traveling within the UK or even abroad. Louay will soon be visiting a selection of Middle Eastern countries for a

SPOTlight

major project that the Arabic Service is working on in cooperation with the International Labor Organisation. This will be the most important project for Louay since joining the BBC nine months ago.

Louay stresses two things which have heavily influenced the BBC's decision to have him as part of their team: his excellent knowledge of the Middle East and his Masters degree through the IIS which focussed on practical radio journalism. Louay's previous experience in journalism in Syria and an internship with the BBC's *The World Today*, which he secured only three months before being hired, helped him secure his current position.



Dr. Karim H. Karim has been elected by his colleagues to be Director of the School of Journalism and Communication at Carleton University in Ottawa. Being Canada's oldest journalism programme, it is the alma mater of many distinguished editors and reporters as well as leaders in politics and public service.

Karim was a member of the first IIS collaborative graduate studies programme in Islamic Studies in 1982-83. He had come to the Institute with a BA in Islamic Studies from Columbia University and went on to obtain an MA from McGill University's Institute of Islamic Studies. He received a PhD in Communication Studies from McGill in 1997.

In Spring 2005, Karim returned to the IIS as a Senior Research Fellow for three months to conduct research on intellectual authority among Muslims in the UK. He had pursued the American portion of this

project while based at Harvard University in the fall of 2004. His publications include the critically-acclaimed Robinson Book Prize winner, *Islamic Peril: Media and Global Violence* (2000) and *The Media of Diaspora*

(2003). Karim has also worked as a Senior Policy Analyst in the Canadian government and as a news agency journalist.



Miriam Ali-de-Unzaga

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"Les Tisseuses Beni Mguild," in *Les Artisans de la Memoire*, Y. Grammet, (ed.), Antwerp Ethnographic Museum, 2006. Catalogue of the Belgian exhibition. For more information see http://www.symbiose-ic.net/fr/frame_projecten.html

"La Bandera de Abu Al-Hasan," in *Ibn Khaldun's The Rise and Fall of Empires in the 14th Century*, Granada: El Legado Andalusi, 2006. Catalogue of the Sevilla exhibition. For more information see <http://www.legadoandalusi.es/legado/contento/exposiciones/exp29.html>

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Al-Karim Dattoo (co-author)

"Transforming schools into learning communities: focus Pakistan," in Rettalick, J. and Farah, I. (eds.) *Transforming schools in Pakistan*. (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Otared Haider

"Arabs and Cultural Dependency," in *Mokarabat*, Issue No.10, 2006.

Abdulmamad Iliiev

"Shrines of Holy Men in Wakhan: From Legends to History," in *Harvard Journal of Central Asian Studies* (forthcoming).

Faranaz Keshavjee (published columns in PUBLICO)

"The legends of the assassins continue..." 24th July 2006
"Is a pluralist model of education possible?" 2nd August 2006
"Be careful! They're "Islamists"!" 20th August 2006
"About the speech of Pope Benedict XVI" 18th September 2006
"Pluralism in the media and in politics" 18th October 2006

Sharmina Mawani (co-author)

"Nizari Ismailis in the West: Negotiating National, Religious and Ethnic Identity," in Y. Kalogeras, E. Arapoglou and L. Manney (eds.) *Transcultural Localisms: Responding to Ethnicity in a Globalized World* (Heidelberg, WinterVerlag 2006).

"Post-Diasporic Indian Communities: A New Generation," in S. Coleman and P. Collins (eds.) *Locating the Field: Metaphors of Space, Place and Context in Anthropology*. (London: Berg).

Nargis Virani

"I am the Nightingale of the Merciful: Rumi's Use of the Qur'an and Hadith," in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* (Vol. XXII Nos. 1 & 2, 2002).

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Selected **Events 2007**

CONFERENCES

University of Essex Islamic Conference
Colchester, UK
21st February 2007

American Oriental Society
San Antonio, TX, USA
16th -19th March 2007

Middle Eastern Studies Association (MESA)
Montreal, Canada
17th – 20th November 2007

American Academy of Religion (AAR)
San Diego, CA, USA
17th – 20th November 2007

IIS PROGRAMMES

Alumni Reunion: Date to be announced

EXHIBITIONS

Jameel Gallery of Islamic Art
Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK
[permanent]

Survey Exhibitions on Islamic Faith, the History of Islam, Islamic Arts and Islamic Science
National Museum Cardiff
23rd October 2006 - 4th February 2007

A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal
Kress Gallery & South Balcony
Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, USA
10th February – 20th May 2007

Gulf Art Fair
Madinat Arena and Jumeirah Beach
Dubai, UAE
6th – 9th March 2007

Venice and the Islamic World, 828–1797
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, USA
27th March – 8th July 2007

Photo Credits

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