



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

(International) in the United Kingdom

Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations



**MASTER OF ARTS IN MUSLIM CULTURES
2015 PROSPECTUS**

“ There is no better investment that individuals, parents and the nation can make than an investment in education of the highest possible quality. Such investments are reflected and endure, in the formation of the kind of social conscience that our world so desperately needs.”

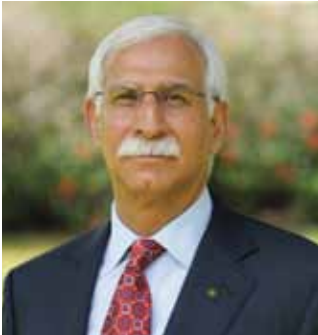
His Highness the Aga Khan
Chancellor, Aga Khan University
Osh, Kyrgyzstan, 2002



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Welcome



President's Message

Your search for an institution of higher learning has led you to the Aga Khan University. Our approach to education is different from other institutions. It emphasises intellectual curiosity, respect for pluralism, the highest standards and the value of service. In the words of the University's founder and

Chancellor, His Highness the Aga Khan, "...the key to intellectual progress will not lie in any single body of instruction, but in a spirit of openness to new expression and fresh insights."

At the Aga Khan University, our goal is to create a spirit of intellectual openness so that our students and faculty have the freedom to explore and learn from different perspectives and contribute to knowledge creation. During their time at the University, students and faculty creatively engage with the issues and challenges facing the world today. Classes use problem based learning, drawing on multiple sources of information and debating real case studies in small groups. There is no one right answer. The development of a sound methodology and debate of the issues in the search for solutions is what is important.

Intellectual vibrancy is not possible without a diversity of students, faculty and ideas. At the Aga Khan University we actively seek diversity in our student body through our merit based admission process that invites students to the University regardless of faith, gender or origin. Our commitment to diversity and service is carrying the University into new geographies and new areas of study. As we build campuses in Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Karachi, Kabul and Nairobi, students and faculty will have opportunities to rotate between the campuses. Our expanding network of partnerships with universities and research institutes worldwide also affords our students the opportunity for discourse and joint research with fellow students and faculty around the globe.

The Aga Khan University offers an exciting opportunity for those looking to be challenged and those who aim to be change agents in society. In the words of our Chancellor, we aspire to develop "truly global citizens, graduates who have studied in a variety of places – among people from a variety of backgrounds, fostering a better understanding of a diverse and complex world".

As you reflect on your choice of a university and if you are looking for a stimulating experience and personal growth, I encourage you to review this prospectus closely.

Firoz Rasul

President, Aga Khan University



Director's Message

We are delighted that you are considering applying for the MA in Muslim Cultures at the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations and hope you find this prospectus gives you a good introduction to what the MA programme offers. At the Institute, you will be part of a dynamic cohort of students

who will accompany you on a two-year academic journey led by faculty who we hope will show you how an understanding of the methods of the humanities and social sciences can open up new insights into the richness and depth of Muslim civilisations.

There is a growing awareness, in the current global climate, of the need to focus on the common humanity shared by the world's citizens. Collectively recognising and embracing that common humanity requires both a sustained and reflective engagement with what is unfamiliar. Within this context, the Institute provides a space for full and free dialogue. Students at the Institute come from different parts of the world. The daily interaction among students from different cultures, both in the academic and personal sphere, provides unparalleled learning opportunities, enabling students to recognise and value diversity. This is an important skill set given the world we live in today. The Institute is located in London's university area and close to all the cultural resources the city offers. We expect our students to combine their academic study with an exploration of all that London has to offer.

We hope that the MA Programme will equip you with new knowledge and the necessary intellectual, analytical and leadership skills to be able to make a meaningful and positive contribution to society and we encourage you to consider carefully what the programme has to offer. If you have any questions that the prospectus does not answer, do please get in touch to find out more.

David Taylor

Director, Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations

About Us

The Aga Khan University

The Aga Khan University, chartered in 1983, is a private, autonomous university that promotes human welfare through research, teaching and community service initiatives. Based on the principles of *quality*, *access*, *impact* and *relevance*, the University has campuses and programmes in South Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa. Its facilities include teaching hospitals, Faculties of Health Sciences with Schools of Nursing and Midwifery and Medical Colleges, Institutes for Educational Development, an Examination Board and the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations. A Graduate School of Media and Communications, an East African Institute and an Institute for Human Development are under development; and Faculties of Arts and Sciences are to be set up in Pakistan and East Africa. Through its needs-blind admissions policy, the University imbues the most promising leaders and thinkers of tomorrow with an ethic of service and the skills to help communities solve their most pressing challenges.

The Aga Khan University is one of nine agencies in the Aga Khan Development Network, a group of private development agencies with mandates ranging from health and education to architecture, culture, microfinance, rural development, disaster reduction, the promotion of private-sector enterprise and the revitalisation of historic cities.

Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations

Based in London, the Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations (ISMC) aims to strengthen research and teaching about the heritage of Muslim societies, with specific attention to the challenges these societies face in contemporary settings.

The Institute seeks to provide a multifaceted approach to the study of Muslim peoples through a framework of world cultures, the humanities and social sciences. This approach is reflected in a Master's programme and other academic programmes, short courses and through research and publications.

Research

Our faculty are committed to producing research that is recognised throughout the world for its quality, relevance and influence. Faculty and institutional research projects are oriented around three major themes:

- Understanding Processes of Change in Muslim Cultures and Societies
- The Construction of Knowledge about Muslim Cultures and Societies
- Governance in Muslim Contexts

Within these broad areas, the Institute facilitates and promotes research on a wide range of topics. Current research areas include: the changing role of law in Muslim societies; gender; development; late antiquity; art and architecture; bioethics and Muslims in Western contexts.

Publications

We aim to generate new ways of thinking about Muslim civilisations by publishing representative points of view from various Muslim contexts, as well as work based on current research by scholars from several different traditions.

The Institute publishes three series in partnership with Edinburgh University Press, in addition to producing individual volumes that illustrate the dynamism of scholarship taking place in Muslim contexts.

Lectures, Seminars and Events

We host a range of public lectures, seminars and cultural events, involving prominent speakers and scholars. Through these events, the Institute aims to foster scholarly debate and discussion on the historical trajectories and contemporary challenges of Muslim cultures and societies.

Short Courses

We have been delivering accredited and non-accredited short courses on Muslim cultures and civilisations since 2008. The participants come from a range of backgrounds, including law, medicine, diplomacy, education, government, business and charities, both in the UK and from abroad. With subjects as diverse as history, literature, law, gender and philosophy, as well as addressing contemporary debates about Muslim cultures and societies, the Institute provides an extensive range of courses to suit all levels of experience and interest.

Why choose the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations?

- We are one of the few academic institutions in the UK that delivers an MA in Muslim cultures.
- Our academic approach utilises the tools of the humanities and social sciences to explore both the past and contemporary cultures of Muslim peoples.
- We provide a platform for scholars from around the world to collaborate and conduct innovative research across areas related to Muslim cultures. These experts also teach as visiting scholars within the MA Programme.
- Each intake of students is kept small so that faculty members get to know everyone well and are strongly engaged with students' personal and academic development.
- Teaching is undertaken by faculty who are specialists in their subject area.
- Our diverse, international student body is drawn from countries such as Afghanistan, Canada, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia and the USA. Daily interactions within and outside the classroom provide practical learning opportunities for cross-cultural engagement.
- We are located in the heart of London, close to the capital's leading political, legal and cultural institutions; and are surrounded by universities, libraries, research institutes and museums.
- We provide opportunities for travel through our Language Immersion Programme, dissertation fieldwork and multiple excursions.
- Our MA programme is relevant for those who wish to work in a range of sectors and professions. Our alumni work thorough out the world in government and non-governmental organisations, some go on to complete PhD's at leading universities.



© Bernd Wannemacher

Omar Kasmani, Class of 2009

“ ISMC will always be home. It is here that I made my first transitions from architecture to the social sciences, acquired the academic tools to read, write and imagine in new and plural ways, and in the process discovered, more

importantly, the coordinates that situate me in relation to experiences of my own history and society. Being embedded in the urban and cultural fabric of London added to the richness of it all. In these and so many other ways, my time at ISMC has shaped and will continue to inform my trajectories, academic and otherwise.”

Omar is a Doctoral Candidate in Social and Cultural Anthropology at Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, Free University of Berlin.



Master of Arts in Muslim Cultures

About the MA Programme

This programme enables students to gain an understanding of Muslim cultures across the world, their various histories, and the way these societies have been shaped through interactions with other world cultures. The courses situate Muslim history within world history and explore Muslim cultures through common topics such as governance, law, ethics, gender, poverty, migration, development, modernity, globalisation and artistic expression. Students will learn about these topics from a number of intellectual and theoretical perspectives, and will be encouraged to think critically about them, while simultaneously engaging with the views of others.

Approach

The MA in Muslim Cultures offers distinctive ways of approaching the cultures and societies of Muslim peoples. The programme draws upon the theories and methods of the humanities and social sciences as a framework for study in order to encourage broad analytical and comparative perspectives. This requires that cultural manifestations such as art, poetry and architecture be examined alongside doctrine, law and religious practice. While the MA programme endeavours to explore and understand Muslim cultures and societies as they have evolved over time, it also focuses on a range of issues as they relate to Muslim contexts.

Teaching and Learning

Learning takes place both in the classroom and in the field. As part of language training, students participate in a Language Immersion Programme by travelling in the summer of the first year to a relevant country to immerse themselves in a language and culture different from their own. During their second year, students undertake a dissertation with optional fieldwork on a theme relevant to their study. Students also participate in a range of academic excursions during the course of the MA Programme.

The diverse student body at ISMC is taught by a truly international faculty. Students also benefit from the facilities and activities offered by neighbouring institutions such as the School of Oriental and African Studies, the London School of Economics and the British Library. Studying in London offers countless opportunities to engage with prominent international speakers and thinkers.

Important Dates

Application deadline 27 February 2015

Start of programme September 2015

Duration Two years full time, divided into six terms of twelve weeks, plus two summer terms of four weeks each

Term calendar for Year I (2015)

Orientation Week	14 September – 18 September
First term begins	21 September
Reading week	26 October – 30 October
First term ends	14 December
Second term begins	4 January
Reading week	8 February – 12 February
Second term ends	30 March
Third term begins	4 April
Reading week	9 May – 13 May
Third term ends	24 June
Language Immersion/Fieldwork	30 June – 31 July



Lindsey Stephenson, Class of 2012

“The MA in Muslim Cultures is unlike any other Masters programme I have found. It appreciates the transnational and trans-regional cultures of Muslims and encourages us to explore the junctures at which sociology, anthropology, history and art converge.”

Lindsey is currently completing a PhD in Near East Studies at Princeton University, USA.

ISMC student at an exhibition in London in 2013





Programme Structure

During the two-year MA Programme, students complete a total of twenty-four courses, consisting of fifteen core courses, six language courses and three electives. Students are also required to complete a Language Immersion Programme and a Leadership Skills Programme.

Introduction to the Humanities and Social Sciences

Courses introduce students to theories and concepts of historiography, epistemology, anthropology, sociology, cultural studies and the philosophy of language; which are all relevant for an understanding of current debates in the humanities and social sciences.

Core Courses

- Approaches to the Study of Muslim Cultures: Relevance of Humanities and Social Sciences
- Writing in the Humanities
- The Sacred Across Cultures

Muslim Heritages as Part of World Cultures

Courses introduce students to the idea that Muslim heritages are an integral part of world history. Students study selected aspects of world cultures that are intimately related to the formation of Muslim religious thought and practices, political discourses and experiences, and artistic and literary developments.

Core Courses

- Late Antiquity
- History of the Qur'an in Classical and Contemporary Scholarship
- Formation of Muslim Thought: Theology and Law
- Muslim Cultures in the 14th – 18th Centuries

Elective Courses

- Religion, Law and Society in Muslim Contexts
- Muslim Reformers in the 18th and 19th Centuries
- Paths in Sufism – Past and Present
- Historiography of the Nation

Contemporary Muslim Contexts

Courses introduce students to major areas of relevance in contemporary Muslim contexts; the choice of courses is guided by an attempt to address social, cultural, political and economic issues.

Core Courses

- Renaissance, Enlightenment and the Advent of Modernity
- Muslim Responses to Modernity and Post-Modern Theories
- Gender, Nation and Muslim Identities
- Development Challenges in Muslim Contexts
- Themes in Muslim Arts and Architecture: Contemporary Period
- Trends in Modern and Contemporary Literature

Elective Courses

- Migration and Diasporas
- Muslims in Western Contexts
- Tradition and Change in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Globalisation, Poverty and Development

Methodologies

Methodology courses provide students with important research skills, enabling them to analyse texts, interpret data and choose between alternative conceptual frameworks.

Core Courses

- Research Methodology and Dissertation Planning I and II

Languages

This component seeks to familiarise students with a language spoken in Muslim contexts. The emphasis on languages enables students to familiarise themselves with primary sources and also acts as a window to other material related to Muslim cultures. Students who do not have Arabic as their mother tongue are encouraged to take Arabic.

Language Immersion Programme

During the summer of their first year, students travel to a country where their language of study is spoken, for example Tunisia for Arabic or Turkey for Turkish, in order to undertake an intensive four-week language course as part of their language training. This crucial feature of the MA Programme exposes students to cultures, communities and ways of life different from their own. The Language Immersion Programme allows students to experience language in its social and lived dimensions while furthering students' understanding of diversity and pluralism.

Languages offered:

- Arabic
- Persian
- Turkish

Leadership Skills Programme

At the beginning of the second year, students are required to attend a week-long Leadership Skills Programme. The aim is to start integrating students' learning with the development of leadership skills in order to respond to today's fast paced, multi-cultural, organisational requirements.

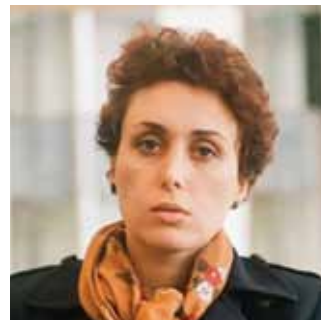
The programme provides practical leadership skills for communicating, influencing and motivating across cultures, managing change and deepening individual impact within society. The programme aims to link theoretical knowledge with practical application.

Dissertation

In preparation for their dissertation, some students may undertake research in the field in the summer of their second year. Where appropriate, the Institute facilitates access to the resources required and assists students in liaising with partner institutions. Students devote the final term of their second year to writing a dissertation of up to 20,000 words. The dissertation is required to be in keeping with academic norms for graduate-level programmes. In the past, student dissertation topics have included:

- Freedom: Construction of a Concept: A Critical Assessment of the Emergence and Evolution of Modern Concept of Freedom in Iran during the Constitutional Revolution (1323-29/1905-11)

- Ngoma Music in Tanzania, Dar es Salaam: A Healing Practice and a Prevailing Social Icon of the Swahili Identity
- The Recited Qur'an and the Female Voices: Ethnography of the Women Reciters in Jos, Nigeria
- Growing up and Surviving on the Streets: Life Trajectories of Adolescent Street Children in Karachi, Pakistan
- In Journalistic Truth: Exploring the Visual Frame Around Photographs of Muslims in the British Press
- The Phenomenon of Murabahah (Mark-up): A Case Study of Indonesian Islamic Banking Practices
- Embracing Religion and Urban Life: Religiosity, Identity and Style of Indonesian Muslim Youth
- De-centering Devotion: The Complex Subject of Sehwan Sharif
- The Redevelopment Strategy of Slums: A Case Study of High-rise Buildings in Dharavi Mumbai
- Mirpuri Marriage Practices among Women Living in Bradford: Generations, Gender Roles and Transformation
- What and How to Conserve: The Case Study of Sefel Al Tallah Neighbourhood, Bab Touma, The Old City of Damascus



**Fatemeh Shams,
Class of 2008**

“ ISMC has been one of the most unforgettable phases of my life. I made life-long friends here, and read some of the best books. Encountering scholars from many parts of the world and taking part in various events greatly changed my life, my direction, my vision, and my future.”

Fatemeh is currently completing a PhD in the field of Oriental Studies, with specific focus on Iranian Studies and Persian literature, at the University of Oxford. Fatemeh taught Persian language and literature at Oxford for three years. In 2013 Fatemeh published her first book of poetry under the title of '88'.

Studying Persian. © Lindsey Stephenson

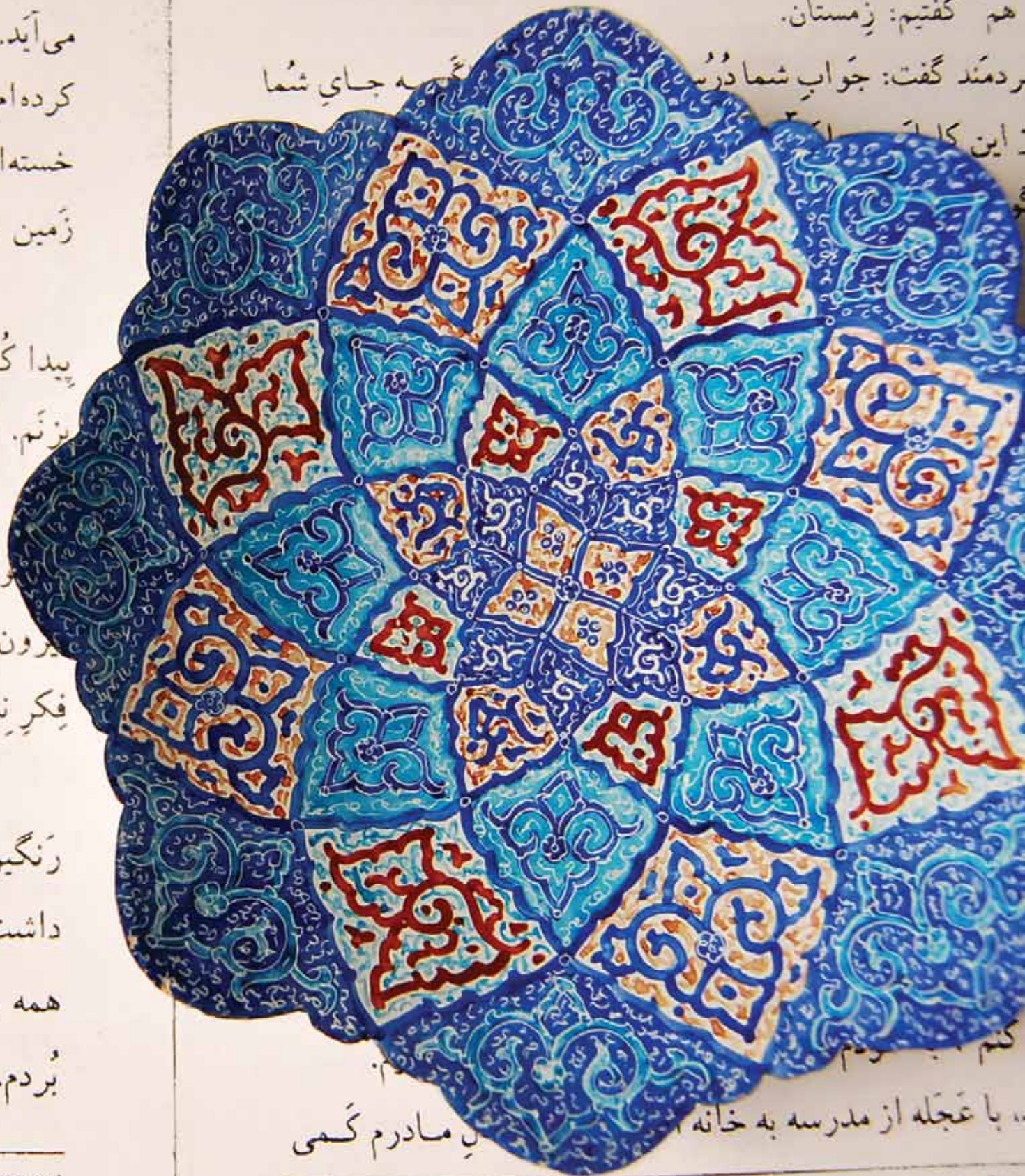
ای آخر اسفند بود. یک روز آقای خردمند به کلاس ما آمد. از ما

چه فصلی است؟

هم گفتیم: زمستان.

خردمند گفت: جواب شما درست است. این کلاس را

بهرتر شده بود
آنها زندگی می
می آید. زیر زم
کرده ام. کمی
خسته ام و نمی
زمین را تمیر
خواه
پیدا کنم. ولی
بزنم. با خود
مادرم
بروید تا
بیرون برده
فکر نشانه ها
داشت
رنگین
داشت. چشم
همه جا گل
بردم. ناگهان



با عجله از مدرسه به خانه
مادرم کمی

= to bring out.
7. راست گفتن =
= to take out.
coloured.
ain.

1. all together.
2. If I were you (= if I was in your place).
3. دادن.
4. obvious.
5. festival.
6. Nowruz, which means "new day", is t
coincides with the first day of the Iranian calendar.
7. A literary word for
- 9 forest.
10. vicinity.
11. بیرون آمدن = to come out.
12. (l) sa
14. In order that, so that.
15. نگهداری کردن = to look after.

Assessment

Assessment is conducted in accordance with the guidelines of the AKU Board of Graduate Studies and is based on the principle of ‘assessment for learning’. It includes both formative and summative dimensions. The MA in Muslim Cultures utilises a range of assessment methods in order to assess specific skills/outcomes. These include essays, student presentations, reflective papers and a dissertation. In addition, students receive ongoing feedback on their progress from faculty advisors throughout the two-year MA Programme.

Co-curricular Activities

Academic and cultural excursions are an integral part of students’ learning experience. In previous years, students have visited Cambridge, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, York, Istanbul and Paris.

Students have also visited several places of interest in London, including Leighton House Museum, the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and Shakespeare’s Globe.

Accreditation and Validation

ISMC is accredited by the British Accreditation Council. The Institute offers an MA in Muslim Cultures, awarded under the authority of the AKU charter in Pakistan. UK NARIC, the British agency which has responsibility for advising on comparability of qualifications, has confirmed that the ISMC MA in Muslim Cultures is comparable to a British Master’s Degree and to level 7 in the UK Qualifications and Credit Framework.

Quality Assurance

QAA Reviewed

Quality Assurance Agency
for Higher Education

The Institute is subject to educational oversight by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education under the UK Border Agency’s Tier 4 sponsorship requirements: www.qaa.ac.uk



Megan Wang, Class of 2012

“I liked the diversity of ISMC. Having the opportunity to live and study alongside students from all over the world was an amazing learning experience. Even though we may have come from vastly different

intellectual and cultural backgrounds we all seemed to possess a similar spirit; a spirit that not only genuinely respected our ‘differences’ but celebrated them. The MA in Muslim Cultures taught me how to ask better questions, questions whose answers matter, whose answers tell us more about the world we live in. I would wholeheartedly recommend this MA to anyone with a passion for Middle Eastern/Islamic Studies and an adventurous, respectfully curious disposition. It’s a gruelling two years but by the end of it you’ll have grown immensely. More importantly, you will have noticed this same growth in your classmates and you will know that you were part of something beautiful and powerful, something real.”

Megan received her Bachelor of Arts from New York University (double major in both International Relations and Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies). She currently works as a coordinating editor for a magazine.

A colonnade of pillars that make up the east side of the Quwwat-ul-Islam Mosque, south of Delhi. Built between 1193 and 1199, this is the earliest extant mosque in India. © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



Student Resources

Library

The library, which serves both ISMC and the Institute of Ismaili Studies, is designed to support the two institutions' academic programmes and research needs. At its heart is a significant and distinctive scholarly research collection on Muslim history, cultures and societies which places particular emphasis on works published by contemporary scholars from Muslim majority regions. Currently, this research collection comprises 30,000 titles in various Asian, European and Middle Eastern languages. The collection includes texts on Muslim traditions and heritages with a specific focus on Qur'anic, Ismaili and Shi'i studies.

The library's collection is divided into separate sections to accommodate the needs of students and researchers alike. Required reading material for each course of the MA Programme is available in multiple copies and is located in the teaching collection, which also holds recommended texts, commentaries and monographs to encourage further reading. Encyclopaedias, dictionaries and other reference tools are available from the reference section, while primary and secondary texts in a wide range of languages, as well as journals of academic value, form part of the library's research collection. To support language learning, the library maintains a growing selection of audiovisual material, including DVDs, music and language CDs relevant to the MA Programme.

Our library staff are available to provide guidance and instruction in the bibliographical aspects of research, and students are welcome to ask for assistance in using facilities, resources and relevant databases. Specialised library collections of the nearby School of Oriental and African Studies and the Senate House Library can also be accessed by ISMC students.

IT Facilities and Support

Networked computers with internet and email facilities, and on-site IT and audiovisual support are available. Training in basic computer programmes, e.g. Microsoft Office, is available to all students.

Conference Fund

Students are encouraged to attend and participate in conferences. The Institute contributes a modest amount towards such participation, with preference given to those presenting a paper.



Kamran Bashir, Class of 2012

“ ISMC prepared me in a number of ways for my current doctoral studies. The interdisciplinary approach used throughout the programme stands out as its core strength. In my opinion, this is what shaped my thinking the most. As a small institute, it also makes a close student-faculty relationship possible and that truly helped me in discussing and understanding academic and career matters at a personal level beyond the classroom. In addition, studying in London offered me some excellent opportunities to immerse myself in a scholarly environment and benefit from the neighbouring world-class institutions of learning.”

Kamran is pursuing a PhD in History and Qur'anic Studies at the University of Victoria, Canada.

Student Life

Orientation Programme

Before the start of their first academic year, students participate in a week-long orientation programme. This essential preparatory week familiarises students with both the Institute's and London's academic resources, and offers an introduction to the cultural attractions of the city. Students have the opportunity to meet the Institute's faculty and staff and the Institute also organises social activities and tours, including excursions to nearby places of historical interest.

Lectures and Presentations

In addition to core courses and electives, students have the opportunity to attend various seminars, conferences, lectures and presentations held at the Institute, and to engage with prominent scholars on a variety of issues related to Muslim cultures. Lectures and presentations have explored topics such as: diversity in the perceptions of world cultures; environment and ecology; Muslim realities in film; and Muslim communities in Europe and America. Students are also strongly encouraged to take full advantage of the Institute's proximity to institutions such as the School of Oriental and African Studies, the London School of Economics, the British Museum and the British Library.

Accommodation

Student accommodation is coordinated through the Registrar's Office. Students are strongly advised to arrange accommodation before arriving in the UK. The Institute will assist all first year students in finding accommodation. ISMC has an arrangement to house students in Opal House, a hall of residence in North London. This provides single student accommodation only. Each bedroom has a bed, desk, chair, clothes storage, and an en-suite shower room/toilet. Each cluster of four to six bedrooms shares a living area with a shared kitchen and food storage facilities, dining table, chairs, sofa and a TV. Opal House also has large communal meeting/TV/relaxation rooms, bike storage, laundry facilities, as well as a security presence and an office. The accommodation at Opal House includes the cost of hot water, heating and electricity, as well as a shared TV in the living area. In the second year, subject to approval by the Director, students may be allowed to live in independent accommodation.

Student Common Room

Students are encouraged to use the common room to socialise between classes. Vending machines are available on site. There are also many shops, cafes and restaurants in close proximity to the Institute.

Living in London

The Institute is situated in the heart of London, within walking distance of cultural attractions such as the British Museum and the British Library, and not far from entertainment areas including the West End and the Southbank. There are many ways to enjoy the city on a student budget. Entry to many museums is free and shops, cinemas and theatres often offer student discounts. ISMC students are able to participate in a wide range of seminars, cultural events and social activities organised by other universities and institutes in London. Students can also benefit from discounts on travel within London and substantial reductions on national travel.



ISMC student playing tennis in London in 2014

Journey through the afterlife
**ANCIENT
EGYPTIAN
BOOK OF THE
DEAD**

The BP Special Exhibition

4 November 2010 – 6 March 2011



Student Support Services

Registrar's Office

The Registrar's Office deals with all matters related to student life on campus such as admissions, advisory services, visas, counselling, extracurricular activities, accommodation, health, special needs, student and alumni records.

Faculty Advisors

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor. Students are encouraged to consult their advisor for support and guidance on academic matters.

Careers Advice

In order to facilitate the next steps in the lives of our graduates, the Institute aims to create opportunities for students to network with individuals and institutions where job openings or internships may exist.

Alumni

Since the MA Programme's first cohort graduated in 2008, the Institute has maintained a close relationship with its alumni. Alumni are now engaged in the education and non-profit sectors, or are undertaking doctoral studies at British, Canadian, German and American universities. The Aga Khan University Alumni Association also enables AKU alumni to be in contact with each other.



A girl at the Mother and Child Health Center in Mogadishu, Somalia, during a visit by Zainab Bangura, the Secretary-General's Special Representative
© UN Photo/Tobin Jones

Academic Staff

(as of September 2014)

Faculty

Sarah Bowen Savant

Associate Professor

Early Islam; the study of religion

Stéphane Pradines

Associate Professor

Islamic art and archaeology; Fortifications of Egypt and Middle East; Trade and urbanization of the Swahili Coast; Urban archaeology in Medieval Cairo

Kathryn Spellman Poots

Associate Professor

Shia Muslims in Western countries; gender and Islam in the Middle East and North Africa; the Iranian diaspora

Jeff Tan

Associate Professor

Political economy of Malaysia; entrepreneurship, innovation and development; infrastructure privatisation

David Taylor

Associate Professor and Director

Indian nationalism and its determinants; Indian political thought; right-wing political movements in India; political economy of India and the nature of the Indian state; mass media and politics in India; Islam and politics in Pakistan

Philip Wood

Associate Professor

Christian Orient; Late antiquity; Syriac; Hagiography and Historiography; Ethnogenesis and communalism; History of the Caliphate; Diaspora; Migration; Religious minorities in modern Syria and Iraq

Abdou Filali-Ansary

Professor (Retired)

Philosophy; Islam and modernity; democratisation and civil society in the Middle East; Islam's reformist traditions

Farouk Topan

Associate Professor (Retired)

Swahili literature; Islam in African literature; African poetry; identity in East Africa

Visiting Lecturers

K Humayun Ansari

Royal Holloway, University of London

Kaya Anjaria

SOAS, University of London

Ana Barandalla Ajona

Independent Scholar

Amine Cakir

Oxford University

Igor Cherstich

SOAS, University of London

Jason Edwards

Birkbeck, University of London

Jamal J Elias

University of Pennsylvania

Hadi Enayat

Syracuse University in London

Murray Last

University College London

Shabnam Mirafzali

SOAS, University of London

Luay Mohammed

University of Westminster

Ali Paya

University of Westminster

Wael Odeh

SOAS, University of London

Tuition Fees and Financial Assistance

Tuition Fees

The annual tuition fee from September 2014 is £11,710. Alternatively, students may pay their fees in four instalments of £2,927.50. In cases where a student withdraws from the MA Programme, tuition for the entire term will be charged.

Financial Assistance

Financial assistance, in the form of partial scholarships and loans, is available and will be granted on the basis of need and merit. However, all students are required to make some financial contribution towards tuition fees, living expenses and other costs.

Assistance is based upon the evaluation of financial data provided by the student. In addition, the student must demonstrate that all other possible sources of assistance have been thoroughly explored. Continuation of financial assistance is conditional upon yearly academic performance.



ISMC convocation, 2012



Admission Criteria

Eligibility

To be considered for admission to the MA Programme, applicants will need to hold the following:

- An undergraduate degree from an accredited/recognised university that is equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree, preferably in the humanities or social sciences
- Evidence of English language proficiency:

IELTS Overall band score: 6.5 (with a minimum of 5.5 in all four components)

The Institute exempts candidates from the English language proficiency requirements if they have completed undergraduate studies taught in the following countries: Antigua and Barbuda; Australia; The Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; Dominica; Grenada; Guyana; Ireland; Jamaica; New Zealand; St Kitts and Nevis; St Lucia; St Vincent and the Grenadines; Trinidad and Tobago; The United Kingdom; The United States of America.

Other English language test results may be acceptable. Please check with the Registrar's Office for more details.

Selection

Admission to the Institute is based on merit and scholarly aptitude. ISMC seeks to admit students of the highest potential. Students are selected for admission without regard to their age, marital status, race, gender, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, social background or any other distinction. All shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview (candidates living outside the UK will be interviewed via Skype or video conference) and may be asked to write a short essay.

Applicants will be required to demonstrate:

- Informed views about contemporary issues in Muslim societies
- A strong interest in the humanities and social sciences and in the study of Muslim cultures and societies
- An ability to articulate clearly and analyse complex intellectual concepts orally and in writing

Applicants are assessed through several other criteria including scholastic achievement, work experience (if applicable), academic interests, references and extracurricular activities. The decision of the University is final.



Community meeting in Afghanistan ©AKTC Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme



Application Procedure

Application Package

Please send us all the information relating to your application in a single package.

You must provide the following:

- A completed application form.
- A personal statement, outlining your reasons for wishing to enrol in the MA Programme.
- An official attested copy of your undergraduate degree and academic transcripts. If a document is not in English, a fully certified translation by a professional translator must be provided. The translation must include details of the translator and confirm that it is an accurate translation of the original. It must be dated and include the original signature of the translator.
- Valid proof of English proficiency.
- Two references, submitted either directly to the Registrar's Office, or along with the application in a sealed envelope with the referee's signature across the seal. Referees must be familiar with your academic and/or professional work to date. At least one referee should be familiar with your academic work. If your referees would like to submit the reference letter via email, please download the reference form, complete the details and request your referees to send it directly to the Registrar's Office at ismc.registraroffice@aku.edu.

Applications should be submitted as early as possible and postmarked no later than 27 February 2015. Please retain proof of postage.

Your application should be sent to:

Registrar's Office
The Aga Khan University
Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations
210 Euston Road
London NW1 2DA
United Kingdom

For further information regarding the MA Programme, please contact the Registrar's Office:

Email ismc.ma@aku.edu
Tel +44 (0)20 7380 3860
Fax +44 (0)20 7380 3830

Admissions Procedure

As soon as ISMC receives your application, an acknowledgement email will be sent out to the email address provided. Applications will be evaluated in two stages. Initially, all applications will be reviewed for eligibility and a shortlist of potential candidates drawn up by the selection panel. Shortlisted candidates will then be invited to participate in an interview. Details of the interviews will be communicated at a later stage.

Please tick each item before sending us your application package:

- Completed application form (including the personal statement)
- Certified copies of certificates/diplomas/degree
- Certified copies of transcripts
- Certified copies of English language proficiency test results (IELTS)
- If applicable, copies of letters showing scholarship funding obtained
- Sealed references (with the referee's signature across the seal) to be submitted either directly to the Registrar's office or by the applicant

Disclaimer

This prospectus contains information on the programmes that ISMC intends to run for students. The Institute has made reasonable efforts to ensure that the information provided is both helpful and accurate. However, this information is compiled one year in advance and is subject to change over time. Some circumstances (such as staff changes and other factors over which the Institute has no control) may result in the Institute having to withdraw or change aspects of the modules and/or student services detailed in this prospectus. A minimum number of enrolled students is required in order for a course to run; if enrolment falls below this minimum, the course may be cancelled. In order to ensure quality, the Institute regularly reviews the modules and programmes offered and when deemed necessary, may change or withdraw a module or add a new programme.





ISMC students