



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

(International) in the United Kingdom

Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations

Graduate School of Media and Communications

Media in Muslim Contexts: Inventing and Reinventing Identities



Welcome

On behalf of the Aga Khan University's Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations (ISMC) and Graduate School of Media and Communications (GSMC), we welcome you to the conference. We are delighted to be able to bring together, at our London campus, a broad and international range of researchers, policy-makers and practitioners, from a variety of disciplinary and geographical backgrounds, to discuss the central role of mass media in the contemporary Muslim World.

In conceptualising the conference theme we sought to examine the relationship between media, in all their forms, and political and social change. Through the 40 plus speakers who will share their insights over the two-day conference, we hope to engage in meaningful discussions around themes including media and the invention of history; media as a vehicle of resistance; iconoclasm and image wars; the power of satire; and the impact of new media and social media; as well as case studies that look at media in local and national contexts.

Media in Muslim Contexts: Inventing and Reinventing Identities will, we hope, provide speakers and participants with new insights about the ways in which the media shape and create perceptions about Muslim cultures and histories both within and outside Muslim majority contexts. Their central role in our lives today is unparalleled and must continue to be understood, examined and studied. We invite you to be part of this exciting dialogue and hope that you enjoy the conference.

Media in Muslim Contexts: Inventing and Reinventing Identities

London, UK – 3-4 November, 2016

Thursday 3 November

9.00 – 10.00	Registration
10.00– 10.20	Welcome from the Aga Khan University Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations and Graduate School of Media and Communications – Firoz Rasul, David Taylor, Michael Meyer, Jamal J Elias
10.20 – 11.00	<i>“Creative Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency: From the Arab Uprisings to the Rise of Daesh”</i> – Marwan Kraidy
11.00 – 11.30	Coffee/Tea Break
11.30 – 13.00	Session 1 Panel A: Muslims, Satire and Global Media (Room 2.1) Chair – Farouk Topan <i>“(Mis)Representing the Muslim in Global Media”</i> – Daya Thussu <i>“Villains or Heroes? A Critical Analysis of the Positive and Negative Depiction of Muslims in Western and Non-Western Comics”</i> – Sara Shaker & Jasmin Makhlouf <i>“Muslims and Media Freedom: Friends or Foes?”</i> – David Harrison Panel B: Cinema and the Nation (Room 2.3) Chair – Massimiliano Fusari <i>“Teaching Egypt Cinematically”</i> – Terri Ginsberg <i>“The Historical TV-drama (musalsal) and Contemporary Arab Historical Consciousness”</i> – Jakob Skovgaard-Petersen Panel C: Humour and the Politics of National Identity (Room 2.2) Chair – Jamal J Elias <i>“Blasphemy and Satire: Has Charlie Hebdo Become Emblematic of Freedom of Speech?”</i> – Imen Neffati <i>“Caricaturing the Other: Religious and Cultural Difference in Modern British Political Cartoons”</i> – Tahniah Ahmed <i>“Satire, Freedom of Expression and Multiculturalism: Analysing the Limits of Humour”</i> – Rhonda Breit

13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 14.40	<p><i>“The Past Progressive: History and Belonging in Syrian Social Drama”</i> - Christa Salamandra</p>
14.40 – 15.00	Coffee/Tea Break
15.00 – 16.30	<p>Session 2</p> <p>Panel A: Modern Media and Religious Identities (Room 2.2) Chair – Rhonda Breit</p> <p><i>“‘Sexual Misery’ or ‘Happy British Muslims’?: Contemporary Mediations of Muslim Sexuality”</i> – Claire Chambers</p> <p><i>“Religious Identity and TV Audience in Turkey: Identity in the Making”</i> – Burak Özçetin</p> <p><i>“Media and the Globalisation of a New Rhetoric Against Terrorism and Political Islam: Reading Jāved Aḥmad Ghāmidī’s Counter-Narrative Against ‘Traditional Islam’”</i> – Kamran Bashir</p> <p>Panel B: Satire in National Contexts (Room 2.3) Chair – David Taylor</p> <p><i>“Dying for a Laugh: The State of Satire in Pakistan”</i> – Moni Mohsin</p> <p><i>“Proposing a Different Communicative Imaginary: Satire in Egyptian Revolutions”</i> – Ghadah Alrasheed</p> <p>Panel C: Popular Resistance and the Media (Room 2.1) Chair – Michael Meyer</p> <p><i>“Youth Mediapreneurship in Tunisia, Morocco and Turkey: Web Resistance 2.0”</i> – Roxane Farmanfarmaian</p> <p><i>“Salamiya and the Syrian War Media: Sites of Civic Education and Civil Society”</i> – Otared Haidar</p> <p><i>“Impact of Social Media on Afghanistan’s Social Taboos”</i> – Bahaar Joya</p>

Friday 4 November

10.00 – 10.40	<i>"Image Wars: Arab Media Dilemma Abroad and at Home"</i> – Hafez Al Mirazi
10.40 – 11.10	Coffee/Tea Break
11.10 – 13.00	Session 3 Panel A: Media and Local Politics (Room 2.2) Chair – Gianluca Parolin <i>"The Role of Media, Demographics and Interpersonal Relations in the Formation of Attitudes towards Islam and Muslims in New Zealand"</i> – Shaista Malik <i>"Media-ised Identities; Technology, Theology and the Muslim Question in South India"</i> – Nuaiman Keeprath Andru Panel B: Media and the Nation (Room 2.3) Chair – Philip Wood <i>"Public Morality and the Transformation of Islamic Media in Indonesia"</i> – Arie Setyaningrum Pamungkas <i>"Inventing a Usable Past: A History of Arab Politics Approach to Understanding the Islamic State Organisation"</i> – Omar Al-Ghazzi <i>"Fixing for the Revolution: An Inquiry into the Role of Egyptian Fixers in Foreign Media Coverage of the Revolution Between 2011 and 2014"</i> – Salma I Mostafa Khalil <i>"War in Syria and the Kurdish Media Narrative"</i> – Zenobia Homan Panel C: Identity on Screen (Room 2.1) Chair – Christa Salamandra <i>"Are We on the Same Wavelength?": Interethnic Homosexual Relationships and Queering the Cinematic Mainstream in Ian Iqbal Rashid's Touch of Pink"</i> – Alberto Fernández Carbajal <i>"Gender, Ethnicity and the Denationalisation of Citizenship in Turkey: Shifting "Representations of Minority Women in post-1980s Cinema"</i> – Sevinc Elaman-Garner <i>"Pirated Films and Popular Resistance in Iran"</i> – Saeed Zeydabadi-Nejad

13.00 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.30	<p>Session 4</p> <p>Panel A: Religion in the Age of Social Media (Room 2.3) Chair – Rhonda Breit</p> <p><i>“Suyuti on YouTube: Mediated Struggles for Identity in Post-Revolutionary Egypt”</i> – Rebecca Skreslet Hernandez</p> <p><i>“Islamic Inspired Radio Stations in Kenya: Creating Alternative Citizen Narratives”</i> – Kimani Njogu</p> <p><i>“Islamic State and Iconoclasm in the Era of Clickbait: Mechanisms and Personal Responsibilities”</i> – Bastien Varoutsikos</p> <p>Panel B: Social Media and Resistance (Room 2.2) Chair – Jamal J Elias</p> <p><i>“Digital Revelations: Text, Secrecy and the Cultivation of Mystics’ Internet Archives in Iran”</i> – Seema Golestaneh</p> <p><i>“When Palestine Bleeds, South Africa Rages: Case Study of the BDS Social Media Warfare”</i> – Farhana Bee Ismail</p> <p><i>“Metamorphosis of Social Media in Iranian Politics”</i> – Daryoush Poor</p> <p>Panel C: Media and Social History (Room 2.1) Chair – Sevji Adak</p> <p><i>“The Role of Social Media in the Documentation and Protection of Syrian Cultural Heritage during the Present War”</i> – Youssef Kanjou</p> <p><i>“The Past Demands an Answer: What Becomes of History in the Digital Era?”</i> – Sharon C Smith</p> <p><i>“Hizbullah, Media and Collective Identity”</i> – Sarah Hamdar</p>
15.30 – 15.45	Closing Remarks

Thursday 3 November

KEYNOTE

Creative Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency: From the Arab Uprisings to the Rise of Daesh

Marwan KRAIDY

This lecture draws on primary research conducted for *The Naked Blogger of Cairo: Creative Insurgency in the Arab World* (Harvard UP, 2016), in which I developed the notion of creative insurgency to encompass a variety of cultural forms that Arab activists created and deployed to contest dictatorships. This mediated resistance, I argued, was best understood through the human body as instrument, symbol and metaphor. When it arose in Iraq and Syria, Daesh (Islamic State) hijacked tactics of creative insurgency from Arab revolutionaries, mounting a spectacle of gore based on the subversion of revolutionary symbols and modalities. I will discuss the consequences of this “creative counter-insurgency” for our understanding of media as sites of political power and resistance.

SESSION 1 – Panel A: Muslims, Satire and Global Media

(Mis)Representing the Muslim in Global Media

Daya THUSSU

In the post-Cold War world, Islam and its representation in the US-dominated global media has progressively been negative, if not hostile. In the open-ended and global ideological and military fight against ‘terrorism’ such terms as ‘Arab’, ‘Muslim’ and ‘Islam’ are discursively linked to the term ‘terror’. This presentation will suggest that the concept of terrorism has been manipulated by powerful governments to promote their own geopolitical and economic interests. US-led Western responses to the inflated threat of terrorism are legitimised by the mass-mediated narratives and stereotypes of Muslims, even though the vast majority of victims of terrorism have been Muslims in Muslim countries. It will be argued that in a globalised and networked communication environment, new news providers are emerging, complementing the US-dominated global news media and, in some cases, eroding the traditional Western primacy in this arena. The digital revolution in broadcasting and broadband and the resultant globalised connectivity has democratised communication, allowing a variety of voices to be heard. Beyond the major state-based news networks - notably television news in English from such diverse countries as Russia, China, France, Germany, Iran and Qatar - image-makers and propagandists from non-state actors are increasingly important, especially the so-called Islamic State and its Hollywood-inspired political and cultural messaging, using social media and the internet. What are the geopolitical ramifications of such journalism in this new media environment?

Villains or Heroes? A Critical Analysis of the Positive and Negative Depiction of Muslims in Western and Non-Western Comics

Sara SHAKAR and Jasmin MAKHLOUF

Comics are literary and visual lexicons accessed by a vast audience from diverse settings. In the foreword of Joe Sacco's, *Palestine*, Edward Said explains how comics have shaped his way of thinking. Unlike other art forms, they entail rebellious thought via its creative colours and panels. As a medium, comics provide space to engage with storytelling that highlights the various perspectives from both the West and the East. Even though it is a universal popular art form, loved by devoted readers, artists, and editors, there has been resistance from the academic community to examine them as a coherent media form. Yet, with the publication of *The 99*, *Kamala Khan*, *Burka Avenger*, and *Dust*, a direct message comes out showing how comics move beyond the stereotyped representation of Muslims as terrorists. It is interesting to note how these comics do not only attribute heroic qualities to their characters but also disrupt gender stereotypes within the Muslim heritage itself. Accordingly, this paper attempts to examine the following research questions: (1) How influential is the comic space as a form of media? (2) To what extent do comic artists perpetuate or challenge the representation of Muslims? The paper is divided into three parts. The first part utilises 'Social Constructivist Theory' to examine how perception affects the comic's artist representation of Muslims. The second part analyses the Kurt Westergaard examination of *The Muhammad Cartoon*. Finally, the paper concludes by assessing the comics of *The 99*, *Kamala Khan*, *Burka Avenger*, and *Dust* and their depiction of Muslims.

Muslims and Media Freedom: Friends or Foes?

David HARRISON

The presentation will examine the role of journalists and the media in different Muslim contexts, drawing on experience of working in the UK and many predominantly Muslim countries such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Kosovo, Sudan, Algeria, Morocco and Egypt. The presenter will examine how the media operates in those countries, how much freedom they enjoy, how much censorship there is, including self-censorship, and other challenges faced by journalists. Real life examples of work produced by journalists, which the presenter has trained in those countries, and the obstacles they face from their editors and other authorities will be shown, along with how many of those obstacles can be overcome. The presentation will discuss media coverage of Muslim issues in the UK and consider the dangers of negative stereotyping and the importance of understanding diversity. Further, the presentation will attempt to define the role of the journalist and examine whether that role is universal or whether it should be defined differently in different contexts. It will also look at the context in which the media operates: ownership by the state, by big business and by private individuals, and look at how that affects the way the media operate. Finally, the presentation will look at the wider socio-economic context and factors including poverty and levels of educational and health provision to explain how differing contexts affect the work of the media.

SESSION 1 – Panel B: Cinema and the Nation

Teaching Egypt Cinematically

Terri GINSBERG

When film and media are subjected to scholarly analysis, the term 'propaganda' is used frequently to denote techniques of political persuasion. For decades, this term has carried negative connotations, due largely to the view, prevalent within capitalist social formations, that rhetorical positioning runs contrary to artistic genius, and that, concomitantly, political positioning runs counter to pedagogical integrity. The general debate around this issue is longstanding, now finding its way into contemporary moving-image culture of and regarding the Arab world. In this contestational context my paper will analyse two recent Egyptian films, the personal feminist documentary *Cairo Chronicles* (Tania Kamal-Eldin, 2004) and *Out on the Street* [Barra fil Share'] (Philip Rizk/Jasmina Metwally, 2015), an innovative instance of filmed theatre of the oppressed. The aim of my paper will be to reveal, through critique, the superficiality and in some instances irrelevance of these albeit very different films' ideologically similar critical receptions: *Cairo Chronicles* has been misrecognised, for instance, as a reflexive work of diasporic nostalgia; and *Out on the Street* has been misunderstood as a phenomenological engagement with the inaccessibility of facts. My paper seeks to transcend these limited, if unfavourable, understandings in the better interests of explaining the films' profound pedagogical import as a core element of their respective aesthetic structurings. By extension the paper will draw critical comparisons between the political positioning of each film with respect to the socio-economic conditions in twenty-first century Egypt with which both films are centrally concerned, and which each of them problematises so compellingly.

The Historical TV-drama (musalsal) and Contemporary Arab Historical Consciousness

Jakob SKOVGARD-PETERSEN

A speciality of Arab television is the musalsal, the 30-episode drama running throughout Ramadan. Each year around 100 such musalsalat are produced and broadcast on both national and trans-national Arab channels, reaching a massive audience, especially around the time of iftar. Historical dramas are a minor but high-profile part of this production, and a successful historical drama is bound to influence the public perception and assessment of the period and figures it portrays. This paper will give an introduction to the historical musalsal and its development – principally in Egypt and Syria - and characterise it as a genre. Focusing on Islamic eras, both early and modern, it will discuss the selection of subjects, the use of sources, and the messages and morals conveyed. In particular, it will look at the depictions of piety, and issues of morality and legality. It will argue that cultural wars over the role of Islam in contemporary Arab societies are played out in subtle and not-so-subtle treatments of registers of piety and moral conduct.

SESSION 1 – Panel C: Humour and the Politics of National Identity

Blasphemy and Satire: Has Charlie Hebdo Become Emblematic of Freedom of Speech?

Imen NEFFATI

Charlie Hebdo was created in the 1960s to challenge thematic and aesthetic blandness through graphic images, utilising scatological, sexually explicit material and elements of the grotesque. In this paper, I argue that 9/11 pushed Charlie Hebdo into increasingly political satire directed at Islam and Muslims, illustrating the ability of bande-dessinée to provoke controversy and reappropriate the values of the Republic, and the place of Muslims in it. This paper exposes how Charlie Hebdo's provocative *bête et méchant* humour mirrors deeper cultural perceptions in French society vis-a-vis religion, and functions as a powerful vehicle for understanding culturally shaped ways of thinking and feeling. Charlie Hebdo contributors have often found themselves in the position of explaining, justifying or defending the provocative content of the newspaper. This paper will look at how the pursuit of artistic freedom through visual blasphemy has become emblematic of freedom of speech. I argue that reading Charlie Hebdo since its inception in 1960 uncovers reliable indicators of anticlerical discourse. This helps the construction of a conceptual language for measuring evolving anti-Islam rhetoric, thus assessing its trends over time, its variation over social groups, and its intensity compared to negative attitudes and emotions aimed at other status minority groups. One main question is to ascertain whether we can de-link hate or fear of Muslims from racism against non-European people.

Caricaturing the Other: Religious and Cultural Difference in Modern British Political Cartoons

Tahniah AHMED

In light of recent terror attacks such as the Charlie Hebdo shootings in January last year and the subsequent publication of the Charlie Hebdo "survivor's" issue, with the image of the Prophet Muhammad on the front cover, the explosive power of political cartoons, especially when they tackle religion, has never been more clear. My paper looks at the portrayal of Muslim men and women in British political cartoons. My paper will look at cartoons since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and how the burqa is identified with ideas of 'otherness' and political and cultural subversion, becoming a feared marker of Islam. I also look at how this same message is applied to Muslim men in cartoons, with a focus on ethnicity as the key marker of difference between Muslims and the wider British public. The paper looks at how the same message of 'otherness' recurs frequently and how certain tropes and visual markers are shifted, adapted, and reassigned from one community to another.

Satire, Freedom of Expression and Multiculturalism: Analysing the Limits of Humour

Rhonda BREIT

The use of satire to ridicule Muslim religious icons has prompted extensive debate in recent years. On the one hand, offensive cartoons are defended on the grounds of freedom of speech and the right to offend – fundamental human rights essential to preserving democracy. Others, however, have called for a more nuanced analysis of the issue to prompt greater responsibility in publication of satirical religious comment. By analysing the changing nature of the public sphere and using examples from the Mohammed cartoon controversies, more nuanced insights can be gleaned into the responsible use of satire to prompt inclusive and informed debate around religious-related issues.

KEYNOTE

The Past Progressive: History and Belonging in Syrian Social Drama

Christa SALAMANDRA

Audiences and producers alike see historical drama as always also about the present. In historical, folkloric and biographical genres, Syrian television makers critique current social and political conditions. Idealised images harken back to perceived golden ages of social cohesion, religious tolerance, cultural flourishing and benevolent governance, throwing the contemporary condition into bitter relief. Drawn from over a decade of ethnographic fieldwork, this presentation explores the inverse of this proposition, arguing that contemporary dramas are always about the past, deployed in multiple and contradictory ways. Works set in the present unfold against a backdrop of shadows. Underlying contemporary social drama—and raised in their makers' discourse—is the question “what went wrong?” referencing the post-independence era when, producers argue, Syria was poised for progress and prosperity. Depictions of social divisions and divisiveness point to the betrayal of this promise, a failed national project. Memory, conveyed through dialogue and flashback, forms a key narrative strategy. Individual stories intertwine with shared pasts; personal histories imply collective failures. The frequent critique of corruption conjures not merely a condition but a process of deterioration. Syrian drama's characteristically dark social realism is itself in an anti-modern aesthetic of dilapidation, reflected in the informal settlements that frequently form its setting. These spaces, and the unfortunates who inhabit them, are not merely mired in the past, they are living a faded, degraded version of that past. Characters struggle amid traces of a bygone better place, even as their creators deride a supposed propensity to live on the glories of Islamic Empire, real and imagined. Conversely, when the past is not wrapped in wistful nostalgia, it becomes the source of a lingering backwardness that hobbles the system. Progressive, secular drama creators seek to counter what they deem the retrograde pathologies of a flawed political and social evolution.

SESSION 2 – Panel A: Modern Media and Religious Identities

‘Sexual Misery’ or ‘Happy British Muslims’?: Contemporary Mediations of Muslim Sexuality

Claire CHAMBERS

This paper first examines what Kamel Daoud controversially termed ‘the sexual misery of the Arab world’ in a 2016 New York Times article. Daoud conflates ‘Arab’ with ‘Muslim’, makes an automatic association between the West and gender equality, and sweepingly generalises about sexual abuses. This is not to suggest that there are no problems for women in the ‘Muslim world’. Egyptian feminists, for instance, have challenged the abuses at Tahrir Square to which Daoud alludes. However, in the context of powerful Orientalist myths about the Arab and Muslim world as a hotbed of repressed sexuality – which Daoud even acknowledges – it is damaging for such articles to use the diction of contagion. Journalists portray Muslims’ sick sexual attitudes being transmitted to the perceived ‘healthy’ European body politic. Using Cologne and Rotherham as two case studies, I conclude the first half of my paper by evaluating representations from the Anglo-American broadsheet newspaper industry of Muslim ‘sexual misery’. In the paper’s second section, I ask how young Muslims imagine their own sexual relationships through art, storytelling and social media. I analyse the 2014 viral YouTube video, ‘Happy British Muslims’ as a joyous antidote to the dominant narrative of ‘sick’ Muslim sexuality. Another resistant alternative can be found in Shelina Zahra Janmohamed’s work. The paper will close by focusing on her blog, Spirit 21, her journalism for such print media as the Times, Guardian, Muslim News and Emel magazine, and particularly her 2013 Telegraph article ‘What Muslim Women Really Want in the Bedroom’.

Religious Identity and TV Audience in Turkey: Identity in the Making
Burak ÖZÇETİN

Empiricist and positivistic tendencies and methodological individualism have dominated the scientific field of audience studies in Turkey (Özçetin, 2013). More interpretive studies focusing on audiences’ reception of media, on the other hand, missed many points by considering media consumption taking place in a vacuum; as if not “surrounded by the mighty structures of our cultures and our economy” (Lewis, 1991, p. 41). Neglecting the theoretical advancements (Alasuutari, 1999; Ang, 1991; Morley, 1992) in the field, ‘audience’ is itself considered as an essentialist, taken for granted category by these approaches. Departing from a sociological/ anthropological (Ginsburg, Abu-Lughod, & Larkin, 2002) grasp of TV audiences, and constructivist understanding cultural identities (Hall, 1990; Jenkins, 2008), this presentation problematises the role played by media consumption “in constructing and defining, contesting and reconstituting national, ‘ethnic’ and other cultural identities” (Gillespie, 1995, p. 11). The presentation specifically problematises the relationship between TV consumption and Islamic (and Islamist) identity making in Turkey. It will present the relevant quantitative (nationwide survey with 4290 participants) and qualitative (in-depth interviews, focus groups and participatory observations) findings of a nationwide research project (24 months 80,000 Pound Sterling project funded by TÜBİTAK, Turkey) directed by the author and his team. The research findings

show that TV consumption practice is an interpersonal and social issue and ‘individual’ choices are deeply connected with construction of symbolic boundaries (Lamont & Molnar, 2002), moral hierarchies and distinctions (Bourdieu, 1984), which are integral to the making of cultural and religious identities. Morality becomes the yardstick against which viewing choices and practices are ordered; and TV viewing and TV talk opens up countless venues where ‘audiences’ as such appear and disappear, and identities are negotiated (Baym, 2000; Scannel, 1989).

Media and the Globalisation of a New Rhetoric Against Terrorism and Political Islam: Reading Jāved Aḥmad Ghāmidī’s Counter-Narrative Against “Traditional Islam”

Kamran BASHIR

As political Islam, Islamism and terrorism have found new ways of expression and activism, dissident voices within contemporary Islam have also developed its rhetoric and narrative against these ideologies, drawing upon historical imagination and revisiting the Muslim scholarly tradition. On many occasions, this struggle among Muslim scholars and activists have made recourse to media for globalising their message and reaching out to Muslims and non-Muslims all over the globe. The Pakistani religious scholar and public intellectual, Jāved Aḥmad Ghāmidī (b. 1951) is one such dissident voice in the contemporary Muslim world who is arguing for a new narrative of what Islam actually means historically and substantially, and what is the relationship between Islam and the state in its historical and contemporary perspective. More important in his campaign is the role of media (including social, internet and television) that has not only played a key role in the global diffusion and impact of his seemingly original ideas to understand Islam in a new light but has shaped this intellectual movement as well. The proposed paper aims to introduce and critique Ghāmidī’s counter-narrative that he offers against ‘traditionalist’ schools which emphasises Islam’s political ambitions, and also how media has played an important role in the spread and influence of his ideas.

SESSION 2 – Panel B: Satire in National Contexts

Dying for a Laugh: The State of Satire in Pakistan

Moni MOHSIN

My talk will focus on the dangers faced by satirists in Pakistan. Though apparently flourishing on television, newspapers and online, satire is, in fact, limited to taking pot shots at only a few innocuous subjects. What ought to be the real targets of satire, the power elites in Pakistan’s polity, are strictly off limits for satirists. This paper will explore how the establishment has secured its immunity from ridicule. While a few brave cartoonists, writers and singers have courageously hit on, they remain exceptions to the rule. In general, such is the climate of fear in the country, that satirists have come to censor themselves. My long running column *The Diary of a Social Butterfly* (which appears in *The Friday Times*) is ostensibly another dig at that easy target, the wealthy chattering classes of Pakistan. Narrated in the voice of a privileged, shallow socialite based in Lahore, the column nonetheless spotlights the seismic changes that have shaken Pakistani society and polity over the last 20 years. The column details how the rise in overt religiosity, conspicuous consumption, nationalism, sectarianism and brutal

extremism have shaped the daily lives of both ordinary Pakistanis as well as those with wealth and power. Quoting from the original text, I will discuss the strategies I have employed in order to have my say and get away with it in what is now a violent and intolerant society. I will also discuss readers' reactions to my writing and whether or not my satirical writing has succeeded in its aim to engender self-awareness and correction.

Proposing a Different Communicative Imaginary: Satire in Egyptian Revolutions Ghadah ALRASHEED

Much attention has been directed towards the role of social media in political uprisings of the Arab world. Most of it relates to the alleged potential of social media in propelling and channelling the protests. Investigating what fuelled the uprisings, many have highlighted the role of the Internet in changing Arab political systems. This way of talking about the interaction between the Internet and revolution is not new. Technological utopianism can actually be located within a long-standing Western historical and cultural construction, one that expresses great hope for new technology (Carey, 1989; Moscow, 2005; Turner, 2010). The problem with this conception is not only that it undermines other resources of resistance, but that it also de-historicises the Arab region and de-roots contemporary movements. Here I find it important to put forward a more differentiated communication imaginary to bear on modern movements by focusing on the case of satire in the Egyptian January 25 Revolution. This imaginary involves satire, a strand of non-utopian political discourse, to dissect what happened. I intend to elaborate on the use of satire in mediating the Egyptian 25 Revolution, and also to trace it historically by showing how satire produced by the Egyptian, James Sanua, inspired the late 19th century protests in Egypt against Khedive Ismail, Egypt's Ottoman governor (Abou Naddara Collection). Satire, I argue, is a resource that can be employed to excavate the history of the region and locate possibility of resistance in areas of communication that have been sidelined by a focus on digital media.

SESSION 2 – Panel C: Popular Resistance and the Media

Youth Mediapreneurship in Tunisia, Morocco and Turkey: Web Resistance 2.0 Roxane FARMANFARMAIAN

Youth groups un-associated with political parties and adept at social media use both domestically and globally, were key to the success of the 2011 upheavals in Tunisia and Morocco, and played a significant role in the Gezi Park uprisings in Turkey in 2013. Yet, today, they are frequently viewed as periphery to mainstream developments regarding freedom of expression, community identity and political activism. In fact, urban, educated youth at the core of yesteryear's revolutionary activism have today become mediapreneurs, using web platforms and social media to impact national identity, public issue awareness and policy construction. As media control, political manipulation, insecurity and extremism play an increasing role in the parameters surrounding the public square, young mediapreneurs are exploring their ability to function as a responsible force of resistance within states undergoing political transition. Drawing on opportunity theory and Berlin's

concepts of 'freedom from' and 'freedom to', the paper analyses three websites each in Tunisia, Morocco and Turkey, all established by young entrepreneurs, which have impacted local politics through the use of investigative, performative, interactive and graphical social media to reach, lobby and engage the population. These case studies make it possible to trace how youth-led social media activism has helped elaborate and expand the public sphere from a space previously inhabited either by 'official' organs of state or anti-government social movements (Web Resistance 1.0), to one that provides a 'public' good – a space no longer devoid of its own politics, but which has become the site of political, professional and civic tension (Web Resistance 2.0).

Salamiya and the Syrian War Media: Sites of Civic Education and Civil Society Otared Haidar

The last five years subjected all Syrians, including the Syrian Ismailis, to unprecedented regular suffering and horror which is still increasing in intensity. The Syrian Ismailis, particularly in Salamiya, are still living through a daily experience of death, kidnapping and misplacement. This brutal war is accompanied by the rise of polemics and a frenzied media war on Ismaili history and symbols. The Syrian Ismailis respond to this organised war on their culture and identity by using the means of cultural and social media to consolidate their collectiveness and defend their community. Their sites and pages reconstruct their cultural imaginary through songs, narratives, films, images, rituals, discussions and collective memory. This cultural output sheds light on the interaction of these individuals and groups with the crisis, and on their own modes of resistance and of struggle for survival. Their cultural production which is disseminated on the platforms of social media represents a strong counter-discourse to the binaries and stereotypes that were established by the war and its paralleled media war. Salamiya and the Ismailis prove that what seems to be standing silent on the sidelines is a conscious diverging from the current standardised patterns of political activism towards peaceful activism and civil society. Their classical and modern cultural paradigms are among their main inspirational sources for their models and projects of social work and civic education in their city and community. This paper combines empirical research with data collected by following daily and closely the Syrian media and new media, and view them in light of modern approaches of cultural studies. It provides an internal and comprehensive view of the Syrian Ismailis and Salamiya during the last five years of war that influenced and transformed the city and the community. It also explores challenges and prospects for them in particular, and for Syria in general.

Impact of Social Media on Afghanistan's Social Taboos Bahaar JOYA

In a country of 1.5 million widows along with 25 % of the women and girls diagnosed with fistula due to child marriage, as they were younger than 16 when got married, social media has helped to a certain extent to eliminate violence and exploitation against women as it is disclosing and bringing awareness about the facts of a narrow-minded male driven society which is being pushed to a certain extent by social media activities to give justice to a recessive section of society, namely women. It is crystal clear that there is ignorance of human rights in a war-hit country like Afghanistan where women have been treated as property or a commodity. In this male-dominated

chauvinistic society, women were always mistreated on every front and were denied their basic rights for ages, i.e. freedom of speech, freedom of education. With a ranking of 147 on the gender inequality index and where 85% of women have no formal education and are illiterate, Afghanistan is one of the most unsafe places to live as declared by the UN due to a lack of security because of three decades of war; the risk of kidnapping and rape has also prompted many families to force their young daughters into marriage. Still, social media has brought a lot of positive changes at a smaller scale in the lives of Afghan women where they can interact with their male counterparts as well as to somehow know about the changes which are happening around the globe. These help them to gain knowledge about their basic rights and can enable them to raise their voices when they have been trespassed.

Friday 4 November

KEYNOTE

Image Wars: Arab Media Dilemma Abroad and at Home

Hafez AL MIRAZI

The government-controlled media in Muslim-majority Arab countries is more sensitive to political taboos than that of religion. Political satirists, like Egyptian Bassem Yousef had no problem making fun of Muslim clerics and icons during the one-year rule of the Muslim Brotherhood, however, the elevation to power of General Sisi pushed Bassem not just to end his highly popular, satirical shows on Egypt's politics, but into voluntary exile. My daily show was also ended once I stated on a pan-Arab satellite TV channel on February 12, 2011: "after the ousting yesterday of Mubarak in Egypt, let's talk next episode about its aftermath on politics in Saudi Arabia." Accusing the MB movement of being a "terrorist organisation" by the current regime in Egypt made Egyptian government-controlled TV channels look similar to anti-Muslim US channels, like Fox News, in terms of negative images and discourse against "radical" Islam. Fox News and its commentators on Islam have become the most quoted, translated, and cherished US media outlet by 'Muslim' Egyptian media that adheres to the government's agenda. On the other extreme, Al Jazeera, particularly in its original and native Arab broadcast, has been the source of violent and grotesque images of troubled Muslim lands for the rest of the world, offering exclusive interviews with leaders of terrorist groups. Sadly, it is following a political agenda of the channel's financier and host, Qatar, in using such groups without believing in their doctrines to intimidate other states and adversaries. Finally, Arab TV stations have, intentionally or out of political/commercial expediency, distorted the images and perceptions of political discourse/debates over national and religious issues. Mainstream media outlets competed with each other, for high viewership ratings, by adopting or inciting heated discussions to turn it into fist fights and brews akin to obscured American "trash talkshows." Indeed, the Arab media has ended up being mistrusted and hated by both, the ruled and rulers, in this part of the Muslim World.

SESSION 3 – Panel A: Media and Local Politics

The Role of Media, Demographics and Interpersonal Relations in the Formation of Attitudes Towards Islam and Muslims in New Zealand

Shaista MALIK

Despite the negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims reported in the media, many research studies explored that non-Muslims demonstrated positive attitudes towards Islam and Muslims. There is, therefore, a tension here: a) media content/discourse studies of anti-Muslims bias; b) audience studies that reveal positive attitudes. This project aims to explore the relationship between media usage and attitudes towards Islam and Muslims among

New Zealand residents. This study has three principal objectives: it investigates the association between media usage and non-Muslims' attitudes towards Islam and Muslims; it examines the links between non-Muslims' attitudes to demographics and interpersonal relations; it compares and contrasts the perceptions of non-Muslims and Muslims towards media coverage of Islam and Muslims. This study assumes that the media and interpersonal relations are important sources of information about Islam and Muslims in New Zealand. It examines how often different media (broadcast, print, online, etc) are used, and how important these media are considered as sources of information about Islam and Muslims. Another significant objective of this study is to explore the perceptions of Muslims and non-Muslims living in New Zealand towards media coverage of Islam and Muslims. The study compares and contrasts the perceptions of Muslims and non-Muslims towards media reporting. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are employed to achieve these objectives. This project draws on three main theoretical frameworks: encoding/decoding model; discourse theory; and the 'discourse-cognition-society' framework.

Media-ted Identities; Technology, Theology and the Muslim Question in South India Nuaiman Keeprath ANDRU

What makes certain media technologies work so smoothly among certain Muslim religious communities over others? One answer to this question rejects any possibility for specific/local history for media technologies and argues that medial qualities of communication technologies work the same way across communities and cultures. But the other answer argues that it's the specific forms of religious identity that shape the life and career of a technology in a given community. Based on an ethnographic investigation among a South Indian Muslim community, this paper understands that while these two explanations are important, neither of them will explain the question adequately and argues that the popularity of certain technologies over others cannot be understood comprehensively without considering the forms of religious authority at work; knowledge practices it affords; and ethical dispositions it seeks to embody in specific Muslim religious communities. This is also to argue that knowledge practices that sustain specific forms of Muslim identity and theological authority depend on the medial qualities of technologies used to store and transmit religious knowledge.

SESSION 3 – Panel B: Media and the Nation

Public Morality and the Transformation of Islamic Media in Indonesia Arie Setyaningrum PAMUNGKAS

Public morality is commonly perceived as moral and ethical standards address to society. It involves social pressures to uphold moral and ethical standards, forms of regulations (disciplines) is often characterised by 'moral panics'. With regard to the transformation of Islamic media in Indonesia, 'da'wa' is a central key to assigning proper Islamic practices of public morality. Therefore it is necessary first to understand the da'wa practice that gave birth to Islamic media in Indonesia that is rooted in the colonial time, and secondly to understand it as a prolonged social political movement in post colonial times, especially

when it works under the capitalist mode of production through mass mediated industry. In the colonial time, Islamic media became a source of popularising Islamic teachings that used to be known as auditory culture, and then visual culture (including the art of readings). Also, in the colonial time, Islamic media played a significant role in the construct of national identity, serving as a revival project against the colonial ruler (the Dutch Indies). In postcolonial times, Islamic media during the Sukarno's period, was also a central key for building national characters and an advertisement of the fears for the impact of polarised global power. Therefore the rise of Suharto into power in post 1965 became a central subjugation to Islamic media that promoted the idea of Islamic revivalism. Indeed, the promotion of Islamic piety in Suharto's period gave a space for contesting new areas of Islamisation, especially when da'wa practices met the capitalist mode of production in the media industry and transformed da'wa practices into pop culture. Islamic pop culture still continues to be hegemonic in post Suharto era, but it is also shaped by various global da'wa movements, because particular da'wa movements have their own audience but they also share knowledge with a larger audience (that is later known as the Muslim public sphere). Therefore, when global da'wa movements through mass mediated forms shape Muslim public spheres, they struggle for claiming 'public morality' for particular interests, and/or audience (market), and inevitably adherents.

Inventing a Usable Past: A History of Arab Politics Approach to Understanding the Islamic State Organisation

Omar AL-GHAZZI

This paper focuses on the communication of history as a prism to think about current Middle East politics, particularly in relation to the Islamic State (IS) organisation. Considering dominant tropes in Arab media discourse, I argue that the momentous events that have shaken the Arab world since 2011 from the Arab uprisings to the rise of IS, have been often communicated and imagined in terms of the rise and fall of an Arab-Islamic collective community. Focusing on IS, I examine how the organisation frames itself as capable of resurrecting an Islamic civilisation, which is portrayed to have been in decline since the caliphate rule in 7th century Arabia. IS's radical essentialisation of religion and history, I argue, exemplifies its communication strategy. I ask: How does IS strategically mobilise its fabricated imagination of history in pursuit of religious legitimacy? What role does its invocation of Islamic history play in its self-portrayal as the solution to grievances expressed by Muslims in various international contemporary contexts? In fact, IS responds to a wider and older context of an Arab fixation with history. Within a context of a modern quest for a usable past, I relate IS's communicative strategy to a number of factors that explain this persistent deployment of history-to-be-achieved in Arab political discourse, which have to do with the region's colonisation, authoritarian ruling systems, and the tensions between pan-regional and nation-state conceptions of identity. These factors explain the failure to institutionalise narratives about the collective past in many Arab countries that give rise to radical interpretations of history, such as that of IS.

Fixing for the Revolution: An Inquiry into the Role of Egyptian Fixers in Foreign Media Coverage of the Revolution Between 2011 and 2014

Salma I MOUSTAFA KHALIL

Journalism is viewed as “the first draft of history”. It is one of the definers of the identity of communities, cultures and history. This paper targets a section of the journalism community, commonly known as fixers. They are the locals who provide assistance to foreign journalists. This study sheds light on the trends in which fixing has existed within the Egyptian context throughout the years following the January 25th 2011 protests and until 2014. It also looks at how the changing political conditions influenced fixing, and consequently affected foreign reporting and the power dynamics and relationships between reporters and the locals they work with. Interviews with eight fixers and six foreign journalists were conducted to address the topic. The community of foreign journalists has been developing, changing and readjusting itself over time and space. Fixers are an innovation of this community, one that is fitted to the circumstances of journalists and the place about which the reporting is happening. The political situation in Egypt, and the challenges that have always existed with regards to freedom of speech and political stability in Egypt as well as international journalistic issues put the agency of the fixer into question. However, when considering their contribution to the process, access to informants, choice of sources, opinions that are expressed, intentionally or not, and finally the fact that fixers are mostly activists, it becomes evident that there is no way of bypassing their voice. Their name on the byline is only a technicality; their voice in the written word, however, is too entangled with the journalist’s voice to be denied or dismissed.

War in Syria and the Kurdish Media Narrative

Zenobia HOMAN

At IISA, academic research meets investigative journalism. This paper discusses how the Northern Kurdistan (Bakurê Kurdistanê) media portray the war in Syria; not just the campaign against Islamic State, but the wider civil war, and human rights. There is a notable absence of consistent and coherent information from Bakur Kurdistan which is accessible in Europe – while the region has a unique and valuable perspective of the situation on its borders. Several case studies have been selected for comparison: messages from Kurdish papers, television, blogs, social media and individuals will be contrasted with the image portrayed by Western media. This is challenging, as it is nearly impossible to access independent and unbiased journalism. Although some studies have already been conducted on Northern Kurdish journalism during the 20th century, the July 2016 coup attempt has had a massive impact on media in this region. The effects of the coup attempt are not yet completely known, and will surely be analysed for years to come. IISA hopes to create a comprehensive overview of the situation as a basis for further research. Particularly, because questions are all too often pointed in the direction of the Turkish government and the PKK, while other events receive less attention in the West. The Syrian civil war has been having, and is sure to further have, a huge impact on Kurdish culture and identity. The way in which this conflict is portrayed by the Bakur Kurdish themselves is a story which cannot be buried underneath internal media problems.

SESSION 3 – Panel C: Identity on Screen

“Are We on the Same Wavelength?”: Interethnic Homosexual Relationships and Queering the Cinematic Mainstream in Ian Iqbal Rashid’s Touch of Pink’

Alberto Fernández CARBAJAL

The Orlando shootings of June 2016 brought to the forefront once more the fraught relationship between Islam and homosexuality, making its depiction in global media all the more necessary. In my paper, I will explore Ian Iqbal Rashid’s *Touch of Pink* (2004), a film depicting the relationship between Alim (Jimi Mistry), an Indo-Canadian Ismaili man born in Tanzania, and Giles (Kristen Holden-Ried), a white British man. Set in the diaspora spaces of Toronto and London, this is indeed a romantic vision of contemporary homosexual relationships whose screenplay and visual style constitute a variation of the classical Hollywood comedy. My paper will propose that Alim, as a western Muslim man, is attempting to find a positive model of queerness through his relationship with the ‘spirit’ of Golden-Age Hollywood actor Cary Grant (Kyle MacLachlan); however, this dream-like relationship also proves an escapist distraction from having to deal with his identity issues as a Muslim gay man. Alim and Giles’s relationship is tested by Alim’s mother’s visit to London, during which Alim initially refuses to introduce Giles as his partner. While I will argue the film’s plot remains fairly conventional regarding its somewhat predictable ‘coming out’ narrative and its depiction of intergenerational reconciliation and interethnic sympathy, I will propose that the broaching of such a controversial topic as Muslim homosexuality in a romantic comedy acts as a subversive narrative exercise, critiquing comedically the double life many queer Muslims are societally forced to lead, while restituting Muslim minority presences onto a mainstream cinematic genre.

Gender, Ethnicity and the Denationalisation of Citizenship in Turkey: Shifting Representations of Minority Women in post-1980s Cinema

Sevinc ELAMAN-GARNER

The foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 was based on an ideology of citizenship that stressed commitment to one nation, one religion and one language. This made life difficult for religious and ethnic minorities in Turkey, who have been forced to play conflicting roles that have fragmented or denied their identities. This ideology of citizenship was echoed in popular culture, where we can also see some of its gendered characteristics: portrayals of non-Muslim/non-Turkish women that appeared in the cinema of the early twentieth century, for example, generally served as one-dimensional and negative ‘others’ who are set against an ‘ideal’ vision of Turkish/Muslim womanhood. They are also generally represented in this way as a threat to the civic, religious and ethnic homogeneity sought by hegemonic Turkish nationalism. This has changed at the end of the twentieth century however: the feminist movement of the 1980s and Turkey’s official candidacy in the European Union in 1999 initiated a process of denationalisation of citizenship which led to the increasing visibility of non-Turkish and non-Muslim identities in Turkey. This paper proposes to take up these themes through an analysis of the representation of minority women in a selection of films produced in the post-1980s period. It explores the changing cinematic manifestations of womanhood in this period as a means of exploring their roles within contemporary discourses of Turkish national and cultural integrity, looking in particular at the way that such portrayals challenge

and deconstruct the kinds of stereotypes that had been dominant in the past. This allows us to reflect on the effects of the nation-building process on religious and ethnic minority women's experiences as gendered national subjects, and to explore some of the ongoing implications of this period within narratives of gendered Turkish nationhood as these themes surface in contemporary Turkish cinema and broader public discussion.

Pirated Films and Popular Resistance in Iran

Saeed ZEYDABADI-NEJAD

Since the 1979 Iranian revolution, pirated films have found their way to Iranian viewers in different formats and via various means. Pirated films that have proved to be popular range from pre-revolution Iranian films, Hollywood, Bollywood, East Asian martial arts as well as banned post-revolutionary films. Based mainly on interviews with Iranian audiences, this paper explores the unauthorised film culture as expression of popular resistance. It discusses the informal film economy's impact on film making practice: for example, why award-winning post-revolutionary directors, such as Jafar Panahi, whose banned films are popular on pirated VCD (video CDs) and DVD, continues to make socially-engaged films in spite of not gaining financial benefits from their distribution in Iran. Furthermore, the paper looks at the impact which some widely-seen Hollywood films have had on film-making practice in Iran, because of [unofficially] being recognised as a blueprint to follow. Finally, the paper discusses the different dynamics at play with the recent high-speed internet connections that allow downloading of accessed films to bypass internet filters.

SESSION 4 – Panel A: Religion in the Age of Social Media

Suyuti on YouTube: Mediated Struggles for Identity in Post-Revolutionary Egypt

Rebecca SKRESLET HERNANDEZ

This paper looks at efforts by prominent members of the Azhari religious establishment in Egypt to re-invent their identities using online media following the 2011 revolution. During Muhammad Mursi's embattled presidency, the religious establishment under the leadership of Shaykh al-Azhar Ahmad al-Tayyib and State Mufti 'Ali Gum'a found themselves in heated competition for authority with salafi and secular voices in Egypt and even split within its own ranks. It is remarkable that during this period of existential crisis, three prominent muftis associated with the state fatwa-issuing authority in Egypt, Dar al-Ifta', all published multi-part commentaries on YouTube in which the scholars explicate the work of the fifteenth-century Egyptian polymath, Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti. What makes al-Suyuti such an effective ally for contemporary scholars seeking to assert their identity as spokespersons for an "orthodox" Sunni ideology? Specifically, what do these scholars find appealing about al-Suyuti's work on legal precepts, al-Ashbah wa-l-naza'ir? How do these scholars use media technology to assert their identity during a time of crisis? This paper argues that each of the three scholars ('Ali Gum'a, Muhammad Wisam, and 'Amr al-Wardani) uses his commentary on al-Suyuti's fifteenth-century work to affirm the legitimacy of the Azhari manhaj. In this context, the Azhari manhaj refers to a methodology of textual and legal interpretation and a larger

ideology that encompasses Ash'ari theology and Sufi conduct in addition to madhhab-based jurisprudence. Positive assertions of a mainstream Sunni identity are made in contrast to a rival approach that is portrayed as extremist, immoral and ignorant.

Islamic Inspired Radio Stations in Kenya: Creating Alternative Citizen Narratives Kimani NJOGU

Media construct, reaffirm and contest identities. They also provide alternative narratives about the world (Njogu & Middleton, 2009). With the push for democratisation processes and the liberalisation of airwaves in Kenya in the 1990s, there emerged a proliferation of private and community media outlets, some of them inspired by Islam. They sought to provide other narratives and to contest those presented by the State. These media platforms are shaping sociopolitical discursive practices within Muslim communities and beyond. Muslim women leaders for instance, are finding an outlet for active agency as media practitioners or articulators of political positions (Alidou, 2013). This paper examines the interplay between democratisation, identity and Islamic inspired radio stations in Kenya with particular reference to Iqra FM, a radio station based in Nairobi.

Islamic State and Iconoclasm in the Era of Clickbait: Mechanisms and Personal Responsibilities Bastien VARIOUSTSIKOS

From Bamiyan to Palmyra, the past 15 years have largely contributed to the construction of a western perception of iconoclastic urges as a systematic expression of Islamic fundamentalism. This paper discusses the mechanisms behind this perception, and highlights how the necessarily public and performative nature of iconoclasm efficiently intersects with modern media strategies such as the clickbait, a content aimed at generating revenue through clicks using sensationalist headlines and/or pictures. After introducing the two latter concepts, this paper analyses their interactions along three main lines of argument, first of which is the issue of responsibility. If publicisation is the *raison d'être* of iconoclasm, what is the role of the media in the process? What is our individual responsibility as members of a web-based social networks in relaying the information? Secondly, we will highlight how the focus on iconoclastic destructions is contributing to the construction of biased perceptions of Islam in western societies. Thirdly, we will look at how this media strategy has been detrimental to international efforts towards the protection of cultural heritage in Iraq and Syria by emphasising a phenomenon responsible for a very small portion of its destruction. We'll conclude with a few recommendations and presentation of existing good practices.

SESSION 4 – Panel B: Social Media and Resistance

Digital Revelations: Text, Secrecy and the Cultivation of Mystics' Internet Archives in Iran Seema GOLESTANEH

Since its original inception, the Nimatullahi Shi'i Sufi Order of Iran has adhered to a policy of secrecy in regard to the dissemination of its ideas, done largely to protect against the

“misunderstanding” or “misappropriation” of mystical concepts by the uninitiated. This adherence to secrecy has grown more complicated, however, as in the last ten years the Sufis have published their own website which contains a digital archive of sermons from the current and past spiritual leaders (quotb), exegetical works and electronic versions of foundational texts. In other words, many of these very texts and sermons which delineate the necessity and virtues of the maintenance of secrecy within the order, now exist in digital form on an unprotected website, and hence are now potentially accessible to all electronic passersby. Based on ethnographic research and textual analysis, this paper examines the motivations behind the Sufis’ construction of such an archive, the internal debates within the Order surrounding it, and the larger implications it has for the Sufi’s creation of their own historical narrative within post-revolutionary Iran. I will address such questions such as: 1) Why is this considered an archive rather than merely a website 2) How do the Sufis explain any seeming contradictions publishing texts and sermons promoting secrecy online? 3) How and why did this new media form inspire the Sufis to create this new form of historical record keeping at this particular socio-historical moment in post-revolutionary Iran. Through these questions, we will gain a greater understanding of how new media forms are impacting the construction, preservation and promotion of the Iranian Sufi past.

When Palestine Bleeds, South Africa Rages: Case Study of the BDS Social Media Warfare

Farhana Bee ISMAIL

The struggle for the liberation of South Africa was fought at a time when social media was not on the radar. The story of the liberation struggle is replete with much store placed on pamphlet bombs and banned literature smuggled into the country. Today activism in South Africa, especially forms of international solidarity have taken to social media. Nominally led by the post 1994 generation, it has had particular success in mobilising for the Palestinian cause. Social media is advantageous as it reaches more people quickly. But it can also be done to the exclusion of organising on-the-ground and lead to information overload. Also how does one enter into substantial debate when the main organisers of a movement are faceless? Against this backdrop this paper engages in a critical case study of Boycott, Disinvestment, Sanctions (BDS) and how it has sought to build Palestinian solidarity through social media. In South Africa the BDS operates primarily to facilitate on-the-ground actions and delivering useful information to supporters. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains a volatile fault line in SA because of the country’s own history. Despite the repeal of apartheid laws in 1994, many South Africans feel an intimate connection with Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. Many see BDS as the only reasonable option left to help Palestinians gain human rights and achieve a just peace, and to achieve tangible successes through various strategies. This paper will attempt to examine and describe how the BDS movement’s social media usage compares with earlier pre-Internet forms of Palestinian activism, and whether the BDS has achieved successes and wins, or not, for the Palestine cause.

Metamorphosis of Social Media in Iranian Politics

Daryoush Mohammad POOR

The beginning of the 21st century witnessed the birth of Iranian blogosphere. Weblogs turned into an autonomous private-public sphere which were suddenly released from the grips of state top-down control and censure. The next generation of social media websites included Google Reader and the latest one of them was Friendfeed. Blogs and social media websites have become part of political dissent and resistance; therefore, they have come under constant attack with constant and continuous pressures on people active in the cyberspace. Pressures have not diminished over time. The presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his controversial second term has witnessed an explosion of cyberspace activity among Iranian people. Part of the expressions of the Green Movement in the aftermath of the 2009 disputed elections were through the use of the social media platform. Yet, as Facebook gradually turned into the dominant network, blogs suffered massively. New generations of social media apps including Viber, WhatsApp and Telegram have turned into new platforms for social and political activism to the extent that Hassan Rouhani publicly acknowledged their role in his rise to the presidency. This paper will reflect on how social media platforms have transformed and been appropriated for sometimes conflicting political ends in Iran.

SESSION 4 – Panel C: Media and Social History

The Role of Social Media in the Document and Protection of Syrian Cultural Heritage During the Present War

Youssef KANJOU

Internet usage has significantly increased since the beginning of the Syrian upheaval in 2011. It was very effective in the field of cultural heritage. It helped mobilise Syrian and international archeological experts and professionals along with junior archaeologists and interested people to monitor, protect, document, analyse and even provide first aid support wherever possible. These newly created virtual groups were able to raise public awareness of the importance of protecting Syrian heritage as part of human history. Before the Syrian crisis, internet utilisation in the heritage sector was not adequately exploited. There were few governmental websites that dealt with Syrian heritage, mostly from a touristic perspective. However, with the escalation of the armed conflict and its direct destructive impact on archaeological sites, enthusiastic youth groups formed several virtual bodies of volunteers and initiated heritage preservation teams. Simultaneously, they invoked local and international attentions to get involved in saving Syrian archaeological sites. Responses to such endeavours, locally and internationally, have been growing gradually and becoming more involved in putting pressure on fighting parties to avoid historical sites. As a result of such collaborations, a database for archaeological sites in Syria has been created to document the damages and their current status. Also, some red lists for looted objects and historical sites under severe threat have been compiled to gain economic support such as in Marat Al-Noman's museum and Umayyad Mosque in Aleppo. This paper will demonstrate the significance of social media in mobilising efforts, virtually and on the ground, to save Syrian heritage and prevent its destruction.

The Past Demands an Answer: What Becomes of History in the Digital Era?

Sharon C SMITH

“The past is knowledge; the present our mistake; and the future we always leave too late.” (“My Ever Changing Moods”, Weller, 1984) As we know, cultural heritage and the built environment throughout the Middle East (writ large) is at tremendous risk. The ravages of war have become part of the vernacular through the advancements of technology. Inundated by the daily explosion of media from, and on, the Middle East, presented rapid fire from a plethora of producers and meant to be consumed wholly and without cognisance of the creator’s intent, context and meaning are lost. In this paper, I will examine the opportunities, constraints, intentions, and consequences – planned and not – of the production, presentation, and dissemination of these materials with focus on the digitisation of materials about and/or from the Middle East and Muslim societies. Digital resources have grown steadily over the last decade and will continue to proliferate in the future. Enveloped within the larger rubric of ‘Digital Humanities,’ digital projects are most often read as philanthropic. Rightfully praised for increasing researchers’ ability to access resources that once were reached only via travel - often prohibitive either in cost and/or accessibility – or preserving materials no longer extant, one should also be aware of who or what is driving any given project. For too long, digitisation projects have escaped the rigours of traditional academic evaluation, resulting in a simplified reading of the digital process and output. One must critically evaluate the impact of digitisation particularly in terms of the production of knowledge and its attendant effects in the construction of history

Hizbullah, Media and Collective Identity

Sarah HAMDAR

For the occasion of ‘Ashura and on a yearly basis, Shi’as around the world gather to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hussein in what is known as the Karbala battle. In Lebanon, multiple political and religious groups organise ‘Ashura rituals around the country, the most prominent of which are those of Hizbullah. The Party organises multiple ritual gatherings and broadcasts them on al-Manar, Hizbullah’s official television station, as well as through Internet live streaming thereby managing to reach a larger audience. This paper is concerned with Hizbullah’s mediated ‘Ashura rituals. Drawing on the theories of Dayan and Katz (1992) and Nick Couldry (2003), it analyses the importance and impact of al-Manar’s live broadcasting on those viewing from home and distant locations. If Hizbullah’s rituals, centred around the physical gathering of individuals, the unified chest beating, mourning and remembrance manage to create a collective identity centred around Shi’a thought and ideology, this paper aims to analyse al-Manar’s ability to translate these elements onto screen thereby allowing viewers to feel as if they are ‘there.’ As such, it is interested in the role of Hizbullah’s media in connecting Shi’as in separate locations to ‘real events’ and in building and maintaining a collective identity through the sharing of a common virtual space, emotions and reality. To do this, this paper also analyses al-Manar’s camera techniques and activities that allow for the translation of the unity and effervescence that are established within the group settings and in this way, analyses the centrality of media in collective Shi’a identity.

Speaker Profiles

Tahnia AHMED,

PhD candidate, King's College London

Research areas: portrayal of religious communities in British political cartoons - specifically Jews, Sikhs and Muslims

Selected publications: Caricatures of Difference: The Changing Perception of Sikhs in London Political Cartoons in *Visualising a Sacred City: London, Art and Religion* (forthcoming)

Omar AL-GHAZZI,

Lecturer in Journalism, The University of Sheffield

Research areas: Global communication; Arab media and politics; citizen journalism; activism and collective memory

Selected publications:

www.sheffield.ac.uk/journalism/staff/omar-al-ghazzi/publications

Website: www.sheffield.ac.uk/journalism/staff/omar-al-ghazzi

Hafez AL MIRAZI,

Professor of Practice in Television Journalism, The American University in Cairo & Radio and TV Broadcaster, Arab media outlets: BBC, VOA, Al Jazeera, Al Arabiya, and Dream TV

Research areas: electronic media; satellite television networking; world politics

Selected publications: see list of newspaper articles and other works at www.aucegypt.edu/fac/hafezal-mirazi

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Ghadah ALRASHEED,

PhD candidate, Carleton University

Research areas: communication and Eastern revolutions/movements; discourse, digital media, and philosophy; history of communication

Selected publications: The Face Veil through the Gaze (2013) in CADAAD

Website: www.carleton.ca/sjc/profile/alrasheed-ghadah/

Nuaiman Keeprath ANDRU,

PhD candidate, University of Hyderabad, Institute of Islamic Studies and Freie University, Berlin

Research areas: ethnography and history of Islam and media in Kerala, South India

Selected publications: Meda-tions: Islam and Media (in Malayalam) (2015)

Kamran BASHIR,

PhD candidate, Department of History, University of Victoria

Research areas: history of Qur'anic Exegesis in South Asia; South Asian Islam; modern Islam

Website: www.uvic.academia.edu/KamranBashir

Rhonda BREIT,

Associate Dean, Graduate School of Media and Communications, Aga Khan University

Research areas: media law; ethics and journalism education; pedagogical innovations to contextualise the study of journalism in East Africa

Selected publications: Internationalisation as De-Westernisation of the Curriculum: The Case of Journalism at an Australian University (2013) in *Journal of Studies in International Education*

Website: www.akumedia.aku.edu/faculty-and-staff/rhonda-breit/

Alberto Fernández CARBAJAL,

Leverhulme Fellow, University of Leicester

Research areas: colonial, postcolonial and queer literatures and films, particularly the representations of the relationship between queer sexualities and Muslim identities

Selected publications: Compromise and Resistance in Postcolonial Writing: E. M. Forster's Legacies (2014)

Website: www2.le.ac.uk/departments/english/research/queer-diasporas

Claire CHAMBERS,

Senior Lecturer, University of York

Research areas: 20th and 21st century writing in English from South Asia, the Arab world, and their diasporas

Selected publications: *British Muslim Fictions* (2011), *Imagining Muslims in South Asia and the Diaspora* (2014), and *Britain Through Muslim Eyes* (2015)

Website: www.york.ac.uk/english/our-staff/claire-chambers/

Sevinc ELAMAN-GARNER,

Lecturer, University of Manchester

Research areas: gender; identity; ethnicity; nationalism; women and war; and women's movements (in particular in Ottoman/Turkish and Middle Eastern society); modern Turkish literature; contemporary Middle Eastern cinema; Middle Eastern studies

Selected publications: *Women, War and the Foundations of the Turkish Republic in The First World War and Its Aftermath* (2015); *The Image of 'Ideal' Turkish Womanhood? A Bakhtinian Approach to Halide Edib Adivar's Raik'in Annesi (Raik's Mother) (1909) in Journal of Gender Studies* (2015)

Website: www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/subjects/middleeasternstudies/postgraduateresearch/phd-students/elaman/ and <https://cresc.academia.edu/Sevin%C3%A7Elaman>

Roxane FARMANFARMAIAN,

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Research areas: International Relations of the Middle East and North Africa; Media in the Middle East; language, discourse and emotion in interstate relations of power; energy security

Selected publications: What is Private, What is Public, and Who Exercises Media Power in Tunisia? A Hybrid-Functional Perspective on Tunisia's media sector (2014) in *Journal of North African Studies*; Policing the Arab Spring: Discordant Discourses of Protest (2014) in *Riot, Unrest and Protest on the Global Stage*

Website: www.free-expression.group.cam.ac.uk/directory/DrRoxaneFarmanfarmaian

Terri GINSBERG,

Assistant Professor and Director of Film, American University in Cairo

Research areas: Palestinian cinema; German cinema; critical theory, gender and sexuality studies; theories of academic pedagogy and institutions

Selected publications: Historical Dictionary of Middle Eastern Cinema; Perspectives on German Cinema; A Companion to German Cinema; special issues of the International Journal of Contemporary Iraqi Studies and Arab Studies Quarterly; blogs for Arabisto, ZNet, Mondoweiss, and The Electronic Intifada

Website: www.aucegypt.edu/fac/terriginsberg; <http://aucegypty.academia.edu/TerriGinsberg>

Seema GOLESTANEH,

Assistant Professor, Indiana University

Research areas: anthropology, religious studies

Selected publications: Understanding Sufi Zikr Ritual as Sites of Aesthetic Experience (2012) in *Saints and their Pilgrims in Iran and Neighboring Countries*

Otarad HAIDAR,

Lecturer, University of Oxford

Research areas: Arabic and comparative studies of literature; media; literary theory; cultural history

Selected publications: The Visual Narratives of the High Renaissance: From Aleppo's Circle to New York's Pen-Club (2013) in *Aram Journal*; The Prose Poem and the Shi'r Journal: A Comparative Study of Literature, Literary Theory and Journalism (2008)

Website: www.wadham.ox.ac.uk/people/fellows-and-academic-staff/h/otared-haidar

Sarah HAMDAR,

PhD candidate, Goldsmiths College, University of London

Research areas: media and communication; religion; politics; childhood studies

Website: www.gold.ac.uk/media-communications/research/current-phd-students/sarah-hamdar/

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Investigative Reporter, Aljazeera International, London and International media trainer, speaker and moderator

Research areas: human rights issues

Selected documentary: Britain's Modern Slave Trade, Aljazeera International (2016)

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PhD candidate, SOAS and Researcher, Institute of Islamic Strategic Affairs

Research areas: Near and Middle East, Turkey, Central Asia; social networks; methods of communication; cultural conflict areas

Relevant publications (available online): Linguistic Identity in Central Asia in Light of Recent Events. Russia & China Programme (2014); Russia and Turkey: Increasing Tensions, Realistic Receptions. Russia & China Programme (2016); Refugee Integration: Past and Present (interview). Refugee Programme (2016)

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Media and Communications Specialist, FBI Communications & Judge, Maritime Industry Media Awards (2016)

Research areas: media; democracy; media sociology; new media

Awards: Courageous Journalism (2001) by Palestinian Syndicate of Journalists, Ramallah Visionary Peace Award (2010) by Sheikh Shaheed Satardien Justice and Peace Foundation

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Fellow, Reuters Institute – Oxford University & Journalist, BBC

Research areas: women's rights in areas of conflict; regional focus – Afghanistan

Selected works: www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26860186;

www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27246742

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Research areas: Syrian cultural heritage; prehistory of Levant

Selected publications: *A History of Syria in One Hundred Sites* (2016); The National Museum of Aleppo, Threats and Strategies for Safekeeping (2016) in ICANNE 9

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Marwan KRAIDY,

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Research areas: Arab media and politics; speed, spectacle and security in globalization, focusing on Islamic State; and the rise and fall of Turkey in Arab public discourse

Selected publications: *Hybridity, or the Cultural Logic of Globalization* (2005); *Reality Television and Arab Politics* (2010); *The Naked Blogger of Cairo: Creative Insurgency in the Arab World* (2016)

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Freelance Journalist and Teaching Assistant, British University in Egypt

Research areas: gender; political Islam; political thought; philosophy; migration; languages

Selected publications: *What is Justice to the Egyptians?* (2011) in *On Egyptian Streets* (Online)

Shaista MALIK,

PhD candidate, Victoria University of Wellington

Research areas: media studies; discourse analysis; social psychology; cultural studies

Selected publications: *Construction of Taliban Image in Pakistan: Discourses Analysis of Editorials of Dawn and The News*

Website: www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/events/MeCCSA/pdf/papers/Malik%20and%20Iqbal%20Paper.pdf

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Writer

Selected publications: *The Diary of a Social Butterfly* (2013); *Duty Free* (2012)

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Graduate Student, University of Amsterdam

Research areas: journalism; alternative education and cultural integration

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PhD candidate, University of Sheffield

Research areas: French satirical press of the 20th century (mainly: Hara Kiri, Charlie Hebdo, Siné Hebdo, La Grosse Bertha); representations of Muslim minorities in the French media; political discourse around Muslims in France; Islamophobia; Racism; Republicanism; Laïcité

Selected blog posts: www.historymatters.group.shef.ac.uk/westerners-blind-plight-muslim-women/; www.thelanguageofauthoritarianregimes.wordpress.com/2016/08/03/it-is-not-the-maghreb-that-islamised-itself-it-is-islam-that-maghrebised-itself/

Website: www.sheffield.ac.uk/history/research/students/imen-neffati

Kimani NJOGU,

Director, Twaweza Communications, former Professor, Kenyatta University

Research areas: Kiswahili; identity; media and governance

Selected publications: Media and Identity in Africa (2009) with J Middleton; Kenya's 2013 Elections: Stakes, Practices and Outcomes (2015)

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Research areas: media anthropology; sociology of culture; media and religion; new media

Selected publications: Making of New Islamism in Turkey: Transformation of the Islamist Discourse from Opposition to Compliance (2011); Mavi Marmara on the News: Convergence and Divergence in Religious Conservative Newspapers in Turkey (with Durna, T) in Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication (2012); İslamcılıktan Yeni-İslamcılığa: İslam, Şiddet ve Devrim (İslam, Violence and Revolution: From Islamism to New-Islamism) in *Türkiye'de Siyasal Şiddetin Boyutları* (2014)

Website: www.populerbegeni.com/

Arie Setyaningrum PAMUNGKAS,

Associate Professor, Gadjah Mada University

Research areas: culture and society; cultural sociology (poverty, gender studies, multiculturalism, politics of identity, globalisation, traditional customaries, urban societies, urbanism); culture and state (nationalism, post national identities); cultural studies (media studies, technoculture, ethnography of muslim cultures and societies, visual art and visual ethnography)

Selected publications: www.edoc.hu-berlin.de/dissertationen/pamungkas-arie-setyaningrum-2015-01-16/PDF/pamungkas.pdf

Website: www.acadstaff.ugm.ac.id/arietia

Daryoush Mohammad POOR,

Research Associate, Institute of Ismaili Studies

Research areas: Intellectual history; contemporary Muslim politics; Ismaili philosophy; international relations

Selected publications: Authority without Territory: The Aga Khan Development Network and the Ismaili Imamate (2014); Nurturing the Seed of Hope: A Green Strategy for Liberation (Statements of Mir Hossein Mousavi) (2012); personal blog (Persian) – blog.malakut.org/

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Christa SALAMANDRA,

Deputy Chair/Associate Professor of Anthropology, The City University of New York

Research areas: Syrian media; culture and society in Syria

Selected publications: Syria from Reform to Revolt, Volume 2: Culture, Society, and Religion (2016)

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Sara SHAKER,

Assistant Lecturer, British University in Egypt

Research areas: women and gender studies; gender and media; media and politics; human rights; Arab Spring

Selected publications: *Khul in Egypt* (2014) by Sara Rizkallah

Website: www.bue.edu.eg/index.php/politicalscience-staff/item/258-sara-hany-shaker

Jakob SKOVGAARD-PETERSEN,

Professor, University of Copenhagen

Research areas: contemporary Islam; establishment of a modern Muslim public sphere and the role of Muslim ulama in modern Arab states; role of Islam in pan-Arab television networks

Selected publications: Defining Islam for the Egyptian State - Muftis and Fatwas of the Dār al-Iftā (1997); Middle Eastern Cities 1900-1950: Public Spheres and Public Places in Transformation, with H C Nielsen (2001); Global Mufti. The Phenomenon of Yusuf al-Qaradawi, with B Graf (2009); Islam on Arab TV (2013); Arab Media Moguls, with N Sakr (2015)

Website: www.tors.ku.dk/ansatte/?pure=da/persons/1596

Rebecca SKRESLET HERNANDEZ,

Independent scholar (previously at Georgetown University)

Research areas: Islamic law and society; religious authority

Selected publications: Medieval Jurist, Modern Muse: Legal Identity and Religious Authority in the Thought and Legacy of Jalal al-Din al-Suyuti (forthcoming, 2017); Sultan, Scholar, and Sufi: Authority and Power Relations in al-Suyuti's Fatwa on Waqf in *Islamic Law and Society* (2013)

Website: www.nelecca.wordpress.com/

Sharon C SMITH,

Program Head, Aga Khan Documentation Center at MIT and Co-director, archnet.org

Research areas: history of art and architecture of the Middle East and of Early Modern Italy; issues of documentation, digitisation, and the dissemination of knowledge

Selected publications: Sites of Mughal Heritage (with Hedrick, C A) in *The Heritage of the Mughal World* (2015)

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Daya THUSSU,

Professor, University of Westminster

Research areas: globalisation and its impact on media cultures, particularly in the South political economy of international communication; global news flow; internationalising media studies; cultural diplomacy and soft power; media and mediated culture in India and among South Asian diaspora

Selected publications: Media and Terrorism: Global Perspectives (2012) co-edited with D Freedman; News as Entertainment: The Rise of Global Infotainment (2007); International Communication: Continuity and Change (third edition, forthcoming)

Website: www.westminster.ac.uk/about-us/our-people/directory/thussu-daya

Bastien VAROUTSIKOS,

Post-doctoral Research Fellow, National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS) and Secretary, Heritage for Peace

Research areas: prehistoric archaeology, cultural heritage in conflicts, Near Eastern and Caucasus areas, community archaeology

Selected publications: The Lessons of Palmyra: Islamic State and Iconoclasm in the Era of Clickbait (with J Felch) in *The Art Newspaper* (2016); The Condemnation of Memory: What's Behind the Destruction of World Heritage Sites in *The Conversation* (2015)

Website: www.cnrs-gjf.academia.edu/BastienVaroutsikos

Saeed ZEYDABADI-NEJAD,

Lecturer, Institute of Ismaili Studies

Research areas: Middle East media and cultures; film studies; religion and politics; media audiences; visual anthropology; online education; blended learning

Selected publications: Political Film in Directory of World Cinema: Iran 2 (forthcoming); Madness, Resistance and Iranian Cinema (2013) in *Contemporary Middle Eastern Cultures: Literature, Cinema and Music*; *Politics of Iranian Cinema: Films and Society in the Islamic Republic of Iran* (2010)

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Notes



The Aga Khan University

Established to serve the developing world and Muslim societies in innovative and enduring ways, the Aga Khan University is committed to the development of human capacities through the discovery and dissemination of knowledge and application through service. Our programmes help prepare individuals for constructive and exemplary leadership roles. Operating on the core principles of quality, relevance, impact and access, we aim to shape public and private policies, through strength in research and excellence in education to ensure students and faculty provide meaningful contributions to society. Inspired by Islamic ethics, humanistic ideals and the philosophy of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), the University is committed to fostering intellectual freedom, distinction in scholarship, pluralism, compassion and positively contributing to our collective responsibility for a sustainable physical, social and cultural environment.

Acting as the intellectual turning plate for the AKDN, the AKU is a unique university which draws on the Network's broad range of development agencies dedicated to improving living conditions and opportunities for the poor, without regard to their faith, origin or gender. Focusing on issues of health, education, culture, rural development, institution strengthening and sustainable economic development, the AKDN works to improve the welfare and prospects of people in developing contexts. Working in more than 30 countries around the world and employing approximately 80,000 people, the AKDN is a global institution that has significantly improved the quality of life of people across Africa and Asia.

To serve AKU's unique mission, the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations (ISMC), based in London, is dedicated to scholarly inquiry about the heritage of Muslim societies. Paying particular attention to the challenges these societies face in contemporary settings, ISMC offers 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 its research, Master's programme, short courses and publications.

In Nairobi Kenya, the Graduate School of Media and Communications (GSMC) seeks to foster a diverse, independent, innovative, ethical and economically thriving media and communications sector that contributes to the creation of successful and sustainable societies in an era of technological and social change. At GSMC, media and communication professionals learn to harness the power of media and play an active role in shaping the future of the media and communications sectors across the East Africa region. The GSMC offers a comprehensive programme of professional development and will soon launch a suite of Master's degree programmes.

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