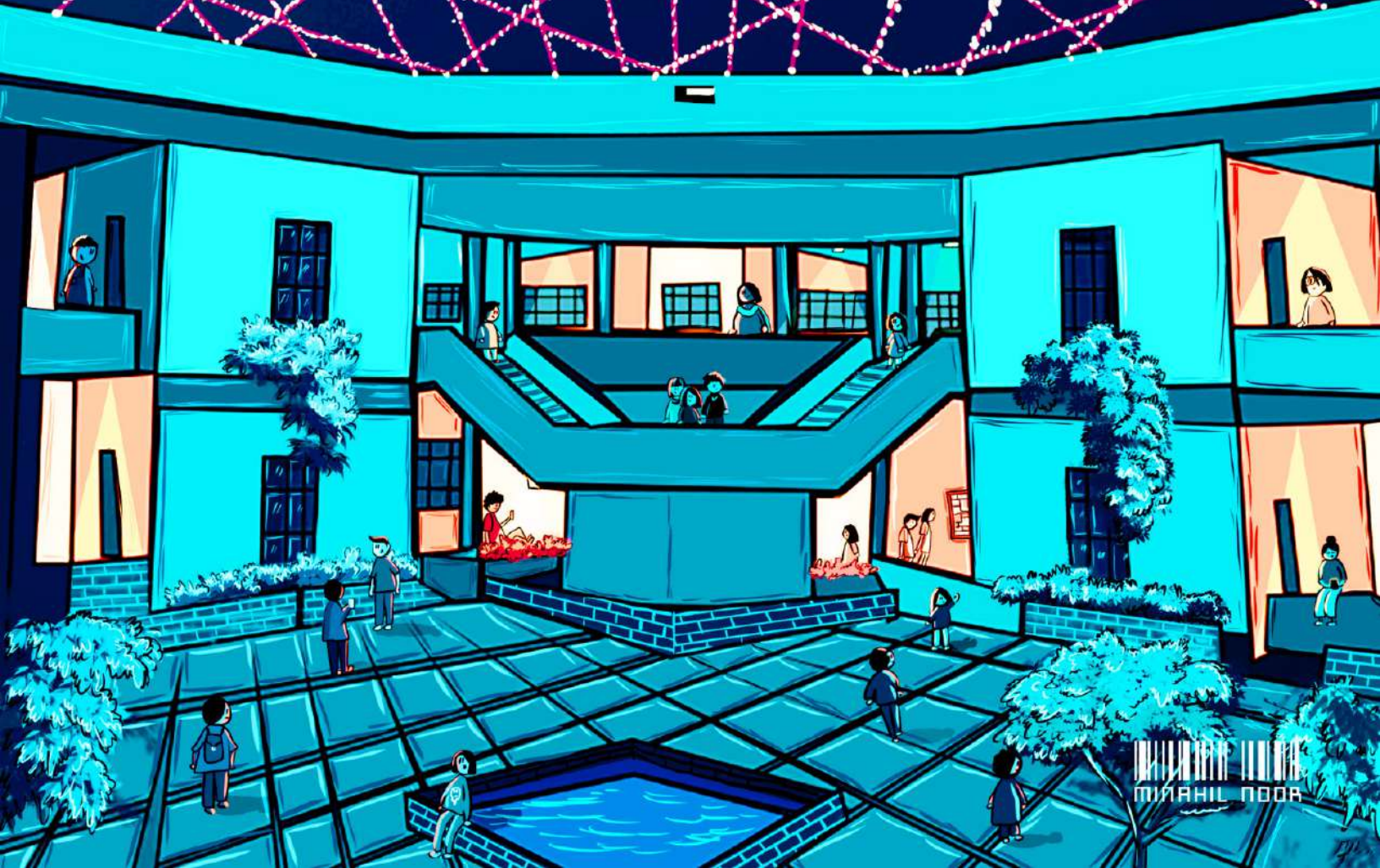




Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

گفتگو GUFTUGU



MINAHIL NOOR

This magazine is the official voice of the
Office of the Dean MGS SHSS.

We are very grateful to all those who contributed
to this magazine in any way. Special thanks to
Minahil Noor for designing the brilliant cover,
and Asim Munir for contributing his beautiful
photographs. We are very proud of how creative
and talented our students are!

This magazine could not have been put
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From the Dean's Desk

When you are an anthropologist, you obsess over culture and how it impacts the surrounding environment. Over the last 15 years I have seen the 'culture' of MGS HSS as a school take shape. Initially, as a much smaller School of Arts and Sciences, then morphing into the School of Humanities, Social Sciences and Law (SHSSL) and finally, settling as the Mushtaq Ahmed Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences (MGS HSS). Today, MGS HSS is the largest and most diverse school at LUMS and arguably the best institution of humanities and social sciences in the region.

In this period of social evolution, the School, which initially was unsure of its identity, has developed its distinct culture and this has been the result of all its individual parts engaging and interacting with one another – students, staff, faculty, alumni. There is something distinctive about Gurmani students, just as there is something distinctive about faculty and staff at MGS HSS. We are a School that nurtures respect, diversity, inclusivity, critical thinking, social commitment, and the drive to continue to learn.

This magazine is an attempt to reflect the interests, values and aspirations of different members of our community. In this edition, we hear from our two new department chairs - Hadia Majid and Waqar Zaidi - on the motivations behind their career choices. We have interviews with two of our most popular teachers – Maryam Wasif Khan and Nauman Faizi. We also have contributions from our students, staff members and alumni. There is coverage of new programs, book launches, talks, conferences and events that make MGS HSS the cultural and intellectual hub of LUMS.

As we complete this issue, we also begin work on the next. We would very much like the magazine to belong to all members of MGS HSS and I encourage staff, students, alumni and faculty to send in short essays and research, artwork, poems, photographs, write ups on certain events – anything of interest for subsequent editions. Ideally, this is a forum to showcase some of the exciting events and initiatives that are happening in our School. Please join the team and contribute!

-Ali Khan



From the Editor's Desk

Hello readers! Thank you for sparing time to go through this amalgamation of all the amazing things that make up the Gurmani School.

Being a business school graduate, I would say that this project has been even more exciting for me, because it gave me the chance to discover more about the people, events, concepts, and courses associated with the humanities and social sciences.

Needless to say, my experience with this project particularly, and my time at the MGSNSS Dean's Office generally, has been eye-opening in the best possible way - I learnt a lot about being on the other side of the student experience at LUMS (it's hard work!), I connected with some fascinating people, and I got wonderful opportunities to express myself in many different ways.

For this magazine, I started by interviewing some really bright and enthusiastic students to take on the project as an intern and I finalised it with Maira - an Econ Pol senior who reminds me a bit too much of myself and writes beautifully. I was able to get to know some faculty members more closely through the interviews Maira conducted and I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I did. It has also been heartwarming to receive some beautiful submissions from alumni and students, and I am very grateful to everyone who contributed.

While there are quite a few iconic things that make LUMS what it is, I feel what really shapes your LUMS journey are the people you meet. This magazine is for all of the people who are or have been associated with the School in one way or the other, as we make a sincere effort to reconnect, share, and learn from each other. We strive to nurture a strong network of support within the Gurmani School for current students, alumni, staff, and faculty; and I am hoping that we can all use this magazine as a platform for creative expression and share all our wins and losses to come together.

We are very excited to see how this magazine grows in its next issues, and would love to hear back from you - whether that is in terms of feedback or contributions for future issues. Feel free to reach out

to us through connect.mgshss@lums.edu.pk or follow us on [@mgshsslums](https://www.instagram.com/mgshsslums) on Instagram. For now, happy reading!

Sophiya Tauseef

The native tribes of Hawaii have over two hundred words for 'rain'. It rains often enough on their island home, sometimes several times a day, that they developed a language of their own for the nature they are surrounded with. There are different terms for drizzles, torrential rain, a heavy storm, a summer soak - over two hundred words to describe them all.

I'm a senior at MGSNSS. I'm from the only batch at LUMS that has experienced campus life pre-, during, and post-pandemic. I have seen the humid summer rains of LUMS, the cold winter winds, and the soft rustle of spring on campus. My favorite is fall, and it is hard to believe that this will be the last time I enjoy the soft crunch of brown leaves on campus lawns as a student at LUMS.

I say this, because it has been four years of being surrounded by these buildings, these people, and these places, and I still don't have the words to describe what LUMS is like when I'm asked.

This magazine is my ode to that question. I might not have the right vocabulary, but I have my own words, and those will have to do for now through this magazine. From the meetings in the Dean's Office at MGSNSS to planning school events, brainstorming designs, and lastly - my favorite - spending hours conversing with instructors during the summer break, only to realize how I was three years too late to do this - that is the journey of this magazine.

Like every journey, this one's come to an end too. But - who knows, maybe one day, we might just have our own dictionary of words to describe what LUMS means to us.

Maira Farooq

The Orange Orchard

By Shaeza N. Cheema



The sweet-tangy citrus scent in the air mixed with the musky earthy aroma of wet soil calmed my nerves as I examined the blue wide sky while sitting on the *chaarpai*. The world seemed so peaceful and serene while I sat in this orange orchard. The bright orange tangerines hanging from the lush green trees made everything look beautiful and oddly refreshing for the eyes. I could feel the nature around me growing with every passing second. I could hear children giggling and playing in the distance, water splashing in the nearby tube well, and birds chirping excitedly. Well, I assumed they were excited, I am no expert in bird emotion.

In this orange orchard at Kamalia, a village in North Punjab, life did not feel as fast paced as

it usually did in Lahore. People were not driving frantically on the road to get to work, no one was running, everyone lived in the moment here. Everyone could hear themselves breathe here. Life is slow, but at peace here. I spend my time in this cozy cottage which was built right at the entrance of this orchard. This is the kind of place where you can sit in a rocking chair, read your favorite book by Mohsin Hamid or a poetry collection of Ghalib's best, and sip on some cardamom *chai*. And when you're done doing that, you can go out for a stroll while a chilly breeze flows through your cotton *kameez shalwar* and your eyes chase the blue birds that fly randomly from tree to tree and are singing melodiously.

In this baagh, life is not haphazard. It is just simple, and our hearts are at peace.

In Conversation with

Dr. Hadia Majid

*Department Chair
Economics*



The Economics Major is one of the most popular in LUMS and heading the esteemed department from the Fall of 2022 as Chair is Dr. Hadia Majid. In this interview, I sat with her to discuss the start of her journey in Economics, her work with the Saida Waheed Gender Initiative, and her new role as Chair of the Economics Department at MGSHTS.

She was part of the undergraduate batch of 2005 at LUMS. Despite having a slice of several disciplines and courses, she knew Economics was her calling. Her time was made all the more memorable with great friends and the excellent tutelage of instructors - some of whom we still have at LUMS. In fact, it was a project of Dr. Ali Cheema's that introduced Dr. Majid to the behavioral discipline of Economics.

“The year was 2003, and I was in my third year,” she tells me. “Dr. Ali Cheema was starting fieldwork in rural Punjab with Dr. Shandana Khan Mohmand of the University of Sussex. They were getting students to join them, and my friend dragged me to his office to sign up. We went on the trip, and that was it. I knew I wanted to go into academia.”

The first interview Dr. Majid took lasted two hours and forty-five minutes. The project was about voting patterns, and the focus locations were rural Lodhran and Sargodha. Even today, she says, going out into the field for research, into the slums of Lahore or elsewhere, is a valuable experience in itself.

But her practical experience in LUMS was only the beginning. After graduation, she applied for both Masters and Phd programs in Economics, and on Dr. Cheema's recommendation did her master's from Warwick.

Within Economics, her particular focus was on decision-making. “This comes from being a woman in a patriarchal society like ours. Like I said, a lot of our students face pressures, particularly girls,” she explains. “Even if they are coming from open-minded, educated families who are willing to support them, there is still a lot of pressure on girls to do certain things at certain times.”

So her Masters' thesis followed this line of research - how women make decisions, what kind of decisions they can make on their own, and what factors affect women's decision-making powers.

Her work on gender does not end here. She was also the Director of the Saida Waheed Gender Initiative between 2020 and 2022, and remains a part of the steering committee. The SWGI is an independent center within LUMS with its own endowment that it works out of, with its steering committee consisting of members from all the schools. The SWGI's objective is to push the conversation on gender and sexuality.

"What we are really interested in is that gender is interdisciplinary," she says. "For example, in mainstream Econ, gender is a peripheral angle. But there are streams of Econ where gender is a lot more central and it is the first thing you look at in order to understand underlying reasons for why things are happening."

Similarly, the SWGI keeps an eye out for courses that have an approach towards gender. "Our school (MGSHSS) sort of has ownership of it because we offer the most courses on gender and sexuality, but the initiative isn't housed in any one school," she shares. "And we don't mean that the course has to have gender and sex explicitly in the course name, but if the course and its theoretical framework has an approach towards gender, then it is cross-listed."

Additionally, the SWGI also holds seminars and workshops, gives research funding to faculty and students, and under Dr. Majid started the Gender Bi-Annual. The Initiative has strong links outside LUMS. "We have strong connections with practitioner networks. We have also had talks where trans people have come in. Not enough men work on gender though. It's an ongoing conversation on how we can move beyond the gender binary and become more inclusive."

Dr. Majid's schedule now has one more addition in 2022. With being a mother, an Econ instructor, and part of SWGI, she lightly admitted at the beginning of the interview that she requires 24 hours of rest after the end of a semester to recharge fully. Now, she is also the first female Head of the Department of Economics. Fortunately, she has had some great predecessors, and she plans to keep things running as they are.

"Before Dr. Ali Husnain, Dr. Turab was HOD for nine to ten years," she recalls. "He brought a real collegial ethos to the department. His office was in the center of the wing and it was impossible to walk by it without dropping in for a conversation. He got along with everyone and that really set that base for collegiality."

Regarding the challenges, moving back to in-person classes and putting a cap on the major take priority.

"Dr. Ali Khan lays out the challenges for us really well, and right now that includes being cognizant of students returning to campus fully come Fall," she says. "Finally we are going back to how things were two years ago, so how do we learn the New Normal? What are the things that need to evolve? What are the things we need to take from the past and how do we bring faculty back?"

To tackle these questions, Dr. Majid will also be taking a page out of Dr. Ali Husnain's book. The department has expanded now, and she explains how Dr. Ali brought certain regulations about how to approach and delegate tasks as HOD. He started new initiatives that she hopes to continue, and also reduced the service burden on the handful of female Ph.D faculty members of the department - a new precedent Dr. Majid is grateful for. She also pays tribute to the staff members who she calls the "real superstars" that make sure the ship is running on its course.

With supportive colleagues to ease her in, Dr. Hadia Majid is optimistic about leading the Economics department. When I ask her a last question about what changes she anticipates, she thinks on it a second before giving me a smile.

"Let's see, maybe instead of 24 hours to unwind, I may need 48."



Writing **3000 word essays** half hour before deadline recognized as **Olympic sport**, MGS HSS students deemed favorites to win gold



[LUMS NEWSDESK]: The International Olympic Committee has officially recognized writing three-thousand-word essays at the last moment as an Olympic sport. The new sport, named 'Reckless Writing' will be played in the 2024 Olympics in Paris.

The peculiar sport will be judged by a panel which will give scores to contestants between 1 and 10. The score categories include: typing speed, nonsensical facts in essay pulled out of nowhere, vainful pleas of deadline extension to professors and close shaves with the Disciplinary Committee. Chair of the IOC said they were "looking forward to the debut of this event" and see participants in "another level of stress" known to exceed a normal human beings' capacity.

Olympic experts have speculated that given how much MGS HSS students practice for this sport during their degree, they will be able to thrive and hopefully win Pakistan an Olympic gold medal after many years of loss.

Ibrahim Arif is a BS EE student in SSE from the Batch of '24. He started a satire project called The Aloobukharay News Series in a private LUMS student forum and continues to write at the handle @aloobukharay_news on Instagram. We are happy to feature an SSE student in a purely MGS HSS magazine because of his olympic championship in satirical writing.

In Conversation with

Dr. Waqar Zaidi

Department Chair Humanities and Social Sciences

One of the fastest growing and most loved departments at LUMS is the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences program. It offers six major degrees, a number of minors, and a diverse range of courses as well. Heading this popular department since the Fall of 2022 as Chair is Dr. Waqar Zaidi. In this interview, we talk about his unique journey to becoming a history professor, his role in establishing the history department at LUMS, and his vision for the Social Sciences Department.*

In his own words, Dr. Zaidi describes his academic journey as atypical, and after hearing it from him, there is no better word I could have chosen myself.

During his schooling years, Dr. Zaidi's interest lay in the sciences, particularly Physics. He narrowed in on that and majored in physics at the University of Oxford. He describes his undergraduate as a fun time and quite enjoyed his chosen degree, though he decided that he did not want to continue with Physics.

"I did what a lot of people in the Sciences do - I went into the corporate and financial world," he tells me. "I worked and qualified as a Chartered Accountant at a big accountancy firm in London. After several years there, I moved into Corporate Finance and worked for a very large investment bank for a few years."

However, he realized that the corporate world, too, was not what he wanted in the long term. It took a couple of years, but Dr. Zaidi found his interest in history. He reconciled it with his interest in science through a discipline called the history of science and technology.

"It can sometimes be hard to find where your true interest lies, and that particular subject was one of my true interests," he imparts. Yet the incidental story of how he stumbled upon his calling on a busy street in New York is even more interesting.

"I happened to be working on Wall Street for a short period of time," he recalls. "I did not know that many people in New York, so I spent a bit of time browsing bookshops. There is a wonderful bookshop called Strand where I found a book on the history of the atomic bomb."

And the pieces fell together for him. He could connect with that book on so many levels, both as someone with a grounding in science but also as someone deeply interested in history and international relations.

Dr. Zaidi returned to the UK and did his

Master's at Imperial College London. He enjoyed studying at the Center for the History of Science at Imperial, which, at the time, was the leading place to study twentieth-century History of Science and Technology in the UK. His interest in the subject encouraged him to apply for competitive funding for a Ph.D. Once that was awarded, he completed his Ph.D. and decided to stay in academia.

"I got to where I am through a fairly twisted path and along many different routes," he says. "But I enjoyed all of them, and I worked hard in all of them. My undergraduate degree was tough, and working in finance in London was tough - but that's how you get a lot out of it."



After this tumultuous and intriguing journey that took him through several careers and two continents, my next question, of course, was about how LUMS came into the picture.

"I made the decision to move back to Pakistan in 2010, and LUMS was the premier undergraduate institution," he says. "So I knew that this would be the sort of place where I would like to teach and continue my career."

However, at the time, there was no History program at LUMS. So Dr. Zaidi stayed in Karachi for a few years and taught in the Social Sciences program at SZABIST and A Levels. When the program was inaugurated at LUMS in 2013, the institute was kind enough to call Dr. Zaidi and ask him to join the department to teach in the new major.

"I was very delighted to join LUMS because I find that the inter-disciplinary environment and program here is something I'm intellectually drawn to," he shares. "I take an interest in a lot of things - I still have my science magazines and calculus books, and I still read books on economic history, business, and international relations. So I was particularly very happy to be in a department that encourages these types of intellectual connections, both in terms of teaching and research."

Within a year of joining LUMS, Dr. Zaidi was asked to head the new stream. From 2014 to 2017, he was the first director of the history program. His appreciation for the HSS department is evident in his speech as he recounts how much it has grown in the last decade or so. It has seen growth in terms of size, depth, subject variety, and opportunities - for both students and faculty.

"We have the greatest depth in Humanities and Social Sciences in the country, easily, and it has just grown over the years," he says. "Students can come in and specialize in so many different ways within those HSS majors."

However, the program's unprecedented growth and depth have also brought its fair share of administrative challenges. While student and faculty numbers have only risen, the department's resources have not kept pace with the growth.

"It's never easy when you have a department that has had a record intake for almost every single year for the past 10 years that I have been here," he says. "I have seen my colleagues and others struggle with these challenges over the years."

Because of tight resources, faculty size has not kept pace with student numbers, and the department has seen an increase in faculty-student ratios and class sizes. While instructors had the leeway of greater class sizes online during the pandemic, it is not the same for in-person classes.

"If we are going back to in-person, how do we get the optimum numbers?" he poses the question. "This is a very complex situation because we need to push for greater funding and greater resources from the university. We have the student numbers, we want to teach them, and we want to give them choices in terms of courses."

Dr. Zaidi shares that the department will continue to ask the university for the required resources to be able to teach their students to the best standards possible. These resources could mean physical space, staff numbers, classrooms, TA support, tech resources, or faculty salaries. Getting more resources to accommodate the department's growing program and student numbers would be ideal.

"Unfortunately, we don't live in an ideal world, and we have to make compromises," he says. "We will not always get what we want, so we have to make things work with what we have. And the one tool that we might use is putting a cap on our courses. There are pre-existing caps on our courses. So we are looking at where we can reduce those caps, in what ways, and how we can reduce class sizes and get a better student-staff ratio so we can continue to teach at a high level of quality."

As Director of the Social Sciences department, there is another challenge looming over the horizon for Dr. Zaidi that is also his priority - to bring the department back fully functioning on campus for Fall '22.

"Over the past 2 years - less so in the last semester - our department has been a little bit in limbo like the rest of the university, as students were taught online," he shares. "Because of that, the department's full functionality and in-person support that we strive to offer, and we offered prior to COVID, is not in place yet."

Dr. Zaidi anticipates a two-fold approach to this challenge. "Firstly, we will have to overcome some habits that we have developed over the last two years," he tells me. "Secondly, we won't exactly be going back to how things were before. There are now new opportunities and new modalities that technology has brought, and this will be incorporated into our physical learning and teaching. How will that integration take place?"

For him specifically, Dr. Zaidi misses having an open door where students and other faculty and staff members could drop by whenever for conversations. He looks forward to having those interactions again immensely.

As Chair, he is also looking forward to continuing and maintaining the strengths of the department which, as he shares, are many.

"When I joined LUMS and the department, I found the quality here to be exceptionally high," he shares. "It is an international quality in terms of the quality of the faculty, and their teaching, and their research. What has changed is that the department has grown in size - and we see this in terms of more faculty members, publications, courses, research, and seminar series."

Dr. Zaidi himself has also played a part in the increasing number and diversity of students the school has seen in recent years. He has worked with the Admissions Office to ensure a more inclusive, representative, and diverse in-take of students.

"The variety is created by us going out to places like KPK, G-B, Balochistan, as well as interior Sindh and Punjab," he tells me. "There is now a steady trickle of students from Balochistan, whereas we didn't even have that eight years ago. But this brings us challenges because it increases the range and backgrounds from which these students are coming, and this is a pedagogical challenge that we need to meet."

Keeping that in mind, his own pedagogical mission has been to take students out of the South Asian context - to take them away from their daily worries and concerns regarding the world around them. Thus, his courses often revolve around international history and global history.

"My aim is to take them somewhere else and give them very different perspectives," he says. "That's always challenging because on one side, our school education system struggles to give students the necessary perspectives on the international world. We find some students come into LUMS with very little understanding of the world beyond their communities and cities, and beyond what they have been taught in school."

He has kept this mission of his thriving and consistent for 10 years now. And each year of his teaching journey has been fun and challenging, and has only seen an increase in his student numbers.

As we draw our conversation to a close, I reflect back to where we started from - his professional journey - and he tells me simply that apart from reading a lot, it was the hard work he put into every field he entered that reaped any learning and reward. The last advice he gives me is one I still think of when attempting challenging tasks.

“Work hard at everything,” he says. “One of the ways that possible employers or anyone would figure out a student’s or individual’s capacity, resourcefulness, and ability is to see how hard they worked in a subject they liked the least. Work hard for the sake of hard work.”

With that, our time drew to end and so did a memorable conversation. While there are a few challenges faced by the department, there is equally as much to celebrate, and we wish Dr. Zaidi all the best for his role as Chair of the Social Sciences Department at MGSNSS.



SABA KARIM

Saba Karim Khan is the author of Skyfall, published by Bloomsbury. She graduated from LUMS on the Dean's Honour List in 2006 and was a recipient of the LUMS Vice-Chancellor Alumni Achievement Award in 2022.

Saba Karim Khan is an author, award-winning filmmaker and educator, who has read Social Anthropology at the University of Oxford and works at NYU Abu Dhabi. Her writing, interviews, and talks have appeared in The Guardian, BBC, The Independent, Khaleej Times, the Emirates Literature Festival, Lahore Literary Festival, NYUAD Institute, Wasafiri, Huff Post, Verso, Think Progress, DAWN, The Friday Times, Gulf News, The National, and Express Tribune. Saba's debut novel, Skyfall, was published by Bloomsbury and her documentary film, Concrete Dreams: Some Roads Lead Home, produced by the Doha Film Institute (DFI), was officially selected and has won awards at film festivals in NYC, Paris, Berlin, Toronto, USA, Sweden and India. Before joining the Academy, Saba worked as Country Marketing and Public Affairs Head at Citigroup. Born in Karachi, she now lives in Abu Dhabi with her husband and two daughters.

What can I do with my ostensibly “USELESS” liberal arts degree?

During my undergraduate years at LUMS, every time someone asked me what major I was studying and I replied with “Social Sciences”, the response was almost identical: a combination of *humour*, followed by genuine *concern*. By the time we graduated, it became a standard, not-so-inside joke, among batch-mates—an “SS major” was often a last resort, one that you reached for when options for accounting, economics or computer science—the more “serious”, “lucrative” disciplines—had failed to materialize. A degree in the social sciences was perceived as a far easier experiment: laid-back, generic, but offering dismal career prospects.

Outside LUMS, similar myths were being churned as if they stemmed from empirical truths; amongst parents and extended kin, a “plug-and-play type of approach to higher education” was apparent.

“You’re enrolled in the arts and humanities?” You obviously want to be a teacher?”

“You want to be a banker? You have to major in economics or finance.”

“If you dream about working in Silicon Valley, you must be a tech geek” and so on.

A lot of the myths and presuppositions about university degrees being springboards to land you into one type of career, are just that: *myths*. The world we inhabit today is far less linear than we assume it to be; in fact, not only is it more complex and quirkier, but its demands are significantly different. In a modern economy where humans are being outpaced by technological innovations, jobs require a combination of soft and hard skills—creativity, writing, synthesizing, critical thinking and above all, empathy—and this versatile range of skills isn’t neatly bundled into any one major. Employers outside of vocational occupations, therefore, are less concerned about a graduate’s precise area of academic pursuit, but rather, in assessing their skills to learn, adapt, and thrive in a particular professional environment.

My own career trajectory lays bare this reality fairly unequivocally; in 2006, at the cusp of completing my social sciences degree from LUMS, I made it to the final round of recruitment interviews with Unilever and

Citibank—both multinational corporations, whom we were conditioned to believe, would unlikely pay heed to liberal arts graduates. During different stages of the extensive and thorough recruitment process for both firms, some of these myths slowly began unravelling—my choice of major appeared incidental to their interview questions. Rather, I was probed about my experiences with collaboration and critical observations, examining case studies and navigating opposing viewpoints, sharing stories of human interaction; in one interview, my views on “father-daughter relationships” were even solicited. It was as if they were gauging whether I was a “good fit” for the company’s culture, whether I demonstrated genuine passion to imbibe and excel in their environment, if the hunger along with the humility was missing or apparent. The specifics of what I had learnt in development economics or research methods, appeared adjunct to these other vital skills that work life demanded.

Eventually, I accepted a job as a management trainee at Citibank straight out of LUMS and ended up working there twice in my career. My experience at Citibank, the second time around, illuminated the changing demands of employers, even more vehemently. Armed with a social anthropology degree from the University of Oxford, I was headhunted just as my post-graduate work was getting completed. I rejoined the Bank as Public Affairs and Corporate Communications Head; over the next three years, the Bank moved me to the role of Country Marketing and Public Affairs Officer. Citi’s openness to mobility and recognizing on-the-job performance was no secret and eventually, I was offered a position within the Bank’s network, to move from Karachi to New York.

Whilst these are wonderful successes to share, the point isn’t exactly to hammer in my marketplace worth; the take-away is much more consequential than any single job story and it is *this*: at no point with Citi, were my recruitment or subsequent promotions evaluated on the basis of my university major, no one ever questioned why I studied anthropology and not accounting, or told me I was too young to sit on the management committee at twenty-six. Instead, my experience in the corporate world reinforced how necessary it is to have the skills to write effectively, persuasively, succinctly; problem-solve creatively; convince colleagues about unconventional ideas; and above all, stay curious, open and optimistic about opportunities that might approach you.

Of course, it would be misplaced to suggest that a liberal arts degree is the only offering that equips you with these skills, to communicate effectively, think creatively etc.; however, it is clear that few other disciplines cultivate creativity, empathy, reading, writing and critical thinking skills, as do the arts, humanities and social sciences—be that through civil debate and learning how to persuade or concede to an argument in a classroom (often on topics that spark sensitivity such as religion, politics, etc.), summarizing knowledge and analysis through systematic written research inquiry, or demonstrating empathy when learning about cultures and beliefs that stand at a departure from our own. Most importantly, it teaches us how to agree to disagree, without resorting to violence and coercive tactics—a skill the world would do well to promote.

In short, a liberal arts degree is akin to a portal or key, and that is the biggest gift that the social sciences experience at LUMS lent to me: it unlocked my mind, gave me wings, allowed me to question and communicate rather than passively receive, interrogate the way things were done and explore scope to spark change, both in my personal and professional journeys. I was astonished to be in classes with professors such as Dr Ali Khan, Dr Furrukh Khan, Dr Saeed Ghazi and Dr Arfa Sayeda Zehra, along with so many others, realizing that there were no limits to stifle our learning and understanding of the world. My anthropology classes in particular made me realize the range of the discipline; you could be interested in economic policies to end famine or wish to unpack marriage rituals among Kalaash women—both areas of study fell under the umbrella of anthropological investigation.

The liberal arts degree at LUMS also taught me to reimagine the power of empathy and how it can be applied as a skill at the workplace. We tend to think of empathy as a social skill, to be used only at parties and in personal relationships. But as George Anders, a previous technology reporter for Forbes, puts it, “empathy is usually the biggest skill” that a liberal arts degree provides. “That doesn’t just mean feeling sorry for people with problems. It means an ability to understand the needs and wants of a diverse group of people... Think of people who oversee clinical drug tests. You need to get doctors, nurses, regulators all on the same page. You have to have the ability to think about what’s going to get this 72-year-old woman to feel comfortable being tracked long term, what do we have to do so this researcher takes this study seriously. That’s an empathy job.”

In 2019, a research conducted by LinkedIn found that among the “most sought-after skills by employers”, creativity, persuasion and collaboration ranked as the top three soft-skills; people management ranked among the top five hard skills. However, headlines advertis-

ing the financial viability of physical science and business subjects only, along with decades of social conditioning about the unemployability of liberal arts degrees, will have us believe otherwise, constantly delegitimizing the value of pursuing sociology, literature, philosophy, political science, anthropology and other disciplines residing within the arts and humanities. Such marketing reinforces the messaging shared by the governor of Kentucky, Matt Bevin some years ago. “If you’re studying interpretive dance, God bless you, but there’s not a lot of jobs right now in America looking for people with that as a skill set.” Whilst interpretive dance might not be the most sought-after major in job markets, the error lies in assuming that studying interpretive dance limits you to just that—the technicalities of the dance itself—when in fact, a liberal arts degree does just the opposite. Through exposure to a range of subject matter, it broadens our knowledge base, sharpens the intellect, trains us how to think and articulate coherently, unleashes the imagination to devise solutions, and offers a skill-set that can be experientially applied in daily work life. It strikes a delicate balance between having skills that are transferable, yet specialized.

In the near 1.5 decades of my own professional trajectory, I struggle to imagine what this journey would have been like, in the absence of my social sciences degree from LUMS. Amongst so many other virtues that it has offered, perhaps most importantly, it toppled the myth of the ostensibly “useless” SS degree, demonstrating how, in

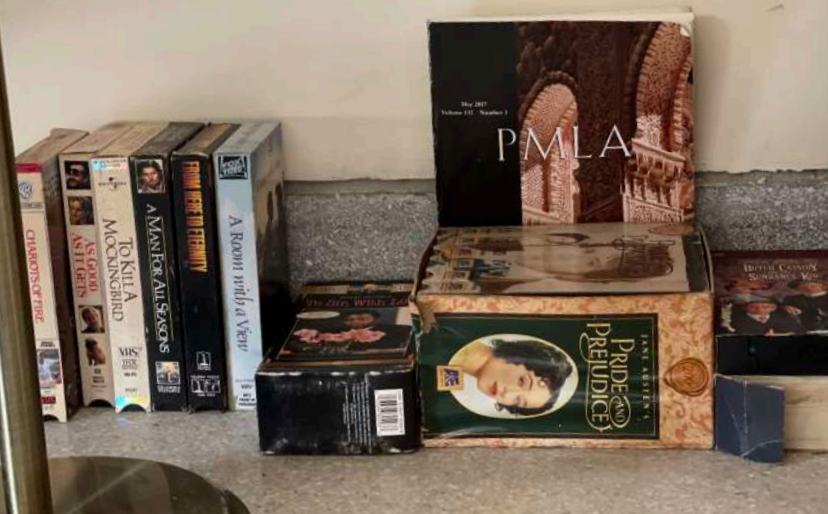


a world where CEOs are English majors and digital nomads work from remote neighbourhoods in Thailand, our days of considering the arts and social sciences as *contingencies* rather than *first-choices*, should long be over. The fact is, that in our current world, agnostic to our choice of major, it is the pursuit of excellence, which employers instantly recognize.



In Conversation with

Dr. Maryam Wasif Khan



Disclaimer: This interview was conducted in Spring/Summer 2022. It may refer to conditions that have changed since then.

There is a corner in Dr. Maryam Wasif Khan's office that is an artful, organized clutter. A 1953 Marilyn Monroe poster perches at the foot of the bookshelves, accompanied by a pile of VHS tapes of classic movies - *A Room with a View*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Doctor Zhivago*. Among the VHS collection also lies a box of the 1995 BBC adaptation series of *Pride and Prejudice*, with a dressed-up Colin Firth gracing the covers.

Dr. Maryam settles in her seat for our conversation, nursing a mug in her hand. It's a little over 2 pm, with the ambitious April sun winking at her back and a large poster of *Gone With the Wind* peeking at me. This fall will mark the start of Dr. Maryam's ninth year at LUMS, and new beginnings await her on the horizon. She's expecting her second child by the end of summer, and she's one of the people spearheading the advent of a new major in MGS HSS - the CLCS major.

But first, with Mr. Darcy and Scarlett O'Hara as our audience, I press rewind and ask her to take me to the start of her journey at our university.

"LUMS is deeply tied to my sense of self," she tells me, a small smile on her face, one that reminisces her years on campus. "I grew up in LUMS, and grew as an adult here too." She was a year old when she came to Pakistan and with her father being one of the founding faculty members, LUMS has always been a part of her life in some capacity. "It [LUMS] is also very close to the way I see the world, and Lahore, and the possibilities of education and workplace."

Speaking of education, I ask her about her undergrad. How did the daughter of one of SDSB's founders fall in love with Comparative Literature?

Dr. Maryam laughs. "My father told me if you want to study Comp Lit, don't come back without a Ph.D.," she says. Initially majoring in the Econ-Pol major at Princeton, she changed her program after taking one course of Comp Lit. Alas, it wasn't just any course - it was a year-long, highly intensive, highly competitive course on Western Sequence taught by six superstar faculty members.

And that was it for her. She couldn't think about other courses, couldn't settle in them, because her heart was somewhere else. So she took a leap and changed her major, studying French and Urdu as part of the program. Interestingly, her relationship with Urdu started off quite rocky.

"I was horrendous at Urdu," she tells me with a wince. "I approach Urdu as my second language, but I was still able

to do very interesting things with it."

Thoroughly intrigued by this idea of someone who is self-admittedly a novice at Urdu yet also a student and teacher of the Urdu cannon - not to mention the Urdu books on her bookshelves - I ask Dr. Maryam to elaborate. "I'm very interested in how Urdu developed after the 19th century," she says. "Urdu was, for a long time, a very elite register in Mughal India. The British transformed it into a large-scale colloquial language, and it was only after the 1850s that it became a language of dominance."





Yet, for all her studying and reading of Urdu, it's Punjabi that has her heart.

"I have an emotional attachment to Punjabi," she tells me. "I grew up speaking it in my Nani's home, and now I'm re-learning it with my toddler so that we can speak it together."

Speaking of home, I ask her the typical question to be asked - why move back to Pakistan?

She recounts an experience from her time in California. She moved there after her undergrad to study Comp Lit further at UCLA under Professor Aamir Mufti, her Urdu-speaking, Urdu-loving advisor from Karachi.

"So I was taking this incredible De-colonial Fiction course on Urdu taught by Aamir Mufti," she recounts. "He would teach this one Faiz poem to his audience of white and Asian and brown students who didn't know the basics of Urdu. Yet he would teach it so passionately, taking his time to recite the poem...." That made the decision for her. "I decided if I wanted to teach Urdu, I'd do it in a classroom where it was understood and could be talked about."

That was a big reason why she moved back, but not the only one. Though she still considers the USA home too,

she didn't want to stay abroad any longer, and so returned to Pakistan. And quite a wonderful return it has been, considering Dr. Maryam was invited to apply for a comparative literature position at NYU two years ago but turned it down. Yes, I am still processing it as well.

"I've always had something special at LUMS," she tells me. "Everyone says don't trust institutions, but as an individual, you can't help being attached to institutions. It's the same for me."

And here she is now, achieving another milestone at LUMS as she inaugurates the new CLCS major.

"Back in my time, there weren't many career options for Comp Lit students," she says. "Now, students have many more opportunities with tech, media, design, journalism, and social media."

That is what the CLCS major will emulate - integrating literary studies with screen studies and language development. Where a major commonly requires 13 courses for completion, CLCS will require 11, with two courses on language studies.

Dr. Maryam believes that languages are an integral part of the new major. "Language helps us imagine the world in a different way," she tells me. "We want students to be able to imagine the world in more languages than Urdu and English."

New courses will also be introduced, with a particular focus on the development of screen studies. The exciting additions also include photography and videography courses that will be open to all, not just those with DSLRs. Another course to look forward to is 'Art of the Webseries' with Tabish Habib. With screen studies and creative writing taking center stage, theory-based courses will be in a minority. The world is evolving in new directions, and the new CLCS major will do its part in developing students' skill sets in order for them to be a part of the digital revolution.



سورج نہ صحیح ہمیں کوئی ستارا ہی نظر آتا
اس پرانی دنیا میں ہمیں کوئی ہمارا ہی نظر آتا

ڈوب رہے تھے ہم آغوش دریا میں
تڑپتے ہوئے ہمیں کوئی کنارہ ہی نظر آتا

نکلے تھے ہم اکیلے ہی ساکی کی محفل سے
گرتے پڑتے ہمیں کوئی سہارا ہی نظر آتا

مرتے ہوئے بھی دیکھا ہمیں اُس بے وفا کا چہرا
اس وقت تو ہمیں سکون کا کوئی نظارہ ہی نظر آتا

ہر روز ہم نے بے کوئی نیا فساد جھیلا
اس ظالموں کی دنیا میں کوئی پیارا ہی نظر آتا

دل ہمارا بجھ گیا تھا ان کی محفل میں
وفا نہ سہی پیار کا کوئی اشارا ہی نظر آتا

بے ساری عمر علی اس کی ایک جھلک کو ترسا
کبھی اس وسیع دنیا میں وہ دوبارہ ہی نظر آتا



There is one name you often find under those posts on LDF that go something like,
“Please suggest instructors one HAS to take courses with before graduating!”

And that name is Nauman Faizi.

In Conversation with

Dr. Nauman Faizi

Despite never having taken a course with him, I walked in with my curiosity piqued. The conversation that followed between us more than satisfied it because I found myself struck by his words more than once.

Before he became a professor of religious studies, Dr. Faizi studied Economics & Politics during his undergrad at LUMS - one of the signature majors of MGSNSS. At the beginning of our conversation, he takes me through his journey of finding his calling in religious studies.

“The initial plan was to teach high school Sociology and do amateur theatre in Lahore,” he says. “This was Plan A.”

At the time of his undergrad, there was no religious studies program at LUMS. But it was during his undergrad that he was introduced to scholars of religion and a branch of philosophy called “pragmatism.”

“I only applied to graduate school and abandoned Plan A because when I was reading scholars of religion and pragmatists, I often ended up feeling like I was in *The Zone*.”

The Zone, in Dr. Faizi's words, is an environment where you can think creatively, expansively, and freely.

“There are environments where you feel like you're a 'lesser' version of yourself,” he continues. “For example, when I'm trying to do Math, I feel like I'm out of my depth and unable to explore the complexity and brilliance of Mathematics. When I'm in *The Zone*, it's a more fulfilling and freer environment where I can relate with, contribute to, and enlarge the thinkers and material I'm engaging.”

It was chasing *The Zone* that led him to apply for the Ph.D program in the Religious Studies department at the University of Virginia (UVA). He remembers his dissertation advisor - Peter Ochs, a pragmatist and philosopher of religion - fondly. It was his dissertation at UVA that laid the foundation for Dr. Faizi's recent book, *God, Science, and Self: Muhammad Iqbal's Reconstruction of Religious Thought*.

“I have been fascinated by Allama Iqbal's *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* for ages,” he tells me. “God, Science, and Self is my attempt to

make sense of how this text constructs its arguments about the relationship between religion, philosophy, and science.”

The broadest claim of Dr. Faizi's book is that the errors that you can identify and potentially fix in the world are errors that you yourself, in some sense, participate in and commit. His book explores how *The Reconstruction* is a text involved in trying to address crucial intellectual crises, and it does this because it is also crafted in the crises of its time.

“For me, a sign that a thinker is actually fixing something is when the problem that they are trying to fix is also present in their own thinking,” he elucidates. “If a thinker claims that the world around them is messed up, but none of that mess is visible in their own think-

ing, I would be a little suspicious and wouldn't trust their claims quite as much.”

Dr. Faizi reads *The Reconstruction* to understand how this text offers creative pathways for addressing the intellectual questions that it is grappling with. His work also displays how *The Reconstruction* is “marked” by the problems that it is trying to solve.

But the journey of *God, Science, and Self* from thought to print was not easy. The book has been in the making for some time. He wrote his

PhD dissertation in 2016 and he had been toiling at it for almost five years till its release in 2021. The process was one of struggle and joy and he remembers it with gratitude.

“For me, intellectual pursuit, when done right, is frustrating, it's overwhelming,” he remarks. “It's also rewarding - otherwise, you'd quit.”

The term for such feelings of inadequacy and frustration is imposter syndrome. He recounts a memory to me, one of him sitting across one of his professors in her office, just like I was now in his. It is the early 2010s, and he is a frustrated grad school student feeling like an imposter and thinking about quitting, wondering if he belonged, if the feelings of self-doubt would ever go away. And he asked his professor as much: “Her answer was 'never,'” he shares. “Because you feeling inadequate in relation to what you're studying - not in a crippling way, but in a humbling way - is a sign that you're part of an intellectual journey.”



And when he tells me that instructors suffer from it too, the same self-doubt we aggrandize as undergrad students on the cusp of the big world, I feel reassurance.

“Your professors suffer from the same things, and part of it is healthy,” he says. “But with community, hope, and strength...it can work out.”

While Dr. Faizi’s words are heartening, it is more interesting to see how his professional area of expertise is reflected in his private life. The turn in conversation occurs when I ask a question that, in retrospect, encapsulates our entire sixty-minute discourse.

“How do you perceive religion?”

Dr. Faizi laughs. “I’m going to resist giving a simple answer here.” And then he continues, “In a sense, my entire intellectual life is an exploration of this question.”

Then he hands me a new lens.

“When I’m teaching Religious Studies as a field, I ask students to imagine that they’re on an exploratory journey. Some students are interested sociologically, some theologically, some are more historically or anthropologically oriented,” he explains. “As students explore this field they discover that the interests and orientations they bring along with them are reflected in the different thinkers they study. The challenge is to appreciate thinkers whose interests, curiosities, and orientations are other than the ones we might bring to the table. Wrestling with this challenge allows students to encounter and observe religion as a complex phenomenon.”

Dr. Faizi’s interest, in particular, is in how religious communities and scholars in religious communities give warrants for, justify, and make sense of the world and their place in the world. How the world, human subjectivity, individuality, our whence and wherefore - how all of these questions are tackled by different religious and philosophical traditions.

His fascination with how thinkers figure out different facets of their life, of modernity and religion and their inter-relation, is reflected in the way he thinks about his personal life as well.

“Similarly, I’m continually trying to figure out how the different facets of my life hang together,” he tells me. “How I am connected with, for example, educational institutions, the state, with my parents, the mosque, communities around me, imperial forces ... how my life is entangled with all these things.”

It is the vastness and inexhaustibility of his area of study that has increased his appreciation for it over time. In his early years in the field, Dr. Faizi expected a formulaic answer to make sense of the problems he encountered, but

the more he studied, the more he learned he was wrong.

“The smallness of my formulaic answers indicated the largeness of what I was encountering,” he hangs on every word, as if sharing the gravity of what he learned. “As a general rule, I try not to study what I am not moved by. My appreciation of and engagement with the study of religion has, thankfully, increased over time.

Yet, interestingly, he also fears what may come out of that deepening appreciation.

“I would hope I’m able to strike a balance between my intellectual pursuits and other facets of my life – otherwise, there’s always the risk of becoming too one-dimensional.” he shares.

“But isn’t that what one would call a successful career,” I argue, “being so passionate about something that it no longer feels like work?”

“Sure, but now imagine that the work becomes so expansive that it elicits the last ounce of your ‘passion’ from you, and you go home an empty shell - I would argue that’s one-dimensionality,” he replies. “When you exit your office space, you shouldn’t be a shell of a human being because you’re more than your professional self. I would like to be someone who has the capacity to be multi-dimensional rather than someone whose academic life squeezes every ounce of passion out of him.”

Dr. Faizi’s parting thoughts to me are one of reflection. He shares that when he studies a thinker, he’s most interested in what the thinker imagines is broken in the world around them. He talks about how, for him, a thinker’s ability to relate the brokenness of the world and their own brokenness enables them to address the problems around them. He relies on these ideas to observe the world around him and to understand his own self better.

It is with these thoughts of self-reflection that we came full circle.



Reminiscence

Train to Pakistan

By Shaezal N. Cheema

The weather today was very hot and humid, I was parched and a little nauseous with all the smell of sweat in the heavy air around me. Bajo and I had been waiting for Aba from the past two hours to arrive at the train station so we could leave on time. Leave on time to have a new life. We were promised a new life by that man on the radio, on a nearby land called 'Pakistan'. He said that this country is pak and all of us could live happily there without any threat to life. Aba told us to go to the train station while he tries to sell our herd of cows for whatever money he gets in return. Bajo was obviously sad and protested against this, but she had no choice now. Why you ask? She has to leave behind Jagjeet because he is not musalmaan like us. They have been in love since the Basaant of '45. I still remember how flushed her cheeks were when their eyes first met from across the rooftops while I celebrated my win and chanted 'bo kata' on top of my lungs.

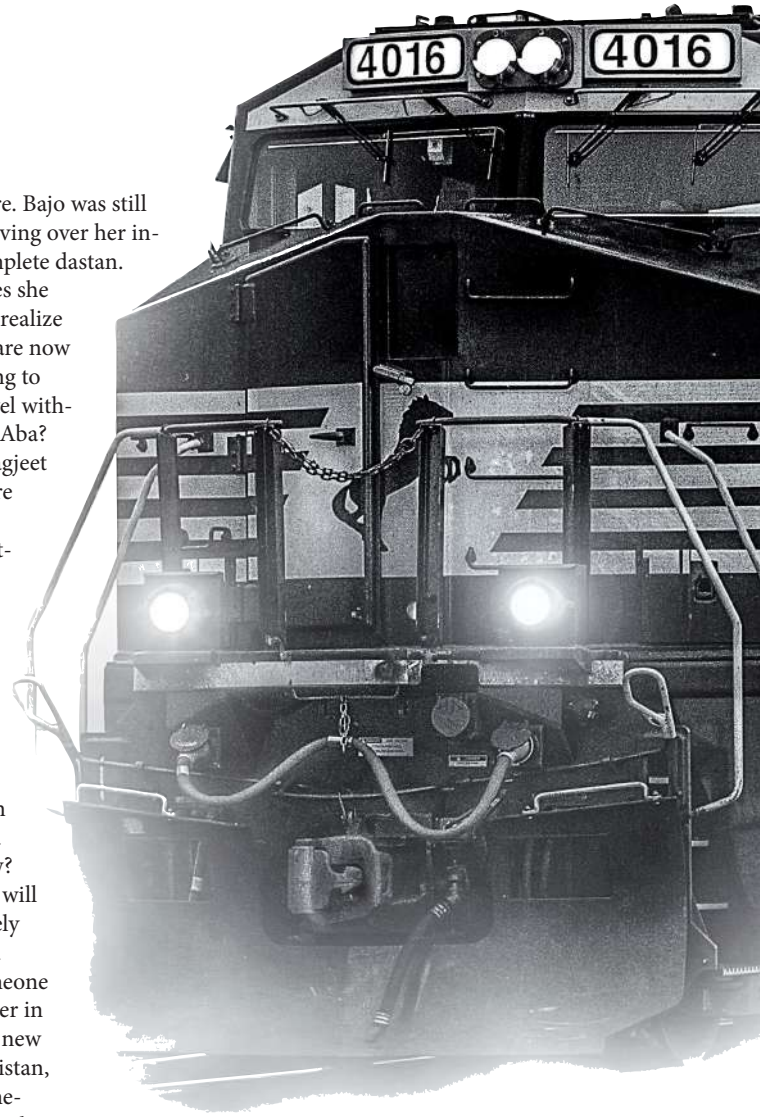
It was 12:25 now and our train is supposed to leave for the Amritsar stop in five minutes, but Aba is nowhere to be seen. How long does it take to sell all your belongings and just come to the train station? Bajo looked very paranoid at this point. She looked blankly towards the sky with tears filling her eyes. The tears never fell though, she did not blink once. She kept looking straight at the blazing sun as if trying to get blinded, trying to not see the reality of being separated from her lover. Conductor Sahab started shouting from the train's entrance to hurry up and get in before something goes wrong. What could go wrong? We are going to the pak sar zameen, how can anything go wrong? I tugged at Bajo and convinced her to wait for Aba on the train or else we will end up losing the only two seats we could find. Aba would surely come along, they are not going to leave him behind, now are they?

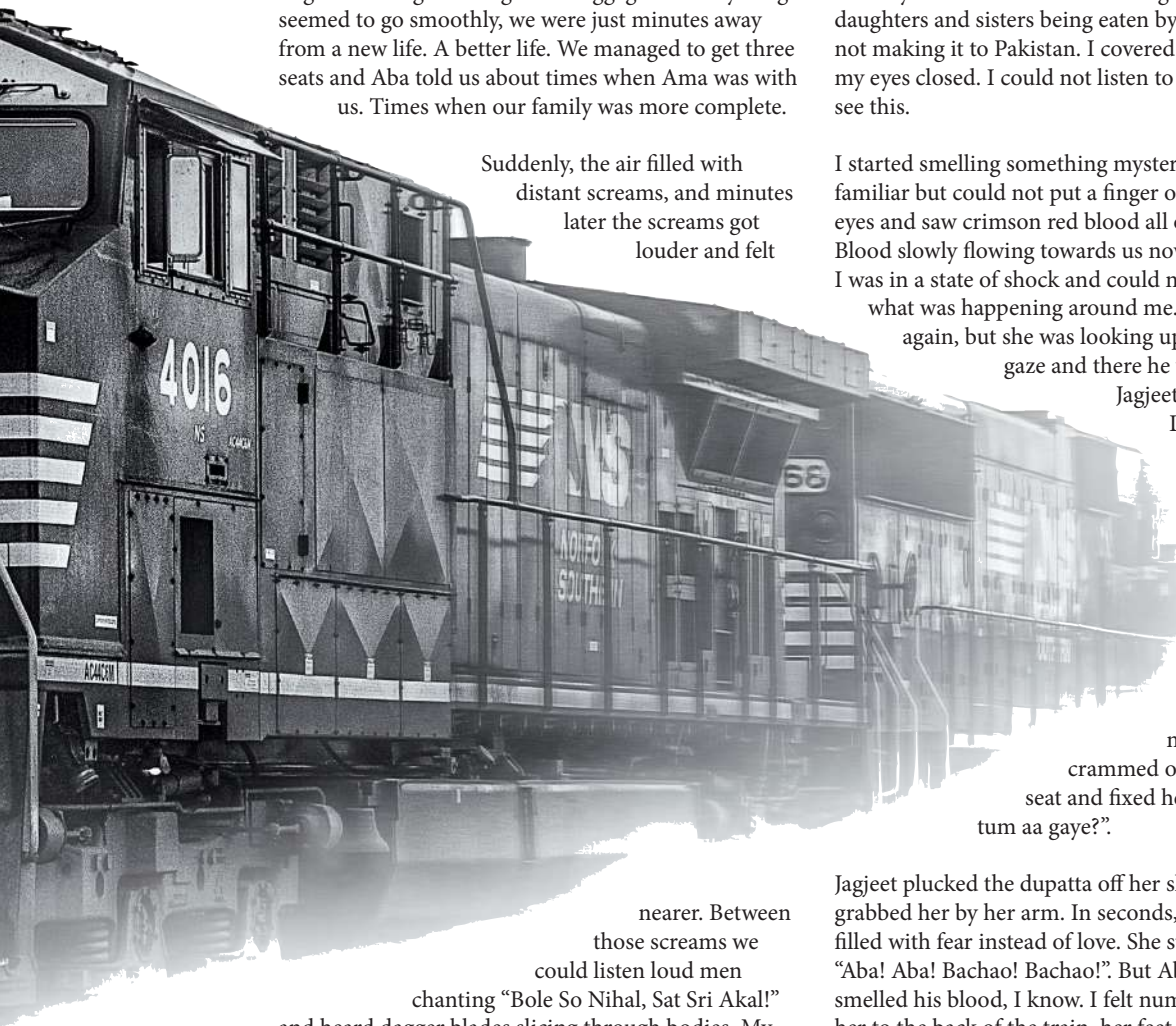
It was 12:40 now and my protests were going in vain, Conductor Sahab was adamant on the train leaving before it is too late. He convinced me that Aba would meet us on the next stop at Amritsar after a few hours by catching the next train and we should wait for him

there. Bajo was still grieving over her incomplete dastan. Does she not realize we are now going to travel without Aba? Is Jagjeet more important

than Aba now? She will surely find someone better in our new Pakistan, some-

one who is musalmaan like us. Everyone there will be kind and loving I heard from the men on the radio. The train starts and I sit back with Bajo trying to indulge her in some fabricated gossip to cheer her up. She would not say a word. This started to annoy me, and I was already too exhausted to try any harder. I turned my face towards the window, shut my eyes close, and soon dozed off.





It was 4:12 now and we were at the Amritsar Junction, Aba's train had arrived seven minutes ago and now all three of us were waiting for our next train to Lahore. Just one more train ride till we reach our new home, our pak sar zameen. Upon Aba's arrival Bajo surprisingly seemed happier, as if Aba had just traded all our buffaloes for her Jagjeet. Her eyes were still glassy with tears, but she adorned a smile on her face now. Fake excitement, maybe? Conductor Sahab asked us to get seated again and get our luggage in. Everything seemed to go smoothly, we were just minutes away from a new life. A better life. We managed to get three seats and Aba told us about times when Ama was with us. Times when our family was more complete.

Suddenly, the air filled with distant screams, and minutes later the screams got louder and felt

nearer. Between those screams we could listen loud men chanting "Bole So Nihal, Sat Sri Akal!" and heard dagger blades slicing through bodies. My heartbeat shot and my entire body fell cold. Aba rushed us to hide under our seats and told us not to come out at any cost. He was profusely sweating and reciting something under his breath with a muscle in his jaw quivering. All the women in the train were hiding under their seats, shutting their kids' mouths closed with their hands to make sure they did not make a noise, while tears dropped from their eyes. All the men gathered at the entrance of the train, ready but not equipped to resist. Aba kept looking back at us. Bajo suddenly smiled. She looked at me and giggled. What is wrong with her? "Jagjeet agaya hai!", she whispered to me, claiming that she heard Jagjeet's voice amidst the hostile chants and flesh slicing.

I could hear the angry Sikh men marching towards our train, their swords and daggers making loud noises when they hit the windows' grills. My heart never raced this fast, my throat was dry, and my lips turned blue. I kept peeking a look out of the train's window and the sight of turbans floating towards the entrance just would not end. How many of them were there? I heard the men in our train shout, "Allah O Akbar!" and attack the Sikhs with whatever they had. All they had was fear. Fear of being killed, fear of their daughters and sisters being eaten by monsters, fear of not making it to Pakistan. I covered my ears and shut my eyes closed. I could not listen to this. I could not see this.

I started smelling something mysterious and weirdly familiar but could not put a finger on it. I opened my eyes and saw crimson red blood all over the train floor. Blood slowly flowing towards us now. Aba's blood? I was in a state of shock and could not even register what was happening around me. Bajo was smiling again, but she was looking up. I followed her gaze and there he was, Jagjeet Singh. Jagjeet really was here.

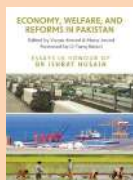
Did he come here to rescue her?
Did he really love her this much? He smiled back at her, but it was not the smile he usually had. It was evil, even more so monstrous. Bajo crammed out of under the seat and fixed her dupatta, "Jagjeet tum aa gaye?"

Jagjeet plucked the dupatta off her shoulder and grabbed her by her arm. In seconds, Bajo's eyes were filled with fear instead of love. She started screaming, "Aba! Aba! Bachao! Bachao!" But Aba was no more, I smelled his blood, I know. I felt numb. Jagjeet dragged her to the back of the train, her feet slid over the blood and made her resistance vile. I saw so many more women being dragged to the back of the train. I heard their clothes being torn. I heard screams. I heard their souls protesting. I heard the blood flowing through my ears. Heads were sliced off and hearts were sliced out. Those who were once brothers now turned into enemies. This was unreal.

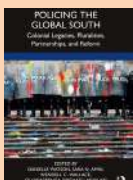
My Aba has reduced to a pool of blood and all that is left of my Bajo are her screams.

Kya yeh tha Pakistan?
...

PUBLICATIONS



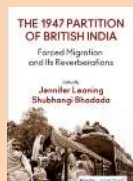
Dr. Hadia Majid (Associate professor and Department Chair, ECON) publishes book chapter titled Women's Economic Empowerment and Financial Inclusion in *Pakistan in the Economy, Welfare, and Reforms in Pakistan: Essays in Honor of Ishrat Husain* (2022).



Dr. Sadaf Ahmad (Associate Professor, HSS) publishes book chapter titled "Unfulfilled Potential: Women Police Stations in Pakistan." In the *Policing the Global South: Colonial Legacies, Pluralities, Partnerships, and Reform*. (2022)



MGSHSS Alumni **Atiyab Sultan** (officer of Pakistan Administrative Service) publishes a book "A Broken Record Institutions, Community and Development in Pakistan" in Cambridge University Press (2022).



Dr. Nadhra S. Khan (Visiting Faculty, HSS and Director GCLL) publishes book article titled "Men, Monuments, and Memoirs: Reclaiming Sites of the Indian Independence Movement in Lahore" in edited volume of *The 1947 Partition of British India Forced*

Migration and Its Reverberations published by the Harvard Lakshmi Mittal Institute (2022).



Dr. Nassir Abbas Nayyar (Adjunct Faculty MGSHSS and editor Bunyad) publishes book titled "Yeh qissa kya hai maani ka" published by Sang-e-Meel Publications (2022).

Dr. Shayan Rajani (Assistant Professor, HSS) publishes journal article titled "Before Ethnicity: Reading Sindh between Religion, Race, Language, and Nation." in the *Philological Encounters* (2022).

Dr. Hadia Majid (Associate Professor and Department Chair, ECON) published journal article titled Drought, Farm Output and Heterogeneity: Evidence from Pakistan in the *Journal of South Asian Development* (2022).

Dr. Hadia Majid (Associate Professor and Department Chair, ECON) and **Syeda Warda Riaz** (Pre-Doc Associate, ECON) co-publishes journal article titled "Unconditional Cash Transfers and Women's Labor Supply in Pakistan" in the *Journal of Development Effectiveness* (2022).

Dr. Noaman G. Ali (Assistant Professor, HSS) co-publishes journal article titled "Worldly Marxism: Rethinking Revolution from Pakistan's Peripheries" in the *Comparative studies of South Africa and the Middle East* (2022) 42 (2): 489–504.

Dr. Sadia Zulfiqar (Assistant Professor, HSS) publishes journal article titled "Sharing a Husband: The Representation of Polygamy" in Buchi Emecheta's *The Joys of Motherhood* (1979)." *Research in African Literatures* (2022) Project muse.

Ms. Farhana Shehzad (Teaching Fellow, HSS) publishes journal article titled "An Essay on Investigating Factors Influencing Comprehensibility of World Englishes by Critically Evaluating Studies in the Domain" in the *British Journal of Arts and Humanities* (2022).

Ms. Natasha Sohail Barlas (Teaching Fellow HSS and Project Lead Leadership Development, OSA) co-publishes journal article titled "Can social-emotional learning programs

be adapted to schools in Pakistan? A literature reviews" in the *International Journal of School and Educational Psychology* (2022).

Ms. Natasha Sohail Barlas (Teaching Fellow HSS and Project Lead Leadership Development, OSA) co-publishes journal article titled "On the Meanings of Functional Play: A Review and Clarification of Definitions" in the *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education* (2022).

Dr. Farah Said (Assistant Professor, ECON) co-publishes article titled "Home-based Enterprises: Experimental evidence on female preferences from Pakistan" in the *Economic Development and Cultural Change* (2022).

Dr. Farah Said (Assistant Professor, ECON) co-publishes journal article titled "Intrahousehold Consumption Allocation and Demand for Agency: A triple experimental investigation" in the *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics* (2022).

Dr. Farah Said (Assistant Professor, ECON) co-publishes journal article titled "Changing Mindset to Foster Non-cognitive Skills and Academic Achievement: Evidence from a field experiment in Pakistan" in the *Journal of Asian Economics* (2022).

Afsheen Salahuddin (Adjunct Faculty, HSS) co-publishes article titled "Narratives of Academic Leadership about University's Role in Knowledge Economy of the Country" in the *Indian Journal of Economics and Business*. (2022)

Afsheen Salahuddin (Adjunct Faculty, HSS) co-publishes article titled Enhancing Confidence in Students' English-Speaking Skills by the Use of Interactive Practices" in the *VFAST Transactions on Education and Social Sciences*. (2022)

مصنوعی مسکراہٹ

تحریر: شیراز احمد

گرمی کا موسم ہے۔۔۔ سمسٹر ختم ہو چکا ہے۔۔۔ عید بھی سر پہ ہے۔۔۔ عجیب انسان ہو، ایک سال ہونے کو ہے اور تم ابھی تک کیمپس میں ٹھہرے ہوئے ہو۔ گھر کیوں نہیں گئے؟ مجھے یہ تو بتاؤ کیا تمہیں ماں کی بھی یاد نہیں آتی؟ کیا عید کی خوشیاں ماں سے دور رہ کر بھی منائی جاسکتی ہیں؟ لیکن تم تو سنگ دل ہو بس سنگ دل۔۔۔

میرے دوست کا ہر سوال میرے دل پہ تیروں کی مانند برساتھا۔ میرا دماغ تو چاہتا تھا کہ آج اس راز سے پردہ اٹھا ہی لیا جائے جس کو میرا دل برسوں سے اپنے کسی خانے میں چھپائے بیٹھا تھا، مگر دل نے راز افشاں کرنے کی اجازت نہ دی۔ آخر کار ایک بار پھر مجھے دل کی ضد کے آگے ہار ماننا پڑی۔ میں نے اپنے ہونٹوں پر نہایت مہارت سے مسکراہٹ نمودار کی اور دوست کو پرعش انداز میں جواب دینا شروع کیا کہ میں گھر کی رونقوں میں گم ہو کر وقت ضائع نہیں کرنا چاہتا۔ اگر گھر چلا گیا تو خاندان کے لوگوں سے ملاقاتوں کا سلسلہ ختم بھی نہ ہوگا کہ یونیورسٹی کی طرف سے نئے سمسٹر کی امی۔ میل موصول ہو جائے گی۔ تمہیں تو بتایا بھی تھا کہ میرا شہر کئی دنوں کے فاصلے پر ہے۔ اور پھر۔۔۔

اچانک اس کے موبائل کی گھنٹی بجی۔ میں مزید بولنا چاہتا تھا مگر اس نے یہ کہتے ہوئے "بس میں سمجھ گیا"، موبائل اپنے کان کے ساتھ لگا لیا۔ چند ہی لمحوں میں اس کے سورج کی تپش سے جھلسے ہوئے چہرے پر خوشی کی لہر چھا گئی اور وہ مڈدبانہ لہجے میں کچھ یوں مخاطب ہوا، "وعلیکم السلام۔۔۔ امی جان کیسی ہیں؟"

ہم دونوں اس وقت لمز کے گرمائی سکول کی اک سبز بیرونی دیوار سے ٹیک لگائے کھڑے تھے۔ میں بغیر کچھ کہے فوراً وہاں سے ہاسٹل کی جانب چل پڑا۔ ابھی چند قدم ہی آگے بڑھا تھا کہ میرا ایک ہاتھ میری آنکھوں سے آنسو صاف کرتے ہوئے مجھ سے مچو گفتگو تھا کہ تیرے دوست کو کیا خبر کہ جس کا اپنا گھر ہی نہ ہو وہ انسان گھر جائے بھی تو کس کے گھر جائے۔ تیرے دوست کو یہ بات تو معلوم ہے کہ بچے ماں کے ساتھ عید کے دن جی بھر کر خوشیاں مناتے ہیں مگر اس سے یہ تو پوچھو کہ جس کی ماں ہی نہ ہو تو۔۔۔

ہاتھ نے اچانک خاموشی اختیار کر لی، مگر اسی ہاتھ کی انگلیوں پر پڑے آنسوؤں سے اس قدر طاقتور صدا بلند ہوئی کہ ساتویں آسمان کی بلندیوں سے نکلانے میں زیادہ دیر نہیں لگی۔

EVENTS



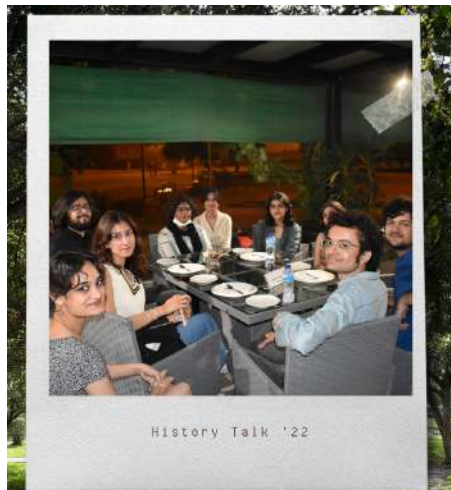
The organizing team behind the MGSNSS Convocation for the Batch of 2022



Our attempt for the LUMS HR 14th August Picture Competition - representing the white in Pakistan's flag and spreading love!



The book launch for Dr Ali Khan's book "*Cricket in Pakistan - Nation, Identity and Politics*"



The History Stream at the department of Humanities and Social Sciences arranged a hi-tea for students who are doing majors and minors in history. Students enjoyed interacting and having insightful discussions with their professors.



We hosted our first movie night in March 2022, screening Jurassic Park in the Central Courtyard. Students, faculty, and staff all enjoyed watching a classic!



The MGSSSH Career Center in collaboration with the LUMS Career Services Office organized a session with a panel of employers from different industries to help students understand what employers look for and network with them



MGSSHSS hosted a skill-building workshop as a part of 'Cultivating the Humanities & Social Sciences & Supporting Under-Represented Scholars of Asia' transnational project, headed by Association of Asian Studies (AAS) and sponsored by Sweden.



The School Farewell for the Batch of 2022!



We're proud to have launched some great souvenirs this year, including postcards, calendars and more! Available at the LUMS Super Store



The Dean's Office in collaboration with SWGI organized a talk with alumni Saim Sadiq and Rasti Farooq talking about their award-winning film Joyland and the journey from LUMS to Cannes



The Economics Department organized a talk with Dr Miftah Ismail, moderated by Dr Ali Hasnain, talking about the issues faced by Pakistan's economy and the way forward.



Welcoming the batch of 2026 at the Orientation 2022 amidst some rain and sunshine!



The MGSNSS staff trip offered a much-needed opportunity to relax and get to know each other better



The Dean's Office at the School's Annual Dinner - welcoming some new faces and welcoming back old ones!



Screening Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone at our second movie night hosted in September 2022



The Dean's Office Annual Lunch and celebration of November birthdays!



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