

گفتگو Guftugu

Newsletter of the **Mishtaq Ahmad Gurmani**
School of Humanities and Social Sciences



From the Dean's Desk



The Newsletter is the official voice of the Office of the Dean, Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences, LUMS.

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The layout has been designed by Nazish Riaz. We also thank the authors who not only provided us with the write-ups but also pictures to go along with them.

Dear Colleagues, Students and Friends,

We have come a long way since the first issue of Guftugu came out more than two years back (this being the fifth). Our conversations within and outside this newsletter have grown across disciplines, schools, and even the University. Today, building on the past hard work of faculty and administrators, MGS HSS stands as an example of what an excellent programme in the humanities and the social sciences can aspire to be in any part of the globe, let alone our own region. To take a few examples, no other University, at least in Pakistan, can boast having a group of more than twenty PhDs in Economics from some of the best universities in the US and Europe, teaching in one department. Similarly, we have a mix of excellent junior and senior political scientists in our growing programme. Our history faculty is changing the contours of the field by publishing pertinent and provocative research. In the past few years, MGS HSS faculty has published in highly-ranked journals and authored books with internationally-recognised Presses.

We are not sitting back and merely basking on our laurels, but constantly creating opportunities to further improve ourselves by participating in international conferences and also organising workshops, symposia, and seminars. In addition to this, we have hired new faculty and consolidated new programmatic initiatives. Most importantly, our excellent faculty, invigorated advising system, and the overall supportive environment have meant a better learning experience for all our students who continue to excel in their academic and future work-related endeavours. Moreover, MGS HSS has pioneered special weekly classes in English and year-long tutoring in English comprehension and mathematics for those students who require it. In the same vein, our third Summer programme for academically-weak students will commence in June-July. Our effort is directed towards the entire University as we are committed to the idea of lifting all boats together. As we enter another new year, we re-dedicate ourselves to the pursuit of knowledge in order to serve our students and faculty alike.

Our guftugu continues.

Sincerely,

Professor and Acting Dean

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LUMS Young Writers Workshop 2019

Mahnoor Ishtiaq Lone

The LUMS Young Writers Workshop is the only residential creative writing workshop in Pakistan. Established in 2012, the annual workshop selects eight talented writers through an open short story contest. The workshop is organised and conducted by Bilal Tanweer (Associate Professor, Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies) and has featured guest speakers such as Sanam Meher, Saba Imtiaz, Mohsin Hamid, and Omar Shahid Hamid. The workshop is made possible by the generous support of the Ferozsons Laboratories Ltd.

The eighth LUMS Young Writers Workshop (LYWW) took place from August 5 to 9, 2019. Out of the 550 writers who submitted their short stories for consideration, eight promising entrants were selected to participate: Minahil Abideen (GCU), Asna Nusrat, Fatima Farhad (Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi), Mahrukh Mohsin (University of Karachi), Aaisha Salman (IBA), Rida Khan (IBA), Aisha Hamid, and Syeda Rabeeha Ahmed (IBA). The residential workshop was fully funded, covering the cost of food, accommodation, and study materials. In order to prepare for the workshop, the participants were sent a selection of books to read in advance. This year's reading list included *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, *Ghachar Ghochar* by Vivek Shanbhag, *Red Birds* by Mohammed Hanif, *A Room of One's Own* by Virginia Woolf, and the short stories of Franz Kafka. During the week long workshop, participants discussed and close-read these texts. They were also given timed writing assignments and subsequently asked to closely read and critique each other's work.

The workshop followed an intensive schedule, with an eight-hour session



of writing and reading each day. The sessions focused on the craft and practice of writing, and included sessions on publishing. "LYWW not only allowed me to learn essential tricks of the trade from critically acclaimed novelists," said Mahrukh Mohsin, "but also provided me with deeper insight into what it means to be a practicing writer."

Renowned author and journalist Mohammed Hanif spent one morning session with the students and offered critique on their work. He discussed the strengths and weaknesses of each story while giving each student advice on how to better achieve the project of their story. The students then asked him questions about his latest novel, which they had read before the workshop. He also shared his experience of being an author and a journalist, and how he balances both roles.

LYWW has always been centered around providing detailed, individualised feedback to hone skills of budding

writers. Near the end of the workshop, the participants expressed their appreciation for this guidance. "I felt an immense gratitude," Aaisha Salman said, "because it gave us the space and time to write, to consider ourselves writers, mentorship to consider our writing practices in new ways, and to share our words with each other." Mahrukh Mohsin explained how the workshop taught her to go "beyond superficial ideas of structure and form ... [to] ... write without any inhibitions, letting go of ... boundaries and safety nets." She said that this allowed her "to explore the many ways in which words can be used to express ideas and stories."

In the past, LYWW alumni have formed long lasting bonds with their fellow participants, providing them with a writers' support group long after the workshop's end. Many of the workshop's graduates have also gone on to receive full scholarships at many top creative writing MFA programmes in the United States.

Workshop for Humanities Graduate Applicants

Ali Mehdi Zaidi

The Gurmani Centre of Languages and Literature held a one-day workshop on August 3, 2019, designed to assist Pakistani students applying to humanities graduate schools in the United States and Canada.

Led and organised by Dr. Maryam Wasif Khan (LUMS), Dr. Jennifer Dubrow (University of Washington), Zain R. Mian (University of Pennsylvania), and Nabeel Jafri (University of Toronto), the workshop consisted of two sessions. In the first part, all four contributors presented their own perspective on the graduate school application process. Dr. Khan shared her insights from her extensive work with prospective graduate applications in the humanities and focused on the process of selecting a university and a programme. Mr. Mian presented on the intricacies of the personal statement while Mr. Jafri commented on the writing sample.

And finally, Dr. Dubrow enlightened participants from the perspective of graduate school application committees.

In the second part of the session, participants got the opportunity to work one on one on their statements and writing samples with the panelists. In addition to the workshop, this event also inaugurated an online portal where students can not only access guidance on specific parts of the application but also view successful samples from previous years. Available freely, this portal serves as a useful repository of information for prospective students both within and outside LUMS. The panelists pointed the various mistakes, pitfalls, and acts of negligence which lead to rejections from graduate schools. These include something as simple as applying to a department that works on Asian Languages and Literature with a project that works solely with English texts

to something as specific as not citing a key academic intervention made in the discipline over the past few years.

Perhaps most importantly, the speakers urged students to fully understand the practicalities of the admissions process, such as the importance of emailing professors in advance, finding the right fit, soliciting good recommendations, scoring well on the GRE, and that it is not expected of the students to have actually worked on the project they initially propose. After the workshop, rather than a seamless systematic process, the graduate application emerged as dependent on some level of arbitrariness and luck that can nevertheless be prepared for. Overall, the workshop was a well-designed and well-executed attempt to make the unnecessarily obscure process slightly less confusing.



Events at MGSHSS

Humanities and Social Sciences Seminar Series

Dr. Asma Faiz



The HSS Seminar Series is organised by Dr. Mohammad Waseem and Dr. Asma Faiz. This series has served as a platform for faculty and researchers both from within and outside LUMS to share their work with the LUMS community. It is the longest-running seminar series at LUMS. The Fall 2019 edition of the series presented a wide-range of topics exploring the research from academics belonging to different disciplines. The Fall edition started with a presentation by Dr. Mohammad Waseem who deconstructed the various dimensions of Pakistan's master narrative. His presentation covered the complex process of



Dr. Nida Kirmani

construction of the national narrative and various aspects of reaction from the political community and civil society.

The second seminar was a presentation by German anthropologist Jurgen Waseem who traced the evolution of African community in Pakistan with a focus on the Shidi community located in Karachi and other parts of Sindh. The third talk was given by Dr. Nida Kirmani who presented her exhaustive research on the amorphous linkages between formal and informal state and the role of non-state actors in the Lyari neighbourhood of Karachi.



Dr. Tariq Rahman

Dr. Kirmani especially elaborated on the origins, growth, and workings of Peoples' Aman Committee that has been at the heart of security issues in Lyari during the last decade.

The next talk in the HSS seminar was delivered by Dr. Hasan Karrar who explored the conceptual, historical, and empirical evolution of the notions of corridors and connectivity. Dr. Karrar traced the idea of corridors from the early days of the Cold War to the

contemporary Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. The next speaker in the series was Dr. Tariq Rahman of Beaconhouse National University (BNU) who provided a brief insight into his research on various interpretations of jihad in Urdu commentaries based on Quranic texts. This presentation was part of Dr. Rahman's recent book on the issue.

This was followed by a presentation by Dr. Philipp Zehmisch who looked into the construction and evolution of Baltistani

identity in the age of post-coloniality. Dr. Zehmisch examined the discourse in Balti online communities, their notions of the self, and Baltistan's relationship with the state of Pakistan. The fall edition of the HSS seminar series thus presented an interesting mixture of themes across various disciplines of the humanities and the social sciences.



Dr. Philipp Johannes Zehmisch

History Seminar Series

Shafaq Sohail

The History Seminar Series is organised by the Department of History at MGSHSS. The series is dedicated to bringing recent scholarship and research in the field of history to LUMS.

As a part of this initiative, the department hosted a book launch for *Prison Interlude: The Last Eyewitness Account of the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case* by Zafar Ullah Poshni. A translation of Poshni Sahib's earlier work titled *Zindagi Zindan Dili Ka Naam Hai* published in 1992, the book details the experiences of Zafar Ullah Poshni as a young army captain involved and convicted in the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case of 1951 against the government of Liaquat Ali Khan.

In discussion with Dr. Ali Raza, Zafar Ullah Poshni narrated the events that led up to his arrest, as well as the incidents, banter, and friendships that emerged in the confines of the prison cells. Reciting fragments of diary entries and poetry that features in his book, Poshni Sahib kept the audience immersed in the meticulous and comical anecdotes of his life during and

after the incarceration. The discussion concluded with Poshni Sahib addressing questions posed by the attendees, reciting the poetry of Faiz Ahmed Faiz, and reminding the audience aptly of a couplet quoted somewhere in his book: *Khub guzray gi jo mil baithengay diwanay do!*

The History Seminar Series, in collaboration with Technology for People Initiative (TPI), also organised an event for the launch of the LUMS Digital Archive. The Archive is a research repository that aims at collecting, cataloguing, and preserving rare material (books, pamphlets, newspapers, and other items) of historical significance and making them available to researchers. As of now, the Digital Archive has four projects on its website: Partition Testimonies: Ishtiaq Ahmad Collection; Partition Abduction 1947; Punjabi Literary Journals; and Reports on Anti-Ahmadiyya Violence.

The Series concluded its events for the Fall semester with a talk by Professor Jamal Malik titled "Andaman in Muslim



Cultural Memory: The case of Faiz-e Haqq Khairabadi". Centered around the memory of Khairabadi, a prominent poet of the Indian Muslim Freedom Fighters of 1857, the talk traced the historical and political contexts of the deportation of freedom fighters to Port Blair and the different meanings that continue to be ascribed to Khairabadi's extradition and consequent death. Elaborating on the significance of his work and the appropriation of his shrine, by Muslims and Hindus alike, Professor Malik highlighted the many interpretations of his life, journeys, and work that remain integral yet debated in the Muslim cultural memory and histories.

English Seminar Series

Dr. Saba Pirzadeh

The English Seminar Series commenced with a talk by Dr. Farah Ali on November 14, 2019. Dr. Ali's talk was titled "Truth to Power: Harold Pinter, a Master of Dramatic Silences but Never a Silent Citizen" and focused on Harold Pinter's interest in representations of power, cruelty, and freedom given his childhood experiences of growing up as a Jew in East London during WWII. The lecture discussed how subsequent wars, injustices, and the bloodshed that occurred across the world converted Pinter into a fierce, outspoken, and provocative critic of human rights abuses in the world. Dr. Ali also showed clips of dramatic performances to emphasise the significance of language, memory, gender, and politics in Pinter's



works. Rabia Nafees Shah moderated the subsequent discussion which focused on Pinter's multiple roles as dramatist, a Noble Prize Winner, and a citizen of the world.

The second talk in the series took place on

November 22, 2019, and included a screening of Atiya Khan's documentary *Qalandar Code: Rise of the Divine Feminine* which delved into Atiya Khan's 16-year journey into the world of the Islamic mystics. The documentary revolved around the shrine of Hazrat Lal Shahbaz Qalandar (Sindh) and a sacred cave called Lahoot La Maqam (Baluchistan), which is believed to be the hiding place of Hazrat Fatima (Prophet Muhammad's daughter) to underscore the affective power and experiences of religious sites. *Qalandar Code* generated intelligent and intriguing questions from the audience at the end of the documentary, which led to further discussion on faith and the role of women in Abrahamic religions. The talk was moderated by Dr. Sadia Zulfiqar and was well-attended by both faculty and students.

Brown Bag Series–Department of Economics

The Economics Society

Increasingly, LUMS has made great strides to increase opportunities for quality research within the university. Like students, these professionals, largely instructors, walk a similar path of intellectual curiosity. There is a lot that students can learn from these often relaxed yet formal presentations about relevant research. This is where the term 'brown bag sessions' (or the 'brown bad lunches') originated, suggesting a relatively casual discussion or meeting over lunch.

True to its name (minus the lunch), the Economic Society's Brown Bag Series provided a platform or space intended to foster this curiosity and growth—an opportunity for the department to engage their peers. These sessions effectively place students in a challenging, and perhaps even unfamiliar, capacity to engage and critique the work of their professors. By providing students with a



Dr. Ayesha Ali



Dr. Sanval Nasim

relatively mature audience to engage with, the department intends to empower students and enable them to learn with their professors, in addition to being able to learn from them. These talks also help bridge the gap between faculty and students, often allowing friendly relations and discussions outside of the classroom.

The talks generally consist of an open environment in order to foster candid and conducive questions from peers, students, guests, and the department at large. They begin with a research presentation followed by a Q&A from the audience. What's worth mentioning is the nature of this audience, and at times even the presenters – they aren't limited to the field of Economics or business. We've had professionals who've shared their unique work in everything from data science to even artificial intelligence! The presenters are also not limited to either LUMS in particular or the Pakistani academia in general—we have had guests who are



part of businesses and industries as well. As far as our own faculty is concerned, these talks were able to shed light on diverse issues. For example, Dr. Hadia Majid, who has a doctorate in development economics, presented her concerns about the constraints faced by women in Pakistan in terms of their ability to join the workforce. Her research focused on the efficacy of the Benazir Income Support Program, particularly on the

capacity of women to command more autonomy in the household. We also had Dr. Ayesha Ali present her findings on the how misinformation was being spread on social media as well as how to identify and counter it—a major and timely concern. Given his expertise in environmental economics, Dr. Sanval Nasim presented his findings on Lahore's increasingly hazardous levels of air pollution and how it is shaping people's

behaviours.

From these albeit brief examples, we get a sense of the diverse academic interests that people at LUMS hold. In order to continue to see similar endeavours in the future, it is absolutely essential to not only allow the faculty to engage their peers but also to allow students the opportunity to be inspired by current trends in fieldwork and in research.



Centre Events

Gurmani Centre for Languages and Literature

Mahnoor Ishtiaq Lone

Visual and Performing Arts at the Gurmani Centre

Continuing with its endeavour to create a space for the arts at LUMS, the Gurmani Centre organised a series of events this semester to encourage students to engage with the visual and performing arts.

In October the Gurmani Centre hosted "Re-View", a videography exhibition featuring the work of moving image artist Asif Khan. The weeklong exhibition, curated by Dr. Nadhra Khan and Olivia Burt, was the first videography exhibition to be held at LUMS. It showcased five drone films shot in the surroundings of the Beaconhouse National University, Lahore. The films highlighted the contrast between agricultural land and sites of construction in the transforming landscape of Lahore's periphery. The exhibition was on display throughout the week, offering students the chance to engage with the work deeply and extensively. At the closing of the exhibition, Asif Khan also delivered a presentation about the work and his broader artistic interests. He elaborated on his choice of filming with a drone and explained that he was "intrigued by this



novel way of looking at the world". He also talked about his predilection for "defying the conventions of the medium, whether it is by forcing a gliding drone to stand still or by freezing a fleeting Facebook live stream in a static image". The audience emerged from the session

with a deeper understanding of the artist's work.

Later in the same month, the Gurmani Centre invited film-maker Hira Nabi to screen and discuss her short-film "All That Perishes at the Edge of Land". The thirty minute short-film captured the lives of shipbreakers at Gadani Port in Balochistan. It poignantly highlighted the bleakness and hardships of their work, while simultaneously capturing glimpses of humour and fraternity amongst the workers. In the following discussion the film-maker discussed her motivations behind the film, the process of making it, and her artistic and academic influences. The film and the discussion surrounding it brought to light the extent of the exploitation underway at Gadani Port. It also highlighted the ways in which evolving forms of filmography can be used to make powerful commentary in the Pakistani context.



The Raag Shaam series, started by the Centre in Spring 2019, also continued this Fall. The series attempted to introduce the LUMS audience to classical music and its continuing influence on our musical sensibilities. The three sessions held this semester continued to discuss the system of Thaaths in North Indian Classical Music. Through the course of the semester, Imran Jafri introduced the audience to Thaath Behro'n, Kaafi, and Marwa, and the Raags contained within them. He elaborated upon the mood and time of day associated with each Thaath. He also recounted anecdotes about people and places he had gathered his musical knowledge from, placing special emphasis on the way knowledge is passed down in musical families. The sessions were interspersed with demonstrations of astayis and popular songs composed in each Thaath. The audience were privy to performances by Ustad Imran Jafri as well as renditions of popular ghazals by Aamna Khalid. Shayan Jafri, Imran Jafri's student and son, too delivered a mesmerising performance of an astayi in Raag Soni during the final session of the semester.

Khokha Natak, another one of the



Gurmani Centre's running series, continued with its third installment this semester. The fortnightly performances, curated and directed by Waqas Manzoor, enacted four Urdu short stories. The series attempted to commemorate iconic Urdu writers by enacting their stories on their birth and death anniversaries. The performances brought to life the witty humour and astute social commentary in stories such as "*Dulhan Kaisi*" by Ismat Chughtai, "*Bandar Wala*" by Ghulam

Abbas, and "*Asiya*" by Bilal Minto. The final performance of the semester featured a vibrant dance performance set to Hadiqa Kiyani's rendition of "*Chap Tilak Sab Cheeni*". The Khokha Natak series continues to sustain a space for a public and lively engagement with performance art and is a testament to the versatility of street theatre.



Literary Events at the Gurmani Centre



Nilofer Iqbal with Zahid Hussain

Since its inception, the Gurmani Centre has strived to cultivate the practice and appreciation of the literary arts within the University. Bilal Tanweer, co-director of the Centre, curated a number of events this semester to continue with this endeavour. Apart from the long running Halqa-e-Danish and Bazm-e-Adab series, the Centre also arranged a reading workshop and a discussion on Annie Ali Khan's *Sita Under the Crescent Moon*. Through these events the hope was to foster engagement with a variety of literature spanning various genres and languages.

The Halqa-e-Danish series for Fall 2019, titled "*Ham-asr Urdu Afsana*", celebrated the work of contemporary Urdu short-story writers. The Gurmani Centre invited three eminent writers, one each month, to talk at length about their work and writing practice. The three writers—Bilal Minto, Asad Muhammad Khan, and Nilofer Iqbal—discussed their literary influences and writing process, and elaborated on their process and practice. The sessions also featured readings by these writers. The series not only facilitated an engagement with a

wide variety of writing styles in contemporary Urdu literature but also provided the writers and audience an opportunity to discuss the craft of writing.

The Ahmed Bilal Awan Bazm-e-Adab "*Tin Diktetar, Tin Sha'ir*" series was a commemoration of the voices and words that protested against dictatorial regimes in Pakistan. For the first session, held in October, the Centre invited feminist poet and writer Kishwer Naheed. Noor ul Huda Shah—an acclaimed poet and playwright who writes in both Sindhi and Urdu—was the guest for the second session. The two poets discussed their personal journeys as female writers and their experience of writing in times of heightened censorship. The audience also had a chance to hear readings of their poetry. Hearing Kishwer Naheed reading "*yeh ham gunahgar auraten*" and Noor ul Huda Shah reading "*khamosh khabardar*" were moving experiences for all present. The series hoped not only to keep alive these histories of resistance but also to reiterate the importance of continuing to dissent in seemingly hopeless times.

"Why are You Silent", a reading workshop which raised questions about the ethics of reading, learning, and knowledge acquisition, was also organised in October.



Bilal Minto with Bilal Tanweer



It was led by Taimoor Shahid, a writer, translator, and doctoral candidate at the University of Chicago. The participants read a selection of texts to read before the event, including excerpts from *Beginning of Guidance* by al-Ghazali, "Being or Becoming the Stranger" by Toni Morrison, and selections from *Truth and Method* by Hans-Georg Gadamer. The

interactive discussion helped participants discover the connections between seemingly unconnected texts from disparate literary traditions.

Towards the end of the semester, the Centre collaborated with the Saida Waheed Gender Initiative to host a roundtable discussion titled "Writing as Inquiry

Writing as Devotion: Reflecting on *Sita Under the Crescent Moon*". The non-fiction narrative book, by the late Annie Ali Khan, is an exploration of Sita Shrines in Pakistan and the women who visit them for pilgrimage. The event was curated by alumnus Amna Chaudhry. She also moderated the roundtable discussion, which was led by guest speakers Saadia Khatri, Zoya Rehman, and Saba Imtiaz. The speakers read out excerpts from the book and discussed the elements of the book that struck them the most. Common among their varying readings was the notion that the book was undergirded by the author's devotion to bringing the stories of marginalised women to light, and a spirit of unqualified acceptance for the subjects of these stories. The discussion created a space for the audience to reflect on the stories told in the book, and the questions raised by them. It also offered the audience a glimpse of a deeply empathetic and feminist ethic of journalistic inquiry and writing.



Asad Muhammad Khan, Mubeen Mirza, and Mohammad Hameed Shahid

Saida Waheed Gender Initiative

Aimen Bucha



Dr. Nosheen Ali

This semester started off with a talk by Dr. Nosheen Ali, a sociologist studying state theory ecology, and Muslim cultural politics in South Asia. In her talk titled "Feminist Journeys in Academia: Theorizing State Power, Development and Social Justice in Pakistan's Northern Frontier", she highlighted key theoretical interventions from her recently published book *Delusional States: Feeling Rule and Development in Pakistan's Northern Frontier*, while emphasising the power and perils of a feminist research process.



Dr. Arsalan Khan

The next talk was by Dr. Arsalan Khan, Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at Union College in Schenectady, New York. In his talk titled "Engendering Piety and the Making of an Islamic Home in an Islamic Revival Movement in Pakistan", he focused on how Pakistani Tablighis, practitioners of the transnational Islamic piety movement the Tablighi Jamaat, attempt to restructure kinship relations within their homes.



Dr. Ayesha Masood

The third talk of the seminar series was by Dr. Ayesha Masood, Assistant Professor of Organizational Behavior at SDSB, LUMS. The talk, titled "Pakistani Women in Medicine: Myths and Realities", explored the historical trends underlying the feminisation of medicine in Pakistan, their implications for the organisation of the medical profession, and the place of women physicians in the Pakistani medical workforce.



Dr. Rashid Memon

This was followed by a talk titled "Undervaluing Women's Voice in Pakistan and the UK" by Dr. Rashid Memon, Assistant Professor of Economics at LUMS. In this talk, Dr. Memon posited that gender discrimination in the modern world has become subtle and implicit—for example, male colleagues regularly discriminate against female colleagues not necessarily by saying something out loud, but by ignoring their input. This project was conducted with university students in Pakistan as well as in the United Kingdom.



Ms. Nazish Brohi

The last talk of the seminar series was given by Ms. Nazish Brohi, a researcher who has worked in the development sector for the past 20 years in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Iraq. In her talk titled "Anatomy of a Rumour", she grappled with what the absence of sexual violence against women means in conflict contexts, when it is accompanied by emphatic statements of presence.

The recorded videos of many of these talks can be accessed on the official YouTube page of the Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences at LUMS.



Research Mentoring Workshop

A cohort of 14 students from across public and private universities in Pakistan were selected for the Research Mentoring Workshop, which aimed to help develop and support original research ideas by students related to gender and/or sexuality and which engaged primary and secondary sources. Along with providing basic training in feminist research methodologies, this workshop was an excellent opportunity for student participants to present their research proposals and receive valuable feedback from the academic research community at LUMS.

Play

This semester, the SWGI also hosted a play titled *Lights Out* (directed by Fawad Khan). Khan graduated from NAPA with a major in direction for stage in 2008. Since then, he has been involved in various capacities in Pakistani theatre. He acts and writes as well. The performers in *Lights Out* included Syed Meesam Nazar Naqvi, Kulsom Aftab Ahmed, Muhammad

Farhan Alam Siddiqui, Muhammad Samhan Ghazi, Kiran Siddiqui, and Ayesha Pervaiz.

The play touched upon themes of patriarchal violence, apathy, and justice to name a few and all these were explored in a panel discussion with the director and Professor Salima Hashmi after the performance.



SWGJ Film Screening: Schokofeh Kamiz's *After Sabeen*

Aimen Bucha



The SWGI screened the documentary, *After Sabeen*, and followed it up with a discussion with director Schokofeh Kamiz and Sabeen's mother, Mahenaz Mahmud. In the wake of Sabeen Mahmud's murder, the director followed her mother and friends to record not only their memories and grief but also their ongoing impetus to continue Sabeen's work and mission.

Schokofeh, an Iranian filmmaker, used to be a video journalist for many years and *After Sabeen* is her first documentary. On the occasion of Sabeen's murder, Schokofeh recalls sitting with one of her friends who knew Sabeen. She observed how shattered he was and she closely listened to what he had to say about her and her work. What inspired Schokofeh the most is how Sabeen not only opened up a space for having difficult conversations on a broad range of issues but also how she, in her routine life, touched the lives of many people. The documentary focuses on how Sabeen is remembered rather

than focusing on bringing forth shots featuring Sabeen. Schokofeh shares how this was a deliberate choice as she wanted to bring across the impact Sabeen had on people and the legacy she left behind.

Mahenaz shared her thoughts as Sabeen's mother and as someone who believed in the principles for which her daughter worked tirelessly and bravely. She talked about how as a mother she never wanted to pass on the anxiety and fear she was made to internalise as a young woman. She wanted Sabeen to feel free and to do the things she wanted to do. She shared that she would raise her the same way and give her the same freedom of chasing her ideals and opening up spaces for others even if the consequences were to be the same.

When asked about how people from varying progressive political affiliations lay claim to Sabeen, Mahenaz responded: "It is difficult to put Sabeen in a box. I don't refute people laying claim to her and sharing what they thought of her because I realise that she meant different things to different people and I am most grateful for that".

The documentary was met with a lot of tears, joy and praise. The sorrow of the audience was soon turned into celebration with audience members sharing their feelings and stories about Sabeen.



Mahbub Ul Haq Research Center

Fizzah Sajjad

The Mahbub ul Haq Research Center (MHRC) is a centre of excellence in social sciences research at LUMS. It supports interdisciplinary research, scholarship, and teaching on issues of human development, social exclusion, and inequality across South Asia. Its vision is to co-construct knowledge on critical challenges with a community of scholars, students, practitioners, and social actors to bring about transformative change for an inclusive and equitable society.

This semester, the Center focused on a number of key activities. These included a review of the Center's plans and organisational structure in consultation with faculty; work on its proposed flagship research project "The Pakistan Urban Futures Initiative"; development of collaborations and partnerships with research institutions and development organisations; and execution of outreach activities.

As a result of its consultative exercise with faculty, the Center has created a set

of thematic research clusters, which offer faculty the opportunity to work in peer groups and draw on expertise that extends across economics, political science, sociology, anthropology, religion, history, and other cross-cutting fields. Each cluster will engage with key research questions in its field, and commence research activities in the upcoming semester. Some of the finalised thematic research clusters are: Political Economy and Governance; Poverty, Inequality and Inclusion; Cities; and Digital Technology.

Partnerships

The Center is planning to launch its flagship project "The Pakistan Urban Futures Initiative" in partnership with the UN Development Programme in Pakistan. The initiative aims to track a select range of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Pakistani cities. Findings from the project will be used to build evidence and influence policymaking and citizen-engagement at the national, regional, and city levels.

MHRC is also in the process of formalising an institutional partnership for research collaboration with the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), a global institution for research, teaching and learning, and impact and communications, based at the University of Sussex. The agreement will also be used to work collectively on the Center's South Asia Human Development Reports.

Outreach Activities

In November, the Centre launched its Distinguished Lecture Series which aims to bring leading scholars to present and discuss new knowledge on critical global and national challenges. The inaugural lecture was delivered by Professor Imran Rasul, a globally renowned development economist and a pioneer of evidence-based policy design. Professor Rasul is based at the University College London. He was recently awarded the prestigious 'Yrjö Jahnsson Award in Economics 2019' by the European Economic Association. In his lecture, titled "Children's Health, Well-being and Human Capital Formation in the Context of Extreme Poverty", Professor Rasul presented results from a large-scale and long-term randomised control trial to evaluate an intervention targeting improved early life nutrition and well-being for households residing in extreme poverty. The intervention led to large and sustained improvements in anthropometric and health outcomes for children, including an 8% reduction in stunting by end line. The results showed the promise and sustainability of scalable multifaceted pre-natal interventions in even the most challenging economic environments. The inaugural lecture was attended by a wide audience of students, faculty, researchers, and practitioners.

In addition to the Distinguished Lecture Series, the Centre is planning book colloquiums, seminars, and policy and practice lecture series for the next semester.

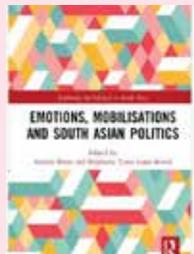


Faculty News

Ali Raza (Associate Professor, HSS) published an article titled "Dispatches from Havana: The Cold War, Afro-Asian Solidarities, and Culture Wars in Pakistan" in *Journal of World History* (2019).



Sadaf Ahmad (Associate Professor, HSS) published a chapter titled "When Emotions Become Fuel: The Passage of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Legislation in Pakistan" in *Emotions, Mobilisations and South Asian Politics*, edited by Amelie Blom and Stéphanie Tawa Lama-Rewal (Routledge, 2019).



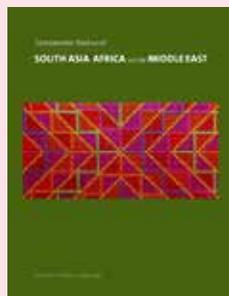
Rasul Bakhsh Rais (Professor, HSS) published an article titled "Geopolitics on the Pakistan–Afghanistan Borderland: An Overview of Different Historical Phases" in *Geopolitics* (2019).



Tania Saeed (Assistant Professor, HSS) co-authored a monograph (with Marie Lall) titled *Youth and the National Narrative. Education, Terrorism and the Security State in Pakistan* (Bloomsbury, 2019). She also published a chapter titled "Resisting Islamophobia: Muslim Youth Activism in the UK" in *Contesting Islamophobia: Anti-Muslim Prejudice in Media, Culture and Politics*, edited by Peter Morey, Amina Yaqin, and Alaya Forte (Bloomsbury, 2019).



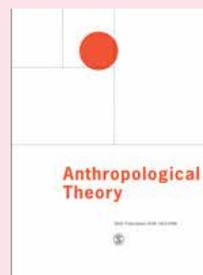
Hasan H. Karrar (Associate Professor, HSS) published an article titled "In the Shadow of the Silk Road: Border Regimes and Economic Corridor Development through an Unremarkable Pakistan-China Border Market" in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* (2019).



Noaman G. Ali (Assistant Professor, HSS) published an article titled "Agrarian class struggle and state formation in post colonial Pakistan, 1959–1974: Contingencies of *Mazdoor Kisan Raj*" in *Journal of Agrarian Change* (2019).



Anjum Alvi (Associate Professor, HSS) published an article titled "Levinas and ethics: The death of Pope John Paul II" in *Anthropological Theory* (2019).



Asma Faiz (Assistant Professor, HSS) published a chapter titled "Rise of Right-Wing Populism: Imran Khan in Pakistan" in *Populismes au pouvoir* (Populisms in Power), edited by Alain Dieckhoff, Christophe Jaffrelot, and Elise Massicard (SciencesPo, 2019).

New Hires

Dr. Farah Ali (Assistant Professor) PhD, English Literature, University of Hull, 2016
Published *Eroding the Language of Freedom: Identity Predicament in Selected Works of Harold Pinter* (Routledge, 2018)

Dr. Noaman G. Ali (Assistant Professor) PhD, Political Science, York University, Canada

Sara Aziz (Teaching Fellow) PhD candidate, Religious Studies, University of Virginia

Dr. Zebunnisa Hamid (Assistant Professor) PhD, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, 2017

Announcements

New Hires

Dr. Sana Haroon
(Visiting Faculty; Associate Professor of History and Asian Studies, University of Massachusetts Boston) PhD, South Asian History, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, 2004

Dr. Rabia Malik
(Assistant Professor) PhD, Political Science, University of Rochester NY, 2016

Momina Mela
(Writer in Residence) MFA, Creative Writing (Poetry), New York University, 2018

Dr. Sadia Zulfiqar
(Assistant Professor) PhD, English Literature, University of Glasgow, 2014

Dr. Farooq Naseer, Assistant Professor of Economics (MGSHSS), took as Director of Office of Program Enhancement (OPE).

Dr. Waqar Zaidi, Associate Professor of History (HSS-MGSHSS) has taken charge as the Director of the Office of International Studies (OIS).

Awards

As part of the annual Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences (MGSHSS) Dean's Honour List ceremony that took place on October 18, 2019, the faculty's contributions were recognised through the LUMS Awards for excellence in the fields of teaching and research.

The teaching award was presented to **Dr. Nauman Faizi** (HSS) and **Mr. Usman Elahi** (Economics) while **Dr. Nadhra Khan** (HSS) and **Dr. Syed M. Hasan** (Economics) received the award for research.

Fellowship

It gives us much pride to announce that **Dr. Waqar Zaidi**, Associate Professor of History, has been offered a Membership at the School of Social Science at the Institute of Advanced Studies, Princeton, for the academic year 2020–21. He may be the only scholar from a Pakistani University to ever receive this award. The Institute was established in 1930 to bring together scholars from around the world to take cutting edge research into new directions. The Institute currently has thirty permanent faculty and roughly two hundred Members based at one of its four Schools: Historical Studies, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and Social Science. Among its present and past Faculty and Members are 34 Nobel Laureates, 42 of the 60 Fields Medalists, and 18 of the 20 Abel Prize Laureates, as well as many MacArthur Fellows and Wolf Prize winners. At the Institute, Dr. Waqar will work on his new research project on the globalisation of civil aviation.

New Leadership

Dr. Ali Raza

Centre for Continuing Education Studies (CES) – LUMS

Shafaq Sohail



Could you please begin by introducing the Centre for Continuing Education Studies (CES)?

The Centre for Continuing Education Studies (CES) aims to address the educational needs of a range of learning communities, from high school students and career professionals to non-traditional learners. We offer a range of courses, from STEM and Business/ Finance to the Humanities, that showcase our strength as a premier institution of higher education. Through CES, I also wish to revisit the question of what a university can and ought to be in Pakistan.

The Centre, previously known as Lifetime Learning at LUMS, recently underwent a rebranding—could you shed some light on what has changed and the developments this rebranding entails?

With our rebranding, we have begun offering courses that are academically more rigorous. With Lifetime Learning, we had mostly been offering interest and

skill-based courses. Our rebranding also aligns us with Continuing Education programs the world over which address the learning needs of a diverse community of learners, in terms of the subject areas, course formats, and the class durations and timings.

How do you see your goals for CES aligning with the mission/vision of LUMS?

I think they are very much aligned (disclaimer: I had to look up what the vision of LUMS was). CES gives us the opportunity to develop exciting and innovative curricula that address contextually-relevant problems. What would it mean, for example, to offer a range of courses to practitioners and policymakers on effective water management? We have the relevant expertise in house, but it is not being offered as part of any regular degree program. I think we can build on the research expertise of our faculty and develop innovative programs that fulfil our commitment to be an institution of educational excellence and seek to sensitively engage with communities

outside the walls of this campus.

You are primarily an academic. What new challenges and opportunities do you anticipate this leadership position holds for you?

Managing budgets! The closest I have come to managing budgets are my household expenses (and I am a miserable failure in that too). I have to say this is not the most intuitive leap for a historian to make. But this is a challenge I have taken to with much relish. I learn something new in this job every day. But more than managing budgets and meeting revenue targets, I see this as a great opportunity to think more critically about learning and the role of the university in the 21st century Pakistan. On a side note: Can I use this opportunity to ask for a raise?

Lastly, what initiatives should the LUMS community be expecting from the Centre in the near future?

Stay tuned for many initiatives! In due course, we shall be expanding our evening program. We will also be designing and offering a range of evening classes for students from low-income backgrounds. In the medium to long term, we are also working on offering short diplomas and part-time degrees in a variety of programs. Finally, we are working on completely revamping our existing summer semester. We are planning to offer two four-week terms of highly intensive courses that will be open to students nationally and internationally in addition to our own. This is a largely vacant and underutilized campus in the summer, and we intend to change that.

Dr. Ali Cheema

Mahbub Ul Haq Research Center – LUMS

Anam Fatima Khan



What kind of work is being done at Mahbub Ul Haq Research Center?

Currently we are re-envisaging the center. Traditionally, the Center's vision was to talk about human development-related socio-economic challenges in South Asia and the product they would come out with was the South Asia Human Development Report which was published annually. The Center was relocated to LUMS in 2011 and was integrated and institutionalised in LUMS in 2017; however, it has been a bit slow in its operations. The current administrative team aims to develop the Center as a premier, interdisciplinary social sciences research center in Pakistan that draws on the talent pool that is there inside our faculty but also has very strong collaborative relationships with social activists, practitioners, and policymakers. Previously, the focus of the Center was to distil research and write about challenges and how to overcome them but the co-production of research was missing. Now we want this Center to be faculty-led where academic expertise are divided into thematic clusters, each of which will write a position paper in their respective areas. The faculty will form partnerships with people in society with whom they can co-produce that research.

Is the Center solely associated with the Department of Economics?

Initially, we have started engaging the Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences; having said that, we plan to have conversations with people in the Suleman Dawood School of Business as well as in the Syed Babar Ali School of Science and Engineering. We do think that it is a Center which has historically developed on top of a solid foundation of social sciences research with prominent economic and historical lenses.

Why were you personally interested in taking up the leadership of the Center?

I feel we have a really exciting group of researchers who are present in a highly under-researched society like Pakistan. I think without research you cannot improve the quality of teaching; therefore, out of the options that I was given, this excited me the most as it allows one to develop some sort of a research foundation but really, it's the talented pool of students and faculty that help devise a structure that enables their research potential to gain fruition.

Will the Center contribute to student employability and training on campus?

The big idea is that the Center should not all be about the talk. We want to do two things: as soon as these clusters start to get populated, we need to devise and actually launch projects which have the potential for impact and once that starts to happen then it will be important to involve students. Secondly, we want to keep the tradition of the South Asia Mahbub ul Haq Development Report alive but that has to be informed by original research. Finally, we have also been thinking about how once applied research starts we can incorporate

it in our undergraduate curriculum. We are starting the Pakistan Urban Futures Initiative focused on public health and demographic and socio-economic challenges in the big cities. We are trying to map out the set of constraints in different parts of the city and one of the curricular initiatives is to have a course where students will be taught different methodologies to observe cities from different perspectives and learn how to document social challenges within a societal context.

Do you think that there will be a need for a separate space for the Center given its ambitious plans in the future?

I am from a different school of thought. I believe that space opens up once you start working. The real issue is how to get faculty to start to engage with the Center which has been here for about eight years. We don't want the Center to have a top-down approach—it has to be something that excites the faculty and is built around the social mission of research that has an impact. The faculty wants to create a pool of individuals who can contribute to global thinking and Pakistan's evolution in the long run.

You mentioned that the Center has been around for the past eight years; still, little work has been done. How will you ensure sustainability?

For me that is not really the issue. The focus, again, is to garner faculty into this long-term commitment to the Center's goal of research. I do think that the university has to then build a capacity in these centers where the administrative structure has to be reshaped in ways where the centres are allowed to take much more initiative and they are empowered to provide services to faculty. There shouldn't be yet another complex layer of regulatory matrix. That's where we have been working with the Office of the Provost and the Office of Research too has been supportive. We're hoping that the Center has the delegation to be able to provide services deftly that supports faculty and reduces transaction cost and bureaucracy.

Faculty Interview

Dr. Tania Saeed

Anam Fatima Khan



Assistant Professor at MGSHSS Dr. Tania Saeed co-authored a monograph with Dr. Marie Lall, FRSA, titled *Youth and the National Narrative: Education, Terrorism and the Security State in Pakistan* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019). In this interview, we talk to her about the monograph as well as about her current research.

Could you please tell us about the broad theme of the book and how you came to conceive of it?

The book explores the changing nature of state-citizen relations in a post-Musharraf Pakistan, focusing on the narratives of young Pakistanis between the ages of 16 and 28, drawing on a sample of 1900 participants, collecting over a 10-year period across urban centers in Pakistan. Specifically, the book examines the increasing securitisation of everyday spaces for young Pakistanis and their understanding of citizenship, political activism, and the role of the “security state”.

We particularly wanted to build on the post-Musharraf context where the scale of securitisation in the aftermath of the war on terror normalised everyday instances of surveillance and control. The question that we were curious to explore was how young people growing up in such a context perceived their relationship with the state, and in particular the “security state”. Academic scholarship on this subject either focused on the macro perspective through geopolitical implications, or the micro context particularly in Education, on curricular reform, madrasa education, or student activism in relation to students and student groups who were politically

active. Within policy circles, references to the Pakistani youth and their future as envisioned by policymakers was constantly invoked without creating a space for the “youth” to share their points of view. In such a context, we wanted to explore the perspective of young people studying in universities and schools in urban centers. By using a mixed methods approach through interviews, focus groups, and a survey carried out at intervals over a 10 year period, we collected narratives and perspectives of over 1900 participants. In the writing of the book, we deliberately developed a style of writing that would be accessible to a range of audience, from academics to policymakers and the general public, given the nature of the themes that are

pertinent in the present socio-political context. The publication of the book in 2020, after the first-year tenure of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was also ideal as the student narratives provide a useful context for the 2018 elections and PTI’s focus on the “youth vote”.

Whom would you credit with helping you through this process? Was there any student involvement?

The credit for this book goes to our participants in schools and universities who spoke to us and trusted us with their perspectives.

You have quite a few publications under your name—is there an underlying theme of progression between them?

My research lies at the intersection between Political Sociology and Education. My work explores the increasing securitisation of the education systems and its implications for students in their day-to-day existence, with a particular focus on narratives of identity and citizenship.



This securitisation in the context of my first book examined the UK government's counter terrorism agenda Prevent and the way it implicated Muslim female students in universities in England, drawing on everyday narratives of Islamophobia amongst the Muslim student body. In particular, the book examined the intersection between gender, religion, and ethnicity located within a security framework. My second project, as I have discussed, continues this theme of securitisation and education within the context of Pakistan.

Are there any future projects or new courses that we should look out for?

There are a few projects in the pipeline but I will mention one that is quite exciting and different. I am collaborating on a potential project with Dr. Julia Paulson at the University of Bristol and colleagues from universities in Columbia, Cambodia, and Uganda. Following an action research model, the project not only explores existing interventions related to education and peace, but also supports interdisciplinary new ideas with the aim of connecting academics, civil society partners, and policymakers. The project will also provide an opportunity for more South-to-South networks being formed. We are waiting to hear about our Arts and Humanities Research Council grant—so, fingers crossed. To give an example of this potential collaboration, I am already working with Dr. Paulson and our civil society partner Engage Pakistan on a Global Challenge Research Fund (GCRF), supporting the incredible work of Engage Pakistan in developing an intervention related to the teaching of violent episodes in our history through innovative methods using digital media. There will be an event related to the project in May 2020 at LUMS which I hope will be exciting.

MARIE LALL and TANIA SAEED

YOUTH AND THE NATIONAL NARRATIVE

Education, Terrorism and the
Security State in Pakistan



More information about the book can be found here:

<https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/youth-and-the-national-narrative-9781350112193/>

MGSHSS Welcomes New Heads of Departments

In the previous issue of *Guftugu* (Spring 2019), we ran a photo-essay covering the farewell that MGSNSS organised for Dr. Ali Khan and Dr. S. Turab Hussain—two people who had worked tirelessly to lead their respective departments as Heads of Departments (HoDs), and who decided to take much-needed leaves of sabbatical last year. After a rigorous application process, the two departments—Economics; and Humanities and Social Sciences—elected their new HoDs.



Dr. Hasan H. Karrar

MGSHSS would like to congratulate Dr. Hasan H. Karrar who has been elected as the Head of Department of the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences. He received his doctorate from McGill University, Canada. He is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at LUMS and specialises in modern Chinese and Central Asian history and political economy. Currently, his research focuses on new economic configurations in the greater Central Asian region (likely inclusive of western China and northern Pakistan) since the 1980s: bazaar trade and bazaar networks; the new Silk Roads and trade corridors; and commercial relations and emerging spatial configurations. More broadly, his work engages with informality, capitalism, and globalisation across this region. He is also interested in Asian borderlands and high mountain regions, environmental history and political ecology, and foreign relations and twentieth century international history.



Dr. Syed Ali Hasanain

MGSHSS would also like to congratulate Dr. Syed Ali Hasanain who has been elected as the Head of Department of the Department of Economics. He is the 2014–16 Oxford-Princeton Global Leaders Fellow and an Assistant Professor of Economics at LUMS, as well as a member of EGAP (Evidence in Governance and Politics). His recent research has studied how Information and Communications Technology (ICT) can be applied in underdeveloped countries to improve governance and market outcomes. He has also studied how individuals' personal characteristics mediate the success of this process. Dr. Hasanain also serves on the Government of Punjab's Economic Advisory Committee. He received his PhD in Economics from George Mason University in 2010.

Faculty Tenured at MGSHSS in Fall 2019



Ali Raza

Dr. Ali Raza is Associate Professor of History at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences and Faculty Director of the Centre for Continuing Education Studies at LUMS. He received his DPhil from the University of Oxford and was a research fellow at the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient in Berlin. His research and teaching interests include the social and intellectual histories of South Asia, comparative colonialisms, decolonisation, and post-colonial theory. Dr. Raza is also the author of *Revolutionary Pasts: Communist Internationalism in Colonial India*, forthcoming with Cambridge University Press.



Bilal Tanweer

Bilal Tanweer is Associate Professor of Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences and Director of the Gurmani Centre for Languages and Literature at LUMS. He was one of *Granta's* 'New Voices' and a recipient of the PEN Translation Fund Grant for his translation of Muhammad Khalid Akhtar's *Love in Chakiwara and Other Misadventures*. He has also translated two novels by Ibn-e Safi and is an Honorary Fellow of the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa.



Taimur Rahman

Dr. Taimur Rahman is Associate Professor of Political Science at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at LUMS. He has a PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. Dr. Rahman's research interests include political theory and philosophy, political economy and class, Marxism and critical theory, and 20th century leftist politics. He is also the spokesperson for the band Laal and a grassroots political activist.



Hassan Javid

Dr. Hassan Javid is Associate Professor of Sociology at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at LUMS. He has a PhD in Sociology from the London School of Economics and Political Science, where he also spent some time as an LSE Fellow in Political Sociology. Dr. Javid's research focuses on democratisation and the relationship between class, power, and the state in South Asia. He is also interested in examining the enduring institutional legacy of colonialism in post-colonial societies.



Waqar Zaidi

Dr. Waqar Zaidi is Associate Professor of History at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences and Director of the Office of International Studies at LUMS. His research and teaching interests include European history as well as the relationship(s) between technology and international relations in the 20th century. He has published across a wide range of history and STS journals and has a book forthcoming with Cambridge University Press in 2020, titled *Technological Internationalism and World Order: Aviation and Atomic Energy, 1920–50*.

Student Contributions

Exchange Semester: Turkish Cay and a Box of Baklava

Mohammad Ahmed Shiwani



For the longest time I wasn't sure why I was going on an exchange programme. I applied, was selected, and just went along with it. Now that I look back on it, I hardly recognise who I was before my exchange to Koç University in Istanbul.

The people at Koç are phenomenal; while they are very welcoming to all exchange students (they host a cohort of about 30 students every semester), they seem to have a special affinity with Pakistan. Our histories are similar, and we share many of the same cultural understandings as them, which is clear in even the symbols that we associate with our respective cultures. And just like ours, Turkey's culture is robust and expansive—one that I couldn't grasp in a lifetime, let alone one semester.

I was warmly welcomed by everyone in Istanbul and settled into the beautiful campus in no time. Classes were scheduled in a way that I could still get out to explore the city in the evening.

If I didn't feel like travelling, I found solace in living in one of the most aesthetically-pleasing areas of Istanbul. The courses, while challenging, were never overwhelming. Koç has international renowned faculty in all their departments, and I was able to develop great relationships with all my professors.

I got to travel, make great friendships, have memorable experiences, and learn more than I have ever learnt.

The food in Turkey is great and the travel is cheap and convenient, so having a good time is easy. We spend too much time in the hubbub of our undergraduate life to truly take time out for ourselves, and my exchange was an outlet for that. For the first time in my undergraduate life, I felt free; the diverse opportunities that the exchange offered never ended, and I was able to hop from one to the other with full support from the people at Koç.

I liked to spend days upon days relaxing at different coasts around the city, either sipping on Turkish cay or devouring a box of baklava. The little things, like the joy of finally figuring out the metro system or reaching Antalya after a 17-hour bus ride, or being lost in the mysticism of Konya, are all vivid in memory. The nostalgia has never hit as strongly as it is now, and that is perhaps testament to how close the experience remains to my heart.



Exchange Semester: Surrounded by Black Hills

Aqeel Ahmad



In January 2019, five days after submitting my final paper, I had to commence another semester— not at LUMS but at Black Hills State University in South Dakota. I was not familiar with the state nor with the university because I only knew the names of major states through movies and books. I was selected for an undergraduate exchange semester and I was travelling abroad for the first time. I went from Washington DC to Dallas and from Dallas to Rapid City. With every flight change, the plane got smaller. I was in Rapid City at 10 pm waiting for my advisor to pick me up from the airport and travel to the university town which was 90 miles away. The temperature was -3 degrees Celsius and my advisor was quite happy considering that the weather was comparatively "normal" that day. Everything was overwhelming and I got more and more scared as the university neared. Black Hills State University is in Spearfish town surrounded by—surprise surprise—black hills, which are as sacred to native Americans as Mecca is to Muslims.

My semester started the next day and I reached out to people to lessen my hesitation. The university had students mostly from the small towns of Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, Colorado, and South Dakota. My friends studying in bigger cities had already scared me with stereotypical stories of rural America. None of them turned out to be true; faculty, students, and

townspeople were welcoming and helpful. One of my favourite pastimes was to study in the hallway of the Meir Hall where music classes were conducted. Geek Speak was another event which I anticipated every week. There, I would talk to an old man—Jeff—who had attended poetry sessions conducted by my favourite poet Robert Frost.

I got in touch with my 'connection family', assigned by my host institution to help me settle in. James and Kari Webb were kind enough to take international students to their favourite hiking trails and restaurants. Eventually, they became my family. James made me feel at home and took me to a baseball game in Denver between the Colorado Rockies and the LA Dodgers. We stayed at his friend's place in Fort Collins, which is considered one of the best towns for living in the United States.

April became the kindest month as the snow started melting and that changed the outlook of the black hills. The University organised multiple tracks meets and sports events which were sources of entertainment for students and townspeople alike. It was a distinct experience for me as sports events in Pakistani universities are of secondary importance. My fourth month came to an end rewarding me with experiences which helped me not only in celebrating different cultures but also in finding similarities between them.



Christmas at LUMS

Mahnoor Ghani

Christmas is celebrated across the globe on December 25 every year, and it is celebrated with festivities, felicitations, and pomp and show. On December 8, 2019, members of the LUMS Community Service Society and Hum-Aahang came together to join in the celebrations and host the families of the MBM staff at LUMS, most of whom adhere to the Christian faith. It is an event which allows different members of the LUMS community to come together and view each other as part of one family. Young children, students, faculty members, and families of the MBM staff flocked to the old hockey ground in the afternoon.

The event commenced with a communal Prayer passage and recitals of hymns. The audience keenly observed and engaged



with the rituals as the proceedings unfolded. This was followed by *Geet*, *Dua*, and *Hallelujah*. After the formal proceedings, everybody danced and sang and played *Antakshari*, and children ran back and forth the hockey ground as they rejoiced in the Christmas festivities with their friends and family. The male and female winners of *Antakshari* were given a prize.

The food was then served right after which offered students and faculty members a much-needed break from the redundant PDC menu. It was a pleasant afternoon amidst the busy finals week wherein all members of the LUMS community were afforded an opportunity to break fast together, bond, and have an overall great time.

Diwali

Noor Fatima Bokhari

On October 30, Hum-Aahang held one of its most anticipated events of the year, the Diwali: the festival of lights. Diwali has over time proven to be one of the most festive occasions, historically and religiously associated with the triumph of light over darkness and of knowledge over ignorance. It is a communal celebration in which members of all ages traditionally engage in cleaning, renovating, and adorning their houses with lights, colourful rangolis, and flowers. The night at LUMS was full of colours: the central courtyard lit up with *diyas* and lights.

As the event unfolded, students were seen laughing, conversing, and truly creating a sense of community. Bright yellow marigold flowers dangling by the walls of the courtyard, the vibrant colours of the rangoli, and *diyas* encircling the fountain—all this added life to the celebration.

The audience keenly listened to the members of the LUMS Hindu community, including the faculty member and



Sindhi language instructor Ashok Kumar Khatri, who briefed the crowd about the significance of Diwali. This was followed by the *aarti* prayer. After this we saw some very talented students perform dances they had been rehearsing for weeks; the audience later joined in too. A distribution of *mithai*, sweets, concluded the event.

The event turned out to be immensely wholesome, especially for the Hindu students on campus who got to partake in the celebrations away from their loved ones, amidst a busy time of the semester. The event helped emphasise the importance of religious harmony, not only in relation to LUMS, but within our society in general. It is just one of many more to come.



Student Solidarity March

Faiz Zafar



On November 29, LUMS students joined hands with 5000 students from universities across the city to make a central demand: lift the ban on student unions. Students and faculty across 25 cities in Pakistan participated peacefully in the Student Solidarity March organised by the Student Action Committee, a loose coalition of students from all over the country, formed in light of the government's recent cuts to the education budget.

From Karachi to Gilgit, students marched to express their dismay at the state of the education sector in the country, be it private or public varsities, the lack of representation and organising for the 140 million youth of the country, or to demand justice for victims of mob violence such as Mashal Khan. Driven by increasing administration negligence and suppression of student activities, the students chanted revolutionary slogans as they waved flags

with images of Bhagat Singh and Mashal Khan. Their demands included, but were not limited to, the restoration of student unions, the allocation of at least five percent of the GDP to education, the formation of inquiry committees for cases of sexual harassment in every university, and the disallowance of security forces from intervening in educational institutes.

However, the students did not restrict themselves to only their own issues, but also addressed the hardships faced by the labourers and farmers of the country, their youthful energy and hope on full display. LUMS students participated with a comprehensive understanding of their privileged backgrounds and were there to acknowledge the freedom they had been granted and advocated for such campuses to be the norm, not the exception.

Despite political leaders including Prime Minister Imran Khan assuring their support for the students' demands, arrest warrants were issued for several organisers and speakers from the march including Iqbal Lala, the father of Mashal Khan; this heavy-handed response by the government highlights the need for student representation.

Climate March

Wafa Asher

The Global Climate strikes started off on Friday, September 20, and over the course of the week 4000 cities had marches all geared toward achieving one goal: to recognise the current climate crisis as the disaster that it is and to take immediate remedial measures. In Pakistan, 29 cities participated in the march, making demands for climate justice, adoption of a low-carbon economy, and ensuring grassroot level climate adaptation efforts. The Lahore Climate March initiated at the Lahore Press Club where students, activists, and civil society organisations gathered to march toward the Alhamra Center.

The march had participation from liberal and left-leaning participants alike. At various points during the march, women were leading chants for freedom, not only from climate disaster but from also the

patriarchy. There was a recognition of the same system of capitalism being a root of various kinds of oppressions, not only pertaining to the climate, but also to gender—and this was voiced out in chants and signs such as "Burn the patriarchy, not the climate". Similarly, another one of the main demands voiced out at the march was to free Baba Jan, an activist from Gilgit Baltistan who had been sentenced to 71 years of imprisonment after fighting for the rights of the displaced.

The march came to a halt in front of the Punjab Assembly, where Azaad Fankaar, a leftist street-theatre group, performed a play regarding the climate crisis we are currently in. The crowd encircled the performers, all eyes focused on the lead actress Takreema and her impassioned speech. After breaking for half an hour,

the crowd began marching again and soon reached their destination: the Alhamra Center, where powerful performances and speeches drilled into people the urgency of the need for climate action.



Lights Out

A play by Fawad Khan

October 10, 2019 | 7:00 pm
B-3, SDSB, LUMS

LUMS | Faculty Center for Language and Literature | LUMS | Sanda Wafarwal, Director, Institute

Re-View

Videography Exhibition

Anif Khan

LUMS

Digital Archive Launch

hosted by the History Department

Friday, October 18, 2019
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Faculty Lounge, VC Office

LUMS | TPI

Humanities and Social Sciences Seminar Series Fall 2019

Cold War Aviation to the Belt and Road: Corridors and Connectivity under Late Capitalism

A talk by
Dr. Ihsan H. Karim
Assistant Professor, MGSAS, LUMS

Truth to Power: Harold Pinter, a Master of Dramatic Silences but Never a Silent Citizen!

A talk by
Dr. Farah Ali
Assistant Professor, MGSAS, LUMS

November 14, 2019
6:00 pm - 7:00 pm
A-16, Academic Block, LUMS

Countering Misinformation on Social Media Through Educational Interventions - Evidence from Urban Pakistan

Talk by
Dr. Ayesha Ali

Friday, September 20, 2019
1:00 pm
A-9 Academic Block, LUMS

After Sabeen

A film by *Schlofkeh Kamis*

Inspired by a discussion with the director and Mahnoor Malhotra

Humanities and Social Sciences Seminar Series Fall 2019

The Master

A talk by
Prof. M. H. Karim
Department of Economics, LUMS

بندر والدو غلام عباس

کھوکھا ناٹک

6:30 PM
19 NOV.

دین شاعرین و دیگر

Workshop, November 7, 2019

CASH TRANSFERS, LABOR SUPPLY AND EMPOWERMENT: EVIDENCE FROM PAKISTAN

A TALK BY **DR. HADIA MAJID**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2019
3:00 PM TO 4:00 PM
A-16, ACADEMIC BLOCK, LUMS

Automated Event Data Collection: Extending the BFRS Political Violence Dataset

A talk by
Dr. Ali Hasanain
Assistant Professor, MGSAS, LUMS

Friday, November 22, 2019
2:00 pm
A-16 Academic Block, LUMS

Humanities and Social Sciences Seminar Series Fall 2019

The Master

A talk by
Prof. M. H. Karim
Department of Economics, LUMS

High Mountain Agriculture and Changing Socionatures in Nagar, Northern Pakistan

A talk by
Michael Spies

Thursday, November 28, 2019 | 6:00 PM
A-16, Academic Block, LUMS

Thinking about Religion as a Field of Study (Some Considerations)

A talk by
Dr. Irfan Moeen Khan
Assistant Professor, MGSAS, LUMS

Organized by the Study of Religious Studies, LUMS

Trees of Lahore

Mapping 100 Native Trees in Lahore: Looking Up and not at a Text

This project will undertake a collective education of students on identifying the native trees of Lahore—and to prepare a brochure, which is useful for used as a guide for travellers and locals alike in identifying and re-building relationships with trees of the city.

Information session
October 14, 2019
4:00pm

Session between the Law School Building and Academic Block



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