



# GLOBAL LECTURES

Mubarak Speeches Series – Part 3

# Global Lectures - Mubarak Speeches Series - Part 3

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## 50th anniversary of ICOMOS, London

22 October 2015, London, UK

*Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim*

Your Royal Highness, the Duke of Gloucester  
 Mr David Thackray, President, ICOMOS-UK  
 Mr Gregory Hodkinson, Chairman, Arup  
 Distinguished Guests  
 Ladies and Gentlemen

What a pleasure it is for me to be marking with you the 50th anniversary of ICOMOS – happy birthday!

Yours is an organisation for which I have long had enormous respect. And I have noted with interest the impressive, recent development of your Cultural Heritage Manifesto.

The creation of ICOMOS 50 years ago came during my first decade as Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslim community, and from the start many of my interests have closely resembled yours.

All Muslims are called upon to improve the physical condition of our world, and honouring our cultural heritage is vital to that calling. Our response in simple terms is that not a day goes by where my institution – the Ismaili Imamate – is not building or rebuilding something somewhere: a historic site perhaps, but also a hospital, a university, an industry.

Our central objective is to improve the quality of life for people in the developing world, and it is from this perspective that I will speak to you today.

Our work extends to 35 countries in fields such as education and medical care, job creation and energy production, media and tourism, the fine arts and micro-finance. We believe that by improving the largest numbers of variables in the shortest possible time, we can obtain stable, long-term improvement in the quality of human life.

Cultural heritage, of course, plays a central role in this endeavour. This focus was sharply intensified for me some 40 years ago when I came to realise that the proud architectural heritage of the Islamic world was progressively vanishing. The physical legacy of great Muslim empires was collapsing, and the response in the Islamic world seemed to be oblivion. What was in fashion, what was prized and taught throughout the Islamic architectural world, increasingly reflected Western preoccupations. Quality was viewed as occidentalisation. We searched throughout the Muslim world for any serious mention of Islamic architectural history and found none. There were no processes for revival, just the occasional misplaced dome or minaret.

Our time-honoured cultural heritage had been buried – obscured not only by the shifting sands of time, but also by an all-consuming occidentalisation. As one observer commented, the physical identity of the Islamic world had been reduced to coffee table books.

It was out of these concerns that the Aga Khan Award for Architecture was established in 1977, followed by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and its Historic Cities Programme.

As our agenda grew over time – and most excitingly – we also came to another critical understanding. We began to see the added potential of heritage projects for advancing an economic and a social agenda, for fighting poverty and driving development. To be sure, this potential was often ignored as culture was too easily miss-labelled as a luxury amid pressing social and economic needs.

But my colleagues and I became convinced that cultural heritage projects are not a diversion from development priorities. Culture is in and of itself a development resource of immense potential value.

Some who share this view refer to cultural investments as a springboard for development. Similarly, I like to say that cultural heritage can be a trampoline, propelling dramatic improvements in the quality of human life.

I have seen this trampoline in action again and again. One of my early such experiences came three decades ago at a conference on urban growth in Cairo, a city founded by my own ancestors 1,000 years ago.

As we looked out over medieval Cairo that week, one glaring anomaly stood out: a stretch of barren land, some 30 hectares, covered largely in heaps of debris.

What an amazing surprise – in a city that was 1,046 years old and as densely populated as Cairo – to find a site in its oldest area on which no building had ever been built! Even the famous Ayyubid walls, which once ran alongside this site were covered by 5 to 6 metres of waste.

This rubble dump was a repellent deformity, but it was also a stirring opportunity. And the result was that on this forsaken site there was created a state-of-the-art green space: Al-Azhar Park.

Opened ten years ago, the Park has since attracted some 17 million visitors. Their access fees produce a re-investable annual surplus of some \$800,000 US dollars.

But there is more to this story.

Adjoining the park was one of Cairo's poorest neighbourhoods – Darb al-Ahmar – its ancient ruins sheltering some 200,000 poor, marginalised inhabitants. Out of those ruins there grew a great archaeological adventure – uncovering and restoring ancient ramparts and gates, six historic mosques and dozens of houses and palaces.

From the start, the local residents were deeply involved in this adventure. They were trained in restoration skills, and some 200 are still employed in this initiative. Others were trained to support the site and to accommodate the flow of visitors.

The restoration project also included major improvements in local education and health services, in neighbourhood infrastructure, in vocational training, and microcredit initiatives.

The result: family earnings there have increased one-third faster than in the whole of Old Cairo, literacy rates have climbed by one-fourth and today the whole area – once one of the most impoverished urban agglomerations on the planet – has become a remarkable residential, recreational and cultural site.

Similar stories can be told about other places in the developing world, where historic cities can be among the poorest, often serving as makeshift transition spaces from rural poor populations to becoming city dwellers.

Our Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme was created to address these needs. It has now completed 20 major projects in ten countries, with a capital investment of over \$190 million.

One compelling example is the restoration in Delhi of the 16th century tomb of the first Mughal emperor Humayun, and its surrounding gardens and monuments. A grand urban space has been created there covering over 150 hectares, hosting over 2 million visitors annually.

In Afghanistan, comparable restoration efforts in Kabul involve thirty buildings and public spaces, including the historic Babur gardens and the Mausoleum of Timur Shah. And nearby in Northern Pakistan, we have worked to restore and repurpose a series of historic buildings – forts and palaces – along the ancient Silk Route.

Another interesting initiative has been in the high mountain areas of Central Asia, to restore and enhance traditional water systems. Some 3,000 projects to date have rehabilitated old irrigation canals and related systems for bringing water from melting glaciers and snowfields to over a million people. And they have also improved water management structures through local water-user associations. The impact has been impressive, not only on human health and agriculture, but also in reducing conflict over scarce resources.

A continent away, in Mali, the restoration of ancient mud mosques in Mopti, Djenne and Timbuktu also involved close collaboration with government officials and local craftspeople, some employing age-old mud building skills. And I could cite other instructive examples – from Kenya, Syria or Tajikistan, from Mostar to Samarkand.

All across these highly diversified situations moreover, social inputs have been critical – including innovations in water and land management, new educational and medical facilities, vocational training, and nascent micro-tourism and micro finance projects.

But let me conclude by mentioning a different sort of example, one that demonstrates how the work of protecting cultural heritage in the developing world can resonate powerfully in the developed world – and sometimes in surprising ways!

I learned this at first hand. After decades when our energies had extended over dozens of international frontiers, I was reminded ten years ago that a classic preservation challenge was growing right under our own noses, in the heart of the French countryside.

I refer to the Domaine de Chantilly – home since the Middle Ages of leading French families: rivals, allies and even members of the Royal House. The Domaine includes its beautiful Chateau, its famous Grand Stables, and its superb gardens – the oldest of which were originally designed by Le Notre, reportedly the artist's own favourite work.

And all of this – can you imagine! – lies just down the road from my personal residence, a short walk away!

Like so many familiar challenges, Chantilly was a noble, honoured but fading asset, with plunging visitation levels and a backlog of deferred maintenance. There was no collaboration amongst the key stakeholders, and not even an attempt to share a vision of the future.

One person who appreciated the importance of cultural heritage was the Duke of Aumale, son of the last French king. He inherited the Domaine in 1830, and rebuilt it to house his many treasures, including an antique painting collection that is second in size only to that of the Louvre. And he bequeathed it to the Institut de France in 1884.

And he did that on purpose! He didn't want to give it to the French Government – that's true! He wanted to give it to the Institut de France.

However, it was not until a century later that the Institut made it a priority to revitalise the Domaine. And I was invited to become a part of the response.

The Institut and I quickly agreed that a short-range burst of attention was not the answer. We needed a long-term plan. And we also agreed to build on the principle of public-private partnership.

Increasingly, we realised the success of cultural projects in the developed world and the developing world alike requires a variety of actors animated by a robust spirit of cooperation and an overriding “ethic of partnership.”

And so it was, at Chantilly in December of 2005, that a partnership agreement was signed between the Institut de France and a new private foundation – one that includes both governmental and private contributors. Operating under my presidency, the foundation was assigned the responsibility over affixed period of 20 years to preserve and promote the entire cultural area of Chantilly as an international model of heritage management.

That 20-year period is half over, but already the foundation has overseen extensive physical renovations, while also improving reception and visitation facilities. We have expanded publicity and we have created a rich programme of cultural events. And we also re-established a unique Horse Museum (surprise, surprise!) within the Grand Stables, reinforcing the historic place of Chantilly as one of Europe’s great equestrian centres.

Meanwhile, the flow of visitors to Chantilly has increased by 50 percent. By next year, we expect to welcome half a million visitors, making the whole initiative financially self-sustaining for the first time.

From this base we intend now to involve even more stakeholders and supporters, building an ever-stronger base of broad local support. As we do so, I know we can learn from many of you who have faced similar challenges.

Planning ahead for long-term sustainability is critical. At Chantilly and elsewhere, our plans have included permanent service facilities – a museum perhaps, or a scholarly research centre, a children’s library, or a training workshop – so that their eventual income streams, along with public access fees, can provide re-investable income.

But the real requirement – the sine qua non – is building a constituency for sustainability, including an engaged local community.

Let me conclude by underscoring my conviction that the work of cultural heritage is more critical today than ever before. In the developing and the developed worlds alike, societies are plunging into an increasingly bewildering future at an ever-accelerating pace.

At such a time – and on occasions such as this – it is important that we commit ourselves ever more ardently to the essential work of cultural heritage as a powerful contributor to improving the quality of life for the entire human community.

Thank you.



<https://global-lectures.com/courses/50th-anniversary-of-icomos-london-2015-10-22/lesson/watch-lecture-video-166/>

# Mawlana Hazir Imam Speech at the 50th Anniversary of ICOMOS

London, UK - October 22, 2015

By: Arifah Momin

## What is ICOMOS?

ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) works for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage places. It is the only global non-government organization of this kind, which is dedicated to promoting the application of theory, methodology, and scientific techniques to the conservation of the architectural and archaeological heritage.

# Importance of Preserving Cultural Heritage

“We began to see the added potential of heritage projects for advancing an economic and a social agenda, for fighting poverty and driving development.”

- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the 50th Anniversary of ICOMOS, London

# Importance of Preserving Cultural Heritage

Pluralism

Economic development

Social development

Environmental impact and Agriculture

Human Health

Reducing Conflict

# Aga Khan Trust for Culture

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) promotes debate about the built environment, cultural heritage, and importance of historic memory.

**Aga Khan Award for Architecture:** Recognising that the built environment is fundamental to quality of life, the Award encourages architectural projects that address the aspirations of societies around the world.

**Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme:** The Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme (AKHCP) works on regeneration projects in historic areas in ways that spur social, economic and cultural development. Our central objective is to improve the lives of the inhabitants of these historic areas, while promoting models that will sustain these improvements.

“All Muslims are called upon to improve the physical condition of our world, and honouring our cultural heritage is vital to that calling. Our response in simple terms is that not a day goes by where my institution – the Ismaili Imamate – is not building or rebuilding something somewhere: a historic site perhaps, but also a hospital, a university, an industry. Our central objective is to improve the quality of life for people in the developing world, and it is from this perspective that I will speak to you today.”

- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the 50th Anniversary of ICOMOS, London

“In Islam, the Holy Qur'an says that man is God's noblest creation to whom He has entrusted the stewardship of all that is on earth. Each generation must leave for its successors an enhanced and sustainable social and physical environment. I am sure every responsible citizen in every part of the world would share this aspiration.”

- Address by His Highness the Aga Khan at the Ninth AKAA Cycle, Delhi

# Al-Azhar Park





## Al-Azhar Park

The site of Al-Azhar Park was originally a 500-year-old debris dump, which had accumulated over centuries of urban neglect. It is situated near the historic district of Cairo, adjacent to the old city walls and several historic monuments, including the Al-Azhar Mosque.

The idea for the park was conceived in the late 20th century. In 1984, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture initiated the project as part of its Historic Cities Program. The goal was to create a green space that would provide environmental, social, and economic benefits to the community.

## Al-Azhar Park

“The restoration project also included major improvements in local education and health services, in neighbourhood infrastructure, in vocational training, and microcredit initiatives.

The result: family earnings there have increased one-third faster than in the whole of Old Cairo, literacy rates have climbed by one-fourth and today the whole area – once one of the most impoverished urban agglomerations on the planet – has become a remarkable residential, recreational and cultural site.”

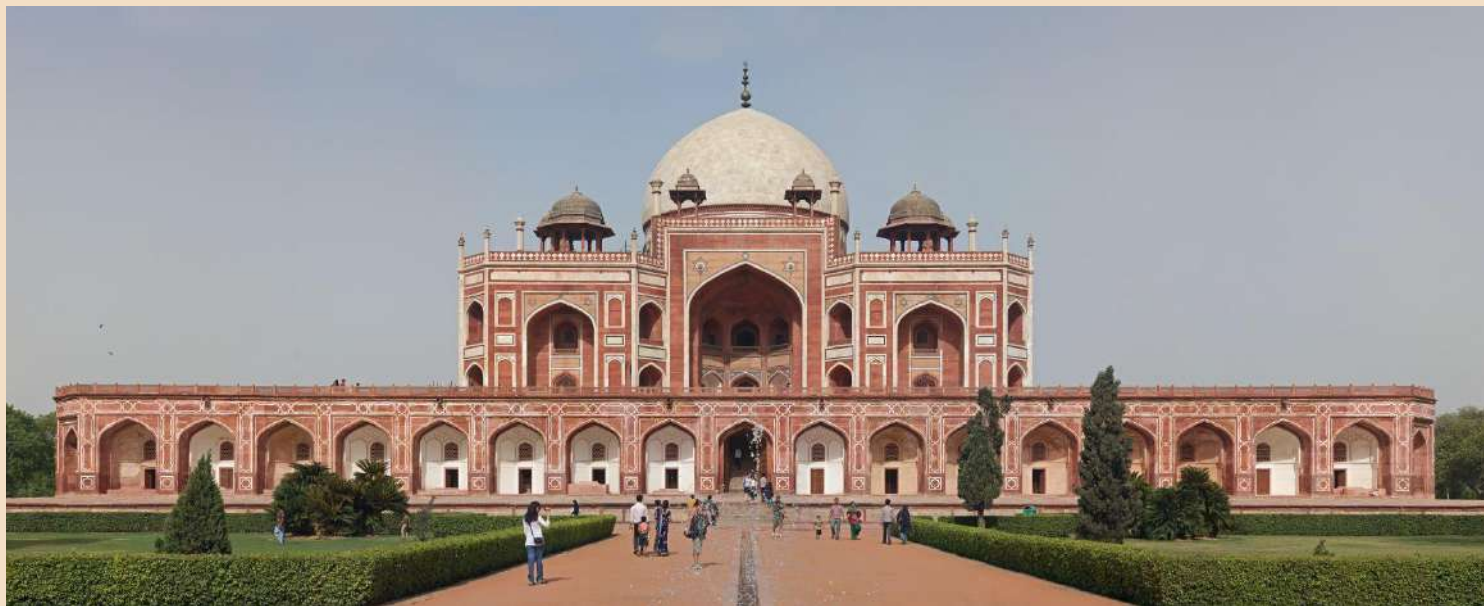
- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the 50th Anniversary of ICOMOS, London

## Al-Azhar Park

"The Trust has taken up the task of demonstrating that cultural concerns and socio-economic needs are intimately linked, and that in interaction they can act as catalysts for improvement in every dimension of development."

- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Inauguration of the Restored Baltit Fort Sunday, 29 September 1996

# Humayun's Tomb



# Humayun's Tomb

Humayun's Tomb is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in Delhi, India. It is an architectural marvel and an important historical monument, notable for its Mughal architecture. This is the burial site of the first Mughal Emperor of India, Humayun.

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture played a crucial role in the preservation and restoration of Humayun's Tomb. The project's efforts were part of a broader initiative to conserve cultural heritage and revitalize the surrounding area.

## Humayun's Tomb

“Our Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme was created to address these needs. It has now completed 20 major projects in ten countries, with a capital investment of over \$190 million.

One compelling example is the restoration in Delhi of the 16th century tomb of the first Mughal emperor Humayun, and its surrounding gardens and monuments. A grand urban space has been created there covering over 150 hectares, hosting over 2 million visitors annually.”

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## Humayun's Tomb

“Islam does not deal in dichotomies but in all encompassing unity. Spirit and body are one, man and nature are one. What is more, man is answerable to God for what man has created. Many of our greatest architectural achievements were designed to reflect the promises of life hereafter, to represent in this world what we are told of the next. Since all that we see and do resonates on the faith, **the aesthetics of the environment we build and the quality of the social interactions that take place within those environments, reverberate on our spiritual life.**”

- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Asia Society, Islamic architecture: a revival, New York

## Kabul, Afghanistan - Babur Gardens





## Kabul, Afghanistan - Babur Gardens

The Babur Gardens, also known as Bagh-e Babur, are historic gardens located in Kabul, Afghanistan. They are named after Babur, the founder of the Mughal Empire, who ordered their construction in the early 16th century.

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture initiated a comprehensive restoration of Babur Gardens in Kabul in 2002, focusing on rehabilitating the traditional charbagh layout, restoring historical structures, and replanting native vegetation. This project engaged local communities, provided training and employment, and transformed the gardens into a vibrant public space and cultural heritage site.

## Kabul, Afghanistan - Babur Gardens

“In Afghanistan, comparable restoration efforts in Kabul involve thirty buildings and public spaces, including the historic Babur gardens and the Mausoleum of Timur Shah.”

- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the 50th Anniversary of ICOMOS, London

## Kabul, Afghanistan - Babur Gardens

“In 2004, we were eager to return to the Gardens. And in only a year, the Foundation had transformed a dusty ruin surrounded by broken walls into a beautiful terraced garden...It was astonishing. Nothing could more eloquently express the mission of your Foundation - to improve the material lot of the world's most devastated regions and peoples, yes, but also to respect spiritual and aesthetic considerations. Babur's Gardens serve as a point of hope and illumination for everyone who cares about Afghanistan, and they are a remarkable symbol of everything that your Foundation does.”

- Adrienne Clarkson's remark- Ceremony For The Delegation Of The Ismaili Imamat Foundation June 2005

# Central Asia Water Systems



## Central Asia Water Systems

Central Asia Water Systems encompass the major rivers, lakes, and associated infrastructure that provide water resources for the countries in the region.

The Aga Khan Development Network has been actively involved in improving water management and sustainability in Central Asia through various initiatives aimed at enhancing water systems. AKDN has worked on modernizing and rehabilitating traditional irrigation systems, particularly in rural areas, to improve water efficiency and support agricultural productivity. AKDN also addresses issues of water quality and access to clean drinking water. Projects often include the construction of safe drinking water systems and the promotion of hygiene and sanitation practices

## Central Asia Water Systems

“Another interesting initiative has been in the high mountain areas of Central Asia, to restore and enhance traditional water systems. Some 3,000 projects to date have rehabilitated old irrigation canals and related systems for bringing water from melting glaciers and snowfields to over a million people. And they have also improved water management structures through local water-user associations. The impact has been impressive, not only on human health and agriculture, but also in reducing conflict over scarce resources.”

- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the 50th Anniversary of ICOMOS, London

# Domaine de Chantilly



## Domaine de Chantilly

Domaine de Chantilly is a renowned estate located in the town of Chantilly, about 50 kilometers north of Paris, France. The estate is famous for its historical significance, architectural splendor, extensive gardens, and cultural heritage.

The Musée Condé, located within the château, contains one of France's most significant art collections, second only to the Louvre in terms of historic importance. It includes over 800 paintings, 2,500 drawings, and numerous rare books and manuscripts.

Domaine de Chantilly is a symbol of French heritage, reflecting the artistic, architectural, and cultural achievements of its various historical periods. It remains an essential destination for those interested in history, art, and horticulture.



## Domaine de Chantilly

“...let me conclude by mentioning a different sort of example, one that demonstrates how the work of protecting cultural heritage in the developing world can resonate powerfully in the developed world....I refer to the Domaine de Chantilly – home since the Middle Ages of leading French families: rivals, allies and even members of the Royal House.”

- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the 50th Anniversary of ICOMOS, London

## Domaine de Chantilly

“We have expanded publicity and we have created a rich programme of cultural events. And we also re-established a unique Horse Museum (surprise, surprise!) within the Grand Stables, reinforcing the historic place of Chantilly as one of Europe’s great equestrian centres. Meanwhile, the flow of visitors to Chantilly has increased by 50 percent. By next year, we expect to welcome half a million visitors, making the whole initiative financially self-sustaining for the first time.

At Chantilly and elsewhere, our plans have included permanent service facilities – a museum perhaps, or a scholarly research centre, a children’s library, or a training workshop – so that their eventual income streams, along with public access fees, can provide re-investable income.”

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## Domaine de Chantilly

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# Citadel of Aleppo



## Citadel of Aleppo

The Citadel of Aleppo is an ancient fortress located in the city of Aleppo, Syria. It is one of the oldest and largest castles in the world, dating back to the 3rd millennium BC with various renovations and additions over the centuries. It had developed as a crossroads between East and West, straddling important trade routes linking the desert to the sea.

The project included significant investment in landscaping around the Citadel, creation of a pedestrian zone at its entrance, traffic planning and conservation of key buildings. The objective was to enhance the Citadel's place in the city and realise its potential as a significant contributor to economic development in the Old City. The programme at the Citadels included investment in facilities such as visitors' centres, pathways and guidebooks, and development of site management procedures.

# Aga Khan Museum



# Aga Khan Museum

The Aga Khan Museum, located in Toronto, Canada, is a museum dedicated to Islamic art, culture, and history. The Aga Khan Museum was established by His Highness the Aga Khan IV. It aims to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the artistic, intellectual, and scientific contributions of Muslim civilizations over the centuries.

## Aga Khan Museum

“In its origins, in its design, and in its programmes and activities, the complex we inaugurate today is animated by a truly pluralistic spirit. In this respect too, it reflects the deep-set Ismaili values — pluralistic commitments that are so deeply embedded in Canadian values.”

- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Opening of the Aga Khan Museum and the Ismaili Centre, Toronto



## Aga Khan Museum

“For the Museum to achieve its goals depends upon the same collaborations and connections it can inspire through its realization. We are calling upon all our communities and cultures to join together in celebrating our shared ideals, common humanity and love of art.”

- The Honourable Hilary M. Weston Member, Board of Directors, Aga Khan Museum  
Honourary Co-Chair, Changing Perceptions Campaign

# The Role of Pluralism in Preserving Cultural Heritage

“Without cultural identity, social cohesion gradually dissolves. Human groups lose their necessary point of reference to relate to each other.”

- Where Hope Takes Root by His Highness The Aga Khan (Keynote Speech Concluding the Prince Claus Fund's Conference on Culture and Development, Amsterdam)

# The Role of Pluralism in Preserving Cultural Heritage

“As you know, development is sustainable only if the beneficiaries become, gradually, the masters of the process. This means that initiatives cannot be contemplated exclusively in terms of economics but **must be seen as an integrated program that encompasses social and cultural dimensions.** Education and skills training, health and public services, **conservation of cultural heritage, infrastructure development, urban planning and rehabilitation, rural development, water and energy management, environmental control** and even policy and legislative development are among the various aspects that must be taken into account.”

- Where Hope Takes Root by His Highness The Aga Khan

## Closing Remarks

“All Muslims are called upon to improve the physical condition of our world, and honouring our cultural heritage is vital to that calling. Our response in simple terms is that not a day goes by where my institution – the Ismaili Imamat – is not building or rebuilding something somewhere: a historic site perhaps, but also a hospital, a university, an industry. Our central objective is to improve the quality of life for people in the developing world, and it is from this perspective that I will speak to you today.”

- Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the 50th Anniversary of ICOMOS, London

## Closing Remarks

“... our faith constantly reminds us to observe and be thankful for the beauty of the world and the universe around us, and our responsibility and obligation, as good stewards of God’s creation, to leave the world in a better condition than we found it...”

- Presentation of the Gold Medal by the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada in Ottawa in November 2013

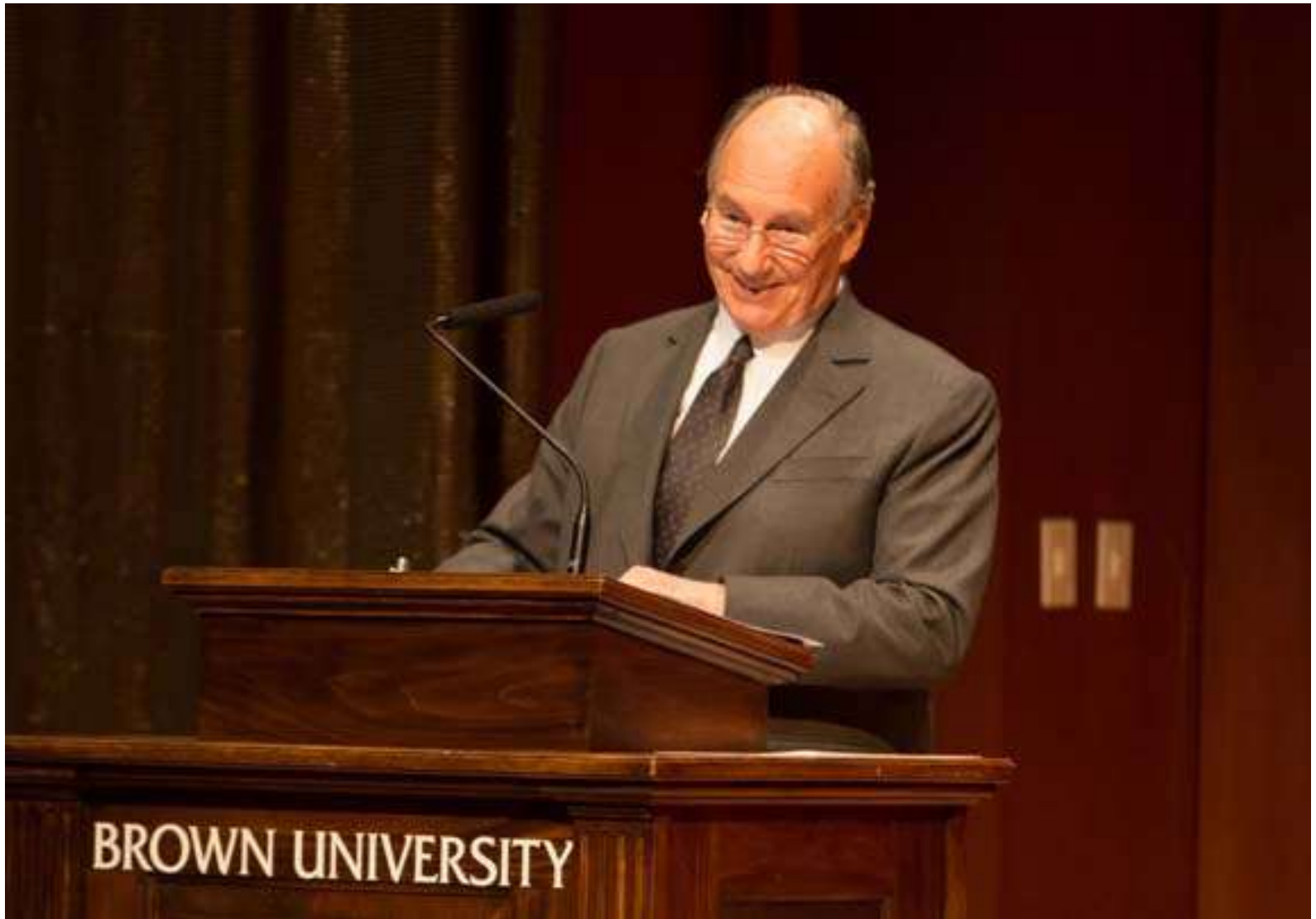
## Closing Remarks

“Ālam-i insāniyyat par tērā ihsān hē azim,  
Tū karīm-i kār saz hē, Nūr Mawlānā Karīm.”

“You have bestowed tremendous favour on the world of humanity  
You are the generous advocate, Nūr Mawlānā Karīm.”

- Allamah Sahib’s Nazam: “Mera Mawla Bahr-i rahmat he”

Thank You!



## **The 88th Stephen Ogden Lecture delivered by His Highness the Aga Khan at Brown University**

10 March 2014, Providence, Rhode Island, USA

**“More information at our fingertips can mean more knowledge and understanding. But it can also mean more fleeting attention-spans, more impulsive judgments, and more dependence on superficial snapshots of events. Communicating more often and more easily can bring people closer together, but it can also tempt us to live more of our lives inside smaller information bubbles, in more intense but often more isolated groupings.”**

*Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim*



President Paxson,  
 Ogden Family representatives,  
 Brown University Faculty, Students and Alumni,  
 Distinguished Guests,  
 Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you very much, Madame President, for your very kind introduction. It is a great honour for me to give the Ogden Lecture, to be included in the distinguished company of past Ogden Lecturers, and to pay tribute to the memory of Stephen Ogden.

I am also delighted to be present for the opening weekend of Brown's 250th Anniversary, or one might say, the happy conclusion of Brown's first quarter of a millennium!!

I have long felt a close sense of belonging at Brown; my eldest son was a member of the Brown Class of 1995, and I treasure the fact that I received an honorary degree from Brown, and was privileged at that time to give the Baccalaureate Address.

My own education has blended Islamic and Western traditions. I was studying at Harvard some 56 years ago when I inherited the Ismaili Imamatus. It is not a political role, as has been mentioned, but let me emphasise that Islamic belief sees the spiritual and material worlds as inextricably connected. Faith should deepen our concern for improving the quality of human life in all of its dimensions. That is the overarching objective of the Aga Khan Development Network, which President Paxson has described so well.

It has been said that giving an effective university lecture requires the boldness to make some strong predictions about the future. I might suggest that President Paxson has put me in a slightly embarrassing position today, by inviting me to return to speak on the Brown campus. The challenge with coming back to give a second such lecture is that you have to explain what you got wrong the first time!

As I look back, over some 18 years now, to 1996, I think I actually under-estimated how many things would change in the years ahead. If you were a student at Brown 18 years ago, you would not have had any Facebook friends and you wouldn't be following anyone on Twitter. And, even more sadly perhaps, no one would be following you!

There was no instant messaging at that time; indeed, as I recall, people actually used their telephones primarily for talking!

In fact, email itself was still quite a new thing in 1996. And those are only the most obvious examples of transformative change in our world.

What has been the impact of such changes? We often think about technological innovation as a great source of hope for the world. We hear about how the internet can reach out across boundaries, helping us all to stay in touch, and giving us access to information from every imaginable source.

But it is worth remembering that the same affirmations have greeted new communication technologies for centuries, from the printing press to the telegraph to television and radio. Yet in each case, while many hopes

were fulfilled, many were also disappointed. In the final analysis, the key to human cooperation and concord has not depended on advances in the technologies of communication, but rather on how human beings go about using – or abusing – their technological tools.

Among the risks of our new communications world is its potential contribution to what I would call the growing “centrifugal forces” in our time – the forces of “fragmentation.” These forces, I believe, can threaten the coherence of democratic societies and the effectiveness of democratic institutions.

Yes, the Information Revolution, for individuals and for communities, can be a great liberating influence. But it also carries some important risks.

More information at our fingertips can mean more knowledge and understanding. But it can also mean more fleeting attention-spans, more impulsive judgments, and more dependence on superficial snapshots of events. Communicating more often and more easily can bring people closer together, but it can also tempt us to live more of our lives inside smaller information bubbles, in more intense but often more isolated groupings.

We see more people everywhere these days, standing or sitting or walking alone, absorbed in their hand-held screens. But, I wonder whether, in some larger sense, they are really more “in touch?” Greater “connectivity” does not necessarily mean greater “connection.”

Information travels more quickly, in greater quantities these days. But the incalculable multiplication of information can also mean more error, more exaggeration, more misinformation, more disinformation, more propaganda. The world may be right there on our laptops, but the truth about the world may be further and further away.

The problem of fragmentation in our world is not a problem of diversity. Diversity itself should be a source of enrichment. The problem comes when diverse elements spin off on their own, when the bonds that connect us across our diversities begin to weaken.

Too often, as the world grows more complex, the temptation for some is to shield themselves from complexity, we seek the comfort of our own simplicities, our own specialities. As has often been said, we risk learning more and more, about less and less. And the result is that significant knowledge gaps can develop and persist.

The danger is that knowledge gaps so often run the risk of becoming empathy gaps. The struggle to remain empathetically open to the Other in a diversifying world is a continuing struggle of central importance for all of us.

The danger of having knowledge gaps grow into empathy gaps – that was the theme of my address in 1996. I discussed then what was becoming an enormous knowledge gap, nearly an ignorance gap, between the worlds of Islam and the non-Muslim world. Since that time, to be sure, there have been moments of encouraging progress on this front, including academic-centred efforts here at Brown, with your wonderful Digital Islamic Humanities Project.

But in many ways, that knowledge gap has worsened.

We have heard predictions for some years now about some inevitable clash of the industrial West with the Muslim world. These multiplied, of course, in the wake of the 9/11 tragedies and other violent episodes. But most Muslims don't think that way; only an extreme minority does. For most of us, there is singularly little in our theology that would clash with the other Abrahamic faiths, with Christianity and Judaism. And there is much more in harmony. What has happened to the Islamic tradition that says that our best friends will be from the other Abrahamic Faiths, known as the "People of the Book", all of whose faith builds on monotheistic revelation?

Of course, much of what the West has seen about the Muslim world in recent years has been through a media lens of instability and confrontation. What is highly abnormal in the Islamic world thus often gets mistaken for what is normal. But that is all the more reason for us to work from all directions to replace fearful ignorance with empathetic knowledge.

Down through many centuries, great Muslim cultures were built on the principle of inclusiveness. Some of the best minds and creative spirits from every corner of the world, independent of ethnic or religious identities, were brought together at great Muslim centres of learning. My own ancestors, the Fatimids, founded one of the world's oldest universities, Al-Azhar in Cairo, over a thousand years ago. In fields of learning from mathematics to astronomy, from philosophy to medicine Muslim scholars sharpened the cutting edge of human knowledge. They were the equivalents of thinkers like Plato and Aristotle, Galileo and Newton. Yet their names are scarcely known in the West today. How many would recognise the name al-Khwarizmi – the Persian mathematician who developed some 1,200 years ago the algorithm, which is the foundation of search engine technology?

In the Muslim world itself, as is true outside of it, much of our history, culture and art, has been obscured, and with it a clear sense of Muslim diversity. Among other "in-comprehensions" is the increasing conflict between Sunni and Shia Muslims. In places like Pakistan and Malaysia, Iraq and Syria, Lebanon and Bahrain, Yemen and Somalia and Afghanistan, the Sunni-Shia conflict is becoming an absolute disaster.

The harsh truth is that religious hostility and intolerance, between as well as within religions, is contributing to violent crises and political impasse all across the world, in the Central African Republic, in South Sudan and Nigeria; in Myanmar, in the Philippines and in the Ukraine, and in many other places.

Such hostilities, of course, represent the most sinister side of what I have described as the centrifugal, fragmenting patterns of our times.

How can we respond to such tendencies? The response, I would emphasise today is a thoughtful, renewed commitment to the concept of pluralism and to the closely related potential of civil society.

A pluralist commitment is rooted in the essential unity of the human race. Does the Holy Quran not say that mankind is descended from "a single soul?" In an increasingly cosmopolitan world, it is essential that we live by a "cosmopolitan ethic," one that addresses the age-old need to balance the particular and the universal, to honour both human rights and social duties, to advance personal freedom and to accept human responsibility.

It is in that spirit that we can nurture bonds of confidence across different peoples and unique individuals, welcoming the growing diversity of our world, even in matters of faith, as a gift of the Divine. Difference, in this context, can become an opportunity – not a threat – a blessing rather than a burden.

This brings us to the challenges for governance in our time. How do we organise our complex societies to achieve harmony and perhaps some progress, even at this time of growing diversity? These have always been difficult questions and they are not getting any easier. As you know, they were particularly difficult questions for the United States back in this university's earliest years, as 13 former colonies tried to write a new national constitution.

George Washington, who had presided over the Constitutional Convention, came to this campus in 1790, after just one year as President, when Brown itself was only a quarter of a century old. He travelled to Providence to mark the recent adoption of the new US Constitution by the state of Rhode Island – the last of the original 13 states to do so. His visit was to celebrate the completion of that constitution-writing process. You may have known about this from reading the plaque that still hangs on the wall of University Hall, on the Brown Main Green, where Washington strolled that day with the university's president.

I am told, incidentally, that Washington was greeted here with “the roar of cannons and the ringing of bells, and in a spirit of great Decorum.” I don't know about the cannon and the bells, but I must testify, as a current university guest, that the “great decorum” has not changed at all! Thank you!

Washington's visit in Providence marked a moment of historic constitutional significance. And the questions we have raised today, balancing centrifugal, fragmenting realities on the one hand with the imperatives of national bonding and governing on the other, were central concerns for Washington at that moment and throughout his career. After eight years of coping with these issues as the first American president, he made them the major theme of his famous Farewell Address.

He was worried, principally, he said then, about what he called the spirit of “faction” and its ability to undermine a sense of democratic nationhood. He described faction as a spirit, that “kindles the animosity of one part against another,” creating a “fatal tendency to elevate a small but artful and enterprising minority of the community” against the whole. It threatened, he said, “a frightful despotism”, one that could “render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together...”

Such threats to bonding, and thus to balance, have long presented a central governance challenge, here and elsewhere. And these issues are now being addressed with new intensity all across the world.

Amazing as it may seem, fully 37 countries have been writing or rewriting their constitutions in the last ten years, with another 12 countries recently embarking on this path. This means that nearly 25 per cent of the member countries of the United Nations have been rethinking these central governance concerns. And nearly half of these 49 countries have majority Muslim populations.

Clearly, many Muslim societies are seeking new ways to organise themselves. And there can be no “one size fits all”. The outcomes obviously are going to be many and varied. The process will challenge the creativity of the world's best political and legal thinkers. Especially in the developing world, such matters will increasingly be in the hands of younger, more educated men and women, provided the system allows them to come to the forefront.

These governance issues are frankly today, of global concern. And I believe that the great universities of the world and Brown University in particular, can also play an especially creative role in responding to them.

The challenge, as we have said, will be one of balancing values and interests, honouring the importance of religious and ethical traditions, for example, while also respecting the free will of individual human beings; accommodating both the role of central governments and regional demands, reconciling the urban and the rural; providing for democratic change, and institutional continuity.

Creating new governance frameworks is obviously not an easy task. But it can be accomplished. In Kenya just three and a half years ago, for example, a new constitution ratified by two-thirds of the voters, redistributed power dramatically from the central level to 47 county governments. In Tunisia, just a few weeks ago, a new “consensus” constitution with 94 per cent approval from the elected Constituent Assembly reaffirmed the Islamic identity of the Tunisian state, while also protecting the human rights of religious and ethnic minorities.

In these cases, and in other places such as Bangladesh, one of the fundamental constructive forces at work has been the strength of civil society, it is a topic that is worth serious attention. And, I am happy to say, that it has been getting increasing attention, including the exemplary, cutting-edge work here at Brown of the Watson Institute for International Studies.

By civil society I mean an array of institutions that operate on a private, voluntary basis, but are motivated by high public purposes. They include institutions devoted to culture, to science and to research; to commercial, labour, ethnic and religious concerns; as well as a variety of professional societies. They include institutions of the media and education.

I think the conclusion is the success of democratic societies will depend in the end on more than democratic governments. The scale and the quality of civil society will become a factor, I believe, of enormous importance.

A quality civil society has three critical underpinnings: a commitment to pluralism, an open door to meritocracy, and a full embrace of what I described earlier as a cosmopolitan ethic.

The voices of civil society will reflect and express the growing complexity of society, not as autonomous fragments, but as diversified institutions seeking the common good. And I believe that the voices of civil society can be among the most powerful forces in our time. Where change has been overdue, they can be voices for change. Where people live in fear, they can be voices of hope.

One of the energising forces that makes a quality civil society possible, of course, is the readiness of its citizens to contribute their talents and energies to the social good. What is required is a profound spirit of voluntary service, a principle cherished in Shia Ismaili culture, and honoured, I know, here at Brown.

Progress is possible when the multiple, diversified needs of any society can be matched by multiple, diversified inputs; that is also what civil society is all about. This is why great universities, with their broad, diversified programmes, can be a resource of importance in the development of quality civil society, in their own countries but also around the world. And again, Brown offers a powerful example.

Perhaps the biggest quandary we face in our economic and social development programmes is the problem of “predictability”; knowing what changes are going to arise, and then deciding what is more or less likely to work in a given situation. But again, progress is possible when complex issues are subjected to competent, intelligent, nuanced and sophisticated analysis, free from dogmatism, and based upon what I would describe as “empathetic

knowledge.” This happens best in open, meritocratic societies, where people’s responsibilities are based on their competence. It also happens best when the intellectual resources of the world’s great universities, like Brown, are brought into play.

One of the important values of the Shia Ismaili tradition is the transformative power of the human intellect – that conviction underscores AKDN’s strong commitment to education, at all levels, wherever we are present. These activities include the Aga Khan University – now thirty years old – our newer University of Central Asia, our Aga Khan Academies at the primary and secondary levels, and our major commitment to the potential of Early Childhood Development.

The Aga Khan University in Karachi and East Africa is in the process today of creating a new Liberal Arts faculty, while also establishing eight new post-graduate schools. I would emphasise both these initiatives. Professional education is sorely needed in the developing world, but equally important is the capacity to integrate knowledge, to nurture critical thinking and ethical sensitivity and to advance interdisciplinary teaching and research.

A quality civil society, in any setting, will require well-informed leaders who are sensitive to a wide array of disciplines, and outlooks and cultures. It will require people with the ability to continue their learning in response to new knowledge. I know these are central concerns for Brown University, articulated so well in its new Strategic Plan and its call for “Building on Distinction.”

As we look ahead, in sum, we face a world in which centrifugal and fragmenting influences are of growing importance, presenting new governance challenges all across the planet, and especially in fragile societies. In such a world, the voices of pluralistic civil society can help ensure that diversity does not lead to disintegration, and that a broad variety of energies and talents can be enlisted in the quest for human progress. Diversification without disintegration, this is the greatest challenge of our time.

Over the past six decades I have been immersed in the problems of developing societies, grappling with ways to assist their populations, despite both natural hazards and human errors. It is my conviction that a strong, high-quality, ethical and competent civil society is one of the greatest forces we can work with to underwrite such progress. And, if this is correct, then the role of great universities has never been more important.

I am convinced that Brown will be among the greatest universities stepping up to this challenge, as it finishes its first 250 years, and embarks on its next quarter of a millennium!

Thank you.

Global Lecture Series

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> Jul 2024 AD / 2<sup>nd</sup> Muharram 1446 AH

<https://global-lectures.com>

Lecture Presentation by Naeem Jeewani

<https://global-lectures.com/courses/07072024-the-88th-stephen-ogden-lecture-at-brown-university-2014-03-10/lesson/watch-lecture-video-167/>

Mubarak speech of Mawlana Hazir Imam

delivered to

88<sup>th</sup> Stephen Ogden Memorial Lecture

at

Brown University

Rhode Island, USA

on

10<sup>th</sup> March 2014

## Session layout

Brown University

Stephen Ogden Lecture

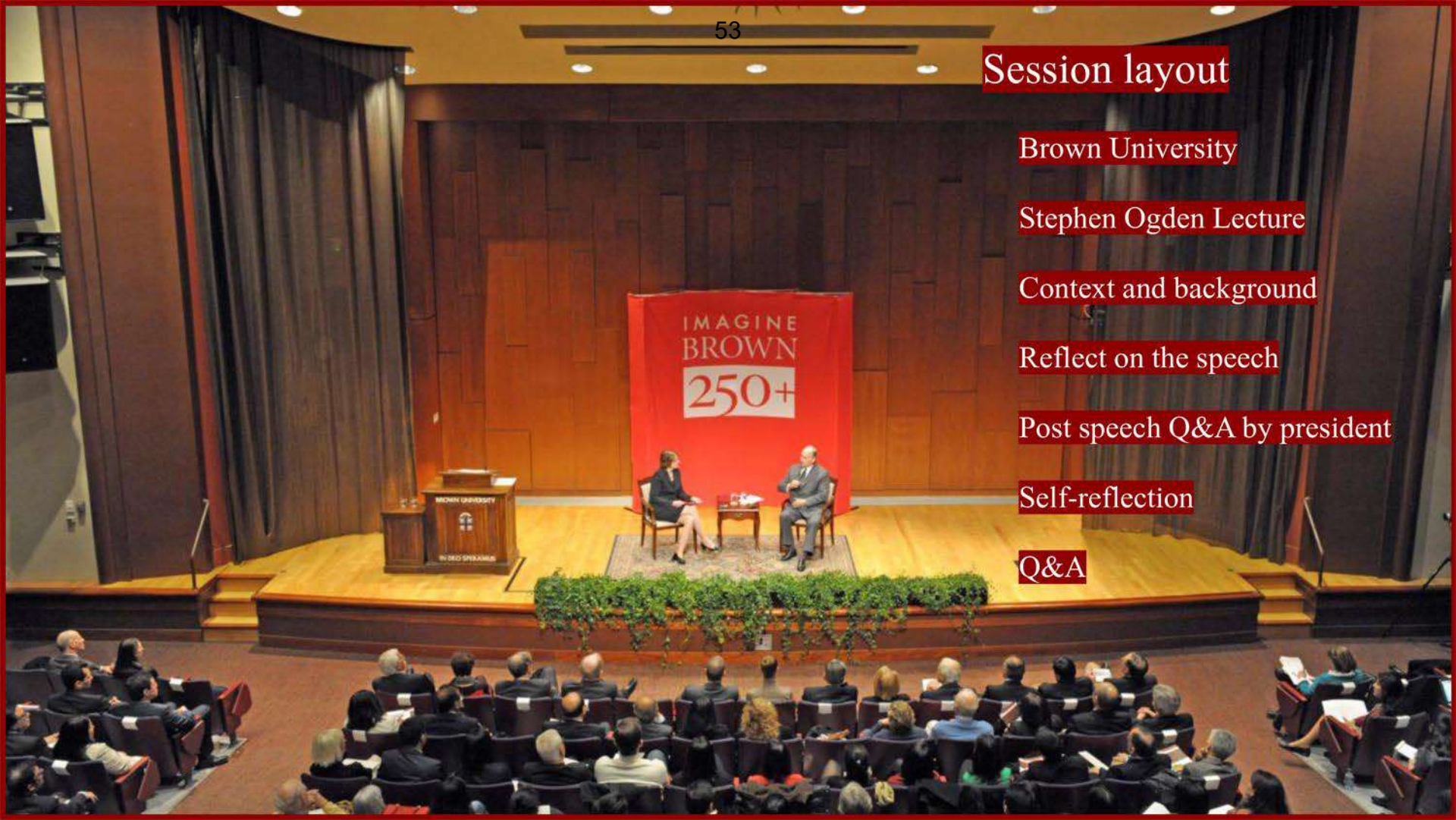
Context and background

Reflect on the speech

Post speech Q&A by president

Self-reflection

Q&A





# Brown University

Brown University is a private Ivy League research university in Providence, Rhode Island. It is the seventh-oldest institution of higher education in the US, founded in 1764 as the College in the English Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

The university has financial endowments of up to \$6.2 billion and it considered as one of the most prestigious universities of US.

The university has currently:

**7,043**

undergraduate students

**2,629**

graduate students

**585**

medical school students

**6,000**

summer, visiting and online students

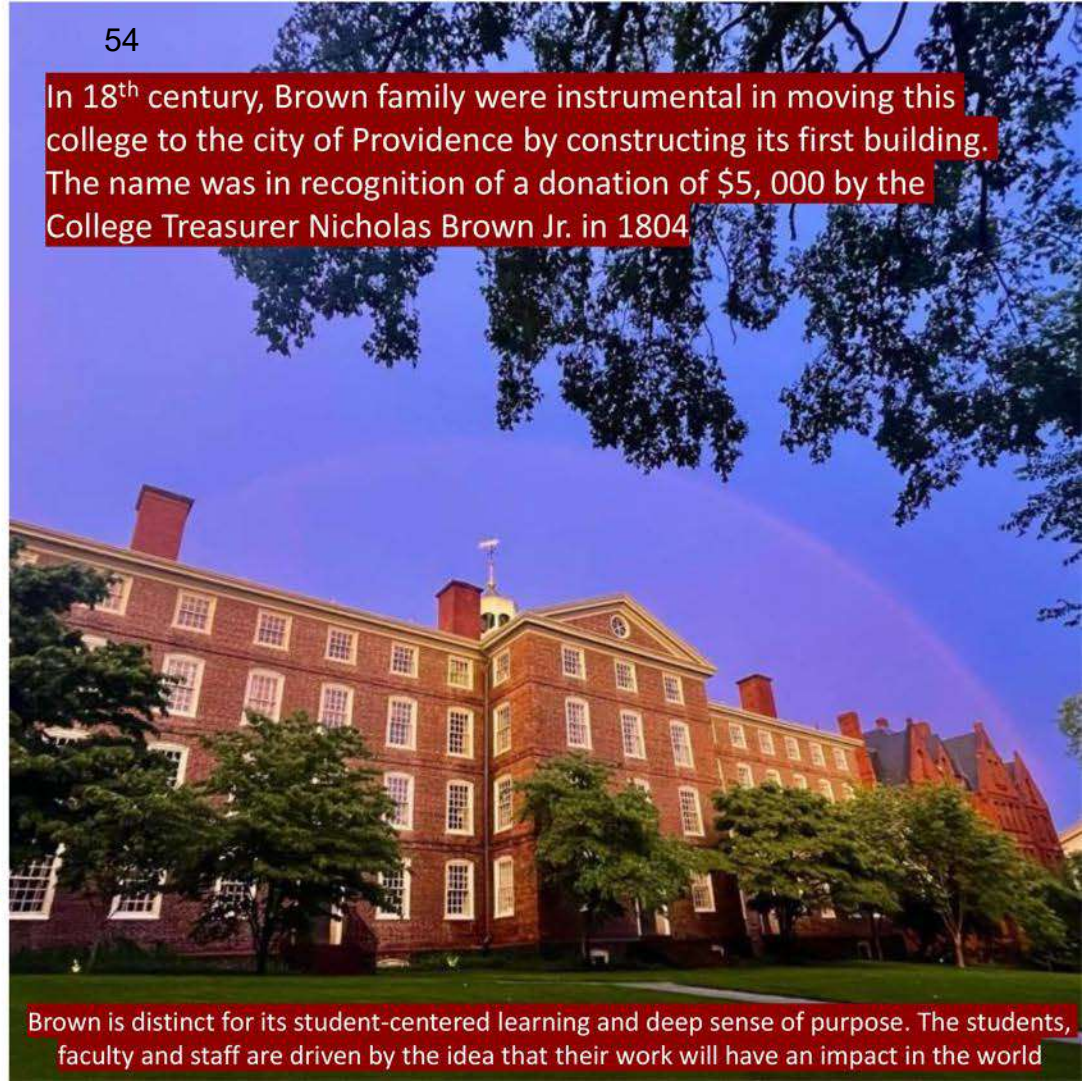
**816**

full-time faculty

The university has a very long history dating back to 18<sup>th</sup> century

54

In 18<sup>th</sup> century, Brown family were instrumental in moving this college to the city of Providence by constructing its first building. The name was in recognition of a donation of \$5,000 by the College Treasurer Nicholas Brown Jr. in 1804



Brown is distinct for its student-centered learning and deep sense of purpose. The students, faculty and staff are driven by the idea that their work will have an impact in the world

11 Nobel Prize winners affiliated

Alumni include:

27 Pulitzer Prize winners

21 billionaires

4 U.S. Secretaries of State

Over 100 members of US Congress

58 Rhodes Scholars

38 Olympic medallists

The Slavery and Justice report, released by Brown university in 2006, marked the first major effort by an American university to address its historical ties to slavery and prompted other institutions to undertake similar processes

# Stephen Ogden Memorial Lectures

Who is Stephen Ogden and what is Stephen Ogden Lecture?

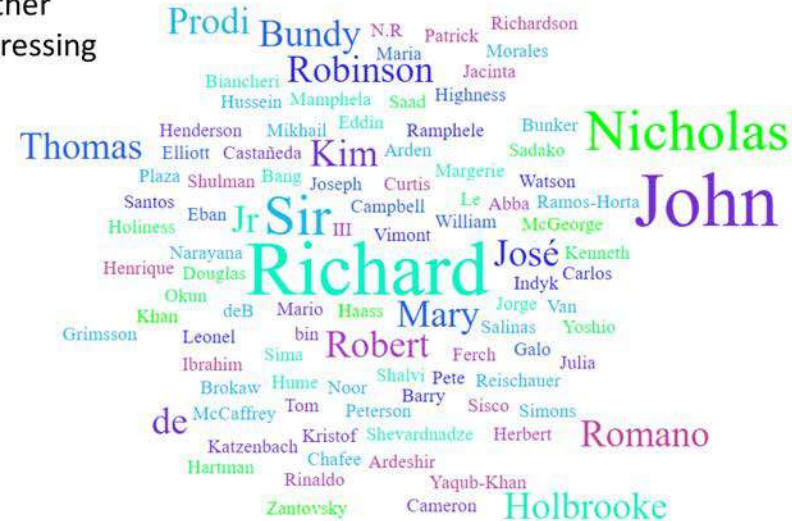
The Ogden Lectures are an enduring tribute to Stephen A. Ogden Jr., an active member of the Brown class of 1960, who died in 1963 from injuries he suffered in a car accident during his junior year. Established by his family, the Ogden Lectureship came into being two years later as a means of achieving in some small measure what Steve Ogden had hoped to accomplish in his life: the advancement of international peace and understanding.

The Ogden Lectures have featured an extensive array of world leaders, including heads of state, international diplomats, policy makers and practitioners, and many other astute observers of the international scene. All have given public lectures on pressing matters of global concern. Some of the past speakers are:

- Dalai Lama
- Mikhail Gorbachev
- Sahabzada Yaqub-Khan
- Kim Campbell
- Theresa May
- Ban Ki-moon
- David Cameron
- Julia Gillard
- Jacinta Arden



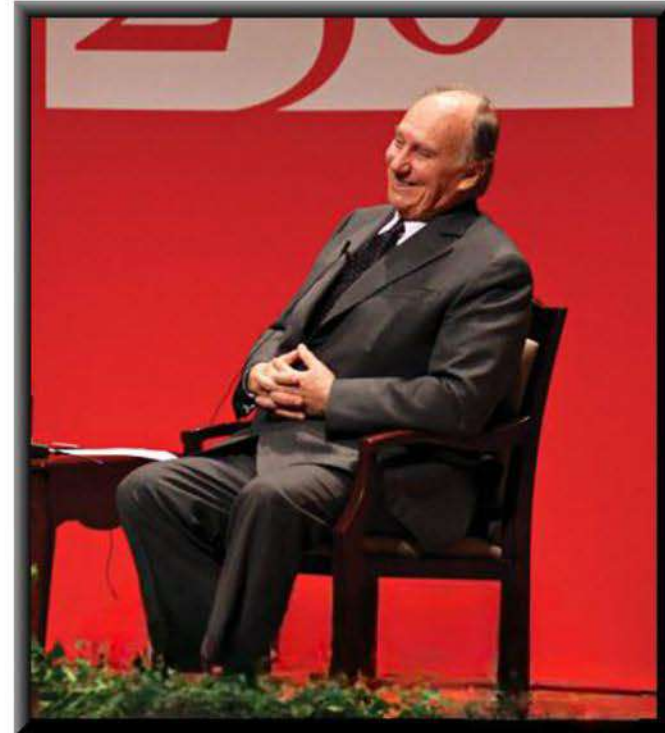
Stephen A. Ogden Jr.



## 88<sup>th</sup> Ogden Lecture & 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Brown University

57

- Brown's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated for 15 months!
- Mawlana Hazir Imam's address at 88<sup>th</sup> Ogden Lecture was part of the opening weekend commencing the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Brown University
- This was the 2nd visit of Mawlana Hazir Imam at Brown University in 18 years
- His previous visit was a Baccalaureate Address at Brown University in 1996

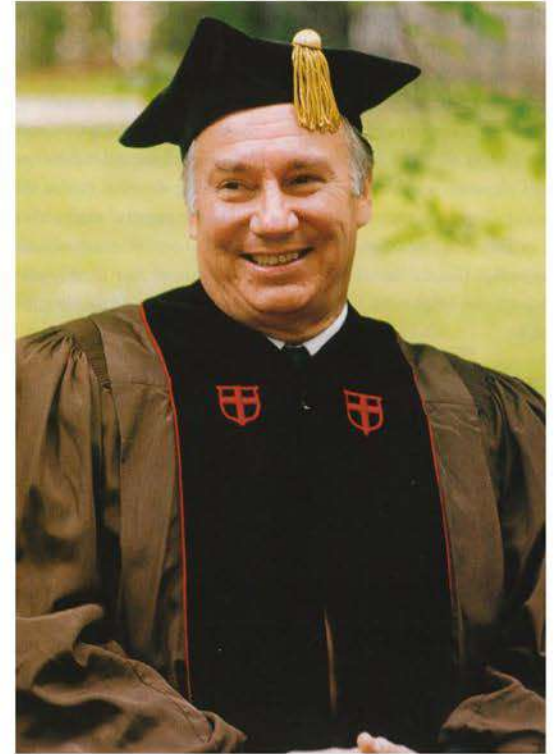


# 1996

## Previous visit to <sup>58</sup>Brown University

- Mawlana Hazir Imam gave a Baccalaureate Address at Brown University in 1996
- First Muslim ever to give the Baccalaureate address at a Brown Commencement in the school's 232-year history
- Prince Rahim graduated with a degree in Comparative Literature from Brown University in 1995
- Mawlana Hazir Imam referred to his 1996 visit in his 2014 speech as:

*The danger of having knowledge gaps grow into empathy gaps – that was the theme of my address in 1996. I discussed then what was becoming an enormous knowledge gap, nearly an ignorance gap, between the worlds of Islam and the non-Muslim world.*



# 1996

## 59 Previous visit to Brown University

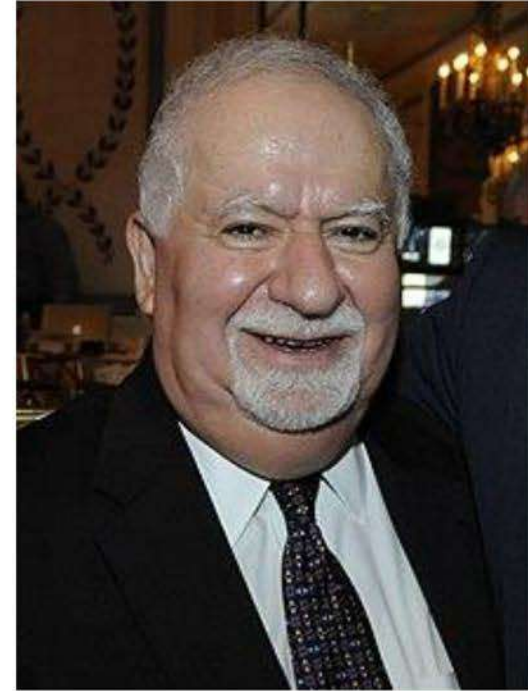
Baccalaureate Speaker Introduction by University president

*His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan IV is the first Muslim baccalaureate speaker in Brown's history, and I dare say in the history of the Ivy League. He embodies the ecumenical spirit that links the three great monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.*

*The Aga Khan, a direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammed, became 49th Imam – spiritual leader – of the Shia Ismaili Muslims in 1957 at the age of 20. This followed the death of his grandfather, Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah Aga Khan, who wanted to be succeeded by “a young man who has been brought up in the midst of the new age.” His grandfather, twice president of the League of Nations, and his father saw his gifts and his potential, just as your grandparents and parents saw yours, as they encouraged you to reach for the stars at this University..*

*For nearly four decades as Imam, the Aga Khan has amply fulfilled his father's trust and his grandfather's expectations...*

*He has become a major activist for civilized humanity and universal values. Not in words but in deeds. Not in one location but around the world. For he believes in the long tradition of Ismaili community values – that education, self-reliance, solidarity and character are the elements which keep a community vibrant and healthy and lead to enlightenment and dignity.*



Vartan Gregorian  
16th President of Brown University

# 1996

## Previous visit to <sup>60</sup>Brown University



Some key messages in previous speech (in 1996) were:

- Increasing pace of change in the world and the need for individuals to adapt
- Mawlana Hazir Imam addressed about the gap between Islam and West
- He mentioned about the dangers of ignorance
- Evolution of societies in east and west
- Diversity within Islamic world
- AKDN efforts
- West must build bridge with Islam and resolve issues together

2014

Brown University President



Christina Paxson is the 19<sup>th</sup> president serving in her role since 2012

- In her introduction, President Paxson calls Mawlana Hazir Imam as a returning friend of the university and a 'Brown Parent' with reference to being a parent of university graduate i.e. Prince Rahim
- Prince Rahim was also present in the audience at 88<sup>th</sup> Ogden Lecture
- She quoted the words of President Vartan Gregorian in her introduction





BROWN

Brown University Library  
Office of the University Librarian

July 2, 2024

Riyaz Momin  
8702 Mesa Dr  
Houston, TX 77028

Dear Mr. Momin,

Thank you for your 2023 donation to the Brown University Library. Your gift helps us support Brown's students and faculty with the scholarly resources that they need for excellence in education and research.

Specifically, I would like to acknowledge receipt and acceptance of the following:

*Book of Healing* by Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai

Please note that gift materials are added to the Library's significant cataloging queue and may take time to appear in BruKnow, the online catalog.

Thank you for your generosity. Donors like you play a very important role in ensuring that our collections keep pace with Brown's world-class academic programs.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joseph S. Meisel".

Joseph S. Meisel  
Joukowsky Family University Librarian

2014

Reflect on the speech



Internet Technology was quite new in 1996 but have changed very quickly by 2014  
What are the impacts of this rapid change?

Potential of social media and Internet-based technology to bridge cultural divisions



Are technological advances a  
great source of hope?

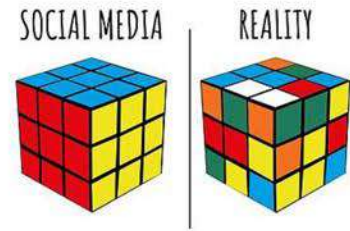
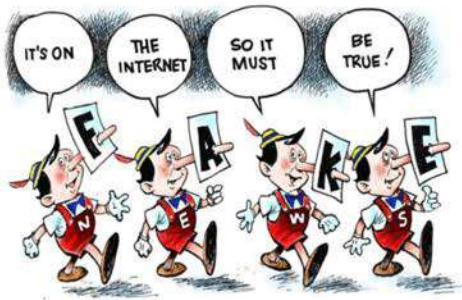
Or

Is it causing more problems?

Do we blame technology for modern problems?

*"Internet can reach out across boundaries, helping us all to stay in touch, and giving us access to information from every imaginable source."*





Information revolution is great influence	Growing “centrifugal forces” - forces of “fragmentation” - they can threaten the democratic institution
More info at fingertips means more knowledge	More fleeting attention span, more impulsive judgements, more dependence of superficial snapshots of events
Communicating more frequently and more easily bring people together	We live more inside smaller info bubbles, more intense and more isolated groupings
Information travel more quickly in greater quantity	Incalculable multiplication of info means more error, more exaggeration, more mis-information, more dis-information, more propaganda
World is right there on our laptop	Truth is further and further away

Greater connectivity doesn't mean greater connection



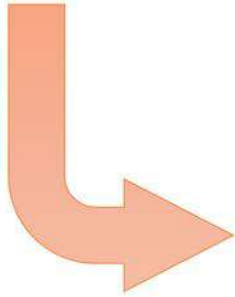
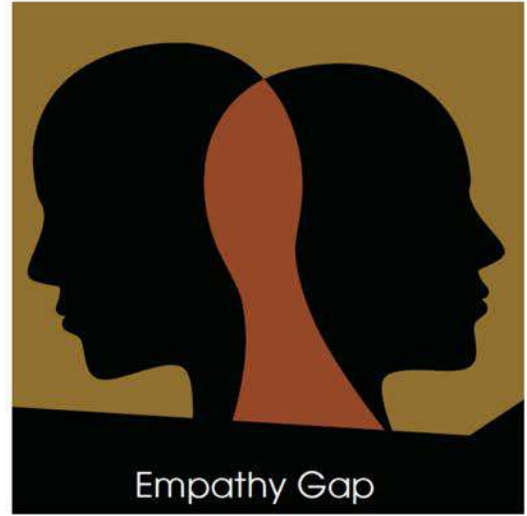
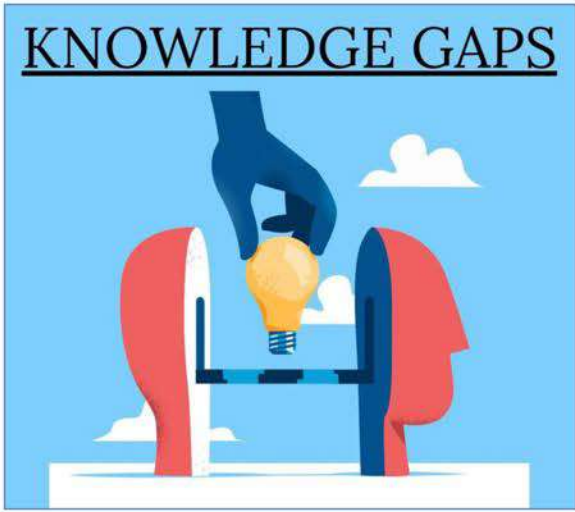
# Forces of Fragmentation Vs Diversity

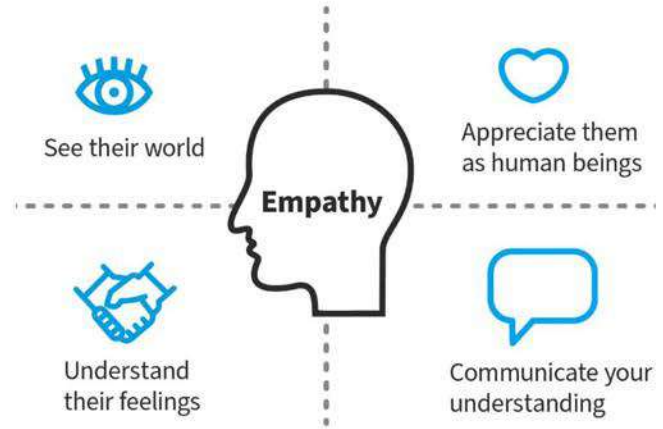






# KNOWLEDGE GAPS





Replace fearful ignorance with empathetic knowledge

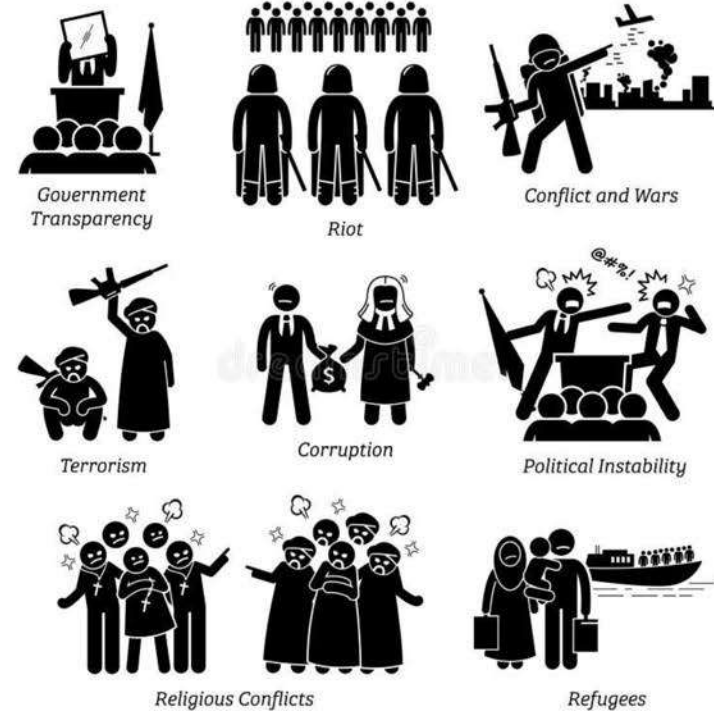
Many centuries ago, great Muslim cultures were built on the principle of inclusiveness e.g. Al-Azhar University

Similar problems due to knowledge gap and empathy gap also persist within the Muslim world as well

Conflicts between Sunni and Shi`a Muslims in many countries is becoming an absolute disaster



Centrifugal, fragmenting patterns of our times





So how to respond to such tendencies?



**1. Fight them**

**3. Embrace them**

**2. Accept them but mostly ignore them**



**Prophet Muhammad (may peace be through him and his progeny) said:**

*“All Muslims are like a building, each part supporting the other parts. In this way, they must support one another.”*

**Allah has created different people and communities so that we can learn from one another. By understanding this diversity and practicing pluralism (i.e., celebrating and learning from this diversity) we can promote peace and development.**



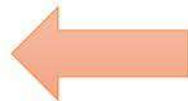
Cosmopolitan ethic



Particulars

Honor human rights

Advance personal freedom



**Balance**



Universals

Honor social duties

Accept human responsibility

*BRISUCE*

The technological forces that are re-shaping our world now mean that neighbours who live on the other side of the planet are as close to us as our neighbours who live across the street. In such a world, peace and progress require that we promote a pluralist agenda, that we invest in a **Cosmopolitan ethic**.

Mawlana Hazir Imam

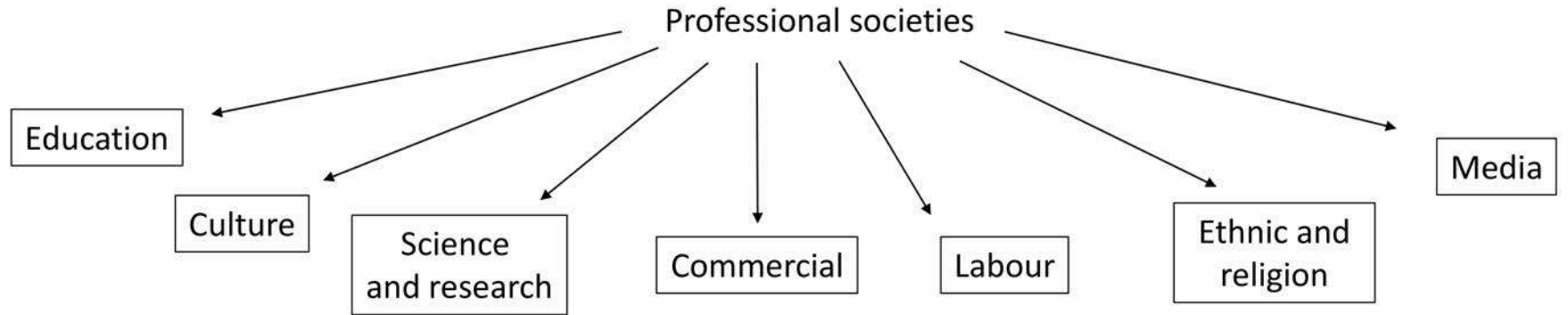
Lisbon, Portugal, March 2019

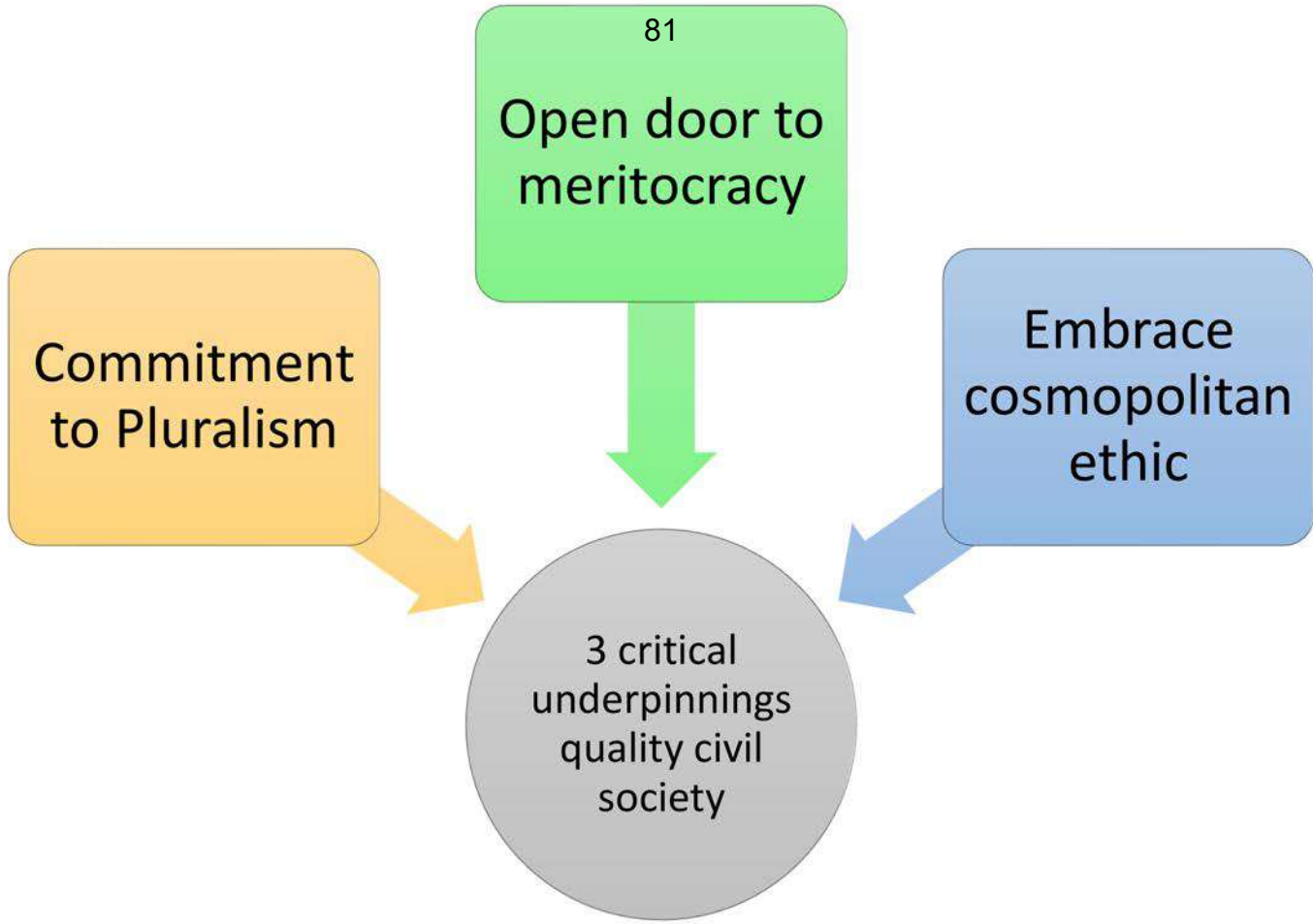
80  
Challenges for governance in the times of growing diversity



Strength of Civil Society

Public-private partnership





Readiness of citizens to contribute their talents and energies to the social good

82  
Greatest challenge of our time:



Diversification without disintegration

# Post speech interview<sup>83</sup> by president



Q. How broad ranges of work (education, healthcare, enterprise dev, culture, quality of life) relates to the ethics of Islam



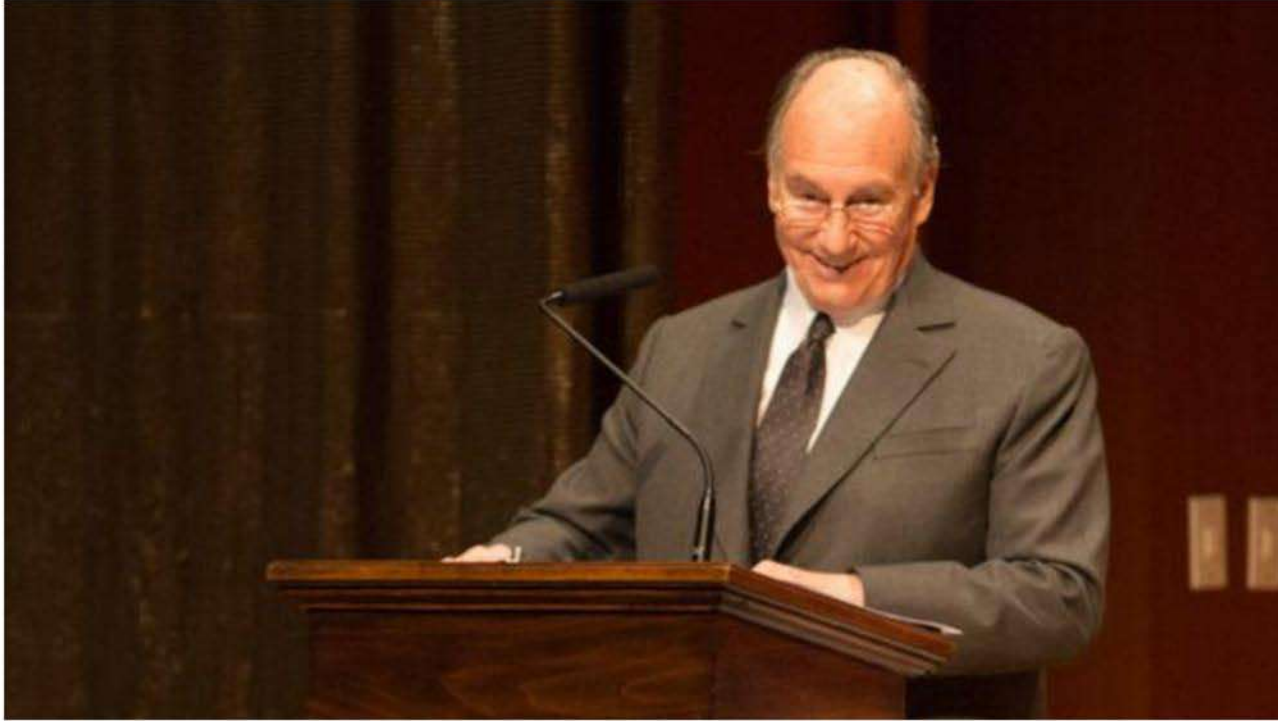
We are the stewards of the creation

# Advice to Students





# Self-reflection



*Nām hai tērā Karīm<sup>(c)</sup>, Shāh salām<sup>un</sup> calayk!*

*Shān hai tērī cazīm, Shāh salām<sup>un</sup> calayk!*

Your name is Karīm<sup>(c)</sup>,  
 O King! Salutation to you!  
 Your glory is great,  
 O King! Salutation to you!

**°Allāmah Naşir al-Dīn Naşir Hunzai**



Q & A  
or

Share your perspective



## Opening ceremony of the new headquarters of the Global Centre for Pluralism

### LOCATION

Ottawa, Canada (16 May 2017)

*Bismillah-ir-Rahaman-ir-Rahim*

Your Excellency the Governor General  
 Madame la Ministre  
 Excellencies  
 Fellow Directors of the Global Centre for Pluralism  
 Friends of the Centre

What a great day this is for all of us. And what a special ceremony, as we honour a beautiful symbol of Canada's rich past, and rededicate it to the great cause of a pluralistic Global future.

As you know, the War Museum Building was designed well over a century ago by the great Canadian Architect, David Ewart. For its first half century, it was the home of the Dominion Archives, and then, for another half century, we knew it as the War Museum. For over one hundred years, all told, it was a place where the record of Canada's proud and confident past was preserved and honoured.

I think you will agree with me that the past still speaks to us in this place. The architects, designers, engineers and so many others who have rehabilitated this wonderful Tudor Gothic building have taken

enormous care to respect its distinctive historic character. We all join today in saluting the design and engineering team led by KPMB, the construction team, led by MP Lundy Construction, and so many other dedicated staff and volunteers who have contributed to this project.

J'aimerais partager une autre pensée alors que nous tournons nos regards vers ce passé si digne de respect. Je trouve en effet très approprié que cette cérémonie ait lieu cette année, l'année du 150ème anniversaire de la Confédération canadienne.

Je suis heureux de pouvoir me compter au nombre de ceux qui, cette année, évoquent avec une fierté particulière "notre" histoire canadienne. La raison en est bien sûr la générosité dont ce pays a fait preuve à mon égard, il y a plusieurs années, en m'octroyant le titre de citoyen honoraire du Canada.

But even as we celebrate the past today, we are also looking ahead, with joy and confidence, to a particularly exciting future.

That future has also been symbolized by those who have renewed this building, in two compelling ways.

First, they created a new garden in the forecourt, a tranquil space for contemplating the past and thinking about the future. And then, secondly, they made a dramatic new gesture for the future by opening this building to the river.

When I first visited this site, I went across the Ottawa River, to see things from the opposite side. From that perspective, I noticed that many buildings on the Ontario side had, over the years, turned their backs to the river. But as we began to plan, another possibility became evident. It seemed increasingly significant to open the site to the water.

Water, after all, has been seen, down through the ages, as the great source of life. When scientists search the universe for signs of life, they begin by looking for water. Water restores and renews and refreshes. And opening ourselves and our lives to the water is to open ourselves and our lives to the future.

In addition, the Ottawa River represents a powerful connection to other places, nearby and far away. It is not only a refreshing symbol, it is also a connecting symbol, connecting this site to the rest of Canada and the rest of the world.

Throughout the history of Canada, the Ottawa River has been a meeting place for diverse peoples, originally the First Nations, and then the British and the French, and more recently Canadians from many different backgrounds. It symbolizes the spirit of connection. And the spirit of connection, of course, is at the very heart of the Global Centre for Pluralism.

The new forecourt garden suggests that the Centre will be a place for contemplation and reflection. And the opening to the River suggests that it will also be a place for connection and engagement.

What happens at 330 Sussex Drive in the years ahead will radiate out well beyond its walls, to the entire world.

Let me emphasize a point about the concept of pluralism that is sometimes misunderstood. Connection does not necessarily mean agreement. It does not mean that we want to eliminate our differences or erase our distinctions. Far from it. What it does mean is that we connect with one another in order to learn from one another, and to build our future together.

Pluralism does not mean the elimination of difference, but the embrace of difference. Genuine pluralism understands that diversity does not weaken a society, it strengthens it. In an ever-shrinking, ever more diverse world, a genuine sense of pluralism is the indispensable foundation for human peace and progress.

From the start, this has been a vision that the Ismaili Imam and the Government of Canada have deeply shared.

My own close association with Canada began more than five decades ago, with the coming to Canada of many thousands of Asian Ismailis, essentially as the result of Idi Amin's anti-Asian policies in Uganda. That relationship has been re-enforced through the years as we have shared with our Canadian friends in so many great adventures, here in Canada and in other lands, including the Global Centre for Pluralism.

The Centre has been, from the start, a true partnership - a breakthrough partnership - a genuine public-private partnership. And one of my central messages today is how deeply grateful we are to all of those who have made this partnership so effective.

It was with Prime Minister Jean Chretien, that we first discussed the idea of founding a new pluralism centre, and it was Prime Minister Paul Martin who helped develop the plan. Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government sealed the partnership and Minister Bev Oda then signed with me the establishing Agreement. Minister Mélanie Joly has also given strong support to the GCP. And Prime Minister Trudeau has articulated, with conviction and with passion, the need for pluralism in our world.

I think, too, today of so many other public servants who have helped guide this effort, including Universities Canada, the IDRC and other past and present members of the Corporation of the GCP. And I also thank the fine cooperation we have received from the Canadian Mint, who will share with us in occupying one wing of this building.

As we celebrate the progress we have made today, we also recognize the growing challenges to our mission, as nativist and nationalist threats to pluralism rise up in so many corners of the world. In responding to these challenges, the Global Centre for Pluralism has planned a variety of new initiatives. Among them are the new Global Pluralism Awards which will recognise pluralism in action around the world, as well as a distinguished series of new publications.

As we look today both to the past and to the future, we do so with gratitude to all those who have shared in this journey, and who now share in our pursuit of new dreams. Among them is someone whom we welcome today not only as a distinguished Statesman, but also as one whose personal support has inspired us all.

It is a pleasure and an honour to present to you His Excellency the Right Honorable David Johnston, the Governor General of Canada.

Thank you

# Opening ceremony of the new headquarters of the Global Centre for Pluralism Ottawa, Canada, 16 May 2017

<https://global-lectures.com/courses/opening-ceremony-of-the-new-headquarters-of-the-global-centre-for-pluralism-2017-05-16/lesson/watch-lecture-video-169/>

Speakers: Najwa Sultani & Mastura Amiri

July 14<sup>th</sup> 2024

## Mercy to Mankind

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

We have not sent you but as a mercy to all  
humankind

Holy Quran, Chapter 21 Verse 107





**THE ISMAILI TV**

FROM THE ARCHIVE:

INAUGURATION OF  
THE GLOBAL CENTRE  
FOR PLURALISM





The Global Centre for Pluralism is an international initiative of Mawlana Hazir Imam and was established jointly with the Government of Canada.

It is located in Ottawa the Capital city of Canada and was officially opened on May 16,<sup>4</sup>2017

# Pluralism and Creation of Successful Societies

The Global Centre for Pluralism is an international centre for research, education and exchange about the values, practices and policies that underpin Pluralist Societies.

The Centre seeks to assist the creation of successful societies.



# Diversity within human beings And duty of mankind

O Mankind! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you peoples and tribes so that you may know one another.

Holy Quran, Chapter 49 Verse 13

مَا تَرَىٰ فِي خَلْقِ الرَّحْمَنِ مِن تَفُوتٍ

You will not find any difference in the  
Creation of Compassionate.

Holy Quran, Chapter 67 Verse 3

## Creation of Mankind from a Single Soul

خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ

I have created you from a Single Soul.

Holy Quran, Chapter 4 Verse 1

## Verses of the Holy Quran

- World of Creation (Physical world)
- World of Command (Spiritual world)

# Equality and Pluralism



بنی آدم اعضای یک دیگرند  
 که در آفرینش ز یک گوهرند  
 چو عضوی ب درد آورد روزگار  
 دیگر عضو را مانند قرار  
 تو که ز محنت دیگران بی غمی  
 نشاید که نامت نهند آدمی

Human Beings are members of a whole  
 In creation of one essence and soul

Poet: Saadi Shirazi



103

Divine Spark within all human beings

‘Men of all colors and all races: black, white, yellow, tawny; all are the sons of Adam in the flesh and all carry in them spark of Divine light. Everyone should strive his best to see that this spark be not extinguished but rather developed to that full Companionship-on-High.

Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah (a.s)

My beloved spiritual children, as we approach the 21<sup>st</sup> Century it is quite clear that our world is becoming smaller in terms of contacts amongst human beings from various parts of the globe and this is true within the ummah and it is true within the jamat, more and more people are in contact with each other from different parts of the world and it must now be more clear to you than ever before that the jamat, the Ismaili jamat around the world is more diverse, is more widespread, speaks more languages, has more inherited traditions and cultures than maybe many of you have suspected, this is immense diversity, it is diversity of language, it is diversity of place, of way of living, it is diversity in cultural history and yet each and every spiritual child whether he is from northern Pakistan, whether he is from Afghanistan, whether he is from the Soviet Union or whether he is from China, each of these spiritual children is a murid of the Imam of the Time and as murids of the Imam of the Time, no matter which part of the world we live in we are members of a spiritual family, we are spiritual brothers and sisters”

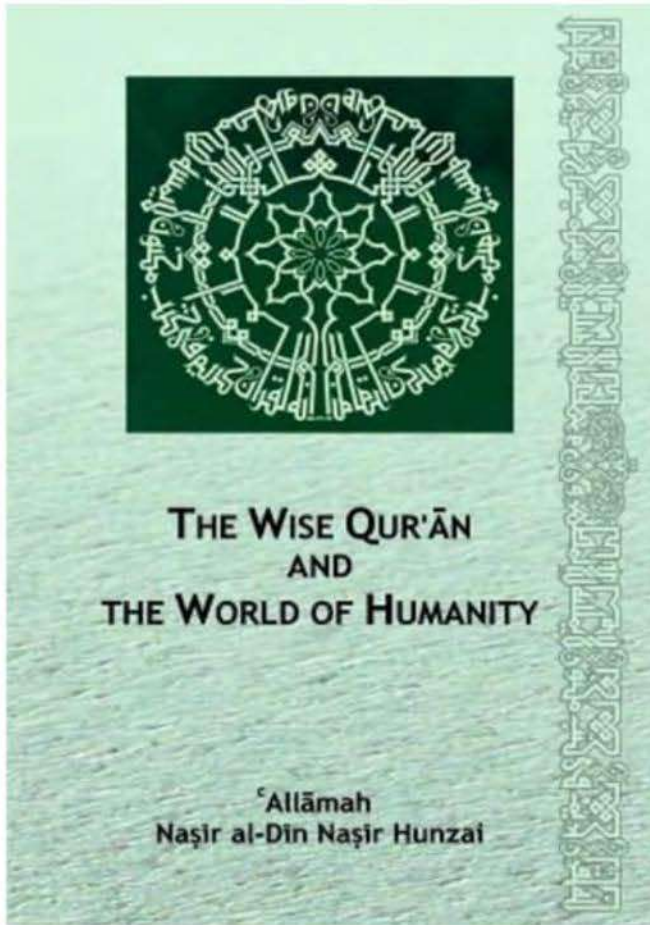
“My beloved spiritual children, India is a pluralist country, and it is a blessing that Indian society is pluralist, because the Quran is very clear. Allah says, “We have made you in many tribes, in many ways, so that you may know each other.” But it also says. “I have made you man and woman from one soul, from one soul.” That is the most unique expression, of the uniqueness, of the singularity of the whole of the human race.”

Mawlana Hazir Imam (a.s)  
Sidhpur, India, 16 May 2008

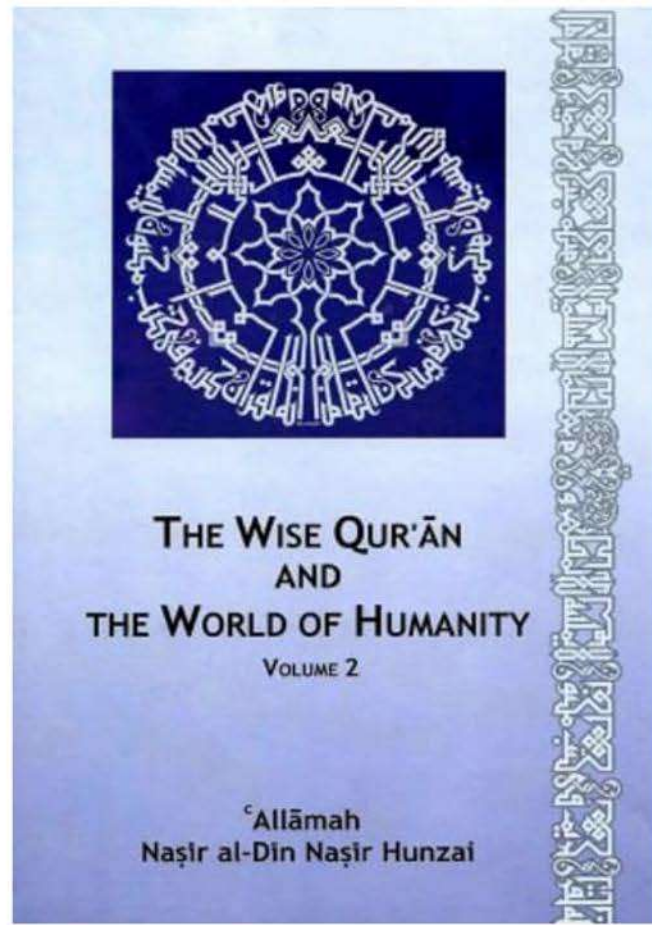
# Why Pluralism is Important?

- Pluralism and Globalization.
- Pluralism as a way of preventing wars and conflicts.
- Pluralism is the foundation for human peace on Earth.

ALL I NEED TO  
KNOW ABOUT ISLAM,  
I LEARNED ON  
9/11



The wise Quran and  
The World of Humanity – Part 1



The wise Quran and  
The World of Humanity – Part 2

# All in one and one in All

If anyone kills a person, it would be as if he has killed all mankind: and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he has saved the entire humanity.

Holy Quran, Chapter 5 Verse 32 and 33



## Pluralism does not mean Universal agreement

“Let me emphasize a point about the concept of Pluralism that is sometimes misunderstood. Connection does not necessarily mean agreement. It does not mean that we want to eliminate our differences or erase our distinctions. Far from it. What it does mean is that we connect with one another in order to learn from one another.”

Global Centre for Pluralism, May 16, 2017

# Religious tolerance during Fatimid Era

People of all religions lived in peace and  
harmony

## When Pluralism is rejected

“My own association with Canada began more than five decades ago, with the coming to Canada of many thousands of Asian Ismailis, essentially as the result of Idi Amin’s anti Asian policies in Uganda.”

Global Centre for Pluralism, May 16, 2017



Water, after all, has been seen, down through the ages, as the great source of life. When scientists search the universe for signs of life, they began by looking for water.

Global Centre for Pluralism, May 16, 2017

## Water of Life (True Knowledge)

شیعت فاطمیان یافته اند آب حیات  
خضر دور شدستند که هرگز نمرند

The Shias of Fatimid (followers of Imam of the time) have found the Water of Life.  
They have become the Khizr of their time therefore they never die (gist)

Sayyidna Pir Nasir Khisraw (q.s)

“Water restores and renews  
and refreshes”

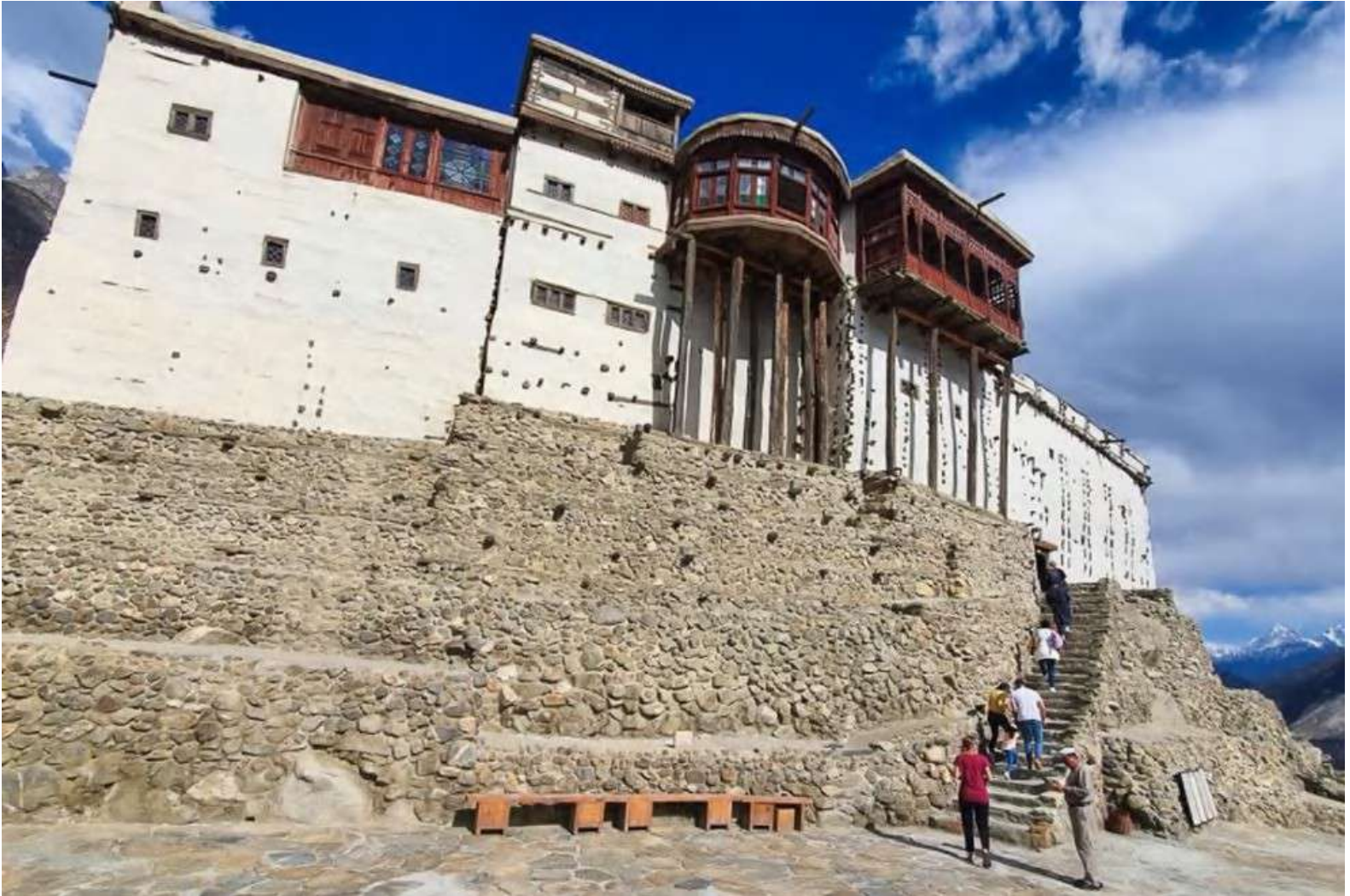
Global Centre for Pluralism, May 16, 2017

## References:

- The Wise Quran and the World of Humanity Vol I & II - by Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai (q.s)
- Qurani Kulliyat ki Roshni Mai Insani Wahdat ka Tassawwur by Dr. Faquir Muhammad Hunzai.
- Is Pluralism a Practical Possibility - by Rashida Noormohamed Hunzai



**Ya Ali Madad !!**



## Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Inauguration of the Restored Baltit Fort

Sunday, 29 September 1996

Your Excellency President Leghari, Honourable Ministers, Your Excellencies, Dear Guests

We gather today to celebrate the completion of one important element in the critical and ambitious undertaking of protecting the historic core buildings of Karimabad. The restoration of the Baltit Fort and its handover to the Baltit Heritage Trust represent the culmination of an enormous amount of work, over three and a half years of time, by several hundred people in many and varied backgrounds. I congratulate and admire them. To each of them in person, I express my gratitude for the expertise, the time and the energy they have contributed to the array of efforts represented by the restored fort. Let me also recognise, in the same terms, the many men and women who have made possible this ceremony and its related

events, here and in Gilgit.

I would like to express my special thanks to His Excellency President Leghari for making time in his busy schedule to attend these proceedings. I am very grateful for the warm welcome and hospitality he and the Government of Pakistan have extended on this occasion. I hope that my remarks will elucidate my convictions about the larger significance of this project for the people of Karimabad, Hunza, Pakistan and those in similar communities around the world, and thereby justify the efforts that His Excellency has made to be with us today.

But before turning to those matters, I would also like to thank Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan and his family for donating the Fort, thus making the restoration project possible. Your donation of the Fort is a shining example of generosity in which the gift and the act of giving are ends in themselves. But ends which, I hope, will mark the beginning of a new trend in community participation in, and in sustenance of, local tradition and cultural identity here in Pakistan, and around the developing world.

We live in a fast changing world. And the nature of change today is different from what it ever has been. It is different because it is taking place at an exponentially accelerating pace. It is different also in that, for the first time in history, the change is global in scale and impact, reaching even the most remote areas and populations of our planet. Today's world is a shifting environment in which everybody must adapt much faster in order to learn to manage the external forces of change, and ultimately mould them around specific values and traditions. Paradoxically, it is the most isolated, best preserved and least changed individuals, communities, and places that are most vulnerable to the tendency of so-called progress to erase tradition, local identity and values. For these are the places most surprised by sudden economic liberalisation, commercialisation, industrialisation, by the globalisation of travel, enterprise and service industries, and by growing communication technologies.

People are on the move as never before. And necessarily, with change and movement come problems, and even the threat of chaos. Prevention of these crises should be at the top of our agenda. The needs of the world's populations for shelter, health, and sustenance are immense. No government, no international organisation and no corporation has the power to meet all those needs on its own. The lessons of the development effort of the last forty years also show that even when working together, governments, international organisations and corporations have not been able to create conditions in which most, if not all, of the world's population is able to live in dignity.

This brings me to the first proposition I would like to put before you for consideration today. It is that only when government, non-government, and commercial organisations come together in, and especially with, a community that the necessary resources can be generated and change can be sustained. This is a guiding principle for the work of the institutions which make up the Aga Khan Development Network, and it is exemplified in its work in the Northern Areas. Sustainable development requires village organisations, the empowerment of those organisations, and the creation of partnerships between them and the government, local and non-governmental organisations, and experts from the leading centres of research and teaching around the world.

Allow me to place a second proposition before you. It is that the satisfaction of needs for medicine, food,

education, and housing, even if accomplished, is not enough for the health of any community or society.

Values and ideals, and the identities to which they relate and give form, have always been important for humankind. They give direction and points of reference in the face of rapid change. Successful development requires community engagement and mobilisation, but it also needs to occur in a cultural context which preserves individual local values and ideals.

Culture takes many forms and is expressed in many ways. The three-dimensional, physical aspect of a particular cultural context is architecture. Maintaining cultural identity and tradition in the physical environment is a central and integral part of preserving the identity of a place or a community, and it is the physical environment that is most directly affected by rapid change.

The Aga Khan Development Network has a long history of involvement in Pakistan: The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme has provided help in social organisation, technical know-how, and economic support to rural areas, enhancing local income generation. The Aga Khan Health Services have provided primary health care to a large number of people, improving health management and making secondary health care available to many. The Aga Khan Education Services have provided modern schooling to youngsters, particularly girls, who did not have access to it before, and have improved teaching standards.

Since the 1980s, these various, but definitely interrelated, activities have developed, expanded and been replicated elsewhere with the generous support from at least a dozen external agencies -- public and private, bilateral as well as multilateral -- and valued cooperation from the Government of Pakistan. While I cannot list them in detail, I want to give my warmest thanks and public recognition to all those agencies, many of which are represented here today. They have contributed immeasurably to increasing both the reach and the effectiveness of the Aga Khan Development Network in working with the peoples of Northern Pakistan to improve the quality of their lives. Today, as many of you know, the Network stands on the threshold of an exciting new phase, the main objective of which is to create innovative local institutions and resource bases, such as a new Development Bank, an Enterprise Support Company, a Professional Development Centre for Teachers, maybe even a front line hospital -- which will complement the accomplishments to date. We aim to bring new levels of sophistication, stimulation and sustainability to benefit the resilient hard-working peoples of this area.

The Network recognises the need to maintain historical physical integrity in those places which will be affected by the strong forces of change. The Network, Pakistan and the Northern Areas cannot settle for an acceptable present, but must also prepare for, seek out, and bring about a brighter future. This implies that we must fight the degradation of our traditions in all fields.

The Baltit Fort is a perfect metaphor for tradition, history, and a cultural legacy. Over the last seventy years it has been decaying slowly, until it was decided that the Fort should be restored and reused in an environment-conscious way. In other words, the future of the Fort has been improved. Without the help of all the people gathered here today it could only have decayed further; in future, it could only have worsened.

This project will complement all the Aga Khan Development Network's initiatives in health, education, rural support, and economic development, by starting to reverse the hundreds of years of decay which

have eroded our cultural identity and to provide some anchors with which we can face the strong currents of change. It will do so in a way that emphasises self-sustenance, which is a keystone concept in the Aga Khan Trust for Culture's work.

By recognising architecture as an important instrument of cultural identity, the Trust seeks to encourage renewal processes which are based both on local traditions and a sensitive integration of contemporary facilities and techniques, and to premiate projects of outstanding quality. It is the Trust's conviction that architectural heritage and environmental values can be assets for use by local communities as they look forward and reach out to take control of their own futures.

The settings in which the Trust works are particularly challenging. The historic cores of cities in the developing world have been neglected for decades. Rural communities affected by rapid change have neither the trained manpower nor the institutions to grapple with the powerful forces at work around them. Both settings are inhabited, for the most part, by populations without much by way of material resources or political influence. The Trust has taken up the task of demonstrating that cultural concerns and socio-economic needs are intimately linked, and that in interaction they can act as catalysts for improvement in every dimension of development. Planning is a key element in this approach. Designing plans and planning processes that build community consensus about the use of available space, the restoration and reuse of existing buildings, the location of major structures and infrastructure, is as important to the Trust as identifying the most up to date technique to solve a restoration problem in a community's most precious monument.

To achieve these goals, the Trust's Historic Cities Support Programme is now testing new strategies which combine state-of-the-art restoration, conservation, and urban development principles with community-based institutions and fresh entrepreneurial initiatives. By supplying financial aid through the Karimabad Town Management Society, by mobilising community resources, providing incentives, and demonstrating evidence of short- and long-term benefits for the local inhabitants, the Programme seeks to trigger a process which should lead to the economic and financial self-sustainability of each project. The Programme's intention is that each project also serve as an opportunity for enhancing local skills in conservation, restoration, planning, economics, and other related disciplines. A strong, field-based network is thus developed within each and around every project.

Before concluding, let me say a little bit about the Karimabad project as one of the first attempts of the Trust to deal actively with these interrelated issues. The planning efforts came about as a natural extension of the conservation of the Baltit Fort started by the Trust in 1990. The prime historic landmark of Hunza, the Fort, is also a major tourist attraction and a potential source of income for the local community. It can therefore be expected that the restoration project itself will act as a dynamic factor of change, benefiting from the improving accessibility of the Northern Areas. Accordingly, the planning projects for Karimabad set out to assist the community in the assessment of available development choices, with a view to preserving and managing cultural and environmental values, while at the same time benefiting from accrued economic opportunities. It is a particularly complex planning exercise since it applies to an environment which is in full transition, moving from a traditional rural community towards an increasingly urban way of life. The corresponding changes in notions such as good or bad neighbourliness applied to urban rather than agricultural land may not always be explicit, but may cause a

completely new value system to be born.

In closing, I would like to return to two points I made at the beginning.

I spoke of this event as the commemoration of the completion of one important element in a critical and ambitious undertaking. I was very conscious of the use of the term "ambitious". Our aspirations are to develop models and techniques that will enable societies throughout the world to rescue, restore and reutilise monuments, structures and spaces that are products of their own distinct histories and therefore central to their identities, and essential reference points in the face of potentially disorienting change. The Aga Khan Trust for Culture is dedicated to working in societies where Muslims have a significant presence. But it seeks to develop, or at least stimulate thinking about, models for all parts of the world.

I also characterised the completion of the restoration of the Baltit Fort and its handover to the Baltit Heritage Trust as "one element in a process". It is not a beginning -- work on the Fort and the associated planning started some years ago. But neither should it be viewed as an end. This project will be a success only if the Fort is maintained into the future by the Baltit Heritage Trust and the people of Karimabad, and if it serves to symbolise something distinctive about the region, and its people, and is a successful catalyst for the vitality of the local community.

Thank you.

*End of speech*



<https://global-lectures.com/courses/opening-inauguration-of-the-restored-baltit-fort-hunza-1996-09-29/lesson/watch-lecture-video-171/>

# **Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Inauguration of the Restored Baltit Fort Sunday, 1996, September 29**

**Presented by: Shehzad Amin**

History of  
Ancient Era

# Hunza State

(Part-I) (English Edition)

By  
Haji Qudratullah Beg  
Son of Sahib Muhabbatullah Beg  
of Baltit, Hunza

English Translation By  
Lt Col (Rtd) Saadullah Beg, TI(M) psc,  
Son of Haji Qudratullah Beg  
Baltit – Hunza

## History of Baltit Fort

- During the era of Ayasho-II and his wife Shah Khatoon, Abdaal Khan, the ruler of Baltistan, sent skilled workers to Hunza.
- These workers laid the foundation stones for both Altit and Baltit Forts.
- Altit Fort was constructed first, according to authentic oral tradition.
- (Beg, Q. 2006)



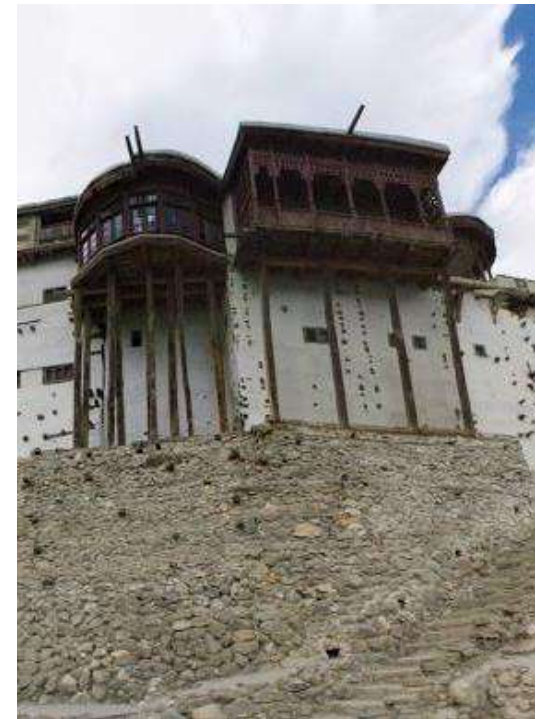
Table 1. Timeline of Baltit Fort Restoration Project. Based on the data from publication by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and a report by Li Lian Tan

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Date (Year/Month)</b>	<b>Milestone</b>
01	1980	Brief Survey by Richard Hughes
02	1985	Officially engagement of Richard Hughes and Didier Lefort by The Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC)
03	1985-1989	Detail survey and documentation of the Fort by Richard and Didier
04	1990-1991	Site Work on retaining walls and repair of stonemasonry walls
05	1992-1996	Restoration of the Fort.
06	1996(September)	Opening Ceremony

*Reference: Akbar, Syed & Plevoets, Bie & Iqbal, Naveed. (2022). Preserving the Tangible and Intangible Values of the Baltit Fort in Gilgit-Baltistan Pakistan, through Adaptive Reuse. Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing Newsletter, IEEE. 10.51596/sijocp.v2i1.20.*

# A Journey from Decaying to Restoration

*“The Baltit Fort is a perfect metaphor for tradition, history, and a cultural legacy. Over the last seventy years it has been decaying slowly, until it was decided that the Fort should be restored and reused in an environment-conscious way. In other words, the future of the Fort has been improved. Without the help of all the people gathered here today it could only have decayed further; in future, it could only have worsened.”* (Aga Khan IV, H.H, 1996)

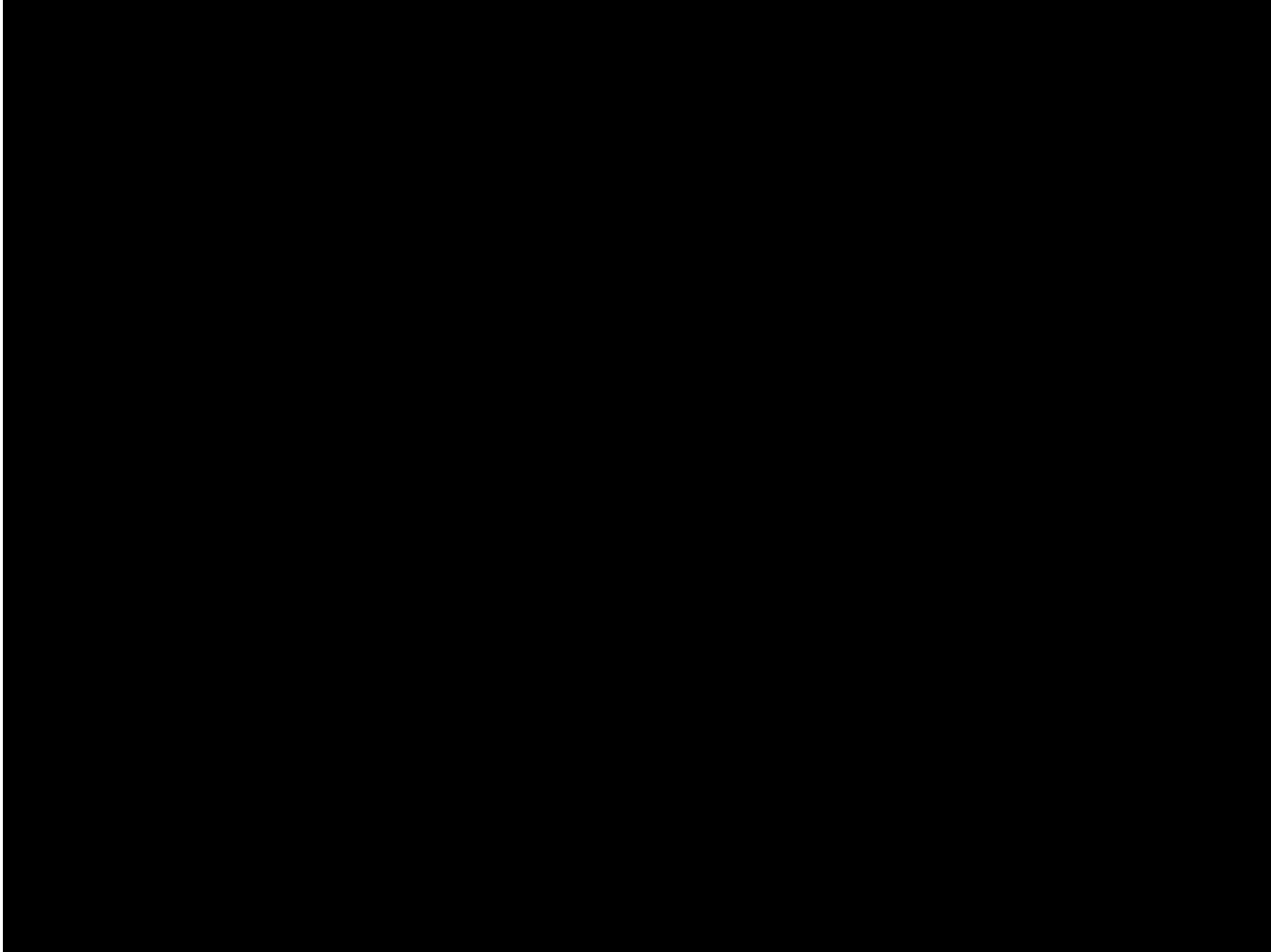


- **Location:** Hunza Valley, Northern Pakistan, atop the valley among high mountains.
- **Significance:** Controlled water flow routes from the Ultar channels and served as a defence barrier for the upper valley.

Reference: Akbar, Syed & Plevoets, Bie & Iqbal, Naveed. (2022). *Preserving the Tangible and Intangible Values of the Baltit Fort in Gilgit-Baltistan Pakistan, through Adaptive Reuse. Acoustics, Speech, and Signal Processing Newsletter, IEEE. 10.51596/sijocp.v2i1.20.*



## **Mawlana Hazir Imam Speaking to the Press Media in French language 1996**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrRcGloVb8w>



# The First Ever Blessed Arrival of Mawlana Hazir Imam in 1960



I.H. Aga Khan in conversation with Mir of Hunza.

# History of Isma'ili Da'wat in Hunza

## **300 Years of Ithna Asharism:**

- From Mir Ayesho Khan II to Mir Saleem Khan II, Gilgit and Hunza adhered to Ithna Asharism for about 300 years.

## **Conversion to Ismailism:**

- Mir Saleem Khan II secretly embraced Ismailism,, influenced by Ismaili dai Sayed Shah Ardbil.<sup>1,2</sup>
- Shah Hussain son of Shah Ardbeel arrived at the death of Mir Saem and the first time Chirag-I Rawshan was performed. <sup>2</sup>
- His son, Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan, invited another Ismaili dai, Sayed Hussain Ardbil, to further spread Ismailism.
- Ghazan Khan II followed Nazim Khan, then Mir Muhammad Jamal Khan, the last Ismaili ruler of Hunza, who died in 1976.

## **Sayed Yaqut Shah's Mission:**

- Sayed Yaqut Shah, an Ismaili dai, visited the Aga Khan I and planned a mission in Gilgit and Hunza, which was approved.
- He arrived in Hunza in 1838 and successfully converted Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan and his attendants.

## **Continuation of Mission:**

- Sayed Yaqut Shah left responsible elders, known as khalifas, to teach Ismaili principles to new converts.

1. History of the Ismailis by Mumtaz Ali Tajddin

(<http://heritage.ismaili.net/node/18050>)

2. Beg, Q. (2006) *History of Ancient Era Hunza State by Qudratullah Beg, Pahar*. Available at: <https://pahar.in/pahar/2006-history-of-ancient-era-hunza-state-by-qudratullah-beg-pdf/> (Accessed: 29 June 2024).

## **Theme-wise Analysis of Mawlana Hazir Imam's Speech at the Event.**






# Hazir Imam Acknowledgments.

- ❖ Mawlana Hazir Imam acknowledges the enormous amount of work several hundred people from various backgrounds have done over three and a half years.
- ❖ ***“I congratulate and admire them. To each of them in person, I express my gratitude for the expertise, time and energy they have contributed to the array of efforts represented by the restored fort..”***

(Aga Khan IV, H.H, 1996)

❖ Mawlana Hazir Imam thanked President Leghari for attending these proceedings and warmly welcomed Mawlana Hazir Imam to Pakistan over the event.

# Gift and Act of Giving : The Beginning of a New Trend in community participation.

- 
- ❖ Mowlana Hazir Imam expresses his profound gratitude to **Mir Ghazanfar Ali Khan** for donating the Fort
  - ❖ MHI considers it a shining example of generosity.
  - ❖ *“The gift and the act of giving are ends in themselves. But ends which, I hope, will mark the beginning of a new trend in community participation in, and in sustenance of, local tradition and cultural identity here in Pakistan, and around the developing world”.*
  - ❖ (Aga Khan IV, H.H, 1996)

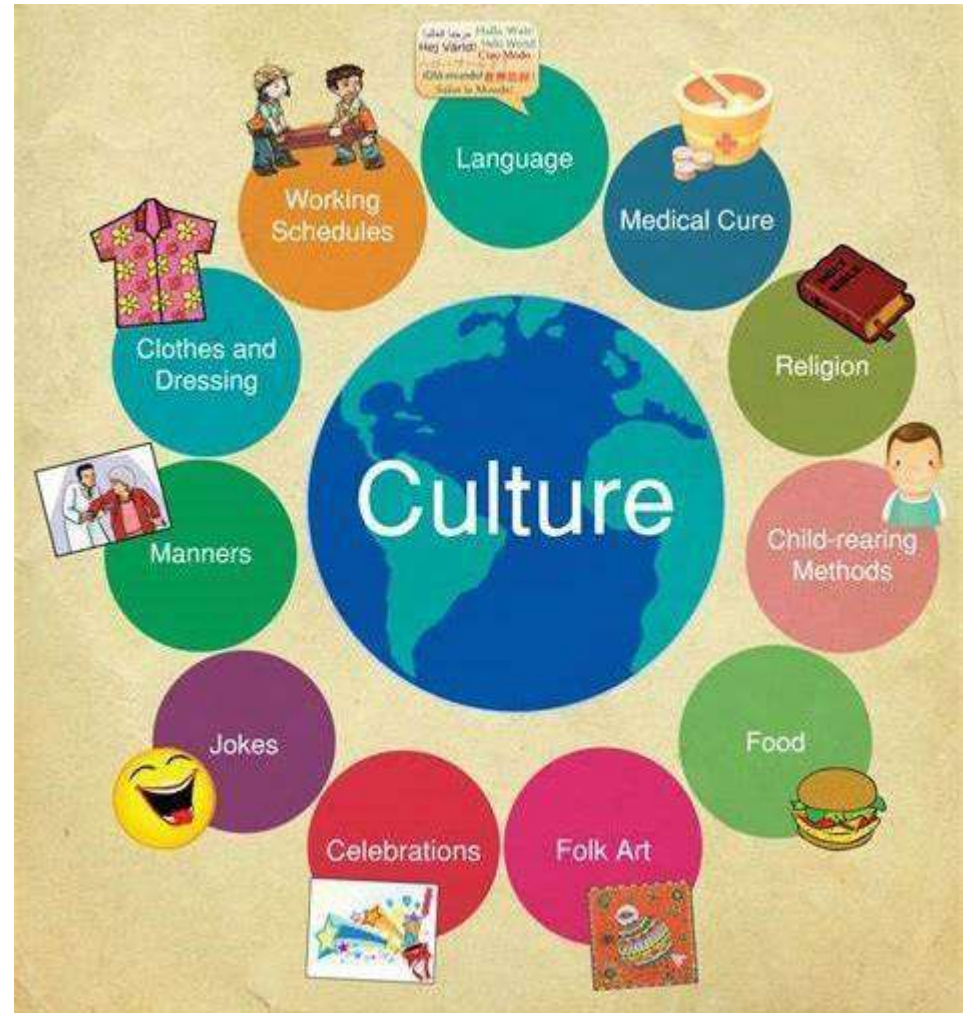
# The Impact of Globalization on Traditional Societies in Fast Changing world.

*“We live in a fast-changing world. And the nature of change today is different from what it ever has been.*

*It is different because it is taking place at an exponentially accelerating pace.*

*It is different also in that, for the first time in history, the change is global in scale and impact, reaching even the most remote areas and populations of our planet.”*

(Aga Khan IV, H.H, 1996)



# The Impact of Globalization on Traditional Societies; So-called progress to erase tradition and local identity.

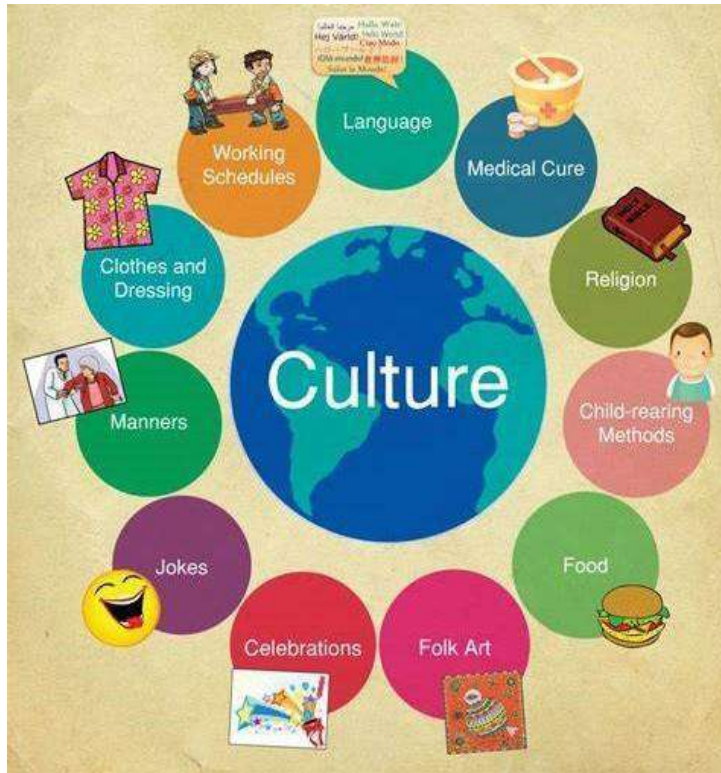
***“Paradoxically, it is the most isolated, best preserved and least changed individuals, communities, and places that are most vulnerable to the tendency of so-called progress to erase tradition, local identity and values.”***

***For these are the places most surprised by sudden economic liberalisation, commercialisation, industrialisation, by the globalisation of travel, enterprise and service industries, and by growing communication technologies.”***

(Aga Khan IV, H.H, 1996)



# The Impact of Globalization on Traditional Societies; Shifting Environments and Adapting Faster...



*“Today's world is a shifting environment in which **everybody must adapt** much faster in order to learn to manage the external forces of change, **and ultimately mould them around specific values and traditions**”.*

(Aga Khan IV, H.H, 1996)

## Adapt vs Adopt

“Adapt”



To change something for a specific purpose

“Adopt”



To take something as your own



**must adapt much faster**

**external forces of change,**

**mould them around specific values and traditions**

# A healthy community/society

•Meeting basic needs (medicine, food, education, housing) is not enough for a healthy society.



Aga Khan Health Services



AKRSP



Aga Khan Education Services



AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

•Values and ideals are crucial for human well-being and identity.

•These values provide direction during times of rapid change.

•Successful development requires community engagement and preserving local cultural values and ideals.



Ideals: an idea or standard that seems perfect, and worth trying to achieve or obtain

Values: the quality of being useful or important

Aga Khan IV, H.H. (1996) *Speech by his highness the Aga Khan at the inauguration of the restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29, Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Inauguration of the Restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29*. Available at: <http://heritage.ismaili.net/node/25272> (Accessed: 29 June 2024).

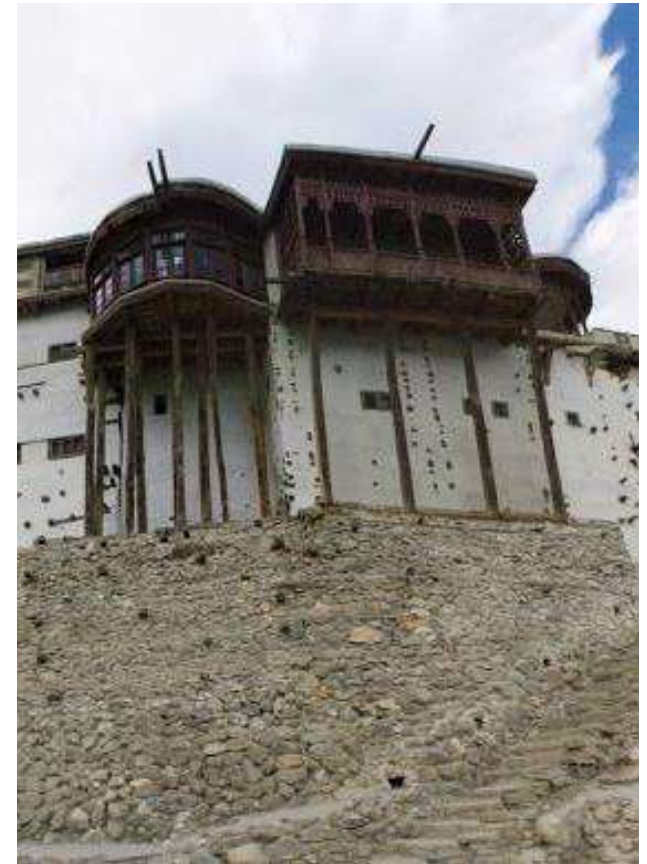
- Cultural Heritage refers to the contemporary society's use of the past.
- Cultural heritage includes both tangible and intangible resources.
- “Tangible heritage includes buildings and historical places, monuments, artefacts, etc.,
- Intangible heritage, i.e. “living expressions and the traditions that countless groups and communities worldwide have inherited from their ancestors and transmit to their descendants, in most cases orally.

(Nilson & Thorell, *Cultural Heritage Preservation: The past, the present and future*, 2018. p.10)



# The Role of Architecture in Preserving Cultural Identity

- Culture is expressed in various forms, including architecture.
- Architecture represents the three-dimensional, physical aspect of a culture.
  - 1. Architecture.
  - 2. Maintaining cultural identity and
  - 3. Tradition in the physical environment
- Preserving cultural identity and tradition is crucial in maintaining a community's identity.
- Rapid changes directly impact the physical environment.
- Maintaining architectural heritage is essential for preserving cultural identity.



**Aga Khan IV, H.H. (1996) *Speech by his highness the Aga Khan at the inauguration of the restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29, Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Inauguration of the Restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29. Available at: <http://heritage.ismaili.net/node/25272> (Accessed: 29 June 2024).***

# Glimpses of Traditional and Cultural Expression



Ease our difficulties, O Ali!. Provide assistance, O Ali!



O Mawla! Protect Us!



# Moving From a Traditional Rural Community Towards an Increasingly Urban Way of Life

*“moving from a traditional rural community towards an increasingly urban way of life.*

*The corresponding changes in notions such as good or bad neighbourliness applied to urban rather than agricultural land may not always be explicit, but may cause a completely new value system to be born.”*  
(Aga Khan IV, H.H, 1996)



**Keywords: Neighbourliness in Urban and Rural (good/bad), New Value system,**



- One The move from rural to urban life brings about significant changes in daily routines, social interactions, and living environments.
- In rural areas, neighborliness is evident in the close-knit communities, mutual support in agricultural tasks, and a strong sense of community.
- Urban living, on the other hand, involves a higher population density in closer proximity, resulting in less personal interaction and reliance on one another.
- These shifts in perceptions of good or bad neighborliness can give rise to an entirely new set of values, reflecting the demands and conditions of urban life.

Wrightson, K. (2007). The 'Decline of Neighbourliness' Revisited. In: Jones, N.L., Woolf, D. (eds) *Local Identities in Late Medieval and Early Modern England*. Palgrave Macmillan, London.  
[https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230597525\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230597525_2)

# Global Movement and the Urgent Need for Cooperative Crisis Prevention

- **Increasing Movement:** More people are relocating than ever before.
- **Associated Problems:** Movement leads to problems and potential chaos.
- **Crisis Prevention Priority:** Preventing crises should be a top priority.
- **Basic Needs:** Populations need shelter, health care, and food.

Aga Khan IV, H.H. (1996) *Speech by his highness the Aga Khan at the inauguration of the restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29, Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Inauguration of the Restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29*. Available at: <http://heritage.ismaili.net/node/25272> (Accessed: 29 June 2024).



From the perspective of Social learning theories, people learn from others by observing them and living with them, through the channel of neighbourliness (good or bad), assimilating in community members with ease.

A few of the local community members said: In perspectives of neighbourliness, northern areas today is not like as it was earlier, now families and people from diverse background are living in the same area, which causes the rise of good/bad neighbourliness.

People from various places, non-residents, to get economic benefits, marketing their socially evil products for tourists and local community effecting the moral and ethical values and ideals of cultural identity. Also giving rise to immoral incidents and activities among youths and adults.





# Global Movement and the Urgent Need for Cooperative Crisis Prevention

- **Limited Power:** No single entity (government, international organization, or corporation) can meet these needs alone.
- **Cooperation Challenges:** Even the combined efforts of these entities have not ensured dignified living conditions for most of the world's population over the **past 40 years.**
- 1996-40 = 1956 Pakistan became the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.
- **Point to reflect:**
  - to Whom? Who needs to collaborate? (Refer to the political history slide in this PowerPoint.)



Aga Khan IV, H.H. (1996) *Speech by his highness the Aga Khan at the inauguration of the restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29, Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Inauguration of the Restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29.* Available at: <http://heritage.ismaili.net/node/25272> (Accessed: 29 June 2024).



*“The lessons of the development effort of the last forty years also show that even when working together, governments, international organizations and corporations have not been able to create conditions in which most, if not all, of the world's population is able to live in dignity”.*

(Aga Khan IV, H.H, 1996)

# Political Scenario

- Hunza became part of Pakistan on November 1, 1948.
- Mohammad Jamal remained the influential leader of Hunza after it joined Pakistan.
- Prime Minister Z.A Bhutto abolished all princely states, including Hunza, on September 25, 1974.
- Although Hunza is under the federal government, but it is not completely incorporated into the federal structure as the people are not allowed to vote during the general elections to the National Assembly,
- However, whenever residents of Hunza travel abroad they carry Pakistani passports.

*(End of a Princely State in Hunza, Pakistan : Modernization of a Peripheral Community / Hafizullah Emadi., 2018)*

# Contribution of the Aga Khan Development Network

## **Aga Khan Rural Support Programme:**

- Assistance in social organization
- Technical know-how provision
- Economic support for rural areas
- Enhancement of local income generation



## **Aga Khan Health Services:**

- Provision of primary health care
- Improvement in health management
- Availability of secondary health care to many



**Aga Khan Health Services**

## **Aga Khan Education Services:**

- Modern schooling for youngsters, especially girls
- Improved teaching standards



**Aga Khan Education Services**

**Aga Khan IV, H.H. (1996) *Speech by his highness the Aga Khan at the inauguration of the restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29, Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Inauguration of the Restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29. Available at: <http://heritage.ismaili.net/node/25272> (Accessed: 29 June 2024).***

# The Expansion and Future Plans of the Aga Khan Development Network in Northern Pakistan

## Development and Support:

Since the 1980s, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) has expanded its activities in Northern Pakistan with support from various public, private, bilateral, and multilateral external agencies.

MHI extended recognition to those agencies whose contributions have significantly increased the reach and effectiveness of the AKDN.

## New Phase:

- The AKDN is entering a new phase of creating innovative local institutions and resource bases.

## Future Initiatives:

- Development Bank
- Enterprise Support Company
- Professional Development Centre for Teachers
- Potential front-line hospital

- Goal:** To enhance sophistication, stimulation, and sustainability for the benefit of the hardworking people of Northern Pakistan.

# Aga Khan Trust for Culture: Integrating Heritage and Development

- **Goals Aligns with the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.**
- **It will support the Aga Khan Development Network's efforts in various sectors as**
- **Health, Education, Rural support and Economic Development**
- **It aims to reverse centuries of cultural decay.**
- **Seeks to strengthen cultural identity.**
- **Emphasizes the importance of self-sustenance.**



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*Aga Khan IV, H.H. (1996) Speech by his highness the Aga Khan at the inauguration of the restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29, Speech by His Highness The Aga Khan At the Inauguration of the Restored Baltit Fort-1996-09-29. Available at: <http://heritage.ismaili.net/node/25272> (Accessed: 29 June 2024).*

***“I spoke of this event as the commemoration of the completion of one important element in a critical and ambitious undertaking. I was very conscious of the use of the term "ambitious".***

***Our aspirations are to develop models and techniques that will enable societies throughout the world to rescue, restore and reutilise monuments, structures and spaces that are products of their own distinct histories and therefore central to their identities, and essential reference points in the face of potentially disorienting change.***

***The Aga Khan Trust for Culture is dedicated to working in societies where Muslims have a significant presence. But it seeks to develop, or at least stimulate thinking about, models for all parts of the world.”***

(Aga Khan IV, H.H, 1996)



AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

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# Take Aways

- Gift and act of giving as a beginning of a new trend in community participation.
- In fast-changing world we should adapt the external power for changes around our values and identity .
- If we do not! Then its going to erase our identity, values.
- Adapt! New changes! Do not Adopt everything that come our way from anywhere.
- In diversify living , need to understand the concept of good/bad neighborliness, where the are people coming from diverse backgrounds as in the urban life.
- Positive change can only take place when institutions, families, and community work together towards preserving the cultural identity and values.
- Due to globalization and movement of people the notion of good/bad neighborliness in the agricultural setting. (Individualism).
- Shelter, food, medicine, education is not the assurance of a healthy community, but the values (how beneficial and good) and Ideals (standards of perfect) as compass to adapt to the rapid change.
- Community engagement is essential in preserving the cultural identity of the region.
- Importance preserving tangible and intangible cultural heritage for our healthy community and society , i.e. Jama'at Khana as an architecture, and its regular attendance and performing the rites and ceremonies as well as zikr and tasbih and educating the intellects of our jamati members are all part of community engagement in fulfilling Mowlana Hazir Imams Vision and happiness.

# Thank You

THANK YOU  
VERY MUCH ♥





## The Global Philanthropy Forum

23 April 2009, Washington DC, USA

President Jane Wales, thank you for those very generous comments.

I'd like to say how happy I am to share in this year's Global Philanthropy Forum.

Participants,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a special pleasure for me to be with you tonight, for I look upon you as particularly serious and informed partners in the work of global understanding and international development.

As you may know, I recently marked my 50th anniversary in my role as Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims. This responsibility connects me intimately with the traditions of the Islamic faith and cultures, even while my education and a host of personal and professional associations have acquainted me with the non-Islamic West. The relationship of these two worlds is a subject of considerable importance for me – a relationship which some define, regrettably, as an inevitable *Clash of Civilizations*. My own observation, however – and my deep conviction – is that we can more accurately describe it as a *Clash of Ignorances*.

It is not my purpose tonight to detail the misunderstandings which have plagued this relationship. Let me only submit that educational systems on both sides have failed mightily in this regard – and so have some religious institutions. That – at this time in human history – the Judeo Christian and Muslim societies should know so little about one another never ceases to astonish – to stun – and to pain me.

As a Muslim leader speaking in Washington this evening, it seems appropriate that I cite the words of President Obama, in his recent speech in Ankara. As he put it, pledging a “broader engagement with the Muslim world, we will listen carefully, we will bridge misunderstandings, and we will seek common ground.” I know that the vast majority of the Islamic world shares these objectives.

Among the areas where we *can* find common ground is our mutual effort to address the problem of persistent global poverty, especially the endemic poverty of the developing world. Surely this is an area where we can listen and learn and grow together – establishing ever-stronger bonds of understanding. One of the great principles of Islam, in all its interpretations, is the elimination of poverty in society, and philanthropy's centrality in this duty.

When I succeeded my grandfather as Aga Khan in 1957, I was a student at Harvard – but speaking mostly French. I got extra English practice, however, from my new official routine of regular communication with Africa and Asia – and, in the bargain, was kept in great good humour by the amazing typographic errors which inevitably arose. But then computerized spell check programs came along - and all those charming idiosyncrasies disappeared!

I recently noticed, to my joy, however, that this new invention is not a fail safe protection. Consider this recent item in the publication “The Week: “Bad week for spell-check: Several Pennsylvania high school students had their last names changed in their yearbook by an automatic computer program, Alessandra Ippolito was listed as Alexandria Impolite, while Max Zupanovic was rechristened Max Supernova. And Kathy Carbaugh's photo appeared next to the name Kathy Airbag.”

After reading this, I decided that maybe I should act prudently and spell check my own name. And I found that, while there was no “Aga Khan”, there was an “Aga” Cooker. It was defined as one of England's oldest stoves and ovens – now somewhat outdated – but with a distinctive whistle every time it frizzled the food within!

But returning to a more serious topic let me submit this evening a few of my own reflections on the developing world that I know a central focus of my interests over fifty years. For, in coming to understand the life of widely dispersed Ismaili communities across the globe, I have also become immersed in their host societies.

The essential goal of global development has been to create and sustain effective nation states – coherent societies that are well governed, economically self-sustaining, equitable in treating their peoples, peaceful amongst themselves, and sensitive to their impact on planetary sustainability.

This is a complex objective, a moving target, and a humbling challenge. Sadly, the response in the places I know best has often been “one step forward and two steps back.” Today, some forty percent of UN member nations are categorized as “failed democracies” – unable to meet popular aspirations for a better quality of life. The recent global economic crisis – along with the world food crisis – has sharply accentuated these problems.

But why have our efforts to change that picture over five decades not borne greater fruit? Measured against history, where have things gone wrong? Given the progress we have made in so many fields, why have we been so relatively ineffective in sharing that progress more equitably, and in making it more permanent?

My response centers on one principal observation: I believe the industrialized world has often expected developing societies to behave as if they were similar to the established nation states of the West, forgetting the centuries, and the processes which moulded the Western democracies. Forgotten, for one thing, is the fact that economic development in Western nations was accompanied by massive urbanization. Yet today, in the countries of Asia and Africa where we work, over 70 percent of the population is rural. If you compare the two situations, they are one and a half to two and half centuries apart. Similarly, the profound diversity of these impoverished societies, infinitely greater than that among nascent European nation states, is too often unrecognized, or underestimated, or misunderstood. Ethnic, religious, social, regional, economic, linguistic and political diversities are like a kaleidoscope that history shakes every day.

One symptom of this problem has been the high failure rate of constitutional structures in many developing countries, often because minority groups – who often make up the bulk of the population – fear they will be marginalized by any centralized authority. But did today’s developed countries not face similar challenges as they progressed toward nationhood?

If there is an historic misperception here, it has had several consequences for development activities.

The first concerns what I would call the dominant player fallacy – a tendency to place too much reliance in national governments and other institutions which may have relatively superficial connections to life at the grass-roots level.

Urban-based outsiders often look at these situations from the perspective of the city center looking out to a distant countryside, searching for quick and convenient levers of influence. Those who look from the bottom-up, however, see a much much more complex picture. The lines of force in these rural societies are often profoundly centrifugal, reflecting a highly fragmented array of influences. But was this not also true during the building of Western nation states?

Age old systems of religious, tribal or inherited family authority still have enormous influence in these societies. Local identities which often cross the artificial frontiers of the colonial past are more powerful than outsiders may assume. These values and traditions must be understood, embraced, and related to modern life, so that development can build on them. We have found that these age-old forces are among the best levers we have for improving the quality of life of rural peoples, even in cross frontier situations.

Nation building may require centralized authority, but if that authority is not trusted by rural communities, then instability is inevitable. The building of successful nation states in many of the countries in which I work will depend – as it did in the West – on providing significantly greater access for rural populations, who are generally in the majority.

If these reflections are well founded, then what is urgently needed is a massive, creative new development effort towards rural populations. Informed strategic thinking at the national level must be matched by a profound, engagement at the local level. Global philanthropy, public private partnerships and the best of human knowledge must be harnessed. As the World Bank recognized in its recent Poverty Study, local concerns must be targeted, providing roads and markets, sharpening the capacities of village governments, working to smooth social inequalities, and improving access to health and education services. The very definition of poverty is the absence of such quality of life indicators in civil society among rural populations.

It is in this context that I must share with you tonight my concern that too much of the developmental effort – especially in the fields of health and education - have been focused on urban environments.

I whole-heartedly support, for example, the goal of free and universal access to primary education. But I would just as whole-heartedly challenge this objective if it comes at the expense of secondary and higher education. How can credible leadership be nurtured in rural environments when rural children have nowhere to go after primary school? The experience of the Aga Khan Development Network is that secondary education for rural youth is a condition sine qua non for sustainable progress.

Similarly despite various advances in preventive medicine, rural peoples – often 70% of the population – are badly served in the area of curative care. Comparisons show sharp rural disadvantages in fields such as trauma care and emergency medicine, curbing infant mortality, or diagnosing correctly the need for tertiary care. Building an effective nation state, today as in earlier centuries, requires that the quality of rural life must be a daily concern of government. Ideally, national progress should be as effective, as equitable, and as visible, over similar time-frames, in rural areas as in urban ones. Amongst other considerations, how else will we be able to slow, if not stop, the increasing trend of major cities of Asia and Africa to become ungovernable human slums?

From this general analysis, let me turn to our own experience. The Aga Khan Development Network, if only as a matter of scale, is incapable of massively redressing the rural-urban imbalances where we work. It is possible, however, to focus on areas of extreme isolation, extreme poverty and extreme potential risk - where human despair feeds the temptation to join criminal gangs or local militia or the drug economy. The World Bank refers to these areas as “lagging regions”. We have focused recently on three prototypical situations.

Badakhshan is a sensitive region of eastern Tajikistan and eastern Afghanistan where the same ethnic community is divided by a river which has now become a national border, and where both communities live in extreme poverty and are highly isolated from their respective capitals of Dushanbe and Kabul. There is a significant Shia Ismaili Muslim presence in both areas.

Southern Tanzania and Northern Mozambique is a region of eastern Africa where large numbers of rural Sunni Muslims live in extreme poverty. A third case, Rural Bihar, in India, involves six states where the Sachar Committee Report, commissioned by the Indian government, has courageously described how Muslim peoples have been distanced from the development story since 1947.

All three of these regions are works in progress. The first two are post conflict situations, relatively homogeneous, and sparsely populated, while the third is densely populated, and culturally diverse. All three have acute potential to become explosive, and our AKDN goal is to identify such areas as primary targets for philanthropy.

We have also developed a guiding concept in approaching these situations. We call it Multi-Input Area Development – or MIAD. An emphasis on multiple inputs is a crucial consequence of looking at the development arena from the bottom up. Singular inputs alone cannot generate, in the time available, and across the spectrum of needs, sufficient effective change to reverse trends towards famine or towards conflict.

Similarly, we want to measure outcomes in such cases by a more complex array of criteria. What we call our Quality of Life Assessments go beyond simple economic measurements – considering the broad array of conditions – quantitative and qualitative – which the poor themselves take into account when they assess their own well-being.

Secretary Clinton echoed the concern for multiple inputs and multiple assessments when she mentioned to you yesterday the need for diversified partnerships among governments, philanthropies, businesses, NGO's, universities, unions, faith communities and individuals. The Aga Khan network includes partners from most of these categories – sustaining our Multi-Input strategy. I applaud her concern – and yours – for the importance of such alliances.

Northern Pakistan provides another example, in a challenging high mountain environment, of a complex approach to rural stabilization. Innovations in water and land management have been accompanied by a new focus on local choice through village organizations. A "productive public infrastructure" has emerged, including roads, irrigation channels, and small bridges, as well as improved health and education services. Historic palaces and forts along the old Silk Route have been restored and reused as tourism sites, reviving cultural pluralism and pride, diversifying the economy and enlarging the labor market. The provision of micro credit and the development of village savings funds have also played a key role.

For nearly 25 years, we have also worked in a large, once-degraded neighborhood, sprawling among and atop the ruins of old Islamic Cairo – built 1000 years ago by my ancestors, the Fatimid Caliphs. This is an urban location – but occupied by an essentially rural population, striving to become urbanized. The project was environmental and archaeological at the start – but it grew into a residential, recreational and cultural citiscape – which last year attracted 1.8 million visitors. The local population has new access to microcredit and has been trained and employed not only for restoring the complex, but also for maintaining it – as a new expression of civil society.

Because historic sites are often located among concentrations of destitute peoples, they can become a linchpin for development. We work now with such sites as Bagh-e-Babur in Kabul, the old Stone Town in Zanzibar, the Aleppo Citadel in Syria, the historic Moghal sites at New Delhi and Lahore, and the old mud mosques of Mopti and Djenne and Timbuktu, in northern Mali. Altogether, more than one million impoverished people will be touched by these projects. Such investments in restoring the world's cultural patrimony do not compete with investing in its social and economic development. Indeed, they go hand in hand.

In all these cases, it is the interaction of many elements that creates a dynamic momentum, bringing together people from different classes, cultures, and disciplines, and welcoming partners who live across the street – and partners who live across the planet. Each case is singular, and each requires multiple inputs. And it is here that those present tonight can have such an important impact. Working together on programme development, on sharing specialized knowledge, and on competent implementation, we can all contribute more effectively to the reduction of global poverty.

Let me say in closing, how much I admire the work you are doing, the commitment you feel, and the dreams you have embraced. I hope and trust that we will have many opportunities to renew and extend our sense of partnership as we work toward building strong and healthy nation states around our globe.

If we are to succeed we will need, first, to readjust our orientation by focusing on the immense size and diversity of rural populations whether they are in peri-urban or rural environments. For no-one can dispute, I think, that a large number of the world's recent problems have been born in the countrysides of the poorest continents.

Finally, we will need to address these problems with a much stronger sense of urgency. What we may have been content to achieve in 25 years, we must now aim to do in 10 years.

A mighty challenge, no doubt.

Thank you.



<https://global-lectures.com/courses/07282024-the-global-philanthropy-forum-2009-04-23/lesson/watch-the-lecture-video/>

# The Global Philanthropy Forum

23 April 2009, Washington DC, USA



Lecture Presentation by Shazia Momin

## Introduction:

His Highness the Aga Khan delivered a keynote speech at the 8th annual Global Philanthropy Forum. The Aga Khan also met with The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, United States Secretary of State, at the State Department prior to delivering the address to participants at the Global Philanthropy Forum.

His Highness the Aga Khan, Secretary Hillary Clinton, Her Majesty Queen Rania, Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus, and White House Climate "Czar" Carol Browner were among the 500 philanthropists present to discuss those crises we face which cannot be solved by governments alone.



## Role of Imam:

“As you may know, I recently marked my 50th anniversary in my role as Imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslims. This responsibility connects me intimately with the traditions of the Islamic faith and cultures, even while my education and a host of personal and professional associations have acquainted me with the non-Islamic West.”



# Clash of Civilizations & Clash of Ignorance

“The relationship of these two worlds is a subject of considerable importance for me – a relationship which some define, regrettably, as an inevitable Clash of Civilizations. My own observation, however - and my deep conviction - is that we can more accurately describe it as a Clash of Ignorances”.



# Quranic Ayat About Ignorance

Surah 7:179

"Already have We urged unto hell many of the jinn and humankind, having hearts wherewith they understand not, and having eyes wherewith they see not, and having ears wherewith they hear not. These are as the cattle - nay, but they are worse! These are the neglectful."

## Quote from Precious Treasure:

“In the chain of the progress and regress of a human being, one type of animal precedes mankind and the other comes after (as a consequence of disobedience). The one which comes before may be good or bad, but the one which comes after, is always bad and extremely bad. Thus some of the apes and swine of the remote past, were extremely vicious and mean animals, which came into being because of the disfiguration of some disobedient people, whether the disfiguration was external or internal. For the Qur'anic wisdom says that some people, despite being in the human form become animals, as God says: "Already have We urged unto hell many of the jinn and mankind, having hearts wherewith they understand not, and having eyes wherewith they see not, and having ears wherewith they hear not. These are as cattle - nay, but they are worse'. These are the neglectful" (7:179). This shows that the one who is disobedient is ignorant”.

(Allama Nasir –al- Din Nasir Hunzai, Precious Treasures 28)

## Misunderstanding by the Western world:

“It is not my purpose tonight to detail the misunderstandings which have plagued this relationship. Let me only submit that educational systems on both sides have failed mightily in this regard - and so have some religious institutions. That –at this time in human history—the Judeo Christian and Muslim societies should know so little about one another never ceases to astonish – to stun – and to pain me.”

## Jodidi Lecture by His Highness the Aga Khan

“Let me mention one more specific issue where a sustained educational effort will be especially important. I refer to the debate—one that has involved many in this audience—about the prospect of some fundamental clash of civilizations between Islam and the West. In my view, the deeper problem behind any prospective “clash of civilizations” is a profound “clash of ignorances.” And in that struggle, education will be an indispensable weapon.”

“The Cosmopolitan Ethic in a Fragmented World”

Delivered on November 12, 2015 at Memorial Church



## Quranic Ayat About Mankind (4:1)

“Oh Mankind, fear your Lord, who created you of a single soul, and from it created its mate, and from the pair of them scattered abroad many men and women...”

## Finding the Common Ground:

“As a Muslim leader speaking in Washington this evening, it seems appropriate that I cite the words of President Obama, in his recent speech in Ankara. As he put it, pledging a “broader engagement with the Muslim world, we will listen carefully, we will bridge misunderstandings, and we will seek common ground.” I know that the vast majority of the Islamic world shares these objectives.”

"Among the areas where we can find common ground is our mutual effort to address the problem of persistent global poverty, especially the endemic poverty of the developing world. Surely this is an area where we can listen and learn and grow together - establishing ever-stronger bonds of understanding. One of the great principles of Islam, in all its interpretations, is the elimination of poverty in society, and philanthropy's centrality in this duty.”

# Goals of Diamond Jubilee

- Improvement of the quality of life of murids around the world and the societies amongst which they live.
- Poverty Alleviation
- Stabilisation and strengthening of our institutions
- Improvement in education from early childhood to tertiary education
- Improvement in quality of infrastructure, particularly water and energy

(Guidance given by HazirImam in his various farmans of 2007-2008)

## Farman about Education:

Farman mubarak of Mawlana Hazir Imam (a.s.)

"Our endeavour in the field of education is based on the premise that every child born should have the opportunity to access early childhood education because science has taught us that the human brain develops more quickly in young children than at any other time. We have concentrated in the past on secondary and tertiary education, now we will concentrate on pre-primary and primary education."

(Aiglemont, 11 July 2017)

## Prince Ayn Al-Agha Khan's quote for ECD and Education::

“As we look to the future, the area that stands out as particularly important is that of early childhood development and education. Very young children that are provided with the building blocks of knowledge and learning at an early age have been shown to be more successful at navigating the difficult paths of adolescence and early adulthood.”

Prince Ayn Al-Agha Khan

Lisbon, May 2012

## Rural Population:

“My response centers on one principal observation: I believe the industrialized world has often expected developing societies to behave as if they were similar to the established nation states of the West, forgetting the centuries, and the processes which molded the Western democracies. Forgotten, for one thing, is the fact that economic development in Western nations was accompanied by massive urbanization. Yet today, in the countries of Asia and Africa where we work, over 70% of the population is rural. If you compare the two situations, they are one and a half to two and half centuries apart. Similarly, the profound diversity of these impoverished societies, infinitely greater than that among nascent European nation states, is too often unrecognized, or underestimated, or misunderstood. Ethnic, religious, social, regional, economic, linguistic and political diversities are like a kaleidoscope that history shakes every day.”

## Efforts of AKDN for rural community:

“Northern Pakistan provides another example, in a challenging high mountain environment, of a complex approach to rural stabilization. Innovations in water and land management have been accompanied by a new focus on local choice through village organizations. A "productive public infrastructure" has emerged, including roads, irrigation channels, and small bridges, as well as improved health and education services. Historic palaces and forts along the old Silk Route have been restored and reused as tourism sites, reviving cultural pluralism and pride, diversifying the economy and enlarging the labor market. The provision of micro credit and the development of village savings funds have also played a key role.”

# Opportunities:





## The Aga Khan Historic cities program:

“Because historic sites are often located among concentrations of destitute peoples, they can become a linchpin for development. We work now with such sites as Bagh-e-Babur in Kabul, the old Stone Town in Zanzibar, the Aleppo Citadel in Syria, the historic Mughal sites at New Delhi and Lahore, and the old mud mosques of Mopti and Djenne and Timbuktu, in northern Mali. Altogether, more than one million impoverished people will be touched by these projects. Such investments in restoring the world’s cultural patrimony do not compete with investing in its social and economic development. Indeed, they go hand in hand.”

# Bagh-i-Babur in Kabul:



# The Old Stone Town in Zanzibar:



# Citadel of Aleppo



## AIM For Preserving Historic Cities by AKDN

"The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) preserves historic buildings through its Aga Khan Historic Cities Program (AKHCP) to promote cultural preservation and revitalization, and to improve the lives of people living in historic areas. The AKHCP's projects aim to spur social, economic, and cultural development, while also creating sustainable models for improvement."

# What is MIAD (Multi-Input Area Development)

“We have also developed a guiding concept in approaching these situations. We call it Multi-Input Area Development – or MIAD. An emphasis on multiple inputs is a crucial consequence of looking at the development arena from the bottom up. Singular inputs alone cannot generate, in the time available, and across the spectrum of needs, sufficient effective change to reverse trends towards famine or towards conflict.”

## The MIAD Approach in Action:

### **AFGHANISTAN: MIAD–GDA:**

“Launched in 2013, the Multi-Input Area Development Global Development Alliance (MIAD–GDA) is a partnership between the Aga Khan Development Network and USAID to improve the quality of life in Afghanistan Badakhshan province by strengthening health, education, livelihoods, and governance. The project links the public and private sector to promote long-term social and economic development.”

### **TAJIKISTAN: ESCOMIAD–GDA:**

“Launched in 2014, the Economic and Social Connections: Multi-Input Area Development (ESCoMIAD) for Tajikistan is a partnership between the Aga Khan Foundation USA and USAID that mobilizes public and private sector capital to catalyze enterprise-driven development programs in Tajikistan. Similar to MIAD–GDA in Afghanistan, the initiative harnesses the combined strengths of the AKDN in the country.”

## Challenges of Northern Pakistan and AKDN Services:

“Northern Pakistan provides another example, in a challenging high mountain environment, of a complex approach to rural stabilization. Innovations in water and land management have been accompanied by a new focus on local choice through village organizations. A "productive public infrastructure" has emerged, including roads, irrigation channels, and small bridges, as well as improved health and education services. Historic palaces and forts along the old Silk Route have been restored and reused as tourism sites, reviving cultural pluralism and pride, diversifying the economy and enlarging the labor market. The provision of micro credit and the development of village savings funds have also played a key role.”



# Collaborative Effort

“In all these cases, it is the interaction of many elements that creates a dynamic momentum, bringing together people from different classes, cultures, and disciplines, and welcoming partners who live across the street - and partners who live across the planet. Each case is singular, and each requires multiple inputs. And it is here that those present tonight can have such an important impact. Working together on program development, on sharing specialized knowledge, and on competent implementation, we can all contribute more effectively to the reduction of global poverty.”

## Conclusion of Speech:

“Let me say in closing, how much I admire the work you are doing, the commitment you feel, and the dreams you have embraced. I hope and trust that we will have many opportunities to renew and extend our sense of partnership as we work toward building strong and healthy nation states around our globe.

If we are to succeed we will need, first, to readjust our orientation by focusing on the immense size and diversity of rural populations whether they are in peri-urban or rural environments. For no-one can dispute, I think, that a large number of the world’s recent problems have been born in the country sides of the poorest continents.

Finally, we will need to address these problems with a much stronger sense of urgency. What we may have been content to achieve in 25 years, we must now aim to do in 10 years.”

## References:

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- <https://the.akdn/en/resources-media/resources/speeches/global-philanthropy-forum-his-highness-the-aga-khan>
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- <https://the.akdn/en/home>



## Opening of the Aga Khan Centre, London

### LOCATION

London, UK (26 June 2018)

*Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim*

Your Royal Highness,  
 Lord Ahmad, Foreign Office Minister, Mr Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London,  
 The leadership of Camden,  
 Your Excellencies,  
 Ladies and Gentlemen

What a pleasure it is to welcome you to this celebration!

We celebrate today a beautiful new architectural accomplishment. As we do so, we also honour those who have made this Centre possible - and the values that have inspired their work.

Two of those values which deserve special mention today - the value of education as a force for cooperation and healing in our world - and the value of architecture as a source of inspiration and illumination.

Both of these values - education and architecture - have been significant in the life and work of today's guest of honour, His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales. As you know, Prince Charles' commitment to creative education - through organisations such as the Prince's Trust and the Prince's School of Traditional Arts - has

transformed the lives of countless young people from many backgrounds - over many years, and in many places.

Prince Charles has also consistently affirmed the transformative power of architecture - including the rich traditions of Islamic architecture. You may know, for example, about his development of an award-winning Islamic garden at his home in Highgrove.

The value of education, of course, is at the heart of this project. We are proud to open here a new home for two important educational institutions associated with the Aga Khan Development Network and the Ismaili Imam. One is the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations of the Aga Khan University. The other is the Institute of Ismaili Studies. The UK offices of the Aga Khan Foundation will also be located here.

These institutions - through their teaching and research, their rich library and archival resources, as well as their tours and public programmes - will enrich the lives of people from the entire world.

For those of us who have seen these institutions grow from infancy, it will be a special joy to see them pursue their mission from this beautiful setting.

And what a mission it is!

One of the central challenges that faces our world today is the challenge of harmonising many highly diversified voices within an increasingly globalised world.

I use the word “harmonising” carefully - for our ideal here is not a chorus that sings in unison, but one that blends many distinctive voices into an intelligent, resonant whole. But to do that requires a deep understanding of what makes each voice distinctive. And that is the essential function of the educational endeavours that will make this place their home.

The challenge is particularly important in the area of religion – and it has been especially challenging for Islamic-Western relations. For centuries, the Muslim and Western cultures were largely separated geographically – although there have been memorable periods of integration as well - on the Iberian Peninsula and in South Asia - among other places. But those were hopeful exceptions to what some observers came, over time, to describe as an inevitable pattern of clashing civilisations.

When I came to my role as Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslim community - just sixty years ago - I found it impossible to accept the notion of inevitably clashing civilisations. My own early life experiences were in both worlds – and so were those of millions of Muslim peoples. So rather than talk about clashing civilisations, I began to talk - again and again, as some of you may recall - about a clash of ignorances. And the assumption behind that phrase was that ignorance could yield to understanding through the power of education.

That continuing conviction is what brings me here today. I believe that is what brings all of us here.

My strong expectation is that, from this new home, our education-oriented institutions will contribute powerfully to building new bridges of understanding across the gulfs of ignorance.

As that happens, one important source of inspiration will be the place from which these institutions will be working - and that brings us to the second value I mentioned earlier - the inspiring power of architecture.

The places from which we look out at the world - and the places into which we welcome the world – can deeply influence how we understand ourselves - and our world.

And what place could be more ideal for both our educational hopes and our architectural enthusiasm than the place where we meet today - in the heart of London’s “Knowledge Quarter.” King’s Cross is one of the central connecting points for a city which itself has been one of the great connecting points for the entire world.

This place has been shaped by many diverse influences – and among them we now welcome the rich traditions of Islamic architecture.

One of those traditions - one that is appreciated by both the Islamic and the British cultures - is the special importance of the garden. We see the garden not merely as an adjunct to other constructions, but as a privileged space unto itself.

And that is why I have emphasised, since our role began here in 2010, my own hope that the value of garden spaces should be embraced here. As we perambulate together through these spaces today, I trust that you will share my delight in seeing how that hope has been fulfilled.

What we will see as we walk along are not only beautiful buildings - but also a unique series of gardens, courtyards and terraces - eight of them, in all, across our two buildings. Each one of them, moreover, has a distinctive identity: each one is inspired by a different region of the Islamic Ummah.

Taken together, this winding ribbon of special spaces is an eloquent tribute to the rich diversity of the Muslim world.

What they will make possible for those who walk these pathways, the people who will live and work here and public visitors as well, is a wonderful journey of refreshment and discovery.

Now, as I mentioned earlier, an extraordinary Islamic garden already exists in this part of the world, the one that Prince Charles created at his own home. But, since it is something of a journey to get out to Gloucestershire, we thought we might save people the trip by locating something here! For now they can actually see eight Islamic gardens right here in the heart of London!

As we open this remarkable site, it is a privilege to salute those who have brought us to this moment. I would recognise, in particular, our fine relationship with the government of this borough, this city, and this country, as well as our rewarding partnership with the people at Argent. We are grateful, as well, for the talents of Maki and Associates, Allies and Morrison, Madison Cox and Nelson Byrd Woltz, as well as Rasheed Araeen and the late Karl Schlamming. I would also like to thank our splendid team of staff and volunteers, including my brother Prince Aryn, who have stewarded this project to completion.

And we especially salute the magnificent generosity of supportive donors from around the world.

Finally, as we open this building, I proudly welcome a guest whose commitment to the promise of inter-cultural education - and to the power of architecture - resonates ideally with the spirit of this place and this moment.

Ladies and gentlemen, His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales.

<https://global-lectures.com/courses/08042024-opening-of-the-aga-khan-centre-london-2018-06-26/lesson/watch-lecture-video-174/>

# OPENING OF THE AGA KHAN CENTRE, LONDON

**26 June 2018**

**Presented by Shenaz Lokhandwalla**



AGA KHAN CENTRE

- Mawlana Hazir Imam emphasized the importance of education and architecture in a multicultural context during his speech at The Aga Khan Centre in London.
- MHI highlighted the need to heal the world from the clash of ignorances and build bridges between different cultures using the inter-cultural education as an inspiring value of education.
- The speech underscored the inspiring value of architecture and its power to blend diverse voices into a resonant whole.
- The use of privileged spaces, such as Eight Islamic Gardens on roofs and terraces featuring water, plantations, and geometrical designs, was mentioned as a way to promote cooperation and understanding between cultures.
- Prince Charles is recognized for his dedication to creative education and his appreciation for Islamic architecture. The speech suggests that his efforts have been influential in promoting these values.





**“ What a pleasure it is to welcome you to this celebration!  
We celebrate today a beautiful new architectural  
accomplishment. As we do so, we also honour those who have made this  
Centre possible - and the values that have inspired their work.”**

## Importance of location of the Aga Khan Centre

*“And what place could be more ideal for both our educational hopes and our architectural enthusiasm than the place where we meet today - **in the heart of London’s “Knowledge Quarter.”** King’s Cross is one of the central connecting points for a city which itself has been one of the **great connecting points for the entire world.**” (H.H Agakhan IV, 2018)*

**Mawlana Hazir Imam addressed the guests of honor: Prince Charles. Among the guests were the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan and Foreign Office Minister for Human Rights Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon.**



THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE AGA KHAN CENTRE  
WAS PERFORMED BY  
[name]  
WITH THE PRINCE OF [name]  
FORTY-NINTH ISAM  
OF THE SHIA ISMAILI MUSLIMS

“Values are defined ‘as the degree of usefulness or <sup>202</sup>desirability of something, especially in comparison with other things”. (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English )

*“Two of those values which deserve special mention today - the value of education as a force for cooperation and healing in our world - and the value of architecture as a source of inspiration and illumination.”*

## Two Inspiring Values

### VALUE OF EDUCATION

1. Value of Education:  
"As a force for  
cooperation and  
healing to our world".

### VALUE OF ARCHITECTURE

2. Value of Architecture  
"As a source of  
inspiration and  
illumination".

## ***ignorance (noun)***

lack of knowledge, experience, information or education: the opposite of wisdom

### **Overcoming Ignorance through Education**


*”When I came to my role as Imam of the Shia Ismaili Muslim community... I found it impossible to accept the notion of inevitably clashing civilisations. My own early life experiences were in both worlds ...So rather than talk about clashing civilisations, I began to talk - again and again, as some of you may recall - about a clash of ignorance. And the assumption behind that phrase was that ignorance could yield to understanding through the power of education.”*

Hazrat Imam Sultan Muhammad Shah, <sup>204</sup>“Usul-i Din”  
Farman, Dar es Salaam, 1899.]

Theme V: Esoteric Traditions in Islam Usul –i Din  
Reading 5

Hazrat Ali has said, “He who knows himself, knows God.”  
Wherever I turn my eyes, I see the Spirit as my Friend.  
When you look around, you merely see the external form.  
All that you can see are hands, legs, face, eyes, etc. You  
fail to see the Spirit behind it. You must constantly strive  
to see the Spirit.

## Education as bridge between cultures



*“One of the central challenges that faces our world today is the challenge of harmonising many highly diversified voices within an increasingly globalised world.*

*I use the word “harmonising” carefully - for our ideal here is not a chorus that sings in unison, but one that blends many distinctive voices into an intelligent, resonant whole. But to do that requires a deep understanding of what makes each voice distinctive. And that is the essential function of the educational endeavours that will make this place their home.”*



## Inspiring Value and power of Architecture



**Sing in Unison:** (a musical term) means chorus in such a way that all voices sound as one voice.

There is no distinctive voice allowed in a chorus singing in 'unison'.

**“but one that blends many distinctive voices into an intelligent, resonant whole.”**(H.H Agakhan IV, 2018)

Like the nature of a forest blends the distinctive sounds of various species of birds in to a resonant whole.

## Building New bridges Across the Gulfs of Ignorance

*“My strong expectation is that, from this new home, our education-oriented institutions will contribute powerfully to building new bridges of understanding across the gulfs of ignorance.”* (H.H Aga Khan IV, 2018)

Gulf: [countable] a large area of sea that is partly surrounded by land.

## Institutions building bridges of understanding across cultural divides



The Institute of Ismaili Studies



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

(International) in the United Kingdom

Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations

Here a new home for **two important educational institutions** associated with the Aga Khan Development Network and the Ismaili Imamat. One is the Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations of the Aga Khan University. The other is the Institute of Ismaili Studies. The UK offices of the Aga Khan Foundation will also be located here.

These institutions - through their teaching and research, their rich library and archival resources, as well as their tours and public programmes - will enrich the lives of people from the entire world. **(H.H Agakhan IV, 2018)**

# ismaili mirror

Special Birth Centenary Issue  
November 1977  
H. R. H. Sir Sultan  
Mohammad Shah Aga Khan



H. R. H. The Aga Khan III with his vision and foresight concluded that widespread illiteracy and ignorance were the root causes of poverty, disease and decay and he therefore dedicated his time, efforts and energy to fight these evils, travelling amongst the

**“ For those who have seen these institutions grow from infancy, it will be a special joy to see them pursue their mission from this beautiful setting. And what a mission it is!”  
For them to see.**



According to Fingal County Council, (Ireland) The Islamic garden, based on its Qur'anic archetype, is a place of retreat, shelter, abode, away from the tensions of everyday existence. There are many references in the Qur'an describing paradise as a garden, and in creating gardens.

Sura 43: Ayah 72 - 73 (Yousuf. Ali) Such will be the GARDEN of which ye are made heirs for your (good) deeds (in life). Ye shall have therein abundance of fruit, from which ye shall have satisfaction.

**“This place has been shaped by many diverse influences – and among them we now welcome the rich traditions of Islamic architecture. One of those traditions - one that is appreciated by both the Islamic and the British cultures - is the special importance of the garden. We see the garden not merely as an adjunct to other constructions, but as a privileged space unto itself.” (H.H Agakhan IV, 2018)**





*“Prince Charles has also **consistently** affirmed the transformative power of architecture - including the rich traditions of Islamic architecture. You may know, for example, about his development of an award-winning Islamic garden at his home in Highgrove.”*(H H Agakhan IV, 2018)



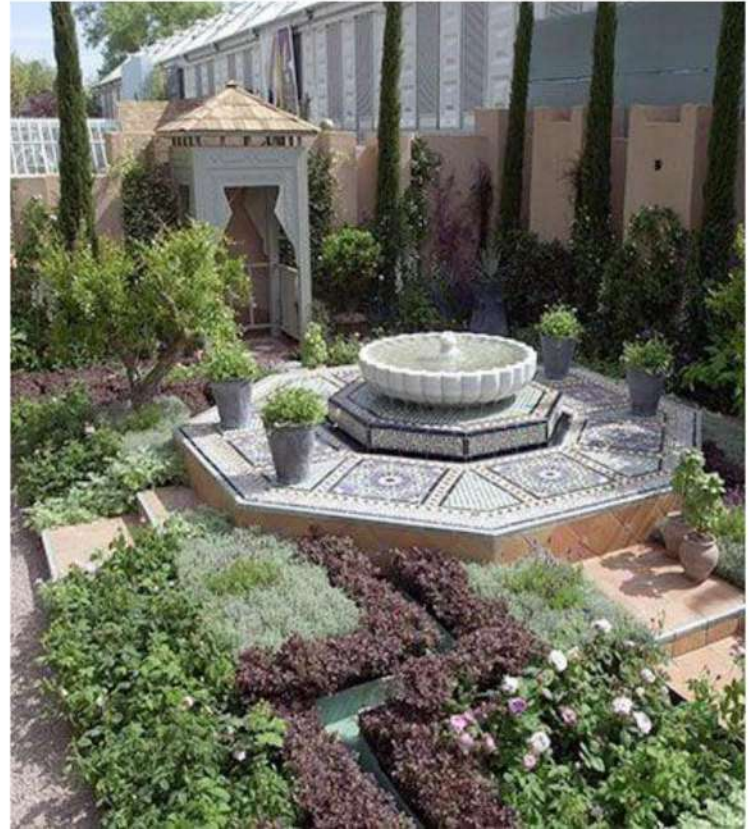






# Award Winning Islamic Garden at Highgrove

*“Now, as I mentioned earlier, an extraordinary Islamic garden already exists in this part of the world, the one that Prince Charles created at his own home. But, since it is something of a journey to get out to Gloucestershire, we thought we might save people the trip by locating something here! For now they can actually see eight Islamic gardens right here in the heart of London!” (H.H Agakhan IV, 2018)*





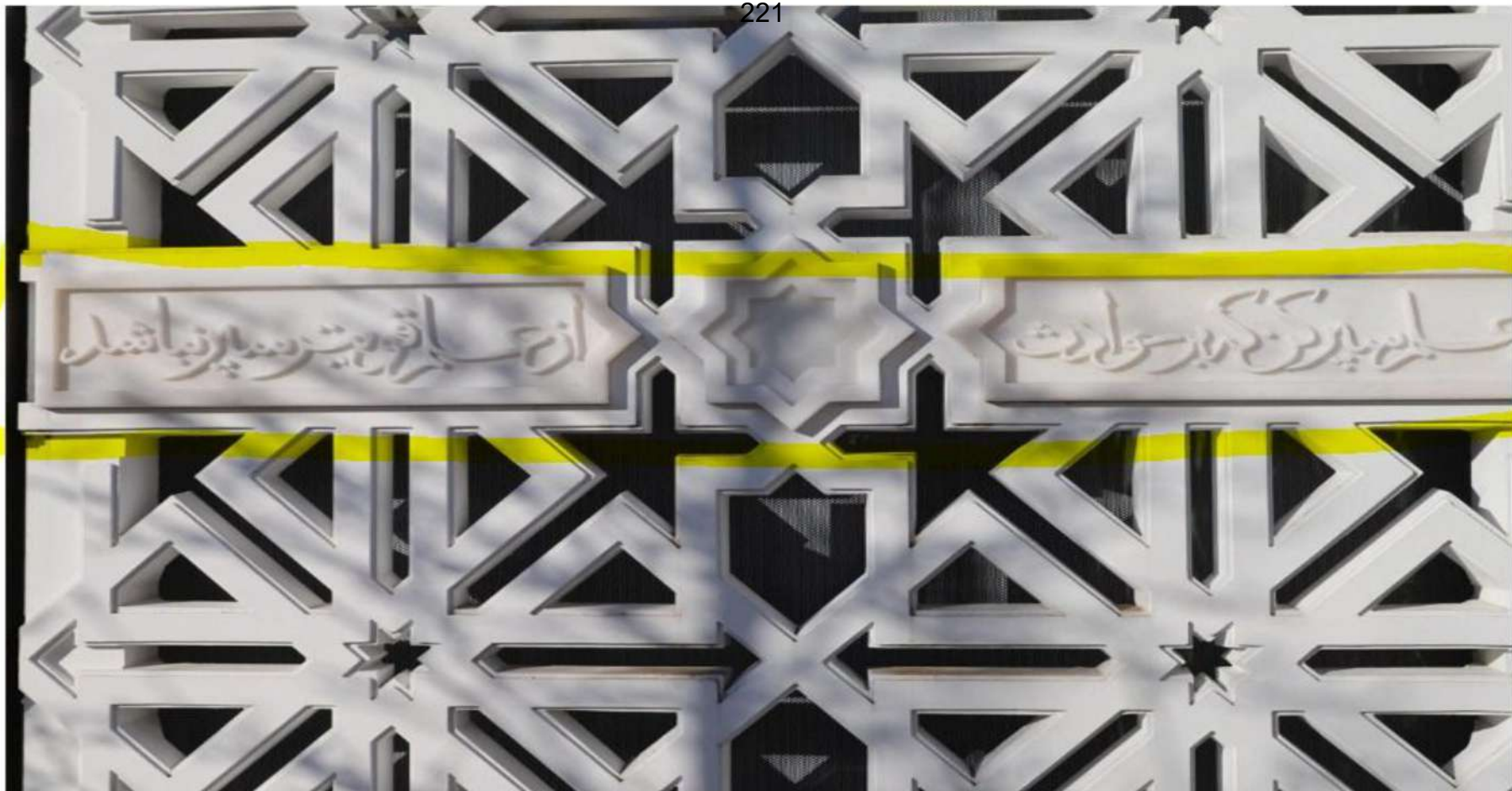
# Garden of Tranquility

# The Garden of Life





## Garden of Light



The inscription of the quoted verse by Nasir Khusraw in the Garden of Light. Image credit: Dr N. Nourmamadchoev.



# The following by Pir Nasir<sup>222</sup> Khusraw:

از علم سپر کن که بر حوادث

از علم قویتر سپر نباشد

Make a shield from knowledge

For there is no stronger shield against calamities

At the AKC, the IIS also houses its **Special Collections**, which include the following manuscript of Nasir Khusraw's *Diwan*.





Garden of Reflection

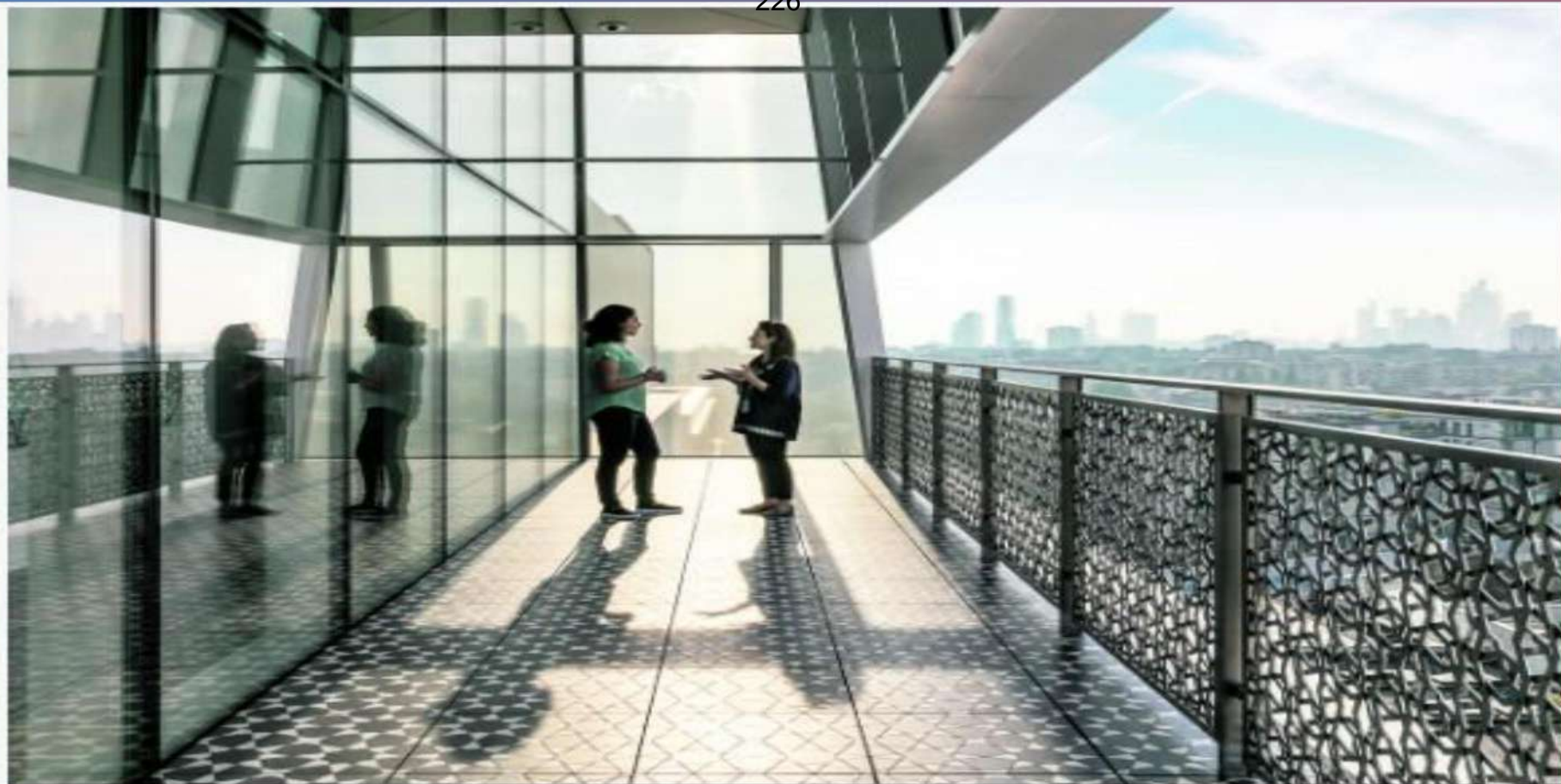
224



# Terrace of Unity



The Terrace of Unity by Vladimir Djurovic Landscape Architecture.



**Terrace of Discovery: views from the City to Coal Drops Yard**

## Terrace of Learning





“The Ribbon Pathway of the green spaces not only illustrates the Islamic Garden as a concept, it also creates a unique collection of outdoor space in London, all with their own identity; the sum of which seeks to reflect the Pluralism that characterises the Islamic world.” His Highness The Aga Khan IV

# Mowlana Hazar Imam Expresses Gratitude



**Fumihiko Maki**

**6 September 1928 – 6 June 2024**

***“We are grateful, as well, for the talents of Maki and Associates, Allies and Morrison, Madison Cox and Nelson Byrd Woltz, as well as Rasheed Araeen and the late Karl Schlamming. I would also like to thank our splendid team of staff and volunteers, .” (H.H Agakhan IV, 2018)***





***“including my brother Prince Aryn, who have stewarded this project to completion” (H.H Agakhan IV, 2018)***

## Acknowledging Donors

***“And we especially salute the magnificent generosity of supportive donors from around the world.” (H.H Agakhan IV, 2018)***



# Conclusion

*Speech revolves around the themes of education, architecture, and intercultural understanding, with a strong emphasis on the potential of education to bridge gaps and promote harmony.*

**THANK  
YOU!**





## The Nobel Institute in Oslo

07 April 2005, Oslo, Norway

Madame Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen

I thank the Government of Norway and Minister Johnson for the invitation to speak here this morning and for her generous words of introduction. Madame Minister, the exchanges we have enjoyed since we met yesterday has been highly constructive.

I am particularly honoured to be speaking at the Nobel Institute, respected worldwide for its promotion and recognition of exceptional endeavours to reduce human conflict.

It is also a rare privilege to address such a learned and experienced audience which includes not only officials in government charged with issues of human development, but also leaders of Norwegian civil society who are important partners in Norway's impressive international development efforts.

In my remarks today I will propose to you several questions which I will attempt to go some way toward answering:

- First, why are so many democracies failing in Asia and Africa?
- Second, is enough being done to help these young countries achieve successful forms of democratic governance?
- Third, are there common factors causing this failure of democracies?
- Fourth, why is the international community unable to get engaged at the early stages before crisis occurs?
- And finally, what can be done?

Before I begin, perhaps I can give you some background on my perspective.

My role in human development stems from my position as Imam or spiritual leader of the Shia Ismaili Muslims, as designated by my grandfather in 1957.

In all interpretations of Islam, Imams, whether they are Shia or Sunni, are required not only to lead in the interpretation of the faith, but equally to contribute to improving the quality of life of the people who refer to them. This dual obligation is often difficult to appreciate from the viewpoint of Christian interpretations of the role which Church leaders are expected to perform.

It is on this ethical premise, which bridges faith and society, that I established the Aga Khan Development Network. Its multiple agencies and programmes have long been active in many areas of Africa and Asia that are home to some of the poorest and most diverse populations in the world, serving people without regard to their ethnicity, gender or faith.

The community I lead of Shia Ismaili Muslims is culturally, ethnically and linguistically, very diverse. Their main concentration is in South and Central Asia, the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. In recent decades the community has also established a substantial presence in North America and Western Europe.

We have lived through colonialism and independence, two World Wars, the Cold War and many local and regional wars. We have seen the collapse of the Soviet Union and the birth of new states. The pendulum has swung from private ownership to nationalisation and back to privatisation. And we have lived in democracy and under dictatorship.

The community and its institutions are in many ways a microcosm of the last century in the developing world and we have learned many lessons.

Ladies and gentlemen, I put it to you that no human development initiative can be sustainable unless we are successful in achieving three essential conditions.

- First, we must operate in an environment that invests in, rather than seeks to stifle, pluralism and diversity.
- Second, we must have an extensive and engaged civil society.
- And third, we must have stable and competent democratic governance.

These three conditions are mutually reinforcing. Taken together, they allow developing societies gradually to become masters of the process and make that process self sustainable.

I will speak first about pluralism.

The effective world of the future will be one of pluralism, a world that understands, appreciates and builds on diversity. The rejection of pluralism plays a significant role in breeding destructive conflicts, from which no continent has been spared in recent decades.

But pluralist societies are not accidents of history. They are a product of enlightened education and continuous investment by governments and all of civil society in recognising and celebrating the diversity of the world's peoples.

What is being done to support this key value for society and for democracy in Asia and Africa, to pre-empt catastrophe, rather than simply respond to it?

The Aga Khan Development Network intends to help create some permanent institutional capacity to address this critical issue through a Global Centre for Pluralism. It will be based in Ottawa to draw from Canada's successful record in constructing and sustaining pluralist civil society. The centre will work closely with governments and with academia and civil society around the world.

The centre will seek to foster legislation and policy to strengthen developing countries' capacity for enhancing pluralism in all spheres of modern life: including law, justice, the arts, the media, financial services, health and education.

I believe leadership everywhere must continuously work to ensure that pluralism, and all its benefits, become top global priorities.

In this effort, civil society has a vital role. By its very nature, civil society is pluralist because it seeks to speak for the multiple interests not represented by the state. I refer, for example, to organisations which ensure best practices such as legal societies and associations of accountants, doctors and engineers. The meritocracy they represent is the very foundation of pluralism. And meritocracy is one of the principles of democracy itself.

Village organisations, women's and student groups, micro-credit entities and agricultural co-operatives help give access and voice to those who often are disenfranchised.

Journalist associations also play a key role, explaining the political process, guarding against corruption and keeping governments accountable. Responsible reporting and competent comment on critical issues, and the hard choices that society must address, are an essential element in the functioning of a democracy.

Civil society organisations make a major contribution to human development, particularly when democracies are failing, or have failed; for it is then that the institutions of civil society can, and often do, carry an added burden to help sustain improvements in quality of life.

I believe strongly that a critical part of any development strategy should include support for civil society. I know that Norway supports this approach and works actively with its own civil society organizations to build capacity in the developing world. Twinning civil society institutions is a promising approach, to which the Aga Khan Development Network institutions and programmes are very receptive.

Let me turn now to the question of democratic governance. If we were to look at a map of the world that charted armed conflicts in the last 15 years, it would show that nearly two thirds have occurred in the developing countries of Asia and Africa. More than 80 per cent were internal conflicts, either full-blown civil wars or state-sanctioned aggression against minorities in those countries.

In nearly every instance, these internal conflicts were predictable because they were the culmination of a gradual deterioration in pluralist, inclusive governance. In too many cases – and I can speak here of our experiences in Uganda, Bangladesh, Tajikistan and Afghanistan – this sad but foreseeable turn of events has had severely adverse effects lasting more than a generation.

The question I have is this: if these breakdowns in governance were predictable, why was the international community powerless to get engaged at the early stages to help arrest the deterioration and avoid the suffering that resulted? Secondly, are there common factors in the majority of these situations which are insufficiently recognized?

I suggest to you that a major problem is that the industrialised world too often is severely lacking in credible information about the forces at play in the developing world.

Take as an example the phrase “clash of civilisations” which has travelled far and wide. I have said many times previously, and I would like to reconfirm today my conviction that what we have been observing in recent decades is not a clash of civilisations but a clash of ignorance. This ignorance is both historic and of our time.

This is not the occasion to analyse the historic causes of the deep ignorance that exists between the Judeo-Christian and Muslim worlds. But I am convinced that many of today’s problems could have been avoided if there had been better understanding and more serious dialogue between the two.

The issue of ignorance, or lack of solid information, and its impact on our world today, is illustrated by events in Iraq. No less deplorable is that the 9/11 attack on the United States was a direct consequence of the international community ignoring the human tragedy that was Afghanistan at that time. Both the Afghan and Iraqi situations were driven by lack of precise information and understanding.

My fundamental point is this: Since the collapse of the Cold War, the need has grown exponentially for the world’s leaders to be able to understand, and properly predict, what is likely to happen in parts of the world in which they previously had no reason to be involved.

The task of addressing this need cannot be met by the resources presently being engaged.

I note that Norway’s Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jan Petersen, spoke of this very problem just last week in Beijing. He called for the international community to provide assistance in governance for fragile states that is, and I quote: “more systematic, more strategic, more persevering and more reliable.”



My suggestion is to examine this question in depth.

Let me share with you some real world field examples. Just as we read about the supposed clash of civilisations, we read about so-called “failed states.” In fact, at least in my definition of a state, it cannot fail. What we are observing in reality is the massive failure of democracy around the world.

I estimate that some 40% of the states of the United Nations are failed democracies. Depending upon the definitions applied, between 450 million and 900 million people currently live in countries under severe or moderate stress as a result of these failures.

To me, therefore, a central question is why these democracies are failing and what can the world’s nations and international organisations do to sustain their competence and stability.

Let me now illustrate some specific issues which I believe are contributing to this fragility.

A number of countries in which we are active have opted to harness enormous resources to universal primary education, causing a significant under-expenditure on secondary and tertiary education. This educational policy originated from a number of ill-advised social economists in the early 60s.

This degradation of secondary and tertiary education is not a new phenomenon. It is being made significantly worse today due to the lack of educational resources available to secondary and tertiary students who, after all, will represent the leaders of tomorrow.

Secondly, if governance is a science, as I believe it is, developing countries must educate about governance at secondary and tertiary levels. Otherwise, they deprive their intelligentsia of academic grounding in the critical knowledge of how democratic states operate.

A survey today in secondary schools or universities in Africa or Asia would find that “government,” as a subject in its own right, is either non-existent or given low priority.

It is clear that over the next decades, a large number of countries will be designing new constitutions, or refining existing ones, and new regional groupings will come into place. Many young democracies will spawn new political structures. But where are the men and women who will lead?

Just as education in governance is weak, the developing world continues to suffer from insufficient support to certain liberal professions which are critical to democracy. In my experience, the teaching profession and journalism are failing to attract the level of men and women who are essential for these liberal professions to make their appropriate contribution to democracy.

The challenge is therefore, clear. We must create the human and institutional resources to build and sustain young democracies.

As long as the developed world hesitates to commit long term investment towards education for democracy, and instead laments the issue of so-called failed states, much of the developing world will continue to face bleak prospects for democracy.

And the West should not discount that an accumulation of failed democracies could be a serious threat to itself and its values, capable of causing – if not conflict – deep under currents of stress among societies.

Ladies and Gentlemen, what seems apparent today is that the developed world must find the resources to provide consistent and meaningful assistance to fragile states struggling with democratic governance.

The world cannot sit by while countries spiral into crisis.

Some of the things we can do, I suggest to you, are as follows:

- A greater commitment to build capacity in the developing world to teach the science of government
- An aggressive effort to support indigenous civil society, both to assist in the building of democracies and to provide a buttress in times of stress.
- Active encouragement and support for pluralism.
- And above all, we must set about to improve knowledge and understanding of the factors in the developing world that are encouraging or undermining democratic governance.

Thank you.

<https://global-lectures.com/courses/the-nobel-institute-in-oslo-2005-04-07/lesson/watch-lecture-video-178/>

# THE NOBEL INSTITUTE OSLO

A Vision for Global Peace and Development

7 April 2005

Lecture Presentation by Shaheen Jamani

## NOBEL INSTITUTE BACKGROUND



Established - 1904 in Oslo  
Nobel Committee review of nominations for the  
Annual Nobel Peace Prizes

## NOBEL PEACE PRIZE - HISTORICAL CONTEXT



Alfred Bernhard Nobel  
1833-1896

Legacy of 31.5m Swedish Crowns  
- invested and awarded annually to the person(s)  
who conferred the greatest benefit to mankind in:

- international peace and justice
- refugee support
- arms control
- democracy
- human rights
- climate change



“I am particularly **honoured** to be speaking at the Nobel Institute respected worldwide for its promotion and recognition of **exceptional endeavors** to reduce human conflict”

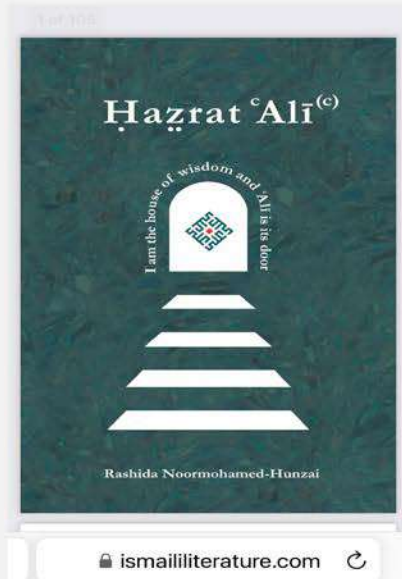
“It is also a rare privilege to address such a **learned and experienced audience** which includes not only officials in government **charged** with issues of **human development**, but also **leaders of Norwegian civil society** who are important partners in Norway’s impressive international development efforts”.

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING



Signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the AKDN and the Government of Norway  
“The Norwegian Government views the Aga Khan Development Network as a **“likeminded”**  
**development actor** and both believing in democratic governance and **Empowerment of the Poor**”

## MAWLANA ALI (ALAYHI SALAM) INSPIRATIONAL LETTER



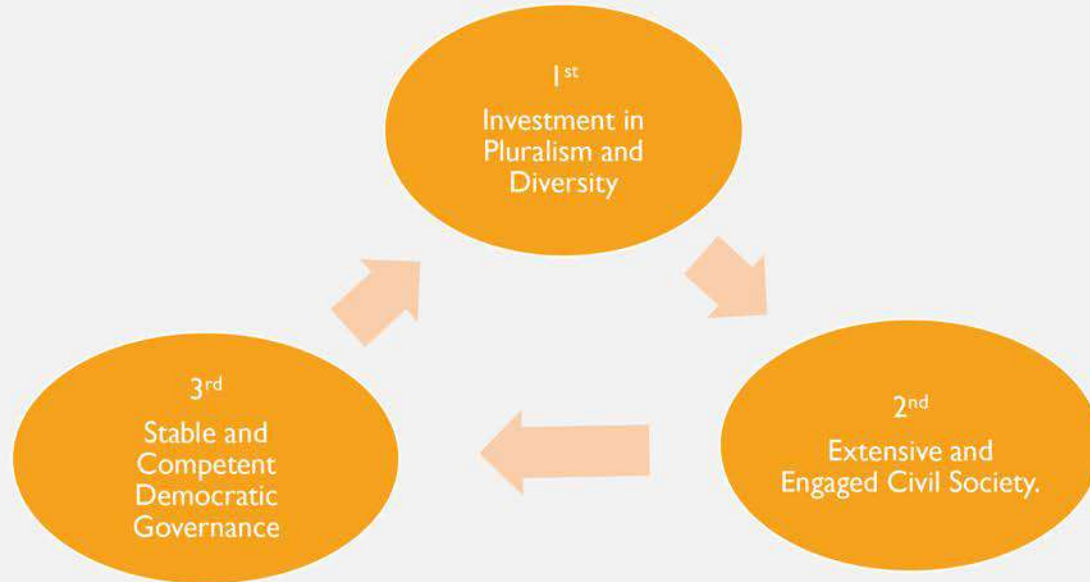
“The **maintenance of the poor and the needy** is an **obligation** on all the other classes”

“**Fear God** when dealing with the problem of the poor who are helpless, forlorn, indigent, who have no one to look out for them; do not seek alms from some who do not question their lot in life”

“For I have heard the **Prophet of God** say that no nation or society, in which the strong do not discharge their duty to the weak, will occupy a high position”.



# HUMAN DEVELOPMENT



“Taken together, they allow developing societies gradually to become masters of the process and make that process self sustainable”.

“As time passes, **ethical principles** of what we build upon in our institutions, in our personal lives, in our endeavors – and this is the fundamental of what we believe in social relations – **bring peace everywhere you live.**

Where there is conflict – **contribute to resolving conflict.** Where there is trouble in terms of relations between people – **help to bring people together.**

Where institutions are not performing satisfactorily – **assist them to improve their performance.**

In other words, in your lives, bring around you as much **effort** and **endeavor** to **build consensus** among **people**, among **communities**, among **institutions**, so that **they can all better serve the societies** in which the jamat is living”

Pakistan, 10 December 2017

“Ismailis and its Institutions are “a microcosm of the last century in the developing world”

## PLURALISM

"O mankind, fear your Lord, who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate, and from them scattered abroad many men and women." 4:1

“Pluralist societies are **not accidents of history**. They are a product of **enlightened education** and **continuous investment by governments** and **civil societies** in **recognising** and **celebrating** the **diversity** of the **world’s peoples**”

“**What a wonderful, liberating thing it would be if more of us, more of the time, could see diversity not as a burden, but as a blessing; not as a threat, but as an opportunity.**”



## CIVIL SOCIETIES

- “By its very nature, civil society is pluralist because it seeks to speak for the multiple interests not represented by the state.”
- “Meritocracy represented by various societies and associations is, in itself one of the principles of democracy”



## “FAILING DEMOCRACIES”



- World leaders unwilling to Dialogue
  - Avoidable Conflicts and Wars
- Failure of International Communities
  - Clash of Ignorance
  - Lack of Education

“But I am convinced that many of today’s problems could have been avoided if there had been better understanding and more serious dialogue between the two”



# EDUCATION

## AKDN - Educational Impact

- Improve knowledge & understanding of governance
- Support the development of democratic societies
  - Reach of 2 million learners annually
  - 3,000 AKDN university graduates annually
    - Support local Civil Societies
  - Continuous ladder of **'Life Long Learning'**
- "... there is no **greater form of preparation** for change than education ... there is no better **investment** that the individual, parents and the nation can make than an **investment in education** of the **highest possible quality.**" Hazar Imam



# KNOWLEDGE/COMMUNICATION

**“World and Faith are inseparable in Islam”**

Knowledge transcends mere  
worldly Intellectual Achievements



Knowledge is deeply intertwined  
with Spiritual Enlightenment

Service to Humanity fulfills our Divine Duties

## COMMUNICATION/PRAYER

- “Prayer is a **Daily Necessity**, a direct communication of the **Spark** with the **Universal Flame**” Mawlana Sultan Muhammad Shah (s.a)
- “There is only one sure **key** to **Happiness** and that is **Prayer**. .... the only real source of **Healing** is **Prayer**” Hazar Imam - Nairobi, 13th October, 1959
- “The soul enriched by **Knowledge** will **Rise Higher**, step by step.” Mawlana Sultan Muhammad Shah (s.a)
- “**Remember God** all the time while standing, sitting, or reclining.” 4:103



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## IMAM OF THE TIME



"Verily, I am going to make you and your offspring leaders of mankind" 2:124

"Make us leaders for the Muttaqin" 25:74

## CONCLUDING THOUGHTS



### “The World Cannot Sit by while Countries Spiral into Crisis”

- **World Leaders** – Dialogue, Educate, Promote Diversity, Resolve Conflicts
- **Our obligation** – Enhanced Civil Societies, Brotherhood, Compassion
- **Essential** – Self Reflection, Contemplation, Knowledge, Prayer

### “Read, Think, Dialogue, Reflect

and bring to yourselves as much knowledge as you can, in order to lead your life in a better way, every day. This is a Farman that I give you today but which applies throughout your life time.”

16th, December 2017



## University of Evora Honorary Doctorate

12 February 2006, Evora, Portugal

President Sampaio,  
Minister of State & Foreign Affairs Freitas do Amaral,  
Rector Manuel Patricio,  
Professor Adriano Moreira,  
Members of the University Senate, Scientific Board and Faculty,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am deeply touched by your warm welcome and generous remarks. I accept this honour with the utmost gratitude and humility, conscious of the great distinction and achievements of past recipients.

Today's occasion is of special happiness since it continues the long-standing relationship that the Ismaili Imam and community enjoy with the Republic and people of Portugal. Our ties are the stronger for being rooted in a shared sense of responsibility to strive together for the greater good of all.

The University of Evora is an ancient bastion of this sense of equitable and moral order which supports its tradition of academic excellence, nurturing merit wherever it exists.

These are the values which the Iberian Peninsula radiated as an inspiring beacon of light, representing the truly glorious epochs in human history when the Muslim and Judeo-Christian worlds developed constructive linkages, enriching their civilisations and empowering their institutions of higher learning with new sources of knowledge.

It is a privilege to be associated with a University which has remained true for so many centuries to the principle that the fruits of learning are to be at the service of all humanity.

In Islam, this is a core principle of belief. In that tradition, my forefathers, the Fatimid Imam-Caliphs of Egypt, who founded Al-Azhar University and the Academy of Knowledge in Cairo a thousand years ago, viewed the acquisition of knowledge as a means to understanding, so as to serve better, God's creation.

For them the true purpose of scholarship, and the gift of reason was to help build society and guide human aspirations. Lest it be forgotten, the society of their times was richly pluralistic when the Quranic notion of the Ahl al-Kitab – the People of the Book – and of one humanity were the driving force for tolerance and respect for difference.

One of history's great lessons is that a society can underwrite human progress only when it overcomes its insularity and suspicion of "the other," and instead, looks upon difference as a source of strength. For, while our new century continues to be marred by conflict and tension, the effective world of tomorrow is a pluralist one which comprehends, welcomes and builds on diversity.

That is why I passionately view the struggle against poverty, and respect for the values of pluralism, as two of the most significant tests of whether the 21st Century is to be an era of global peace, stability and progress.

These two challenges engage the entire spectrum of the institutions and programmes of the Ismaili Imam which constitute the Aga Khan Development Network, cornerstones of which are its educational endeavours from the pre-school to the tertiary level. The Network's agencies and programmes are non-denominational and open to all without discrimination, guided by the Imam's policy of replacing walls that divide with bridges which unite.

Their ethic is that of global convergence and the development of civil society that manages, and harnesses the forces of pluralism so as to elicit the best in human endeavour.

I am profoundly honoured that this historic institution of higher learning, that has contributed so much to the human cause, has seen fit to consider me henceforth as one of its esteemed graduates.

Thank you.

*Mawlana Hazir Imam(a.s)'s  
Mubarak Speech Series*

**09.01.2024**

**UNIVERSITY OF EVORA HONORARY DOCTORATE  
2006-02-12**

**Ali Yar**

<https://global-lectures.com/courses/09012024-university-of-evora-honorary-doctorate-2006-02-12/lesson/watch-lecture-video-182/>

**Series-5**



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### Historical Context:

- The Ismaili community has a long history in Portugal, dating back to the migration of Ismailis from former Portuguese colonies in Africa during the 1960s and 1970s. Over time, this community has grown and integrated into Portuguese society, contributing to the country's cultural and economic life.



### 2015 Agreement:

- A landmark in this relationship was the agreement signed in 2015 between the Portuguese government and the Ismaili Imam. This agreement allowed the Ismaili Imam to establish its global headquarters in Lisbon. It was a significant diplomatic move, highlighting Portugal's openness and commitment to fostering international cooperation.
- The agreement was not just symbolic; it provided the Ismaili Imam with a unique legal status, granting it privileges similar to those of other international organizations. This status allowed the Imam to operate with the necessary autonomy to carry out its global humanitarian and development work.
- The headquarters serves as a hub for the Imam's work, coordinating efforts across various sectors including education, health, culture, and economic development.



“The University of Evora is an ancient bastion of this sense of equitable and moral order which supports its tradition of academic excellence, **nurturing merit wherever it exists**. These are the values which the Iberian Peninsula radiated as an inspiring beacon of light, representing the **truly glorious epochs in human history** when the Muslim and Judeo-Christian world's developed constructive linkages, enriching their civilisations and empowering their institutions of higher learning with new sources of knowledge. It is a privilege to be associated with a University which has remained true for so many centuries to the principle **that the fruits of learning are to be at the service of all humanity.**”



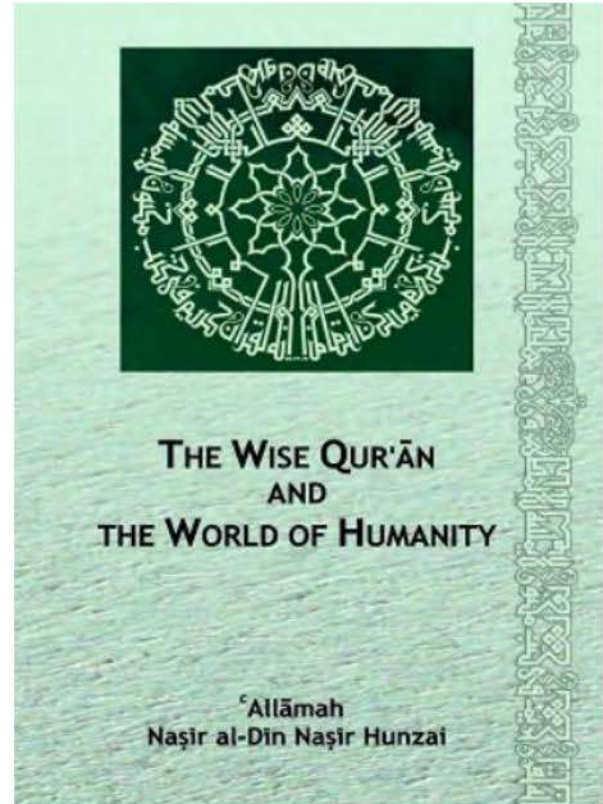
### Part 3

*In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful*

It is mentioned in verse (21:107): “And We sent you not but as a mercy to the people of the world.” This verse about the holy Prophet Muhammad is a bright proof that ultimately all people have to go to paradise. The above noble verse guarantees this and no wise person can deny God’s law of universal mercy.

Thus, although the hell of ignorance exists in the world, when the Imām of the time, by God’s command, causes spiritual resurrection (17:71), he gathers all the people together and brings them into paradise. It is in this sense that the holy Prophet has said: “The people are [as if] God’s household”.

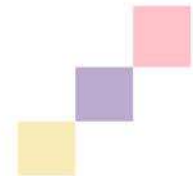
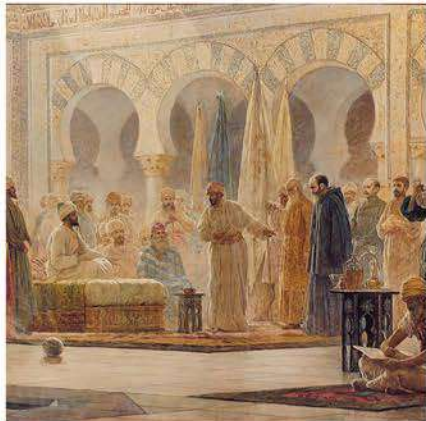
Praise belongs to Allah for His grace and beneficence!

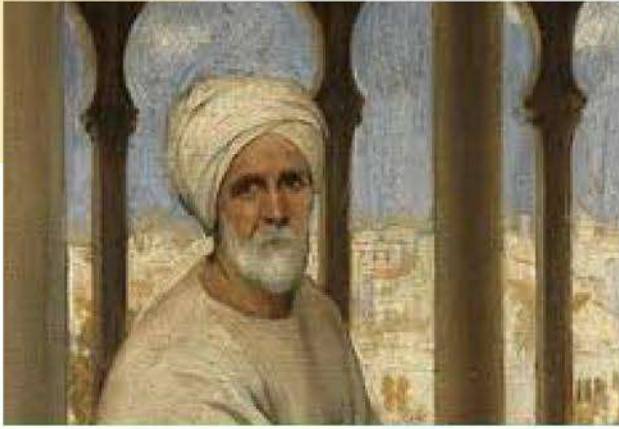


# Iberian Peninsula's Historical Significance

/06

- The Iberian Peninsula, comprising modern-day Spain and Portugal, has a unique historical significance, especially during the Middle Ages. During this time, the region was a melting pot of cultures, particularly Muslim, Christian, and Jewish communities, which coexisted and interacted in various ways.
- This period, especially in places like Al-Andalus (Muslim-ruled Spain), is often celebrated for the rich cultural and intellectual exchanges that took place. Scholars from different religious backgrounds collaborated, translating and preserving ancient texts, and advancing knowledge in fields such as science, philosophy, medicine, and the arts.
- The reference to "truly glorious epochs in human history" points to this period of **convivencia** (coexistence), where Muslim, Christian, and Jewish scholars contributed to a shared intellectual heritage, enriching each other's civilisations and laying the groundwork for the Renaissance in Europe.





## Ibn Rushd (Averroes) (1126–1198)

**Philosophy:** Ibn Rushd wrote extensive commentaries on Aristotle's works, like *Metaphysics*, explaining complex ideas in a way that made them accessible. For example, he argued that both religious faith and reason could lead to the same truth, which helped bridge the gap between science and religion.

**Medicine:** In his medical book *Kulliyat*, Ibn Rushd detailed how to diagnose and treat various diseases. For instance, he emphasized the importance of understanding anatomy for effective treatment, which influenced later medical practices.

**Astronomy:** Ibn Rushd critiqued Ptolemy's geocentric model but accepted it due to the lack of evidence for alternatives at the time. He encouraged the use of observation to understand the universe.



## Al-Zahrawi (Abulcasis) (936–1013)

**Surgery:** In *Kitab al-Tasrif*, Al-Zahrawi described over 200 surgical instruments and their uses. For example, he invented a tool to remove tonsils, which laid the groundwork for modern surgical techniques.

**Dentistry:** Al-Zahrawi developed methods for cleaning teeth and treating dental issues. He designed forceps specifically for extracting teeth, showing his focus on practical, effective tools.

**Pharmacology:** He provided recipes for medications, such as an ointment for treating wounds, which were used for centuries in both the Islamic world and Europe.

**Orthopedics:** Al-Zahrawi described how to properly set broken bones and invented a splint to keep them in place, much like the casts we use today.

## Al-Jazari (1136–1206)

**Automata (Mechanical Devices):** Al-Jazari designed and built various automata, such as a programmable humanoid robot that could serve drinks. This is considered one of the earliest examples of robotics, showcasing his advanced understanding of mechanics and innovation.

**Engineering Innovations:** Al-Jazari invented crankshafts, which convert rotational motion to linear motion, a key component in many modern machines. For example, his water-raising machines were used for irrigation, significantly improving agricultural productivity.

**Mechanical Engineering Principles:** He introduced key engineering concepts like the use of cams and cranks, which are foundational in the development of machinery. His work detailed how to build complex devices step-by-step, much like modern engineering manuals.

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## Al-Majriti (died 1008)

**Astronomical Tables:** Al-Majriti contributed to refining the Zij (astronomical tables) used for calculating the positions of celestial bodies. He corrected earlier tables and improved their accuracy, which were essential tools for astronomers of the time to navigate and understand the stars.

**Mathematics:** Al-Majriti worked on improving methods of calculation, particularly in algebra and geometry, which were crucial for astronomical observations. He explored the use of the astrolabe, an ancient instrument used for solving problems related to time and the position of the stars.

**Alchemy:** He was involved in the study of alchemy, particularly in the transmutation of metals and the search for the philosopher's stone. Al-Majriti's work in alchemy was more scientific, focusing on the chemical processes rather than just mystical elements.



## Hani ibn Ahmad al-Andalusi

**Poetry:** Muhammad ibn Hani al-Andalusi al-Azdi, usually called Ibn Hani, was an Andalusī Ismaʿīlī poet and the chief court poet to the Fatimid Caliph.

### THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH:

I saw the Imam, who is the foundation of faith;  
Obedience to him is success, and disobedience loss.

**Enduring Influence:** His poetry remains a significant part of Andalusian literary heritage.



## Louba al-Qurtubiyya 10th Century

**Prominent Poetess:** Louba al-Qurtubiyya was a renowned poetess in Al-Andalus (Islamic Spain). Her poetry was known for its elegance and depth, making her one of the most celebrated female poets of her time.

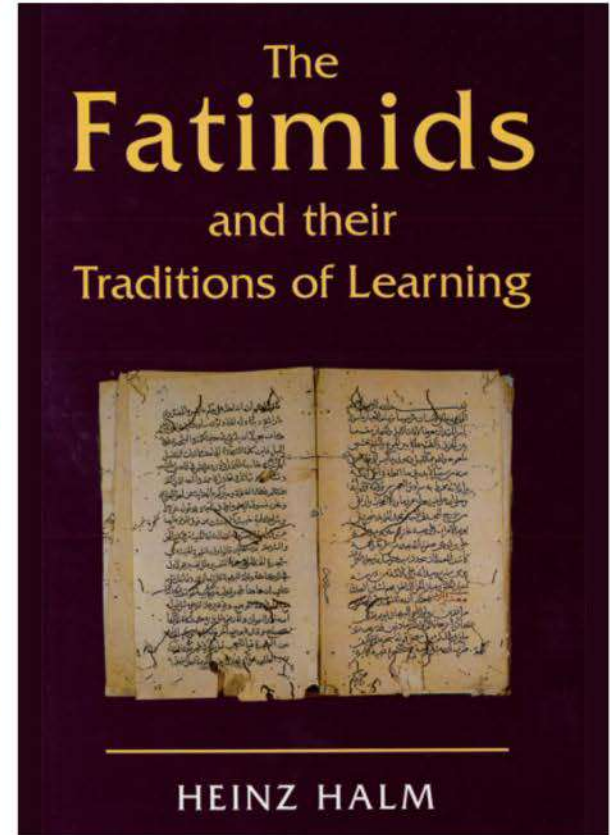
**Cultural Influence:** Her work contributed to the rich cultural and literary tradition of Al-Andalus, influencing both contemporary poets and future generations.

**Role in the Court of Córdoba:** She was part of the intellectual and cultural circles of the Umayyad court in Córdoba, often reciting her poetry at court gatherings, which helped to elevate the status of women in the intellectual life of the period.



“In Islam, this is a core principle of belief. In that tradition, my forefathers, the Fatimid Imam-Caliphs of Egypt, who founded Al-Azhar University and the Academy of Knowledge in Cairo a thousand years ago, viewed the acquisition of knowledge as a means to understanding, so as to serve better, God’s creation. For them the true purpose of scholarship, and the gift of reason was to help build society and guide human aspirations. Lest it be forgotten, the society of their times was richly pluralistic when the Quranic notion of the Ahl al-Kitab – the People of the Book – and of one humanity were the driving force for tolerance and respect for difference.”

“... Contrary to a widespread misconception, Al-Hākim's religious policy was thoroughly consistent. Until the end he sought to enforce the shari'a upon his subjects and to urge it under the threat of severe punishment. But he tried to produce a rapprochement between the Sunnis, the Twelver Shiis and the Ismailis because he wanted to be the imam of all Muslims. These efforts culminated in May 1009 (Ramadān 399) in an edict (sijil) of tolerance which legally put Sunni rites on a par with Shii rites. In support of this edict he referred to the well-known Quranic verse 2:256: 'No compulsion is there in religion'. The differences between the Islamic confessions remained, but were tolerated. So for instance while the Ismailis counted (hisab) the thirty days of Ramadān and then broke their fast, the Sunnis ended their month of fasting when the new moon was sighted (ruya), so that nothing prevented the two confessions from celebrating the feast of breaking the fast ('id al-fitr) on two different days. The Shi'a were forbidden the open abuse, on their holidays, of those of the Companions of the Prophet who had opposed 'Ali, but they were allowed to add the formula 'Arise to the best of deeds!' (hayya 'alā khayr al-amal), which was omitted by the Sunni muezzins in the call to prayer (adhān). Similarly, when taking an oath, people could use the religious formula of their choice”



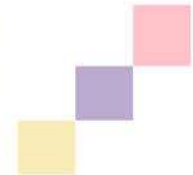
### 1. The House of Knowledge (Dar al-Ilm):

- The Dar al-Ilm, established by the Imam al-Hakim (a.s) in 1005 CE, was a public institution that provided free access to its vast collection of books and manuscripts. It was staffed by scholars and librarians who were available to assist those who came to study. The institution was open to all, regardless of religious or social background, embodying the Fatimid commitment to pluralism and the dissemination of knowledge.
- Scholars from different religious communities worked side by side in the Dar al-Ilm, engaging in intellectual debates and exchanges that enriched their understanding and contributed to the advancement of knowledge. This collaboration was a living example of the Fatimid belief in the Quranic principles of tolerance and mutual respect.



### 2. Pluralism and Tolerance in Fatimid Society:

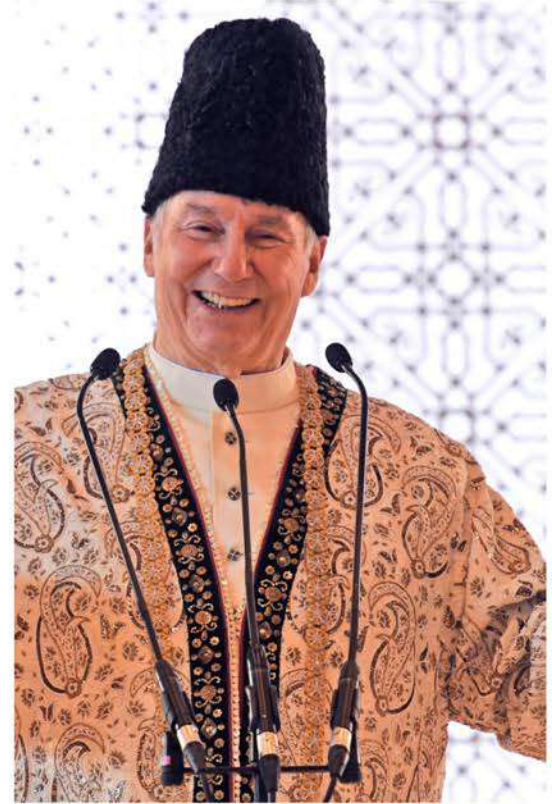
- The Fatimid Caliphs were known for their pluralistic approach to governance. They ruled over a diverse population that included Muslims, Christians, Jews, and other religious and ethnic groups. The Fatimid state promoted a policy of tolerance and respect for different beliefs, in line with the Quranic notion of the Ahl al-Kitab (People of the Book), which refers to Jews, Christians, and Sabians as recipients of earlier divine revelations.
- This respect for diversity was not just a political strategy but a reflection of the Fatimids' belief in the unity of humanity and the importance of fostering a society where different communities could coexist and contribute to the common good.





يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ  
نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ

[4:1] "O mankind! Be careful of  
your duty to your Lord Who  
created you from a single soul".





“One of history’s great lessons is that a society can underwrite human progress only when it overcomes its insularity and suspicion of “the other,” and instead, looks upon difference as a source of strength. For, while our new century continues to be marred by conflict and tension, the effective world of tomorrow is a pluralist one which comprehends, welcomes and builds on diversity. That is why I passionately view the struggle against poverty, and respect for the values of pluralism, as two of the most significant tests of whether the 21st Century is to be an era of global peace, stability and progress.”

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**AKDN**

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**AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK**

# Conclusion

“I am profoundly honoured that this historic institution of higher learning, that has contributed so much to the human cause, has seen fit to consider me henceforth as one of its esteemed graduates. Thank you.”

**University of Evora | Portugal | 12-02-2006**

**Thank You**



## Remarks by His Highness the Aga Khan at the inaugural Aga Khan Music Awards

31 March 2019, Lisbon, Portugal

*Bismillah-ir-Rahman-ir-Rahim*

Your Excellency, President of the Republic, Professor Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa,<sup>[L] [SEP]</sup>  
 Your Excellency, Vice-President of the Parliament, Mr. Jorge Lacão,  
 Madame Isabel Mota, President of the Gulbenkian Foundation,  
<sup>[L] [SEP]</sup>Members of Government and of Parliament,  
<sup>[L] [SEP]</sup>Diplomats, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,<sup>[L] [SEP]</sup>  
 Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure - and a great honour - to welcome all of you who have come to this exceptional venue tonight, on this extraordinary occasion.

As I welcome you, I do so on behalf of many others - all around the world - who have made this occasion possible.

I speak of course of those who are part of the Ismaili Jamat and the Aga Khan Development Network, but, more generally, all those who have helped to organize the Aga Khan Music Awards. I salute them all - the nominators, the members of the Awards Steering Committee, the Master Jury, and the Awards Secretariat. And of course all the participants. I salute all the Awardees whose musical talents have so generously enriched today's events.

I am grateful, too, to those here in Lisbon who have helped to plan this Inaugural program, and to the Gulbenkian Foundation for their invaluable support. This event is one that celebrates artistic talent and the sociological effects of artistic accomplishment in and from diverse places and cultures. And this place, in my estimation, is the perfect location for doing that. The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is respected across the world for its role in honouring the arts and the sciences, while Lisbon has long been one of the world's most welcoming cities for people of diverse cultures and backgrounds, and Portugal itself has played a major role over the centuries in bringing to the countries of this continent the cultures of distant lands.

The presence here tonight of the President of Portugal, the Vice-President of Parliament, the Minister of Culture, and so many other members of Government, speaks eloquently to the commitment of this country to pluralistic ideals in pursuit of a better tomorrow. We are deeply honoured to have you all with us.

The musicians we recognise this weekend represent highly diverse forms of the Muslim musical heritage. Now I know that in some parts of the world, the words "Muslim" and "music" are not often linked together in the public mind. But they should be. The cultural heritage of Islam has long embraced musical language as an elemental expression of human spirituality. Listening to music, practicing music, sharing music, performing music - have long been an intimate part of life for Muslim communities across the world, as has been the chanting of devotional and historical or epic texts.

I learned at a young age about how my own ancestors, the Fatimids, cultivated music in the city of Cairo a thousand years ago. And I also learned about how the Iberian region where we are now meeting, the territory known as al Andalus, produced new forms of music and poetry in the late medieval period. It was here in al Andulus that Muslims, Jews, Christians, created together an exemplary culture of tolerance, fostering musical creativity that even included new types of musical instruments and pioneering approaches to music education.

I also remember a visit I made to Tajikistan in 1995, during which I was deeply impressed by the richness of musical life among those whom I had visited. I began to think even more about the ways in which music can be a strong cultural anchor, deepening a sense of community, identity and heritage, while simultaneously reaching out in powerful ways to people of different backgrounds.

I recall sharing these thoughts with my brother, Prince Ayn Aga Khan, whose guiding hand helped to lay the groundwork, in 2001, for what we called the Aga Khan Music Initiative. And that program has led directly to the Music Awards we inaugurate today.

The initial focus of the Aga Khan Music Initiative was in the countries of Central Asia. This mission was urgent, for the old Soviet Union, when it controlled these regions, had actively discouraged, or even suppressed, music linked to traditional ways of life. The Music Initiative worked first to build a heightened awareness of their musical heritage in local communities themselves, to ensure that a new generation of musicians playing traditional instruments was formed, and then to introduce this music and these musicians to international audiences. And it worked - on two levels. It helped musicians, first of all, to earn a livelihood so that they could continue to develop their talents. And, it also advanced a pluralistic understanding of Muslim cultures and inter-cultural sharing.

The initial success of this work in Central Asia led to the expansion of the Music Initiative beyond Central Asia's borders to include countries in South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. In so doing, it reached beyond performance to new composition, to creation, and all of this work complemented our other efforts to advance economic and social development, contributing to more stable communities, nurturing a new sense of inspiration and hope, and building vectors of human connectivity across old divides.

One other point we learned to appreciate and to share is the remarkable diversity which exists within the world of Muslim music! It comes in many styles, forms and classical repertoires. It includes simple folk melodies, contemplative mystical music and driving dance rhythms; and it reflects the immense diversity of different Muslim cultures themselves, including musical traditions that have been carefully cultivated over the centuries within the Ismaili community.

In creating the Music Awards, we now hope to expand the reach and impact of the original Music Initiative. To this end, our Award winners will not only each receive a monetary prize, but will also be asked to collaborate with the Music Awards secretariat in broadening the impact of their creative work in dialoguing with each other. The goal is not only to help today's generation of artists, but also to inspire a new generation of young performers and composers in both the East and the West.

In all of the performances that are taking place on this occasion, you will hear outstanding musicians expressing themselves in their own authentic artistic languages. Here in Lisbon today - and across the world in the months and years to come - their voices will, we trust, continue to transcend old boundaries of time and place, reminding the world that every individual can respond to art and music, whether it emanates from a different culture or not.

For, after all, art is a matter of humanity just as much as it is a matter of identity. As the Islamic tradition has reminded us for many centuries, the Divine spark that bestows upon us our individuality also bonds individuals in a common human family.

In this light, we learn to see our differences in a new way. We can understand that cultural diversity is not a burden or a threat. In fact, it is rather a Divine Gift, an opportunity to learn and to grow, an opportunity to understand and to appreciate the Identity of the Other and thereby one's own essential identity.

The technological forces that are re-shaping our world now mean that neighbors who live on the other side of the planet are as close to us as our neighbors who live across the street. In such a world, peace and progress require that we promote a pluralist agenda, that we invest in a Cosmopolitan ethic. These Music Awards aim to be an investment in that promotion.

Thank you.



31 March 2019 | GLOBAL

**Remarks by His Highness  
the Aga Khan at the  
inaugural Aga Khan  
Music Awards.**



Lecture Presentation by Niamat Chandani

## Pleasure of Imam:

It is a great pleasure - and a great honour - to welcome all of you who have come to this exceptional venue tonight, on **this extraordinary occasion**.

As I welcome you, I do so on behalf of many others - all around the world - who have made this occasion possible.

I speak of course of those who are part of the Ismaili Jamat and the Aga Khan Development Network, but, more generally, all those who have helped to organize the Aga Khan Music Awards. **I salute them all** - the nominators, the members of the Awards Steering Committee, the Master Jury, and the Awards Secretariat. And **of course, all the participants. I salute all the Awardees whose musical talents have so generously enriched today's events.**



## Celebrating Cultural Diversity

“I am grateful, too, to those here in Lisbon who have helped to plan this Inaugural program, and to the Gulbenkian Foundation for their invaluable support.

This event is one that celebrates artistic talent and the sociological effects of artistic accomplishment in and from diverse places and cultures.

And this place, in my estimation, is the perfect location for doing that. (it matters where it is celebrated- where the art is valued and artists are honored)

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is respected across the world for its role in honouring the arts and the sciences, while Lisbon has long been one of the world’s most welcoming cities for people of diverse cultures and backgrounds, and Portugal itself has played a major role over the centuries in bringing to the countries of this continent the cultures of distant lands.”



## Music as a Cultural Anchor: A Reflection from Tajikistan

- “I also remember a visit I made to Tajikistan in 1995, during which I was deeply impressed by the richness of musical life among those whom I had visited.
- I began to think even more about the ways in which music can be a strong cultural anchor, deepening a sense of community, identity and heritage, while simultaneously reaching out in powerful ways to people of different backgrounds.”



## Inaugural event of the Aga Khan Music Awards By Prince Ayn Khan, Lisbon, Portugal · 29 March 2019

- This happy event is particularly meaningful to me personally, as it represents the actualisation of an idea that I first broached to my brother almost two decades ago...
- **The movement has been reversed:** Instead of music which is trying to sound what the audience would think of as oriental, we are moving toward a **music emanating directly from the East** but including western elements and even in time with perhaps western instruments. From what risked being pastiche, we are moving toward a new, broader inclusive music that respects and includes different traditions, different sounds, different rhythms. **A new, inclusive language.** Music is, by definition, **an evolutionary art, and musical composition has always evolved.**

<https://the.akdn/en/resources-media/resources/speeches/inaugural-event-aga-khan-music-awards-prince-amyn-aga-khan>



## Genres and categories of music eligible for the awards

**The Awards focus on the constellation of:**

- devotional music and
- poetry,
- indigenous classical music,
- traditional folk music, and
- tradition-inspired contemporary music

that has **flourished in cultures shaped by Islam.**

**Award prize fund used for opportunities for professional development.**

- These opportunities include commissions for the creation of new works,
- contracts for recordings and artist management,
- support for pilot education initiatives, and
- technical or curatorial consultancies for music archiving, preservation, and dissemination projects.

<https://the.akdn/en/how-we-work/our-agencies/aga-khan-trust-culture/aga-khan-music-programme/aga-khan-music-awards>

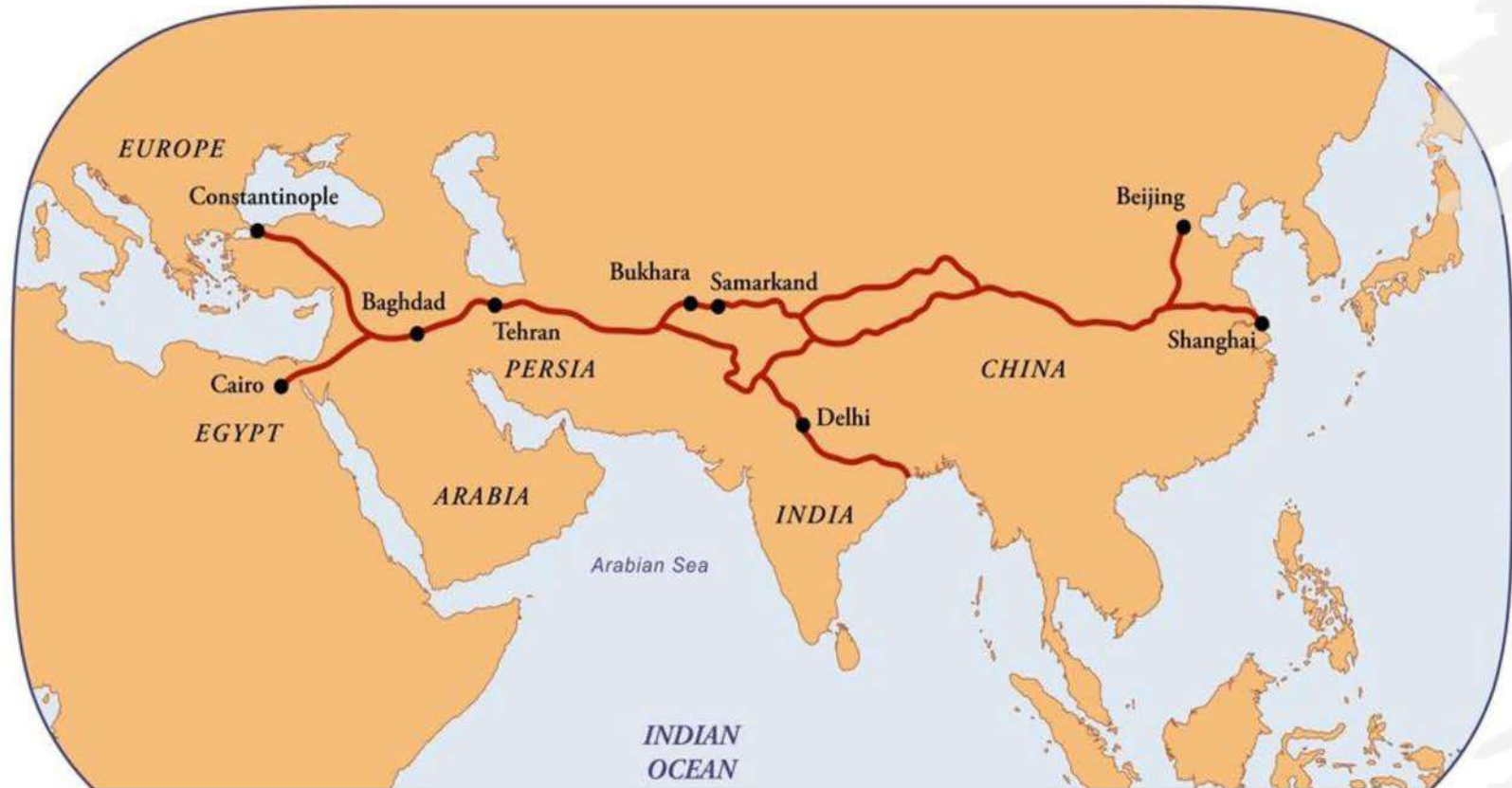
## Deepening Sense of Community, Identity, and Heritage

**Geneva, Switzerland, 28 March 2024** - On Saturday, 23 March, the Aga Khan Master Musicians (AKMM) delivered a stunning performance to conclude the Madeira Music Festival at the Congress Centre in Funchal, Portugal.

<https://the.akdn/en/resources-media/whats-new/news-release/aga-khan-master-musicians-bring-unique-sound-to-madeira>



# The Silk Road





# Silk road project

The **Silk Road Project** aims to illuminate the Silk Road's historical contribution to the cross-cultural diffusion of arts, technologies, and musical traditions, identify the voices that best represent its cultural legacy today, and support innovative collaborations among outstanding artists from the lands of the Silk Road and the West.

"I am sure you will join me in thanking Yo-Yo Ma and the members of the Silk Road Ensemble for taking time out of their performance schedule to participate in the Award Ceremony today. Last year the Aga Khan Trust for Culture joined the Silk Road Project created by Yo-Yo Ma to support variety of projects broadening **the the understanding and appreciation of the musical and artistic cultures of the Silk Road that linked the West with Asia and the Middle East, including Syria, for over a thousand years.**"

Yo-Yo Ma "The selection of the projects, that were honoured, demonstrated an enlightened understanding of the importance of renewing rooted traditions. **The Aga Khan Trust for Culture demonstrates the understanding that, in the end, it's not about your culture or my culture, but about our common world heritage.**"

<https://the.akdn/en/resources-media/whats-new/news-release/yo-yo-ma-performs-silk-road-aga-khan-award>

<https://the.akdn/en/resources-media/resources/speeches/2001-award-presentation-ceremony-aga-khan-award-architecture-his-highness-the-aga-khan>



# Musical Heritage: Echoes of Al-Andalus and the Fatimid Legacy

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- “I learned at a young age about how my own ancestors, the Fatimids, cultivated music in the city of Cairo a thousand years ago.
- And I also learned about how the Iberian region where we are now meeting, the territory known as al Andalus, produced new forms of music and poetry in the late medieval period.
- It was here in al Andalus that Muslims, Jews, Christians, created together an exemplary culture of tolerance, fostering musical creativity that even included new types of musical instruments and pioneering approaches to music education. “



## 1. Early Focus and Successes of the Aga Khan Music Initiative

- “The initial focus of the Aga Khan Music Initiative was in the countries of Central Asia. This mission was urgent.....
- ...it also advanced a pluralistic understanding of Muslim cultures and inter-cultural sharing.”

## 2. Expanding Horizons: The Global Reach of the Aga Khan Music Initiative

- “The initial success of this work in Central Asia led to the expansion of the Music Initiative beyond Central Asia’s borders to include countries in South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.
- In so doing, it reached beyond performance to new composition, to creation, and all of this work complemented our other efforts”

## 3. Celebrating the Diversity of Muslim Music

- “One other point we learned to appreciate and to share is the remarkable diversity which exists within the world of Muslim music!
- It comes in many styles, forms and classical repertoires.
- It includes simple folk melodies, contemplative mystical music and driving dance rhythms;
- and it reflects the immense diversity of different Muslim cultures themselves,
- including musical traditions that have been carefully cultivated over the centuries within the Ismaili community. ”
- 



## Harmonies Through Time: Exploring Centuries of Musical Tradition

“....to inspire a new generation of young performers and composers in both the East and the West.”

- Devotional Music (Ginans and Qasidas)
  - Traditional Instruments
  - Folk Music and Dance:
  - Contemporary Expressions
  - Cultural Events and Festivals
- 
- "I say to you Idd Mubarak and I say to you enjoy the evening with lots of dancing and happiness Khanavadan." At Nairobi October 5<sup>th</sup>, 1982.
  
  - " I know this evening you will be having Dandia raas. And when I was much younger, much younger, I used to come to Jamatkhana and participate in Dandia raas Myself. But tonight, it is unfortunately impossible, because I have an engagement. But I would like you to know that while you will be having Dandia raas, I will be with you, participating in your happiness, in your joy, and I hope that that happiness and that joy will be with you always." At New York, U.S.A. November 11<sup>th</sup> , 1986





## Unveiling the Soulful Melodies: Embracing Music's Spiritual Essence in Islamic Culture

“The musicians we recognise this weekend represent highly diverse forms of the Muslim musical heritage.

Now I know that in some parts of the world, the words “Muslim” and “music” are not often linked together in the public mind.

**But they should be.**

The cultural heritage of Islam has long embraced musical language as an elemental **expression of human spirituality**.

**Listening to music,  
practicing music,  
sharing music,  
performing music**

have long been an intimate part of life for Muslim communities across the world, as has been the chanting of devotional and historical or epic texts.”



# Prophet Muhammad sa

## and Music

"And this Tradition is known to all that on the occasion of the migration of the Prophet to Medina,  
women were *singing this song accompanied by tambourines*"

Tala`a'l-badru `alaynā; min saniyāti'l-wadā`  
Wajaba'sh-shukru `alaynā; mā dā`a li llāhi dā  
Ayyuha'l-mab'ūsu fī-nā; ji'ta bi'l-amri'l-muta

The moon has risen upon us from the hills of Wada`  
Gratitude is obligatory upon us so long as  
an inviter invites towards God.

# Hazrat Dawud. & music

*Let Everything Praise the Lord*

Praise the LORD!

Praise God in his sanctuary;

praise him in his mighty heavens!

Praise him for his mighty deeds;

praise him according to his excellent greatness!

Praise him with **trumpet sound**;

praise him with **lute and harp**!

Praise him with **tambourine and dance**;

praise him with **strings and pipe**!

Praise him with **sounding cymbals**;

praise him with **loud clashing cymbals**!

**Let everything that has breath praise the LORD!**

Praise the LORD!



**Psalms 150**

<https://www.bible.com/bible/114/PSA.150.NKJV>

Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai, *Pearls of marifat-II*, trans. F.M. Hunzai & R.S.N. Hunzai, Karachi, p. 52.

<https://www.ismaililiterature.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Pearls-of-Marifat-Part-2.pdf>



## Ginan by Pir Shams q5



**Tāre vagā te ginanna vajāre mān, Khel kidhā te Gur Shamsere mān. 1**  
Then the musical instruments of ginan (Garbi) started to play,  
and Pir Shams began to play.

**Tyre vāji chhe jantri dharamnire mān, Khel kidhā te Gur Shamsere mān. 3**

At that time the musical instrument of the religion started to play, and Pir Shams began to play.

<https://ginans.usask.ca/commons/508600> *Kamaluddin, Muhammad. 50 Ginans with English Translation and Glossary - Volume 02*



# True Music vs. Deceptive Harmonies:

## Know the Difference



## Verse of treasures

15:21

وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خَزَائِنُهُ

wa-'in min shay'in 'illā 'indanā  
khazā'inuhū

**"There is nothing whose  
treasures are not with Us"**



## 6:73

وَلَهُ الْمُلْكُ يَوْمَ يُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ

wa-lahu l-mulku yawma yunfakhu fī ṣ-ṣūri  
and His is the Kingdom the day  
the **Trumpet** is blown

- Sūr or Nāqūr → trumpet
- Israfil –Jadd (Glory of God, 72:3)
- Angel of love,
- Power of divine love is greater than all other powers.



Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai, *Pearls of marifat-II*, trans. F.M. Hunzai & R.S.N. Hunzai, Karachi, p. 52-59.

<https://www.ismaililiterature.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Pearls-of-Marifat-Part-2.pdf>

## The Sur of Israfil as

- When Hazrat i Israfil blows the trumpet, he announces and declares His eternal and everlasting kingdom through it.
- This sur is miraculous in its nature, blown on the occasion of Resurrection

Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai, *Pearls of marifat-II*, trans. F.M. Hunzai & R.S.N. Hunzai, Karachi, p. 52-59.

<https://www.ismaililiterature.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Pearls-of-Marifat-Part-2.pdf>



## Embracing Cultural Diversity as a Divine Gift

....their voices will, we trust, continue to transcend old boundaries of time and place, reminding the world that every individual can respond to art and music, whether it emanates from a different culture or not.

For, after all, art is a matter of humanity just as much as it is a matter of identity. As the Islamic tradition has reminded us for many centuries, the Divine spark that bestows upon us our individuality also bonds individuals in a common human family.

In this light, we learn to see our differences in a new way. We can understand that cultural diversity is not a burden or a threat. In fact, it is rather a Divine Gift, an opportunity to learn and to grow, an opportunity to understand and to appreciate the Identity of the Other and thereby one's own essential identity.



### Reviving culture and arts in Aswan

NEWS RELEASES | 15 May 2017

**Aswan, Egypt, 16 May 2017** - Artist and cultural development specialists will gather in Aswan during 12-22 May 2017 to premiere a series of music and arts workshops that will form the first phase of the ...

## Revival of souls

"A very great secret and wisdom-filled allusion in this is that the greatest power in religion is:

- the pure love for God,
  - the Prophet and
  - the Imam of the time and
- the special means of arousing it is

### through sacred music

so that **by this means the lifelessness of the heart disappears and true life is attained.**

This is the wisdom-filled allusion of Sur-i Israfil, if a wise person reflects on it, understands and benefits from it."

Allamah Nasir al-Din Nasir Hunzai, *Psalms of Lovers*, trans. F.M. Hunzai & R.S.N. Hunzai, Karachi, p. 29.  
<https://www.ismaililiterature.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Psalms-of-Lovers.pdf>



“...reached beyond performance to new composition, to creation, and all of this work **complemented our other efforts.**” MHI Speech –March 31, 2019

## Raus aus der Hölle der Intoleranz

Emotionaler Abend mit dem Meher Angez Trio aus Nordpakistan beim Klangkosmos

VON MARKUS LIESEGANG

Hamm - Mit Tränen in den Augen sahen die drei Frauen von einigen Lambrosen am Düsseldorfer Flughafen empfangen worden, erröhte Heike Bednarz am Dienstagabend den rund 100 Zuhörern im Kulturbahnhof. „Das berührt mich auch.“ Der Auftritt des Meher Angez Trio aus Nordpakistan war der erste einer NRW-Tournee. Der Start in Hamm ist gelungen, wenn auch die Rhythmen, die Sprache der Sufi-Gesänge weit, weit weg von europäisch sozialisiertes Ohren waren.

Beerdigungsritual Singen die Hänge, mit der Meher Angez Gesänge ihre Tochter Durr-E-Adan (Tabla, Daf) und Ambareen (Charda-Hunza Rubab) die spirituellen Ge-

sänge in den epischen Stücken interpretieren.

Gekleidet waren die drei in traditionellen Gewändern des abgelegenen Hunza-Tals in Gilgit-Baltistan. Das liegt im pakistanischen Teil der Kaschmir-Region im Himalaya. Auf dem Boden sitzend huldigte Meher Angez, die einzige Sufi-Sängerin ihrer Heimat, ihrem Schöpfer, als Ismailiten Allah. Sie hat um Erleuchtung, sie betrachtet die Religion der Ismailiten durchaus philosophisch, sprach von vielen in einem gemeinsamen Ziel endenden Wegen, wie die englische



Trio aus der Kaschmir-Region: Durr-E-Adan (von links), Mutter Meher Angez und Ambareen spielen zum Auftakt ihrer NRW-Tournee in Hamm.

All das verkündete Meher Angez mit einer auf Dauer ausstrahlenden Stimme, die allerdings sehr flexibel und

variantenreich war. Meher Angez trieb, trillierte, spielte mit Overtönen, debattierte und komprimierte die Frequenz.

Ihre Tochter untermauerte den Gesang mit ruhigem Spiel auf der Rubabinstrument, nahm gemeinsam mit Ambareen den „Jehtra“ auf. Letztere überlegte mit einem sehr schönen dunklen Timbre in ihrer Stimme. Die Frau an den Seiten übernahm nicht nur den Rhythmus, sondern nahm mit der Rubab ebenfalls die Melodie auf. Ihr Können bewies Durr-E-Adan auf der Tabla. Sie ist eine der weltweit seltenen professionellen Spielerinnen auf dieser Melodie- und Bass-Doppeltrummel.

Die Ekstase von Meher Angez ging so weit, dass ihr zum Ende hin die Tränen kamen. Während sie in regulären Konzert Sätzen von links nach rechts hinstierte, sang sie die Zugabe abschließend frei.

BY MARKUS LIESEGANG

Hamm - The three women were greeted with tears in their eyes by some of their countrymen at Düsseldorf airport, Heike Bednarz told the audience of around 100 at the Kulturbahnhof on Tuesday evening. “That touches me too.” The performance by the Meher Angez Trio from Northern Pakistan was the first of an NRW tour (North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany). The start in Hamm was a success, even if the rhythms and language of the Sufi songs were far, far removed from European socialized ears. What was impressive, however, was the devotion with which Meher Angez (vocals), her daughter Durr-E-Adan (tabla, daf) and Ambareen (charda-hunza rubab) intoned the spiritual chants in the epic pieces.

The three were dressed in traditional garments from the remote Hunza Valley in Gilgit-Baltistan. This is located in the Pakistani part of the Kashmir region in the Himalayas. Sitting on the floor, Meher Angez, the only Sufi singer in her homeland, paid homage to her creator, as an Ismaili religion quite philosophical, speaking of many paths ending in a common goal, as revealed by the English translation of the local Burushaski language. “Leave the hell of intolerance, come to the paradise of knowledge.” The Aga Khan’s Islam is open to the world.



Trio from the Kashmir region: Durr-E-Adan (from left), Mother Meher Angez and Ambareen played at the start of their NRW tour in Hamm.

PHOTO MARKUS LIESEGANG

Meher Angez chirped, trilled, stretched over time, but very flexible and rich in variation. Her daughter accompanied

the singing with quiet playing on the frame drum and recorded the ‘chorus’ together with Ambareen. The latter, by the way, had a very beautiful dark timbre in her voice. The woman on the strings not only took over the rhythm, but also recorded the melody with the rubab. Durr-E-Adan demonstrated her skills on the tabla. She is one of the world’s rare professional players of this melody and bass double drum.

Meher Angez’s ecstasy went so far that she was in tears by the end. While she turned pages from left to right during the regular concert, she sang the encore freely.

## Escaping the Hell of Intolerance

Emotional Evening with the Meher Angez Trio from Northern Pakistan at Klangkosmos







## Inauguration of the Aga Khan Garden, Alberta

### LOCATION

Edmonton, Canada (16 October 2018)

*Bismillah-ir-Rahaman-ir-Rahim*

Your Honour Lois Mitchell,  
The Honourable Rachel Notley,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Your Worships,  
Chancellor Stollery,  
President Turpin,  
Distinguished Guests,

It is always a great pleasure to greet old friends and welcome new friends at a celebration like this. But today's inauguration stands out for me as particularly joyous.

For one thing, the old friendships we renew today are especially meaningful. We look back, of course, to the welcome in Alberta of members of the Ismaili community who settled here almost a half century ago, often in

very difficult circumstances. And those bonds of welcome have been continually renewed through the years, especially through our rewarding partnerships with the University of Alberta.

One of the special gifts that old friends offer is introducing us to wonderful new friends, and that has also happened here. The project we celebrate today – the inauguration of the Aga Khan Garden – is a particularly happy example.

I think all of you have had the pleasure – in your personal life or your professional life – of seeing a fascinating story develop happily from beginning to end. We recall the excitement of a new beginning – as well as that deep sense of grateful satisfaction when the planning works – when the hope is realised, and the vision is achieved.

Well that is exactly how I feel today. I was fortunate to have been part of this project's conception – and I feel fortunate to be here today to help mark its realisation.

I remember well my visits to the University of Alberta during my Golden Jubilee year – in 2008, and again for the graduation ceremonies in 2009. That was when we first discussed this dream of creating here, together, a new Islamic garden. I paid my first visit to the proposed garden site at that time, wondering, even then, just how this dream might come true in practice.

It seemed like an unlikely dream to many. After all, the great tradition of Islamic gardens has its roots in very different times and places. The symbol of the garden as a spiritual symbol goes back to the Holy Qur'an itself - where the garden ideal is mentioned many times. Down through many centuries, Islamic culture has continued to see the garden as a very special place, where the human meets further proof of the divine.

The development of the garden as a symbol of Islamic ideals flourished most magnificently some 500 to 600 years ago – and that happened, of course, in the warmer climates of Southern Asia. And yet, there we were in Edmonton a decade ago, proposing to extend that lovely eastern and southern tradition, at the start of the 21st Century, to the unique natural environment of northern and western Canada. This proposed new garden, to be precise, would be the northern-most Islamic garden ever created.

Over the past nine years I have been able to watch the dream come true – as we agreed on the configuration of the site, assembled a Steering Committee, chose an architectural firm, and reviewed development plans. And then, with the planning completed, the building process took just some 18 months – finishing “on time and on budget,” as planners like to point out!

As I look out at this garden today, what I think about – above all – are the people who made it possible - their dedication, their talent, and their remarkable energy. I want them all to know that in celebrating this new garden today – we are also celebrating them. Theirs is a highly valued gift to the generations to come, who also must be privileged by experiencing the spirituality and harmony of multiple life forms.

They include construction workers and gardeners, planners and administrators, artists and scholars, architects and designers – including the landscape design firm of Nelson Byrd Woltz. They include dedicated members of the Ismaili and other Muslim communities in Alberta – and other parts of Canada, the remarkable family of the University of Alberta, governmental officials at all levels, and those who serve the Aga Khan Trust for Culture and the Aga Khan Development Network.

At the heart of their efforts, of course, was the inspiring power of the Islamic garden itself. For a central part of the garden tradition is the high calling of human stewardship, our responsibility to honour, to protect, and to share the gifts of the natural world.

Gardens in this context can be seen not as imitations of nature but as humanity's interpretations of nature, their geometric structures providing a human framework in which we can experience – in this case – the magnificent fluctuations of the Albertan landscape.

The garden of Islamic tradition is also a place where the flow of refreshing water reminds us of divine blessing. It is a place for meditation, and quiet renewal. But I would likewise emphasise that the garden, through history, has also been seen as a social space – a place for learning, for sharing, for romance, for diplomacy, for reflection on the destiny of the human race. And even as we share the garden experience with one another, we can feel a connection with those who walked through similar gardens in the past.

I would also mention one additional aspect of the particular garden we inaugurate today. It symbolises not only the creative blending of the natural and the human – but also the beauty of multiple inter-cultural cooperation.

One of the great questions facing humanity today is how we can honour what is distinctive about our separate identities – and, at the same time, welcome a diversity of identities as positive elements in our lives.

This city and this country have been among the world leaders in providing positive answers to that ancient question. The project we inaugurate today is a beautiful extension of that Canadian tradition.

In Canada and in many other places, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture has made a major commitment to creating and renewing important green spaces in recent years. We can look back on ten recent successes in places ranging from Cairo to Zanzibar, from Toronto to Kabul, from Dushanbe in Tajikistan to Bamako in Mali. In 2018 alone, I helped to inaugurate three such garden projects – in London, in Delhi, and now here in Alberta.

But the story does not end here. In fact, the story of Canadian Islamic gardens itself is not yet completed. Our plans are now advancing, in fact, for a new park to be developed a few hundred miles southwest of here, in Burnaby, British Columbia.

Yes – to be sure – it will surpass Edmonton as the western-most Islamic garden. But, of course, we can be rest assured, that Edmonton's garden will still have a lasting claim as the northern-most!

I have talked about the past, today, but I would close by emphasising the future. It is wonderful at a moment like this to think of all those who will visit here in the years to come. Our work now is to sustain this space, to create new experiences and to meet new challenges.

As you walk through these Gardens, you will see evidence of the ways in which future generations will be able to make the most of this site. It is our hope and expectation on this special day that the Aga Khan Garden here at the University of Alberta will truly be a gift that keeps on giving.

Thank you.

<https://global-lectures.com/courses/inauguration-of-the-aga-khan-garden-alberta-2018-10-16/lesson/watch-lecture-video-181/>



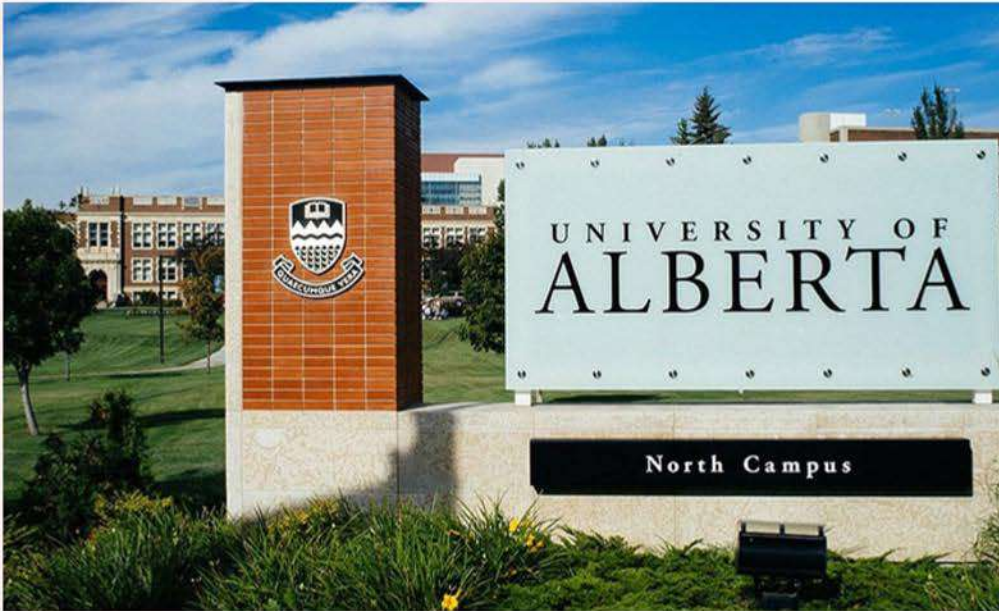
## **THE ALBERTA GARDEN OPENING SPEECH**

Lecture Presentation by Durr-i Sameen



**THE TRADITION OF  
ISLAMIC GARDENS**

# INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA



The University of Alberta is:

- Located in Edmonton
- One of Canada's top 4 universities
- Ranks 91 among the top 100 in the world.
- Five campuses in 2 cities
- has a branch called University of Alberta Botanical Garden



a picture of Kurimoto garden

## UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA BOTANIC GARDENS (UABG)

- The UABG was established in 1959.
- It was previously known as Devonian Botanic Garden.
- It has over 8,000 plant species,
- It includes three indoor showhouses.
- In 1990, with the opening of Kurimoto Japanese garden, the opened its gates for daily visits



**In 2009, Mawlana Hazir Imam gave a gift of 25 million to UABG. It led to the construction of the Aga Khan Garden in UABG.**

**The construction was  
completed in 2018.**





a picture of Aga khan garden

## THE AGA KHAN GARDEN

- A 4.8-hectare land
- It was adapted to the northern climate of Edmonton.
- Designed by a renowned American landscape architectural firm called Nelson Byrd Woltz
- A contemporary interpretation of Islamic Landscape Architecture.



a picture of Aga khan garden

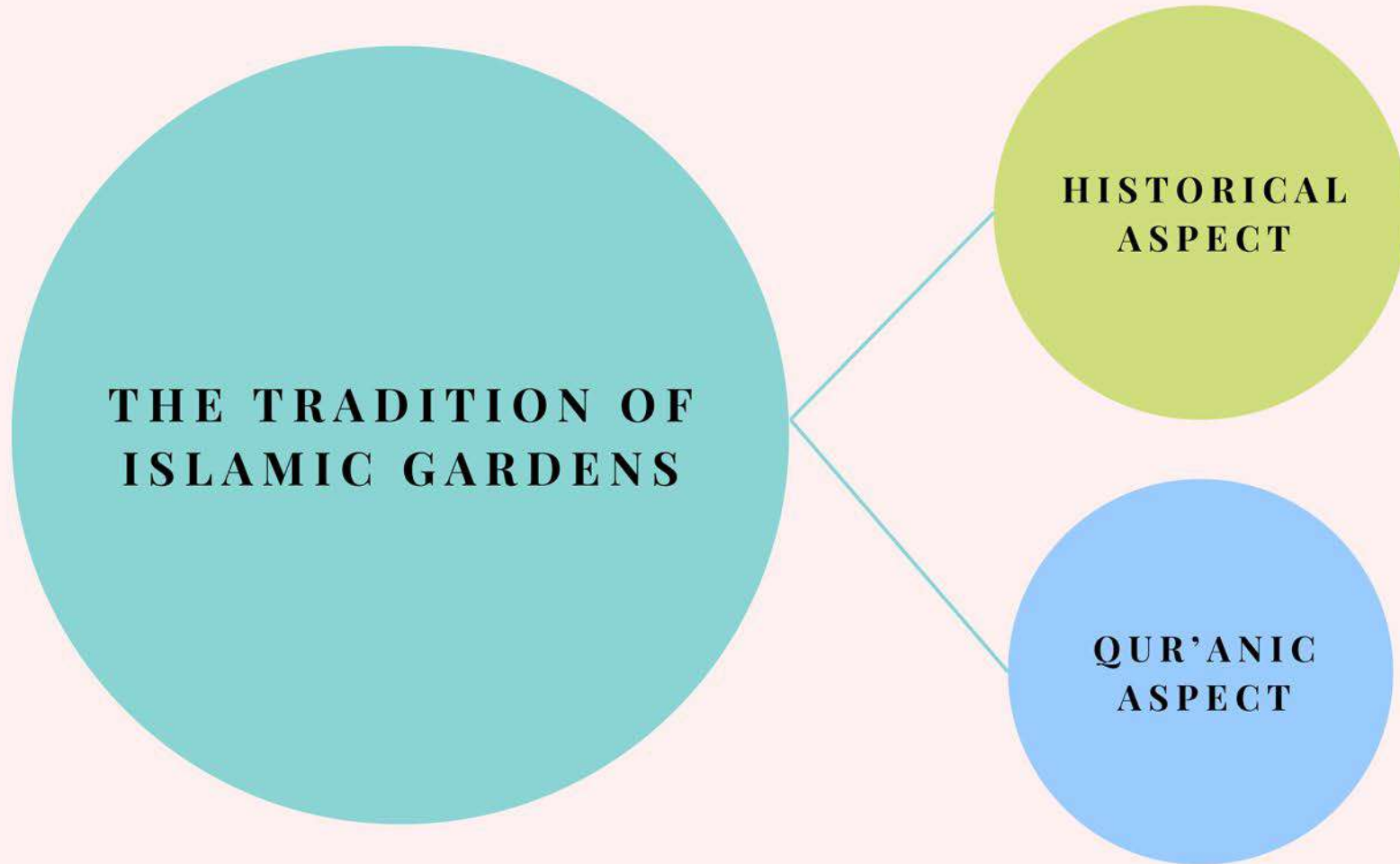
## THE AGA KHAN GARDEN

- A balance of geometry, water, light and shadow.
- The reflection of Islamic ideals
- Interlaced with ideals of order, harmony and spiritual connection.
- Display of reflective pools, limestone terraces, 25,000 trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals and wetland plants

**The inauguration took place  
on 16th October 2018.**



**THE TRADITION OF  
ISLAMIC GARDENS**





**HISTORICAL  
ASPECT**

## QUOTE FROM THE SPEECH

“After all, the great tradition of Islamic gardens has its roots in very different times and places”

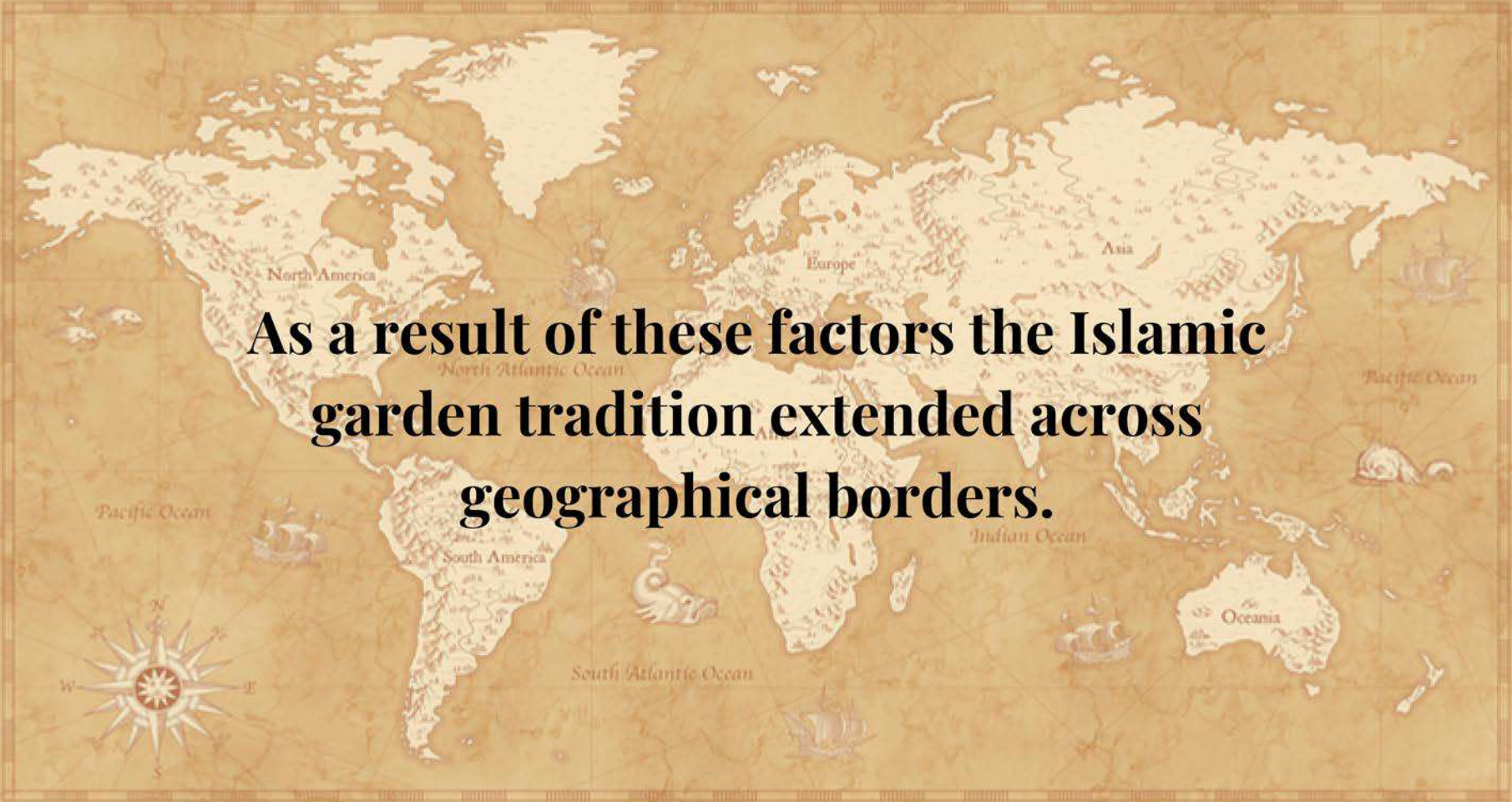
**‘Different places and times’ - a hint to  
diversity within Islamic Garden Culture?**

```
graph LR; A((THE ISLAMIC GARDEN CULTURE SPREAD THROUGH)) --- B(Ruling Muslim Dynasties at the time); A --- C(Trade)
```

**THE ISLAMIC  
GARDEN CULTURE  
SPREAD THROUGH**

Ruling Muslim  
Dynasties at the time

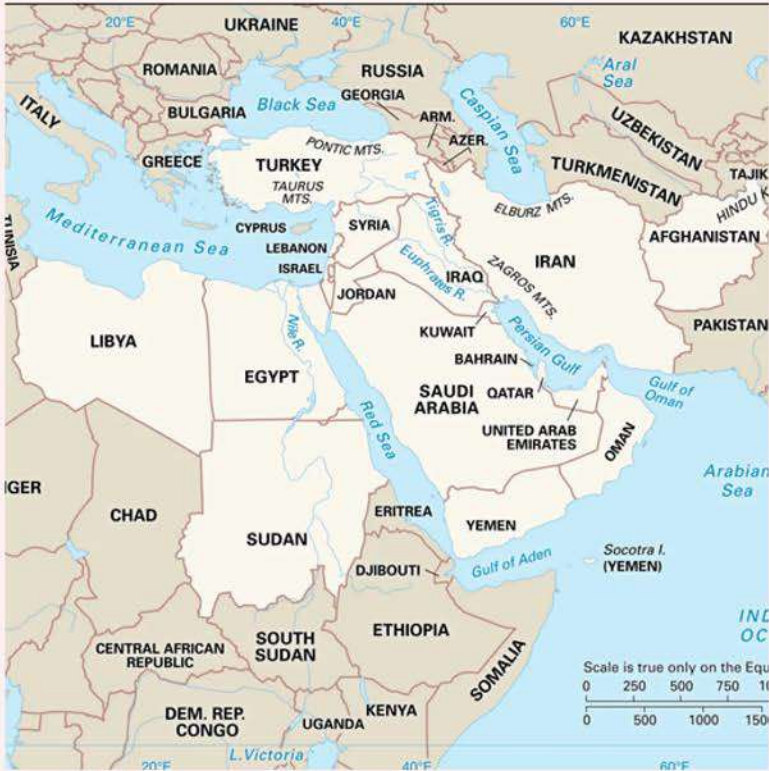
Trade



**As a result of these factors the Islamic garden tradition extended across geographical borders.**

# MIDDLE EAST

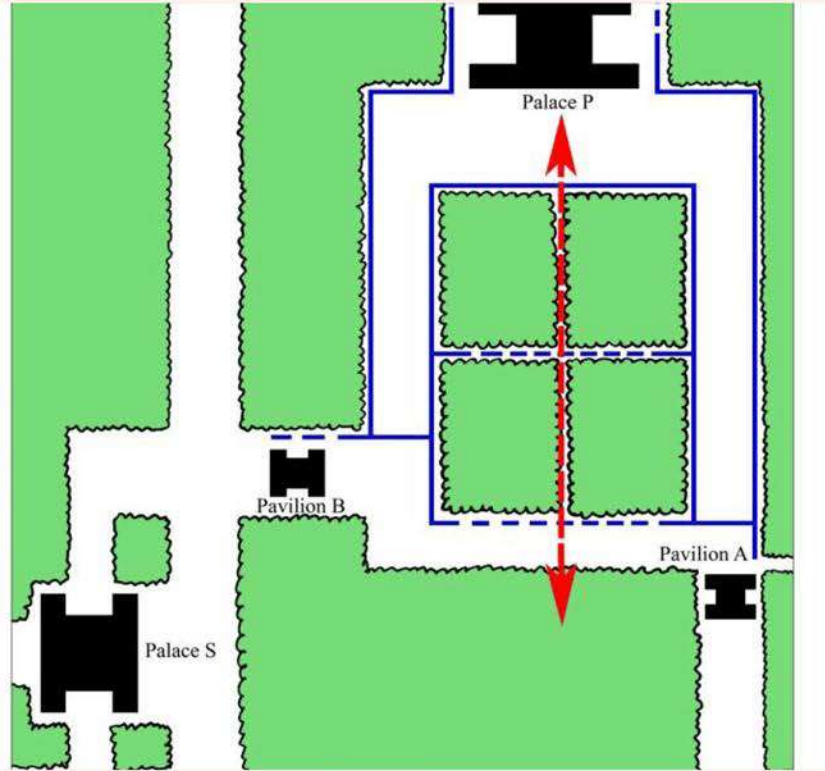
- It all began from the Ancient Middle Eastern gardens.
- They laid the foundation for Greek, Roman, and later Islamic garden designs.
- They were crucial to early civilizations.



The white region is Middle East

## MIDDLE EAST

- The region's arid climate led to the incorporation of **water-efficient decorative fountains**
- The architectural layouts were secluded to ensure privacy and protection from the sun.



Pasargadae: the palace complex (black), the garden (green), the water channels (blue) and the visual axis connecting the palace with the garden (red)



The fountains that run through the Patio de Acequia, the main attraction in Generalife

## SPAIN

- Much later, under Muslim rule, Spanish cities like Granada, Cordoba, and Seville flourished with lush gardens.
- These gardens were adorned with tiles, stucco, and fountains.



# NORTH AFRICA

- North African gardens adapted to their dry climate
- oasis-based agriculture
- Walls and screens of trees enclosed the garden
- Protection from sun and desert winds



Courtyard in the Bahia Palace, Marrakech, Morocco,  
North Africa

## EASTERN AND WESTERN AFRICA

- In 8th century the early Islamic trade introduced Islam to regions like contemporary Mali and Niger.
- Few gardens were found since water was needed for people and livestock



The Great Mosque of Djenné, Timbuktu, Mali, restored by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

## EASTERN AND WESTERN AFRICA

- However, the region's Islamic garden legacy is evident.
- The rammed earth and mud structures of Timbuktu in Mali are still present



The Great Mosque of Djenné, Timbuktu, Mali, restored by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

## PERSIA AND CENTRAL ASIA

- Islamic gardens in Iran and Uzbekistan, such as in Isfahan and Nishapur, Qom and Shiraz often included ornamental tiles, small pointed arches (muqarnas), and timber pavilions with scenic views



The garden view from the Chehel Sotoun pavilion, Isfahan, Iran. The name means '40 columns' – 20 are in the pavilion and 20 are reflected in the pool.

## SOUTH EAST ASIA

- From the 12th century, Islamic rulers in the Malay Peninsula created **Taman** or pleasure gardens.
- They integrated local design features into it such as artificial hills and water pavilions to symbolize mountains and the sea.



Pools at Taman Sari Water Castle, Yogyakarta, Indonesia



Detail of the fountain at Topkapi Palace, Istanbul, Turkey, once the main residence of the Ottoman sultans.

## TURKIYE AND EASTERN EUROPE

- Around 16th century, The Ottoman Empire which back then stretched to North Africa, the Persian Gulf, and Eastern Europe.
- It incorporated local materials and forms in their gardens, developing refined metalwork and unique tile-making and glazing techniques.

## SOUTH ASIA

- The further development of this tradition took place around 500 to 600 years ago in Southern Asia.
- The **Mughal Empire's** gardens in **India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh** featured terraced spaces, palace and tomb gardens, decorative inlay, carving, and long water channels with **sloped waterfalls (chadars)**.



The chadar at Humayun's Tomb, Delhi, India, restored by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

**And finally it reached Western and  
Northern Canada in 2018**



## QUOTE FROM THE SPEECH

“The development of the garden as a symbol of Islamic ideals flourished most magnificently some 500 to 600 years ago – and that happened, of course, in the warmer climates of Southern Asia-

## QUOTE FROM THE SPEECH

And yet, there we were in Edmonton a decade ago, proposing to extend that lovely eastern and southern tradition, at the start of the 21st Century, to the unique natural environment of northern and western Canada. This proposed new garden, to be precise, would be the northern-most Islamic garden ever created.”

# VIDEO



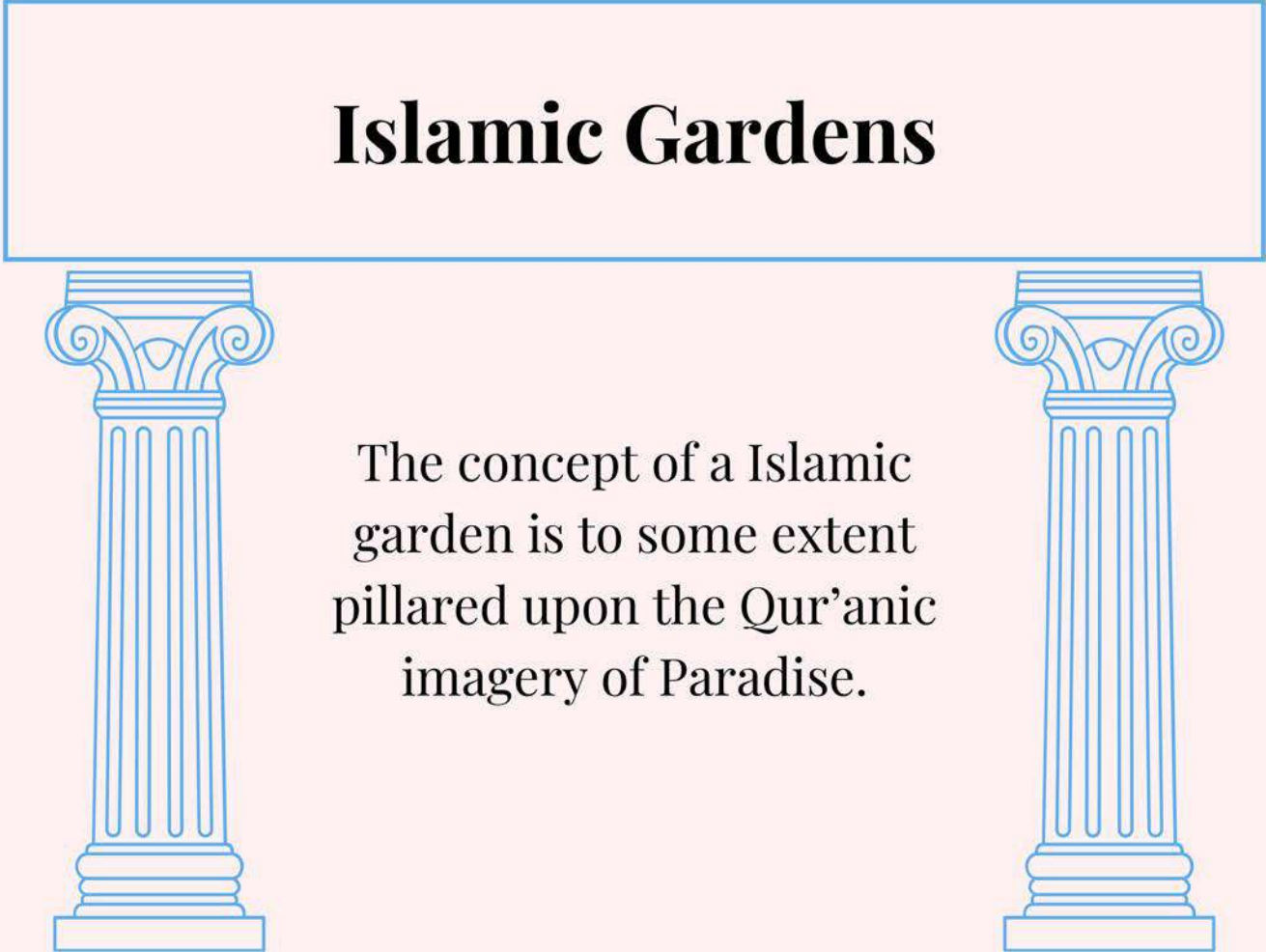


**QUR'ANIC  
ASPECT**

## QUOTE FROM THE SPEECH

“The symbol of the garden as a spiritual symbol goes back to the Holy Qur’an itself - where the garden ideal is mentioned many times.”

# Islamic Gardens

The image features two identical blue line-art columns on either side of the text. Each column has a fluted shaft, a base with three steps, and a capital with two scrolls. A blue rectangular box is positioned at the top, containing the title 'Islamic Gardens'.

The concept of a Islamic garden is to some extent pillared upon the Qur'anic imagery of Paradise.



**‘JANNAT’**

- Qur’an uses this term to allude to Paradise.
- The word itself means a garden.
- The term Jannat and its variations occurs 147 times in Holy Qur’an.



## QUR'ANIC VERSE TRANSLATION

“God has promised to the believers, men and women, gardens underneath which rivers flow, forever therein to dwell, and pure dwelling-places in the gardens of Eden; and God’s good pleasure is the greatest. That is the supreme triumph.” (9:72)

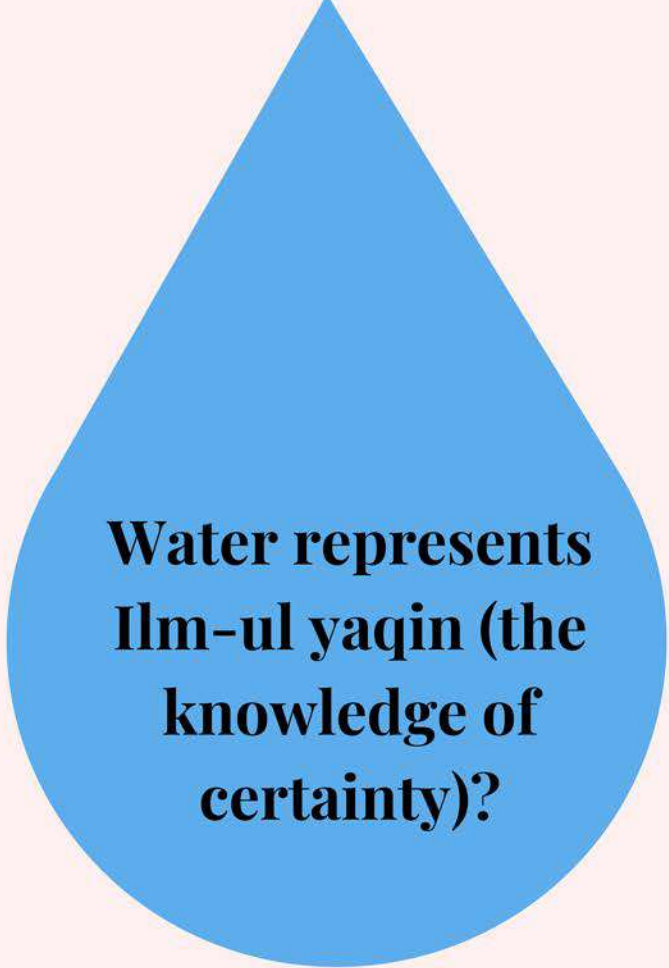
## QUR'ANIC VERSE TRANSLATION

“O you who have believed, turn to Allah with sincere repentance. Perhaps your Lord will remove from you your misdeeds and admit you into gardens beneath which rivers flow [on] the Day when Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believed with him-

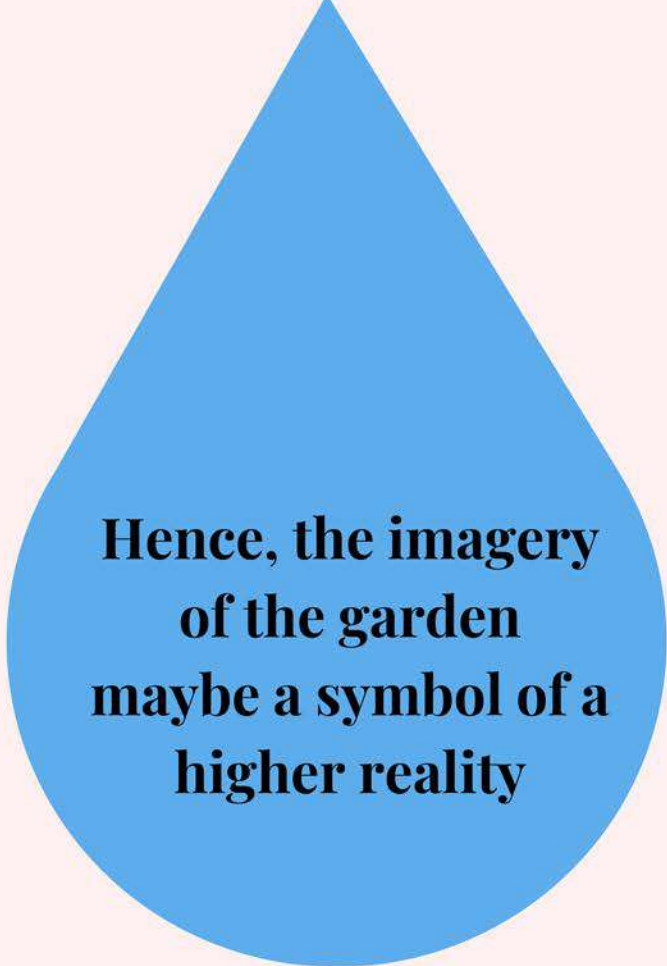
## QUR'ANIC VERSE TRANSLATION

Their light will proceed before them and on their right; they will say, “Our Lord, perfect for us our light and forgive us. Indeed, You are powerful over all things.” (66:8)

**Rivers flow underneath this garden?**



**Water represents  
Ilm-ul yaqin (the  
knowledge of  
certainty)?**

A large, solid blue teardrop-shaped graphic is centered on the page. Inside the teardrop, the text "Hence, the imagery of the garden maybe a symbol of a higher reality" is written in a bold, black, serif font, arranged in four lines.

**Hence, the imagery  
of the garden  
maybe a symbol of a  
higher reality**

“The real gardens and flowers are within, they are in man’s heart and not outside.” – Jalāl ad-Dīn Rūmī

**QUR'ANIC VERSE TRANSLATION**

“Verily in the remembrance  
of God do hearts find  
peace”(13:28).



## QUR'ANIC VERSE TRANSLATION

“Is the description of Paradise, which the righteous are promised, wherein are rivers of water unaltered, rivers of milk the taste of which never changes, rivers of wine delicious to those who drink, and rivers of purified honey, in which they will have from all [kinds of] fruits and forgiveness from their Lord, like [that of] those who abide eternally in the Fire and are given to drink scalding water that will sever their intestines?” (47:15)

# The symbol of 4 rivers?

**WATER**

**MILK**

**WINE**

**HONEY**

## The symbol of 4 rivers?

**WATER**

**MILK**

**WINE**

**HONEY**

- These rivers maybe represent different stages of ta'wil

## The symbol of 4 rivers?

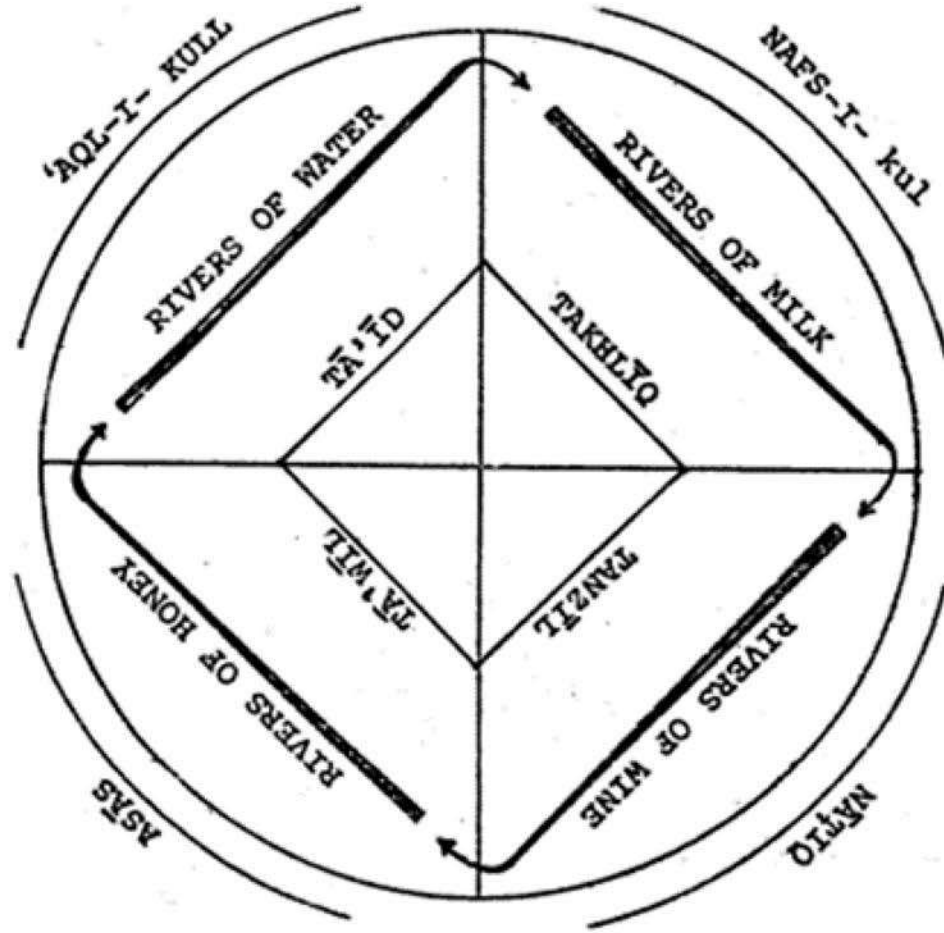
**WATER**

**MILK**

**WINE**

**HONEY**

- These rivers maybe represent different stages of ta'wil
- The book 'Diagrams of wisdom' has shown how rivers of water, milk, wine and honey represent Ta'id, Takhliq, Tanzil and Ta'wil respectively through the means of a diagram.



# The symbol of 4 rivers?

**WATER**

**MILK**

**WINE**

**HONEY**

- These rivers also hint at the Four-fold Design and the deep symbolism of the number four in Islamic paradise.

# The symbol of 4 rivers?

**WATER**

**MILK**

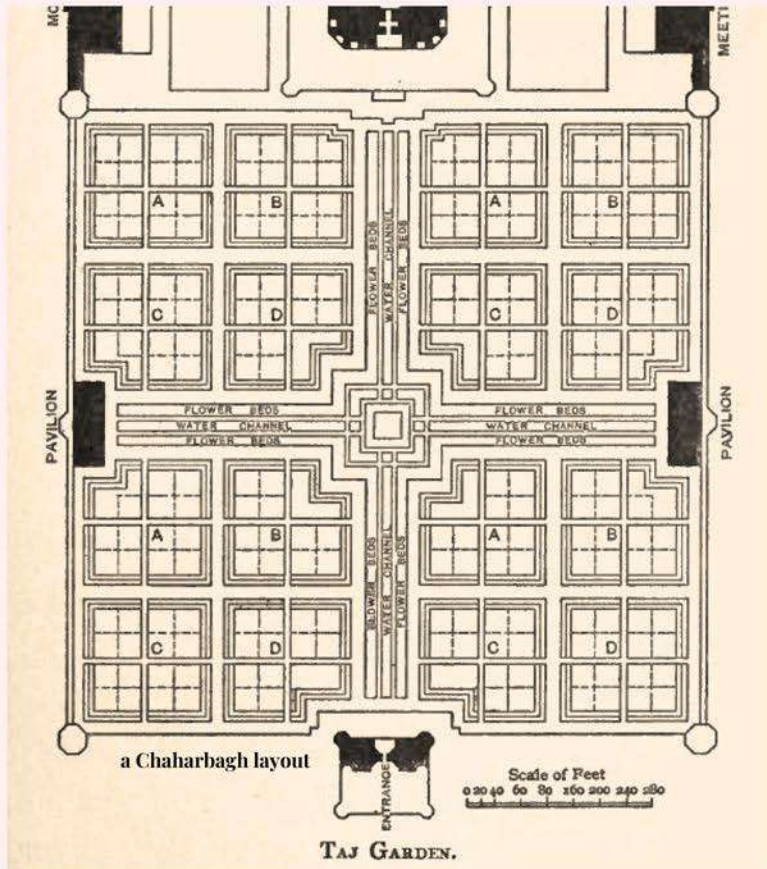
**WINE**

**HONEY**

- These rivers also hint at the Four-fold Design and the deep symbolism of the number four in Islamic paradise.
- it can hint at the four fundamental principles of religion, known as Usul-i din:
- Universal Intellect, Universal Soul, Natīq, and Asās.

## CHAHARBAGH: -

- It is an architectural feature.
- It originated in Persia around 6th century.
- It is a quadrilateral layout, divided by walkways or flowing water into four smaller parts.
- It was also used in Taj Mahal.







**Chaharbagh in Aga Khan Garden, Alberta**

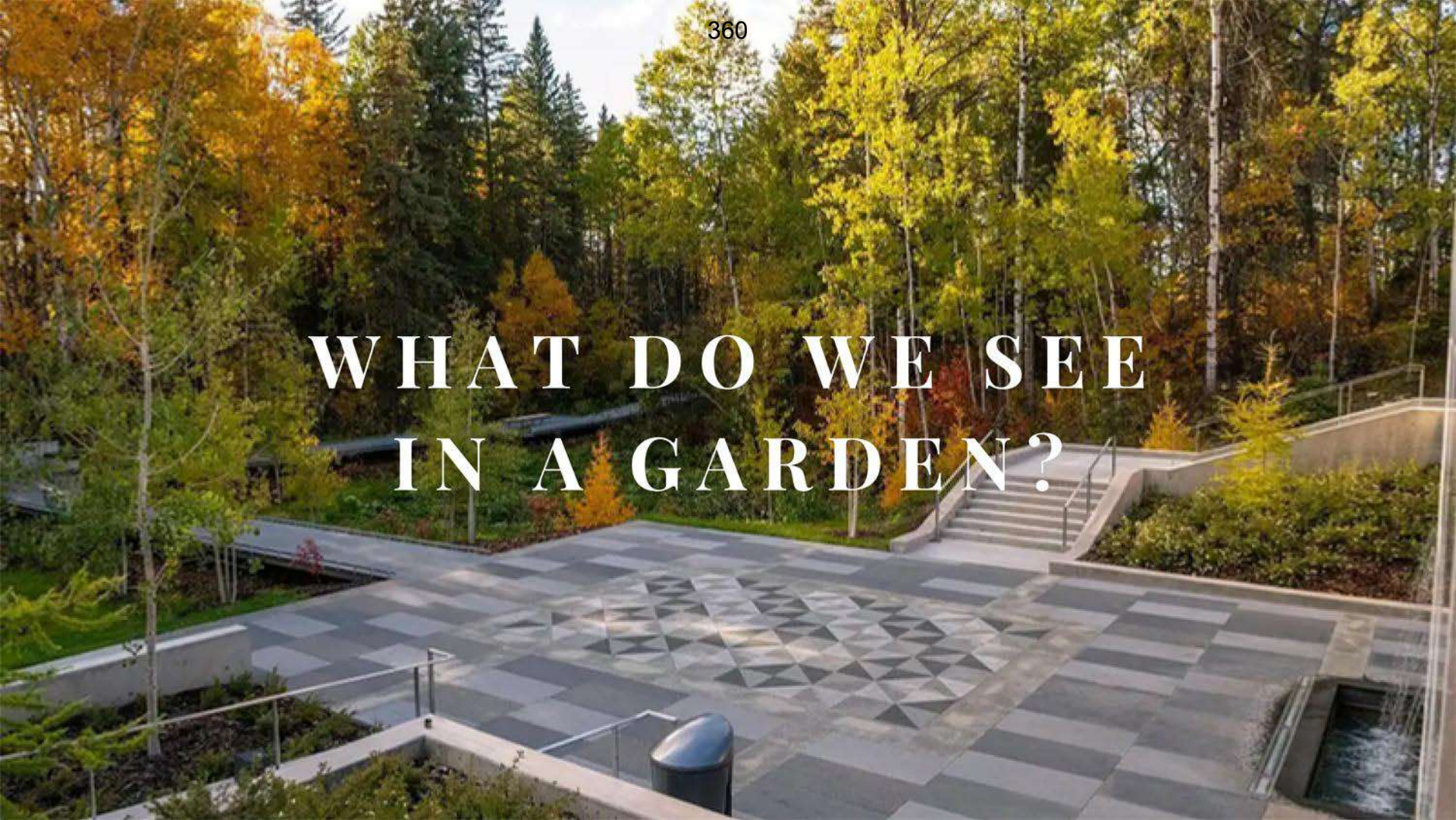
## **CHAHARBAGH: -**

- It is not just an aesthetic choice; it was inspired by the four gardens of Paradise described in Surat al-Rahman.
- This shows how symbolic the tradition of Islamic gardens is, particularly in relation to the Qur'anic imagery of paradise.

## QUOTE FROM THE SPEECH

“Down through many centuries,  
Islamic culture has continued to see  
the garden as a very special place,  
where **the human meets  
further proof of the divine**”

WHAT DO WE SEE  
IN A GARDEN?



# WHAT DO WE SEE IN A GARDEN?





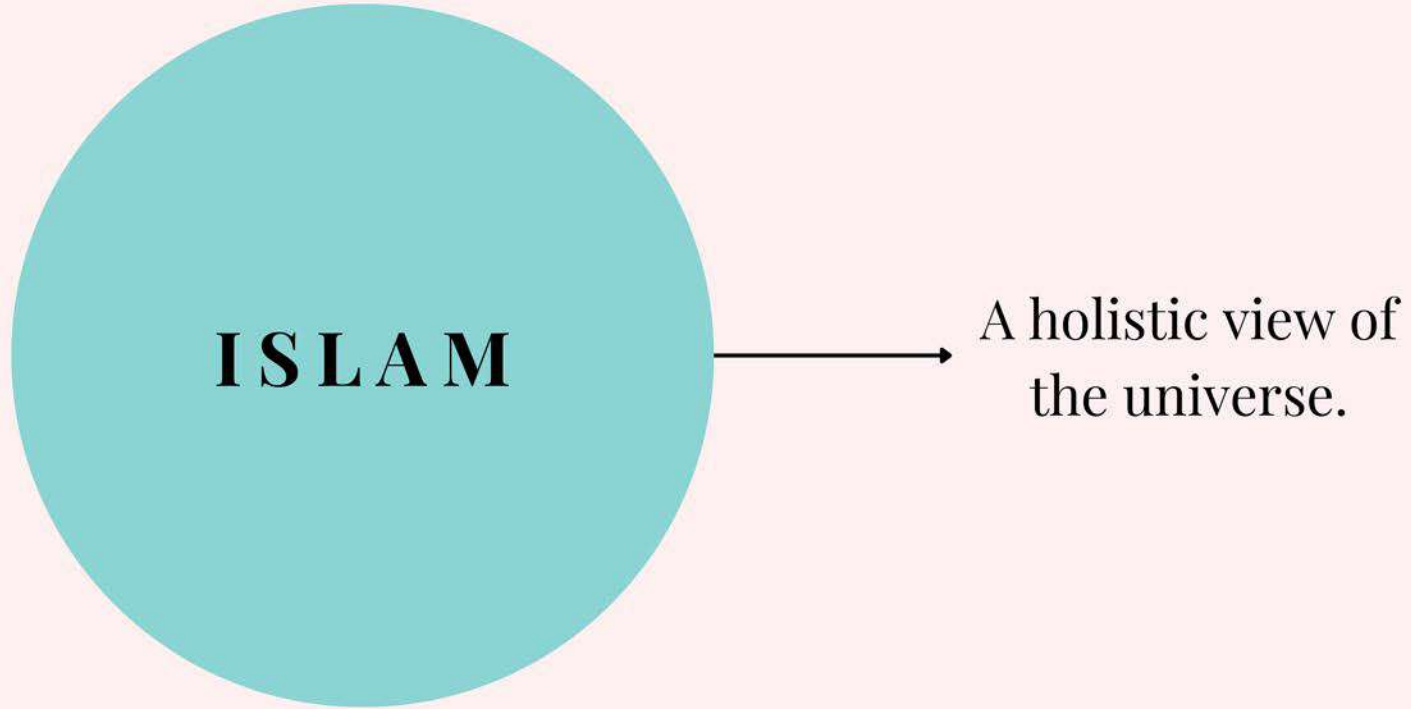
WHAT DO WE SEE  
IN A GARDEN?



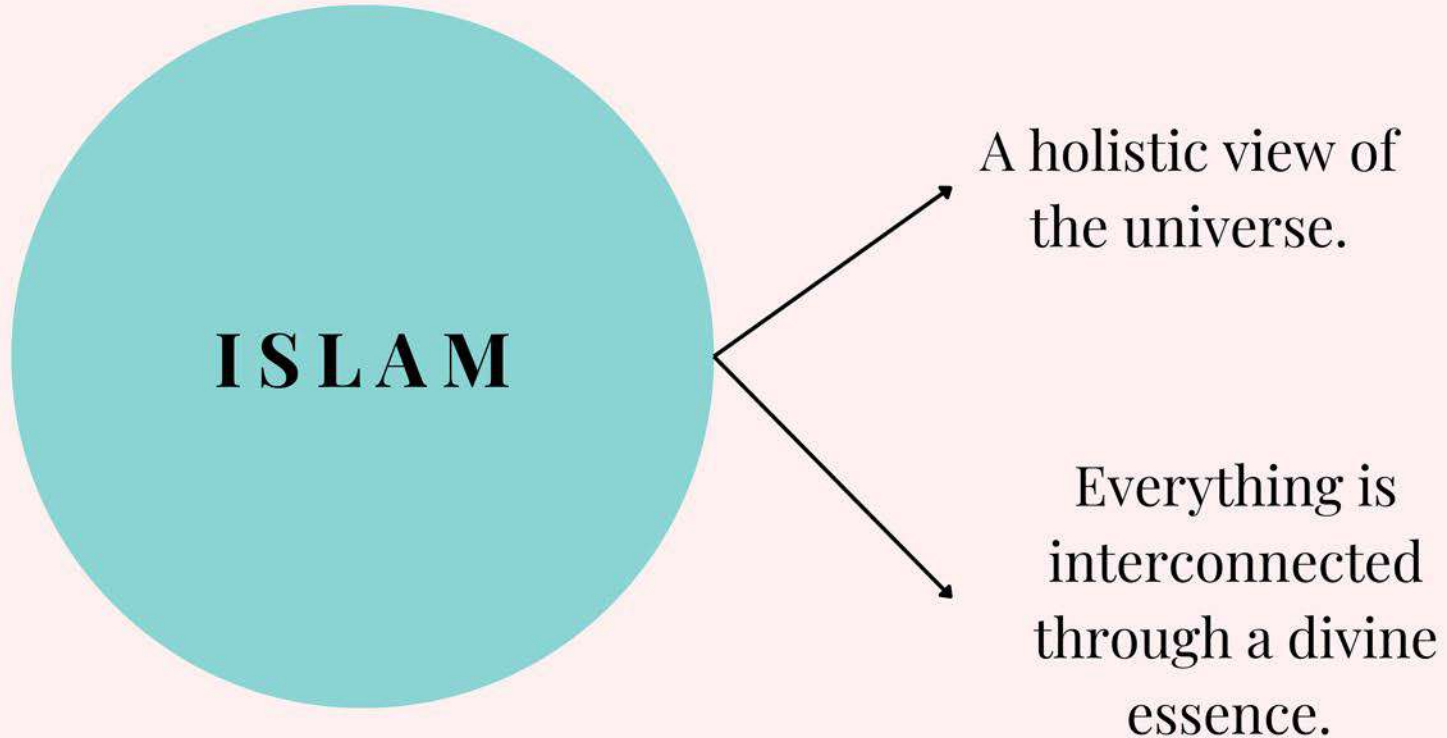
HOW DOES THE  
NATURE GIVE US ANY  
PROOFS OF DIVINE?

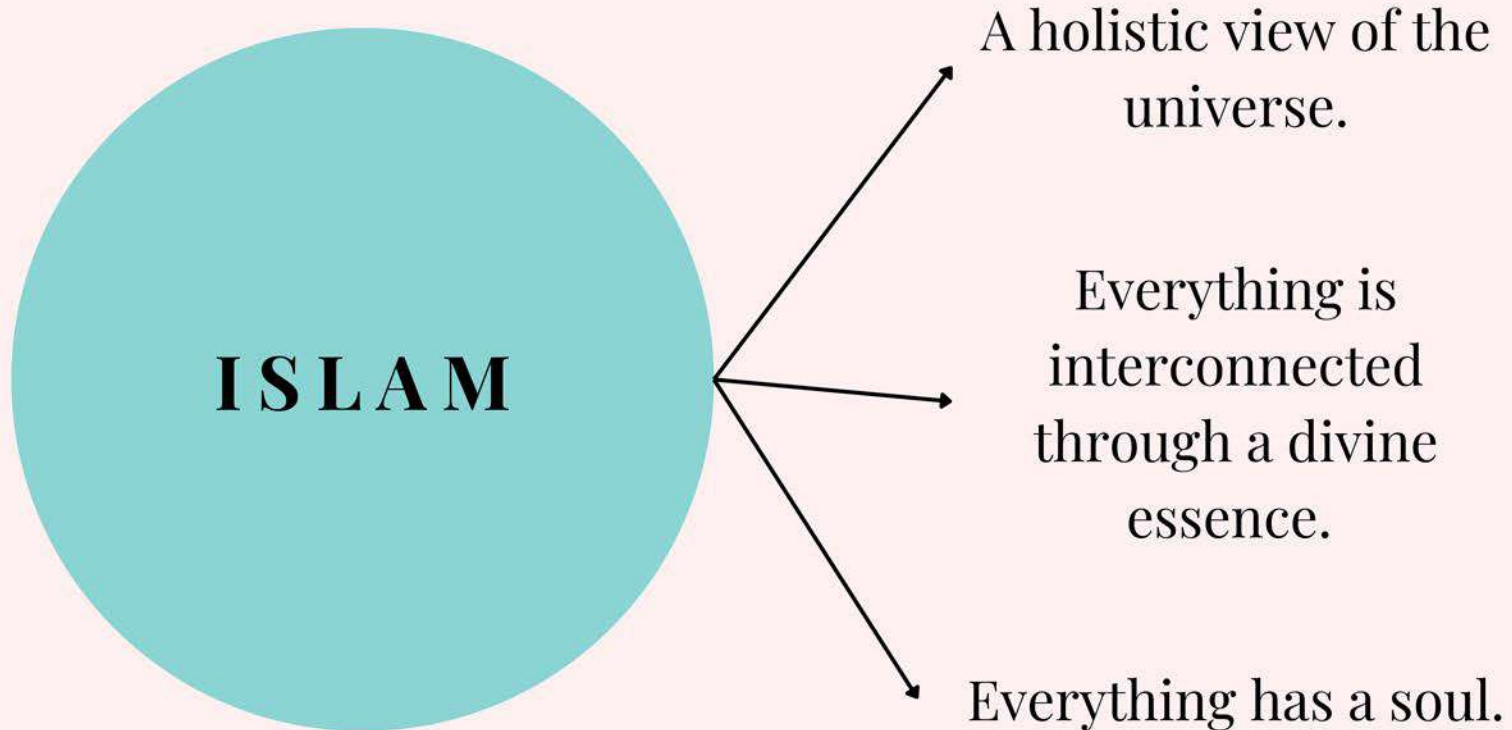


**ISLAM**









## IMAM SULTAN MUHAMMAD SHAH'S QUOTE

“Islamic doctrine goes farther than the other great religions for it proclaims the presence of the soul, perhaps minute but nevertheless existing in an embryonic state in all existence in matter, in animals, trees, and space itself. Every individual, every molecule, every atom has its own spiritual relationship with the All-Powerful Soul of God.”



A sense of unity  
and reverence

Importance  
of living in  
harmony

Deeper  
appreciation  
for life

We move and  
have our being  
in God.

## QUR'ANIC VERSE TRANSLATION

“It is Allah Who has raised the heavens without pillars—as you can see— the established Himself on the Throne. He has subjected the sun and the moon, each orbiting for an appointed term. He conducts the whole affair. He makes the signs clear so that you may be certain of the meeting with your Lord. And He is the One Who spread out the earth and placed firm mountains and rivers upon it, and created fruits of every kind in pairs. He covers the day with night. Surely in this are signs for those who reflect.” [Ar-Ra’d, 13:2-3]

DO WE HAVE  
ANY RESPONSIBILITY  
TOWARDS NATURE?



## A QUOTE FROM THE SPEECH

“For a central part of the garden tradition is the high calling of human stewardship, our responsibility to honour, to protect, and to share the gifts of the natural world.”

As humans, it is our responsibility  
to ensure that the Earth can  
sustainably support our current  
and future generations.



## QUR'ANIC VERSE TRANSLATION

- And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, “Indeed, I will place in the earth **a viceroy (khalifah).**”; They said, “Will You place upon it one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You” Allah said, “Indeed, I know that which you do not know” (2:30)

# **The Nature of Hazrat Adam's ( A.S) vicegerency**

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- Stewardship of all aspects of God's creation
- Spiritual + Material

# The Nature of Hazrat Adam's ( A.S) vicegerency

- Stewardship of all aspects of God's creation
- Spiritual + Material
- There is **NO DICHOTOMY** in Islam

# **The Nature of Hazrat Adam's ( A.S) vicegerency**

- Mawlana Hazir Imam sets an example for all of us
- We should look at his contribution in preserving the natural heritage and ecosystems

## A QUOTE FROM THE SPEECH

- “In Canada and in many other places, the Aga Khan Trust for Culture has made a major commitment to creating and renewing important **green spaces** in recent years. We can look back on ten recent successes in places ranging **from Cairo to Zanzibar, from Toronto to Kabul, from Dushanbe in Tajikistan to Bamako in Mali.**”

## A QUOTE FROM THE SPEECH

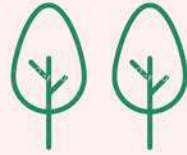
“In 2018 alone, I helped to inaugurate three such garden projects – **in London, in Delhi**, and now here **in Alberta**. But the story does not end here. In fact, the story of Canadian Islamic gardens itself is not yet completed. Our plans are now advancing, in fact, for a new park to be developed a few hundred miles southwest of here, **in Burnaby, British Columbia.**”



**8.3 million**

The Aga Khan Foundation planted  
8.3 million trees in 2023.





## 13 Parks

AKDN has created and rehabilitated 13 parks and gardens and receives over 3.9 million visitors each year.



**1.7 billion**

AKDN generates 1.7 billion kWh of  
clean electricity per year.



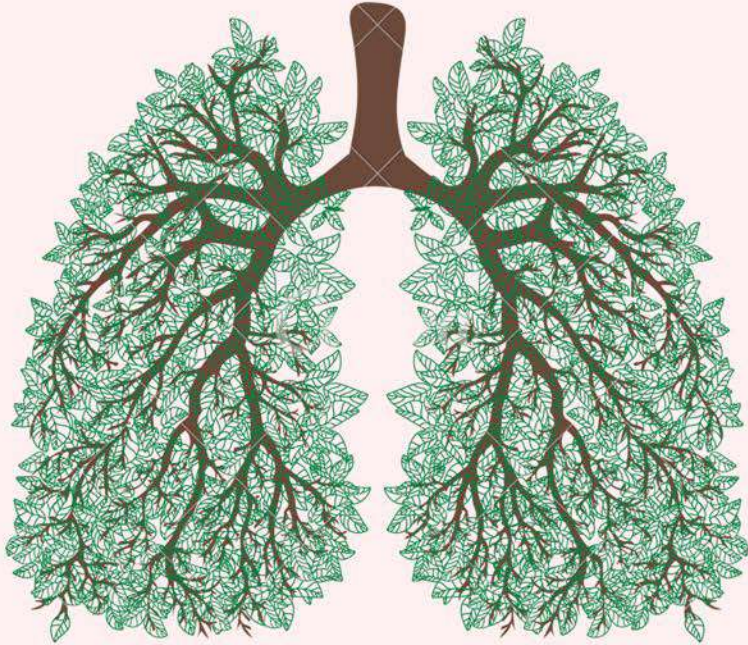
**50,000**

The Aga Khan Agency for Habitat has retrofitted 50,000 private dwellings for energy efficiency and hazard mitigation



**Air pollution in Cairo**

- In many of the cities green space has often been overwhelmed by growth, migration from the countryside and a lack of planning.
- In Cairo, one estimate suggested that there was an average of less than one square metre of green space per inhabitant.



AKDN provides a “green lung” for such cities and their inhabitants to counteract pollution, providing them education about plants and a place to exercise, socialise and relax.

## A QUOTE FROM THE SPEECH

“Gardens in this context can be seen not as imitations of nature but as humanity’s interpretations of nature ...”

**What is the need to interpret nature?**

## **What is the need to interpret nature?**

- To express creativity, values, and cultural perspectives.



## **What is the need to interpret nature?**

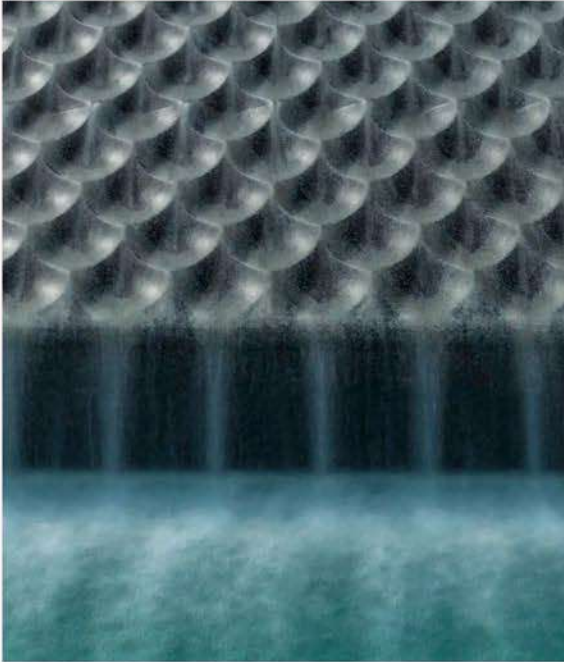
- To reflect our spiritual beliefs, aesthetic preferences, and societal ideals
- To convey a sense of harmony, or symbolism

## **What is the need to interpret nature?**

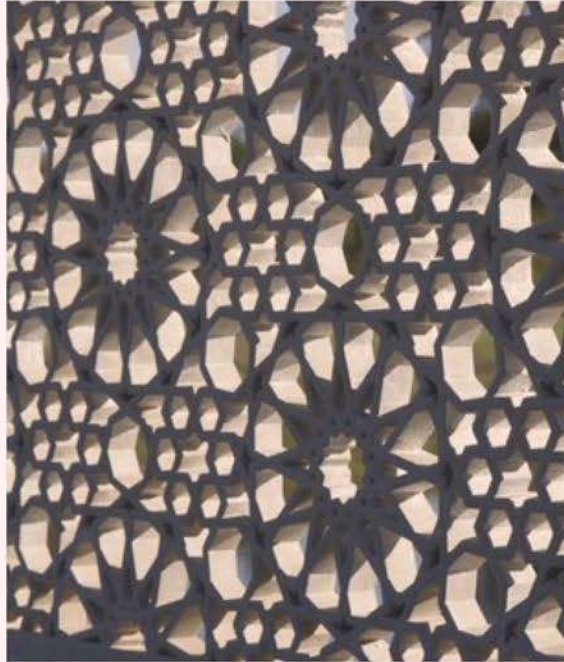
- To foster a sense of connection, contemplation, and even stewardship toward nature.

# The Islamic garden blends:

Water



Geometry



Light and shadow





## REFLECTING POOLS

- water is shaped into a granite reflecting pools
- symbolism of the mirror
- It mirrors sky, trees, and one's own image
- It can remind us of a famous prophetic tradition:
- **Man `arafa nafsahu faqad `arafa Rabbahu**

TRANSLATION OF A  
PROPHETIC TRADITION

“One who knows oneself  
knows their Lord.”



# REFLECTION POOLS

- This concept is also explored in the **Ginan Kesari Sinha** by Pīr Shams where a lion cub raised among goats only realizes its true identity after seeing its reflection in a pond

# FOUNTAIN

- The constant flow of water reminds us of the concept of barakaat.
- Barakaat hints at never ending nature of divine blessings just like the perpetual flow of water in a fountain



Woodland Seep Fountain in Aga Khan Garden, Alberta



**Garden - a profound fusion of natural elements with human creativity**



## A QUOTE FROM ANOTHER SPEECH

“The Garden has for many centuries served as a central element in Muslim culture. The Holy Qur’an, itself, portrays the Garden as a central symbol of a spiritual ideal – a place where human creativity and Divine majesty are fused, where the ingenuity of humanity and the beauty of nature are productively connected. Gardens are a place where the ephemeral meets the eternal, and where the eternal meets the hand of man.” (Toronto, May 2015)

**Aga Khan Garden - a  
symbol for pluralism?**

# Pluralism?

Cultural identities don't  
just coexist but interact

# Pluralism?

Cultural identities don't  
just coexist but interact

Principles of inclusion  
and unity

# Pluralism?

Islamic thought

Canadian Tradition

## A QUOTE FROM A FARMAN

- And the Qur'an is very specific; there is a specific Ayat in the Qur'an which says that Allah made the human race, the totality of the human race, from one soul. So keep in mind that we need to build these relationships.

And everything we can do to build peace and happiness, amongst communities, is something which we must try and do. (Mumbai, India: 17 May 2008)

## TRANSLATION OF A QUR'ANIC VERSE

“O humanity! Be mindful of your Lord Who created you from a single soul, and from it He created its mate, and through both He spread countless men and women. And be mindful of Allah—in Whose Name you appeal to one another—and ‘honour’ family ties. Surely Allah is ever Watchful over you.” [Surah An-Nisa, 4:1]

# **Aga Khan Garden - a symbol for pluralism?**

Adaption of Canadian climate

East + West



# **Aga Khan Garden - a symbol for pluralism?**

Rose collection in the garden  
contains a nod to the garden's  
provincial heritage

# **Aga Khan Garden - a symbol for pluralism?**

Rose collection in the garden  
contains a nod to the garden's  
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The Canadian stonework

# **Aga Khan Garden - a symbol for pluralism?**

Rose collection in the garden  
contains a nod to the garden's  
provincial heritage.

The Canadian stonework

The inclusion of an  
Amphitheatre

## A QUOTE FROM ANOTHER SPEECH

“For one thing, the old friendships we renew today are especially meaningful. We look back, of course, to the welcome in Alberta of members of the Ismaili community who settled here almost a half century ago, often in very difficult circumstances. And those bonds of welcome have been continually renewed through the years, especially through our rewarding partnerships with the University of Alberta.”

## CANADA'S ROLE IN ISMAILI HISTORY



# **Aga Khan Garden - a symbol for pluralism?**

a renewal of the bonds of  
welcome between the Ismaili  
community and Canada.

# CONCLUSION

**THE END.**





# Major themes from 33 speeches of Hazir Imam

- \*\*\*\* Themes in almost half of his 33 speeches & few selected messages
- **Poverty**
    - \* gap between rich and poor; housing, sanitation and micro finance
    - \* isolation and marginalization of rural communities
    - \* quality of life – HI quote ‘Islamic value of responsibility to the poor and weak in society’; ‘Muslims called upon to improve physical condition of the world’
    - \* requires international mutual effort in combating global poverty
  - **Diversity**
    - \* ‘a Divine gift’ (Includes cultural, ethnic, religion and linguistic)
    - \* ‘Diversity a force for good’ ; ‘not to dilute self identity but increase self knowledge’
    - \* ‘fear globalization led to cultural homogeneity, loss of identities’; chronic conflicts
    - \* ‘not about erasing differences’ but learning from each other , ‘maintain cultural integrity’
    - Refers several times to diversity in Ummah and own community
  - **Pluralism and Cosmopolitan Ethics**
    - \* **“created from a single soul” \*\*\***
    - \* ‘rejection of Pluralism will lead to conflict and a threat to West’
    - \* Pluralism ‘welcomes complexities of human society; ‘a value for all peoples’; adheres to all faiths’
    - ‘Does not mean elimination of differences but embracing...’... ‘Pluralism is misunderstood’
    - \* Qur’anic principle of Pluralism

## Themes (contd)

\*\*\*

Themes in almost a third of his speeches & few selected messages

### ■ Revival of Islamic heritage:

- \* 'Create environments that reverberate spiritual life' - arts, traditions
- \* music 'a strong cultural heritage'
- \* Islamic **architecture**\*\*\* (inspire, reflect spirituality of Islam and physical integrity ); kinaesthetic experience of Islamic buildings ; 'powerful agent for change'
- \* 'Value of garden spaces'; 'a wonderful journey of refreshment and discovery'; contemplation and reflection; 'symbol of divine blessing'
- \* 'flow of refreshing water a reminder of divine blessing'

- ### ■ Role of media:
- \* lack of good journalism, media images, crises reporting
  - \* profit oriented; 'know its historical but ignore root causes of conflicts'
  - \* Freedom **of** press/ religion/individual (**not from**) & Individual accountability
  - \* The West image of Muslims through media

### ■ Relationship between Muslims and the West:

- \* role of media
- \* critical to global peace and security
- \* **Clash of civilization Vs clash of Ignorance** \*\*\*

# Themes (contd)

\*\*\* Themes in almost third of speeches and few selected messages

## ▪ Failure of Democracy :

- \* oscillations between promise and disappointments
- \* crises of constitutions and governance
- \* competence in governments & how to make democracy work, “no safe world without world safe for democracy”
- \* public capacity to deal with complexities in societies; public integrity
- \* engagement of international community

## ▪ Education:

- \* Islamic history of academic learning, goes back more than a 1000 years
- \* Primary at expense of Secondary & Further education
- \* Lack of training/education on governance, lack of competence
- \* ‘importance of Academic freedom’; ‘an intellectual search to understand Allah’s creation’
- \* ‘A force for co-operation and healing’;
- \* Ignorance/lack of education of Islamic history and the Golden Age of Scientists, Philosophers.....West developed with Knowledge from Islamic scholars

## Themes (contd)

\*\* In 6 or more speeches & few selected messages

### ▪ Islam, his role& Imamat :

- \* educated in West from a Muslim family, direct descendant from Holy PM & Hazrat Ali
- \* explains history and Sunni-Shia divide
- \* 'colonization broke the concept of Muslim statehood'
- \* '**No dichotomy in Islam**'\*\*\* between faith and society, spirit and body are one, man and nature are one

### ▪ Civil society:

- \* critical role to promote commitment to pluralism, education, values 'no government can do it all'
- \* voice for change
- \* Meritocracy in civil society and challenges for them

## Themes (contd)

- \*\* In 6 or more speeches & few selected messages
  - **Islamic Values:**
    - \* Tolerance shared with other religions
    - \* Pillars of Islamic Values – social justice, equity, humility and generosity
    - \* Co-existence/inclusiveness during Fatimid period between Christians, Jews and Muslims
  - **AKDN:**
    - \* Ethics of Public Private partnership (PPP) reflected in work, approach and values re poverty, pluralism, diversity, education and healthcare to better serve God's creation
    - \* Addresses the balance of poor medical care in rural areas
    - \* Awards for recognition of concepts
    - \* Not philanthropy but according to Islam teachings
- \* In 3 or more speeches & few selected messages
  - **Renovations:**
    - \* challenges
    - \* catalyst for cultural renewals, preserve cultural heritage
    - \* springboard for socio-economic growth
  - **Impact of migration:**
    - \* accounts for two-thirds of population in 30 OECD countries
    - \* societies becoming multi-cultural/pluralistic but not in spirit

## Themes (contd)

### Other themes:

- \* Climate change and mutating viruses
- \* Voluntarism- not philanthropy, but enlightened self-fulfilment
- \* Impact of fast socio economic growth
- \* Role of communications technology – ‘greater connectivity does not mean greater connections’;
- \* Developing sustainability in medical professions and professional careers for women

And finally:

Hazir Imam's overwhelming generosity and humility in every single speech acknowledging, thanking Governments, partners, donors and the audience.....

Ya Ali Madad

# Background Information and Context

- Peshawar speech – History of this area of the world
- Restoration of Humayun’s tomb – Mughal history
- University of Sankore – History of Muslim West Africa – Mali (Emperor Mansa Kankou Moussa by the architect Abu Ishaq as-Saheli.)
- Evora Speech – History of Islam in Andalusia
- Speeches on health – many background facts about countries and their levels of healthcare etc.
- Ismaili Centre, Dubai – we learnt about the UAE and its constituents
- Gardens in Islam (One of the great questions facing humanity today is how we can honour what is distinctive about our separate identities – and, at the same time, welcome a diversity of identities as positive elements in our lives.)
- Qur’anic verses (The Holy Qur’an, itself, portrays the Garden as a central symbol of a spiritual ideal – a place where human creativity and Divine majesty are fused, where the ingenuity of humanity and the beauty of nature are productively connected. Gardens are a place where the ephemeral meets the eternal, and where the eternal meets the hand of man.) and saying of Mawlana `Ali
- And many more!



# Mubarak Farman on the Occasion of the Inauguration of the Commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee, Aiglemont, 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017

“... much time and effort have been devoted to strengthen existing institutions and programmes and also to develop new ones. This endeavour was based on the ever-increasing appreciation of the fact that social change and the improvement in the quality of life of various communities around the world are driven by the capacities of civil society. Increasingly the role of government is expected to be an enabler for civil society to grow positively.

Fortunately, in many of the countries where the Jamat is living, both the public and private sectors are recognising the need and the benefit to invigorate civil society, and it is within that context, since the last ten years, that the Aga Khan Development Network has expanded its activities.

An important facet of modern development thinking is that societies can best strengthen themselves by mobilising their own dynamic forces rather than relying on external support and direction. The AKDN, because of the multiplicity of its activities in economics, health, education, cultural activities and others, is exceptionally well-placed to enhance the development of civil society in many countries of the world.”

Farman contd.

“My Jamat should always remember that ours is an intellectual tradition which premisses the pursuit of knowledge that is to be used better to understand Allah’s creation and for the good of larger society. *Live your faith through acquiring knowledge with which to help others.*”