



The research project 'The Challenge of Islam: Young Bangladeshis, Marriage and Family in Bangladesh and the UK' began in January 2008 and will finish in March 2011. This major research project on young Bangladeshis in Bangladesh and in the UK is based at Cardiff University and is funded by an ESRC research grant for £348,636,50,

We acknowledge the support of Muslim Council of Wales for its generous support in helping us organise this event. We also acknowledge the support from the Centre for Study of Islam in the UK, Muslim Youth Wales, Cardiff University Islamic Society and the School of History, Archaeology and Religion, Cardiff University.



BAHAR

Research Group on
the Body, Health
& Religion

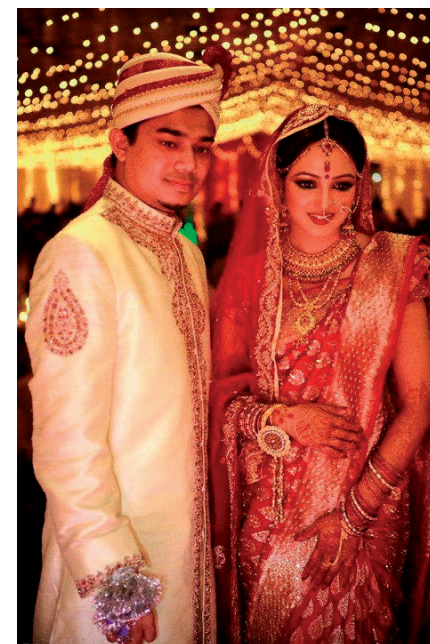
BAHAR is a network of researchers on the body, health and religion. BAHAR stands for the Body, Health and Religion, but the word *bahar* also refers to the spring season, youth and vitality in Urdu, Farsi, Turkish, and other Asian languages. Our members are scholars of anthropology, religion, theatre, psychology, and other academic disciplines, as well as people working with the body in dance, movement and therapy, and creative artists in words, music, the visual arts and other dimensions. The BAHAR network has more than sixty members in many different countries including the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Malta, Canada and Australia. The network is directed by Geoffrey Samuel.

Current projects include work on Tibetan longevity practices, on Tibetan medicine, on Islam and young Bangladeshis in Bangladesh and the UK, and on the Taff Valley in South Wales.

For further information see

<http://www.bodyhealthreligion.org.uk/BAHAR/>
or email Geoffrey Samuel at SamuelG@cardiff.ac.uk

ISLAM, LOVE AND MARRIAGE: NEW CHOICES IN A NEW WORLD



Wednesday 23rd March, 2011 5-8 p.m.

Birt Acres Lecture Theatre, Bute Building,
Cardiff University, King Edward VII
Avenue, CF10 3NB

Public Workshop to Present Findings from
ESRC-funded research project on Islam and
Young Bangladeshis

Introduction

Our research project, 'The Challenge of Islam: Young Bangladeshis, Marriage and Family in Bangladesh and the UK,' is now drawing to a close. Today's workshop is intended to present some of our findings to the general public. It also includes presentations by prominent figures from the Muslim community on related topics, and offers an opportunity for public discussion of our findings.

Marriage and the family are central but largely neglected areas in understanding contemporary developments in Islam. They have been little studied in comparison with more dramatic issues such as terrorism or veiling, but we believe that they have much to tell us about the appeal of contemporary versions of Islam. These new forms of Islam, while seeking to be true to the Islam of the Qur'an and Hadith, offer solutions to the problems faced by contemporary Muslim families in a rapidly changing world. In particular, they provide a model of personal identity that centres the individual's life around a vision of marriage, family and community.

Our study examined how marriage and the family are changing among young female and male Bangladeshi Muslims in the UK and in Bangladesh. We are particularly interested in how young Bangladeshis before and after marriage think of themselves in relation to their future or actual husband or wife, and to their wider family network and community. We also looked at the role that both secular, Westernised images of the nuclear family and romantic love, and new forms of Islam, may have in forming their ideas.

A preliminary report on the project may be found on our website at <http://www.bodyhealthreligion.org.uk/BAHAR/Islam-Bangladeshis.html>,

along with further information about the project and forthcoming publications.

Programme

5 p.m. Arrival and Networking

5.30 p.m. *Welcome*

Saleem Kidwai (Muslim Council of Wales)

5.40 p.m. *Introduction to the Project*

Professor Geoffrey Samuel (Cardiff University)

6.00 p.m. *Islamic Marriage: A Haven in an Uncertain World*

Santi Rozario (Cardiff University)

6.20 p.m. *Comments on the Project Findings*

Sophie Gilliat-Ray (Cardiff University)

6.30 p.m. Break for Prayers and Refreshments

6.50 p.m. *Love, Culture and Confusion: How Young British Bangladeshis Navigate through Relationship*

Ajmal Masroor (Imam; Director, Communities in Action; Co-Founder, Barefoot Institute, London)

7.10 p.m. *Love and Marriage in Islam: The Secular and the Spiritual*

Shaykh Faiz ul Aqtab Siddiqi (Principal, Hijaz College, Nuneaton; Head of the Naqshbandi Hijazi Sufi Order; barrister)

7.30 p.m. *General Discussion*

Introduced and chaired by Mohammed Mansur Ali (Cardiff University)

7.55 p.m. *Closing Remarks*

Saleem Kidwai (Muslim Council of Wales)

Speakers

Saleem Asghar Kidwai OBE, is Executive Secretary of the Muslim Council of Wales, and Chief Executive of the Ethnic Business Support Programme, an initiative to encourage and support members from the ethnic community at the developmental stages of starting a business. He is the first British Pakistani in Wales to receive an OBE, and is an Honorary Fellow of Cardiff University and a Member of the Council for CBI Wales (Confederation of Business Industry).

Shaykh Faiz ul Aqtab Siddiqi is a British Muslim scholar, principal of the Hijaz College, National Convenor of the Muslim Action Committee (MAC), Secretary General of the International Muslims Organisation, Grand Blessed Guide of the Naqshbandi Hijazi Sufi Order and a barrister at law.

Ajmal Masroor is a British imam, broadcaster and politician. He is well known for being a television presenter on political discussions and on Muslim channels. He is a member of the Muslim Council of Britain, director of Communities in Action and Co-Founder, Barefoot Institute, London.

Geoffrey Samuel is a Professor in the School of History, Archaeology and Religion at Cardiff University and Director of the Body, Health and Religion (BAHAR) Research Group, and an Honorary Associate of the Department of Indian Sub-Continental Studies at the University of Sydney, Australia. His research, mainly on Tibetan and South Asian societies, extends over a number of interrelated areas within religious studies, social anthropology, comparative sociology, and cognate disciplines.

Muhammad Mansur Ali is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK. His research interests include Muslim chaplaincy in the UK, Ulama in the West, Contemporary Islamic Legal theory, and Islam in Bangladesh and Bangladeshi Muslims in the West, history and developments.

Sophie Gilliat-Ray is the Director for the Centre for the Study of Islam in the UK (Islam-UK), and a Reader in the School of History, Archaeology and Religion at Cardiff University. Her research projects include Religious nurture in Muslim families; and Leadership and Capacity Building in the British Muslim Community: the case of 'Muslim Chaplains'.

Santi Rozario is a Reader in the School of History, Archaeology and Religion at Cardiff University, and Associate Director of the Body, Health and Religion (BAHAR) Research Group. Her academic background is in sociology and social anthropology. Much of her earlier research was on women and development in Bangladesh. More recently she has been studying Islam and Bangladeshis in the UK and in Bangladesh.