



PORTRAIT
OF IBN SINA

Newsletter Of Ibn Sina Academy

NISA

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IAMMS ACTIVITIES

EVENTS IN THE ACADEMY

1. Delegates of the International Seminar on "Impact of Persian Language & Culture in India", organized by the Department of Persian, AMU, Aligarh, paid a visit to Ibn Sina Academy on April 3, 2005. The Academy arranged a program on that occasion. Dr. Mahdi Mohaghegh, a renowned medical historian of Iran and vice-president of the Academy presided over the function.
2. A documentary-film on one of the prominent Aligarhians, Asrarul Haq Majaz, an exemplar of Aligarh-spirit and tradition as well as Composer of University Tarana (Song of praise), was shown on May 29, 2005 at Karam Hussain Museum of Arts, Culture & Sciences, Ibn Sina Academy of Medieval Medicine & Sciences, Dodhpur, Aligarh. Mr. Johny Foster, Ms. Farah Malik & Dr. S. Ziaur Rahman arranged this film show.

AIDS Cell of the Ibn Sina Academy Becomes a Partner of AIDS-Care Watch



Dr. Abigail Erikson, President of the AIDS-Care-Watch (Chiang Mai, Thailand) announced the list of partners of AIDS-Care-Watch (ACW). In his e-mail letter <abigail@aidscareswatch.org> dated April 29, 2005 to Dr. Syed Ziaur Rahman, he wrote "Greetings from AIDS-Care-Watch (ACW)! We are very pleased that *AIDS Cell* of the Ibn Sina Academy is a partner of the ACW campaign, and we look forward to working with you during the course of 2005 and beyond. Since the launch of AIDS-Care-Watch, over 130 organisations have been assigned as our partners, from Cameroon to India to Croatia. This rapidly

growing global partnership demonstrates that AIDS-Care-Watch is being felt as a much needed and relevant advocacy initiative, particularly at the country level. This is very exciting and we look forward to building the ACW partnership in the upcoming months".

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES OF THE MEMBERS OF IAMMS

Prof. Syed Zillur Rahman (President, Ibn Sina Academy) has been chosen as one of the members of the newly formed "Unani Tibbi Panel" of National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language, Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India, New Delhi. He had also been the member of the erstwhile "Unani Medicine Expert Panel" of the Council since 1997.

Dr. S. Ziaur Rahman (Treasurer, Ibn Sina Academy) attended the 2nd InterNICHE Conference, 'Alternatives in the Mainstream: Innovations in Life Science Education and Training' held at Kulturkirke Jacob in Oslo (Norway) during 12th -15th May 2005. He presented a paper, "Students' Conscience & Trend in Animal Utilization for Teaching & Research – Before and After CPCSEA". Mr. Nick Jukes (Coordinator, InterNICHE) especially invited Dr. Rahman. InterNICHE (www.interniche.org) is an international network of students, teachers and animal campaigners set up in 1988 with the mission of building a progressive life science education through minimum animal use in education and supporting conscientiously objecting students. It is a network where academics concerned with best practice education can meet in common cause with students, professionals and campaigners who are concerned with ethics and respect for living beings. The conference was organized in partnership with NOAH (www.dyrsrettigheter.no). NOAH was founded in 1989, and from the very beginning the campaign for humane education has been central. NOAH promotes respect for the individual animal, and opposes the killing and other exploitation of all sentient beings. It has campaigned within all areas of animal abuse. Ms. Siri Martinsen of NOAH was the local organizing

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secretary. Other participants from India who attended this conference were Prof. Mohammad A. Akbarshah (Bharathidasan University, Tamil Nadu) and Dr. Jignesh Patel (Kherva, Gujarat)

During his Oslo visit, Dr. Rahman also called on WHO Collaborating Centre for Drug Statistics Methodology at Oslo and met its Director, Ms. Marit Ronning, who presented the Centre's important publications like Guidelines for ATC Classification and DDD Assignments (2005), ATC Index with DDDs (2005), Introduction to Drug Utilization Research (2003), etc., for CSRUISM of the Ibn Sina Academy. Likewise, Islamic Cultural Centre (ICC) of Norway presented publications of ICC including posters on Ibn Sina, Ibn Haitham and Al Khwarazmi for the Library of Ibn Sina Academy (Aligarh, India).

From Oslo, Dr. Rahman was invited to attend another formal meeting at WHO Collaborating Center for International Drug Monitoring, Uppsala (UMC), Sweden. At UMC, he was informed with technical know-how about the Herbal Drug Reaction Monitoring. He interacted with many of the UMC staff. In the convention, Dr. Rahman presented his views on the "Concept and Principles of Pharmacovigilance in the Rational Drug Therapy of Unani Medicine". Mr. Sten Olsson (Head, External Affairs) Mr. Mohamed Farah (Senior Specialist, Traditional Medicine) & Ms. Anne Kiuru (Head, Signal Detection & Analysis) of UMC particularly arranged this informal meeting. For the Museum of Ibn Sina Academy (Aligarh, India) point of view, Mr. Farah Mohammad also informed about the historical background of Carl von Linnaeus, a renowned Swedish scientist who laid the foundations for the modern scheme of taxonomy. His original botanical garden may still be seen in Uppsala. A single initial of Linnaeus, "L." can be seen in various medicinal plants like *Ruta graveolans* L., *Cocos nucifera* L., etc.

Anyone interested in reading Linnaeus' works and achievements and want to see his picture on the current Swedish 100-krona Bank Notes may consult the staff of the Museum of Ibn Sina Academy.

Letter of Appreciation to President, IAMMS

"Respected Prof. Zillur Rahman, Greetings! I am Salil Kader, the researcher from Hyderabad who met you at IAMMS on 4th April. I have since returned to Hyderabad.

Sir, this mail is basically intended to convey my heartfelt thanks for the time you gave me and all your valuable advice. I can say with confidence that those three hours spent with you enlightened me greatly not only about History of medicine but life in general too. Your scholarly words will always be with me in the years to come.

I thank you once again for your advice, guidance and hospitality. Please do convey my regards to Dr. S. Ziaur Rahman. Also, please do let me know if there is anything I can do for you here in Hyderabad. I will keep in touch with you and update you on my progress. With warm regards, Salil Kader, Doctoral Research Scholar, Department of History, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad (India).

Salil Kader was born in 1975 at Thrissur, Kerala. Son of a former Army Colonel, he has had the opportunity of studying in various schools across India. After finishing his Bachelor of Arts from the Nizam College (1996) Hyderabad, he joined University of Hyderabad for his Masters programme at the Department of History (1996-98) where he stood second in order of merit. He went on to complete his M.Phil (Persian Influences in Medieval Deccan) in 2000 from the same department. He is presently pursuing his Doctoral programme and is working on the 'History of Medicine in Medieval Deccan.' He is a Junior Research Fellow of the University Grants Commission. Apart from this, Mr. Salil Kader's research interests include History of Music, History of Islam and Socio-Cultural History of Medieval Kerala. He was the President, Students Union, University of Hyderabad between 2001-2002. His extra-curricular interests include cricket and music. He has successfully represented various teams and the School of Social Sciences in the intra-varsity cricket matches. He has been an active member of the University students' band since the past 6 years and was instrumental in the formation of the Music Club on campus.

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**FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES /
SEMINARS**

History of Science Congress at Beijing (China)

The World Congress on History of Science is slated to be held at Beijing (China) in August 2005. Prof. S M Razaullah Ansari (Secretary, Ibn Sina Academy) is representing the Congress.

On-line version of the exhibition: 'Drug Trade: therapy, pharmacy and commerce in early-modern Europe'

The Museum of the History of Science, Oxford (UK), has launched an on-line version of its exhibition – 'Drug Trade: therapy, pharmacy and commerce in early-modern Europe' from July 2005 - www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/drugtrade/index.htm

JOBS / FELLOWSHIPS

Appointment of Dr. Lisa K. Walker as the 2005-2006 DeWitt Stetten, Jr., Memorial Fellow in the History of Biomedical Sciences and Technology.

The Office of NIH History and Stetten Museum at the National Institutes of Health announced the appointment of Dr. Lisa K. Walker as the 2005-2006 DeWitt Stetten, Jr., Memorial Fellow in the History of Biomedical Sciences and Technology. Dr. Walker holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of California, Berkeley, and she has worked as a Senior International Health Officer for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Global Health Affairs, Office for Eurasia, Biotechnology Engagement Program. As a Stetten Memorial Fellow, she will work with the National Institute on Allergy and Infectious Diseases on a project titled, "U.S. Soviet Collaboration in the Fight Against Polio: NIAID, Attenuated Vaccines, and the Prevention of Viral Diseases in the Twentieth Century." Ibn Sina Academy congratulates Dr. Walker on her appointment.

Discounted fare for "Medicinal Plants of Antiquity"

Earthwatch Institute is pleased to announce that students will have a discounted fare for the

program "Medicinal Plants of Antiquity" from June 19th - July 3rd, 2005.

The "Medicinal plants of Antiquity" program aims at recovering the ancient therapeutic practices of healers recorded by physicians of Classical Antiquity and the Middle Ages, such as Hippocrates, Galen, and Avicenna. Research will be conducted in Rome (Italy) at the National Library. Texts and plant representations from printed herbals of 15th and 16th century will be collected and further be analyzed at the Smithsonian Institution, so as to be added to a constantly growing computerized database. Archeological material will complement this documentation and contribute to create a comprehensive collection of data to sum up a legacy of humankind now exposed to oblivion.

Data will be available through a website currently under construction. For more information and details, visit the web site: www.earthwatch.org/expeditions/touwaide.html or email to Alana Jones at ajones@earthwatch.org, or Nicole Like at nlike@earthwatch.org

Graduate Certificate Program in Science, Technology and Society at the University of Michigan

The program in Science, Technology, and Society at the University of Michigan solicits applications from students wishing to pursue a Ph.D. with specialization in Science, Technology and Society, the history or anthropology of medicine, or related fields.

University of Michigan's Science, Technology and Society program offers a wide range of perspectives on the reciprocal role of science, technology, and medicine in shaping societies, cultures, and politics. Geographical strengths include Africa, the Middle East, North America, and Western Europe. Topical strengths include:

- Colonial, transnational, and global dynamics in the practice of technology, science, and medicine
- Historical and anthropological perspectives on bodies, health, genetics, and environment
- Politics and culture of information systems

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- Life sciences and their social implications
- Cultural meanings of science, technology, and medicine

The University of Michigan encourages scholars routinely to move across traditional academic boundaries. In order to balance disciplinary training and accreditation with interdisciplinary research, the Science, Technology and Society certificate is offered in conjunction with disciplinary Ph.D. programs. Candidates should therefore apply to departments for admission. The program particularly encourages applications to the departments of History, Anthropology, American Culture, and Sociology, and to the schools of Information and Public Health. For more information about the program and its faculty, please consult and visit the website: <http://www.umich.edu/~umsts/>.

CONFERENCES / SEMINARS HELD

History of Medicine Day celebrated by the College of Physicians of Philadelphia

Section on Medical History (1905-2005) of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia celebrated its centenary with History of Medicine Day on Saturday, April 16, 2005.

The Section on Medical History offered its first programs in 1905. It is one of the oldest organizations in North America devoted to the history of health and medicine.

Sixteenth Annual David L. Cowen Lecture in the History of Pharmacy

The Rho Chi Honor Society, The American Institute of the History of Pharmacy, and Dean John L. Colaizzi of the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey organized the Sixteenth Annual David L. Cowen Lecture in the History of Pharmacy on April 25, 2005 at William Levine Hall at the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy on Busch Campus. This year's speaker was Dr. David F. Musto, Professor of History of Medicine at Yale University. Dr. Musto spoke on the topic of "When Cocaine Was New: The First Epidemic." Dr. Musto is an awardee of the

prestigious Edward Kremers Award for pharmaco-historical writing of the American Institute of the History of Pharmacy.

(Submitted by Lisa A. Mulé, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, Piscataway, NJ 08854-8020, USA)

International Seminar on Hifzân-e-Sihat Aur Mâholiyat – Our Experience

Khan Usmanghani, Faculty of Eastern Medicine, Hamdard University, Karachi, Pakistan

We would like to pay high tributes to Prof. Afzal Ahmad, Chairman, Department of Hifzane-Sihat, Faculty of Unani Medicine, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, India for inviting me (Prof. Dr. Usman Ghani Khan, Head, Department of PreClinical Sciences, Faculty of Eastern Medicine, Hamdard University, Karachi), Prof. Hakim Abdul Hannan, Dean, Faculty of Eastern Medicine, Hamdard University, Karachi and Hakim Rahat Naseem Sodharvy, Joint Secretary, Pakistan Association for Eastern Medicine (PAME), to attend the International Seminar on Hygiene and Environment from March 29-30, 2005. Both Prof. Afzal Ahmad and Prof. Hakim Syed Zillur Rahman deserve all credit to organize this seminar in a befitting manner from 29th – 30th March 2005. The program was divided into 16th scientific session in which the leading practitioners of Unani Tibb participated from all over India. Mr. Naseem Ahmad, Vice Chancellor, Aligarh Muslim University, chaired the opening session. He delineated that Unani Tibb has played a pivotal role for the health care of the people and that tremendous progress is being witnessed in academia and research. Prof. Hakim Abdul Hannan gave an overview of the current affairs of Eastern Medicine (Unani) in Pakistan and myself urged the scientist / physician audience to carryout research in Unani Medicine at higher level of excellence. Mementos of the Aligarh Muslim University were accordingly presented to myself, Prof. Hakim Abdul Hannan, Hakim Rahat Naseem Sohadravi, Prof. Dr. Mahdi Hasan (Lucknow) and Prof. S. Zillur Rahman. The following significant personalities presented their papers: Prof. S. Mahdi Hasan, Dr. Sonia Kanwar,

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Dr. N.K Rathee, Prof. (Mrs.) Iftikhar Jahan, Dr. Surendra Kapil, Dr. Abul Hassan Ashraf, Dr. Saad Usmani, Hk. Rahat Naseem Sohadravi, Dr. Jawaid Ali, Prof. Anis Ismail, Dr. Amir Mahdi Talib (Iran), Dr. M. Seinaddeen (Sri Lanka) Dr. Hamid Ali Khan, Prof. Akhtar Hussain, Prof. Qamar Akhtar Kazmi, Prof. S. Jafar Raza Zaidi, Prof. Anis Ahmad Ansari, Dr. Abdul Hamid Ali, Prof. Dr. Khan Usman Ghani, Dr. Absar Ahmad, Dr. Ammar Ibn Anwar, Dr. Zar Nigar, Dr. Najeeb Hanzala Ammar, Dr. Syed Ziaur Rahman, Dr. Isa Nadvi and Prof. Hk. Abdul Hannan.

Valedictory session of International seminar was held under the presidentship of Hakim Syed Zillur Rahman, in which dignitaries of Tibb expressed their opinion about the current scenario of Tibb in Indo-Pak subcontinent. It was suggested by many speakers that exchange of academia, researchers, teachers, practicing physicians as well as students between India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka should preferentially be planned. The greater attention of the world at large with the pace and progress about Unani Tibb implication and applications should be highlighted. The delegation of Pakistan physicians and scientists exchange ideas with the Faculty of Unani Medicine, Aligarh Muslim University. Later on we were taken around the Aligarh Muslim University, which is quite large in its nature and style and spread over the huge area of lush green surroundings. Prof. Dr. Afzal Ahmad, Hakim Zillur Rahman, Dr. Abdul Latif, Mr. Shahabuddin and other colleagues of Aligarh Muslim University were the guide to explain the minute details of Aligarh Muslim University. At the last leg, we offered Fateha on the grave of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the founder of knowledge and science dynasty, which is still glowing and serving as beacon light for those who seek learning. We stood motion less because we were hearing: it is Sir Syed Ahmad Khan for whom all the bells toll.

The Ibn Sina Academy of Medieval Medicine & Sciences, which has been founded by Hakim Syed Zillur Rahman in his house, is really a place to be seen. He has collected huge number of books, rare collection of coins, pens, cutlery

items, culture dressings, manuscripts, pictures of eminent physicians of India. A gigantic effort by a single person is really remarkable and praiseworthy. Moreover, the large collection of theses and dissertations, rare books, old manuscripts in original hand writing - over and above I was highly impressed when I saw some of the graduate and postgraduate students consulting the scientific journals and other reference materials. I promised Hakim Syed Zillur Rahman to send all my 12 books to be added in his collection¹. I must appreciate the drama and mushaira organized by the Drama Society of Aligarh Muslim University and Indo-Pak mushaira at Ibn Sina Academy to entertain the foreign guest and all the participants from India. Prof. Dr. Afzal Ahmad was very much thankful to the Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family welfare to sponsor this seminar.

We were very much delighted to witness that Dawakhana Tibbia College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, which is diligently manufacturing at least 250 Unani drugs and distributing all over India. In this way this Dawakhana is earning quite huge sum of money and contributing in the development of education of tibb.

Prof. Hakim Abdul Hannan, Prof. Dr. Usman Ghani Khan and Hakim Rahat Naseem Sohadravi presented their papers on Unani Medicine: Development and sustainability; Bone Health: A conjoint approach for the management of osteoporosis and antilepedimic plants, respectively. Prof. Hakim Abdul Hannan and Prof. Dr. Usman Ghani Khan and Hakim Rahat Naseem Sodharvy also chaired one session each.

An exhibition of Unani drugs prepared by Rex (U&A) Remedies Pvt. Ltd., Delhi was on display. This company received many awards among them conferred by former Chief Minister (Delhi) and President of India in 1996 and 1997, respectively.

¹ Thanks Dr Usman Ghani. We have received your all 12 books - editor, NISA

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However we will not forget to mention the young final year student of Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery (BUMS) of Aligarh Muslim University Mr. Shahabuddin who received us at Delhi airport, brought us to Aligarh Muslim University and was with us all the time when we visited Agra to see Taj Mahal and Agra Fort. Taj Mahal has so much fascination and beauty that every individual is being attracted to and every body looks with an inward eyes for appreciation.

Our visit to Aligarh Muslim University, Jamia Hamdard and Central Council for Research in Unani Medicine (CCRUM) was rewarding in a sense that we received more than two dozens of books as gifts on the subject of Unani Medicine and research, which have been duly deposited in Faculty of Eastern Medicine, Hamdard University, Karachi, Pakistan seminar Library.

DOCUMENTATION

Governance Document of the Commission on History of Science & Technology in Islamic Societies – To be presented at the forthcoming Congress on History of Science, August 2005 in Beijing (China) by Professor Gül A. Russell (President)

Section 1. Name. The name of this organization shall be Commission on History of Science & Technology in Islamic Societies (hereafter: the Commission).

Section 2. Nature and Objectives. The Commission is an international organization that seeks to encourage scholarship and to foster lines of communication among specialists concerned with the history of the origins and development of science and technology in Islamic societies as well as their transmission and influence. It invites the participation of faculty, students, and all others interested in these subjects.

Section 3. Membership. The Governing Council shall consider for membership all those who have a documented interest in the work of the Commission and have completed a membership application. The application is available in the Commission's Newsletter and on the

Commission's website. Admission to membership shall be by majority vote of the Governing Council. Members shall have the option of being listed in the Commission's online "Directory of Members" and subscribing to a listserve.

Section 4. Quadrennial Meeting. The Commission shall normally hold a business meeting at the quadrennial congress of the International Union of the History and Philosophy of Science. At the quadrennial meetings, the members who are present shall constitute a quorum. The act of the majority of the members present shall be considered the act of the general membership. In addition, the Commission shall normally sponsor at least one professional session at the Congress. At the General Assembly meeting of the DHS/IUHPS, the Commission shall be represented by the President and Secretary. The Commission may appoint a third delegate from the membership if this is deemed suitable. The President shall vote on behalf of the Commission.

Section 5. Newsletter. If finances permit, a printed newsletter shall be sent to all members once a year. In addition, an online Newsletter shall be updated at least once a month.

Section 6. Website. If finances permit, the Commission shall maintain a website that contains information relevant to the work of the Commission.

Section 7. Listserve. If finances permit, the Commission shall maintain a listserve that provides a forum for communication among members.

Section 8. Finances. There shall be no dues for membership. The President shall be responsible for applying for funds for Commission activities.

Section 9. Governing Council. The Governing Council shall carry on the business of the Commission. The Council shall be composed of five members: President, Vice-President, Secretary, and two counselors.

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The President. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Commission and shall chair the quadrennial meeting. The President shall be responsible for communicating information between the Governing Council and the International Union. S/he shall also be responsible for organizing the Commission's session at the quadrennial congress of the International Union. The President is also charged with securing funding for the Commission and keeping records of any such funding.

The Vice-President. The Vice-President shall fulfill the office of the President when the President is unable to do so.

The Secretary. The Secretary shall keep records of all the communications and minutes of the Commission and shall inform the membership, prior to the quadrennial meeting, of the time, place, and purpose of the quadrennial meeting, as well as maintain the membership records of the Commission. S/he shall be responsible for composing and distributing the printed Newsletter.

Counselors. There shall be two counselors whose advice shall be sought on all matters before the Commission.

The Governing Council shall allocate other duties to the officers and to other commission members as appropriate.

Section 10. Vacancy. In the event that a member of the Governing Council, other than the President, is unable to serve, the majority of the remaining Council may appoint an individual to fill the vacant position on the Council until the next general election.

Section 11. Removal from Office. Members of the Governing Council may be removed from office by the vote of four-fifths of the Council or by a petition signed by 25% of the current membership. The majority of the remaining Council may appoint an individual to fill the vacant position on the Council until the next

general election.

Section 12. Term of Office. The term of office shall be for four years. No officer shall serve for more than one consecutive term in a given office, except for counselors who may serve for two consecutive terms. The maximum time that any individual may serve consecutively on the Governing Council is twelve years.

Section 13. Election of Officers: The Governing Council by majority vote shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three members chosen to represent the geographical and disciplinary breadth of the Commission. The Committee shall forward its slate of nominees for specific positions, after ascertaining their willingness to serve, to the Secretary by December 1 of the year preceding the International Congress. The Secretary shall announce the slate of candidates to all members via email by January 1 of the year in which the International Congress is to be held. Additional nominees from the membership, supported by at least five active members of the Commission, shall be accepted by the Secretary until 15 February. The Secretary shall be responsible for ascertaining the validity of these nominations. On or before March 1, the secretary shall prepare a final paper ballot and airmail it to each active member at the address on record in the Commission files. (If convenient, the ballots can be inserted into the Newsletter.) Valid ballots must be placed in an unmarked envelope inserted into a second envelope bearing the voter's name, address, and signature. Ballots must be received by the Secretary no later than June 1. The second, outer envelope shall be thrown away after the secretary has registered the vote on a member directory. The inner envelopes are opened and counted at the Commission's quadrennial business meeting. Council members are elected by simple majority of the Commission membership that has voted. In the case of a tie, the secretary will oversee a secret ballot among commission members in attendance at the quadrennial business meeting. This procedure may be repeated until a winner emerges.

Section 14. Governance: Most matters that come

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before the Commission's Governing Council should be decided by consensus, which is defined as agreement among the President, Vice-President, and Secretary. On matters where consensus cannot be reached, each Governing Council member (including the two counselors) shall have one vote and a majority vote shall be binding. In those cases, motions should be sent to the Secretary, who shall then record and announce the votes. Voting should be completed within two weeks after the secretary (or the president in case of the absence of the secretary) has notified all Council members of a motion. .

Section 15. Governance Document: The Governance Document and amendments thereto shall be formulated by the Governing Council; suggestions for modifications are welcome from any member. They shall come in force only after approval by a majority of voting members. Voting may be by postal mail ballots that have been distributed by the Secretary, or during the Commission's business meeting held during the Quadrennial Congress. In the latter case, voting shall be by paper ballots distributed during the meeting. Since the Commission is under the auspices of the International Union of the History and Philosophy of Science, it shall also be subject to its governing bylaws and rulings.

SHORT COMMUNICATION

In Search of Babar

M.H.A. Beg
(ENT Consultant, UK)

If Zaheeruddin Mohammad Babar were to be reborn today, he would hate to go to the country of his birthplace, now known as Uzbekistan, which is inhabited by a race called the Uzbeks. Babar regarded the Uzbeks as foreigners to his country, Farghana and Samarqand. They were usurpers, people from a foreign land, *Dasht Qapchaq* and invaders. Thus started the exit of the Taimuris from Mavara-un-Nahar in 1497-1498.

Yet it is this country which has adopted Babar as one of its heroes. Before independence when the

country was under the clutches of Russia it was forbidden to talk about national personalities. The fall of the Russian bear and independence in 1991 brought a rethinking of self and non-self and resulted in the adoption of Amir Taimur, Ali Sher Navoi, Ulgh Beg and Babar as heroes.

Babar played a role in Mavara-un-Nahar in his younger years, when he was less than 20 years of age. He ruled Farghana as well as Samarqand, the apple of his eye, twice. But those were the days of a young buccaneer and there were old hawks around. Being a practical man he soon realized that it would be difficult to gain a foothold in the country in those circumstances. Under the available resources he found other greener pastures.

The people of Uzbekistan now regard him as a prose writer, a poet and a commentator on Fiqh Hanafi but not as a warrior and a king. He wrote Turki prose, lovely Turki ghazals and he instructed his son Kamran in *Fiqh-i-Hanafi*. This role of Babar is well received in Uzbekistan today. His well known literary work is the *Babarnama*, his autobiography, the best-known book of its kind in the world. This has been translated in all the major languages. It continues to fascinate readers and in the last decade four various editions of the *Babarnama* have been published from places as far afield as Harvard (US) and Kyoto (Japan).

Babar was deeply attached to his home country. In his autobiography he describes its beauty lucidly, and writes vividly about its birds and bees, the fruits he ate, and the countryside he roamed. The descriptions are remarkable. Do his words still hold true? Are the sites he described still surviving? Can we still taste the sweet apricots of Farghana? These were the questions in my mind when I followed his footsteps to search for him in his native land.

The *Babarnama* opens with the announcement that Babar has become the *Badshah* at the age of eleven. He does not write where he was born, nor does he give details of his childhood. We know that his father had a castle in Akhsi, which is on

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the north bank of Syr Darya. What made him a *Badshah* was an accident of fate. Umar Shaikh Mirza, his father, had gone up to his pigeon house which was on the ledge overlooking a deep ravine before the Syr Darya and was flying pigeons when the *kabootar khana* gave way and down came the house and with it Mirza, as Babar puts it, became 'a falcon'.

Akhsi - This was his father's capital and has since disappeared. We do not know how but now on its site there is a mound of earth and rubble known as Akhsikint. You can still see the bricks and remnants of the castle. It is still on the north bank of the Syr and is divided by the road that leads to the bridge. Walking on the mound you can pick up pottery and bricks. What an excellent excavation site it can be once the Uzbek government comes to it. Annette Beveridge, the best-known commentator on Babar, has mentioned erosion by the river as the cause of destruction of Akhsi. But now there are no signs of erosion. A smaller river called the Kashan joins the Syr nearby without any signs of river damage. None of the rivers have changed course over the last five hundred odd years.

Kashan - Following the Kashan river upstream leads to Kashan town described by Babar for its beauty. It is a town 45km north of the one main road. The town is now known as Kasansoy. The road runs parallel to the river and Babar calls this river Kashan water. It is a small river with a wide bed, which must be overflowing its banks in summer. Not many gardens described by Babar as 'posteen pesh bara' (beautiful front of a coat) are now there. The countryside is flat but still green. It is a fine clean town with many *chay-khanas* overlooking the river. There is a 16th century mosque, which is not open for prayers yet. We had enjoyed lovely cups of green tea under clear skies besides the fresh cool water with a cool breeze blowing in our face.

Andijan - At the time of his father's death Babar was in Andijan, the biggest town of Farghana valley. As he was young and it was feared that his uncles would harm him, he was taken to the

namazgah, before he proceeded to the mountains to escape.

I was intrigued by his use of the word '*namazgah*' and not *masjid* as we call it or *maschit* as the Turkic people term it. But when I traveled through the length and breadth of the land the puzzle was solved. In this part of the world there are three types of prayer places, a *namazgah* for everyday prayers, a *jama masjid* for Juma prayers and an *Eidgah* for the festive prayers.

Babar says that the Andijanfis are all Turks. This is still true. There are a lot of honest simple religious Turkic people in the place who would greet you with a warm *salam*, with their right hand on their hearts bowing their heads a little in a very friendly manner. And don't be surprised if they take you to the *bursi* of a friend of a friend, celebrated early in the morning culminating in *fateha* and a modest feast of *pulao*, laid out on a table with restraint.

Babar also praises the good looks of Andijanis. Their fair colour, symmetrical and proportional features are a common observation. Babar praises Khawaja Yusuf Andijani for his music. He was the court musician and the singer of Baisnagar Mirza. He had a deep penetrating voice. Shahrukh bin Taimur asked Baisnagar many a time to send Khawaja over but received no response. At last Shahrukh sent 100,000 dinars in exchange for Khawaja Yusuf's services. Baisnagar wrote back, 'We do not sell our Yusuf, keep your black silver to yourself.'

Fruits are still in abundance in Andijan. The grapes, melons, pomegranates and apricots there are excellent. In the time of Babar so much melon was grown that the fruit was never sold at the farms. Anybody could pick up a fruit. The Soviets adopted a policy of promoting the cultivation of cotton, which is now grown all over the country reducing the output of other crops.

The fort of Andijan was the third biggest after Samarqand and Kesh but was destroyed in an earthquake. In fact nothing of the old town is left. Babar's house has been rebuilt at its old site.

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There is a courtyard in the middle with a fountain and a statue of Babar in the centre, with rooms and *dalans* around. A garden called Bagh-i-Babar has been developed in the southeast of Andijan on a two-acre site on three levels. A small building contains paintings based on the *Babarnama* and shelves with books published about Babar all around the world.

Babar also praised the *shikar* available around Andijan. He thought pheasants are really big and on one occasion four persons could not finish even one cooked pheasant. The pheasants are still seen occasionally but most of them are now in the museums.

Farghana is one of the regions of Uzbekistan where Islam has been revived. The Islamic extremists are believed to have been responsible for the recent bombing in Tashkent and Bukhara. In Andijan, the biggest 16th century mosque has been closed down, it being believed that it was a Wahabi mosque. The other mosque is a small one in one of the back streets near the bazar. I had the chance to offer my Friday prayers there. The mosque was full and its courtyard crowded. The namazis - mostly young men - were overflowing on to the road, which was completely blocked during prayer time.

Oosh - Babar has lavishly described the beauty of Oosh, which is now in Kyrgyzstan. You have to have a visa and fill in forms to pass through customs. No doubt Oosh is a small beautiful town with a river (Babar called it Andijan rud) now named Ak Bura which passes through the centre of the town. The river flows towards Andijan and there are cotton fields on both sides of the road. This is the sowing season for cotton, and there are women and children working in the fields.

According to Babar, Oosh is four *yagash* from Andijan. How long is a *yagash* is not really known. Khan-i-Khana Abdur Rahim Khan in his translation of the *Babarnama* translated *yagash* as a *farsang*. A *farsang* is still used in Iran and is about 6 km. Annette Beveridge regards a *yagash* to be between 4-8 miles. The current distance between Andijan and Oosh is, 50km. By this

calculation, one *yagash* comes to 12 km.

On the southwest of the old town is a mountain called Barakoh. Babar's maternal uncle Sultan Mahmud Khan made a *hujra* on the peak. In 1496 Babar constructed a *baradari* there, I went round the mountain but found no buildings anywhere. A new construction has come up on the southeast edge of the mountain and is called Takht-i-Sulaiman, where there is a prayer place as well. Traditions and the tourist official guides link the place with the baradari of Babar. This cannot be so as Babar writes that his uncle's *hujra* was on the top of Barakoh while his own Baradari was located below it at a spot from where he had a better view of the whole town and its suburbs. The mosque has been rebuilt as late as 1989.

Legends regard the mountain as the throne of Hazrat Sulaiman bin Daud. I was told by an Aksal (white beard), a respectful term for an old and wise man, that Hazrat Daud use to pray here. The mountain also flew to Hazrat Muhammad (pbuh) and there are imprints of Burraq's hooves on the stone. The mountain is revered from ancient times and there is a local legend that if you climb this mountain twice and pray here, it is equal to performing the Umra. The wealth and power of Hazrat Sulaiman is well known and we also know that he had a takht on which he would fly. He had control over the birds and the *jins* who use to help him. We know there are other mountains where Takht-i-Sulaiman is believed to have been found, as in Kashmir (as noted by Bernier). All these appear to be later developments as Babar describes nothing and he is unlikely to miss such important stories.

His description of Oosh is colourful and unsurpassed by any description before or after him. According to the local books, the *hujra* was destroyed in the 17th/18th century. Nobody knows why or by whom and the Takht-i-Sulaiman mosque was not built until 1829. The mosque existed until 1963 and was destroyed again on the decision of the communist administration and was only rebuilt in 1989. Babar also describes the Masjid Jauza at the foot of Barakoh. There is a newly built mosque there

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and the running water at the foot of the mountain is now represented by the surviving spring through which the water still flows. The nearby area is closed to visitors as a settlement belonging to the 2nd century has been found and is being excavated here. There should have been a meadow here, which was the resting-place for travelers, on whom the ruffians of Oosh would throw water to drench them.

Khujand - The only border open for Khujand, Tajikistan is Oyibek about 100km southeast of Tashkent. It takes about two hours to get there with two more to get clearance from the two customs and immigration authorities. The Uzbek side is stern and official while the Tajik side is uninterested and relaxed. This is followed by 62km of inhospitable barren and hilly land of Tajikistan until you reach Munughal mountain which has to be circumnavigated to enter the valley right on Syr darya. The valley is as beautiful as Uzbek Farghana.

The Syr is not very broad but flows rapidly. The river can be crossed by two bridges to go to Khujand. The roads in Tajikistan are bad and the road from Oyebik to Khujand is worst. Most of the people are what Babar calls *Sarts* (Tajiks).

Features typical of Changaiz Khan are everywhere. Khujand is the second biggest city in Tajikistan. I could see its tourist attractions in a day on foot with ease. You get a strange empty feeling here. The people are all Muslims who speak Dari (Persian) but a visitor cannot read a word of what is written on the signboards as they all are in Cyrillic script. This script was enforced by the Russians and is still used by their successors. A lot of academic work is being undertaken in the university but it remains unknown abroad because the script is not known.

Babar describes two personalities of Khujand. Shaikh Maslehat Khujandi, whose actual name was Badiuddin, who lived in the 12th century. He was a Sufi and his mausoleum - a well preserved building - is in the centre of town. There is a mosque next to it, newly constructed. Babar had a dream in which he was told that Shaikh Maslehat

has given him Samarqand. This proved true as a few days later in 1500 he reconquered Samarqand.

The other person is Kamal Khujandi, the Persian poet. In 1497 Babar was stationed in Khujand for a year. He found it to be very limited in resources and was unhappy there. He praises all the fruits of Khujand particularly the pomegranates. After the evening meal that day the wife of our host served us bananas, apples, grapes and oranges. The apples were yellow and very juicy. Thinking them to be local produce I praised the apples only to be told that they had been imported from Iran. Bananas are not grown locally at all.

The remnants of the old town are by the Syr darya, as described by Babar. The city wall (*faseel*) is of mud. The old town and castle are being reconstructed under a UNESCO program and at present there is a museum there.

Kund-i-Badam - Another town in the Farghana valley is Kund-i-Badam, which Babar has praised for the excellence of its almonds. It is now known as Kunbadam. It is 80km east of Khujand. The road is smooth except for a few broken patches. The police keep a close eye on travellers, checking their papers and their speed with cameras. There are gardens on both sides of the road where apricots, apples, almonds, pomegranates and mulberry trees can be seen. Tajikistan lies on the left while Kyrgyzstan is on the right.

Today there is a dam in this region with a reservoir called Qaraqoram that has produced a large lake. The availability of water has changed the environment of a place Babar had described as a desert where severe whirlwinds covered the place with dust. He calls it 'Ha Darvesh'. A few dervish had lost their way here as they kept searching for each other until they all perished. The desert has completely vanished. We stopped at three places to judge the velocity of the wind, but there was none, though a pleasant cool breeze was a delight. The town of Kund-i-Badam is new as the old town has been destroyed by an earthquake.

Asfara - This is the only other town described by Babar in the Farghana valley. It is 30km southeast of Kund-i-Badam. There are hills, as described by Babar, on both sides of the road. There is no vegetation at all and the hills are multicoloured, yellow, black and even purple. The road is narrow and passes over a small hilly pass to enter into Asfara. There are factories on both sides of the road. Most of them are now closed and a lot of people are jobless. Under the Soviets everybody had some work. In the centre of the town is a river also called Asfara and on both of its banks are *chai khanas* or teahouses. Asfara's pullao is famous.

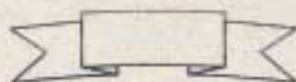
Babar describes a rock located two miles south of the town. This shines like a mirror (*aaina*), but there is no trace of it now. The town has a population of 60,000 thousand. There is a bazar here but the Russians changed its character. They moved the bazar from the centre of the town to a site on the outskirts and enclosed it with a roof. A signboard was erected calling it *Dehqan Bazar*.

In the nearby hill country Babar lived in Sukh and Hushyar villages after losing Samaqand and Farghana. He passed a miserable year here, and then decided to leave his country and proceed to Kabul which started his story of success.

The other interesting features of this place are the graves and tombstones by the side of the road of the victims of road accidents. People leave flowers and candles to remember them.

It is indeed heartening to travel to Babar's country as it answers many questions which arise in the mind of anyone who reads the *Babarnama*, which is indeed a must for anyone who has a critical eye for an account of life in the 15th century. The book certainly ranks on top. I end this account of my journey with a verse recited to me by Saifuddin Jalilov, a professor of history I met in Andijan.

Dunya yak sara-ey-i-o do dar ast
Har roz een sara-ey-i-qaum deegar ast



Oslo – A City of Thousand Years Old

S. Ziaur Rahman

I had the opportunity to visit Oslo (Norway) to attend a conference on "alternatives to animal experiments". My flight via Frankfurt reached Gardermoen Airport at 7:00 PM on 11th May 2005. There are two airports in Oslo. Gardermoen is bigger and officially opened in 1998. From airport via train, I reached my place of stay – Royal Christiania Hotel near Central Station. Apart from academic activities (see page 2-3), I witnessed the city very closely. I already knew that Oslo is the oldest of the Nordic capitals and a city surrounded by islands and forested hills. Fortunately I went there when lots of centenary commemoration programs were being organized all over Oslo. The year 2005 was being celebrated as the 100th anniversary of the dissolution of the union between Sweden and Norway. It was also the 100th anniversary of the recognition of Norway as an independent country with its own monarchy and foreign ministry. The dissolution of the union laid the foundation for Norway's participation in the international community. The occasion was being commemorated not only in Norway and Sweden, but also internationally. Throughout 2005, varied programmes on cultural events will be celebrated. May 17th was the Constitution Day. I with my other friends - Rahef Yusuf (an Aligarian and living in Skien, Norway), Tayyib Mian (Coordinator of ICC, Gronland, Oslo), Shaukat Rana (a delegate like me from Pakistan), enjoyed the beautiful programmes organized on that special day. It was a glorious mixture of festival, ceremony and culture. Both ladies and gentlemen were seen in traditional uniform. School children from Oslo and nearby cities particularly marched the main lane of the city (Karl Johans Street) up to the Royal King's Palace. The king is supposed to wave each group of school when they pass in front of the palace on every Constitution Day. Since the present king could not attend this important affair as he was ailing, on his behalf, HRH Crown Prince Haakon Magnus and princess Mette Marit Tjessem Hoiby performed the duties and waived the school children.

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Oslo is the oldest of the Scandinavian capitals, its history going back to around 900 AD when the first settlements were built at the inlet of the Oslo fjord. There are some doubts as to the meaning of the name of Oslo. The term of "Os" can be understood as either a long and narrow hill or as a reference to a pre-Christian God. The second half of the name, "Lo", generally refers to a field. Hence the ancient name of Oslo may either mean "the field below the hill" or "the field of the Gods". By 1300 when the construction of the Akershus fortress and castle was started, the city was already an important trade center. It is said that Haakon V built Akershus Fortress in 1300 ca. King Haakon VI died in 1380. In 1536, Norway becomes a Danish province and remained in its union till 1814. In the same year, when the Norwegian Constitution was signed at Eidsvoll, it became a part of Swedish Union. As most of the buildings were of wooden construction with turf roofs, the city was plagued by fires. After the great fire that destroyed the city in 1624, the Danish king Christian IV, decided to rebuild the city around the walls of Akershus Fortress in brick and stone, and named it Christiania. Later, 1/3rd of Christiania city was burned again in 1686. In the area known as Kvadraturen, some of the buildings dating from the 17th century have been preserved. Among them, Christiania's first Town Hall, dating from 1641 is significantly conserved.

Norway gained its independence in 1905 and Haakon VII became its first king. In 1925, three hundred years after the city had been renamed Christiania, growing national awareness lead to a Parliament Decree renaming the city Oslo.

The Vigeland Park at Frogner is a unique sculpture park. Sculptor Gustav Vigeland (1869-1943) to whom the Park is dedicated himself made more than 200 sculptures. "Ghost Walk" is another event, which I enjoyed the most. This creepy, exciting and historic walk all through the streets of old Christiania and Akershus fortress is very popular and is the first ghostwalk ever in Oslo (www.oslowalk.no).

The art and cultural life reflect the fact that the inhabitants of Oslo come from all over the country and from all parts of the world. I myself saw and met many people from Indian subcontinent. Many Indians and Pakistanis are residing at Gronland, an area in the city of Oslo. South Indian Tamils may particularly be seen at various places of Oslo. Its worth to visit Oslo – the capital of Norway.

The Nobel Institute in Oslo is the home of the Norwegian Noble Committee, and this committee is selected by the Norwegian Parliament (Storting). The Nobel Committee selects the Peace Prize winner based on the criteria set out in Nobel's will: <<...the person(s) who shall have done the most or the best work for brotherhood between nations, for abolition or reduction of standing armies and for arranging and promoting peace processes>>. From 1905 until 1946 (except during the two World Wars), the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded at the Nobel Institute. As of 1990, the Peace Prize ceremony takes place in the Oslo City Hall on December 10th every year, the anniversary of Nobel's death. Alfred Nobel died on 10th December 1896 in San Remo, Italy. Alfred Bernhard Nobel (1833-1896) was the Swedish inventor and industrialist who established the Nobel Foundation. In his will, Nobel decided that the interest of his fortune of 30 million kroner was to be divided into 5 categories <<... and be rewarded to those who in the previous year have contributed the most to mankind>>. In connection with the celebration of Centenary Commemoration, the Nobel Institute is opening a new information center, the Nobel Peace Centre, in the center of Oslo. This Nobel Peace Centre, which opens on June 11, 2005, will host a permanent exhibition of all Nobel Peace Prize winners through history, as well as other exhibitions, activities for children and adults, lectures, conferences, documentation, etc. The Centre's main objective will be to inform visitors about Alfred Nobel, the Nobel Peace Prize and current conflicts and international peace efforts.



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