Annual Report
2009

This report briefly describes the major activities undertaken by the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace in 2009. Professor Bushrui, who holds the title of Research Professor Emeritus, is the Director of the Gibran Chair as well as Senior Scholar for Peace Studies at the Center for International Development and Conflict Management. The George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace operates under the auspices of the Center for Heritage Resource Studies in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Maryland, College Park.

THE GEORGE AND LISA ZAKHEM KAHIL Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace......................................................... 3
NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES .................................................................................................................. 6
Minority Rights and Pluralism in Islam................................................................................................................................. 6
Min Ajl Lubnan Fundraiser and Event in Honor of Professor Suheil Bushrui............................................................................... 7
The Ameen Rihani Annual Interfaith Seminar Series........................................................................................................... 7
Oseh Shalom.............................................................................................................................................................................. 9
Dialogue with Officials from Bahrain ........................................................................................................................................ 10
Meeting with His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales ............................................................................................................ 11
Temenos Academy Lecture ....................................................................................................................................................... 11
Dinner in Honor of HE HH Princess Lalla Joumala Alaoui and Mr. Reza Esfandiari.............................................................. 12
Reception at the House of Lords.................................................................................................................................................. 14
International Academy for Human Sciences and Culture 9th International Peace Seminar ........................................... 14
Mercury and Gibran.................................................................................................................................................................... 14
“Journeys of Faith” by Unity Walk: Personal Conversations with Public Figures ............................................................... 15
Al Hewar Center Lecture......................................................................................................................................................... 16
The Ameen Rihani Annual Lecture Series.............................................................................................................................. 17
Honors Course Proposal........................................................................................................................................................... 18
PUBLICATIONS............................................................................................................................................................................ 19
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK............................................................................................................ 24
THE GEORGE AND LISA ZAKHEM KAHLLI GIBRAN CHAIR FOR VALUES AND PEACE
Thursday, 5 November 2009
The President’s Residence
The University of Maryland

On 5 November 2009, Mr. George Zakhem and his wife, Mrs. Lisa Zakhem, were the guests of honor at a special stewardship dinner convened at the official residence of Dr. C. D. Mote, Jr., President of the University of Maryland (UMD). The event was held to express gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Zakhem for their generous gift of $1 million for the establishment of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace in UMD’s College of Behavioral and Social Sciences.

Mr. Zakhem is the co-founder and Chairman of the Board of Zakhem International, a well-known and respected conglomerate with interests in engineering, construction, investment, and hospitality. The Zakhem group operates worldwide from offices in Beirut, London, Houston and Nairobi, and the success of the firm under his leadership has enabled Mr. Zakhem to become a great benefactor of higher education.

Mr. Zakhem has served as a trustee of Beirut University College (BUC), now Lebanese American University, where he was also Chairman of the Board. During his chairmanship, Mr. Zakhem spearheaded the establishment of two new campuses, at Byblos and Sidon. More than twenty years ago, the Zakhem firm donated 100,000 square meters of land for the Byblos campus. Additionally, Mr. Zakhem worked in conjunction with Patriarch Ignatius IV, the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, to establish and underwrite the University of Balamand in north Lebanon.

Mr. Zakhem is a member of the Advisory Council of the Center for the Global South at The American University in Washington, D.C., and is a patron of the Center of Lebanese Studies at Oxford University. His memoir, *Men Who Dream Can Do...*, is published by Quartet Books (2009). Mr. Zakhem will help guide the Gibran program at UMD in his capacity as Chair of its International Advisory Board, a post he assumed in July 2009.

Mrs. Zakhem has for many years been actively engaged in philanthropic and cultural initiatives, most prominently as Executive Secretary of the British Lebanese Association, an organization dedicated to fostering understanding and cooperation between the Lebanese and British communities, and as Vice Chair of the Lebanese chapter of the English Speaking Union for Lebanon.

Mr. and Mrs. Zakhem are both natives of Lebanon and, like many of their compatriots, they share a passion for the works and message of the Lebanese-American author and artist Kahlil Gibran (1883-1931). Gibran, who at the age of twelve moved from Lebanon to the United States with his family, is most widely known for *The Prophet*. The book, which was first published in 1923 and has never been out of print, relates the story of a sage preparing to depart on a voyage who pauses to share wisdom on timeless themes such as love, freedom, friendship, and beauty. In his oeuvre, including *The Prophet*, Gibran developed a unique consciousness of unity that, from his time until today, has inspired countless readers throughout the world.

Building on Gibran’s vision, the core mission of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace is to engage in intercultural dialogue, broadly defined, for the purpose of transcending barriers and promoting conflict resolution between the East and West. The Chair fulfills its mandate, in part, by engaging individuals and communities representing a variety of perspectives on the level of interfaith and cross-cultural dialogue.

Professor Bushrui has for many years shepherded the development of the Gibran program at UMD from its origin as the Kahlil Gibran Research and Studies Project, to its emergence as the Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace, and now in its fully consolidated status as the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace. Most significantly, in the spring of 2009 Professor Bushrui worked closely with his longtime friends, Mr. and Mrs. Zakhem, to orchestrate their gift to the University of Maryland.

* * *

3
The dinner on 5 November given in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Zakhem commenced with welcoming remarks delivered by UMD’s president, C.D. Mote, Jr. President Mote thanked Mr. and Mrs. Zakhem for their generosity and expressed how UMD is “honored to be the home of this significant scholarly designation and proud that this distinction will be part of the University’s larger dialogue on global citizenship, on cooperation, and on the Middle East region....” Emphasizing the increasing prominence of Middle East studies at UMD, President Mote said that the Gibran Chair under Professor Bushrui’s leadership will highlight the vital role of literature and language as instruments of intercultural understanding and peace.

In conclusion, President Mote shared the following reflections: the donation by Mr. and Mrs. Zakhem is the largest individual donation in the history of UMD’s College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS); the gift allows UMD to establish its third Chair in peace studies; and the University of Maryland now enjoys the status of being the first institution in the world with a Chair in Kahlil Gibran’s honor.

Responding, Mr. Zakhem thanked President Mote and the assembled UMD and BSOS leaderships for the extremely warm welcome that he and his wife received from the University of Maryland community. He noted that his own encounter with America mirrored that of so many other Lebanese over the years. Starting in the 19th century, Americans went to the Levant as educators and humanitarians, elevating Lebanon by helping the country and its people develop infrastructure and human resources. In turn, during subsequent decades Lebanese-Americans like Kahlil Gibran – and more recently individuals such as Dr. Michael DeBakey, Dr. Charles Malik, and Mr. Ralph Nader – gained prominence in all walks of life, including literature, diplomacy, politics, medicine, engineering, and business. “We Lebanese are everywhere in this wide and generous land,” said Mr. Zakhem, contributing “in no small measure to the richness of the American life and to making America the great nation it is.”

Mr. Zakhem expressed particular gratitude to the University of Maryland for cultivating the kind of broad vision that encouraged the establishment of the Gibran Chair. He expressed confidence that the Gibran Chair will serve as a catalyst for intensified cooperation between American and Lebanese scholars, and said that the Chair could have no better champion in that endeavor than Professor Bushrui. In conclusion, and in reference to the title of his memoir, Mr. Zakhem remarked that he and Professor Bushrui share a firm conviction that “Men Who Dream Can Do.”

Following Mr. Zakhem, Professor Bushrui took the floor and thanked him and his wife for their outstanding financial, organizational, and moral support for higher education and Lebanese-American friendship. Addressing the work of the Gibran Chair, Professor Bushrui said that he envisioned its purpose as “broadening our awareness, deepening our wisdom, enriching our artistry, expanding the range of our empathy, and improving our ability to work together.” Professor Bushrui noted that the significance of Gibran—and, by extension, of the Chair that bears his name—ranges well beyond literary studies and even the humanities in general. To achieve a stable international system characterized by democracy and shared standards of justice, we all must strive to acquire knowledge and appreciation of other countries and cultures. “If we have in fact entered the global age,” said Professor Bushrui in closing, “then Gibran is the global poet par excellence.”

His Excellency Antoine Chedid, Ambassador of Lebanon to the United States, spoke after Professor Bushrui, concluding the formal remarks phase of the dinner. Ambassador Chedid thanked Mr. and Mrs. Zakhem for advancing the cause of Lebanon in the United States, congratulated Professor Bushrui on his installation as the Gibran Chair professor, and expressed gratitude to President and Mrs. Mote for their patronage of the proceedings. Ambassador Chedid spoke of the special cultural mission of Lebanon to serve as a beacon of unity in diversity for all humanity. Gibran, said the Ambassador, remains a leading voice of peace who “was able to express in his works the need in today’s world for balance and reconciliation between heart and mind, between Faith and Reason, between spiritual values and the demands of modern technology and progress.”

Later in the evening, as a special token of thanks, President Mote presented Mr. and Mrs. Zakhem with a rare first edition of Kahlil Gibran’s Arabic work al-Mawakib (“The Procession”), published in 1919. This presentation copy was laid into a handsome, hand-built wooden display case specially ordered by Professor Bushrui in consultation with a master craftsman.

Finally, President Mote invited Professor Bushrui to close the dinner with a reading. Professor Bushrui obliged and, fittingly, read the following passages from Gibran’s The Prophet:
Then said a teacher, “Speak to us of Teaching.”
And he said:
No man can reveal to you aught but that which already lies half asleep in the dawning of our knowledge.
The teacher who walks in the shadow of the temple, among his followers, gives not of his wisdom but rather of his faith and his lovingness.
If he is indeed wise he does not bid you enter the house of wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own mind.
The astronomer may speak to you of his understanding of space, but he cannot give you his understanding.
The musician may sing to you of the rhythm which is in all space, but he cannot give you the ear which arrests the rhythm nor the voice that echoes it.
And he who is versed in the science of numbers can tell of the regions of weight and measure, but he cannot conduct you thither.
For the vision of one man lends not its wings to another man.
And even as each one of you stands alone in God’s knowledge, so must each one of you be alone in his knowledge of God and in his understanding of the earth.

In addition to His Excellency Antoine Chedid (Ambassador of Lebanon to the United States) and Mrs. Chedid, the dinner given by President and Mrs. Mote in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Zakhem also included a host of prominent guests, among them (in alphabetical order): Mr. Kenneth E. Bowers (Secretary General of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of the United States); Mr. Muhammad Ali Farhat (Senior Editor of the respected Arabic daily Al-Hayat); Her Excellency Carla Jazzar (Deputy Chief of the Lebanese Mission in Washington, DC); His Excellency Clovis Maksoud (retired diplomat and Arab League envoy and currently Professor of International Relations at The American University in Washington, DC); Ms. May A. Rihani (Chair of Min Ajl Lubnan); His Excellency Elie A. Salem (former Foreign Minister of Lebanon and now President of the University of Balamand); Dr. Philip A. Salem (Director of the Cancer Research Program at St. Luke’s Episcopal Hospital in Houston, TX); and Mr. Salim Zakhem (eldest son of George and Lisa Zakhem and Director of Zakhem International’s U.S. operations).

As a special mark of esteem, Mrs. Mote personally oversaw details of the stewardship dinner, including menu selections and recipes. Ms. Leslie Coleman (Senior Director of Leadership Gifts at UMD) helped plan the dinner and, in that capacity, worked closely with Professor Bushrui, especially in composing the guest list.

* * *

On 20 November 2009, a full-page article on the inauguration of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace appeared in the Culture and Art section of Al-Hayat (Issue No. 17031, page 16), a newspaper of record that is widely read throughout the Arab world and the Arab diaspora. Authored by Mr. Muhammad Ali Farhat, one of the paper’s senior editors, the story featured a large photograph of Kahlil Gibran as well as pictures of Mr. Zakhem, President Mote, Ambassador Chedid, and Professor Bushrui. Locating the stewardship dinner within a wider context, Mr. Farhat praised the event as a high-profile commemoration of Kahlil Gibran, a figure described as a leading symbol of the Lebanese-American cultural relationship. Of particular importance, noted Mr. Farhat, was President Mote’s statement that the creation of the Gibran Chair at the University of Maryland will enhance the profile of literature and language as systems of Arab-American cultural exchange.

The Al-Hayat article underscores how a celebration like the Gibran Chair inauguration can resonate more broadly, both internationally and cross-culturally. It is precisely this ambition—cultivating a moral and intellectual dialogue among and between Arabs and Americans—that inspires the work of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace.
On 26 February 2009, Dr. Bushrui was invited to participate in a panel discussion entitled “Minority Rights and Pluralism in Islam” as part of American University’s new series “Engaged Conversations: Perspectives in Islam and Contemporary Global Issues.” The event was co-hosted by the Mohammed Said Farsi Chair of Islamic Peace, and featured the following panelists (in alphabetical order) who represented a diversity of voices on critical topics related to Islam and Muslims in a globalized world: Dr. Suheil Bushrui (Professor and Director of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace, University of Maryland); Ms. Jena Luedtke (Director of the Center for Interfaith and Intercultural Dialogue Rumi Forum); Dr. Sulayman Nyang (African Studies Department, Howard University); and Dr. Mehmet Paçaci (Counselor for Social and Religious Affairs, Turkish Embassy). Dr. Padideh ‘Ala’i (Professor of Law at American University’s Washington College of Law) moderated the event.

The moderator allowed each panelist a fifteen minute introduction and then the meeting was opened to questions from the audience. The panel addressed the experiences of minorities in today’s society and what Islamic sources say about the rights and responsibilities of minorities, Muslims and/or non-Muslims. Ms. Jena Luedtke was the first speaker; her introduction was centered on the concept that Islam allows minority rights and freedom of religion. She quoted the Qur’anic verse: “Let there be no compulsion in religion” (Sura 2 – The Cow). Ms. Luedtke also encouraged people of all religions to overlook their differences and live in peace and harmony.

Dr. Mehmet Paçaci was the second panelist. He talked briefly about the history of Islam, and said that Islam always allowed the people of the Book and others to live peacefully under Islamic rule, even though in most cases Muslims and non-Muslims lived in different communities. He also mentioned that non-Muslims had to pay a tax for their protection to Muslim governments, and that this was equivalent to the Zakat which Muslims had to pay.

Professor Suheil Bushrui spoke about the oneness of religion and the course he teaches at the University of Maryland, “The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race.” He explained a chart demonstrating that there are twenty-two religious groupings in the world and that the people of the Book were less than half the world’s population. He also talked about the persecution of the Bahá’ís in Iran and the Arab world. Professor Bushrui went on to explain that in the early days of the Faith, the Bahá’ís were first accused of being agents of Czarist Russia. When the enemy changed, they were accused of being British spies, and when the enemy changed again the Bahá’ís were accused of being agents of America and now Israel. He presented the teachings of the Bahá’í Faith about loyalty and obedience to the government of the country in which Bahá’ís reside, the non-interference in partisan politics, and the desire to be well-wishers to all mankind.

Dr. Sulayman Nyang talked about some of the different interpretations of Islam and how Muslims should never discriminate against anybody no matter what their religion might be. He wondered why Muslim countries discriminate against Bahá’ís.

When the floor was opened to questions and answers, among the few interesting questions asked, two were from young women who expressed bitterness about the treatment of their respective minority groups, the Kurds and Ahmadiya sects, in Muslim countries. Dr. Sulayman Nyang responded by blaming it on the British by saying that it was because of Salah El-Din, a Kurd, whom the British never forgave. Hence, they did not allow the Kurds to have full autonomy. There was no explanation given as to why the Ahmadiya sect is treated badly.
Another interesting question came from a business school student who said that in business they are taught if a system does not bring about the required results, it is abandoned. He then directed this concept to Islam and Muslims, asking if Islam was dead. Ms. Jena Luedtke answered by saying that Islam was not dead, but she did not answer the question as to why it has no positive effect on its followers. Professor Bushrui quoted from the Qur’an the verse in Arabic in which it is stated that everything on the face of the earth vanishes, and nothing remains except the face of thy Lord. He then went on to say that the majesty, purity, and truth of Islam have never vanished.

Min Ajl Lubnan Fundraiser and Event in Honor of Professor Suheil Bushrui
Date: Sunday, 29 March 2009
Venue: Neyla Restaurant, Washington DC

On Sunday 29 March 2009, a fundraising event was held to strengthen the programs of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace. The event, which was also held in honor of Professor Bushrui, was organized by the entire Lebanese community in Washington, DC and under the auspices of the Ambassador of Lebanon, His Excellency Antoine Chedid. Many prominent members of the Lebanese community were present at this event, as well as the entire staff of the Lebanese Embassy.

The Ameen Rihani Annual Interfaith Seminar Series
Title: “Civil Society in Egypt: Pluralism and the Concept of Citizenship”
Date: Thursday, 2 April 2009
Venue: The University of Maryland

The Ameen Rihani Annual Interfaith Seminar Series will address in general terms the major issues discussed by Ameen Rihani in his English and Arabic works such as: East/West relations, the future of the Arab world, and interreligious and interfaith understanding. The significance of Rihani’s work can scarcely be lost on modern day scholars and politicians alike. Some of the answers to the problems of today were provided by him over half a century ago. There is surely no more crucial contemporary issue than the importance of East/West relations, something Rihani not only realized but did his utmost to promote. His work, therefore, deserves consideration on two levels: in the context of the prevailing atmosphere of the times in which he lived, and in the light of present-day issues on which his influence still has an enduring bearing.

* * *

This seminar, which inaugurated the Ameen Rihani Annual Interfaith Seminar series at the University of Maryland, took the format of a dialogue and discussion with a distinguished Egyptian delegation which included (in alphabetical order): Dr. Nabil Abadir (General Director of the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services); Dr. Fathy Abou Ayana (former Dean and Professor of Human Geography at Alexandria University); Ms. Samira Luka (Director of the Forum for Intercultural Dialogue); Ms. Amina Shafik (journalist with Al Ahram); and Dr. Hanan Youssif (Professor of Arab and International Media, ‘Ain Shams University). This group has been participating in dialogues between the faith communities in Egypt for many years, focusing not on theology but on themes concerning citizenship, in an effort to build creative bridges between the religious traditions over topics of mutual concern. The participants in the dialogue included members of the delegation, and five discussants (in alphabetical order): Imam Dr. Mohamad Bashar Arafat (President of the Civilization Exchange and Cooperation Foundation, and scholar in Islamic studies); Mr. Kenneth E. Bowers (author on culture and religion, and Bahá’í scholar); Dr. Gary Fink (Rabbi Emeritus of Oseh Shalom Synagogue, and specialist in pastoral care and end-of-life counseling); Reverend Dr.
Clark Lobenstine (Executive Director of the InterFaith Conference of Metropolitan Washington); and Miss Somya Shesadri (President of the Hindu Student Council at the University of Maryland). It was a great honor to have Dr. Hikmat Nasr and Mrs. Julia Nasr present, and Dr. Nasr’s welcoming remarks and greetings on behalf of Min Ajl Lubnan – the co-sponsor of this event – were much appreciated.

Among the guests who attended and took part in the discussions were leaders of the University of Maryland (in alphabetical order): Dr. Carol Pearson (Director of the James MacGregor Burns Academy of Leadership); Dr. Paul Shackel (Chair of the Department of Anthropology and Director of the Center for Heritage Resource Studies); and Dr. Saúl Sosnowski (Associate Provost for International Affairs and Director of the Office of International Programs), as well as esteemed representatives of the Lebanese-American and Arab-American communities, including members of the Min Ajl Lubnan Task Force, and leaders of thought representing different professions, some of whom are the following:

Mr. Nabil Bashirelahi  
Doctoral student in Middle Eastern Studies  
University of Maryland

Dr. Miles L. Bradbury  
Assistant Professor of the History of Religion in America  
University of Maryland

Mrs. Ann Bradbury  
One-time Librarian, University of Maryland

Mrs. Mary Bushrui  
Former Head Teacher at the Lycée Français

Ms. Jennifer Cate  
Executive Director of Hands Along the Nile Development Services, Inc.

Dr. Taraneh Darabi  
Specialist in Parenting and Child Education

Mr. Farhang Darabi  
President, Darabi & Associates, Inc.

Dr. Maria Dayton  
Representative of Voices for a Democratic Egypt

Mr. Michael W. Dravis  
Scholar in Diplomatic History  
University of Maryland

Dr. Sawsan El Hady  
Educational Consultant (UK)  
One-time Professor of Arabic Studies, University of Beijing;  
University of Canterbury (NZ)

Mr. Abdel Aziz El Hady  
One-time Professor of Arabic Studies, University of Beijing;  
University of Canterbury (NZ)

Dr. Nabil Hanna  
Scholar in Muslim-Christian Cultural Relations

Dr. Hikmat Nasr  
International Consultant in Agricultural and Rural Development  
Formerly of the World Bank  
Representative of Min Ajl Lubnan

Mrs. Julia Nasr  
One-time Chair of the United Nations Women Association  
Board Member, Washington Chapter of the American University of Beirut Alumni Association of North America

Mr. Mustafa Sabri  
Scholar in Arabic Studies  
Fellow of the International Association for the Study of the Life and Works of Kahlil Gibran

Dr. Joseph B. Scholten  
Associate Director of the Office of International Programs  
University of Maryland

Dr. Talaat Shehata  
Office of International Programs  
University of Maryland

Dr. Naeim Sherbiny  
Senior Representative  
Ibn Khaldun Center for Development
The discussion centered on the meaning of citizenship, and the necessity for a pluralistic approach in matters related to the whole of society, as well as interfaith dialogue. One of the most important results of this encounter was a new awareness on the part of the Egyptian delegation of Lebanon's contribution to the creation of an Arab civil society, and a very valuable introduction to the work and thought of Ameen Rihani, especially his ideas on civil society and a pluralistic religious community. The members of the delegation wanted very much to keep in touch with the University of Maryland, and they were particularly moved when they were greeted by Professor Bushrui who read, in their honor, his translation of a poem written by one of the most distinguished Egyptian poets of the last century, Ahmad Shauqui:

“The Feast of Time”

To God all religions belong—whomever
He wills He guides,
Calling each single soul through the voice
of Faith to His side,
The many Faiths that exist, no hostile
feeling or strife
Ever must quicken to birth in those to
whom He has given life.
All creeds and holy books, all messengers
from God’s hand,
Are treasures beyond price to those who
understand.
The essence of all true Faiths, are God’s
love and His fear,
The rock beneath His laws to all who serve
Him here.
In what those laws decree all goodness is
enshrined,
Their interdicts ward off all evil for
mankind.
Among their virtues, Tolerance shines forth
with brightest gleam,
In holiness Sublime, it crowns them all supreme.

عبد الزمان
الدين الله، من شاء الإله هدى
كل نفس هو في الدين داعيها
ما كان مختلف الأديان داعية
إلى اختلاف البرايا أو تعاليها
الكتب والرسل والأديان قاطعة
خزائن الحكمة الكبرى لواعيها
محبة الله أصل في مراشدها
وخشية الله أس في مبانيها
وكل خير يلقى في أورمها
وكل شر يوقى في نواهيها
تسامح النفس معنى من مروعيتها
بل المرؤوه ففي آسمى معانيها
Oseh Shalom
Date: Friday, 22 May 2009
Venue: Oseh Shalom Synagogue, Laurel, MD

Professor Bushrui was invited to speak on the role of religion in peacemaking at Oseh Shalom Synagogue on 22 May 2009. Professor Bushrui’s talk was the fourth in a series featuring intellectual inquiry woven into the Friday evening services.

Dialogue with Officials from Bahrain
Date: Tuesday, 2 June 2009
Venue: The University of Maryland

On 2 June 2009, representatives of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace at the University of Maryland (UM) held a dialogue with a delegation from Bahrain’s Ministry of Justice. The meeting—which focused on the role of religion in American life, the status of the Muslim-American community, and interfaith relations—was convened at the request of the U.S. Department of State. One year earlier, in July 2008, the Gibran Chair had met with a similar delegation from Bahrain, and on this occasion the State Department sought a reprise of that encounter.

Because Professor Suheil Bushrui, the holder of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace, was traveling abroad on the date of the dialogue, at his request the Chair was represented by the following panel (in alphabetical order): Professor Miles Bradbury (Assistant Professor of the History of Religion in America, University of Maryland); Mr. Michael Dravis (Research Associate with the Gibran Chair, and scholar in Diplomatic History, University of Maryland); and Dr. Nabil Hanna (retired U.S. Foreign Service Communications Officer, and scholar in Muslim-Christian Cultural Relations). The Bahraini delegation included (in alphabetical order): Mr. Nawaf Rashed Mohamed Rashed Abdulla (Administrative Coordinator); Sheikh Jaafar Ali Hasan Alaali (Sharia Jaffariyat Court); and Sheikh Abdulnaser Abdulla Ebrahim Hasan (Chief of Hajj and Omra Affairs), all of the Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs. The State Department provided an English-Arabic translator.

Mr. Dravis opened the dialogue by welcoming the members of the Bahraini delegation and by introducing Professor Bradbury and Dr. Hanna. He also thanked Miss Poupak Moallem (Coordinator of the Gibran Chair) for arranging the details of the dialogue.

In his remarks, Professor Bradbury surveyed the diversity of religious life in the United States. In particular, he briefed the Bahrainis on two recent reports issued by the Pew Research Center: “Faith in Flux” and “Muslim Americans: Middle Class and Mostly Mainstream.” Professor Bradbury said that these reports demonstrate, in an empirical fashion, the fluidity and dynamism of American religious life. Addressing the status of various religious communities, he said “growth, change, and loss are constants in the American religious landscape.” Professor Bradbury also shared details about a course he teaches at the University of Maryland, “The History of Religion in America.”

For his part, Dr. Hanna offered a personalized perspective on religion and interfaith dialogue. He said that, according to his belief and experience, all the revealed religions come from one God and share basic truths, but came at different stages in the development of humankind. Dr. Hanna observed that in the United States and elsewhere, discord between religious communities is not caused by inherent differences between faiths, but rather results from willful and exclusivist misinterpretations of religious texts and gave some examples of these exclusive misinterpretations in the Jewish, Christian and Islamic faiths. Reflecting on religious life in the United States in comparison to the Middle East, Dr. Hanna said that in the U.S. religion}
is more a religious/social phenomenon whereas in the latter region religion is a matter of a fundamental way of life.

Following the presentations by Professor Bradbury and Dr. Hanna, the members of the Bahraini delegation asked a series of probing questions that further explored the American experience of religion. At one point, for example, the discussion focused on the fluctuation and alteration that characterize religious life in America. A member of the delegation wondered if this was really a healthy development. Professor Bradbury responded that religious practice in the U.S. is sometimes explained as a “rational choice” made by individuals who adapt their religious practices according to their own personal and varying needs.

At the conclusion of the encounter, the members of the Bahraini delegation warmly thanked their University of Maryland counterparts for arranging the dialogue and expressed their hope that contacts could be maintained in the future.

Overall, the meeting with officials from Bahrain’s Ministry of Justice was an example of how the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace fulfills one of its core missions: engaging professionals of capacity from around the world on the level of interfaith and cross-cultural dialogue.

Meeting with His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales
Date: Tuesday, 9 June 2009
Venue: Clarence House, London, UK

On 9 June 2009, Professor Bushrui met with His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales to discuss the publication of the second volume of speeches and articles by His Royal Highness as well as the Arabic translation of the first volume. Projects related to the inclusion of the work of His Royal Highness in courses which are taught at the University of Maryland were also discussed as well as the proposed Honors course entitled: The Unity of Vision, Ethic and Action: Leadership in a Global Age – The Work and Thought of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales.

Temenos Academy Lecture
Title: “The Sacred in Literature – ‘Sages Standing in God’s Holy Fire’: The Poet and Spirituality”
Date: Tuesday, 9 June 2009
Venue: The Royal Asiatic Society, 14 Stephenson Way, London NW1

Abstract:

In sacred literature we discover humanity’s awareness of the relationship with the divine and its powerful experience of a yearning for the spiritual. Inspired poetry uses ordinary words in extraordinary ways that produce intimations of that eternal Word that sustains all things. The idea that the writing of true poetry requires a spark of something like divine possession is widespread in many civilizations. In its most extreme form, this can lead to the poet being seen as temporarily or permanently mad; we may remember the German poet Friedrich Hölderlin, who spent many years in confinement after losing his reason in 1806 at the age of 36, as well as John Clare, the English peasant poet whose lifelong struggle with adversity and oppression reduced him to insanity and caused him to end his days in an asylum in 1864. We may also recall Robert Graves’s description of Sappho in his collection of essays The Crowning Privilege, pressed beyond the bounds of sanity by the double burden of incarnating the Muse and expressing her divinely-inspired utterances. Indeed, the inspiration of the poet is so powerful and all-consuming as to appear positively dangerous.

This is in no small part bound up with the magical function of language. The ancient Druids, for example, acted not only as guardians of the sacred traditions of the Celts but as poets and teachers of an oral tradition too powerful to be trusted to writing because of the power which it gave its possessors to curse and blight as well as to bless and fructify. It might seem bizarre at first sight to claim common ground for Arabic and Irish literature, but both these cultures share an awareness of the ‘lawful magic’, known in Arabic as *Sihr halal*, which resides in the music and texture of words and transcends their immediate meaning. This becomes clear in the passages from the Holy Qur’an:

So when the truth came to them from us they said:
this is surely clear enchantment.³

Yeats expresses the same vision:

And I would have all know that when all falls
In ruin, poetry calls out in joy,
Being the scattering hand, the bursting pod,
The victim’s joy among the holy flame,
God’s laughter at the shattering of the world.³

Elsewhere in the same poem, expressing the religious quality of all true poetry, Yeats describes it as

One of the fragile, mighty things of God

—a concept close to the Arabic term *i`jaz* (language miraculously wrought), applied only to the Holy Qur’an itself as the highest literary expression.

These glimpses of the sacred transcend the boundaries of time and space, culture and tradition and find further expression when Yeats’ imagination enables him to enter the ‘holy city of Byzantium’ - not the city of the impetuous young, driven by their senses, but a home of sages, ‘singing-masters of my soul’, prophets and teachers of a higher wisdom, true poets surrounded and inspired by ‘God’s holy fire’.

Similar to previous years, this lecture was very well-received, and the decision was taken by the Temenos Academy to publish the paper as one of its major publications.

---

**Dinner in Honor of HE HH Princess Lalla Joumala Alaoui and Mr. Reza Esfandiari**

Date: Wednesday, 10 June 2009

Venue: The Royal Automobile Club, 89 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5HS

On 10 June 2009, Professor Bushrui had the distinct privilege of addressing the following group of prominent dignitaries and leaders of thought and profession at the Royal Automobile Club. At this important gathering, Professor Bushrui spoke about Arab culture and civilization.

HE MR SAMI KHIYAMI
Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic
AND MRS AMINA KHIYAMI

HE MR YURY FEDOTOV
Ambassador of the Russian Federation
AND MRS ELENA FEDOTOVA

---

² The Holy Qur’an, X:76.

HE DR ALIA BOURAN
Ambassador of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
AND MR ISHAQ BOURAN

HE MR JEAN-MICHEL VERANNEMAN DE WATERVLIET
Ambassador of Belgium
AND MRS MARIA DO CARMO VERANNEMAN DE WATERVLIET

HE MRS HAMIDA MRABET LABIDI
Ambassador of Tunisia

MINISTER COUNSELLOR ZHANG LIRONG
Embassy of the People’s Republic of China

BRIGADIER SIR MILES HUNT-DAVIS KCVO CBE
Private Secretary to HRH The Duke of Edinburgh

LT COLONEL CHARLES RICHARDS LVO
Deputy Master of HM The Queen’s Household

LORD JANVRIN GCB GCVO
Former Private Secretary to HM The Queen
AND LADY ISABELLE JANVRIN

YVONNE, MARCHIONESS OF BRISTOL

BARONESS PAULINE NEVILLE-JONES DCMG
Chairs the Conservative Party Group on National and International Security

PROFESSOR SUHEIL BUSHRUI AND MRS MARY BUSHRUI

MRS MEHRI ESFANDIARI
Mother of Mr Reza Esfandiari

MR RASHID FARMAN-FARMAIAN AND MRS DUNIA FARMAN-FARMAIAN

MR JAMES KIDNER
Former Private Secretary to HRH The Prince of Wales
Director of the Co-Exist Foundation

MR ASHRAF LAIDI
Market Strategist CMC Markets
Son of Former Algerian Ambassador to London

DR KISHAN MANOCHA MRC Psych,
Barrister at Law
Assistant to General Dallaire of Canada
Fellow of the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies

MRS KARTIKA SOEKARNO SEEGERS
Daughter of former President Soekarno of Indonesia
Wife of Mr Frits Seegers, CEO for Global Retail and Commercial Banking Barclays

DR GRAHAM WALKER AND MRS GUILDA NAVIDI WALKER

MISS ALEXANDRA WALKER
Head of Communications and Marketing, BGC Partners, Europe & Asia
Reception at the House of Lords
Date: Monday, 15 June 2009
Venue: The House of Lords

On 15 June 2009, Professor Bushrui was honored at a special reception at the House of Lords in recognition of his distinguished services rendered to increasing East/West relations and understanding. Professor Bushrui addressed this same topic, as well as the role of culture and literature in promoting this understanding, in the remarks that he made before a very distinguished group of Members of the House of Lords, Ambassadors, diplomats, and other dignitaries.

International Academy for Human Sciences and Culture 9th International Peace Seminar
Date: 4-11 July 2009
Venue: Walenstadt, Switzerland

The International Seminar is an annual scientific and cultural project of the International Academy for Human Sciences and Culture, which has the foremost aim of furthering peace and the oneness of mankind through programs emphasizing intercultural understanding, dialogue, and education of the mind and heart.

The theme for 2009 was “Family and Peace.” Based on research conducted by the International Academy for Human Sciences and Culture, the family is the “primary place” where the “basic attitudes of a child are formed, character qualities are developed and behaviour patterns are learned.” Therefore, the focus of the seminar was placed on the family as the central point from which children receive their training to become leaders in society.

Mercury and Gibran
Date: 9 July 2009
Venue: The University of Maryland

The International Association for the Study of the Life and Works of Kahlil Gibran is pleased to announce the achievement of Lebanese astronomer, Dr. Nelly Mouawad, at the University of Maryland

On 9 July 2009, the International Astronomical Union officially approved the naming of a 100km diameter crater on the planet Mercury after Kahlil Gibran thanks to the efforts of Dr. Nelly Mouawad, a former student of al-Hikmah School in Beirut, and a graduate of the University of Cologne in Germany where she received a PhD in Astronomy. Dr. Mouawad is currently a post-doctoral researcher in the Astronomy Department at the University of Maryland, and a close associate of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace. This is a truly outstanding development and great achievement for Lebanon and its great poet, Kahlil Gibran.

Dr. Mouawad’s work involves studying the formation and composition of the exosphere (thin atmosphere) of Mercury using ground-based data and MESSENGER (MErcury Surface, Space ENvironment, GEochemistry, and Ranging; the space mission to Mercury). Recently, new images of Mercury were taken with MESSENGER, and new craters were discovered. According to Dr. Mouawad, craters – as well as any other feature on Mercury – are named only when they are considered important enough on the scientific level to be named.

During a MESSENGER meeting, therefore, Dr. Mouawad proposed that one of the newly discovered craters be named after Gibran. She then gathered and prepared all the required information for the committee
responsible for naming the craters to submit in its official proposal to the International Astronomical Union (IAU) which ultimately accepts or rejects the proposed names. Official approval was obtained by the IAU on the 9th of July. As additional names may be proposed, plans are underway to also submit the name of Ameen Rihani for consideration. It may be of interest to note that on Mercury, there are craters named after Abu Nuwas, Al-Akhtal, Imru Al-Qais, and Al-Jahiz.

Further details are available on the official website for planetary nomenclature:
http://planetarynames.wr.usgs.gov/jsp/FeatureTypesData2.jsp?systemID=1&bodyID=9&typeID=9&system=Mercury&body=Mercury&type=Crater,%20craters&sort=AName&show=Fname&show=Lat&show=Long&show=Diam&show=Stat&show=Orig

"Journeys of Faith" by Unity Walk: Personal Conversations with Public Figures

Date: Tuesday, 4 August 2009
Venue: Soka Gakkai International – USA; Washington, DC Buddhist Culture Center

On 4 August 2009, Professor Suheil Bushrui—holder of the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace at the University of Maryland’s Center for Heritage Resource Studies—was the featured speaker at a major interfaith gathering held in Washington, DC. The event was the first in a series called “Journeys of Faith” featuring conversations with prominent public figures about how their faith informs and guides their life and work. The “Journeys of Faith” discussions are organized by a leading interfaith organization in the nation’s capital, Unity Walk (http://www.911unitywalk.org/).

The “Journeys of Faith” conversation with the Gibran Professor was itself an outstanding example of interfaith dialogue: Professor Bushrui is the former holder of the Bahá’í Chair for World Peace at the University of Maryland; Sister Maureen Fiedler, a Catholic Nun and the creator and host of the public radio program Interfaith Voices (http://wamu.org/programs/interfaith_voices/), interviewed Professor Bushrui; the event took place at the Soka Gakkai International (http://www.sgi-usa-washingtondc.org/), Washington’s Buddhist cultural center; and the audience consisted not only of Buddhists but also Christians (including a Catholic priest), a delegation of scholars from Morocco (a predominantly Muslim country) visiting Washington under the auspices of the U.S. Department of State, and representatives of several other faith communities.

Sister Fiedler began the conversation by asking Professor Bushrui about the Bahá’í Faith. He responded by outlining some of the basic teachings of Bahá’u’lláh, the prophet-founder of the Bahá’í Faith. These teachings include belief in the essential oneness of humanity and the need, in this age, to undertake practical measures to unify the world under a global society. Professor Bushrui stressed that this process of unification, according to Bahá’í belief, entails the search for justice, followed by the building of unity, ultimately leading to peace. This formula of justice-unity-peace cannot be reversed, Professor Bushrui said.

Sharing details of his own spiritual journey, Professor Bushrui emphasized that as a child he was educated in Islamic schools and was deeply imbued with, and appreciative of, Muslim teachings and beliefs. Later, as a young man, he made the conscious choice to follow the Bahá’í Faith. This, he said, was reflective of the Bahá’í belief that religion and faith are personal matters to be decided on the basis of individual contemplation and choice.

Sister Fiedler then asked the Gibran Professor to discuss his forthcoming study entitled The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race (Oxford: Oneworld, 2010). This book, a comprehensive survey of divine and non-divine spiritual traditions, is designed for a general audience and will be published in two editions, one in English and one in Arabic. Professor Bushrui noted that the book is an ambitious collaborative effort between himself, his co-author Dr. Mehrdad Massoudi, and three other contributing authors. The aim of the book, said Professor Bushrui, is to present a basic survey of the history and core beliefs of each faith or spiritual tradition. The book has already received praise and enthusiastic responses from a wide range of scholars;
most notably, it is the first recipient of the Temple of Understanding Interfaith Education Award for outstanding work in the field of interfaith education. The book also includes a Preface by Alison Van Dyk, Chair of the Board of the Temple of Understanding.

Given the variety of perspectives that prevail within many faith communities, said Professor Bushrui, the authors sought to represent each faith in a respectful fashion that mainstream practitioners would find acceptable. As part of their quest to treat each religion with equally and respectfully, Professor Bushrui noted that the team of authors did not use of the suffix “ism” when referring to any religion, as in Judaism or Hinduism. Instead, these particular traditions are referred to as the Jewish Faith and the Hindu Faith.

Of great significance, the Gibran Professor said, is the Arabic language edition of the book. This will be the first book on religion published in the Arab world that includes a comprehensive review of all the major religious traditions. For this reason, the authors hope that their text will serve as a foundation for interfaith studies throughout the Arab Middle East.

In responding to questions posed by Sister Fiedler, Professor Bushrui addressed a variety of other issues related to the role of faith in shaping the state of the world. One pernicious trend, the Gibran Professor said, was the misrepresentation of Islam. This misrepresentation springs from two sources, Professor Bushrui argued: first, forces within the Muslim community that use religion to advance narrow political interests, in part by circulating tendentious and exclusivist interpretations of Islam; and, second, the lack of knowledge by non-Muslims of the true teachings of Islam. Both of these negative perspectives can be ameliorated, said Professor Bushrui, through a greater understanding of Islam’s sacred texts as opposed to questionable interpretations of those texts.

After a period of time, Sister Fiedler invited audience members to join the conversation with their own questions or comments. When one questioner mentioned the prevailing financial crisis, Professor Bushrui shared his view that the world was not, in fact, experiencing a financial crisis at all, but rather was undergoing the trauma of an ethics crisis. The financial disaster is a symptom, not the cause, Professor Bushrui said. Faith communities everywhere can contribute to a long-term solution by championing the highest ethical standards and by insisting that leaders in all walks of life—politics, business, education, etc.—uphold such standards and inculcate them on all levels of society.

Sister Fiedler closed the “Journeys of Faith” discussion by thanking the Gibran Professor for participating in the event. Following the formal program, a reception was held during which audience members had the opportunity to interact personally with Professor Bushrui. Notably, he was approached by the delegation of Moroccan scholars who were in attendance. They warmly thanked Professor Bushrui for the spirited defense of Islam that he had issued during his exchange with Sister Fiedler.

In sum, the “Journeys of Faith” event was an example of how the George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace fulfills one of its core missions: engaging individuals and communities representing a variety of perspectives on the level of interfaith and cross-cultural dialogue.
The Ameen Rihani Annual Lecture Series

Title: “The Arab World: Extremism or Reform?”
Date: Friday, 4 December 2009
Venue: The University of Maryland

On the evening of 4 December 2009, Professor Suheil Bushrui, from the Center for Heritage Resource Studies in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Maryland, College Park, in association with Min Ajl Lubnan, hosted a lecture by Egyptian professor, Arab scholar, and world renowned human rights activist Dr. Saad Eddin Ibrahim. Dr. Ibrahim is the author of over 100 scholarly articles in both Arabic and English periodicals, some of which have been translated into as many as thirteen languages. He is also internationally recognized for his work as the leading human rights activist and advocate of democracy and civil society in the Middle East - issues which were of great interest to Ameen Rihani and were often discussed in his English and Arabic works.

The lecture was part of the Ameen Rihani Annual Lecture Series, which was inaugurated in 2008. The purpose of the lecture series is to highlight critical issues and challenges facing the Arab world, particularly through the lens and philosophy of Ameen Rihani. Dr. Ibrahim’s lecture, entitled “The Arab World: Extremism or Reform?” was attended by the Dean of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences, Dr. John Townshend, scholars and educators from the University of Maryland community, and members of the Min Ajl Lubnan Task Force.

The evening began with opening statements by Dean Townshend and Dr. Suheil Bushrui. In his remarks, Dr. Bushrui expressed how privileged he was to welcome Dean Townshend publicly, and how delighted he was to be working with him to strengthen the University of Maryland’s capacity to enhance peace and reconciliation in our world.

Dr. Ibrahim began his talk by speaking about what he called the “seeds of extremism.” According to Dr. Ibrahim, these seeds can manifest themselves in the human psyche in different forms. Extremism in the context of his talk focused mainly on behavioral and ideological extremism that leads to hate and inevitably to a path of violence. Referring to a recent statistic in Foreign Policy magazine, Dr. Ibrahim reminded the audience that the ratio of the death toll – that is, human lives lost in wars between America and the Arab world since the end of World War II – is 1-to-20. From this staggering figure alone, one can begin to imagine the depth of the tragedy in Arab society, and the negative roots that extremists can manipulate to engage others in a so-called “holy war” against the West.

Dr. Ibrahim was also careful to explain that the seeds of extremism are of course not only sown by foreign atrocities, but also by home-grown autocrats in the Arab world. The undemocratic governments in many countries of the Arab world, which to a large extent are supported by Western powers, have also contributed to the frustration and lack of opportunity for the majority of Arab youth. The combination of poor economic conditions, personal freedoms, and pessimistic outlooks for young people assists the theocrats who aim to present their ideas and aspirations as superior to those of secular regimes. Unfortunately, the theocrats are just as undemocratic as the secular governments but their views are more extreme. One possible solution, as Ameen Rihani advocated, is in the empowerment of the young generation through better education, and love for liberty, purity of thought, and brotherhood.

Another important theme in Dr. Ibrahim’s talk was his focus on the tremendous opportunity that exists in already democratic Muslim nations. He reminded the audience that there are in the world today functioning democracies where Islam is the main religion. This proves that there are no inherent incompatibilities between Islam and its traditions, and Western values of democracy and social order. Countries like Indonesia and Turkey are two prime examples. It is crucial to remember that the Islamic fundamentalists that more frequently than often capture the headlines of news reports represent less than 1% of Muslims in the world. This striking fact is usually disregarded or not known in Western societies. Therefore, the work and the philosophy of Ameen Rihani that called for permeable ties and civil exchanges between East and West are far more important in our time than any other. In a world where knowledge and
information travel at the speed of light, it is imperative for those who wish to reconcile and enrich the human experience of all societies in the East and in the West to look back at the ideas and mechanisms that Ameen Rihani committed himself to in order to enhance the understanding of this dichotomous world.

Despite the tumultuous past between America and the Arab Muslim world, whose population is only one-third that of the global Muslim population, Dr. Ibrahim emphasized that with the tools Ameen Rihani left for us in terms of truly understanding the culture, customs, languages, arts, religions, and spirituality of the Oriental human being, there is no doubt that the Western man is capable of coming to the realization that all humanity is precious and all of its heritage is equally enriching and worth preserving. Those ideals defined the journey for Ameen Rihani and by that journey he inspired thousands of his fellow Arabs to strive for the same.

Honors Course Proposal

The Unity of Vision, Ethic and Action: Leadership in a Global Age – The Work and Thought of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales

His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales has set an important example of inspired leadership in an age desperately in need of leaders with vision and a deep sense of responsibility to serve their people and the world of which they are an indivisible part. Drawing from principles winnowed from the essential wisdom of humanity’s spiritual heritage—what scholars have termed ‘the perennial philosophy’—the Prince has developed an integrated worldview capable of addressing modern problems with solutions that are holistic as well as practical. His unique leadership has demonstrated how perennial principles, when applied to environmental and social problems, result in models that build community and guide development in ways that are environmentally safe, aesthetically enriching and sustainable.

An honors course at the University of Maryland, under the auspices of the Center for Heritage Resource Studies, will study the unity of vision, ethic and action of His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales and his example of leadership in a global age. The course will feature guest lectures from scholars and experts in the fields of urban development to geothermal technology and the inspiration of teachers of English and History and will examine the relationship and interrelatedness of these fields to the vision of the Prince as demonstrated in his many charitable institutions. Some of the organizations under the royal patronage, the aims of which shape the thematic approach of this course, include: The Temenos Academy, which fosters educational and scholarly initiatives that investigate the universal values and teachings at the heart of the world’s spiritual traditions; The Prince of Wales’ Foundation for Integrated Health, which combines the best of conventional and complementary medicine; The Prince’s Foundation for the Built Environment, which puts people at the center of the city-planning process by reviving the timeless principles of traditional urban design; The Prince’s School of Traditional Arts, which aims to teach arts and crafts skills which have profound roots in all the major faith traditions; and Business in the Community, which promotes corporate responsibility.
This list does not include the long list of publications of books and articles in Arabic and English. What follows are selected items of the most recent publications to date.


The essays in this second volume reflect His Royal Highness’s leadership in drawing attention to global issues and concerns which affect the whole of humanity.


From the Preface of Selected Speeches and Articles by His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales

Once again His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales inspires us with the breadth of his knowledge, bringing keen insight and remarkable vision to some of the seminal issues of our time: political strife, climate change and sustainability, food and agriculture, and our relationship to the planet and the universe beyond. His analyses reveal the depth of his thoughts about agriculture, architecture, biology, and environmental science, among others. His speeches are underpinned with narratives from diverse cultures and framed by insights from history, philosophy and theology. His Royal Highness is a Renaissance intellectual, knitting together multiple topics with precision and grace.

Some of the questions his speeches pose are timelessly existential: the tension between the material and the spiritual; the secular and the religious. Others are contemporary: technology and nature; sustainability and capitalism. His talent for navigating these realms is remarkable, opening avenues for exploration and understanding. His passion for discovery and learning shines brightly through the text, as does his concern for humanity, ethics and environmental stewardship.

The Prince’s commentaries encourage us all to move to a better balance with our environment. His arguments for the inherent order of the Universe are compelling, seamlessly mapping the linkages between the earth, its inhabitants, and the cosmos. Expertly weaving this tapestry, he envisions creative solutions to shared problems, such as climate change, by harmoniously linking the strengths of distinct stakeholders. He calls for alliances between business, governments and NGOs, melding their assets for the greater good of the planet.

Professors Suheil Bushrui and David Cadman demonstrate their own wisdom in gathering these intellectual gems together in this second volume. The Prince’s topics are thought-provoking and his writing is superb. As with the first volume, Professor Bushrui and Professor Cadman’s acumen is evident from their selection of the Prince’s most elegant prose and their strategic arrangement of subject matter. Successfully unifying so many topics from disparate fields, Professors Bushrui and Cadman illuminate the leadership and intellectual rigor of a great 21st century thinker, The Prince of Wales.

Dr. C.D. Mate, Jr.,
President, the University of Maryland
In May 2008, Professor Bushrui was invited to contribute a chapter to Global Leadership: Portraits of the Past, Visions for the Future. This volume is in the International Leadership Association’s Series, “Building Leadership Bridges.” Professor Bushrui’s contribution was entitled “Global Leadership Portraits and Visions for the Future: The Poet’s Vision and the Promise of World Peace.”

**Extract:**
The great poets, for as long as we remember, have been the true leaders of humanity. Their vision was always the inspiration for the great spiritual conquests of the human race, the triumph of the spirit before which all other values are non-existent. The poet’s leadership, therefore, is vindicated against what one poet calls “the reasoners and merchants” and of the “unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty”. How true in today’s social and political climate is this claim of the poet, for the greatest poetry can never compromise the Truth.

The political discourse has dominated for too long all discussion – national and international – emphasizing the so-called “realities of time and place”, and employing in research the quantitative and empirical methods that have not yielded many positive results. The power of the word, the power of poetry, and the power of literature survive both time and place.

* * *

**Gibran’s Little Book of Love**

Almost immediately, this anthology made the bestseller list in the UK and was subsequently reprinted in a special gift edition.

**FROM THE INTRODUCTION OF GIBRAN’S LITTLE BOOK OF LOVE**

The selections in this anthology represent an attempt to include the many different aspects of love that Gibran refers to in his works: the love of God; the love of country; the love of family and friends; the love between men and women; the love of nature; and the love of all humanity. It is hoped that these short passages will also demonstrate the sense of compassion Gibran expresses in his view of men and women, who are seen to be equally in need of self-realisation. Only through the knowledge of the heart are we able to achieve self-knowledge: words become powerless and inadequate. The perennial question, which is universally asked, occurs in The Prophet: ‘Who among you does not feel that his power to love is boundless?’

For Gibran, love remained the supreme virtue and the dynamic force that enhanced the life of the world and the spirit. For him, no gift can ever compare with the unique gift which only love can offer.

Suheil Bushrui

* * *
In this global age, an understanding of humanity’s religious and spiritual traditions is essential for all students who aspire to be citizens of the world. Religious pluralism, misunderstandings about and between the religions, as well as religious extremism are all central to the challenge of establishing a lasting peace in the twenty-first century. Unfortunately, the issue of religion and spirituality has been the “missing dimension” of conflict resolution. Increasingly, however, it is recognized that only a holistic approach to peace-building—one which fully acknowledges the important role of religion—will be successful. In 1933, Mahatma Gandhi recognized that “there will be no lasting peace on earth unless we learn not merely to tolerate but even to respect the other faiths as our own.” This perspective was reiterated by the Swiss thinker Hans Küng when he affirmed shortly after the tragedy of September 11th that “peace among the religions is a precondition for peace among the nations.”

Though insularity and prejudice may be observed in every field, in religious education the extent of these limitations is unmatched. Indeed, for most believers, the Truth of one’s own religion implies the falsity of others. Alternatively, for the non-believing social scientist all such beliefs are false, except for his or her own belief in non-belief. From the pens of such authors there is usually as much distortion as fact regarding much of religious tradition and spiritual experience.

Where can one go for a straightforward, nonsectarian, non-judging introduction to how each religion looks from the inside, from the perspective of believers instead of from the outside point of view of either the social scientist or competing theologian?

The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race is a clear and effective response to this question. In the space of 400 pages, the book exposes the reader to the basic teachings, spiritual practices, and liturgical calendars of both the major world religions and major regional spiritual traditions. A consistent effort is made to present each chapter of this heritage with respect and dignity. It emphasizes the intrinsic values of each religion and provides stimulating evidence for a common ground shared by all. The material is written so as to be easily followed by the general reader as well as university students in a general education course in which the aim is understanding, not criticism. In addition to the chapters devoted to the specific “faiths,” there is also an ample bibliography, a glossary, and selected quotations from each of the traditions on the subjects of God, Humanity, Society, Nature, and the Golden Rule. Thus, students are equipped to carry out research on topics of both particular and comparative interest.

No comprehensive account of the religions of the world is intended by this volume, but it does open many new vistas for the reader who cannot fail to marvel at the rich diversity of spiritual expression which has grown out of the nourishing and challenging environments of the world. The book has already received praise and enthusiastic responses from a wide range of scholars including Marcus Braybooke, President of the World Congress of Faiths, who described it as follows: “This wonderful book will encourage us to appreciate and rejoice in the spiritual heritage which we now share.” The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race is also the first recipient of the Temple of Understanding Interfaith Education Award for outstanding work in the field of interfaith education. Requests have been made for its translation into Russian and Chinese. The publication of the Arabic translation (Tourath al-Insaniyya al-Ruhi) is expected in 2010.

Another important feature of this publication (in English) is that it serves as the main textbook for the University of Maryland Honors course, “The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race.” The text, therefore, draws on Professor Suheil Bushrui’s work over the last two decades in interfaith reconciliation and is the result of the material presented in the course over the last twelve years.
From the Preface of The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race

The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race is a work developed out of a lifetime of scholarship and teaching about the great religions of humanity. Using the history of the evolution of civilization as a framework, the authors seek to follow a parallel evolution, that of man’s “universal yearning for transcendence.” We are given a profound view of humankind’s search for ultimate reality, both through the diversity of form and the unity of aspiration for the divine. One of the implications that can be drawn from this epic approach is that religions have evolved one out of the other throughout history. Out of the ancient Hindu religion, for instance, grew Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism. Out of the Jewish religion grew Christianity and Islam. Out of Ancient Chinese religious thought grew the teachings of Lao Tzu and Confucius. This perspective creates a flow and movement that can be likened to one great eternal river of religious thought. The reader is both conscious of the uniqueness of each religion but also of the vast heritage of religious thought from the earliest “First Peoples” to the great traditions of today. The Spiritual Heritage of the Human Race creates for us a passage of initiation into the heart of each of the great world’s religions from both the standpoints of their relationship to each other as well as their independence from one another. In this way, this book creates a unique contribution to interfaith understanding.

This book will, I believe, transform the way the study of religions is taught in universities. In setting the history of religions against the background of the evolution of humanity’s spiritual heritage, Dr. Suheil Bushrui and Dr. Mehrdad Massoudi have given us a masterful and unique window into both the essence of each religion and its relationship to the whole of humankind’s search for transcendence.

Alison Van Dyk
Chair of the Board
Temple of Understanding
Leaders in Cross-Cultural and Interfaith Education

* * *


In 2004, Professor Suheil Bushrui was invited by Professor Roger Allen (Professor of Arabic, University of Pennsylvania) to contribute an article on Kahlil Gibran for a volume on Arabic literature. Among the other figures included in this volume are the following (in alphabetical order): Iliya Abu Madi; Zaynab Fawwaz al-'Amili; Mikhail Naimy; Ahmad Shawqi; and Jurji Zaydan.

From the Introduction of Essays in Arabic Literary Biography: 1850-1950

This is the third (and last) volume in a series devoted to the biographies of renowned Arab littérateurs. The three volumes have been organized into the following periods*: Volume 1: 950-1350; Volume 2: 1350-1850; Volume 3: 1850-1950.

While it will be noted that these “periods” are indeed the product of a process of periodization….it is important for readers of the series to be aware that, as Series-Editor for the volumes…the principles applied in establishing these timeframes for the four volumes have endeavored to be more reflective of changes in intellectual and cultural milieus and, almost deliberately, to transcend the more traditional historical boundaries of previous studies of the Arabic literary heritage.

Roger Allen
Editor

*It should be noted that a previous volume devoted to the earlier period, 500-950, was published under different circumstances: see Arabic Literary Culture 500-950, ed. Shawkat Toorawa and Michael Cooperson, Dictionary of Literary Biography series no. 311 (Detroit: Thompson Gale, 2005).
This groundbreaking series consisting of five volumes will be the first of its kind to include the entire creative output of Kahlil Gibran, including his English language works (books and articles), Arabic materials (which will appear in a new translation), letters, and artwork. Each of these volumes will have a detailed critical introduction and new material as well as full bibliographic details.

For the first time, Gibran’s worldwide readership will have access to the range of his writings and artwork in a single, expertly produced collection.

* * *

Volume I: The English Works

* *

Volume II: The Arabic Works in Translation

* *

Volume III: The Letters

* *

Volume IV: The Artwork

* *

Volume V: A Supplement to the Collected Works

The World of Kahlil Gibran: A Pictorial Record of His Life and Work

* * *

Published by Oneworld (Oxford), 2010
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

The University of Maryland at College Park is one of America’s leading academic centers for scholarship, education and public service. Ranked in the top tier of the nation’s public research universities, the University of Maryland’s faculty is known nationally and internationally for their myriad contributions to the fields of science, engineering, mathematics, computer science, economics, government, politics, international relations, sociology and the humanities. Located adjacent to the nation’s capital, the University of Maryland at College Park draws to its campus a truly international student body, and contributes its faculty’s expertise to the development of national and international policy and public opinion through the major departments of national government and global institutions like the IMF and World Bank.

THE COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The College of Behavioral and Social Sciences is the University of Maryland’s academic center for teaching and research in psychology, sociology, economics, government and politics, archeology, anthropology, geography, criminal justice, and African American studies. The College plays a significant role within the University in preparing the next generation of outstanding graduates by serving as the academic home for over 25% of the young men and women who receive their baccalaureate degrees each year. Through their scholarship, their teaching, and their off-campus collaborations with major national and international institutions, the College’s faculty contribute their knowledge and expertise to the most pressing social, economic, political and cultural questions of our time.

Central among these most pressing issues are the concerns for international relations, cross-cultural understanding, global development, conflict management, peace, terrorism, ethnic identity, social justice and the preservation of the great cultural traditions of the world. The College of Behavioral and Social Sciences supports its faculty in their disciplined work on these issues through a network of interdisciplinary research centers that include: the Center for International Development and Conflict Management, the Program on Global Security and Disarmament, the Harrison Program on the Future Global Agenda, the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism, the Cultural Systems Analysis Group, and the Center for Heritage Resource Studies.

THE CENTER FOR HERITAGE RESOURCE STUDIES

The Center for Heritage Resource Studies in the Department of Anthropology was established in 2000 to bring scholars and practitioners together to support a comprehensive approach to the study of heritage. The Center’s research and educational efforts are formulated in a way that can be readily applied by those who are responsible for the management of our historic, cultural, and environmental resources. In this manner, the activities of the Center will contribute substantially to an increased awareness of the need for responsible heritage development. Investigation of these issues crosses many disciplines, including cultural anthropology, archaeology, historic preservation, community development, environmental sciences, and others.