

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

مركز الأمير الوليد بن طلال للدراسات الإسلامية

HRH PRINCE ALWALEED BIN TALAL
CENTRE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES



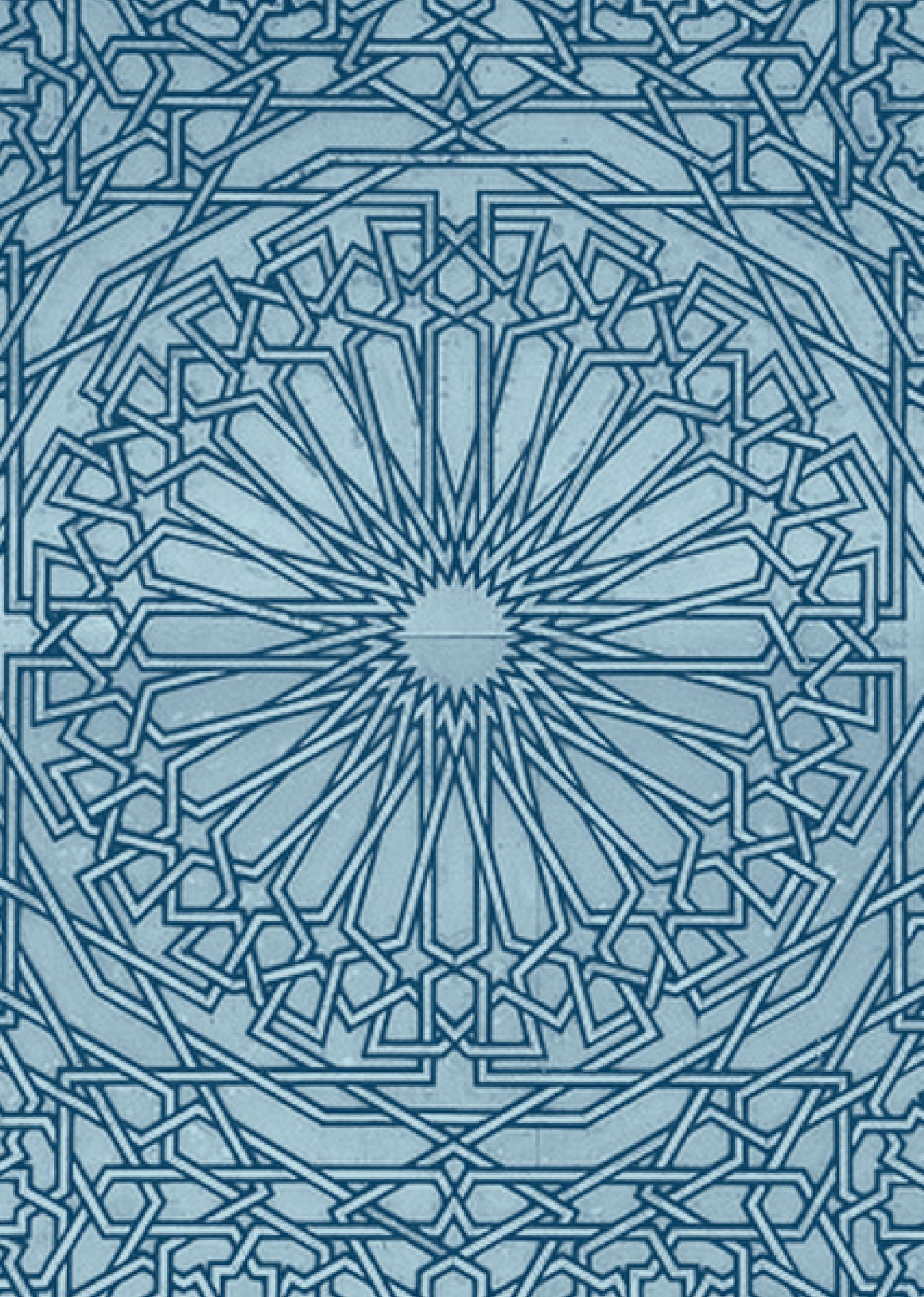
ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

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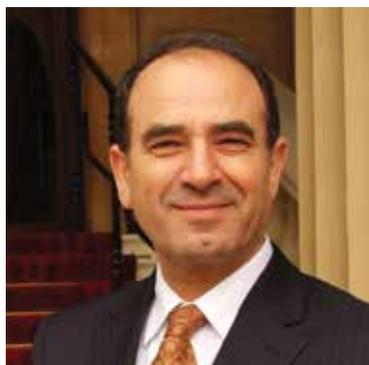
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FROM THE DIRECTOR



Foreword by the Director

One of the highlights of this year was the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centres meeting which took place in May. It was an honour for the University of Cambridge to host this prestigious event, and to showcase the research and public outreach work of the Centre alongside the others in the Alwaleed Philanthropies network, to a high-powered audience including HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chairman of Alwaleed Philanthropies, and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz. The event ended with a lively discussion in which the Centres' Directors fielded questions on the prospects and challenges for cultural understanding in the world today.

Another highlight has been the continued success of the Centre project on conversion to Islam in Britain, with the report on male perspectives launched this year in Cambridge and London. The voices of male converts are often unheard in contemporary debates, so the project brought together forty-six male Muslim converts to discuss aspects of their conversions to Islam. The report, *Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain: Male Perspectives*, shed new light on issues that have received little attention in public and scholarly discussion, such as how converts 'learn Islam', conversion in prison and radicalisation, the relations between converts and heritage Muslims, and the struggle with faith and exiting Islam.

I am delighted that the Centre convened its third graduate symposium on Muslims in the UK and Europe. Building on the success of previous years' symposia, a selected group of graduate students from across the UK and Europe gathered in Cambridge to present their research to their peers and selected senior mentors. The Centre also published selected papers from the previous year's symposium in an extensive publication *Muslims in the UK and Europe II*.

The schools outreach programme has developed an impressive roster of activities and connections with local communities. The Centre arranges initial visits to schools to discuss their requirements, offers advice, talks and workshops and invites teachers and pupils to attend some of the Centre's events. Our Teaching and Outreach Associate, Shahla Suleiman, continued to deliver talks on Islam to a wide range of primary and secondary schools, to offer schools advice on curricula and resources, and in addition was elected in summer 2016 as a member of the Cambridgeshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) committee – a body which monitors the effectiveness and appropriateness of the religious education syllabus. In addition, Shahla continued to deliver the Centre's Arabic language teaching programme to graduate and undergraduate across Cambridge University (other than

those taking the Arabic tripos). This increasingly popular programme is an important aspect of the research-relevant training which the University provides particularly at the graduate level.

This year also saw the culmination of the Centre's work on anti-Muslim hate crime. The Centre's Research and Outreach Associate, Julian Hargreaves, who has been leading this work, brought together experts from the academy, government, the police and the voluntary sector to share ideas about the nature and impact of anti-Muslim hate crime, the issue of under-reporting, and strategies of resilience adopted within communities. This led to a Centre publication presenting and summarising the current research, *Anti-Muslim Hate Crime: Evidence-Based Research and Practice within British Muslim Communities*.

Our lecture series *Turbulent World*, organised jointly with the Faculty of Politics and International Studies, has been very popular, with talks from leading academics, senior public officials and distinguished commentators, on a range of current international policy issues. In addition, the Centre was active at the Festival of Ideas, presenting a number of talks at this educational festival whose aim is to build bridges between Cambridge and society at large.

The Centre continues to host international scholars who come to Cambridge to spend periods of time in research and study, and held its regular annual meeting to present and discuss their research with members of the wider Centre of Islamic Studies community.

Finally, the Centre was sorry to bid farewell to our Administrator Louise Beazor who left us to take up a post in the British Embassy in the United Arab Emirate. We wish Louise good luck. Hattie was replaced by Ludmila Applegate, who brings an impressive record of administrative experience to the Centre.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yasir Suleiman". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Professor Yasir Suleiman CBE, FRSE, FRCPE
Founding Director

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BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION



The Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies

The Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies (CIS) was established in 2008 as a successor to the Centre of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies (CMEIS). CMEIS was founded in 1960 by Professor Arthur Arberry to foster an interest in the Middle East, particularly the modern Middle East, amongst Cambridge scholars, students and the general public, and to support research.

CMEIS played an active role in promoting Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies amongst academics and the public through lectures, seminars and conferences. The Centre also helped to establish and develop links between individuals and institutions with an interest in Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies. The Centre further encouraged communication between academics, the media and the public.

The Centre of Islamic Studies was established as the successor to CMEIS and was officially opened on 23rd March 2011.

During the academic year 2015/16 the Centre has played an active role in facilitating and promoting dialogue and discussion on a range of topical subjects for a wide international audience. Senior officials, scholars, and faith and community leaders have engaged actively in the Centre's Outreach programme, the primary aim of which has been to advance tolerance, mutual understanding, and cross-cultural dialogue between Islam and the West.



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The Prince Alwaleed Centres Meeting: Cultural Understanding – Prospects and Challenges in the World Today

FRIDAY 6 MAY 2016

The Gillespie Centre, Clare College, Cambridge

HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz ALSaud, Chairman of Alwaleed Philanthropies, convened the six Alwaleed Academic Centres on Friday 6 May. The meeting was attended by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Cambridge Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Professor Yasir Suleiman, Director of the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center of Islamic Studies, at the University of Cambridge, Dr. Hugh Goddard, Director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World, at the University of Edinburgh, Dr. Ali Asani, Director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Islamic Studies Program, at Harvard University, and Dr. Jonathan Brown, Director of Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, at Georgetown University. Also in attendance was Professor Lisa Hajjar, Director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz ALSaud Center for American Studies and Research, at the American University of Beirut, and Professor Magda Shahin, Director of the Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz ALSaud Center for American Studies and Research, at the American University in Cairo, along with Mr. Francis Ricciardone, newly appointed President of the American University in Cairo, and former United States Ambassador to Egypt.

The event started with an academic symposium of presentations and discussions of some of the research themes pursued at the University of Cambridge Center. Key Research Associates at the University of Cambridge Center presented on topics such as hate crime, medical ethics, and Muslim prisoners and rehabilitation. Following the presentations, a meeting conducted between the center delegates and Alwaleed Philanthropies focused on ideas of effective ways in which the six centers can collaborate to reach a wider audience. A panel discussion on “Cultural Understanding: Prospects and Challenges in the World Today” was then moderated by Professor Yasir Suleiman, and joined by all six Center Directors. The panel topic was part of the research accomplished at the Cambridge University Center, highlighting its world-class activities and how they resonate around the world, where over 70 guests had joined including academics, researchers and graduate students. Invited dignitaries then joined a dinner at King’s College for detailed discussions about the day’s findings. Also in attendance from Alwaleed Philanthropies was HRH Princess Lamia Bint Majed ALSaud, Secretary General, Ms. Nauf Al Rawaf, Executive Manager of Global Initiatives, and Ms. Sara Balghonaim, Media & Communications Officer. Attending from HRH’s Private Office was Ms. Hassna Alturki, Executive Manager of International Relations, along with Mr. Fahad Bin Nafil, Senior Executive

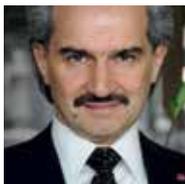
Assistant to HRH the Chairman and Mr. Hani Agha, Head of the Travel and External Affairs Department to HRH the Chairman. In addition, attending from the Kingdom Holding Company was Mr. Naief Alzuhair, Website & Social Media Manager of the Corporate Communications Department.

As part of its mission to build bridges that can foster cultural understanding, Alwaleed Philanthropies has provided over US \$100 million worth of funding to the six academic centers, along with the Islamic Arts Hall in the Louvre Museum. They are located in prestigious seats of learning across the world. To mark today’s meeting, the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Center of Islamic Studies, at the University of Cambridge, issued a new report entitled “Muslims in the UK and Europe.” The report compiles postgraduate research papers studying the wide variety of different Muslims’ lived experiences in the UK and Europe, alongside an analysis of the forces affecting their lives. “Muslim engagement with the western world will shape peace and security for generations to come. Yet many of the issues at the heart of the debate are poorly understood and much of the rhetoric is based on ignorance. The six Alwaleed Academic Centers are working together to change this – by driving new research, bringing together communities and uniting the best minds in the Islamic and western worlds,” said HRH Prince Alwaleed.

For over 35 years, Alwaleed Philanthropies has supported and initiated projects in over 120 countries regardless of gender, race, or religion. Alwaleed Philanthropies collaborates with a range

of philanthropic, governmental and educational organizations to combat poverty, empower women and youth, develop communities, provide disaster relief and create cultural understanding through education.

Foreword from His Royal Highness Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud



It is my firm conviction that the serious challenges facing the world cannot be tackled by governments alone and that it is incumbent on all who are able to join the search for solutions on a local and global scale.

I am also committed to fostering cultural understanding as a means of achieving a better future for all citizens of the world, regardless of religion or gender.

Philanthropy is not only a responsibility, but an intrinsic part of my Islamic faith, so the six Centres I have established at some of the world's most esteemed universities are very close to my heart.

These Centres are effectively the intellectual crossroads between the Islamic world and the west. Through worldleading research and education we are able to promote wider understanding, and to begin and guide the important conversations between different cultures and religions that have so often in the past been played out in conflict and mistrust.

It is tremendously rewarding therefore to witness the extraordinary progress that has been made by the Centres, not only in understanding but in celebrating the differences, similarities and strengths of Islamic and western culture. Most importantly they are playing a significant role in helping to build a more peaceful, equitable and sustainable world for generations to come.

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for the work you are doing in the furtherance of this aim, and to welcome you to this year's Centres Meeting, kindly hosted by the University of Cambridge.

Introduction from Professor Sir Leszek Borysiewicz, Vice-Chancellor



Understanding the role of Islam and Muslims in global society is one of the most important fields of research of the 21st century. Through the vision and philanthropy of HRH Prince

Alwaleed Bin Talal this topic is being thoroughly and directly addressed.

The Centres established by Alwaleed Philanthropies at six of the world's greatest universities are conducting and disseminating world-class research and stimulating and informing discussion between academics, policy makers and the media. The impact of the Centres is a major contribution to a more enlightened, harmonious and ultimately prosperous world.

Cambridge is honoured to count among the institutions entrusted with this vital research and proud of our contribution, not just to the understanding of Islam in the wider world but also in the local and regional community. Since its inception the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge has established a programme of outreach to schools covering all age groups and denominations, and fostered a wide range of community links, raising awareness and promoting understanding of Islam and the issues facing British Muslims in the modern age.

Our mission is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence. The Cambridge Centre of Islamic Studies furthers the fulfilment of this mission, and for that we are profoundly grateful to HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal.

Professor Yasir Suleiman

Director of the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge

I am delighted to welcome you to the Annual Centres Meeting on behalf of the Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge. The Cambridge Centre was established in 2008 thanks to a generous endowment from HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal with a vision to promote a constructive and critical understanding of the role of Islam and Muslims in wider society, with a focus on the UK and Europe.

In fulfilment of this vision, the Centre has established a track record of public education and engagement based on fundamental and innovative research. The findings of this work are made freely available in public reports – the Centre has published 17 to date – and inform our outreach programme to primary and secondary schools.

Our research work has ranged from the ‘Contextualising Islam in Britain’ project – which

brought together a diverse group of Muslim British scholars, academics and activists to discuss what it means to live faithfully as a Muslim in Britain – to ‘Narratives of Conversion to Islam’, an initiative which brought together more than forty female Muslim converts, and later a similar number of male converts, to discuss aspects of their conversions to Islam, to reflect on their journeys and experiences and to produce a report to inform Muslims and non-Muslims about the topic.

Building on this foundation, we anticipate that our work will be developing in exciting new directions in the coming year. None of this would be possible without the vision of an engaged philanthropy that lies behind it. We are delighted to celebrate that ethos today along with our friends and colleagues at the University and beyond, at Alwaleed Philanthropies and with the broader network of HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centres.



Annual Centres Meeting Programme

FRIDAY 6 MAY 2016

9.00 – 11.00 Academic Symposium: Riley Auditorium, Gillespie Centre, Clare College
Introduced by Professor Chris Young, Deputy Head of the School of Arts and Humanities

Speakers:

Dr Paul Anderson

Perspectives on citizenship in pre-conflict Aleppo

Dorothea Ramahi

Intimate strangers: perspectives on female converts to Islam in Britain

Dr Julian Hargreaves

Islamophobia: the Lumpers versus the Splitters

Dr Ryan Williams

Muslim prisoners' experiences of coping, adaptation, and belonging in high security prisons: some new and some familiar challenges

11.00 – 11.30 Refreshments: Garden Room, Gillespie Centre, Clare College

11.30 – 13.00 Meeting: Alwaleed Philanthropies and Centres directors – Riley Auditorium

13.00 – 14.30 Lunch: Garden Room

14.30 – 18.00 Cultural Understanding: Prospects and Challenges in the World Today

A panel discussion between the directors of the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centres – Elton Bowring Room

Opening remarks by the Vice-Chancellor

Dr Paul Anderson, University of Cambridge

Professor Ali Asani, Harvard University

Professor Jonathan Brown, Georgetown University

Professor Hugh Goddard, University of Edinburgh

Professor Lisa Hajjar, American University of Beirut

Professor Magda Shahin, American University in Cairo

Professor Yasir Suleiman, University of Cambridge (Chair)

Closing remarks by HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal

Academic symposium speaker profiles

Dr Paul Anderson

Dr Anderson is the Assistant Director of the Centre of Islamic Studies and HRH Prince Alwaleed Lecturer in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies. Dr Anderson is a social anthropologist interested in the study of morality, language, value and politics in the Arab world. He has written about practices and concepts of moral personhood, and the social and political effects of speech, in Syria and Egypt.

Dorothea Ramahi

Dorothea Ramahi is a PhD student at the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern studies under the supervision of Professor Yasir Suleiman. She holds a Centre of Islamic Studies studentship. For her MPhil she conducted research into the social networks of female converts to Islam in Britain. Her PhD stems from this research but extends beyond it in exploring the family context in conversion to Islam for both male and female converts.

Dr Julian Hargreaves

Dr Hargreaves is a Research Associate at the Centre of Islamic Studies. His research interests include British Muslim communities, social science and statistics, and issues around diversity and equality. He is currently completing a PhD thesis on the concept of Islamophobia. His research for the Centre of Islamic Studies focuses on the unreported 'everyday' hate crimes suffered by British Muslims.

Dr Ryan Williams

Dr Williams is currently pursuing his interests in Islamic identity, belonging and citizenship as a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Calgary, Canada, and he will join the Centre of Islamic Studies in autumn to continue these interests. Ryan has also researched interreligious dialogue and contemporary religious movements.

Centre director biographies

Professor Ali S Asani,

Harvard University

Ali S Asani is Professor of Indo-Muslim and Islamic Religion and Cultures at Harvard and Director of the University's HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Program in Islamic Studies. A specialist on Islam in South Asia, he teaches courses on various aspects of the Islamic tradition. In 2002, he was awarded the Harvard Foundation medal for his outstanding contributions to improving intercultural and race relations by promoting a better understanding of Islam. More recently he received the Petra C. Shattuck Prize for distinguished teaching from Harvard's Division of Continuing Education.

Professor Jonathan AC Brown,

Georgetown University

Jonathan AC Brown is the Alwaleed Bin Talal Chair of Islamic Civilization in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, and he is the Director of the Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim Christian Understanding. Dr Brown has studied and conducted research in Egypt, Syria, Turkey, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, South Africa, India, Indonesia and Iran. His book publications include *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunni Hadith Canon* (Brill, 2007), *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oneworld, 2009), *Muhammad: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2011) and *Misquoting Muhammad: The Challenges and Choices of Interpreting the Prophet's Legacy* (Oneworld, 2014). Dr Brown's current research interests include Islamic legal reform and a translation of *Sahih al-Bukhari* with commentary.

Professor Hugh Goddard,

University of Edinburgh

Hugh Goddard is the Director of the Edinburgh Alwaleed Centre, which has Islamic Civilisation and Muslims in Britain as the two main themes on which it works. His own main academic specialism is Christian-Muslim Relations, on which he has published *Christians and Muslims: From Double Standards to Mutual Understanding* (1995), *Muslim Perceptions of Christianity* (1996), and *A History of Christian-Muslim Relations* (2000). He is currently working on the intellectual exchanges between Jews, Christians and Muslims in the period between the 8th and the 13th centuries CE.

Professor Lisa Hajjar,
[American University of Beirut](#)

Lisa Hajjar is a professor of Sociology at the University of California – Santa Barbara and is currently a visiting professor at the American University of Beirut where she directs the Alwaleed Center for American Studies and Research. Last year, she was the Edward Said Chair of American Studies at AUB. Hajjar is the author of *Courting Conflict: The Israeli Military Court System in the West Bank and Gaza* (University of California Press, 2005) and *Torture: A Sociology of Violence and Human Rights* (Routledge, 2013), and is currently working on a book titled *The War in Court: The Legal Campaign against US Torture in the 'War on Terror.'* Hajjar's work focuses mainly on law and conflict, human rights, war crimes, and military occupations.

Professor Magda Shahin,
[American University in Cairo](#)

Magda Shahin is the current Director of the HRH Prince Alwaleed Center for American Studies and Research, School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) at the American University in Cairo (AUC). Ambassador Shahin has had numerous posts in diplomacy namely as Attaché in Bonn, as Counselor in New York, as Deputy Chief of Mission in Geneva,

as Ambassador of Egypt to Greece, and lastly as Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Economic Relations. As a Professor in the American University in Cairo her teaching interests include Political Economy, the International Trading System and the WTO, International Negotiations, Diplomacy and US-Middle East Policy.

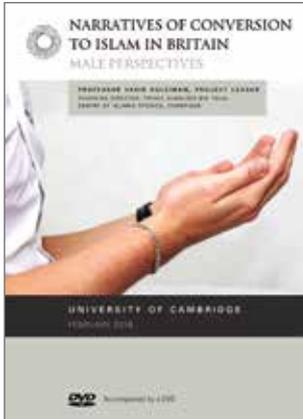
Professor Yasir Suleiman,
[University of Cambridge](#)

Professor Yasir Suleiman is the Director of the Centre of Islamic Studies, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Sa'id Professor of Modern Arabic Studies, and a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. His research covers the cultural politics of the Middle East with special focus on identity, conflict, diaspora studies and modernisation in so far as these issues relate to language, modern Arabic literature, translation and memory. He also conducts research in Arabic grammatical theory and the Arabic intellectual tradition in the pre-modern period. Professor Suleiman is Chair of the Panel of Judges, British-Kuwaiti Friendship Society Book Prize in Middle Eastern Studies. In 2013 Professor Suleiman was elected as Chairman of the International Prize of Arabic Fiction (IPAF) popularly known in the Arabic-speaking world as the 'Arabic Booker'.



Report

Narratives of Conversion to Islam: Male Perspectives Report



Centre of Islamic Studies published the Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain- Male Perspectives report in February 2016. The project follows on from the huge success of the first report in the series, Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain: Female

Perspectives (2013) and aims to go some way to fill the current gap in accessible, high-quality research on issues around male converts and conversion to Islam in the UK. The reports are available on the Centre's website to download for free.

Narratives of Conversion to Islam: Male Perspectives brought together forty-six male Muslim converts to discuss aspects of their conversions to Islam, to reflect on their journeys and experiences and to produce a report to inform Muslims and non-Muslims about the topic. The preliminary meeting (December 2014) commented on the widespread misrepresentations of male converts and shed new light on issues that have received little attention in the literature, such as how converts 'learn Islam', conversion in prison and radicalisation, the relations between converts and heritage Muslims, struggle with faith and exiting Islam. The voices of male converts are often unheard in contemporary debates about Muslims and Islam in the UK. Based on an extended set of conversations held at the University of Cambridge in 2014/5 with male converts to Islam, this project provides a platform for male converts from diverse socio-economic, geographical and denominational backgrounds to articulate their experiences and perspectives on matters they have identified as significant.

The report is accompanied by a DVD that contains interviews with the Project Leader, Professor Yasir Suleiman and a few of the male converts who

participated in the project, in the setting of their homes, or local mosques, as well as introducing some of the issues that are at the heart of the report. The interviews are available on the Centre's website. Teaching and Outreach Associate, Shahla A Suleiman, managed all aspects of the project including the media communications.

Report Launch, London

London Launch of the report,

3 FEBRUARY 2016: 5-7PM

at Kamran Djam Lecture Theatre, The School of Oriental & African Studies (SOAS).

Speakers:

Professor Yasir Suleiman, University of Cambridge, Professor Muhammad Abdel Haleem, SOAS, Uthman Ibrahim-Morrison,

Rapper:

Tommy Evans,

Chair:

Dr Paul Anderson, University of Cambridge.





Report Launch, Cambridge

Cambridge Launch of the report,

5 FEBRUARY 2016: 6.30–8.30PM

Mill Lane Lecture Theatre, University of Cambridge.

Speakers:

Professor Yasir Suleiman, University of Cambridge, Adam Kelwick Muslim Chaplain, Embrace Foundation, Dr Jeremy Henzell-Thomas University of Cambridge,

Rapper:

Tommy Evans,

Chair:

Dr Paul Anderson, University of Cambridge.



The two launches discussed and reflected on the Centre of Islamic Studies' research project on Conversion to Islam that focused on the experiences of nearly 50 British men of all ages, ethnicities, backgrounds and faiths (or no faith) – who have all converted to Islam. Some of the participants in the project took part in the discussion during the launches. They explored some of the many issues addressed in the report and responded to questions on their personal experience of conversion to Islam in Britain.

To watch the report launches in London and Cambridge, visit the [Centre's website](#).

Other report launches

A number of launches of have also been held in a number of cities in the UK by some muslim communities and organisations, such as a launch organised by the Nottingham Muslims HUBB on 26 Feb 2016, 7–9pm, Venue: Bobbersmill Community Centre.

These were the questions discussed in this launch:

Why do men convert to Islam in Britain?

How do they relate to Heritage Muslim communities in Britain?

How do they relate to family and friends post – conversion?

Press coverage

'The landmark report, produced by Cambridge's Centre of Islamic Studies, captures the isolation and dislocation felt by many new converts, and the sense of being a 'minority within a minority' as they adjust to life as a follower of one of the most maligned and misunderstood faiths in the UK' (Cambridge Research News, 3 February 2016)

Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain: Male Perspectives report has received much press coverage in Britain and around the world. To read articles please see the Centre's website.

University of Cambridge
Research
News



Report

Male converts to Islam: landmark report examines conversion experience of British Muslims

The experiences of British male converts to Islam have been captured in a unique report launched today by the University of Cambridge.



"I was basically given an ultimatum: give up the religion or get out." Abdul Maalik Tailor

Examining the conversion journeys of nearly fifty British men of all ages, ethnicities and faiths, *Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain: Male perspectives*, allows an unprecedented examination of the challenges and concerns facing converts to Islam in the UK today.

The landmark report, produced by Cambridge's Centre of Islamic Studies, captures the isolation and dislocation felt by many new converts, and the sense of being a 'minority within a minority' as they adjust to life as a follower of one of the most maligned and misunderstood faiths in the UK.

With converts drawn from white, black and South Asian backgrounds from across the UK, Cambridge assembled nearly 50 British males over the course of the 18-month project in an attempt to understand and record the experiences of British male converts to Islam. The converts were from a diverse range of geographical and socio-economic backgrounds.

The Male perspectives report follows Cambridge's hugely successful report into female conversion in 2013 (<http://bit.ly/1INy3tW>) which has been

downloaded more than 150,000 times from the Centre of Islamic Studies' website and attracted widespread media coverage.

Speaking under Chatham House Rules, the converts gathered together in Cambridge over three weekends to record their responses to a wide-ranging list of themes, questions and provocations.

Among the key findings to emerge from the Male perspectives project were:

- There is often targeting of converts by the British Security Services to work as informants
- White converts lose their white privilege on conversion
- Conversion to Islam in prison is usually driven by a desire to instil discipline into a prisoner's life. But upon release, Muslims find little support from their families or Muslim communities, increasing the risk of reoffending
- Converts live in a liminal space: cut off from their families and friends and only tenuously integrated within heritage Muslim communities.

- Recognition that women converts experience worse hardships through wearing the hijab and other religious dress
- There are many routes to Islam: love and marriage; friendship; conviction and rational choice; music, arts, architecture and pondering the beauty of the universe

Shahla Awad Suleiman, Teaching and Outreach Associate at the Centre of Islamic Studies, and Project Manager of the report, said: "Narratives of Conversion sets out the contours of the relationship between converts and heritage Muslims, warts and all, and builds on the findings of our hugely successful work with female converts.

"Allowing our male converts to set the agenda and speak frankly and openly about the very real issues they have to face and wrestle with has given us – and anyone who reads the report – real insight into the challenges facing 21st century converts to Islam."

Professor Yasir Suleiman, Director of Cambridge's Centre of Islamic Studies, said: "In the West, conversion to Islam has been tarnished by claims of extremism (violent and non-violent), radicalisation, and, sadly, terrorism. It has also fallen victim to the general apathy towards faith in largely secular societies causing those who convert to be described

by some as not only eccentrics, misfits, outcasts and rebels, but also as renegades, traitors or enemies of a fifth column who have turned their back on their original culture(s).

"Converts can be made to feel outsiders from the lives they have left behind and as new members of the faith they have embraced upon conversion. This report reveals that conversion to Islam is as much a matter of the head as it is for the heart and soul.

"What this report also illuminates is the importance of convert-specific organisations. There is not enough support for the convert community as things stand. But by sharing their experiences frankly and honestly, this diverse group of converts revealed a profound sense of their pride in both Islam and their British heritage, despite the often negative portrayal of converts in the mainstream press."

Other topics discussed in the report include the mixed response of heritage Muslims to converts, homosexuality and polygyny.

Although the symposium and reports were conducted under conditions of anonymity (quotes are not attributed within the report), several of the converts have agreed to speak on the record about their conversion experiences.



STUART ROBERTS

"Isolation is unfortunately a major part of life for Muslim converts." Abdul Maalik Tailor

Abdul Maalik Tailor, who converted to Islam from Hinduism, and now runs Islamic-themed tours of London, suffered considerably after converting.

"A number of things happened to me when I embraced Islam twenty years ago," he said. "It was a very challenging time and an experience I won't forget about. I suffered physical and emotional abuse from my family. It was a very testing time.

"For myself and other brown converts, it always goes back to the issue of partition between India and Pakistan and Bangladesh. My relatives thought I had become brainwashed. I was basically given an ultimatum: give up the religion or get out. I was 18 at the time. And I had to leave after being beaten up.

"A year later my father passed away and there was an expectation that I had to fulfil all the Hindu rituals as I was the only son. I had to say, 'I can't do it', which was a challenge; I would have preferred to have a lot more support from the Muslim community at that time."

Another participant, Adrian (Jamal) Heath, said: "I always joke with people that it's a bit like 'coming out' and I've discovered a lot of people who concealed this until the later stages. I was exposed as a Muslim to friends and family inadvertently and my parents took it hard. They didn't come to

my wedding. I was also subject to some ridicule at work, which I now look back on as completely unacceptable in the modern world. I was ridiculed for my prayer times and to my face by people who had education and should have known better.

"As a white man in modern Britain, I'd never come across the feeling of being in a minority before and that actually quite shocked me."

Another theme that provoked widespread discussion was the media portrayal of Muslims.

Convert Warren (Raiyyan) Clementson said: "Generally speaking, when I see converts on TV, they have been radicalised or involved in extremist activity. So for me personally, it's a double whammy. Firstly, the negative portrayal of Muslims as a whole and within that, a sub-context of the convert community being portrayed in a radical light, or that they're most susceptible to ideologies of violence. Being a convert myself, and having met so many other converts, this is a fallacy."

Abdul Maalik Tailor questioned why there seemed to be such a propensity for negativity in the portrayals of both Islam and converts to the religion.

"You find a number of stories that concentrate on radicalisation. If there are successful Muslim converts



LOUISE WALSH

"If I had to sum up the reasons for my conversion in just three or four words it would be something along the lines of community, god, sharing, and...resistance to the world as it is." Mark Barrett

who have contributed to society and to Britain, they won't get highlighted by the media. Why do the media have a set agenda to try and demonise us?"

Shahla Awad Suleiman added: "By pulling together these narratives of conversion we have dealt with topics of enormous importance, not just to Muslims, but British society at large.

"There is now a need for more work on the friends and families of converts, heritage Muslims' views and reception of converts, the children of converts, and more work on conversion to Islam in Britain away from the security prism."

The report [Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain: Male Perspectives](http://www.cis.cam.ac.uk/) can be downloaded here: <http://www.cis.cam.ac.uk/>



STUART ROBERTS

"I'd prefer to be a convert in Britain as opposed to Europe in the sense that for a Muslim convert or a Muslim in general, you're a lot more safer in Britain than perhaps the continent where some people have banned halal food and some people have issues regarding the niqab." Abdul Maalik Tailor



LOUISE WALSH

Uthman Ibrahim-Morrison at Friday prayers, Norwich 2016

The Independent, 3 February 2016: "MI5's attempts to recruit informants blamed for making British Muslim converts objects of suspicion".

The Telegraph, 3 February 2016: "British Muslim converts targeted for recruitment as possible informants, a study says"..

ITV News, 3 February 2016: "Muslim converts face discrimination says new report".

Asian Image, 3 February 2016: "British Muslim converts feel isolated from society".

The Australian, 3 February 2016: "Tough road for those that convert to Islam".

The Daily Telegraph Australia, 3 February 2016: "Tough road for those that convert to Islam".

World Bulletin, 3 February 2016: "UK's MI5 targets Muslim converts for recruitment".

LBC, 3 February 2016, Podcast discussing Experiences of Religious Conversion available

Republika Online (Indonesia), 4 February 2016, "Mualaf Inggris: Menjadi Minoritas dalam Minoritas".

Cambridge TV News, 4 February 2016, "Muslim Convert Study". TV interview.

Church Times, 5 February 2016, "Muslim converts find they are 'suspect'". *Church Times February 2016 Article*.

The Independent, 9 February 2016, "I'm a middle-aged, white Scottish man who converted to Islam without ever meeting a Muslim. This is how". Read the article [here](#).

The Economist, 12 February 2016, "Why some Brits choose Islamic prayer over partying".

BBC Scotland, 15 February 2016, The Kay Adams Programme discusses 'The Muslim Convert' (122th minute). Please note availability to this programme expires on 31 March 2016.

BBC Indonesia, 10 June 2016, Interview with participant Alan Rooney.

Symposium and report

Anti-Muslim Hate Crime

The Centre convened a one-day meeting in June 2015 to discuss anti-Muslim hate crime in the UK. The meeting was intended to bring together experts from the academy, government, the police and the voluntary sector to share ideas about the nature and impact of anti-Muslim hate crime. To encourage participants to speak freely, the meeting was closed to members of the public, but a handful of interested participants were invited to contribute from the floor. The proceedings were recorded, but instead of publishing a summary of the wide ranging discussions that took place – as is the general practice in research sponsored by the Centre of Islamic Studies – it was decided in the end to produce a summary of some of the formal presentations only. We are grateful to the participants who allowed us to use their research to produce this report, which is freely available on the Centre’s website:

<http://www.cis.cam.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Anti-Muslim-Hate-Crime-Report.pdf>

The meeting emphasised the importance of evidence-based research in dealing with anti-Muslim hate crime to move the discussion away from the opinion-based sensationalism that is more often than not associated with this topic in the public sphere. The papers in the report reveal that anti-Muslim hate crime is under-reported in government and police registers, owing to the fact that Muslims tend not to report incidents of verbal and physical abuse to the relevant authorities. The papers offer a set of explanations for this stance among members of Muslim communities as well as hinting at the resilience of these communities in dealing with hate crime. Some also delve into the impact of anti-Muslim hate crime on those who are directly and indirectly affected by this kind of crime. Cyberhate crime against Muslims is discussed through a case study that paves the way for further research on the topic.

The meeting at Cambridge was convened by Julian Hargreaves, Research Associate at the Centre, who put the report together with the aim of informing public debate on the topic. The Centre is grateful to him for planning and convening the meeting and for producing this report as part of the Centre of Islamic Studies public-outreach activities.

Symposium

Muslims in the UK and Europe Symposium III, 2016

13–15 MAY 2016

Venue: Moller Centre, Cambridge

The Centre held its third Annual Postgraduate Symposium on 13–15 May 2016. This aims to bring together graduate research work pertaining to Muslims in the UK and Europe, and provide a forum for critical discussion and reflection. As in previous years, the emphasis was not on theology or comparative religion, but on understanding the wide variety of different Muslims' lived experiences in the UK and Europe, alongside an analysis of the forces affecting these lives. The papers covered a variety of geographical and institutional contexts, mainly in the United Kingdom but also in Germany, Russia and Tunisia. Discussion at the symposium benefited immensely from the critical input of Dr Nadia Fadhil of the University of Leuven, a noted anthropologist of Islam, who delivered the keynote speech entitled

"Enough with excuses! On self-critique, Islam, and the dilemmas of public anthropology after the Paris and Brussels attack" "Enough with excuses!" On self-critique, Islam, and the dilemmas of public anthropology after the Paris and Brussels attackse "Enough with excuses!" On self-critique, Islam, and the dilemmas of public anthropology after the Paris and Brussels attacks. Dr Fadhil also acted as mentor and discussant throughout the event.

The Centre also published the annual proceedings from the previous conference, which are available free to download from:

<http://www.cis.cam.ac.uk/publications/muslims-in-the-uk-and-europe-ii/>



Programme

FRIDAY 13 MAY

- 15.00** Registration (study centre)
- 16.00** Welcome by Dr Paul Anderson, Assistant Director, Centre of Islamic Studies
- 16:15** **Keynote Lecture**
“Enough with excuses!” On self-critique, Islam, and the dilemmas of public anthropology after the Paris and Brussels attacks
Dr Nadia Fadil, University of Leuven
- 17.15** **Panel 1: European Institutions and Activism (Chair: Chris Moses)**
Constructing expectations towards Muslims in the German Islam Conference
Tobias Müller, University of Cambridge
‘European Islam’ beyond the national frame: shifting to the arena of the European Union
Adela Taleb, Humboldt-Universität Berlin and Visiting Research Student, LSE
‘Swedish Muslims for Peace and Justice’ as a space for negotiations of Islam and Swedish identity amongst young Muslims in Sweden
Lenita Törning, Birkbeck
- 18:35** Break
- 19.00** Dinner (restaurant)

SATURDAY 14 MAY

- 07:30–09:00** Breakfast (restaurant)
- 09:00** **Panel 2: Culture and Orthodoxy (Chair: Dr Paul Anderson)**
Lowering the gaze, shaping desires – a perspective on Islamic masculinity in Germany
Miriam Kurz, Freie Universität Berlin
Managing Islam alla italiana: from Muslims in Italy to Italian Islam?
Mustafa Cenap Aydin, University of Cambridge
The Weight of Tradition. “Traditional” vs. “Non-Traditional” Islam in Russia’s Volga Region
Matteo Benussi, University of Cambridge
- 10:30** Tea & Coffee
- 11:00** **Panel 3: Muslims in the Fray (Chair: Julian Hargreaves)**
Representations of Muslims in British Muslims’ press: initial analysis and discussion
Samar Mezghanni, University of Cambridge
Living in a world where the ‘Islamic State’ has been propelled: the perspective of British Muslims in their own words
Mymoonah Zainab, Hamad Bin Khalifa University

Conceptualizing Islamic radicalization: how the UK Prevent initiative is perceived by British Muslims, police forces, and policy makers

Madeleine Ary, University of Cambridge

Muslim women in British politics: expanding the political space

Alaya Forte, SOAS

12:50 Lunch (study centre)

14:00 **Panel 4: Legal Affairs** (Chair: Vishal Vora)

Institutions of Islamic law in Europe: Muslim legal practice in the UK

Yvonne Prief, University of Münster

“Unlawful Marriages”: The Problem with Unregistered Polygynous Marriages in England and Wales

Hadeer Soliman, SOAS

Muslim family law: how do Muslim women pursue divorce in the UK?

Islam Uddin, University of Middlesex

15:30 Tea & Coffee break

16:00 **Panel 5: Transnationalism** (Chair: Dr Nadia Fadil)

The England in my head: Halide Edib Adivar’s “England and the English” newspaper series, the Bloomsbury Group, and the Anglo-Turkish Pact

Kaitlin Staudt, University of Oxford

The Islamist politics of exile: the struggle of Tunisia’s al-Nahda in France and the UK (1987–2011)

Anne Wolf, University of Oxford

Establishing Islam in the West: the case studies of the Ahl-e-Hadith and the Jamaat-e-Islami inspired groups in Britain

Hira Amin, University of Cambridge

17:30 Break

19:00 Dinner (Private Dining Room –Suite 2, Main Building)

20:00 Free Time

SUNDAY 15 MAY

07:30–09:00 Breakfast (restaurant) and check out

09:00 **Panel 6: Science and Ethics** (Chair: Shahla Suleiman)

Aid paradigms: competition between the EU and Muslim majority countries

Behar Sadriu, SOAS

How does Kalām, made the foundation of all other Sciences, influence contemporary Muslims?

Diaa Karaali, University of Oxford

The development of Islamic economic orthodoxy in British Muslim communities c.2000–2016

Martyn Rush, University of Oxford

- 10:30** Tea & Coffee
- 11:00** **Panel 7: Diversity and Belonging** (Chair: Dr Jeremy Henzell-Thomas)
- Becoming Muslim, becoming British, becoming White: White British Muslims challenging notions of religion and ethnicity**
Kevin Brice, Newcastle University and University of Wales Trinity Saint David
- An ethnographic study of a Muslim school in the south London borough of Queensbridge**
Thomas Evans, UCL Institute of Education
- Pioneer Muslim migrants in Sheffield, their British-born wives and the culture of 'everyday tolerance' – c. 1916–1947**
David Holland, University of Sheffield
- 12:30** **Plenary Session**
- Dr Nadia Fadil, University of Leuven
- Dr Paul Anderson (Chair)
- 13:15** Buffet lunch (study centre)
- End of Symposium
-

The “Turbulent World” Seminar Series: Maghrib, Mashriq and Gulf in the New Era of Uncertainty

As is often the case, the advent of the Arab Uprisings in 2011 was bathed – in the media and in Western academic circles – with a roseate glow and the belief that Arab exceptionalism had been shown to be a myth so that the Arab world would now enter into the generalised emergence of democratic governance worldwide. There was, to be sure, a residual anxiety, as new governments began to emerge, that the challenge of political Islam as a new force shaping regional political dynamics might find democracy difficult to accommodate. Confidence, however, was placed in the political maturity that such movements seemed to show, a confidence that was not dented by the sudden and unexpected emergence of a new gamut of Salafist movements and parties throughout the region.

In retrospect, of course, such sunny optimism was to prove to be misplaced. Economic realities – in the midst of the worst financial crisis the world has known since the 1930s – have obtruded, wrecking the plans and expectations of the new governments that had emerged, despite high oil prices in the face of the shale revolution. Some regimes, moreover, violently resisted the new democratic wave and global geopolitics, as ever, intervened, as Western suspicions of Iran, and of China and Russia behind

it, trumped political realities, consigning Syria and the surrounding states to aggravated instability and suffering. Regional tensions intervened, too, as the confrontation in the Gulf broadened out into a sectarian conflict pitting Sunni against Shi’a. The role of the region as a ‘shatterbelt’ between East and West, in short, continued.

Meanwhile, observers – as is usually the case – seemed to have forgotten the old adage that revolutions often consume their children. The failure of the Morsi presidency in Egypt underlined a fundamental contradiction in the Whiggist narrative of seamless democratic evolution; what happens when a democratically-elected movement loses popular legitimacy long before its term-in-office is ended and it is suspected of ambitions for democratic dictatorship instead? Commentators also seem to have overlooked the vital role and obligation of the state in ensuring national security within the process of monitoring and guaranteeing political change, as the accelerating crisis in Libya underlines. Nor do they seem to have anticipated the role that transitional justice (or vengeance) would play in the development of the new politics, despite the experiences of the waves of democratisation in Latin America and Eastern Europe in recent decades.



The Centre for Islamic Studies and the Centre for the Study of the International Relations of the Middle East and North Africa at the University of Cambridge continued to monitor and comment upon the manifold uncertainties that confront the Arab world today. The seminar series engages the wider, interested audience throughout the University and beyond, through a series of fortnightly meetings held between 5.15 pm and 6.45 pm at Pembroke College in Cambridge.

23 OCTOBER 2015

Urbanism and Violence in Saudi Arabia

Professor Pascal Menoret, Brendais University

Menoret is the author of *The Saudi Enigma: A History and of Joyriding in Riyadh: Oil, Urbanism, and Road Revolt*. An ethnographer and historian, he is interested in youth, urbanism, and political activism in the Arabian Peninsula and beyond. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Paris 1 and was a postdoctoral fellow at Princeton University and Harvard University. He previously taught at New York University Abu Dhabi.

of Technology in 1982. He has been a professor at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia, since 1988. Katz is the author of *The Third World in Soviet Military Thought* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), *Russia and Arabia: Soviet Foreign Policy toward the Arabian Peninsula* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), *Gorbachev's Military Policy in the Third World* (Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1989), *Revolutions and Revolutionary Waves* (St. Martin's Press, 1997), *Reflections on Revolutions* (St. Martin's Press, 1999), and *Leaving without Losing: The War on Terror after Iraq and Afghanistan* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012).

13 JANUARY 2016

The Perils of Putin: Russia's Foreign Policy toward the Middle East

Mark N. Katz, Professor of Government and Politics, George Mason University

This talk discussed Moscow's reaction to the Arab Uprisings that began in 2011 and the evolution of Russia's relations with the region since then and especially since Russian armed forces directly intervened in the Syrian civil war beginning in September 2015. Prior to 2011, Putin had established relatively good relations with virtually all the major actors in the Middle East (except, of course, Al Qaeda and its affiliates). But Putin's support—and more recently, intervention on behalf of—the Assad regime in Syria has resulted in increasingly strained relations with those Arab states most concerned about Iranian influence, and a disastrous downturn in Russo-Turkish relations. The prospects for Moscow achieving its specific aims in Syria as well as its broader ones in the Middle East as a whole will be assessed.

Mark N. Katz received a B.A. in international relations from the University of California at Riverside in 1976, an M.A. in international relations from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in 1978, and a Ph.D. in political science from the Massachusetts Institute

21 JANUARY 2016

The Gulf and Iran: A Grand Bargain or More of the Same?

Sir John Jenkins, Executive Director, International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) – Middle East

Sir John Jenkins KCMG LVO is a British former diplomat who has served as Her Majesty's Ambassador to several countries in the Middle East and Asia. Sir John joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1980 and served in Abu Dhabi, Kuala Lumpur and Kuwait before being appointed HM Ambassador to Burma (1999–02); Consul-General in Jerusalem (2003–06); and HM Ambassador to Syria (2006–07). He was Director, Middle East and North Africa at the FCO in London from 2007–2009; HM Ambassador to Iraq (2009–11); UK Special Representative to the National Transitional Council of Libya, then subsequently HM Ambassador to Libya in 2011; and HM Ambassador to Saudi Arabia from June 2012. At the end of January 2015 he retired from the Diplomatic Service and in February that year became Executive Director of the Middle East branch of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, based in Bahrain. Sir John obtained a BA and doctorate from the University of Cambridge in 1977 and 1980 respectively.

4 FEBRUARY 2016

The Syrian Refugee Crisis and the Challenge for the Arab State: A Preliminary Assessment

Dr Filippo Dionigi, LSE

Conflict in the Middle East has in recent history provoked several waves of forced mass displacement, often with disruptive consequences. The Syrian refugee crisis is the latest of such events, unprecedented in its magnitude. A handful of Arab states (Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Iraq) have come to host to over half of Syria's refugees. This has inevitably brought with it a number of social, political, and economic challenges that in some cases have significantly strained the already weak structures and (im)balances of the state.

This seminar explored how states such as Lebanon and Jordan have coped with the challenges of mass displacement within their borders. It considered prospects and implications of forced mass displacement in the Middle East.

Dr Filippo Dionigi is Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, researching the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on Arab statehood from a comparative He has completed his PhD in International Relations at LSE and his book, titled Hezbollah, Islamist Politics and International Society, was published by Palgrave-MacMillan in December 2014. His articles are published in the Journal of International Political Theory, the European Journal of International Relations, International Peacekeeping, and Politics and Religion.

18 FEBRUARY 2016

Can Yemen Remain United?

Dr Noel Brehony, Menas Associates

When the north and south Yemen united in 1990 it was the first time for 250 years that a regime could claim to be assert its authority over most of Yemen. That unity was challenged in a 1994 civil war and is under challenge in 2016 following the rise of the Huthis and the war that followed the intervention

of the Saud-led coalition. The extended crisis has created sectarian tensions in a Yemen where Sunni and Zaydi Shia have lived in harmony for 900 years. Throughout Yemen local communities, some tribal and some not, have been empowered by an absence of government and want a much greater say voice in determining their political future. How can those involved in any peace settlement in Yemen keep the country united? And can they succeed?

Noel Brehony has been involved in Yemen since the early 1970s when he was a diplomat in the then People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. He is author of Yemen Divided: the story of a failed state in South Arabia (2011), co-editor of Rebuilding Yemen: Political, Economic and Social Challenges (2015) and editor of a forthcoming book Migration from Yemen: The Politics and Identity of the Hadhrami Diaspora. He has edited a monthly newsletter Yemen Focus for Menas Associates since 2010 and was Chairman of the British-Yemeni Society 2010–2015. He is Chairman of the Council for British Research in the Levant and of Menas Associates and a past President of the British Society for Middle East Studies.



The Gulf Research Meeting

To enhance knowledge and research about the Gulf, the **Gulf Research Centre Cambridge** has established an annual **Gulf Research Meeting** (GRM) with the clear objective to provide an academic environment to foster Gulf studies and to encourage scholarly and academic exchange among those working on or interested in the developments taking place that are defining the Gulf region and their constituent societies. Set within the historic outlines of the University of Cambridge, the annual Gulf Research Meeting attempts to highlight the issues of importance to the Gulf region and provide a basis for undertaking and engaging in academic and empirical research in the fields of politics, economics, energy, security and the wider social sciences.

The Centre of Islamic Studies is proud to support and host this initiative, led by the GRC, which took place in Cambridge from Monday 14 August – Thursday 27 August 2015. Bringing together more than 300 scholars, policy officials and specialists, the event comprised eleven workshops dedicated to various aspects of Gulf development and strategic issues. H.E. Dr. Abdullatif Rashid Al-Zayani, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council, gave the keynote address.

For more information see:

<http://www.cis.cam.ac.uk/activities/post/sixth-gulf-research-meeting-2015/>

Visiting Scholars Meeting

28 SEPTEMBER 2015

Saltmarsh Rooms, King's College

The Centre of Islamic Studies convened a research meeting for its visiting academics, providing an opportunity for new scholars to share their research with research staff of the Centre and across the University of Cambridge.

- 13:00** Buffet Lunch
- 13:45** Welcome – Dr Paul Anderson, Assistant Director, Centre of Islamic Studies
- 14:00** **Panel 1: Visiting Scholar talks (20 minutes each)**
- Chair: Dr Paul Anderson**
Al-maturidi and some of his Theological Opinions
- Dr Ma Zhan Ming, Ningxia University, China**
Gharar and Islamic Economics: Case study: the Origins of Salam Contract
- Katarzyna Sidlo, University of Warsaw, Poland**
- 14.30** Q & A session
- 15:00** Tea and Coffee
- 15.30** **Panel 2: Visiting Scholar and Assistant Director talks (20 minutes each)**
- Chair: Julian Hargreaves, Research Associate, Centre of Islamic Studies**
Trade and Citizenship in pre-Conflict Aleppo
- Dr Paul Anderson, Assistant Director, Centre of Islamic Studies**
The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood's Democratic Vision in Practice
- Dara Conduit, Monash University, Australia**
- 16.00** Q & A session
- 16.45** Concluding remarks – Dr Paul Anderson
- 17:00** End

Abstracts

Gharar and Islamic Economics: Case study: the Origins of Salam Contract,

[Katarzyna Sidlo, University of Warsaw, Poland](#)

Gharar is one of the least known and most misunderstood concepts in Islamic Banking and Finance. Both Islamic scholars of the classical period and contemporary researchers attempted to coin its commonly accepted definition. By far no one has managed to succeed, though. Not only there is not one commonly accepted and accurate translation of the term into English, but its commonly accepted and accurate definition in Arabic is not available either.

The main aim of the paper is not, however, a creation of one, but rather an in-depth analysis and explanation of the prohibition of *gharar* from the socio-economic perspective. To that end a *bai' salaf/salaf* (future sale) will be discussed, as an interesting study case of a contract that should theoretically be prohibited under *gharar* rules, however has been used in Muslim societies through centuries, and indeed is currently being used in contemporary Islamic financial markets.

The analysis of Quran, *Kutub al-Sittah* and other prominent collections of hadith and works of Islamic jurisprudence such as Imam Malik's *Muwatta* or 'Abd ar-Razzaq's *Muṣannaf* leads to a working hypothesis to the effect that *salaf/salam* sale was first encountered by the Prophet and his companions on their arrival to Medina and had not been known in Mecca. Is it however possible that a merchant society such as Mecca's, with its extensive network of commercial contacts would not had heard about it? Taking a step back and looking into Jewish *khalaha*, as well as Roman trade laws, the author attempts to answer this question and shed more light on the treatment of *gharar* prohibition in 7th century Medina.

Trade and Citizenship in Pre-Conflict Aleppo, [Dr Paul Anderson](#)

One set of questions posed by the current Syria conflict in its various aspects has to do with citizenship and nationhood. How and why did Baathist regime's project of nation-building fail? What notions of identity, what forms of collective belonging, have emerged through the conflict

and even driven it forward? What kinds of nation-building, and ideas about citizenship, might succeed, and bring stability and justice, in the longer-term? Framing the conflict in this way – as processes of contesting and reformulating notions of nation and citizenship – enables us to move beyond understandings of the conflict as representing a sudden and dramatic rupture with Syria pre-2011. This framing also helps us to avoid seeing the conflict wholly as a reaction to dynamics visited upon the social fabric from the outside: whether through the agendas of foreign players, the actions of transnational jihadis, or the rise of ISIS, important as these are. This paper explores some of the ways in which nationhood, citizenship, and the terms of belonging to society, were already being contested before the outbreak of sustained protests and then violence in 2011.

Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork on Aleppo's "informal economy" carried out in 2008–09, this paper argues that trading practices of entrustment and reputational accounting served to fashion a space of economic agency but that they can also be understood as the "performative and moral dimensions of citizenship". This because they defined the meanings and practices of belonging in mercantile society, at a time when Baathist visions of the Syrian nation and of citizenship had become ideologically unconvincing for many. However, mercantile notions of urban citizenship were also exclusionary. Wholesale trade was a site of social differentiation, where some were deemed properly urban and others not, some were admitted to and others were excluded from the benefits of urban citizenship: socioeconomic rights to trade, to use and appropriate space in market alleyways just outside shops, to enter certain shops and cafes, to access credit, to enter marriage alliances, and to access informal justice mechanisms. These are all rights pertaining to urban citizenship. Mercantile discourses and practices of entrustment, accounting and accountability, and civility, did not only structure their economic agency, creating the market as a place where it was possible to buy and sell. They were also central to the contestation of urban citizenship: who had the right to take up social space in the city.

The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood's Democratic Vision in Practice 1947–1963.,

[Dara Conduit, Monash University, Australia](#)

The Syrian Muslim Brotherhood is one of the oldest and best-known Syrian political groups, having played a role in every iteration of Syrian politics since 1945. The group was an active member of the Syrian parliamentary system from 1947 to 1963, but was banned alongside most political parties after the 1963 Ba'th coup. One and a half decades later, the Brotherhood took up arms against the Syrian government, decimating its membership base and sealing its fate as an opposition-in-exile for the next 30 years. However, the group has re-emerged as a political heavyweight in the current Syrian uprising, and has a very real chance of winning a share of power in a post-war Syrian political system.

Given the group's potential democratic re-engagement, this paper looks at the Brotherhood's track record in the Syrian parliament between 1945 and 1963. Was it a fair political player and a committed democrat? Or was its political practice guided by an anti-statist ideology? Was the Brotherhood – at its origins – a democratic movement, as it claims to be? Although decades have passed since Syria's democratic era, this is an important period because it is the only time that the group has enjoyed political freedom. In addition, its leaders today routinely highlight their desire to return to the ideological path forged by the group at this time, so it is imperative to understand the Brotherhood's practice in this era.

It is argued that contra to the observations in much of the literature, the Brotherhood demonstrated

very little radicalism in its founding decades and posed little threat to the Syrian democratic system. Although this changed later, its behaviour was comparable to the mainstream political parties operating in the Syrian political sphere, and one could go so far as to characterise it as a conservative political actor.

Al-Maturidi and Some of his Theological Opinions, Dr Ma Zhan Ming, Ningxia University, China

Al-maturidi is one of the greatest theologians in the history of Islam who studied and systematised Abu Hanifa's theological thoughts. Through teaching, writing and debating Abu Hanifa's work, Al-Maturidi produced remarkable contributions to Islamic theology and defended the Sunni faith. He produced more than ten books in different fields, some of which consist of ten volumes. His work examined main theological issues which caused controversy at the time. This was largely due to his use of opposite faction's opinions, which he debated and clarified perspectives of Sunni faction. It is worthy to say that Al-maturidi is the first Sunni scholar who proposed the theory of knowledge which is significant for opening people's mind when they seek knowledge. Al-maturidi's theological opinions became an important school of Sunni theology which spread widely in the Muslim world and is now followed by many people. Al-maturidi was given several titles, each of which indicates that he was very distinguished in the field of Islamic theology and, furthermore, that he should be considered as the founder of science of Kalam among Sunni Muslims. Unfortunately few scholars today are aware of Al-maturidi and his contributions and many of his views are misunderstood, often leading to unfair criticisms.

Forum

Muslims in Europe Postgraduate Forum

The Centre supported the activities of the **Cambridge Muslims in Europe Postgraduate Forum**, an interdisciplinary research and discussion group based at the University of Cambridge for postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers studying Islam and Muslims in Europe. It brings together researchers from the Politics, Divinity, History and Middle East Studies departments, as well as students from further afield. Part of its activities this academic year entailed hosting postgraduate speakers from other universities to present their research in a supportive atmosphere. These events engaged with the topics of Islamic law, intellectual thought, civil society, education, marriage, and migration. For more information see: <http://www.cis.cam.ac.uk/activities/lectures-workshops/>

20 OCTOBER 2015

Discussion Theme: English law and religious marriage

Presenter: Vishal Vora, School of Law, SOAS

Abstract: The question of marriage validity is not novel; the answer could only be valid or void. What changed in 1997 was the formation of a new category called non-marriage. Certain religious marriages are considered so far from being what parliament intended, that they can only be deemed a non-event and give rise to no legal rights. In a short space of time there have been a number of cases involving the validity of Islamic marriages, entered into with good faith and via a ceremony, yet nearly all have been declared non-marriages. Is this judicial 'wrong-turn' being used too casually? Has the time come to recognise religious and belief marriages and if so, what may be the best mechanism?

3 NOVEMBER 2015

Discussion Theme: Youth and Religiosity

Presenter: Hira Amin, Faculty of History, University of Cambridge

Abstract: A common narrative in the literature surrounding British Muslims is the inevitable generational conflict between 'traditional' parents and their 'modern' British-born children. This 'clash' and confusion in identity, the historiography argues, is the primary factor that causes young Muslims to become more religious and use their faith to gain a sense of stability and belonging. This paper aims to re-examine this narrative in two ways.

Firstly, instead of focusing on conflict, I argue that it is important to examine how both generations negotiate and adapt. The over-arching emphasis on conflict obscures the complex and more fluid reality of cooperation and reconfiguration. Secondly, a factor that is missing from current analysis is time. There seems to be a lack of appreciation of how the meaning and practice of Islam evolves in an individual over time and how this impacts the family.

17 NOVEMBER 2015

Discussion Theme: Cultural Identity

Presenter: Katarzyna Sidło, Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge, and Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Warsaw

Abstract: Two opposite trends in religiosity or, more broadly, spirituality, have been gaining on strength lately. On the one hand, increased levels of piety and devotion are being observed. On the other, the number of people identifying themselves as "non-believers" or "secular" is on the rise. This paper is an attempt at characterizing a segment of society that fits into the latter group, albeit in a heterodox way, namely "cultural Muslims", who break the traditional dichotomy between Muslims (us) and non-Muslims (them), introducing a concept of a gradual identity. The analysis will aim at determining who they are, how they are perceived by both religious Muslims and disaffiliates from Islam, as well as evaluating their place in the public discourse on religion, and their place in the society in UK in general.

1 DECEMBER 2015

Discussion Theme: Anthropology of Islamic Education in Britain

Presenter: Alyaa Ebbiary, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, SOAS

Abstract: Among the many criticisms afforded the British Muslim 'community', particular censure is reserved for its Imams and religious leaders, both by non-Muslim wider society and their own co-religionists. A common refrain is disappointment that they are in the main, born and educated abroad, have a poor command of English and an even worse understanding of British society and connecting with the youth. Over the last 30 years several institutions have been established to train home-grown religious specialists, but many of them have been similarly criticised as 'backward' and 'out of touch'. In the last decade, there has been a huge interest in nurturing a cohort of ulema (Islamic scholars) for whom cultural literacy is as important as religious literacy. My research explores the personal and pedagogical experiences of this emerging trend, with reference to fieldwork conducted with seminary students and aspiring Islamic religious professionals, in Cambridge and London.

1 FEBRUARY 2016

Discussion Theme: Islamophobia and Anti-Semitism

Presenter: Maryyum Mehmood, Department of War Studies, King's College London

Abstract: Research exploring the effects of xenophobia is often categorised under the umbrella of multiculturalism studies, and most often there is little, if any, engagement between different forms of xenophobia. Following calls by experts in the field to widen scope of the discourses into Antisemitism and Islamophobia, this study seeks to highlight the underlying similarities and differences in terms of the respective reactions they generate. A further nuance of this study is that it investigates both Antisemitism and Islamophobia through the target's lens, i.e. the reactions of Jews and Muslims towards being members of scapegoated or suspect communities. Essentially, I aim to put

forward this notion of 'accommodation' as the most effective form of acculturation for both groups or communities. Accommodation, amongst other things, entails balancing all aspects of one's identity, and the process of negotiation is discussed in detail in this presentation. It is hoped that by offering insight into the accommodationist response, we can simultaneously learn more about Antisemitism and Islamophobia discourses, and offer a deeper understanding of the current assimilation vs isolation debates.

9 FEBRUARY 2016

Discussion Theme: Islam and Youth in France

Presenter: Margot Dazey, Department of Political and International Studies, University of Cambridge

Abstract: A widespread narrative among French sociologists of religion understands youth involvement in Islamic revivalism as a reactive phenomenon, about either estrangement from 'traditional' parents or alienation from a hostile society. Drawing on literature from the sociology of activism, this paper aims at disentangling a number of assumptions underlying this kind of narrative by highlighting both the various processes of joining these movements and the motivations for staying. Using data from extended interviews and periods of participant-observation, it seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics of Muslim youth activism in France.

23 FEBRUARY 2016

Discussion Theme: Muslims and the Media

Presenter: Samar Samir Mezghanni, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge
<http://www.ames.cam.ac.uk/directory/mezghannisamirsamar>

Abstract: This presentation showcases a preliminary analysis of the discourse of press that caters to Muslim communities in the United Kingdom. The research looks at the similarities and differences in the discourses of Muslim press and mainstream newspapers from 1998 to 2009 with regards to the topics they consider newsworthy and their

representation of Muslims and Islam. The presentation focuses on the diachronic analysis of consistencies and/or changes in the topics covered by The Muslim News over the 12 years framework. The quantitative and qualitative analysis suggests that, in covering newsworthy events involving Muslims, The MN shifts its focus and representation of British Muslims based on their position in the news story as agents or patients.

8 MARCH 2016

Discussion Theme: Transnational Islamic mobilisations

Presenters: Mathilde Zederman, Department of Politics and International Studies, SOAS, and Margot Dazey, Department of Politics and International Studies, University of Cambridge

Abstract: To what extent Western European states provide Islamic opposition actors with new opportunities and constraints for political expression? How are homeland opposition politics displayed and reworked within diasporic political scenes? Building on two in-depth case-studies, *Solidarités tunisiennes* and *CODE Égypte*, this paper seeks to explore the micro-politics of Islamic opposition mobilisations stretching across borders. Set up in France after repressive events in home countries (following Ben Ali's repression against Ennahda in Tunisia in the 1990s and after military crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood during Rabaa events in 2013 for the Egyptian case), both *Solidarités tunisiennes* and *CODE Égypte* articulate democratic claims, Islamic markers and national references tightly. Investigating their discourses and practices might enable us to disentangle the distinctive frames, political agendas and activist careers of 'long-distance Islamic actors'.

3 MAY 2016

Discussion Theme: Recognition of Islam in Italy

Presenter: M. Cenap Aydin, Istituto Tevere, Rome, and Visiting Scholar, University of Cambridge

Abstract: Islam is the second largest religion in Italy but it still lacks legal recognition. None of the Muslim communities has achieved an "intesa" (accord) with the state unlike most of the religious minorities. However, this atypical relation at the national level does not prevent some Muslim communities to become transnational religious

actors. In my research I look at three Muslim communities – UCOII (The Union of Islamic Communities and Organizations in Italy), COREIS (The Islamic Religious Communities in Italy), Ahmadi Community – not only in terms of their transnational networks and "imagined" ummas but also in terms of their interaction with another significant transnational religious actor, Roman Catholicism. After a brief discussion in the literature (transnational religious actors, religious minorities, law and religion in Italy), I will present my preliminary findings in the fieldwork, especially based on participant observation and some interviews.

10 MAY 2016

Discussion Theme: Syrian Migrants in Germany

Presenter: Philip Rushworth, Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Cambridge

Abstract: In this talk I will introduce my PhD research looking at hospitality and citizenship in relation to Syrian migrants and refugees in Germany. 'Hospitality' is a term that is frequently used to describe Germany's response to the so-called 'refugee crisis', especially in relation to the *Willkommenskultur* (culture of welcome) movement. In my ethnographic fieldwork in Germany, beginning in October 2016, I plan to investigate *practices* of hospitality: German citizens opening their homes to Syrian migrants and refugees. Specifically, I am interested in exploring these practices in relation to discourses of 'inclusion' and 'integration' of migrants and refugees into German society, which I consider in terms of 'citizenship'. In this seminar I will discuss why practices of hospitality are interesting to think about and what questions they raise.

24 MAY 2016

Discussion Theme: Islamic NGOs in France

Presenter: William Barylo, L'École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS), Paris

Abstract: Categorising Muslims according to their level of orthodoxy or political orientations can impoverish the quality of social science study, since it can then be impossible to take the diversity of their discourses and practices into account. Using Valérie Amiraux's article, this presentation addresses the need for using a micro-sociological

analysis that underlines the importance of anti-utilitarian motives such as feelings and emotions, and so considers subjects as complex persons. Drawing on my empirical research on Muslim volunteers participating in grassroots charities in France and Poland, this presentation seeks to transcend the binary of whether a subject be Muslim at certain times, but at other times not.

7 JUNE 2016

Discussion Theme: The Gülen Movement

Presenter: Caroline Tee, Faraday Institute, University of Cambridge

Abstract: The Gülen, or Hizmet, movement in Turkey is the country's most powerful and affluent religious organisation. Its central tenet, advanced by its founder, the charismatic Sunni preacher Fethullah Gülen (b. 1941), is that Muslims should engage positively with modernity. A prime means of advancing this philosophy has been education: at hundreds of Gülen-run schools and universities, not

only in Turkey but also worldwide, instructors aim to cultivate the next generation of Muslim bankers, biologists, software engineers and politicians. But how does the Gülen movement resolve the sometimes conflicting positions of Sunni Islam and contemporary science for example, on evolutionary theory? Drawing on sustained ethnographic research conducted among Gülen communities in Turkey, Caroline Tee analyses their complex attitudes towards secular modernity. She focuses on education, science research and industry to explore how pious Muslim practitioners engage in science at high levels, arguing that the Gülen movement's success in this critical area of modernity has facilitated its rise to prominence in recent decades. Considered against the backdrop of Turkish politics, and particularly the acrimonious power-struggle between the Gülen movement and its erstwhile ally, Turkey's ruling AK Party, Gülenist engagement with modern science is revealed as a key source of its influence and success.



OUTREACH AND TEACHING

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Outreach Programme

Schools Outreach Programme and Educational Engagement

The Centre's School Outreach Programme aims to establish and develop a close relationship with schools in Cambridgeshire and beyond to promote the study and understanding of Islam and Muslims. The Centre arranges initial visits to schools to discuss their requirements, offers advice, talks and workshops and invites teachers and pupils to attend some of the Centre's events. Talks and activities are tailored to suit the curriculum and needs of each individual school. Teaching and Outreach Associate continues to offer advice and support to Religious Education teachers on Islam and Muslim issues by answering their queries, suggesting useful resources, commenting of their curriculum and teaching material and sometimes attending their classes.

This year the Centre's Teaching and Outreach Associate, Shahla Suleiman, has delivered a number of activities including the following:

- St Faith's School, 20 October 2015: 'Islam Faith and Practice'
- Long Road Sixth Form College Talk, Cambridge, 9 November 2015: 'British Muslims: Identity and the Media'
- Long Road Sixth Form College, Cambridge, 8 December 2015: FAB Armchair Sessions – A stall and sessions set up during the Inter Faith & Belief Week in the school for students to drop in to ask or discuss any issues about of religions and faiths. Shahla organised a 2-hour session on Islam.
- Friend's School, Saffron Walden, 29 April 2016: An open Question and Answer session on different issues facing Muslims especially Muslim women including converts to Islam.
- St Mary's Junior School, Cambridge, 10 May 2016, 'Islam, Message of Islam, Mosques, Muslim dress'.
- St Mary's Senior School, Cambridge, 25 May 2016: 'Muslims in Britain, Politics, Media and Identity'.
- St Paul's School, Cambridge, 17 June 2016: 'Islam and Muslims'.
- Queen Edith, Cambridge, 20 June 2016: 'Islam, Pillars of Islam, Muslim Communities Families'



Queen Edith Primary School, Cambridge



St Mary's Junior School, Cambridge



St Mary's Junior School, Cambridge



St Paul's Primary School, Cambridge

This is the selection of samples of the pupils' feedback:

Dear Shakla Suleiman,
I am writing to thank you for speaking to us about gender equality in Islam. It was I (found it particularly interesting) enjoyed hearing about very controversial and challenging issues from a Muslim's perspective. You appeared to have ^{a very} ~~your~~ ^{well} own opinion on the matter, which is important, if you have a faith, to express that. Especially considering all the news that the media puts across and wants us to believe. The topics put forward were ~~as~~ interesting as well. Thank you very much again for taking the time to prepare it and also for being in books.
From God bless,

The thing I enjoyed learning about most was the different varieties of Muslims. I liked learning about the way they dress too.

I want to say a very very very big thank you, I hope you liked teaching us more about Islam, and the way you presented it was really really good.

I think that your presentation was priceless!
(in other words Spectacular!)

Dear Shahla,

Thankyou for coming in and teaching us about Muslims and Islam. I learned that not all muslims are extremists. I enjoyed when you read us some thing in arabic. And I really loved listening to your talk,

Dear Shahla,

Thankyou for coming in and talking to us about Islam.

It was so interesting and I learnt so much,
For example now I know how to write in Arabic.

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ (In the name of Allah, the most compassionate, the most Merciful.) It was also interesting to learn a bit more about the 5 pillars of islam. (Belief, Prayer, Ramadan, Pilgrimage and Charity.)

thank you so much for ~~come~~ coming
and teaching all of year 5 about Muslims
and the Islamic Religion. I had a lot of
fun and I learnt a lot more than
I expected, and because ~~the~~ time flies
when you're having fun, ^{so} 3 quarters
of an hour seemed like 10 minutes.

I loved your presentation! I knew a little
bit about Islam but you helped me to learn
more. Thank you for coming in I was really
looking forward to it.

To Shabla,

Thank you so much for coming to St Marys
and speaking to us about Islam. I learnt so
much. You were very interesting and you
captivated all of us in our interesting facts
and items. Especially when you put on that
Islamic dress and our amazing description
of the Mosque. I loved your presentation.

Dear  Shahla, 

I very much enjoyed your talks to us about your religion. I found it interesting that women traditionally cover their bodies. I know that my friends and I are very thankful of you giving up your time for us.

We were previously taught about Muslims and their traditions, so it was educational for us to meet and talk to one.   

Thank you so much for coming to talk to year 5 about Islam and the religion of Islam. I learnt so much about the Quran and that it can't touch the floor. I loved seeing how Muslims dress and the way Muslims pray. Your presentation was very good and I learnt a lot. I really appreciate that you did for us.

From Sara

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

We were delighted to hear such an approachable and well informed speaker. Quakers have a long tradition of listening to and learning from other faiths.

Truth is one: The sages call it by many names. (Hinduism. The Rig Veda)

Shahla was able to provide a very broad view of gender issues, from both a personal and an academic perspective, showing the widely differing views of Muslims in different cultures and countries. Helen Golden.

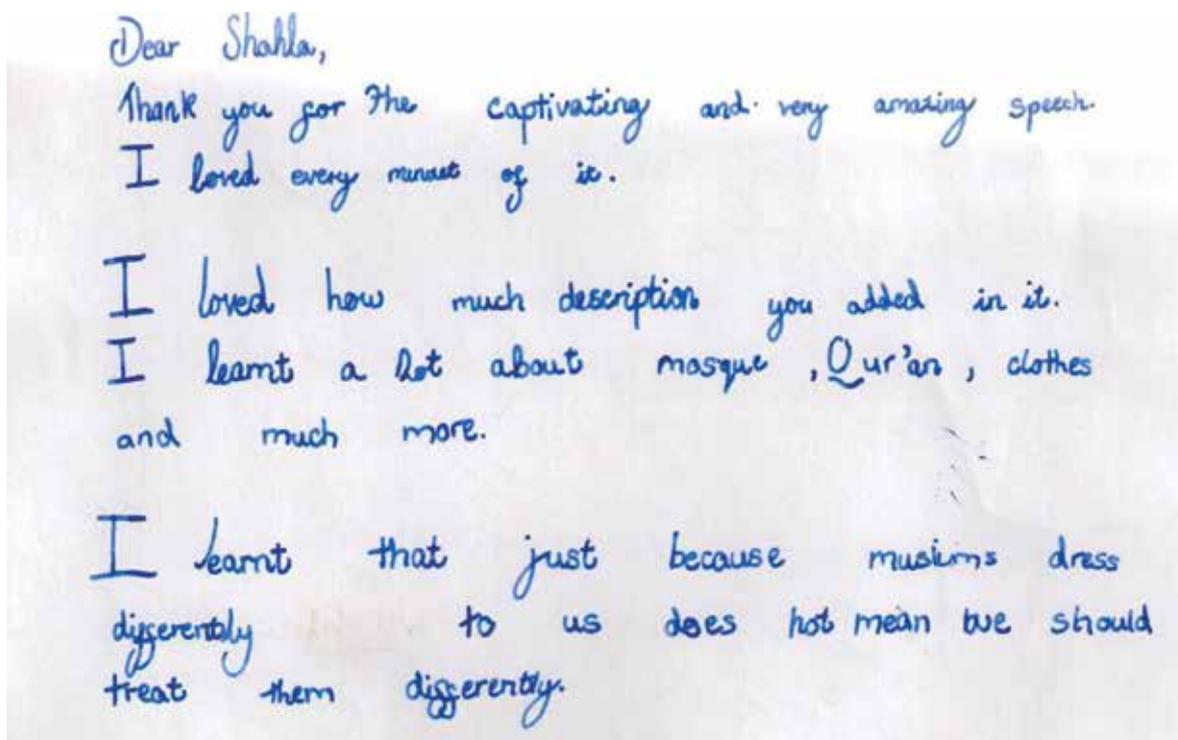
"I enjoyed hearing about controversial and challenging issues from a Muslim's perspective". Abigail Jorgensen.

"I learnt that women's rights differ from country to country". Ulla Oliver

"I found it truly inspirational that Muslim women fought for woman's rights". Alistair Penman.



Friend's School Weekly Newsletter – Parents' Notes 6th May 2016



The Centre's Teaching and Outreach Associate, Shahla Suleiman, has been elected in the summer 2016 as a member of Cambridgeshire Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) committee, Cambridgeshire County Council, to represent Muslim community in Cambridge. The SACRE monitors the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education which has been created by

the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus Conference and approved by the SACRE. It is the legal basis for Religious Education in Cambridgeshire which is formally reviewed every five years.

Shahla aims to make a link between the CIS, Muslim community and the work of SACRE in order to build a relationship to encourage constructive discussions and collaboration.

This year Shahla Suleiman acted as a member of the Long Road Faith & Belief Group (FAB), Cambridge. This involves consultation, offering talks on issues concerning Islam and Muslims in the UK and contributing to FAB and Long Road International Faith and Belief Week. FAB aims to help students increase understanding of religious belief and have access to people of Faith & Belief. Shahla Suleiman also occasionally participated in the Student Faith and Belief Lunch Group meetings. This monthly lunch is set up and run by students to encourage interfaith and belief collaboration.

Teaching and Outreach Associate participated in the annual conference organised by TIES in January 2016 in Birmingham and presented the Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain: Male Perspectives project and announced the dates of the launch of the report. TIES is a charitable and social British Muslim organisation with the aim of establishing

an open framework for communication and co-operation between organisations, societies and communities in order to support the social stability and cultural variety of the British society.



Shahla Suleiman speaking at TIES conference in Birmingham

Programme

Arabic Language Teaching for Cambridge University Students

Centre of Islamic Studies offered Arabic language teaching to graduate and undergraduate students across Cambridge University (other than those taking the Arabic tripos) whose research interests include the Arab and Islamic world. This was done in fulfilment of the mission of the Centre to engage the University community.

The Programme is tailored to different levels and runs during the academic year. The courses focus on Modern Standard Arabic and aim to cover the four Arabic language skills of Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

Teaching and Outreach Associate Shahla A Suleiman is the course organiser and teacher.



Course outlines

Beginners

The beginners level of Arabic is designed for students with little or no previous knowledge of Arabic. The purpose of this course is to develop student's language proficiency and communication skills in Modern Standard Arabic. The course introduces students to the sounds, scripts and basic structures of Arabic grammar while building reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.

Intermediate

The course aims to consolidate students' knowledge of Modern Standard Arabic and continue to develop the four language skills at the intermediate level of proficiency. The course utilizes previously acquired grammar and vocabulary to improve students' conversation and comprehension skills. Particular emphasis is placed on reading and expanding student's knowledge of Arabic grammar and vocabulary

Advanced

The course aims to develop Arabic language skills and expand students' knowledge of Arabic vocabulary, grammatical structures, idioms, fluency and style at the advanced level of proficiency. The course focuses on authentic materials dealing with topics such as politics, history, society, economics, religion, culture and literature. Particular emphasis is placed on reading comprehension, composition and translation

Students have been encouraged to take part in the Centre's research and activities. They have expressed their profound appreciation for this service and enjoyed being part of CIS and learning about other students' research projects. Below, some the students who attended the courses in 2015/16 and their motivations for joining the CIS Arabic teaching programme:



Melissa Gatter
Faculty of Asian and Middle East Studies, MPhil, "Dar'awi Refugees and the Future of Syria"

"I work on the resilience of social networks among Syrians living in Jordan's Za'atari refugee camp. My fieldwork aims to understand how social relationships vital to community life before statelessness transform in the space of the camp. I will examine how their transformation contributes to an understanding of how camp residents from Dar'a, Syria view the city's future and its role in the changing political idea of Syria and Syrianness. I would like to expand my Arabic vocabulary, especially as I prepare for fieldwork in the refugee camp. For my research, I will also be using some contemporary sources in Arabic, such as newspapers and journal".



Aline Khoury
Development Studies, PhD, "The inclusion of vulnerable immigrants in the labour market in Brazil and in the UK"

"My research will deal with policies for inclusion of vulnerable immigrants and refugees in labour market in Brazil and in the UK. I will analyse how these governments have used migration policies according to internal market demands, and then propose alternatives to reach a more humanitarian approach, considering the immigrant beyond his/her role exclusively in the market. Arabic has been very helpful so far because a significant part of the immigrants with whom I deal come from Arabic speaking countries, especially Syria and Iraq. Although many of them speak some English, it is very useful to have notions in Arabic for my interviews. It can help to translate more precisely some specific terms, as well as to create more empathy with the interviewees. Besides that, I have always appreciated Arab culture and language, as I had Arab grandparents and I had great times travelling to the Middle East. I have studied basic Arabic in my hometown in Brazil, so the classes at the Centre have helped me a lot to keep practicing and to acquire new vocabulary quite fast. The

teacher has been a very kind and patient teacher, motivating us to learn in a natural and dynamic way".



Katarzyna Sidlo
Visiting Scholar at the Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge, a Research and Communications Associate at CASE – Center for Social and Economic Research, a Warsaw-based think tank, and a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Oriental Studies at the University of Warsaw.

The classes were great, very helpful not only because I've learned some new things (although mostly refreshed properly my previous knowledge) but also because they helped me to work on my Arabic more regularly and motivated to revise new word on daily basis. My research interests focus on the political economy of the Middle East, Islamic banking and finance, economics of religion, and religious conversion. Because a lot of my work right now is based on early Arabic written sources, such as Sunna and historical, legal, and theological treaties, I really benefited from the classes, not least because it gave me an opportunity to practice speaking and use more modern language than I usually do in my research. I've also benefited greatly from grammar revision – perhaps not the most exciting part of the classes, but very useful for reading old texts.



Philip Rushworth
PhD Candidate, FAMES

My research looks at Syrian refugees who have come to Europe during the so-called 'migrant crisis'. Syrians who attain refugee status and settle in Europe are often said to be 'starting a new life'. I want to investigate what this means in reality: do Syrian refugees see their lives in these terms? What is actually entailed in starting a new life? What are the expectations of a new life in Europe? I explore this through a study of hope and its consequences. I am studying Arabic because it will be essential for the 12 months ethnographic fieldwork I plan to conduct in 2016/17 with Syrian refugees which this study will be based upon.



Elizabeth Martejijn

Faculty of Divinity, PhD, “Local Palestinian Christians and the Authenticity of Christianity” (working title)

“As a student of Theology and Anthropology, the relationship between religion and culture is at the core of my research interests. In my doctoral work I would like to develop a theologically astute ethnography of the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of ordinary Palestinian Christians. This topic will be explored ‘from below’ by an extensive period of fieldwork among Palestinian Christians, in combination with library research on Israel-theology. Learning Arabic is an important element of my research, because I would like to conduct interviews with Palestinian Christians during my fieldwork. Not all Palestinians speak English, so I have to acquire some knowledge of Arabic myself. Learning another language is also a tool to understand a culture better, because a lot of cultural sensitivities are hidden in language. In addition, speaking the language of the community one studies is a good way to gain their trust. I am very pleased with the Arabic classes at CIS. The classes are designed for research students, so the size of the groups are small and the teacher listens to the individual needs of her students. The classes stimulated me to keep on practicing and enabled me to improve my Arabic quite fast. I would definitely recommend these classes to other research students who would like to use Arabic in their research”.

Margot Dazey,

Department of Politics and International Studies (POLIS), PhD candidate, “Revivalist Islam in France”

Funded by a Knox scholarship, Margot’s doctoral research examines the ways Muslim activists engage with western European public spheres in the context of the ongoing legacy of Islamic reformism. In particular, she seeks to explore how everyday revivalist narratives and practices are actively reworked in the Muslim-minority settings of French cities, with a focus on educational, social, and cultural activities. Her research interests span Muslim diasporas, faith-based activism, social movements, and ethnography of religion. In the course of her PhD, she intends to explore Arabic archival sources and newspapers, to attend Arabic-speaking events and to conduct interviews with diasporic movements’ leaders and activists.

Halimatou Hima

Centre for Development Studies, PhD, “The emergence of positive deviants in rural Niger (working title)”

“My interest in languages began when I realized that in fact, many words in seemingly unrelated languages sounded the same. Hausa, one of the major Afroasiatic languages, shares a lot with Arabic. In many ways, Arabic is a language that connects worlds apart. Niger, my country and main site for my research, is predominantly Muslim, most of whom draw their inspiration and practices from the Qur’an and the Sunnah. I would like to further understand the key drivers of certain practices. As a Muslim myself, I would like to seriously understand the key Islamic texts – learning of the Arabic language is an integral part of this journey. Finally, I aspire to a career in public policy and service – a language with the global reach of Arabic would be an asset. The class has been extremely interesting and helpful. Even though I have a long way to go, I read Arabic with greater confidence”.

Festival of Ideas

The Centre of Islamic Studies held three events at the Cambridge Festival of Ideas in 2015. The Cambridge Festival of Ideas was established in 2008 with the aim of encouraging the public to explore the arts, humanities and social sciences, meet academics and students, and engage with the University via a thought-provoking and creative series of mostly free events. In 2015, The Centre of Islamic Studies organised presentations and discussions on discrimination and hate crime; on dynamics of conversion to Islam; and cultural

exchange between the Middle East and the rest of the world.

Another one was about bridging the Middle East with the rest of the world through perfumery explaining how our sense of smell has the ability to define a dialogue between cultures and perfumes. The Centre of Islamic Studies has also celebrated its Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain research project with an evening of discussion and poetry performance featuring spoken-word artist Tommy Evans.

Event

Islamophobia: New Findings, New Perspectives

31 OCTOBER 2015, 14:00–16:00

Venue: Arbury Community Centre, Cambridge, CB4 2LD

The Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge presented a lively discussion on Islamophobia in modern Britain. Expert opinion and debate from:

Dr Chris Allen
[University of Birmingham](#)

Daniel Zeichner MP
[Cambridge](#)

Faisal Mohammed
[Cambridge Islamic College](#)

Sabina Tahir
[Muslim Education and Outreach Cambridge](#)

Community officers
[Cambridgeshire Constabulary](#)

This event presented research and ideas from the Centre of Islamic Studies in an informal and relaxed setting. The Centre of Islamic Studies had recently completed a study of 'everyday' hate crime and discrimination against Muslim communities living in England and Scotland. Key findings include the prevalence of non-criminal forms of hatred and discrimination (being stared at on public transport, being ignored in shops, being discriminated by public bodies such as local authorities and schools) and a widespread perception among Muslim communities that the British media plays a major role in sustaining adverse social conditions for British Muslims through their negative reporting of Muslims and Islam. The study also recorded the various ways in which individuals and communities coped with the hatred and discrimination against them, including strategies that incorporate elements of faith and religious practice (including forgiveness, personal fortitude and strengthened community networks).



The event gathered together one of the UK's leading experts on Islamophobia (Dr Chris Allen, University of Birmingham), alongside Daniel Zeichner MP (Cambridge), and representatives from the Abu Bakr Masjid (Cambridge Mosque), Cambridge Islamic College, and the Cambridge Constabulary. The Centre of Islamic Studies welcomed people of all faiths (and none). The event was free and open to anyone who lives, works or studies in the Cambridge area.

Event

Bridging the Middle East with the Rest of the World through Perfumery

28 OCTOBER 2015, 17:30–19:00

Venue: Arbury Keynes Room, King's College, King's Parade, CB2 1ST

As part of this year's Cambridge Festival of Ideas, the Centre organised an event featuring Christopher Chong, Creative Director of Amouage, an international perfumery house originating in Oman. Under the Festival theme power and resistance, Bridging the Middle East with the Rest of the World through Perfumery provided a platform to challenge our preconceptions and explore the opportunities in which scent can create a dialogue and understanding between different cultures.

Christopher Chong presented an informal lecture about his creative process for Amouage, an international perfume house originating from Oman. Drawing from personal experiences he presented an informal lecture about his creative process for Amouage Perfumery House, explaining to a diverse audience how our sense of smell has the ability to define a dialogue between cultures and perfumes. The event even included trying a variety of Amouage perfumes! The event was free and open to all.



Event

Rapping Our Way to Islam

27 OCTOBER 2015, 18:00–19:30

Venue: Keynes Room, King's College, King's Parade, CB2 1ST

Conversion to Islam is not a templated experience. It has many entry points, some of which are inchoate but all of which are thought to be equally valid. Converts may accept Islam rationally before they embrace it emotionally and spiritually. Or they may embrace it emotionally before they accept it rationally and deepen their involvement in it spiritually.

As part of its 'Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain' research project, the Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge presented a lively discussion and musical performance by Tommy 'A-Man' Evans. Tommy, a Muslim convert and one of the participants in the project, offered a fascinating insight into his very personal journey to faith and Islam via his love of hip hop and his continued involvement in the creative and performing arts.

As a successful artist on the UK's hip hop scene – a musical form synonymous with the themes of power and resistance underpinning this year's Festival of Ideas – Tommy spent over a decade producing and performing music across the UK, Europe and USA. Hip-hop was his first gateway to Islam. Many rappers happened to be Muslim, a fact largely arising from the African-American tradition of Islam, and much of the rap he listened to referred to Islam. But the path from hip-hop to Islam was paved more by people than by lyrics, by the rappers he met and the friends he made. Following his conversion to Islam in 2005, Tommy's artistic and intellectual endeavours expanded significantly during the intervening years: he is now a popular spoken word artist, as well as a writer, photographer, and broadcaster.

The event was free and open to all.





Rapping Our Way to Islam

HRH PRINCE ALWALEED BIN TALAL
CENTRE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES



6PM – 7.30PM
Tuesday 27 October
Free and Open to all

Keynes Room, King's College,
King's Parade, CB2 1ST

The Centre of Islamic Studies celebrates its Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain research project with an evening of discussion and poetry performance featuring spoken-word artist Tommy Evans

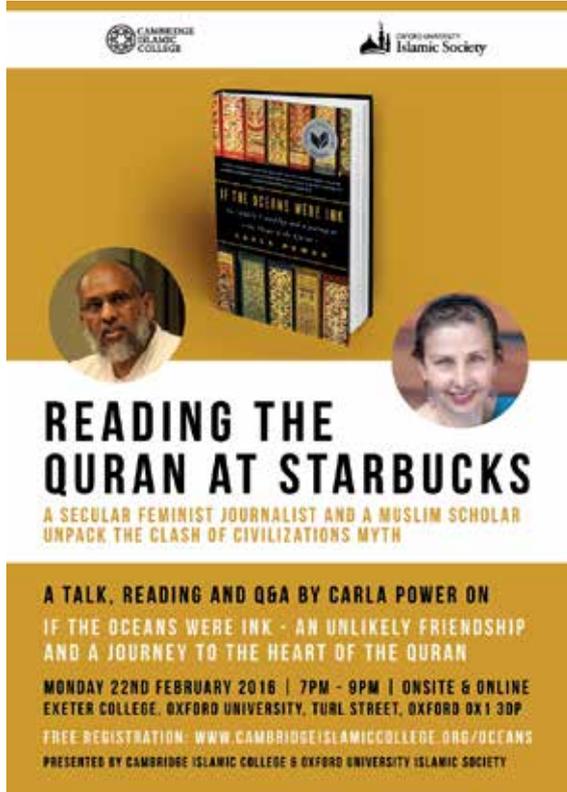
www.festivalofideas.cam.ac.uk

Discussion

A Talk, Reading and Discussion with Carla Power on 'If the Oceans Were Ink'

24 NOVEMBER 2015, 19:00–21:00

Venue: Room 2, Mill Lane Lecture Rooms, Mill Lane, Cambridge, CB2 1RX



The poster is for an event titled "READING THE QURAN AT STARBUCKS". It features a central image of the book "If the Oceans Were Ink" by Carla Power. Above the book are logos for Cambridge Islamic College and Oxford University Islamic Society. Below the book are circular portraits of Sheikh Mohammad Akram Nadwi and Carla Power. The text on the poster includes: "A TALK, READING AND Q&A BY CARLA POWER ON IF THE OCEANS WERE INK - AN UNLIKELY FRIENDSHIP AND A JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF THE QURAN", "MONDAY 22ND FEBRUARY 2016 | 7PM - 9PM | ONSITE & ONLINE", "EKETER COLLEGE, OXFORD UNIVERSITY, TURL STREET, OXFORD OX1 3DP", "FREE REGISTRATION: WWW.CAMBRIDGEISLAMICCOLLEGE.ORG/OCEANS", and "PRESENTED BY CAMBRIDGE ISLAMIC COLLEGE & OXFORD UNIVERSITY ISLAMIC SOCIETY".

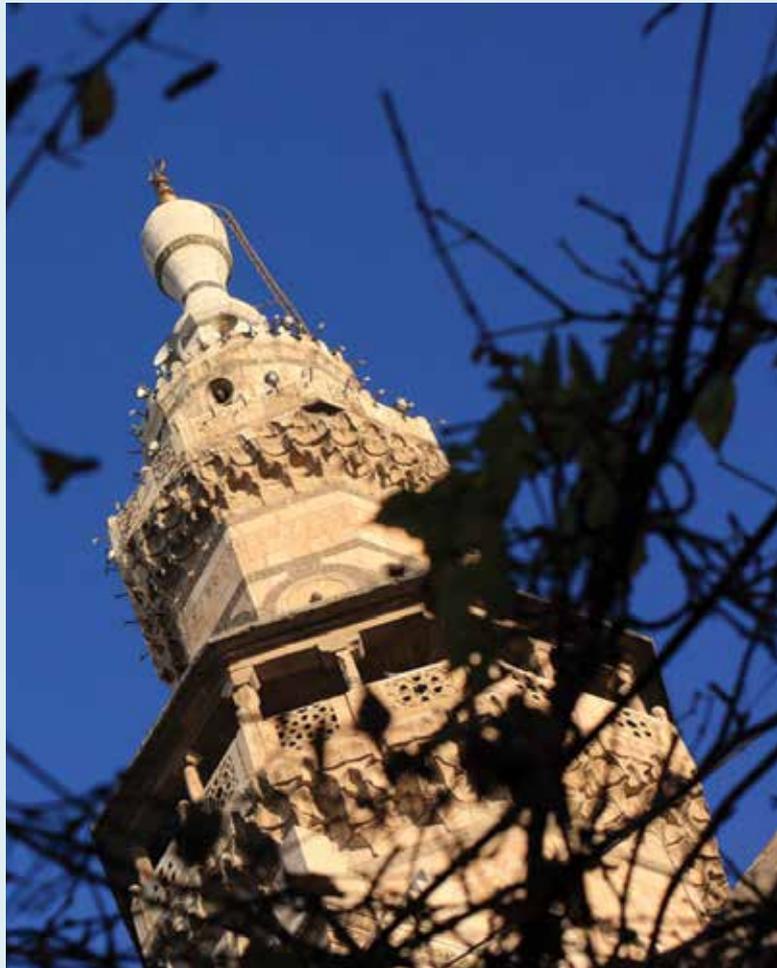
In partnership with the Cambridge Islamic College, the Centre of Islamic Studies presented 'If the Oceans Were Ink – An Unlikely Friendship and a Journey to the Heart of the Quran', by Carla Power. Through an account of her *twenty-year* friendship with Sheikh Mohammad Akram Nadwi, the founding chancellor of the Cambridge Islamic College, *Oceans* probed issues of migration, faith, and explored the possibility of tolerance in a world wracked with intolerance. The book was a finalist for this year's National Book Award in the United States.

A journalist specializing in Muslim societies, global social issues and culture, Carla Power is the author of *If the Oceans Were Ink: An Unlikely Friendship and a Journey to the Heart of the Quran* (Henry Holt, 2015), an account of her year spent studying with the traditional Islamic scholar Sheikh Mohammad Akram Nadwi. She writes for *Time* and is a former correspondent for *Newsweek*, where she produced award-winning stories, reporting from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Her essays have appeared in a wide range of publications, from *Vogue* and *O: The Oprah Magazine* to *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Guardian*, and *Foreign Policy*.

Power holds an M.Phil. from St. Antony's College, Oxford University in Modern Middle Eastern Studies, as well as degrees from Yale and Columbia. Married, with two children, she lives in England.

VISITING FELLOWS AND SCHOLARS

Visiting Fellows and Scholars and Research Associates are at the heart of the Centre of Islamic Studies' intellectual community. They contribute to our research and outreach activities, while benefiting from contact with the University of Cambridge's wider community, its library and research facilities.



VISITING FELLOWS AND SCHOLARS

Visiting Fellows

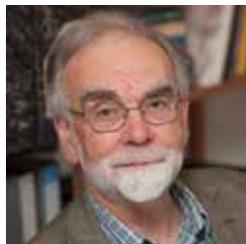


Dr Sara Betteridge

Chartered Counselling Psychologist and Spiritual Care Advisor NHS

Research Interests: Incorporating Religion into therapy, Muslim experiences of mental health, Islamic interpretations of mental health issues, Psychological, Social and Spiritual theories on Psychosis.

Research at Cambridge: Muslim Mental Health in Britain.



Mr Ahmed Paul Keeler

Research Interests: Western world cultural narratives, cultural narratives in the Muslim world, the arts of Islam, modern art.

Research at Cambridge: Exploring the Quranic principle of Mizan as realised in Islamic civilisation.



Mr Martin Rose

MENA Consultant, British Council

Research Interests: Morocco generally, language and culture, and the interaction of faiths.

Research at Cambridge: The Moroccan Community in Manchester and the Trade in Silver Plate.



Dr Shana Cohen

Stone Ashdown Director, Woolf Institute

Research interests: public services; non-profit organizations; political alienation in North Africa; inequality; comparative values of social justice and social good.

Research at Cambridge: contemporary values and practices of social good and society within Judaism, Islam, and Christianity.

Research Associates *Research Associates are usually appointed by invitation only.*



Dr Jeremy Henzell-Thomas

From 2000–2010, Dr. Jeremy Henzell-Thomas was the Founding Executive Director of the Book Foundation, a registered UK charity which works with partner institutions in the UK and the USA to improve understanding of Islam in the West. He was the first Chair of the Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR), and is currently a member of the Executive Committee of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS UK) and a member of the Advisory Board of the Prince Alwaleed Centre for the Study of Islam in the Contemporary World at the University of Edinburgh. A Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, he speaks and writes widely on the themes of education, culture, society and spirituality, having written regular reflections over the years for *Islamica* and *emel* magazines, and more recently for the Credo column in *The Times*. Jeremy's current research interests include Islam and pluralism, inter-cultural and holistic education, and shared values. A former lecturer in Applied Linguistics at the University of Edinburgh, he is also engaged in research which applies his academic specialism of psycholinguistics to contemporary issues affecting public perception of Islam and Muslims.



Dr Abdullah Baabood

Dr Abdullah Baabood's research interests focus on the states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), primarily their economic, social and political development and their external relations. He has published widely on these topics. Abdullah is a graduate in Business and Economics and holds a master's degree in Business Administration (MBA), a master's in International Relations (MA), and a PhD from the University of Cambridge. He is also a member of several academic and professional bodies.



Dr Khaled Hroub

Dr Khaled Hroub's areas of research include the contemporary history and politics of the Middle East with a focus on Islamism and its political manifestations; the socio-political and cultural impact of the 'new' media in the Arab world; the role of public intellectuals; and the Arab novel. He has published widely on Hamas and political Islam. Currently he is writing a book critique of the Arab renaissance project. He also publishes weekly articles in leading Arab and world media.



Dr Yonatan Mendel

Dr Yonatan Mendel completed his doctoral studies in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at Cambridge University. His thesis examined the history of Arabic studies in Jewish schools in Palestine/Israel from 1935 to 1985, and focused on the politicisation and securitisation of the language. His research deals with topics such as language policy and war, security considerations and language planning, and the interrelationship between political conflict and foreign language studies in Israel/Palestine. His book, *The Creation of Israeli-Arabic: The Political History and Securitisation of Arabic Language Studies in Israeli-Jewish Society*, will be published in 2014 (Palgrave Macmillan). Mendel is a regular contributor to the *London Review of Books* and has published widely on Israeli society and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in English, Arabic and Hebrew.



Dr Chaoqun Lian

Dr Chaoqun Lian is an assistant professor in Arabic Studies at Peking University, China. He received a BA and a MA in Arabic Studies from Peking University and completed his PhD in Middle Eastern Studies at University of Cambridge. His research focuses on language symbolism in the social world as is revealed in Arabic language planning and language policy (LPLP) and Arabic lexicography from the nineteenth century onwards. He is currently working on a book project that examines the phenomenon of Arabic language academies in the context of Arab nationalism(s) and peripherality of the Arabs in the modern world-system. Chaoqun is also planning to study metaphor and language ideology in the discourse of Arabic LPLP and to compare Arabic and Chinese LPLPs in relation to the notion of 'Oriental bond'. He contributes to the Chinese and Arabic press regularly on political and cultural themes.



Dr Hawraa Al-Hassan

Dr Hawraa Al-Hassan is an associate fellow of the Higher Education Academy, having taught Arabic and modern history of the Middle East at the University of Cambridge. Hawraa completed her PhD in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Cambridge and gained an MA in Comparative Literature at University College London. She is interested in the cultural history of the Arab world in so far as it relates to totalitarianism, propaganda and nationalism. Hawraa's research focuses on interdisciplinary approaches to the Arab novel as a conduit of group identities. Her current project explores Iraqi Ba'thist involvement in the production of literary and media discourses on gender and nation, whilst considering the potential of resistive 'counter-public' spaces, be they Islamic or secular.

Visiting Scholars 2015/16

Auhoud Al Bulushi, Women in Oman: Financial and Political Empowerment, Social Schizophrenia and an Identity Dilemma

Essam Ayyad, Appraising Medieval Arabic Accounts of Early Mosques

Lihanna Borhan, Becoming Muslims: Learning and Teaching of Islam

Ma Zhan Ming, Studies on Aibu Mansur Al-Maturidi's Theological Thoughts

Rike Sinder, Contingency in *uṣūl al-fiqh*. On Aristotelian Equity in Islamic Jurisprudence



Andrew



PARTNERS



Partners

Gulf Research Centre-Cambridge (GRC-C)

The Gulf Research Centre Cambridge (GRC-C) is the Gulf Research Centre office in Cambridge, UK. GRC-C is a registered UK Charity, cooperating closely with the Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge. The prime directive of GRC-C is to advance education and research on political, economic, social and security issues and other matters relating to member countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council and other countries of the Gulf region including Iran, Iraq and Yemen.

The Gulf Research Centre Cambridge organises the annual Gulf Research Meeting (GRM) which seeks to provide an academic environment to foster Gulf studies and promote scholarly exchanges

among scholars working on/or having familiarity with the Gulf region. GRM identifies subjects of importance to the Gulf region, stimulates research in these subjects, and provides a forum for broad dissemination of the research results. Motivated by the same objectives underlying the Gulf Research Meeting, GRC-C also serves as a platform for other events throughout the year and provides a focal point for students dedicated to carrying out and promoting critical research related to the Gulf.

The Gulf Research Centre Cambridge is a registered charity organization under the Charity Commission for England and Wales and can therefore receive tax deductible donations



Matt Brown

The Islamic Manuscript Association (TIMA)

The Islamic Manuscript Association (TIMA) is an international non-profit organisation dedicated to protecting Islamic manuscript collections and supporting those who work with them. It was formed in response to the urgent need to address the poor preservation and inaccessibility of many Islamic manuscript collections around the world.

The Islamic Manuscript Association:

- Articulates standards and guidelines for best practice in cataloguing, conservation, digitisation and academic publishing so that Islamic manuscript collections may be made more accessible and preserved for posterity.
- Promotes the highest ethical and professional standards in the care and management of Islamic manuscript collections.
- Promotes excellence in scholarship on Islamic manuscripts, particularly Islamic codicology and disciplines related to the care and management of Islamic manuscript collections.
- Provides a platform for presenting scholarship on Islamic manuscripts, particularly Islamic codicology and disciplines related to the care and management of Islamic manuscript collections, at its annual conference at the University of Cambridge.

- Provides a wide range of online resources about manuscripts and their care.
- Awards grants to support the care of Islamic manuscript collections and advance scholarship on Islamic manuscripts.
- Organises regular training workshops in cataloguing, conservation, digitisation and academic publishing as well as an annual workshop on Islamic codicology in cooperation with Cambridge University Library.
- Facilitates dialogue between individuals with scholarly and professional interests in Islamic manuscripts and institutions holding collections of Islamic manuscripts.

TIMA includes among its members libraries and museums possessing collections of Islamic manuscripts as well as individuals with scholarly and professional interests in Islamic manuscripts. Over 150 persons from 25 different countries are members. Members have the right to vote, hold office, apply for grants and receive members' rates for the annual conference and training workshops.

TIMA is an affiliated project of the Centre of Islamic Studies and is one of the principal projects of the Thesaurus Islamicus Foundation.



CENTRE STAFF 2015/16

Director



Professor Yasir Suleiman, CBE, FRSE, FRCPE

Professor Yasir Suleiman is the Director of the Centre of Islamic Studies, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Sa'id Professor of Modern Arabic Studies, and a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge. His research covers the cultural politics of the Middle East with special focus on identity, conflict, diaspora studies and modernisation in so far as these issues relate to language, modern Arabic literature, translation and memory. He also conducts research in Arabic grammatical theory and the Arabic intellectual tradition in the pre-modern period. Professor Suleiman is Chair of the Panel of Judges, British-Kuwaiti Friendship Society Book Prize in Middle Eastern Studies. In 2013 Professor Suleiman was elected as Chairman of the International Prize of Arabic Fiction (IPAF) popularly known in the Arabic-speaking world as the 'Arabic Booker'. He serves as Trustee on the Boards of the following organisations: Arab-British Chamber Charitable Foundation, Banipal Trust for Arab Literature and is Trustee of the Gulf Research Centre-Cambridge. He is also Board Member of the Islamic Manuscript Association, Chair of the Centre for the Study of the International Relations of the Middle East and North Africa (CIRMENA), Cambridge and Member of the Advisory Board of Our Shared Future, a joint project of the British Council, USA and Carnegie Foundation. He is a member of the editorial boards of a number of journals and book series. In October 2013 Professor Suleiman was made Ambassador of the University of Sarajevo for his outstanding contribution to promoting the University internationally.

Professor Suleiman is Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE), a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and formerly Head of the Department of Middle Eastern Studies, the University of Cambridge.

In recognition of his outstanding contribution in promoting the University of Sarajevo's international reputation, Professor Yasir Suleiman, Director of the HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge, was conferred with the Ambassador of the University award in the UNSA Rectorate premises on Wednesday, 9 October 2013.

Professor Suleiman's publications include:

Arabic in the Fray: Language Ideology and Cultural Politics, 2013
Arabic, Self and Identity: A Study in Conflict and Displacement, 2011
Living Islamic History: Studies in Honour of Professor Carole Hillenbrand (ed.), 2010
Literature and Nation in the Middle East (ed.), 2006

A War of Words: Language and Conflict in the Middle East, 2004
The Arabic Language and National Identity: A Study in Ideology, 2003
The Arabic Grammatical Tradition: A Study in Tal'liil, 1999
Language and Society in the Middle East and North Africa (ed.), 1999
Arabic Grammar and Linguistics (ed.), 1998
Language and Identity in the Middle East and North Africa (ed.), 1996
Arabic Sociolinguistics: Issues and Perspectives (ed.), 1994

Reports:

Contextualising Islam in Britain II (with J. Henzell-Thomas), 2012
'Reforms in Islamic Education' (with P. Anderson and C. Tan), 2011
'Language, Conflict and Security' (with Y. Mendel), 2010
'Contextualising Islam in Britain: Exploratory Perspectives'
(with P. Anderson), 2009
'Arabic on Campus and beyond' (with P. Anderson), 2008
'Conducting Fieldwork in the Middle East' (with P. Anderson), 2007
'Islam on Campus: Teaching Islamic Studies at Higher Education
Institutions in the UK' (with A. Shihadeh), 2007

Assistant Director



Dr Paul Anderson

Dr Paul Anderson is the Assistant Director of the Centre of Islamic Studies and the Prince Alwaleed Lecturer in the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Cambridge. He gained his PhD in social anthropology at the University of Edinburgh and his BA(Hons) in Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Oxford.

Research Interests: social and political anthropology of the Arab world (especially Syria), particularly traders, markets and trust relations.

Courses:

Dr Anderson teaches courses on the anthropology of the Middle East, the anthropology of Islam and on modern Islamic thought in the Arab world, combining an anthropological approach with a close study of modern Islamic texts in Arabic.

Dr Anderson's research publications include:

- 2013 'The Politics of Scorn in Syria and the Agency of Narrated Involvement', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. 19(3): 463–481)
- 2013 'Aleppo's Yarn Market: Trust and Speculation in a Time of Economic Transformation', in Jean-Claude David, Thierry Boissière (éd.), *Alep et ses territoires. Fabrique et politique d'une ville, 1868 – 2011*, Beyrouth, Presses de l'Ifpo, 2013.

- 2013 Trust and uncertainty in Syrian commerce: the success and failure of a businessman in Aleppo, 1980s–2009, with T.Boissiere, in Jean-Claude David, Thierry Boissière (éd.), *Alep et ses territoires. Fabrique et politique d'une ville, 1868 – 2011*, Beyrouth, Presses de l'Ifpo, 2013.
- 2013 Leaving room for failure: optimism in the thought of Mohamed Talbi, in "Cambridge in Morocco". Rabat: Editions et Impression Bouregreg
- 2011 'The Piety of the Gift': Selfhood and Sociality in the Egyptian Mosque Movement', *Anthropological Theory* 11(1):1–19.

Conference and Seminar Papers:

- 2016 Order and Disorder: The Politics of Everyday Life among Traders in Pre-Conflict Aleppo. European University Institute, April.
- 2016 Living in an Uncivil State? Perspectives on Citizenship in Pre-Conflict Aleppo. Alwaleed Centres Meeting, University of Cambridge, May
- 2015 "We come here and cry!" Emotion, authenticity and urban identity in pre-conflict Aleppo. Heritage Seminar Group, University of Cambridge, November.
- 2015 "Horizontal Genealogies": Mercantile Conceptions of Social Order in Pre-Conflict Aleppo. University of Copenhagen, June.
- 2015 Litter: Contesting the Space for Citizenship in pre-revolutionary Syria and Egypt. University of Kaunas, May
- 2015 Structures of Incivility: the Frustration of Citizenship and the National Subject in Bashar al-Asad's Syria. Stanford University, April.
- 2015 Struggling to be Civil. Activism and Lament in Bashar al-Asad's Syria. Queens University, Belfast. March.
- 2015 Mapping Aleppo: Cultural Geographies before the Current Conflict. Darwin College Seminar Series, University of Cambridge, January.
- 2014 The Plenitude of Presence: Techniques and Recognitions of Value in a Syrian Market. Annual Meeting of the Association of Social Anthropologists, June
- 2014 Arenas of Value: Recognition and the Politics of Acknowledgement in Aleppo in 2009. Cambridge University Social Anthropology Society, March
- 2014 Transacting Presence: Theories of Value and Practices of Remembrance among Syrian Traders in Aleppo. Department of Anthropology, University of Sussex, February
- 2013 'Accounting for Morality: Concepts of Moral Personhood among Syrian Traders in Aleppo in 2009', public lecture, University of al-Akhawayn, Ifrane, Morocco, October
- 2013 'The politics of scorn in Syria', Department of Anthropology and Middle Eastern Studies, University of Manchester, February.
- 2012 'Economies of Desire: Justifying and Deriding State Intervention in Syria', Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, November.

- 2012 'Reflecting Objects and Reflexive Subjects: Financial Collapse and Self-Reproach in Syria', Senior Seminar, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh, January.
- 2012 'Laughter and Reflexivity: Avoiding Cynicism in Syria', Senior Seminar, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge, January.
- 2012 'Leaving Room for Failure: Optimism in the Thought of Mohamed Talbi', Universities of Casablanca, Fes and Rabat, April.
- 2011 'Between Civility and Legality: Why did Syrian Popular Investment Schemes Collapse in the 1990s?', Middle East Studies Association, Washington DC, December.
- 2011 'Trust in a 'Transitioning' Economy: Aleppo's 'Money Collectors'', British Society of Middle East Studies Annual Meeting, University of Exeter, June.
- 2011 'Explaining Extraordinary Events in Syria: The Rise and Fall of Aleppo's Financial Entrepreneurs', University of Sarajevo, May.
- 2010 'Invisible Yarn: An Ethnography of Aleppo's 'Stock Market'', London School of Economics, South West Asia and North Africa Seminar Series, June.

Reports:

- 2016 *Muslims in the UK and Europe II* (with Y. Suleiman)
- 2011 *Reforms in Islamic Education* (with Y. Suleiman and C. Tan)
- 2009 *Contextualising Islam in Britain* (with Y. Suleiman)
- 2008 *Arabic on Campus and Beyond* (with Y. Suleiman)
- 2007 *Conducting Fieldwork in the Middle East* (with Y. Suleiman)

Teaching and Outreach Associate



Shahla Suleiman

Shahla Awad Suleiman (BSc, GradDipEd, MSc) is the Teaching and Outreach Associate at the Centre of Islamic Studies. She taught Arabic and coordinated Arabic language teaching at the Department of Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Edinburgh and taught at the Department of Middle Eastern Studies at University of Cambridge. She worked as Director and Project Manager of an educational consultancy that undertook extensive work in various Arabic language teaching reform initiatives in the Middle East. She was Project Manager of the Centre's major project 'Narratives of Conversion to Islam in Britain'. Shahla is interested conversion to Islam in Britain and the place of Arabic language among non-Arab Muslims. She is the Teacher and Organiser of Centre of Islamic Studies Arabic Language Programme. She also runs the Centre's Outreach Programme including School Outreach.

Research Associate



Julian Hargreaves

In 2015–16, Julian Hargreaves was a Research Associate at the Centre of Islamic Studies. His research interests include British Muslim communities, social science and statistics, as well as issues around diversity and equality. He holds a BA (Hons) in Historical Studies from Manchester Metropolitan University and a Masters (Distinction) in Criminology from Lancaster University where he is currently completing a PhD thesis on the concept of Islamophobia. Previously he worked with both musicians and lawyers. His present research for the Centre of Islamic Studies focuses on the unreported 'everyday' hate crimes suffered by British Muslims.

Research Interests:

- Hate crime
- British Muslim communities
- Evidence-based research
- Quantitative and qualitative research methods

Administrator



Ms Louise Beazor

In 2015–16, Louise Beazor was the Administrator of the Centre of Islamic Studies. She gained her MA (distinction) in Middle Eastern Studies at SOAS and her BA (Hons) in Religion in the Contemporary World at King's College, London. Louise has experience in public policy and international relations following brief roles at the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce and YouGov.

Committee of Management 2015–2016

Professor Martin Millett (Chair of Management Committee)

Professor Yasir Suleiman CBE (Director)

Professor Charles Melville

Professor David Abulafia

Dr Christine van Ruymbeke

Ms Abir Kaki

Ms Amal Algrafi

Ms Mona Shabab





PRINCE ALWALEED BIN TALAL CENTRE OF ISLAMIC STUDIES

University of Cambridge / Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies / Sidgwick Avenue / Cambridge, CB3 9DA

Web: www.cis.cam.ac.uk Tel: +44(0)1223 335103 Fax: +44(0)1223 335110 Email: cis@cis.cam.ac.uk