



**BRAIS 2015**  
**THE SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES**  
**London, 13–15 April 2015**

**Day 1: Monday, 13 April**

9.00–9.30, Registration and refreshments

9.30–9.45, Welcome and opening remarks (Beveridge Hall)

**9.45–11.00: SESSION 1. Qur’anic Studies (Plenary)**

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Shuruq Naguib (University of Lancaster)*

Muhammad Abdel Haleem (SOAS), *The Qur’an in English in the age of BRAIS*

Andrew Rippin (University of Victoria), *The reception of scholarship on the Qur’an in the Muslim world: issues and prospects*

11.00–11.30, *Refreshments*

## 11.30–13.00: SESSION 2. SIX PARALLEL PANELS

### Panel 1: Text-Critical Approaches in Qur'anic Studies

Room: Bedford, Chair: Mariana Klar (SOAS)

Mariana Klar (SOAS), *Beyond a Form-Critical Surat al-Kahf*

Recent Qur'anic scholarship has demonstrated a growing awareness of text critical approaches, from early explorations into form criticism to more recent applications of Semitic ring theory and the tools of discourse analysis. Surat al-Kahf has accordingly been divided and re-divided at various junctures, and a number of unifying themes have been suggested in order to justify the sura's progression through its narrative blocks. The proposed paper will focus on the hinge passages at Q. 18:7-8, Q. 18:27-31, Q. 18:56-9 and Q. 18:99-102. These have historically been viewed either as independent units, as part of the preceding textual block, or indeed as attached to the following narrative material. James Muilenburg, in his programmatic 1969 essay 'Form Criticism and Beyond', highlights the broad disagreement between commentators on the limits and scope of a literary unit within Biblical texts. He states that 'more often than not, no defence is offered for the isolation of the pericope. It has even been averred that it does not really matter'; as he goes on to comment, however, 'on the contrary, it seems ... to be of considerable consequence' [Muilenburg 1969:9]. Following Muilenburg, I would like to argue that insufficient attention has been paid to the limits of the text units that make up Surat al-Kahf, and reinvestigate the evidence for their inclusion in specific narrative blocks. More specifically, I would propose that the sura be divided along putative seams at Q. 18:9, Q. 18:27, Q. 18:56 and Q. 18:103, and assert that it presents a complex argument against the exalted status of a number of figures and communities.

Nicolai Sinai (University of Oxford), *Editorial Expansion and Literary Growth in the Medinan Suras*

Like the Hebrew Bible, the Qur'anic corpus exhibits manifold cases of scriptural self-interpretation, meaning that an earlier sura or passage is clarified, complemented, or re-interpreted by later proclamations. One way in which this is achieved is through later expansions of existing compositions. While there is a considerable degree of consensus on the identification of secondary additions to the early Meccan suras, where they stand out by dint of sudden surges in verse length as well as distinctive terminology and thematic concerns, such interpretive expansions are considerably more inconspicuous in the Medinan suras. Nevertheless, on the basis of a summary analysis of the introductory passages of suras 5 and 9 I shall argue that the phenomenon exists in the Medinan layer of the Qur'an as well. Publications by Cuypers, Farrin, and Ernst have insisted on the considerable degree of literary coherence exhibited by the long Medinan suras, which might well be taken to indicate unitary composition "in one go". Against such a conclusion, my findings

preliminarily suggest that these texts may have had a more complicated redactional history and could in part be products of extended processes of literary growth (which I can well envision as having taken place, or at least as having commenced, during the lifetime of Muhammad). This stance unites me with Karl-Friedrich Pohlmann's recent emphasis on the need for a thorough scrutiny of the Qur'an in general, and of the Medinan suras in particular, for redactional seams and indications of secondary editorial revision, although I am sceptical about his particular manner of carrying out such an investigation.

Holger Zellentin (University of Nottingham), *Secondary Synchronicity as Literary Device*

The Qur'an's repetitions of specific words, expressions, and sentences create internal cross-references within the entirety of the text, within individual suras, and within individual literary units within them. For the audience, the appreciation of the Qur'an's repetitions in changing contexts turns every hearing of the Qur'an into a rehearing, and every reading into a rereading. While internal repetitions create structure, repetitions throughout the Qur'an lead the audience to perceive a largely unchanging stasis of divine truth. In their totality, the repetitions inscribe a "secondary" synchronicity into the Qur'an's literary form—a process that began in the time when its verses were first uttered and that culminated when it was redacted in its current form. At the example of a literary analysis of Surat Ya Sin, this paper seeks to trace a few threads of the vast web of meaning that the Qur'an creates within the sura's central simile (Q. 36:13-30), within Surat Ya Sin as a whole, and within the entirety of the Qur'an. I seek to explore three interrelated issues: the nature of the Qur'an's secondary synchronicity; the tension resulting from the ways in which this synchronicity overwrites the Qur'an's historical diachronicity; and the possible implications of this overwriting for our understanding of the composition and redaction history of the Qur'an.

## **Panel 2: Islamic Law and Human Rights**

*Room: Bloomsbury, Chair: Mohammad Mesbahi (The Islamic College)*

Mohammad Mesbahi (The Islamic College), *Muslim family law: The rights of the wife, in light of International human rights* (co-authored by Islam Uddin)

Muslim family law represents that aspect of the Sharia (Islamic law) which governs areas such as marriage, divorce, maintenance, child custody and inheritance. There is an ongoing debate on whether Muslim Family Law can be reformed to reflect the condition of society today, and in accordance with the standards of international human rights. Traditionalists argue that these social laws do not change over time and space, i.e. are immutable, and thus, any changes in their application would conflict with religious text. Conversely reformists/modernists argue that such laws are mutable, and must reform to reflect the social, economic and political changes in

society. Some notable reformists within the past century are Muhammad Abduh, Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Fazlur Rahman. The global struggle for women's equality and social justice in the past century is a theme that is well documented in legal history, and their rights to equality is reinforced by the preambles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 (UDHR) and the articles contained within the declaration. Thus, according to International law women can expect equality in the pursuit of education, employment and politics. Furthermore, 'the West' has seen many reforms in family law to ensure that there is also equality in family life for women. This paper will examine the key premises proposed by Islamic reformists in the past, and argue that further reforms to 'Muslim Family Law' are necessary in a world fast moving towards gender equality and social justice, in light of universal human rights.

Nehad Khanfar (The Islamic College), *A Comparative Analysis of the Concept of Citizenship under Al-Madinah Constitution*

In the democratic states the constitution gives equal rights to all citizens. All citizens are equally treated according to the rule of law. This is based on the concept of the citizenship which was developed and flourished gradually within the Western Democracy. The basic element of the concept of citizenship is built mutually on the system of rights and duties between the state and its citizens. This paper will examine whether the concept of citizenship as such was founded in Al-Madinah constitution, and to what extent that contributed to establish the political entity of the Islamic state. This will be assessed by comparatively analysing the articles and the terms of the constitution with some modern constitutional texts. It aims to comparatively analyse the rights and duties given in Al-Madinah constitution with some other modern constitution. It will mainly focus on the religious rights, economic and financial rights, and the equality under the rule of law. In addition, the paper will analytically discuss some articles related the human rights system compared to some other modern constitution.

Mahboubeh Sadeghinia (The Islamic College), *A Conceptual Analysis towards Comprehensive Human Security: An Islamic Approach*

A large amount of global issues is currently devoted to the Islamic political extremism and the means of dealing with this threatening phenomenon by both Western and Islamic countries. The major gap in this regard is lack of proper attention to roots causes of vicious ideologies that justify organised violence, but it is, only to global counterterrorism efforts; a phenomenon that has received the most attention since 9/11. Assuming the Islamic extremism as an effect, this paper aims to examine causes of such global crisis from human rights (HR) perspective. The hypothesis is that despite some conceptual differences between the Islamic and Western HR norms, disagreements with respect to HR criteria are basically found in details rather than fundamental norms. However, it is assumed that similar political approach of the Islamic and Western states to HR has encouraged Islamic radicalism worldwide. Drawing upon the relationship between HR, politics and radicalism this study is

aiming to provide a conceptual analysis on options of confronting Islamic radicalism from both political and ideological aspects. To this end, it is aimed to: 1) emphasis on a number of fundamental values essential to international relations – i.e. some shared objective criteria that facilitate independent judgment on ethics, beliefs and behaviour applicable to all and the rule of law and 2) provide a theoretical and conceptual discourse that enables a comparative study of HR in Islamic Law and secular communities, primarily in the West.

Haider Al Khateeb (Middlesex University), *The abuse of Islamic Caliphate concept in causing humanitarian crises by violent extremism*

The rise of the 'Islamic State Caliphate' has brought with it many contentious arguments to an array of disciplines, such as political, economic, religious and ethical issues. The speed in which this group had spread through various geographical locations mainly Syria and Iraq demanded a more scrutinising look at how these advances materialised at such a short time. This paper will look at the ethical (or lack of) approach implemented by IS aided in the spread of this group. The sheer violation of human rights had not been witnessed, documented or exposed as propaganda material to cause mass hysteria and displacement across cities, towns and villages. The rise of IS has brought with it a documented graphical images of unqualified human rights violation that are broadcasted on the internet in order to deliver the powerful message of complete cruelty to those who oppose their ideological belief. Initially by looking at this ideological belief, the paper assesses if it justifies these practices and whether there are any grounds for carrying out such violations in the Islamic literature. Moreover, the paper critically will review the precedence of such violence in the Islamic Caliphate history. It should be noted that we will be relying on accessible reports by United Nations, NGO's and other qualifying bodies to document IS human rights violations.

### **Panel 3: Adab and Sufi Ethics in the Formative Period**

*Room: Gordon, Chair: Stephen Burge (Institute of Ismaili Studies)*

Saeko Yazaki (University of Glasgow): *Morality in early Sufi literature: the Treatise of al-Qushayri and the Revelation of the Hidden by Hujwīrī*

Adab plays a significant role in Sufism. Humble and appropriate conduct is closely linked to spiritual awareness, as humility stems from the full recognition of God as the only perfect existence. Sufi tradition requires both internal and external adab at every mystical step, which eventually leads up to the annihilation of the lower self and realisation of the Divine reality. Thus the code of behaviour found in early Sufi texts covers both individual and spiritual manners, and social interactions. This paper explores two classical guidebooks of the eleventh century: *Risālat al-Qushayriyya* ("The Treatise of al-Qushayrī") by al-Qushayrī, one of the most popular Sufi manuals, and *Kashf al-maḥjūb* ("The Revelation of the Hidden") by Hujwīrī, the

earliest extant Persian treatise on Sufism, focusing on their discussion of ethical conduct as regards their understanding of the harmonious relations between inner and outer adab. In these works, mannered behaviour is conceived of as an acquired habit, and their moral concerns are not specifically mystical or other-worldly, nor exclusively Sufi or even Islamic. This paper attempts to analyse the way in which social ethical conduct and mystical concerns are interrelated in these two influential works on Sufism.

Annabel Keeler (University of Cambridge): *Adab versus ādāb in the discourse of Sarrāj and Sulamī*

Among the seminal works of Sufism which appeared between the late 4th/10th and late 5th/11th centuries are two works on Sufi ādāb composed by Abū ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-Sulamī (d. 412/1021), namely his *Jawāmi‘ ādāb al-ṣūfiyya* (‘Collection of Sufi Rules of Conduct’) and *Ādāb al-ṣuḥba wa ḥusn al-‘ishra* (‘The ādāb of [Spiritual] Association and Good Companionship’). These treatises no doubt helped to establish not only the concept of a ‘Sufi code of conduct’, but also a genre of works on the subject. Before Sulamī, Abū Naṣr al-Sarrāj (d. 378/998) had devoted a section of his *Kitāb al-Luma‘ fī-l-taṣawwuf* to the subject of Sufi ādāb, amounting to some twenty-four chapters. Although Sarrāj and Sulamī both emphasise ādāb (in the plural), laying out the inner attitudes and modes of conduct that they understood as being proper to Sufism, their discussions include many sayings of early mystics that speak of adab in the singular. This paper will explore the significance of some of these early Sufi sayings about adab (singular), and their relevance within the context of Sulamī’s and Sarrāj’s attempts to define the ādāb (plural) of Sufism.

Harith Ramli (Cambridge Muslim College): *Sufi Adab and the Sunna: Balancing Individual Virtue and Social order in the Qūt al-qulūb*

The *Qūt al-qulūb* of Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī (d. 386/996) is one of the major texts of classical Sufism, often placed in the genre of so-called Sufi ‘manuals’ that appeared in the fourth/tenth century, alongside al-Sarrāj’s *al-Luma‘* and Kalabādhī’s *al-Ta‘arruf*. But while the *Luma‘* and the *Ta‘arruf* focus on the articulation of a specialised technical language and code of conduct for Sufis, parts of the *Qūt* address the concerns of a wider audience sympathetic to traditionalist piety and concerned with moral decline in Muslim society. Furthermore, it often goes beyond the usual list of early ascetic and Sufi authorities, drawing on a wide range of figures associated with traditionalism such as Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 241/855). Focusing on discussions related to the ethics of religious obligations and *makāsib* (earning a livelihood), and drawing comparisons with other contemporary Sufi works and the literature of the emerging Ḥanbalī tradition, the paper explores how the *Qūt* tries to strike a balance between the cultivation of individual virtue and maintaining social order.

#### **Panel 4: *‘Ilm wa-Ta‘allum: Madrasas, Dialectics, and Mysticism in the 13th-16th Centuries***

*Room: Woburn A, Chair: Judith Pfeiffer (University of Oxford)*

Talal Al-Azem (University of Oxford), *The Education of an Historian of Education: ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Nu‘aymī (d. 927/1521)*

The term ‘al-‘ulūm al-āliyya’—medieval Islamdom’s indigenous conceptualisation of a set of propaedeutic disciplines—seems to first appear in the fourteenth-century Muqaddima of Ibn Khaldūn. There, the North African historian and social theorist defines them as disciplines which serve as mere instruments for the learning of other sciences. The term is then increasingly found scattered in the biographical dictionaries of the 1400s; by the sixteenth century, it has become an organising concept in works presenting schemas of knowledge, a trend which continues into the early modern period. This paper seeks to demonstrate that an idea of propaedeutics pre-dated the coining of the term in the 1300s, and that this concept informed the structure and contents of a new generation of textbooks reflecting a ‘scholastic turn’. These textbooks—with their focus on first principles, self-reflexivity, and ‘interdisciplinarity’—themselves engendered new scholarly traditions, as well as harsh criticism from others who saw in these textbooks a deleterious effect on pedagogy. Based upon select passages from the work of the grammarian and jurist Ibn al-Ḥājj (d. 1249), the paper will assess how the scholasticisation of traditional disciplines occurred in late medieval textbooks, and the subsequent effect of this turn on conceptions of education.

Walter Young (University of Oxford), *Models for Argument Analysis: Scripting al-Samarqandī’s Risāla fī Ādāb al-Baḥth*

The reception of the *Risāla fī Ādāb al-Baḥth* of Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Ashraf al-Samarqandī (d.702/1302) brought a synthesizing and universalizing impetus to variant, longstanding traditions of Islamic dialectical theory (*jadāl/munāẓara*). A newly-styled discipline—the *Ādāb al-Baḥth wa’l-Munāẓara* (Proper Guidelines of Dialectical Investigation and Debate)—offered a more streamlined, general method; it proved quickly popular, inspired primary works and commentaries from major luminaries, and eventually became a staple of madrasa education from Nile-to-Oxus, Balkans-to-Bengal. The import of the discipline is indisputable; but the implications of its teaching and study, theoretical elaboration, and—presumably—practical application, remain largely unexplored. The formative dynamic of the *Ādāb al-Baḥth*, in other words, with regard to post-Samarqandian argumentation and intellectual trends, has not been assessed. The present paper aims to initiate this larger project by introducing the discipline’s core technical vocabulary, and providing a heuristic impression of how, in practice, a disputation governed by the *ādāb al-baḥth* should appear. To this end, al-Samarqandī’s own demonstrative problem-cases (*masā’il*) will be scripted in sequence, and each dialectical move analysed in blow-by-blow accounts. Thus rendered, his *masā’il* are more than illustrations of streamlined

munāzara-theory—they are models for assessing the character of post-Samarqandian argument styles.

Giovanni Martini (University of Oxford), 'Alā' al-Dawla al-Simnānī's 'Hybrid-Structure': Promoting the Preeminence of the Sufi Mode of Knowledge

'Alā' al-Dawla al-Simnānī (d. 1336) was a prominent figure of the political and intellectual landscape of the Ilkhanid era. Belonging to a patrician family of Persian viziers, until the age of 24 he grew up and lived in the royal ordu and was a close friend of Arġūn Khān. Nevertheless, after a visionary experience (1284), Simnānī's lifestyle would completely change. Leaving the royal court he devoted all his life to Sufism, in both its private and social aspects. Simnānī in fact was at the same time devoted to long periods of seclusion and to the training of disciples, to the edification and management of an important khāniqāh and to writing texts in Arabic and Persian to different addressees, both on doctrinal and practical issues. Finally, even after his conversion, and from his new position, Simnānī did not renounce occasional involvement in and interaction with the political life of the time. The aim of this paper is to show how Simnānī tried to present the Sufi way (and the intuitive mode of knowledge proper to it) as the crowning element of the 'Islamic edifice'. Four main treatises will be surveyed which show a 'hybrid' structure: despite formally introducing and discussing different subjects, i.e. theology, religious orthopraxis, philosophy and ḥadīth, all conclude in promoting the way of the mystic. This intellectual operation should be seen not only as a statement of supremacy of a mode of knowledge, but also for its implications in the social and political sphere. One of Simnānī's main concerns was the deterioration of the Sunni society of the Ilkhanate because of the rule of 'unbeliever kings' and a new rise of Shī'ī Islam. Being a fervent Sufi it was absolutely natural for him to recognize in taṣawwuf the best means to safeguard and reinforce Iranian Sunni society against contemporary, divergent tendencies.

## **Panel 5: Education, Violent Extremism and Criticality**

*Room: Woburn B, Chair: Farid Panjwani (CREME)*

Mike Diboll (Institute of Education, UCL), *ISISes of the Imagination: Multiple Ontologies for the ISIS Phenomenon, and the ISIS of False Consciousness*

Using a 'multiple ontologies' approach, this paper seeks to problematize the notion of a unified, discrete entity called 'ISIS'. The paper will review Middle East Studies perspectives that see ISIS variously as a development of the post-2003 'Sunni insurgency', as 'neo-Ikhwan', as a post-2011 destabilization force comparable to the 1980s Contras in Central America, and as a 'brand' identity that provides a unified front a disparate array of local groups with divergent agendas. Deploying an Andersonian understanding of 'imagination', the paper will then explore the idea of 'ISISes of the imagination', and the relationship of these with messy military, political

and sectarian realities on the ground in the destabilized Arab north. The paper will posit multiple 'ISISes' of the imagination, the ISIS of mass media imagining, the ISIS of security state imagining, the imagined ISIS of Islamophobic discourse, and the ISIS of disaffected false consciousness. The paper will problematize apparent attraction of the ISIS phenomenon for a significant number of Muslim British youth and young adults in the UK, engaging critically with the romanticization of takfeeri 'jihad' as an anti-globalization and anti-neoliberalization force, arguing for a renewed emphasis on critical thinking skills in British education to counter such forms of mystification.

Reza Gholami (Middlesex University), *Diasporic Education and 'Democratic Energy': a Critical Exploration of 'Muslim Schools' and 'Supplementary' Education in the UK*

Drawing upon ongoing research on so-called 'supplementary' schools within Iranian and Turkish diasporas in the UK, this paper critiques the notion of 'Muslim Schools' – a concept which regularly appears in the media, most often alongside terms such as 'extremism' and 'terrorism'. I argue that such representations present 'Muslim' and 'Islam' as absolute social categories implying a monolithic definition of Islam and no room for critical dialogue. However, there are many educational models within communities from Muslim backgrounds which reflect and accommodate their true internal diversity and are predicated upon ongoing critical debate and engagement with various secular and non-secular positions (including vernacular ones). I also argue that given their approach to pedagogy and curriculum design, as well as the national, trans-national and increasingly trans-communal nature of their connections, these schools occupy unique positions which make them important sites for the development of critical, cosmopolitan and 'alternative' models/expressions of citizenship. Theoretically, therefore, it can be useful to conceptualize their educational models as 'diasporic' education.

Farid Panjwani (CREME), *Extremism and ethics: an exploration of meta-ethical theory of Muslim extremism*

The paper explores the underlying meta-ethical theory of Muslim extremism. Groups such as the Taliban, al-Qaida and the ISIS are sometimes labelled as mad, lunatics, drugged – all the terms implying that their acts defy any rational explanation. In this paper I will propose that contrary to the common portrayals, religious extremism works with a meta-theory of ethics, Divine command theory, which though different from that held by most people swayed by modern sensibilities goes back centuries. Plato's dialogue Euthyphro discusses the question, whether the gods love the good because it is the good, or whether the good is good only because it is loved by the gods. The latter, in its refined form, came to be called the Divine command theory – the idea that what is ethical is determined by God's command. The position was widely accepted in Muslim history and had allegiance of various theological schools such as Asharism and of men such as Ibn Hazm. While most Muslims have come to re-imagine their moral theory in modern times and generally read contemporary

moral positions in the sacred texts, one characteristic of extremism is its insistence on the Divine command theory. It will be argued that understanding extremism's meta-ethical theory is a necessary element in making sense of its underlying worldview.

## **Panel 6: Islamic Branding: global perspectives, local consumptionscapes**

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Reina Lewis (London College of Fashion)*

Nazli Alimen (London College of Fashion), *Islamic Sub-Markets and Their Consumers: Faith-Inspired Communities in Turkey*

The eligibility of an Islamic product or service for pious consumers does not solely depend on its conformity with the Islamic rules. Several other factors, such as personal and communal values and ideologies, have an impact on Islamic consumption. To investigate these factors, this paper focuses on three faith-inspired communities widespread in Turkey, namely the Gülen, Suleymanlı, and Menzil, each one of which has its own marketplace consisting of a wide variety of goods and services, such as banks, publication houses, newspapers and magazines, television channels, retail firms, travel and transportation companies, and construction firms. These goods and services can belong to the communities or be privately owned by a community member/s or a sympathiser/s. The analyses of the interviews with thirty-two members, the textual data, for instance the communities' publications, and of the observation data collected in the members' houses and workplaces, and in the communities' spaces, for example, dormitories and schools, point to the diverse values and negotiations, such as the current political situation (for instance, the conflict between Fethullah Gülen, the leader of the Gülen community, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the prime minister [2003-2014] and president [2014-] of Turkey), in Islamic consumption.

Reina Lewis (London College of Fashion), *The risks and opportunities of Islamic branding: commercial, spiritual, political*

The increasing numbers of Muslims who identify with the transnational community of the umma has been seen as central to the development of Islamic and Islamist politics and to new forms of Islamic consumer culture. For many Muslim women the adoption of covered, or modest, dressing has become integral to the cultivation and expression of pious dispositions. New markets have opened up for the commercial manufacture and distribution of apparel for modest fashion. Whilst professional marketers in Islamic branding celebrate the potentially transnational markets for Islamic/modest fashion, this paper uses sociological approaches to everyday religion to investigate the advantages and risks posed to fashion designer/entrepreneurs and consumers once Muslims are constructed as a consumer segment. Exploring entwined risks and advantages across commercial, spiritual, and political registers the paper asks: did DKNY's Ramadan collection threaten the market share of local

Emirati designers or/and show welcome attention to regional cultures?; what was the fallout or/and opportunity for interfaith dialogue sparked by the furore over the collaboration between Jewish brand Mimu Maxi and Muslim American hijabi blogger Summer Albarcha; and, how are the evolving covered norms of Muslim modest dressing affecting the garments available to consumers of British Asian diaspora fashion?

Jonathan Wilson (University of Greenwich), *Being hip, happy, and halal – more than meat and money*

At its most basic level Halal means permissibility of actions and consumption, as outlined by Islam. The majority view is that Halal is the norm and Haram (impermissible actions and consumption), or non-Halal, is the exception. Whilst scholars concur with this construct as a general principle, this paper argues that the recent phenomenon of creating Halal logos and branding strategies as part of mainstream corporate architectures have created both opportunities and challenges; classical understanding of Halal are changing and consumers increasingly reverse previous norms and exceptions. Whilst Halal branding is now practiced in countries with almost exclusive Muslim majorities, non-Muslim global brands sometimes ignore Muslim demand at home, appearing to think 'not in my back yard'. This paper focuses on the (re)emergence of Muslim Hipster culture -Being Hip Happy and Halal - to argue that a new wave of young, urban, transnational, multicultural, educated Muslims are cross-over entrepreneurs taking Islamic values into the wider consumptionscape. When beards are cool and halal food is artisan high-quality, this cohort of social-media savvy Muslims bring to life the much vaunted rhetoric that Halal is not only for Muslims.

**13.00–14.30, Lunch**

**14.30–16.00: SESSION 3. SIX PARALLEL PANELS**

**Panel 1: Gender A**

*Room: Bedford, Chair: Tbc*

Aljawharah Alassaf (AMIDEAST HQ- Washington DC), *Religious Practice vs. Social Custom*

In Islam, the relationship between religion and culture, compromise and dependence, misrepresent religious practices in several ways. For the purpose of this paper, the idea of autonomy intervenes where religious doctrine and cultural traditions meet and diverge regarding women's education. Looking at this subject from two distinct viewpoints will identify how protection of tradition distorts the

implementation and practice of Quranic mandates, and has also complicated the issue of women's education in Saudi Arabia. Islam is one of the religions where ambiguity between social custom, tradition, and religious practice exists. In an Islamic country such as Saudi Arabia, the Qur'an and Hadith are revealed sources for the establishment of laws, traditions, and social practices. Despite possessing these primary sources, Islamic law is sometimes limited by custom and tradition. In this regard, Islamic law, called Shariah, has been integrated with social custom and tradition that allows Muslims to maintain their social and cultural identity. In some cases, tribal or traditional law has even been seen as overriding or superseding Islamic Law. This is a situation that exists inside one of the few countries still governed by Shariah, the Islamic country of Saudi Arabia.

Adal Almoammar (SOAS), *The Cultural Concept of "Incompatibility in Lineage" and the Rights of Women in Saudi Arabia*

The cultural concept of incompatibility in lineage has been invoked to prevent and to forcibly dissolve marriages between men and women of different social rank in Saudi Arabia. Those who support this practice often claim that it has a basis in Islamic law. However, research shows that the concept originated with pre-Islamic tribal traditions and customs, and that it was perpetuated by Muslim jurists who relied on traditional practices to interpret the divine sources of Islamic law. Moreover, the continuation of this tradition has led to abuses of the Islamic notion of guardianship, which have, in turn, resulted in racial discrimination, discrimination against women and inequality between men and women. In addition, the concept of incompatibility in lineage has led to breaches of international law under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), both of which have been ratified by Royal Decree and adopted into Saudi domestic law. The proposed paper discusses the origins of the concept of incompatibility in lineage and its introduction into Saudi legal tradition and argues that this concept is inconsistent both with Islamic law and with Saudi Arabia's obligations under international law.

Julia Lisiecka (SOAS), *Re-reading Huda Shaarawi's "Harem Years" – Bargaining with the patriarchy in the changing Egypt*

This paper re-examines the legacy of an influential Egyptian feminist Huda Shaarawi; in particular, the uneasy relationship between feminism, nationalism and Islam. The research focuses on Shaarawi's memoirs, which challenge both the patriarchal structure as well as the Western orientalist imaginary of harem life. The paper aims at contributing to a better understanding of these issues by examining Shaarawi's relationship to Islam. In her view, Islam has been falsely portrayed as the source of gender inequality, while Shaarawi traced it rather to class divisions and elitist practices of exclusion. Furthermore, the paper explores the evolution of feminism in the context of the emergence of a national movement in colonized Egypt in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The paper argues that those transformative decades were characterized by a reversed social order in which, as in

Bakhtin's carnival, the oppressed temporarily gained voice. Yet, their demands were soon marginalized. The national movement demanded from women to return to the patriarchal structure as an act of decolonization. The circumstances and other sources of Shaarawi's activism, such as the Woolf's symbolic "room of her own", cultural and social capital allowed Shaarawi to maneuver between nationalism, feminism and Islam and "bargain with patriarchy".

## **Panel 2: Law and Ethics A**

*Room: Bloomsbury, Chair: Tbc*

Abdallah Alashaal (Fordham Law School), *Legal reflections in the Holy Qur'an*

The Holy Quran is the main source of Shari'a or Islamic law and the major source of knowledge for the whole of Islamic studies. It is admitted that the Quranic studies have to be enriched by interdisciplinary approach, including law and legal concepts in law and Quran. In this paper, some legal reflections are developed for further exploration for which five titles are tentatively selected. 1) The contracts in Quran. Some contracts mentioned in Quran require some legal initial clarification and may be classified into two categories, the first contains the contracts between individuals and includes six kinds. The second category comprises four: martyrdom, loan, freedom of conviction and agency. This category involves two parties in a particular way, God on one hand and the believer on the other. 2) The right and freedom of conviction in Quran. 3) The right to life which is a cardinal object of polemics. 4) Human rights in the Quranic perspective. 5) Terrorism and deterrence in the Quranic paradigm.

Rana Alsoufi (FAU Erlangen-Nürnberg), *The use of Analogy as a Legal Method in Islamic Law*

This article is concerned with the use of analogy (qiyās) as a legal methodology deployed by Sunnī legal theoreticians (al-uşūliyyn). The juristic recourse to the use of analogy (qiyās) has been one of the salient characteristics of Islamic law as well as one of the points of contention in the Sunnī discourse of the legal theory of qiyās. In this article, however, I shed light on the Shāfi'īs' employment of analogy in their legal theory: Is analogy authoritative as a legislative source of law, and if so, to what extent analogy has been allowed in the law process? What is the role of analogy in the Sunnī legal theory? What is the function of analogy in Shāfi'ī uşūl al-fiqh? What are the limits of analogy (qiyās) as a method of legal reasoning in the Shāfi'ī law? In the course of this article, I seek to present the Shāfi'īs' discourse of qiyās as a legal methodology that allows the jurists to legislate rulings that are not explicitly defined in the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

Sohail Hanif (University of Oxford), *6th/12th Century Hanafī Fatawa Literature and the Consolidation of School Identity*

Much has been written about fatāwā literature and relationship between fatāwā works and standard furū' works. Almost all of these studies view fatāwā works as collections of responsa to actual questions raised to a muftī. This paper challenges this notion by a careful study of fatāwā literature in the 6th/12th century when a sudden explosion occurred in the production of this literature in Ḥanafī Transoxiana. The bulk of these fatāwā works were authored by scholars in Bukhara, the most key of whom was 'Umar b. Māzah (d. 536/1141), known as al-Ṣadr al-Shahīd. By studying his works and those produced by his students and their peers, the paper demonstrates that these fatāwā works were not primarily answers to actual questions, but rather, authoritative compilations of school doctrine, giving particular emphasis to opinions of school-founders not contained in widely-transmitted works (nawādir) and to opinions of jurists of the 3rd/10th and 4th/11th centuries, the pre-classical period. The brilliance of fatāwā authors was displayed, not through how they answered questions, but through their ability to sift through the differing legacy of narrations from early juristic centres to produce a definitive set of the 'most correct' opinions. The paper concludes that 6th/12th century Ḥanafī fatāwā literature is thus, along with the mukhtaṣar, a genre of legal writing produced in Islamic law's classical period to serve the need for a well-defined and stable set of rules in the madhhab-law tradition.

Mahadzirah Mohamad (Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin), *Maqasid Syariah Approach of Measuring Quality of Life*

The main aim of this paper is to present a proposal that argued measuring quality of life using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs failed to completely fulfill the measurement requirements of quality of life. This is because Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs only assesses the needs and wants aspects of individuals. However, this paper offers Maqasid Syariah approach of measuring quality of life that includes other aspects, rather than only needs and wants, which are justice, spiritual and public interest. In addition, this paper put forward a measurement model of quality of life based on Islamic principle of syariah - the Maqasid Syariah approach and discusses the various stages of human needs; the necessities (dharuriyyat), the convenience (hajiyyat), and the refinement (tahsiniyyat). Moreover, the five pillars of Maqasid Syariah, namely religion, life, mind, lineage, and property, based on the jurisprudence set in the Holy Quran and sunnah as the foundation to measure quality of life are also discussed. These aspects are to ensure beneficence and avoid destruction of humankind. This paper proved that the Maqasid Syariah is an important framework to be applied in everyday life, especially in facing life challenges.

Karen Taliaferro (Georgetown University – School of Foreign Service, Qatar), *Mediating Reason and Revelation: Istihsān and the Necessity of Taqlid*

How can Islamic law remain true to revelation and tradition while adapting to the needs of modern society and individuals? This paper provides a careful analysis of the juristic tool of istihsān (juristic preference), arguing that when it is properly

understood it provides the means of mediating both adaptation and tradition, reason and revelation. I take issue with contemporary literature that treats istihsān as the functional equivalent of equity, as this requires a standard of justice higher than revealed sources and amounts to innovation (bida'). I then examine Ibn Taymiyya's definition, in which istihsān is a specification of the ratio legis, asking whether this understanding is sufficient to prevent legal stagnation. I examine the theological debates behind these legal norms and find that the role of taqlid is critical to the employ of istihsān. If taqlid is understood as thoughtless imitation, istihsān cannot help Islamic jurists meet the changing needs of society. If, on the other hand, taqlid is understood to incorporate both rationality and tradition, it opens possibilities for istihsān to adapt to contemporary needs while standing firmly within Islamic legal tradition, thus serve as a jurist's tool for both practicing and interrogating Islamic legal tradition.

### **Panel 3: Inter-Religious relations**

*Room: Gordon, Chair: Tbc*

Alex Mallet (University of Exeter), *Two writings by al-Ṭurṭushī as Muslim reactions to the Frankish presence in the Levant at the beginning of the crusading period*

This paper will examine two writings by the Andalusī scholar al-Ṭurṭushī, who lived in Egypt during the first three decades of the sixth/twelfth century. The two texts are the 'Mirrors for Princes' work *Sirāj al-mulūk* and the anti-innovation tract *Kitāb al-ḥawādith wa'l-bidā'*. It will highlight aspects of these works – including their underlining of the dangers of Muslim-Christian interactions and the call for the restoration of the Pact of 'Umar – who were they addressed to, and al-Ṭurṭushī's background in al-Andalus, to highlight how this one Muslim regarded correct Muslim relations with Christians at the beginning of the Frankish crusader presence in the Levant, and how that presence may have influenced his thoughts. It will also compare the ideas of al-Ṭurṭushī with those of other writers who addressed the Frankish threat to highlight that there were a number of different reactions to the Franks in this period, and that even amongst Muslim religious scholars there was only limited consensus of how to react to the threat.

Abdulla Galadari (Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education), *Corruption of Scriptures: "Yuharrifūn" as a Contrast to the Term "Tuqīmū" in the Qur'an*

The interpretation of the term "yuharrifūn" in the Qur'an has caught the attention of past and modern scholars alike. The interpretation of the term ranges from the distortion of text (taḥrīf al-lafz) to the distortion of meaning (taḥrīf al-ma'na). It is argued that the Qur'anic use of the term "yuharrifūn" neither describes the distortion of text nor meaning, but simply is defined by the root meaning of "yuharrifūn," which is to turn away or to bend (inḥirāf). The Qur'an accuses the Jews of "yuharrifūn" in Q. 5:41, but two verses later in Q. 5:43, it describes how the Jews already have the

Torah with God's laws in it. If the Qur'anic use of the term "yuḥarrifūn" is an accusation that the Jews distorted the text in Q. 5:41, then it would not have almost immediately after state that they have the Torah with God's laws. On the contrary, it is argued that within the same chapter, the Qur'an requires the People of the Book to stand upon their scriptures, using the term "tuqīmū" (i.e. Q. 5:66, 5:68). The root of the term "tuqīmū" means "istiḳāma," which is to straighten. It is contrasted with the Qur'anic use of the term "yuḥarrifūn," which means to bend (inḥirāf).

David Beamish (SOAS), "And the Caliph was glad to command a people so proud of their liberties": Albert Fua in Paris, 1900-1914

This paper will examine the writings of the former Young Turk and later Ottoman Liberal Albert Fua. Fua was an Ottoman Jew from Salonika who settled in Paris in the late 19th Century and who was close with Ahmed Riza and his faction of the Young Turk movement before splitting with CUP in the years leading up to the 1908 Young Turk Revolution. Fua operated within a European discursive space, publishing his writings almost exclusively in the French language. In this way he acted as both activist agitator, but also more importantly as intellectual and informant. This paper will argue that the work of Albert Fua should be read as part of a broader conversation about Islam, constitutionalism and nation-building that was going on during this period both among and between those in the Islamic world and within Europe rather than within the narrower confines of exile political opposition. By spanning the period before and after the 1908 revolution the writings of Albert Fua provide valuable continuity in his interpretation of the Ottoman Empire as an Islamic State and the place of Islam in shaping and determining the boundaries of identity and Empire.

Esmā Çakır (Dokuz Eylül University), *Is God The Best Mediator Of All Times?*

Among the believers of Abrahamic religions the sacred texts are believed to be the words of God. However; even this belief itself does not save them to be pointed at as the cause of violence for some. Since times of peace in world history is not bigger than small portion of times of war these texts have always been on the top agenda of discussion for inter-religious conflicts. With or without purposefully God has always said to be guilty of conflicts among believers. Is God really the one to blame? Can the conflicts between the people of different religions be solved with the help of sacred texts? Is there a way or ways to try for peace before blaming God for the conflicts between people? We would like to discuss the topics that has shortly been described above from a mediator point of view and try to find out if the sacred texts can be used as a tool for inter-religious conflict resolution with the references from the sacred texts of three Abrahamic religions; Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

Kenan Cetinkaya (Bozok University), *Turkish Response to the Christian Call for Dialogue*

After the Second Vatican Council, which took place in 1962-1965, the Catholic Church reached out to both co-religionists and non-Christians. As the second largest religion in the world (after Christianity), the Muslim world began to react to this call for dialogue. Without a worldwide religious authority, Muslim scholars and communities have tried to understand and respond to this call for dialogue in their own way. Turkey, as one of the most influential and modern Muslim majority states, joined the discussion about interreligious dialogue, especially with Christians. Very diverse in culture, tradition, and thought, Turkish scholars' discussions and critiques of the dialogue requested by the Christian world have clearly contributed to interreligious dialogue on a global scale in the last decades. This paper briefly examines the development of interreligious dialogue in Turkey and the significant views presented by Turkish theologians as a response to the Christian call for dialogue. The conclusion proposes a Turkish Model for interreligious dialogue. This model, which is based on common points that most of the Turkish Muslim scholars are agree on, should contribute to the global scholarship and the Christian-Muslim relations in the twenty-first century.

**Panel 4: Classical Islamic Thought A**

*Room: Woburn A, Chair: Tbc*

Elisabetta Loi (University of Aberdeen), *Atheism in Islam? The case of al-Rāzī*

The paper will examine a particular expression of atheism in Islam through the analysis of the ideas of one of the main Muslim thinkers, Muḥammad Ibn Zakariyyā' al-Rāzī (d. 925CE). The studies about the evolution of atheism through history highlight that atheism is associated with ideas that, traditionally, promoted a view of the world which excludes or limits divine interference on human existence. Such position sees the understanding of the natural world and morality as essentially the product of human considerations. In this context, al-Rāzī's emphasis on reason led him to reject the validity of the Qur'ān, the prophecy and to formulate an essentially atheistic world-view based on a secular conception of knowledge, justice and ethics. The paper, therefore, will argue that al-Rāzī's main outcomes essentially questioned the existence of God, in particular the Islamic one, leading to His rejection. Moreover, it will show that Muslim philosophy considerably contributed to the evolution of atheism in the Islamic world, through the introduction of new and specific elements. It will also contribute to the understanding of processes which characterised the evolution of atheism through history.

Mansoureh Ebrahimi (University Technology of Malaysia), *Ma'rifat and Muhabbat's Relations in al-Ghazālī's Kīmiyā-i-Sa'adat*

The present article aims to explain the concept of ma'rifat (knowledge) from Al-Ghazālī's perception in his *Kīmiyā-i-Sa'adat*. Ma'rifat that is initial element of the creation of muḥabbat (love) can be its result as well. Sālik, a person who engaged Sufism as an Islamic spiritual path, with ma'rifat and knowing Allah would be devotee of his/her beloved God. Then, Sālik who is a devotee of God, with his/her muḥabbat would love much more ma'rifat of his/her beloved God. Therefore, ma'rifat and muḥabbat-e ḥaqīqī (true knowledge and love) always act in a causality chain at the path of progress, strengthening, and motivation of each other. Qualitative approach has been used to observe the messages given in this paper. It will highlight that ma'rifat-e ḥaqīqī is the same substance and essence of muḥabbat. Only those possessed of the capacity are able to understand the domain of ma'rifat and muḥabbat-e ḥaqīqī. The Qur'ān is the best sufficient proof: "God will raise (in degree) those of you who truly believe (and act accordingly), and in degrees those who have been granted the knowledge (especially of religious matters)." (58:11).

Farid Suleiman (University of Erlangen-Nuremberg), *Ibn Taymiyya's rejection of the ḥaqīqa/majāz-dichotomy and its significance for the controversy over the interpretation of the divine attributes*

The ḥaqīqa/majāz-division, widely accepted in the Islamic tradition, rests on the assumption that each Arabic word has been assigned a context-independent primordial meaning (al-ma'nā al-waḍ'ī). The instrument of ta'wīl, intrinsically tied to the ḥaqīqa/majāz-division, is most famous, but also most-heatedly debated, when it comes to the interpretation of the divine attributes. This paper shows how Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328) seriously challenged the theory of majāz by attacking the above-mentioned assumption. However, the main argument of this paper is that the whole controversy over the theory of majāz and the instrument of ta'wīl is, surprisingly, merely terminological, when it comes to the interpretation of the divine attributes. This claim will be substantiated on the one hand by arguments based on the analysis of the relevant writings of Ibn Taymiyya. On the other hand, Ibn Taymiyya himself affirms this claim explicitly in a passage that is absent from the corpus of his edited writings but is quoted by the Damascene scholar al-Qāsimī (d. 1332/1914) in his work *Maḥāsin at-ta'wīl* (arguments will be adduced that he quoted Ibn Taymiyya faithfully). Thereby, this paper seeks to contribute to the understanding of Ibn Taymiyya's rejection of the theory of majāz and its wider implications for Islamic theology.

Ahmad Ahtar (Heythrop College, University of London), *Ibn Khaldun's defence of Ash'arism against the criticism of Ibn Taymiyya regarding Qur'anic anthropomorphism*

Ibn Khaldun in his discussion of the typology of Muslims' approaches to anthropomorphic verses in the Quran, identified two legitimate approaches from the point of view of his Ash'arites doctrine. The first one is a tafwid-type approach which Ibn Khaldun identifies with the Salaf. It consists of affirming the transcendence of God and delegating to God the meanings of all these verses that might indicate imperfection if understood according to their literal sense. The second one is called ta'wil-type approach which involves interpreting these verses metaphorically. Ibn Taymiyya criticised both approaches and presented another approach which he claims to be the true approach of the salaf. This approach consists of affirming both the literal meaning of these verses and the transcendence of God. This paper aims to examine Ibn Khaldun's criticism of this approach which he identifies with the late Hanbalites but without naming Ibn Taymiyya. I will argue that the aim of Ibn Khaldun's criticism is to refute the claim of Ibn Taymiyya that his position represents the view of the salaf and at the same time to present the position of the Ash'arites as an authentic and true representation of the salaf.

**Panel 5: Contemporary Issues A**

*Room: Woburn B, Chair: Tbc*

Mehdi Beyad (SOAS), *The Role of Islam in the Political Thought of Muhammed 'Abduh*

Muhammad 'Abduh stands as a founding thinker of Islamic revivalism, the political phenomenon which began in the 19th century that sought to address the perceived regression of Islamic societies in the face of western colonialism and modernity. This paper provides a critical approach to dominant methodologies within the scholarship on 'Abduh, and attempts to re-think the epistemic framework of his political thought and the place of Islam therein. Much of the current work on 'Abduh falls into the trap of seeing his task as one of compromising Islam for the values of European modernity. But for 'Abduh Islam was not simply a theology: it was at the nexus of societal emancipation, intellectual and cultural rejuvenation, and political progress. Far from diluting Islam so that it became irrelevant in the face of rationality as defined by European modernity, Islam appeared as the ideal force for elevation in 'Abduh's thought. This approach can mark a new way of analysing broader Islamic political thought and other key thinkers – we should appreciate the internal logic of Islamic political discourses on their own terms, if we are to understand their potency, rather than asserting a theoretical hegemony over them in the effort to explain them.

Sevcan Ozturk (Social Sciences University of Ankara), *Rereading the 'Reconstruction': Iqbal's view of the problems of Islamic thought*

Muhammad Iqbal is one of the most outstanding and celebrated figures of modern Islamic thought. The philosophical views he brought together under the heading of 'the reconstruction of religious thought in Islam' have been heavily studied. However, Iqbal studies is still a field which, with a few notable exceptions, is lacking in analytical and critical studies. One of the causes of this problem is arguably that Iqbal's thought has not been understood in its wholeness. This is mainly because the underlying reasons for his suggestion of the reconstruction of Islamic religious thought, namely the context of his philosophy, have not received enough attention. In other words, the vital question why he suggested the idea of the reconstruction, which is a key to understand Iqbal's philosophical thought in its entirety, has remained unanswered, and this has caused a significant gap in Iqbal studies. This paper will examine the reasons for Iqbal's suggesting the reconstruction of religious thought with a particular focus on his critique of the situation of the Muslim World of his day and his perception of the problems of Islamic thought. I argue that Iqbal's critique of Greek philosophy, 'Islamic pantheism', and of traditional Muslim scholars play a key role in terms of putting Iqbal's thought into a philosophical context. Therefore, through analysis of these three issues, the context of his suggestion will be explored. This paper aims at contributing to Iqbal studies by shedding new light on a crucial but neglected aspect of Iqbal's philosophical thought.

Omar Anchassi (Queen Mary University; London), *Fazlur Rahman's 'Qur'ānic Turn', Islamic Law and Gender*

The late Fazlur Rahman (d. 1988) of Chicago University was a seminal contributor to Qur'ānic studies as well as a perceptive student of contemporary intellectual trends. Significantly informed by his engagement of cognition and prophetology in classic falsafa, Rahman came to view revelation as prioritising the struggle to establish a just socio-moral order. Underlying the critical place of law in this vision, however, was Rahman's deeply egalitarian ethic, the impress of which is clear in his views on gender which, inter alia, this paper hopes to explore. While sharply accentuating the historicity of the Qur'ānic event, Rahman was sensitive to the need to ground ethical norms in scriptural commands and so read the Qur'ān to normatively propose gender equality. In his capacity as an official adviser to Ayub Khan's government on 'Islamisation' (1962-1968), moreover, he endeavoured to put this new Qur'ānology to work. For a number of reasons, including his sponsorship of controversial personal status legislation, Rahman left Pakistan for the more congenial intellectual climate of the United States, where he ended his career. It is suggested that Rahman can be viewed as largely continuing the tradition of modernist-inspired 'state feminism' in the Muslim world, and as belonging to a particular ideological moment in the history of post-colonial Muslim-majority states. This paper hopes to explore Rahman's contributions to Islamic Law and gender through the prism of his Qur'ānic hermeneutic, with important reflections on his sources.

## **Panel 6: Muslims in the West A**

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Jørgen Nielsen (University of Copenhagen)*

Abdul-Azim Ahmed (Cardiff University), *God's House – The Adaab of The Guest*

The sacred/profane dichotomy has been a significant theme of religious studies since Durkheim first articulated his thesis on its centrality to understanding religions. In recent decades, a number of scholars have developed the idea of the sacred further, particularly in regards to space, adding greater depth and nuance. Pnina Werbner and Barbara Metcalf in developed a vocabulary and basis for looking at sacred space amongst Muslims. More recently, edited collections by Margaret Cormack (*Muslims and Others in Sacred Space*) and Desplat and Schulz (*Prayer in the City*) expanded available literature on the theme significantly. This presentation builds on existing work, and explores the question of Muslim sacred space through reflections on an extended ethnographic study of a British mosque conducted as part of a PhD thesis. It argues that behavioural norms (adaab) are a significant way by which sacredness is mediated, as well as being a method by which anxieties and tensions associated with Muslim identity in contemporary Britain are articulated. It highlights how these findings were a result of extended and in-depth ethnographic fieldwork, and concludes by arguing for the importance of ethnographic research in contemporary Islamic studies.

Muhammed Altıntaş (Erciyes University), *Muslim Schools in England, Holland and France- A Comparative Study*

There is a significant number of Muslims in Western Europe today. Over nine million Muslims currently live in Western Europe. Many Muslims want to establish Muslim schools in order to have their children trained in Islamic moral values and norms. Muslims have pressed for Muslim schools, which has raised questions among policymakers about whether or not this can or should be done within the existing constitutional structure. State accommodation of Muslim schools in Western Europe varies based in part on the inherited relation between church and state in each country. At the same time, existing policy to Muslim schools depends on the structure of the school system within a country. Some countries require Muslim schools to follow central regulations (e.g., a national curriculum and national inspection), while others do not; some allow non-regulated and non-subsidised Muslim schools that provide compulsory education, while others do not. Muslim schools in Western Europe are too vast and heterogeneous. With this study, we aimed to explain and evaluate policies and regulations in Muslim schools, which emerged in Western Europe. This paper will compare Muslim schools in Holland, England and France from viewpoint of the teaching curricula, the pedagogic methods used, funding, choice, control, etc. The reasons for the choice of these countries have to do with the interesting differences that emerge in such a comparison. Little has been done to compare the policies and procedural norms of Muslim schools between countries with sizable Muslim populations.

Yahya Birt (University of Leeds) *Crisis, Reaction and Periodization, or what's at stake in how academics frame British Muslims?*

This paper explores how far the academic study of “British Muslims”, itself a relatively new phrase, has reflected critically on their narrative framing (Morey and Yaqin 2011) through crisis (the Satanic Verses Affair, 9/11, 7/7, etc.) and reaction (anti-multiculturalism, securitization, etc.) and periodization with respect to crisis–reaction cycles in the recent past. This is evident in popular narratives (e.g. K. Malik 2009) and this paper looks to build on major critiques of these framings, e.g. the immigrant imaginary (Sayyid and Hesse 2006, Sayyid 2014) or securitization (Croft 2012), particularly with respect to periodization. I explore how the concept of the “Event” as transformational, as something that “exceeds its causes” (Badiou 2005, Calcagno 2007, Zizek 2014) might allow for a conscientious pause before adopting nationalist frameworks of crisis and response. How far can the historical turn in “British Muslim studies” (e.g. Ansari 2004, McLoughlin et al 2014) allow for critical reperiodization outside of the assumption that British Muslims are framed through crises of the nation. And how far can Muslim actors themselves provide subaltern reframing and reperiodization that would also bring new insights to the subject of “British Muslim studies”?

Amédée Turner (MA Oxon, QC) and Davide Tacchini (The Catholic University, Milan), *Muslim Grassroots in the West Discuss Democracy*

During the last nine years, a team of scholars, researchers and religious leaders in Europe and the USA has organized meetings and gatherings with members of local Muslim communities. Over 70 discussion groups (involving 900+ Muslims) were set up all over Europe and the US. Muslims taking part were professional and business people, students, Sunni and Shia mixed. This Report originates from a sub-committee on Muslim dialogue through the Advisory Council of the Anglican Observer to the UN. The discussions were designed to explore different views, not to arrive at common positions. The Project does not aim to be a large scale survey, it is not statistically based, and has no statistical purposes. It is intended to provide direct connection with the real life of ordinary Muslim citizens, in Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Spain, the United States and Canada. Muslims in the West, in the time we are living in, bear a heavy representational responsibility to the West, but also to the Muslim world. What we would like to present here is the result of the completed survey, which is, actually, a window on the highly diverse Western Islam. The study thus bridges the period before the “Arab Spring” and after,

Masoumeh Velayati (Al-Maktoum College), *Muslim women's Activism in the UK: Commitment to Moral and Religious Principles*

The autonomy and preferences of women – in the sense of what they want to do, to achieve, or to be – is related to “the capability approach”, introduced by Amartya Sen in 1980s, as a conceptual framework to measure well-being. Muslim women in the UK are worse off in terms of standard outcome assessment, as well as their material

means to well-being, based on income and visibility in the labour market. However, my interviews with Muslim women reflect their inclination to integrate in British society through paid and voluntary work. Women, who were involved in the voluntary sector, were mostly involved in women-related organisations or social activism as part of their commitment to religious ideals. Some of these organisations set up by professional Muslim women operate at national, regional and local levels. Some provide welfare activities for disadvantaged women and children; some promote religious education; and some are sites of cultural exchange. In Aristotelian principle, the exercise of dignity among these women is conveyed through expressive performance of incommensurable social activities. This is despite the fact that their valuable contributions to the multicultural aspect of British society and to the welfare of different social groups remain largely invisible.

16.00–16.30, *Refreshments*

#### **16:30–18:00: SESSION 4. SIX PARALLEL PANELS**

##### **Panel 1: Abdessalam Yassine's Thought**

*Room: Bedford, Chair: Hammadi Nait-Charif (Bournemouth University),*

*Discussant: George Joffé (Cambridge University)*

Abdelouahad Motaouakal (Imam Yassine Foundation), *An Explanation of Yassine's Alternative Approach to Reform in Morocco*

What does Sheikh Yassine, the former leader of al-Adl wal-Ihsan movement (AWI), propose to achieve social and political change in Morocco? Two quotations seem to point to where the answer to this question should be sought. In the first Yassine expresses his determination “to dash any hope of seeing ourselves one day committing the political mistake that is both a moral fault and a default on our commitment to nonviolence, that is, of laying ourselves open to civil war.” In the second, commenting on what he considers an absurd idea of power-sharing, he states, “It is indeed an unjust arrangement and an unfair division that the ‘obscurantists’ should be accorded a dark, bleak corner in the government to undertake some [marginal] tasks while the dictators have the upper hand and the final word. [...] We will never agree to such a position.” It is clear from these two statements that Sheikh Yassine favours neither working from within the system nor the use of violent means to seek change. The former, in his view, boils down to meaningless politics and, at best, delay of the required reform indefinitely and the latter involves violence and bloodshed. This paper sets out to examine the nature of an alternative strategy Yassine proposes and see what he suggests to accomplish two daunting objectives which appear hard to reconcile: comprehensive change through peaceful means.

Yahya Abdellaoui (European Institute of Human Science), *Social Justice: Its Principles and Rules in the Thought of Imam Abdessalam Yassine*

The aim of this study is to shed light on the significance of social justice, with particular emphasis on how the latter is theorized in the thought of Imam Abdessalam Yassine. Yassine pays particular attention to this issue in his writings, proposing a theoretical framework for modern Islamic social politics which strikes a balance between the principles of Islam and the exigencies of modern times. To achieve this aim the study is divided into two parts: In this part, I discuss the meaning of social justice, and I emphasize the necessity of putting social justice rules in action locally and globally. Part two subsumes four major principles which regulate social justice: Social justice should take into account moral and spiritual principles. Financial solidarity to guarantee the basic living requirements is an obligation. Solidarity should be extended to all human beings. An inductive reading of Yassine's books yields the following conclusions: Social justice has a great value, and it should be concerned with the realization of the material as well as the spiritual welfare of the people. Difference between people in terms of gender, or wealth should not justify social injustice. Humanity should struggle to keep balance between classes.

Monir Birouk (Mohammed University, Rabat), *Spiritual Purification between Rule-bound Ethics and Political Activism: Insights from Taha Abdurrahmane and Abdess*

With the current polemic about the application of Shari'a, Islam has come to be reduced in the consciousness of many to a manual of dry ethical rules. More alarmingly, the Islamic movements themselves are in some respects responsible. One should legitimately worry about their inflation of the political and the legal at the expense of the ethical and the spiritual. In this paper, I bring to spotlight two prominent voices from the Western Arab-Islamic world-Abdessalam Yassine and Taha Abdurrahmane- who set alarm bells against the withdrawal of the meanings of ihssan in the practice of the Islamic actors. To this end, this paper falls into three parts. In the first, I highlight the centrality of spiritual purification in the thoughts of both Abdurrahmane and Yassine, explaining how it constitutes for them the locus of human existence. In the second part, I stake out their attempts to deconstruct the ways in which activism- both cultural and political- drain off spirituality. In the last part of this paper, I highlight those epistemological moments of convergence and divergence in their approaches to spiritual education in Islam. My approach in this paper is analytical and comparative, an approach which, I think, allows the readers to evaluate the thinkers' positions and draw the appropriate conclusions themselves.

**Panel 2: Legal Reform in the Intellectual Contributions of Ibn ‘Āshūr: *Maqāsid* Discourse, ‘Urf and Hadith**

*Room: Bloomsbury, Chair: Anicée Van Engeland (SOAS)*

Dawood Adesola Hamzah (SOAS), *Maqasid al-Shari’ah: A Reflection on Ibn ‘Ashur Reform Methodology*

Muhammad al-Tahir ibn Ashur reiterated that the Shari`ah is universal and must not be restricted to a single culture and thus, Ijtihad is a collective duty. After its emergence in the 12th century of Al-Ghazali, and subsequent 14th century reformulations of Ibn Taymiyyah and Al-Shatibi, Maqasid al-Shari’ah as a concept went into abeyance. A renewed effort towards its reformulation was felt due, of course, because of the obvious and irresistible challenges of modernism. Ibn Ashur pioneered modern reform effort. A Tunisia juri-consult and thinker, Ashur’s career was shaped not only by the power and influence of his family, but also by the cultural and political currents of his time, engendered by government-led structural and cultural changes. He believed that usul al-fiqh had reached its limits and become over-burdened with technicalities. He insisted that the higher goals of the Shari’ah must be perennially discovered. By the turn of the century his efforts had spurred many scholars and jurists into jurisprudential action. This paper seeks to bring into focus the thought and reform efforts of Ibn Ashur with a view to show case the relevance of his thought in modern day Islamic law and jurisprudence.

Tariq al-Timimi (SOAS), *Configuring the Hadith Setting: Acknowledging the Impact of ‘urf on Prophetic Traditions and its Implication on Islamic Jurisprudence*

The late al-Tahir bin ‘Ashur (d. 1973) was a traditionalist scholar, who both studied and taught at the renowned Zaytuna Mosque and Institute. Of remarkable breadth of knowledge, Ibn ‘Ashur stressed the universality of shari’ah and strived to revive its relevance and to demonstrate its ability to attune to modern exigencies. Perhaps the most significant way he did this was to resurrect the theory of maqasid al-shari’ah, which had become dormant for five centuries. He did this in a seminal book bearing the name of the topic, published in 1946. In this important work, he tackles a range of subjects, continuously challenging what was hitherto seen as undisputable. In this paper I will highlight one of these subjects, namely, Ibn ‘Ashur’s novel view of the principle of ‘urf. I argue that, Ibn ‘Ashur, in recognising the universality of the shari’ah across cultures, draws on the heritage of al-Qarafi (d. 1285) and develops a variant of the principle of ‘urf where, instead of the traditional view of the effect custom has on the application of narrations, Ibn ‘Ashur looks at the effect of Arabian customs on narrations themselves. In adopting this method of interpretation, I will argue that he does away with much of the confusion that faced scholars in understanding certain shari’ah prohibitions. This method is demonstrating its increasing relevance with the European Council of Fatwa and Research, other bodies and scholars adopting the approach.

Abdullah Sliti (Durham University), *Rethinking Tradition: Ibn 'Ashur's Potential Reform*

In this paper, I will investigate how the modern traditionalist, Ibn Āshūr, deals with authentic single-narrated-traditions (gharīb/aḥad/ fard) that have problematic implications (mushkil al-āthār) and whether or not his methodology is consistent with all such traditions in any given domain. Also, I will consider whether Ibn Āshūr's methodology applies to all single-narrated-traditions that are not problematic in nature. I will argue that Ibn Āshūr employs a logical 'common- motive' ('umūm al-dawā'ī) theory to verify traditionally authenticated single-narrated-traditions; given that this category of traditions typically oppose the nature of common-motives. Additionally, if the single-narrated-traditions have potentially problematic implications, then I will show that Ibn Āshūr argues that such narrations should be systematically rejected based on its inconsistency with the common-motive theory and its further problematic implications. Lastly, I will explain how Ibn Āshūr's common-motive theory has the potentiality of reforming the utilization of traditions as an epistemological reference in orthodox Islam and hence, may entail the reconsideration of many theological and legal issues- in light of the absence of traditionally authenticated single-narrated-traditions.

### **Panel 3: Twelver Shia Communities in Britain: Transnational and Diasporic Perspectives**

*Room: Gordon, Chair: Oliver Scharbrodt (University of Chester)*

Sayyid Fadil Bahrulloom (Centre for Islamic Shi'a Studies), and Yafa Shanneik (University of Chester) *'Who Buried Husayn?': Shia Mourning Poetry by Women Writers in the 20th Century*

Writing elegies for the dead and performing them publicly is an Arab tradition dating back to the pre-Islamic period. Al-Khansa', a contemporary of the Prophet Muhammad, is one the best known poetesses who composed plaintive and melancholic poetry mourning the death of her two brothers. The style of her lamentation poetry has created and shaped the genre of Arabic lamentation poetry until the present. In the context of Twelver Shia Islam, writing elegies and performing them in mourning rituals has been a central element in publicly lamenting the death of Imam Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, in Karbala in 680 CE. Yet, very little is known about Shia lamentation poetry and its roots in pre-Islamic poetical traditions. This paper examines the roots, development and transformations of Shia lamentation poetry written by Shia women in Iraq, the Gulf and Europe in the 20th century in light of the geo-political and socio-religious changes within Shia communities in the Middle East and within diasporic communities in Europe.

Oliver Scharbrodt (University of Chester), *Mapping Transnational and Diasporic Shia Networks in London*

This paper draws a Shia map of London presenting different communities and their transnational connections. While Shia Muslims in Britain constitute a minority within a minority, their presence is also characterised by internal diversity, based on ethnic background, ideological orientation and class and social status. The paper argues that both public discourse and academic research so far has failed to encapsulate the complex dynamics within diasporic Shia communities in Britain. Intra-communal factionalism has been either overstated or ignored. Particular forms of public engagement have been recognised as progressive and constructive, while the social conservatism of some communities has been simplistically interpreted as segregation from British society. Transnational and diasporic Shia networks in London are rather situated in a “diaspora space” which is marked by complexity and heterogeneity. Following Webner’s notion of “complex diasporas”, the paper discusses how Shia diasporic spaces in London can be “both ethno-parochial and cosmopolitan”. Taking the examples of a number of Iraqi Shia networks present in London, the paper examines how these diasporic communities mediate between being conduits between diaspora and homeland and being representatives of Shia Islam in British society.

Sufyan Abed (University of Chester), *Being Shia before and after ‘Ashura’: Discourses on Living a Piety-led Life among South Asian Shia Muslims in London*

This paper aims at exploring and analysing the emerging discourses which emphasise “living an exemplary and piety-led life as a good Muslim” among South Asian Shia Muslims in London. Morality and piety as everyday life practices are disseminated by Shia speakers who have been trained in post-revolutionary Iran. The paper explains how Shia Muslims of South Asian background in London are exposed to and made familiar with living a successful life as a pious and modern Muslims, whose life-style can be perfectly compatible with the economic, political and social challenges of being a Muslim in Britain. While Shia Muslims of South Asian background are mostly engaged with keeping their distinct identity of being Shia Muslim intact vis-à-vis Sunni Muslims by commemorating the rituals of ‘Ashura’ with religious devotion, reformist Shia speakers expand the meanings of being Shia beyond the month of Muharram and introduce a more generic notion of being a pious Muslim in everyday life. Such an emerging discourse appeals to some of the upwardly mobile and educated Shias of South Asian background, but is seen as too apologetic by others.

Chris Heinhold (University of Chester), *The Construction of a British Shia Identity in London*

In London, Shia communities from around the world are found existing alongside one another. While there are specific events which see elements of these disparate communities converge, for example the annual ‘Ashura’ procession at Marble Arch, there remains a distance between them which is maintained by language, culture and traditional practice. This paper poses the question; to what extent are these boundaries breaking down amongst the second and third generations of these

communities? Conceptions of identity are stretched by the processes of globalisation. While they maintain proficiency in the languages of their parents and grand-parents, young British-born Shia in London are largely educated and socialised through English. At the Marble Arch procession this year, for instance, the lecture was given in English, directly addressing this emerging community who operate primarily in the language of their new geographical home, and confirming their position as a key audience for the wider community to reach. Through their shared complex diaspora experience, young Shia in Britain create new identities for themselves which prioritise their Shia-ness over any ethnic or national background. The popular culture which predominates in their world is actively incorporated into this identity construction.

#### **Panel 4: The Formation and Transformation of Physics and Metaphysics in Islamic Thought**

*Room: Woburn A, Chair: Tbc*

Andreas Lammer (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich) *Science, Physics, and Metaphysics in the Works of Avicenna*

The purpose of this paper is twofold. We shall, first, explore the two notions *waḍʿ* and *muṣāḍara*. These terms feature most prominently in a passage of Avicenna's *al-Burhān* in which he critically engages with a view he attributes to some unnamed predecessors. As will be shown, this passage derives directly from Philoponus' commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*. On the basis of Avicenna's critical examination of this view we shall, secondly, shed some light on his complex theory of scientific inquiry as a whole and examine the relations that obtain between teacher and student, between principles and subject-matters, and ultimately between various disciplines such as physics and metaphysics. This will eventually explain why Avicenna introduces his physical works with a methodological note and how one ought to understand his natural philosophy within the framework of the scientific enterprise as such.

Laura Hassan (SOAS), *Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī on the World's Contingency: A Question for Physics or Metaphysics?*

Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī (d. 631/1233) draws on a dual heritage in composing his major theological compendium, *Abkār al-afkār*. His background in Avicennian philosophy meets with an allegiance to the Ašʿarī tradition of rational theology. The results of the intersection of these traditions make for an excellent case study in post-Avicennian *kalām*. In this paper, I take al-Āmidī's expression of the contingency of the world as a case study for the meeting of two distinct paradigms. On the one hand, for Avicenna, the world's contingency is proven within metaphysics by way of the distinction between possible and necessary existence. On the other hand, for classical Ašʿarīs, contingent existence is temporally originated existence. As such, the contingency of the world is established through discussion of the constituents of the natural world, namely substance (*ḡawhar*) and accident (*ʿaraḍ*). In my paper, I ask how the structure of al-Āmidī's *Abkār al-afkār* demonstrates whether he sees the world's

contingency as a matter to be established through natural philosophical or metaphysical enquiry. I argue that al-Āmidī's procedure reflects a significant Avicennian influence and a shift from the classical Aš'arī understanding of the world's contingency.

Anna-Katharina Strohschneider (Julius-Maximilians-Universität, Würzburg), *Averroes on Metaphysics, Physics, and the First Principle*

One of the main points of disagreement between Averroes and Avicenna is the question of the subject matter of metaphysics. Avicenna famously introduces a purely metaphysical proof for the existence of God. Since, according to the methodological rules set down by Aristotle in his Posterior Analytics, no science can prove its own subject matter, God cannot be the subject matter of metaphysics. My paper analyses Averroes' reply in his *Tafsīr mā ba'da l-ṭabī'a*, a text which has never been subject to detailed investigation with regard to this topic. Averroes actually agrees with Avicenna that metaphysics is the universal science, responsible for studying being insofar as it is being. For Averroes, however, the only acceptable proof of the existence of the first cause is the proof provided by Aristotle in Physics VIII. Metaphysics is responsible for demonstrating how God is a final and formal cause, and applies the study of being and substance as its method. I will argue that, just like Avicenna, Averroes develops a theory combining the two divergent aspects of metaphysics. He has a unique way of explaining how this science can at the same time study the first cause and being insofar as it is being.

### **Panel 5: Why Critical Muslim Studies?**

*Room: Woburn B, Chair: S. Sayyid (University of Leeds)*

This panel will address the development of Critical Muslim Studies as a distinct approach to the study of matters Islamicate. The background to the panel is the launch of new academic journal dedicated to pursuing this approach: *ReOrient: The Journal of Critical Muslim Studies*. Critical Muslim Studies is based on the mobilization of decolonial epistemologies and interventions to investigate the theoretical and methodological implications of the de-centring of the West, for an understanding of Muslims and Islam. Given the extent to which intellectual disciplines emerge in the context of Western centrality, what does the de-centring of the West mean for analytical tools forged for the most part in the smithy of Western global domination? Panellists will explore the rationale for and necessity of Critical Muslim Studies and what such an approach can contribute to our understanding of a world haunted by the Muslim Question.

S. Sayyid (University of Leeds), *Of Black and White Cats: Critical Muslim Studies and Decolonial Horizons*

Deng Xiaoping once famously remarked that it did not matter whether a cat was black or white as long as it caught mice it was a good cat. The statement recorded in 1961 took on a poignancy five years later when it seemed like a riposte to the excesses of the Cultural Revolution with its insistence on 'better red than expert'.

When those who want to imagine something that transcends the Western order of things, are often admonished not to worry about the colour of cats but focus on catching mice. When it comes to analyzing Muslims or Islam this means, not worrying too much about epistemology, or eurocentrism, but simply doing what comes naturally, and trusting in western sciences to provide us with facts and data. This paper sets out the case for how a decolonial epistemology can fill the void left by the critique of Orientalism.

Abdool Karim Vakil (KCL), *ReOrienting the Muslim Question*

Abstract TBC.

Nadia Fadil (KU Leuven), *Islam in Europe: a colonizing trap or a process of emancipation?*

Abstract TBC.

### **Panel 6: Muslims in Britain: Everyday Experiences, Multi-Focal Perspectives (MBRN Panel)**

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Carl Morris (University of Central Lancashire)*

Christopher Moses (University of Cambridge), *Chasing a Muslim story: an ethnographic vignette of media suspicion*

It is well documented that that British media outlets often approach, frame and construct Muslims through the lenses of suspicion and security. However, how can we better understand the processes behind the creation of these accounts? During my ethnographic fieldwork at a Muslim community centre in London, a series of public events connected local Muslims with terrorist activities abroad. Consequently, the centre, too, fell under suspicion. A number of journalists were in touch to explore possible links; some decided there was no meaningful causal relationship and kept the centre out of their reportage, while several others proceeded to publish or broadcast accounts directly connecting it to these individuals. This paper will seek to address some of the questions arising from this episode, and in doing so, seeks to develop our anthropological and sociological understandings of media engagement with Muslim institutions more broadly. Firstly, what cultural and ideological norms might we abstract from the journalists' strategies, accounts and praxis during these interactions? Additionally, acknowledging the multiple roles of Muslim representatives as potential producers, interpreters and negotiators of public knowledge, how do they engage with this process? And finally, what are the local impacts of becoming the objects and recipients of these media accounts?

Seán McLoughlin (University of Leeds), *Pilgrimage, Performativity, and British Muslims: Scripted and Unscripted Accounts of the Hajj and Umra*

This paper contributes one of the few systematic accounts of late modern Muslims' lived experiences of performing the Hajj. Analysing more than 30 testimonies gathered in preparation for the British Museum's Hajj exhibition in 2012, I signal the utility of pilgrimage studies for Hajj research. This is equally true of older paradigms associated with sacred place, liminality and *communitas*, as postmodern approaches emphasising contestations of the sacred. However, working across a wider range of disciplines from the anthropology of Islam to sociology of religion and diaspora studies, I also view the Hajj as an example of Muslim religiosity across local, multilocal and supra-local spatial scales. Therefore I dwell not only on the Hajj in Mecca but also religiously inspired and everyday experiences in various time-space locations before, during and after pilgrimage. I argue that through embodied actions associated with the Hajj, its preparation and its remembrance, British Muslims actively shape their own self-identities, spirituality and emotional lives, while at the same time reproducing authoritative Islamic scripts. However, the fragility of such performances by British Muslim actors positioned by multiple, complex and sometimes paradoxical lived structures including consumer capitalism and secularity, means that 'real' Hajj stories also include unscripted uncertainties and ambivalences.

Riyaz Timol (Cardiff University), *To Sufi or not Sufi? Exploring the Spiritual Praxis of the Tablighi Jama'at*

Sufism has a rich and varied history in the Islamic tradition having long found expression in myriad forms. Yet the extent to which the Tablighi Jama'at (TJ), often cited as the largest movement for Islamic renewal in the world, is a Sufi movement is a matter of some debate, particularly as its historical roots draw upon both Sufi and reformist antecedents. In 2006, opposing viewpoints were taken up by Dietrich Reetz and Marc Gaborieau in a single edition of *Archives de sciences sociales des religions*. While Gaborieau (2006, p. 66) argued that the "esoteric individual quest and its ecstatic complement which characterize Sufism, do not constitute an integral part of the Tablighi agenda: they lie outside it," Reetz's (2006, p.47) rejoinder analysed the career and family of TJ's founder, Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas Kandhalawi, to identify elements of Sufi practice which have been incorporated into mainstream TJ rituals: "... the Tablighis have ... adapted the Sufi heritage to their needs ... It has strong Sufi roots, which it prefers not to acknowledge publicly." Based upon current doctoral ethnographic fieldwork undertaken with British TJ, this paper fleshes out the contours of the debate with fresh data and new insights.

Carl Morris (University of Central Lancashire), *Reclaiming and Reimagining Islam: African-Caribbean Converts in Britain*

Recent research suggests that a growing number of British people from an African-Caribbean ethnic background are converting to Islam. Despite growing awareness of this phenomenon, there have been few attempts to understand the multi-faceted issues that are implied through this unique process of social and religious change. First, what are the decisions, challenges and continuing experiences that underpin the conversion of British African-Caribbean Muslims to Islam? Second, what are the

implications of this ethnic and cultural diversification for wider conceptions and practices of Islam in Britain? This paper attempts to answer these questions through the consideration of initial findings from an ongoing research project. It will be argued that a common theme for African-Caribbean Muslim converts in Britain is the re-appropriation and continuing exploration of interwoven ethnic and religious histories. Most interestingly, it will be suggested that this represents both a simultaneous articulation of Black Muslim identity and an engagement with a developing discourse in Britain relating to a multi-ethnic Islamic universalism.

18.00–18.15, *Short break*

**18.15–19.45: SESSION 5. The Caliphate, in Theory (Plenary)**

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Ayman Shihadeh (SOAS)*

Hugh Kennedy (SOAS), *Caliphate: An Idea Through the Ages*

Carool Kersten (King's College London), *The Caliphate in the Modern Muslim World: Political Ideal or Qur'anic Metaphor?*

**END OF DAY 1**