



## **BRAIS 2015**

### **THE SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES**

**London, 13–15 April 2015**

#### **Day 2: Tuesday, 14 April**

**9.00–10.00, BRAIS Annual General Meeting (Beveridge Hall)**

**10.00–11.30: SESSION 6. SIX PARALLEL SESSIONS**

##### **Panel 1: Qur'an and Hadith A**

*Room: Bedford, Chair: Tbc*

Johanne Louise Christiansen (Aarhus University, Denmark), *Ascetic practices in the Qur'an – the vigil as a case*

The concept of 'asceticism' has recently become an important concept in the study of religion. The Qur'ān and early Islam seem, however, to be ignored or seen as somewhat distinctive in discussions on asceticism, often due to the fact that Islamic monastic orders, parallel to those in Christianity, did not develop. The Qur'ān does on one side contain descriptions of ascetic practices, like fasting (Q2:183-187), and positive references to ascetics (Q5:82); but on the other side, a polemical tone is set towards those who exaggerate such practices (Q9:31-34; 17:26-27). Is the consequence of this ambiguity that the concept of 'asceticism' is irrelevant or misplaced regarding the Qur'ān? In this paper, I propose that Peter Sloterdijk's etymological definition of *áskýsis* as an 'exercise' is useful in understanding Qur'ānic

references to vigil practices. From a close reading of two passages in sūrat I-muzzammil (Q73:1-9, 20), I argue that Qur'ānic articulations of vigils can be considered as articulations of an ascetic training program that is intended not only to be a refrainment from sleep and 'normal' time, but also a way to maintain the level of training for the believer. In this way, the Qur'ān can be seen as taking part in a broader ascetic tendency of Late Antiquity.

Ramon Harvey (Cambridge Muslim College), *At the Branching of Qirā'āt and Fiqh in Kufa: Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī and the Legacy of the harf of 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd*

The idea of the Qur'an's revelation within seven Arabic ḥarfs (modes, or dialects) is often used to explain the phenomenon of the qirā'a (reading, or recitation) tradition. One of the qirā'āt long considered non-canonical is that associated with the companion 'Abdullāh b. Mas'ūd and his circle in Kufa, Iraq, in the mid-seventh century. Analysing early scholarly literature, this paper will build up a picture of Ibrāhīm al-Nakha'ī, a student of Ibn Mas'ūd by one remove, and his reported deployment of this qirā'a in selected exegetical contexts. His use of significant variations from the canonical text confirms the persisting importance of this ḥarf within the Kufan juristic tradition a century after the hijra. Investigation of foundational texts in early Ḥanafism reveals evidence of legal interpretations derived from the ḥarf of Ibn Mas'ūd, notwithstanding a refusal to give these variations the status of canonical qirā'a. I will suggest that with scholarly and political pressure for the qirā'a genre to conform to the 'Uthmānī muṣḥaf, the Kufan juristic tradition proved more receptive to the interpretative possibilities of the Mas'ūdian readings. The result is a contested legacy, with examples of such readings surviving in both theoretical and practical discussions of the developed Ḥanafī school.

Marie Nuar (Pontifical University of St. Thomas), *An Islamic Scriptural Anthropology*

A proper way of understanding humanity is not possible without knowing where man is from and why he is here. While there are a number of Qur'anic verses that speak of humanity's creation and mission, the one that speaks most clearly of the telos of that creation is Al-Dharyāt 56, which reads, "I have not created jinn and mankind except to serve me". A summary examination of some of the prominent Qur'anic commentators and their interpretation of the verse give insight into the understanding of the telos of humanity's creation according to the Qur'ān. The examination of the commentaries reveals certain recurring themes, foremost among them is that God or Allah creates humanity. The only proper response to this divine act is gratitude and obedience. An aspect of that obedience is to assume the role assigned by God, namely that of trustee or viceroy. If one follows God's dictates on worship than he/she will be rewarded in the next world. Through the revelation of the Qur'an, one is able to know humanity's place and mission in the created world and thereby act accordingly.

Mohammad Ali Tabataba'i and Saida Mirsadri (Tehran University), *The Qur'anic Cosmology in its Historico-cultural Backdrop*

This paper focuses on the Qur'anic cosmology and cosmography that has so far received very little scholarly attention compared to the other ancient cosmologies of this ilk. There is no doubt that the Qur'anic cosmology did not take form in a vacuum. Like all other historical phenomena, it is influenced by its time and space and seems to be a continuation of the earlier cosmological traditions of its environmental and neighbouring cultures, resulting in some commonalities and similarities between them. To highlight these overlaps, one should first and foremost give an image of the cosmos, the way the Qur'an every now and then describes, with all its detailed items – heaven and earth, celestial bodies, terrestrial objects, etc. To reach this goal, this work aims to depict an elaborate image (in a format of a 3D) of the cosmos as shown by the Qur'an. Having given an image of the Qur'anic cosmos, one will be enabled then to conduct a comparative study of the Qur'anic cosmology with its previous and contemporaneous cosmological trends and traditions – Sumerian, Babylonian, Biblical, Greek, etc. (through a visual comparison between them all). The result of this comparison would be showing the fact that the Qur'an, not only has a lot of similarities, as so far was speculated, with the Mesopotamian cosmology, but also with the Greek cosmology in some, at the first look unnoticed, details.

Belal Abo-Alabbas (University of Oxford), *Muhammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī in Contemporary Arabophone Scholarship: A Review Essay*

Influenced by the Western controversy about the authenticity of hadith, many Arabophone scholars have attempted to unearth the 9th-century methodology of hadith criticism. No doubt, Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī (d.256) is at the centre of this interest. This is not only because of his place in Hadith scholarship but more importantly the ambiguity around his methodology. While voluminous commentaries on his magnum opus, the Ṣaḥīḥ, continue to appear even today, there has not been sufficient research on his methodology (apart from reproductions of classical views on his methodology and criterion). However, today there is significant Arabophone scholarship that debates many classical notions about al-Bukhārī and his methodology. The most observable aspect of this debate is whether al-Bukhārī accepts indirect transmission (where is no clear mention of direct audition between the transmitter and his informant). This is based on the classical assumption that al-Bukhārī's methodology is essentially that of other critics like Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 261). However, there is an interesting trend that rejects this notion and attempts to construct al-Bukhārī's methodology from his other works, including al-Tārīkh al-kabīr (the Great History). In this paper I review almost fifty works to provide the English-speaking audience an interesting insight into the debate among Muslim scholars on hadith criticism, particularly al-Bukhārī's methodology.

## **Panel 2: Islamic Studies in Different University Contexts**

*Room: Bloomsbury, Chair: Tbc*

Syed Imtiaz (Cambridge Muslim College), *Characterising Orientalist Studies at the University of Cambridge 1929-1970*

This paper will consider the applicability of Edward Said's thesis on orientalism to a particular body of knowledge. Said's criticism of orientalism is that knowledge production in this field was directly related to the exercise of power through empire. Other scholars such as Robert Irwin and John MacKenzie have criticized this approach and have instead suggested that orientalist studies can also be characterised by curiosity, personal interest and admiration even. This paper will take as its body of knowledge doctorates awarded in the area of Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge from 1929-1970. A preliminary analysis has found that there were twenty-nine doctorates successfully submitted in this period. This particular period is chosen because Islamic Studies at the University of Cambridge was dominated at this time by two scholars: Professor Reynold Nicholson and Professor AJ Arberry. This paper will consider the PhD's that were submitted during this period, their content and approach and then identify how best this form of knowledge production can be characterised. This will then be compared with Edward Said's thesis on orientalism.

Robert Ivermee (SOAS), *The campaign for a Muslim university in colonial India*

Explanations of the campaign for a Muslim university in nineteenth century India traditionally focus on the political motivations of a group of Muslim elites concerned to protect and promote their temporal interests under colonial rule. This paper revisits the university campaign, revealing how it brought together Muslims from across northern India in an influential movement against secular colonial education. The refusal of the Government of India to accede to appeals for the establishment of a Muslim university forced Muslim elites to interrogate their position as a minority religious community. In the first decade of the twentieth century, redefinitions of Indian secularism were proposed by Muslim parties exploring possibilities for the accommodation of a plurality of religions within the Indian state and nation. The paper is part of a wider project on the impact of negotiations between Muslim and British parties in colonial India to the historical development of secularism on the subcontinent, soon to be published as *Secularism, Islam and Education in India, 1830-1910* (London: Pickering & Chatto). It offers a series of lessons for those interested in Islam, democracy and religious pluralism today.

Emilie Roy (Al Akhawayn University), *Combining Traditional Islamic Knowledge and Islamic Studies in Academia: Case Study at Al Akhawayn University*

The MA in Islamic Studies at Akhawayn University participates in the "Religious Studies" field of knowledge in the American liberal arts tradition. The students in this program are an all-male cohort of graduates from Qarawiyyin University (one of the renowned center of higher Islamic learning), who have memorized the Quran at an early age, studied Islamic theology and philosophy and have had little or no exposure to other religious tradition or academic field of study. The program takes

for granted that the earlier Islamic educational background of the students is to be complemented, not replaced, by the educational model of the University. MAIS students are Islamic scholars in their own right, experts in a specific episteme grounded in an Islamic theory of knowledge, and are then introduced to and become conversant with the academic study of religion in a liberal arts tradition. I will explore in this paper the difficulties faced and strategies used to facilitate this process of migration from an Islamic conception of knowledge, an episteme in which the students understand Truth as of divine origins, to the field of religious studies in a liberal arts tradition where conceptions of knowledge are devoid of divinely inspired truth claims.

### **Panel 3: Culture A**

*Room: Gordon, Chair: Tbc*

Essam Ayyad (Suez Canal University), *Early Terminology of Mosque Architecture: Derivation and Evolution*

As far as literary and archaeological evidence can tell, Arabia in pre- and early Islam did not possess a substantial architectural heritage. This situation had its clear impact on the early sources' usage of mosque architectural vocabulary. The terms used by the early Arabic informants to describe the elements and features of the earliest Islamic buildings were as rudimentary as the buildings themselves. As mosque architecture gained its distinctive character, the relevant lexicons underwent phases of maturation and particularization. The front part of the mosque, for instance, is referred to by the sources as: *zullat al-qibla*, *muqaddam al-masjid*, *bayt al-ṣalāh*, *al-mughattā*, *riwāq al-qibla*, etc. The application of such designations can be rationalized on chronological as well as geographical grounds; both are exquisitely linked to the evolution of the architectural element itself. Sometimes, the early authors' use of an architectural term was influenced by their own vernacular parlance. In other cases, they used contemporary, albeit inaccurate, idioms to designate old architectural features. This may well be attributed to the fact that many of the reports on the earliest mosques were written in a retrospective way. This research tries to give an insight into how the terminology of mosque architecture derived, and how the early Arabic sources' use of it developed. The main finding of this research is that the evolution of such terminology cannot be properly understood unless it is related to the cultural contexts in which the early mosques were erected and the early accounts were recorded.

Fozia Bora (University of Leeds), *Reflections on the fate of the Fatimid royal libraries: were they destroyed by Salah al-Din?*

A persistent myth featuring in some modern accounts of the transition from Fatimid to Ayyubid rule (1169–71) is that one of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's (r. 1171–93) first actions upon attaining sovereignty over Egypt was to destroy the Fatimids' book collections in their entirety. Medieval sources present a different, more nuanced depiction of books sold and dispersed over a decade or more, rather than extirpated and put out of circulation altogether. In this talk, I examine medieval Arabic accounts of the

episode, and find further indications of the robust survival of Fatimid-era works in the composition of later chronicles, where native Fatimid-era accounts, which clearly did endure beyond the Fatimid age, are well-represented. I will also look at the tendentious aspects of medieval accounts of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn's policies, and the difficulties they pose to a modern appraisal of the sultan's character and intellectual-ideological tendencies.

Marije Coster (University of Groningen), *Ties of blood versus ties of faith. The Muslim Muḥayyisa versus the non-Muslim Dirār b. al-Khattāb*

Arabic society before Islam was a tribal society. With the process of sedentarization tribal bonds became looser, but the ideal of tribal unity and loyalty was still very alive around Muḥammad's lifetime. Although the notion of the ummah as a supratribal community of believers is considered a fairly late development in Muḥammad's preaching, his call to obedience and submission to one God cut across tribal ties from the start of his prophetic career. In ancient Arabia, a poet kept the tribal wisdom and traditions and functioned as the oral register of the tribe's history and genealogy, as well as the defender of the tribe, of its morals and ideals, and its identity. As such, their discourse is an important study object for the research of early Islam. Many poetical compositions have been transmitted in which contemporaries of Muḥammad –converts and non-converts– react to his preaching and to the emerging socio-religious community of believers. Analysis and comparison of these compositions can shed light on the discourse of Arabic society around the time of emerging Islam, on the process of constitution of the early group of believers, and on the transformations, challenges, and tensions this community posed to existing social groups.

Zsuzsanna Zsidai (Hungarian Academy of Sciences), *What does Turk mean in the medieval Arabic sources? Remarks on an ethnonym*

The Arabs came into contact with the people of Central Asia from the 7th century as a result of the Islamic conquest, thus the Arabic sources often mention the peoples of Eurasia. My paper is focusing on the "Turks". The term "Turk" was used by medieval Arabic authors for several ethnic or social communities of the Steppe. The Arabic sources relate that we can find many Turkic tribes or peoples in different regions, such in Ferghana, Khorasan, Transoxania, Samarkand, and near to Armenia, so it is obvious that the name "Turk" can be interpreted in different ways. The identification of the various peoples has always been a serious and often discussed problem for those scholars who examined the history of the early medieval Eurasian Steppe. My aim is to point at some difficulties regarding the translation and interpretation of sources and to show some examples for the occurrence of "Turk" in the medieval Arabic texts. What did the name „Turk" mean? What kind of a social/ethnic group was it referred to? Framing the problems and possibilities we can use the "Turk" as a group-identifying term more carefully in the wider context of the early medieval world of the Eurasian steppe.

#### **Panel 4: The Transmission, Preservation and Socio-political Use of Knowledge: Historical Figures and Cultural Practices in Diverse Spatial Settings**

*Room: Woburn A, Chair: Hugh Kennedy (SOAS)*

Paula Manstetten (SOAS), *The Umayyad Mosque of Damascus as Educational Institution in the Medieval Period*

This paper looks at the diverse uses of the Umayyad mosque of Damascus for educational purposes during the hitherto understudied period of the mid-11th to mid-12th century, i.e. from the last years of Fatimid rule and the rise to power of the Seljuqs until the takeover of Nūr al-Dīn in 1154. As the central public space of Damascus, the Umayyad mosque was not only the main place for Muslim worship, but also the community's political and social centre. It was the principal venue for the transmission of knowledge in various disciplines (mainly Quran, ḥadīth, fiqh) which took place in numerous formal and informal study circles. By exploring the biographies of scholars involved in teaching and studying in the mosque, I will attempt to shed light on the following questions: How was knowledge produced, disseminated and consumed in the institutional setting of the mosque and who had access to it? How were Muslim scholars able to make use of the cultural practices taking place in the mosque to acquire status and authority? In what ways did the ruling elites try to insert themselves into the public space of the mosque in order to exercise control and to claim legitimacy?

Rasmus Bech Olsen (Birkbeck College), *The khaṭīb as Actor in 14th Mamluk Society*

This paper will focus on the social and political role of the khaṭīb – the officially appointed preacher of the congregational mosques - in 14th century Mamluk society. As the khaṭīb was obliged to mention the name of the ruler in the Friday sermon, he must be regarded as a key figure in a repeated ritual confirmation of civilian loyalty to the state. Despite his central position, the khaṭīb has rarely caught the attention of modern scholarship, once he stepped down from the pulpit. Therefore, his role as actor in the social field of Mamluk urban society remains largely unexamined. Drawing on contemporary chronicles and biographical dictionaries, this paper seeks to examine the office of the khaṭīb through the following questions: Did his role on the pulpit translate into a social and political position as mediator between state and civilian society? Can we detect a pattern of institutionalized behavior connected to this office? And lastly, did the role of the khaṭīb differ from city to city within the Mamluk realm?

Daisy Livingston (SOAS) *Archival and Documentary Practice in a Peripheral Milieu*

Historical scholarship on the Middle Period has often centred on elite groups with clear political or religious importance in medieval Islamic society, such as the Mamlūk sultans and 'ulamā', approached through the medium of literary sources. The relative rarity of original documents from the Middle Period, and the absence of state archives have hindered the use of documentary evidence for the histories of these elite groups. On the other hand, the nature of the documents that do survive

encourages consideration of a broad social cross-section, a perspective which allows for the use of the full range of extant, and hitherto neglected, documentary evidence. This paper examines both the content and the physical traces of documentary and archival practices contained within private and business letters originating from rural Egypt. It sheds light on archival and documentary practices in diverse milieus, and reflects on the social strategies and motivations of a range of actors who were involved in written communication and documentary preservation. It takes an inclusive approach, broadening the range of social groups under investigation, highlighting the actions of individuals situated outside the political and religious mainstream and emphasising the historical relevance of those who remain absent from traditional historical narratives.

Christopher David Bahl (SOAS), *Cultural Exchange across the Western Indian Ocean, 1400-1600. Travelling Scholars and the Transmission of Texts*

The following paper is concerned with the transregional transmission of Islamicate texts across the Western Indian Ocean in the late medieval and early modern periods. Whereas studies on Indian Ocean history have so far mainly stressed economic aspects and commercial activities, in the *longue durée* of transoceanic history various forms of cultural exchange represented an equally important connective phenomenon within this 'seascape' of interactions. Especially for the 15th and 16th centuries the voluminous transregional biographical dictionaries offer a plethora of materials for the study of transregional connections between Egypt, the Hijaz, and the Western Indian shores. While it will be crucial to read the transregional conceptualisation of these biographical dictionaries in terms of its cultural significance for this period, this paper will pursue two main approaches to the historiographical sources. First of all, scholarly networks will be reconstructed in order to reveal the academic conduct and itineraries of transregional agents. Secondly, this will be complemented by the examination of cultural practices of transmitting texts with regard to its specific forms and social environments. Thus, late medieval configurations of cultural encounters can be illuminated spanning the various regions of the Middle East and South Asia.

#### **Panel 5: Contemporary Issues B**

*Room: Woburn B, Chair: Tbc*

Lalel Gomari-Luksch (University of Tübingen), *State of God or Godless state: the continuity of religion and state unity in Iran*

The close relationship of religion and state in Iran has existed for much of the country's long history. For this reason, despite calls for regime change, it is highly unlikely that even a change of government will pursue secular politics. Iran will always remain a nation with a unified state and religion. This study deals with the question: "Why is it impossible to divorce religion and state in Iran?" I attempt to answer this issue through the lens of memories studies (Assmann 2011, Halbwachs 1925 [1992]) and argue that Iran's collective memory is inextricably linked with

religion, from Zoroastrianism in the ancient times to Islam in the modern era. In order to support my thesis, I will utilize the examples from popular culture from the 20th century onwards to provide discursive evidence for the continuity of religion and state. Moreover, I will provide details on how such a system has functioned since the Islamic Revolution of 1979 as modern conceptions of the state has been absorbed by Islam.

Caglar Ezikoglu (Aberystwyth University), *Justice and Development Party's Transformation in Turkey: From Conservative Democracy to Islamic Authoritarianism*

This paper tries to answer the question how we can explain the rise of Political Islam in Turkey under the AKP government and why AKP has transformed more authoritarian conservative regime in Turkey. AKP established as a winning coalition which includes moderate Islamists, moderate nationalists, secular but socially conservative centre-right voters and a sizable number of intellectuals. This coalition has continued until 2011 election which is AKP's victory as gaining half of the votes in election. AKP's winning coalition cannot survive because in all cases, winning coalition must fall its power inherently. AKP has tried to keep his winning coalition as small as possible. After 2011, the support of liberals and centre-right actors, which are the secular part of this coalition, decreased due to AKP's autocracy. As a result, the impact of Political Islam in Turkish public and political life has increased from day to day. It is clear that; the aim of conservative democracy has transformed to the rise of Political Islam with more authoritarian regime in Turkey under Erdogan's government.

Vahram Petrosyan (Yerevan State University); *The Rise and the Evolution of Political Islam in Iraqi Kurdistan*

The attention of experts of international relations has been turned increasingly in recent years to the problem of Iraqi Kurdistan in the context of considerable international changes. The paper is an attempt to mainly combine the mutual influence of domestic and foreign challenges of the radical Islamic trends in Iraqi Kurdistan in the context of the policy of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and within the framework of regional security. While reviewing the evolution of Political Islam in Iraqi Kurdistan throughout 1950s to present, and in addition to the above-mentioned issues, I would like to present some crucial sub-points: religion and the Kurdish Identity, Naqshbandi (Nakşbendi) and Qadiriyya orders (tarikats) in Iraqi Kurdistan, Naqshbandi factor in Turkish Kurdistan, ethnic and religious minorities in Iraqi Kurdistan, the Rise of Islamic Fundamentalism in Iraqi Kurdistan, the Political Islamic Movements in Iraqi Kurdistan and the Evolution of Political Islam, Ansar al-Islam - al-Qaeda connections, KRG and the Managing of Political Islam in Iraqi Kurdistan, ISIS and the Islamist Threat in Iraqi Kurdistan, Fethullah Gülen Movement in the context of Turkey –KRG relations, Fethullah Gülen Movement's activities in the territory administered by the KRG, Contemporary Main Political and Islamic trends in Iraqi Kurdistan. The paper aims to come up with pertinent findings, and provides insightful recommendations for the study of the Kurdish Political Islam issue within the framework of regional security.

## **Panel 6: Muslims in the West B (Pecha Kucha format)**

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Tbc*

Fayaz Alibhai (University of Edinburgh), *People, Places and Texts: Presenting and Representing Islam at The Edinburgh International Book Festival*

There is a long and established history of analysis on the representation of Islam and Muslims. Epitomised by classic treatments such as Orientalism (Said, 1978), these works remain forseably salient against the backdrop of contemporary and wide-ranging policy and academic debates about the extent and dangers of both radicalisation among Muslims and Islamophobia. Given that many recent perspectives, particularly within the specialism of Muslims in Britain, have revolved primarily around such representation in the media, this study aims instead to explore the phenomenon within the confines of one of Britain's most widely acclaimed literary festivals, the Edinburgh International Book Festival. In the specific context of Edinburgh, Scotland, where comparatively less research on Muslims has so far been undertaken, the paper will draw upon ethnographic fieldwork conducted from 2011-2013, examining how the space of the festival not only portrays Islam but also propounds ideas about Islam. It will highlight emergent themes from festival events and discuss how they contribute to wider public understandings of Islam and Muslims. In so doing, it hopes to shed new light on concepts such as religious literacy, authority and leadership in Islam, and Muslim diversity.

Laurens De Rooij (Durham University), *The Interpretation of Islam in the News by a non-Muslim audience*

News debates with regards to Islam and Muslims seems to be dealing with stories that either discuss terrorism, violence and unwelcome/irrational behaviour or the integration and the compatibility of Muslims and Islam with western values and society. At the level of media consumerism, there is little work on how the everyday media practices of non-Muslims in Britain affect and engage the practices of the audience. This paper will discuss how news media consumption by non-Muslims relates to the construction and expression of interpretations and ideas with regards to Islam and Muslims. The conclusions of this paper are based on empirical fieldwork conducted in Britain in 2012-2013 among members of the public living in England at the time. The paper will be linked to media usage in the public sphere influencing religious identity construction and the conceptualisation of the religious identity of others in network society. The effect of media narratives regarding Islam from a number of sources consist of among others blame, trust, curiosity, prejudice and persecution and is used by the various communities to construct the identity of Muslims and define their place and role in society. The existing protocols of media and public space of a given context characterise the kinds of experiences communities are exposed to, as well as dictating their participation.

Des Delaney (Dublin City University), *Resolving Recognitive-Power Dilemmas: The Everyday Experience of Sunni Muslim Individuals in Dublin, Ireland*

In recent years, due to the increased visibility of immigrants and the rise of Islamic terrorism, there has been a dramatic increase in studies that aim to gain a deeper understanding of Muslim populations in the West. In the European context, such empirical studies invariably focus on “core” nation-states whilst a dearth of research pertains to “peripheral” countries, such as the Republic of Ireland. In addition, the existing Irish literature tends to lack theoretical underpinning and methodological sophistication. To fill the gap in the existing literature, this paper presents an overview of my doctoral project that focused on examining how Sunni Muslim individuals living in Dublin perceive how they are recognised within various spheres of everyday interaction and how such perceptions of recognition affect identity formation and maintenance. To conduct such a study, Axel Honneth’s social critical theory of recognition has been synthesised with a qualitative sociological thematic analysis of interviews and focused discussion groups.

Alyaa Ebbiary (SOAS), *You Are What You Learn: Religiously Educating British Muslims*

Once upon a time, Islamic scholars were innovative pioneers in the fields of science, mathematics and linguistics. Now they are arguing about beard-lengths and moon-sitings. A crude caricature, maybe, but one that can be heard regularly in British mosques, Muslim civil society and over dinner tables. The state, or lack of, a highly educated religious elite to match the polymaths of the Muslim ‘glory days’ is a common lament of many a second generation Muslim, and one that feeds into ideas around identity and communal self-esteem. What happened to Islamic education? Beyond the national panics about Trojan Horses and religious segregation, there is a growing trend of young British-born and British-educated Muslims demanding ‘Islamic education’ - exactly what this is, has increasingly become a subject of speculation and inquiry. The settlement and growth of a largely migrant-origin faith community, which is arguably getting a higher quality of education from the state infrastructure, is now seeking a quality and rigor not afforded by their community institutions. What constitutes a ‘traditional education’ in the mind of British Muslims? Is it a simple harking back to the past forms of religious learning or is it something different? My paper will explore some of these educational movements and innovations in the Muslim community in Britain.

Alaya Forte (SOAS), *Flags and hijabs: the problematic and contested nature of symbols in contemporary Britain*

Hanna Pitkin (1967) spoke of symbols as being recipients of feelings and expressions of emotions intended for what they represent, rather than sources of information. The use of symbols in contemporary Britain, and the emotional response they intend to trigger, is on the rise, but what happens when the Union Jack meets the hijab? The recent campaign Making A Stand, featured in The Sun and aimed at empowering British Muslim women to come together against IS, did just that, but without first incurring a wide backlash of criticism. Journalist Myriam Francois-Cerrah warned that “voices fit into a broader discourse...and that broader

discourse is one within which there is the presumption of guilt [...]. So to absolve ourselves, we [Muslims] must prove our Britishness". A closer analysis of this campaign, and the debates it generated, will expose the pitfalls of attaching burdened symbols to the category of Muslim women, already hugely complex and heterogeneous. This will also be an opportunity to explore in more detail, and problematise, the debate on the hijab in the UK, its place as a signifier of belonging and the role of gender in redefining the boundaries of national citizenship.

Sandra Maurer (University of Kent), *Digital Islam: Adapting traditional Islamic Practice in contemporary Britain*

Islamic traditions such as Qur'anic memorization, recitation and sama (listening) play a central role in the hearts and minds of Muslim communities. Media scholars such as Gary Bunt and Charles Hirschkind trace modern day practices, which cross boundaries into popular culture and digital experience of religion. Although we recognise that people seem to have digital religious experiences we have yet to adequately inquire how they evoke spiritual and religious value. My paper will address how some young Muslims create meaningful experiences with the Qur'an by utilising Islamic practice through modern media such as YouTube and smartphones. Drawing on two ethnographic case studies undertaken in 2013 and 2014 of young Muslims' interaction with oral traditions of the Qur'an, I will argue that the Islamic concept of *niyah* (intention) facilitates the means to transform non-traditional practice into meaningful spiritual and religious interaction with Allah. Considering contemporary theories of individualisation I will show that Islamic practice depends on social context. In conclusion this paper will offer valuable phenomenological insight into modern Qur'anic activity in Britain; although preferred medium and style of practice may become adapted to suit individual preference and needs, the essence of Islamic Qur'anic tradition remains the same.

Karim Mitha and Shelina Adatia (University of Edinburgh + ITREB Canada), *Toques and tea, or chapals and chai: Muslims, media, masti, and meaning*

Often, Muslims in Western contexts are portrayed in an Orientalist fashion, conforming to tropes of terror and alienation. While these tend to reflect the prevalent discourse of Muslim minorities, there is an increasing effort by Muslims themselves to subvert this depiction to reflect how they position themselves in their country of residence. The Canadian television program, "Little Mosque on the Prairie", was, by admission of its UK-born, female, Muslim creator Zarqa Nawaz, envisioned as a medium for cultural understanding. It depicts Muslims as "normal" individuals, while addressing controversial issues. Indeed, this genre of "Muslim comedy" has now reached UK shores with the controversial "Citizen Khan", by UK-born comedian Adil Ray. While it can be said that both are seeking to encourage cross-cultural dialogue through comedy, each has taken a different approach in its depiction of its national Muslim populations, and reflects the community's integration. This paper will examine, using the examples of "Little Mosque on the Prairie" and "Citizen Khan", how Muslims are engaging with media to construct Muslim identity and address issues of integration and race relations. Furthermore, it will argue that these two programs reflect the current discourse surrounding multiculturalism and Muslim

integration in their respective countries and in so doing, are actively involved in forging their own meaning of the Canadian/British Muslim identities.

Daide Pettinato (University of Exeter), *British Muslim Youth Fighting Against Global Injustice: Introducing 'MADE in Europe'*

This paper offers an original contribution to the study of Islam and Muslims in Britain and of Muslim faith-based activism by presenting an analysis of the discursive and strategic co-ordinates developed by the British Muslim advocacy-NGO 'MADE in Europe'. Through this case study, the paper aims to challenge incomplete and unhelpful essentialisations of Muslim activism, and rather to prompt curiosity about justice-centred currents within it that have the potential to contribute tackling some of today's 'global issues'. In particular, two research questions are explored here: 1) how are the notions of faith and activism articulated by MADE with regards to the Islamic framework of reference?; 2) how can the type of activism exemplified by MADE be located within the wider ecology of Muslim activism? Using data from MADE's public material (publications, videos, web presence, etc.) and adopting an analytical framework inspired by social movement theory, the paper highlights two main results: 1) that MADE develops a discourse that indicates the emergence of four main Collective Action Frames ('Identity/belief', 'Agency/movement', 'Justice/rights', and 'Glocality'); and 2) that MADE's faith-based advocacy efforts may exemplify larger trends within British Muslim youth which have an desire for innovative and fluid nuances of activism that may combine in eclectic ways religion, identity, and aesthetics with a concern for interconnected 'glocal' issues and a broad sense of social justice.

Farrah Sheikh (SOAS), *A Tale of Three Cities: Spiritual Stories from British Muslims in London, Leicester and Norwich*

At a time where Muslims in Britain are painted as a community in opposition to British values and is still viewed as mainly an immigrant community, which refuses to integrate, it has become more important than ever before to allow Muslims to tell their own stories and shape a counter-narrative in their own words. Identity formation in Muslim minority communities in Britain is a complex process, which often involves negotiating several facets of the self simultaneously. These facets often include cultural, sectarian, national, linguistic and spiritual dimensions. The present research uncovers a community slowly moving away from the ethnic ties of parents, preferring to re-establish itself as a faith-based community. It looks at the role of spirituality in the formation of British Muslim identity as it emerges as a community in transition by telling the stories of Muslims negotiating everyday racisms and the role religion and spirituality plays in their lives. This paper aims to present a set of British Muslim stories from a range of ethnic, sectarian and linguistic backgrounds from fieldwork conducted in Leicester, London and Norwich and discuss preliminary findings related to the role of spirituality in formulating an identity that is uniquely British and inherently Muslim.

11.30–12.00 *Refreshments*

**12.00–13.30: SESSION 7. TWO PARALLEL PANELS**

**Panel 1:**

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Saeko Yazaki (University of Glasgow)*

Likayat Takim (McMaster University, Canada), *Fiqh for minorities: Shi'i law in the diaspora*

This paper will examine the new diasporic jurisprudence that has emerged within Shi'i juridical circles. It will discuss the tools that are discussed and elucidated in Shi'i legal theory (*usul al-fiqh*) and will argue that these present a significant amount of flexibility in proposing novel ways of interpreting traditional sources. Principles within Islamic jurisprudence are invoked to facilitate social and political exigencies. Indeed, within the Shi'i diaspora community in the West, many things that were considered prohibited (*haram*) in the past are now deemed permissible (*halal*). The paper will also examine some of the hermeneutical tools that Shi'i jurists have deployed in coming up with novel solutions to the challenges the community has encountered in the West. The paper will further examine juridical pronouncements on three issues that impact Muslims in the West. These are: the purity of the people of the book, offering prayers and fasting in areas where the sun does not set or rise, and shaking hands with members of the opposite gender. During this discussion, I will examine the methodological tools posited in Islamic legal theory (*usul al-fiqh*) that have been invoked in revising earlier rulings.

Douglas Pratt (University of Waikato and University of Bern), *A tale of two dialogues: 21st-century Christian-Muslim initiatives*

Early in the twentieth century missionary elements in the Christian Church began to question long-held exclusivist and negative assumptions toward other religions. By mid-century far-reaching changes were underway: other religions and their peoples, including especially Islam and Muslims, were honoured as dialogue-partners and viewed as co-religionists capable of common cause action. And early in the 21st century, in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and the concomitant global focus on Islam, including an upsurge in both socio-cultural and interreligious relations with Muslims, there have been many new initiatives as well as the reinvigorating of longer-standing dialogical relationships. In 2002 there occurred two initiatives by Christians to reach out and engage the Muslim world. One was very much a 'top-down' approach, emanating out of England. The other was more a 'bottom-up' event within the German context. Both quickly settled into a regular, annual, conference-style meeting with published outcomes. This paper will offer a review of these wider dialogical developments and a discussion of the nature and significance of the contributions of the 'Building Bridges' seminar series begun by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the 'Theologisches Forum Christentum-Islam' initiated by an ecumenical group of young scholars in Germany.

## **Panel 2: New Trajectories in the Study of Tafsir: Two Recent Volumes**

Room: Woburn B, Discussant: Andrew Rippin (University of Victoria), Institute of Ismaili Studies book launch

Karen Bauer (Institute of Ismaili Studies), *Aims and methods of the genre of tafsir*

Andreas Görke (University of Edinburgh) and Johanna Pink (Freiburg University, Germany), *Understanding tafsir in its broader intellectual context*

13.30–14.30, Lunch

## **14.30–16.00: SESSION 8. SIX PARALLEL PANELS**

### **Panel 1: The Qurʾān: The Text and its Reception**

*Room: Bedford, Chair: Omar Alí-de-Unzaga (Institute of Ismaili Studies)*

Andrew Rippin (University of Victoria), *The Names of the Chapters of the Qurʾān*

Published studies of manuscripts of the Qurʾān note that, in general, the earliest texts we have did not originally indicate the name of each sūra at its beginning, as is now the standard practice in copies of the muṣḥaf. Further, when the titles do start to appear, variant names are sometimes attested. Modern Muslim common opinion (as evidenced by recent publications) asserts that the sūra names stem from Muḥammad and that only a small number of sūras have more than one name; other names that are known to be given to sūras are considered ways in which those sūras are referred to (e.g., in tafsīr) and are not their names as such. Given the manuscript evidence (which itself needs to be collated and analysed), there is a significant history to how such a consensus position has been arrived at. After considering some of the textual evidence that is readily available, this paper will map out the basic contours of the historical discussions concerning the sūra names and will suggest some future research projects that might bring additional clarity to the issue.

Asma Hilali (Institute of Ismaili Studies), *Was the Ṣanʿāʾ palimpsest a Work in Progress? A Reconsideration of Old Qurʾān Manuscript Studies*

Manuscript 01-27.1 held in the Dār al-Makḥṭūṭāt in Ṣanʿāʾ, Yemen, has been known as the “Ṣanʿāʾ palimpsest” since its discovery in 1976 by the German scholar Gerd Puin. MS 01-27.1 contains 38 folios of two superimposed Qurʾānic texts. The studies on this manuscript emerged from the scholarly interest in Qurʾān manuscripts that arose in the nineteenth century. The new dating technologies, namely radiocarbon 14 (RC14) dating, have influenced the atmosphere of research in the field thanks to the attractive prospects presented by the oldest dates obtained through this technique. Most of the studies focus on the differences between the manuscript,

especially the lower layer, and the standard Qur'ān (Cairo edition). In my paper, I explain my method of deciphering and reconstructing the lower layer of the manuscript; I describe the challenges of the edition work and present my principal results. I focus on the usage of the manuscript by its contemporaries during the first/second century AH (seventh/eighth century CE). I conclude that MS 01-27.1 represents, especially in the lower layer, a work in progress.

Nuha Alshaar (Institute of Ismaili Studies), *Ibn Rushd/ Averroës' Rational Reading of the Qur'ān*

Although many scholars have attempted to study the Qur'an in religious literature, less attention has been paid to its reception in non-religious traditions. This paper explores the Qur'ānic reading of the Muslim Andalusian philosopher Ibn Rushd/ Averroës (d. 595/1198). Averroës, who is known for his commentaries on Aristotelian writings, is the only Arabic philosopher to write a book on the relationship between philosophy and religion. In *Faṣl al-maqāl* (The Decisive Treatise), he introduced important ideas on religion and developed a non-religious philosophy of language, which is central in his treatment of the Qur'ān. In order to make sense of certain Qur'ānic statements, Averroës uses various literary techniques which, without offending the divine nature of the Qur'ān, creatively facilitate variable interpretations of the Qur'ān in correspondence with the intellectual abilities of readers since according to Averroës; people possess different capacities of comprehension. This paper will critically discuss how Averroës' rational reading of the Qur'ān can offer an intellectual tool to dialogue with the scripture. It will explore how the need to deal rationally with the sacred text led Averroës to develop a philosophical theory of language, and how this approach could be utilised for modern discussions on religion and rationality.

Kazuyo Murata (King's College London), *Prophetic Beauty in Comparison: Adam, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and Muhammad in Rūzbihān Baqlī's Qur'an and Hadith Commentaries*

Ruzbihan Baqli Shirazi (d. 1209) has long been known as a lover of beauty on all levels, from the earthly to the divine, and the theme of beauty figures prominently in his writings. This paper examines Ruzbihan's presentation of prophetic beauty in his commentaries on the Qur'an (Ara'is al-bayan) and the Hadith (Ara'is al-hadith) with a focus on the following five prophets: Adam, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, and Muhammad. Key Qur'anic verses and hadiths to be examined include: He taught Adam the names, all of them (Q. 2:31); Prostrate to Adam (Q. 2:34); My Lord, show me how You bring the dead back to life (Q. 2:260); This is my Lord (Q. 6:76, 6:77, 6:78); O father, indeed I saw eleven stars, the sun, and the moon prostrating to me (Q. 12:4); My Lord, show me so that I may look upon You (Q. 7:143); I threw love upon you from Me for you to be made upon My eyes (Q. 20:39); "Whoever has seen me has seen the Real"; and "I saw my Lord in the most beautiful form." Comparison of Ruzbihan's interpretation of the above verses and hadiths reveals the unique nature of each prophet's beauty in Ruzbihan's understanding.

## Panel 2: Asia

Room: Bloomsbury, Chair: Tbc

Mansur Ali (Cardiff University) How do we know the Prophet said it? Hadith commentary as polemic in post-colonial India: a study of al-Uthmani's l'la al-Sunan

In his seminal work, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, Mohammed Qasim Zaman mentions that the genre of Hadith literature known as Sharh (commentary) is not a neutral work written to explain the Prophetic teachings to people. He argues that the 'commentary' also functioned as discursive work which was employed to promote a partisan view or for settling old scores. This paper explores one such book of Hadith commentary, the *l'la' al-Sunan*, written in post-colonial India as a response to allegations by the Indian Ahl-e-Hadith scholars levelled at the Hanafi School of Thought that it has no basis in Hadith. The paper explores the author, Zafar Ahmad Al-Uthmani's (d. 1974) methodology in aligning the Hadith to the opinions of the Hanafi School. It maps out how the author does this by first deconstructing the traditional sciences of Hadith (*ulum al-Hadith*) and then reconstructing a new methodology using hermeneutical tools developed in Hanafi legal theory (*usul al-fiqh*). The paper further deliberates on the implications of this new hermeneutic and questions whether it offers a new framework to read seemingly controversial hadith texts in new light.

Muhammad Arshad (University of the Punjab), Muhammad Asad's concept of Ijtihad: A critical evaluation

The proposed study seeks to examine the principles and methodology for the reconstruction of Islamic law as proposed by Muhammad Asad (1900-1992) an Austrian convert to Islam. Asad emerged as a vehement protagonist for the revival of the spirit of *ijtihad* and independent reasoning. Asad, following the footsteps of Ibn Hazm, denounced the trend of *taqlid* very harshly. He was greatly influenced by modernist thinkers notably among them were Mufti Muhammad Abduh, Rashid Riza and Dr. Muhammad Iqbal. While his stay in India Asad was encouraged by Iqbal to undertake the exposition of Islamic constitutional and the formulation of a methodology for the reconstruction of Islamic law. With the emergence of Paksitan in 1947 he was appointed as Director of the newly created Department of Islamic Reconstruction. Asad formulated a blueprint of Islamic constitution, laid down a scheme for the Islamization of the newly emerged state of Pakistan and suggested a methodology for the reconstruction of Islamic Law. He also vehemently advocated for the codification of Islamic law. Asad called, not just for a partial reformation of the existing corpse of Islamic fiqh and law, rather advocated for a free exercise of independent reasoning and a thorough reconstruction of Islamic law, based only on the *nusus* of the Qur'an and Sunnah. He has endeavoured to redefine the concept of *nass*. He has also suggested a thorough critical evaluation of the *hadith* corpse and compilation of an authentic collection of hadith. The principle of *maslaha* has a vital significance in Asad's methodology. Asad, in his proposed methodology, discards the existing schools of Islamic law, and rejects the notion of *talfiq*. Asad's notion of

ijtihad and his proposed scheme for the reconstruction of Islamic law met with a harsh criticism from the traditional ulama' of the *hanafi* school of law as they perceived it militating the very spirit of school. They lodged a protest with the Government and asked for the closure of the Department of Islamic Reconstruction. To appease the traditional ulama' government acted promptly and Asad was removed from its Directorship in 1950.

Raana Bokhari (Lancaster University), *A Challenge to the Discourse by 'Takfiri' Extremism in Pakistan*

The issue of diversity within Islam and the protection of human rights within and without Islam has been challenged on an unprecedented scale in Pakistan over the last sixty years. Islam prides itself in the guarantee of human rights, purportedly enshrined in both the Quran and Sunnah. However minority group have been systematically killed in Pakistan under the slogan of puritanical Islam. That being the case, Islamic theologies have been used to justify the erosion of the human right to life: Deobandi affiliated schools in Indo-Pak have declared Shias to be 'wajibul qatal'. Statistics show that over 60,000 Shias, Hindus, Christians, Barelwi Sunnis and Ahmadis have been killed in Pakistan under this claim. This paper examines how 'Islamic' theologies have challenged the very essence of human rights – the sanctity of the right to life itself – and how minority communities have grappled with voicing their counter-claims of absolute right to life. The focus will be on the Shia killings in Pakistan and their articulations of how Islam enshrines human rights. The points of disjuncture between theological claims and socio-political realities will be examined by the use of historical and statistical evidence.

Siti Nor Aisyah Ngadiran (Universiti Teknologi Malaysia), *The Issues of Western Interpretation on the History of Islam in Malaysia-Indonesia from the Perspective of Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas*

The concept of so-called Malay studies; provided by British and Dutch scholars as well as their ideas have widely spread in the Malaysia-Indonesia. Until now their methods, findings, concepts are still in use by the local scholars; and also have been blindly imitated by some of them. The historical sources which are mainly Malay Muslim historical sources reviewed in accordance with the western perspectives while the principles that should be taken into consideration have been ignored. Thus, this problem is seen by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas as one of the biggest challenge which was brought about by the Western civilization particularly in our tradition of knowledge especially in the history of Islam; and also in our educational system. For him, the lack of understanding in local cultures, language and religion have been caused the rejection of things proved true and correct, and also caused the wrong interpretation of the Muslim historical sources and documents. Thus this article presents an outline of some issues of Western Interpretation particularly on the history of Islam in these regions based on his perspective.

Max Regus (Tilburg University), *Constructing Inclusive Citizenship in Quasi-Secular State: Some Reflection on the Case of Ahmadiyya Islam Minority in Contemporary Indonesia*

By taking the current case of Ahmadiyya Islam Minority, this paper will discuss some important aspects related to the interreligious relationship, the practise of human rights and the position of state in Indonesia as the biggest Islam population but still is not an Islamic state. Theologically, mainstream Islam does not recognize this group as part of the Islam. Two fatwa, in 1980 and 2005, issued by the MUI (Indonesian Muslim Scholar) has declared the Ahmadiyya as a heretical group. At the state level, national state have intended to stop all activities of Ahmadiyya group. However, as secular state, Indonesia need to think that political and legal protection for citizens to be necessary condition for the fulfillment of the principles of democracy and the secular state. This paper will analyze and answer the main question on how Indonesia construct framework of inclusive citizenship in the context of violent attack against Ahmadiyya Islam minority. This question will connect with many issues such as main actors, strategy, policy options in relating with the dynamics and problems of the constructing inclusive citizenship in Indonesia and worldwide.

**Panel 3: Medieval Muslims Responding to Christian Challenges**

*Room: Gordon, Chair: Jon Hoover*

Diego Sarrió Cucarella (Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies), *Shihab al-Din al-Qarafi on fighting for God's cause: virtue or vice?*

This paper discusses the Cairene jurist Shihab al-Din al-Qarafi's (d. 1285) views of the morality of fighting for God's cause, as expressed in his work *al-Ajwiba al-fakhira* (Splendid replies). This book is among the most extensive and important medieval Muslim refutations of Christianity composed in response to a popular apology for Christianity written by the Melkite Bishop of Sidon, Paul of Antioch, around the year 1200. Although Paul remained silent on the issue of the spread of Islam through military conquest, al-Qarafi still felt the need to address the question, aware as he was of the popularity of this argument in Christian polemics against Islam. Al-Qarafi also raised the issue of religious warfare in connection with his defense of the universality of Muhammad's prophethood, this in reply to Paul's contention that Muhammad was sent exclusively to the Arab pagans of his time. From his treatment of the subject, it becomes evident that al-Qarafi conceives Muhammad's wars as religiously driven, an expression of his fight against error and unbelief. Unlike other prophets through whom God executes vengeance on one particular nation, Muhammad's universal mandate makes his nation a chosen instrument of divine vengeance on all the unfaithful nations.

Zeynep Yuçedogru (University of Nottingham), *Ibn Taymiyya's Contextual Interpretation of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in Matthew 28:19*

It is a widespread assumption that the Damascene theologian Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) takes an agnostic approach to the reliability of the text of the Bible. Although

this assumption is accurate to some extent, Ibn Taymiyya also provides exceptionally incisive and notable interpretations of biblical verses without direct recourse to the Qur'an. In his refutation of Christianity, al-Jawab al-Sahih (The Correct Response), he employs a systematic exegetical methodology that focuses on the language of the Bible itself. Despite excellent studies on al-Jawab al-Sahih, which investigate the arguments of Ibn Taymiyya pertaining to the Trinity and the Incarnation, his exegesis of individual verses from the Bible is still to be explored. In this paper, I will outline Ibn Taymiyya's contextual methodology in interpreting Matthew 28:19. This will highlight the terms and concepts found in discussions of language in Islamic theology and legal theory that Ibn Taymiyya uses to advance his analysis. These include the terms *mutawati'* (univocal) and *mushtarak* (equivocal) which denote different ways that words refer. I will also touch on the controversy over *haqiqa* (literal) and *majaz* (non-literal) meanings in the mainstream Islamic tradition and show how Ibn Taymiyya subverts this dichotomy in his contextual interpretation of the Bible.

Younus Mirza (Allegheny College), *The Disciples as Companions: Ibn Taymiyya's Refutation of the Exegetical Argument that the Messengers (rusul) in Surat Ya Sin are the Disciples of Jesus*

Scholarship on Ibn Taymiyya of Damascus often posits him as an Islamic fundamentalist who summarily dismisses Jewish and Christian literature and maintains that the Qur'an and Sunna are sufficient for the Muslim community. In this paper, I will demonstrate that Ibn Taymiyya's engagement with Christianity in his famous al-Jawab al-Sahih (The Correct Response) led him to reexamine the Qur'an and its exegetical tradition. In al-Jawab al-Sahih, Ibn Taymiyya responds to the Christian 'Letter to a Muslim Friend' which, among other things, argues that the Qur'an supports the view that the Disciples of Jesus were divinely protected from error (*ma'sum*). Ibn Taymiyya counters that the Disciples are analogous to the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad and thus could not be divinely protected 'messengers' (*rusul*). In a treatise written after al-Jawab al-Sahih, Ibn Taymiyya further asserts that the *rusul* mentioned in surat Ya Sin could not be Jesus' Disciples as other exegetes claim, but refer instead to other prophets. Those who allege that the *rusul* in surat Ya Sin are Jesus' Disciples are therefore unknowingly falling into the trap of a Christian apologetic argument. Thus Ibn Taymiyya's engagement with Christianity spurred him to undertake intertextuality between the Qur'an and Christian sources.

Mònica Colominas Aparicio (University of Amsterdam), *Religious Polemics as Discursive Practices in Late Medieval Christian Iberia: The Literature of the Mudejars against the Christians and the Jews*

Since the beginnings of Islam, Muslims have actively engaged in the production and consumption of religious polemics with Christians and Jews. Scholars have often focused on medieval polemical literature produced in majority Muslim territories but have paid less attention to this genre among the Muslim minority communities in the Christian territories of the Iberian Peninsula, known as Mudejars. The main aim of this paper is to shed light on the corpus of Mudejar polemics as embedded within

their larger processes of identity construction vis-à-vis the Christian majority community and the Jews, who were themselves the other important religious minority in the Peninsula. To this end, I analyze the Mudejars' polemical discourses in relationship to the more general discursive practices of the members of their communities in Christian Iberia and to major Muslim knowledge centers of their time. I present a typology of their literary production and underline the Mudejars' agency in developing their unique understanding of 'polemics' that seems to reflect the resilience of their sustained contacts with Christians and Jews.

#### **Panel 4: Classical Islamic Thought B**

*Room: Worburn A, Chair: Tbc*

Emrah Kaya (University of Nottingham), *A Comparison of the Divine Names and Attributes in Ibn al-Arabi and Ibn Taymiyya*

Muhyi al-Din Ibn al-Arabi (d. 1240) and Taqi al-Din Ahmad Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) as two significant and leading scholars have been so influential not only in their time but also today. In this presentation, I will focus comparatively on the subject of the divine names and attributes, as a particular topic, according to Ibn al-Arabi and Ibn Taymiyya. Since while the time is limited and the subject is very deep and complex, I confine myself to the relationship between the Essence of God (al-dhat) and the names; and the incomparability (tanzih) and similarity (tashbih) of God. The first aspect of this issue is related to God Himself while the second aspect of the issue is related to the relationship between God and the originated beings in the cosmos. This kind of comparison is going to show us that even though these thinkers are assumed to be very opposed to each other, even on such an important theological issue, it is possible to see many significant similarities between Ibn al-Arabi and Ibn Taymiyya. In this point, my purpose is to draw attention to that the differences of these thinkers are mostly related to their styles, terminologies, interpretations, or concerns rather than their thoughts.

Rami Koujah (Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education), *On the Purposiveness of God's Actions and its implications on legal theory: A look through the writings of Sayf Al-Din al-Amadi*

Mu'tazilites and Ash'arites agreed that God is wise (ḥakīm), but they disagreed as to the nature of His wisdom. For instance, the Mu'tazilites affirmed a necessarism that emanated from God's wisdom; since God is wise, they argued, it must necessarily be so that He acts in a way that is consistent with His wisdom. The Ash'arites, in their incessant quest to uphold God's omnipotence, argued against this necessarism. This debate was subsumed under the discussion on the nature of ethical value (al-ḥusn wa-l'qubḥ), and a part of it dealt with the nature of God's actions. More specifically, competing theologians argued as to whether or not God's actions were motive-driven, purposeful, or pursuant of an objective. If God is wise, as the consensus holds, how can God's actions not be purposive? Is such a purpose directed towards God or His creation? If God is not purposive, how can this be reconciled with His wisdom? Ultimately, how do commitments to these doctrines

impact conceptions on the nature of law, legal theory, and man as a norm-subject (mukallaf)? This paper aims to shed light on this topic through a close reading of Sayf al-Dīn al-Āmidī's (d. 630/1233) theological and legal texts, along with the influences it exhibits from received Ash'arite and (constructed) Mu'tazilite doctrines, with a brief look of the influence it had on the legal theory of his student, al-'Izz b. 'Abd al-Salām (d. 660/1261).

Seyed Mousavian (University of Gothenburg and Institute for Research in Fundamental Sciences, IPM), *On the Origination of Human Soul: From an Avicennian Point of View*

Ontological problems with Avicenna's view on the nature of human soul run deep. Regarding the origination of human soul, according to the conventional wisdom, see, among others, Thérèse-Anne Druart (2000, 262-3), Michael Marmura (2008, 122), and Dimitri Gutas (2012, 417-8), Avicenna is committed to the following thesis: (C) Human soul is originated with human body. We will be trying to argue against the conventional interpretation. More particularly, we will be trying to argue that Avicenna's view on the origination of human soul is consistent with the following thesis: (N) Human soul is not originated with human body. We will try to show how Avicenna may consistently be read in accordance with (N). Further, as far as Avicenna's view on the origination of human soul is concerned, we submit that (N) is superior to (C) for two reasons: First, Avicenna's treatise *The Animal in The Healing* fare better when read under the assumption (N), as opposed to (C) and, second, Avicenna's metaphysical view on the impossibility of substantial motion suggests that the existence of human soul precedes the existence of human body, or so we shall try to argue. None of these, we suppose, implies that Avicenna holds a Platonic theory of human soul; for Avicenna, human souls are contingent abstract objects with temporal origination. Finally, we will try to explain how the conventional interpretation has, in our view incorrectly, become 'conventional'.

Abdullah Sliti (Durham University), *Freedom & Responsibility: Ibn al-Qayyim's Compatibilism of Dual Agency*

Free will is perhaps the most voluminously debated of all philosophical problems given its puzzling complexity and its vast implications in various disciplines. In this paper, I will argue that Ibn al-Qayyim (d. 751/1350) develops a compatibilist position of dual agency- where both human responsibility and God's creation are neither compromised. Additionally, I will elucidate the original developments and contributions of Ibn al-Qayyim on the debate and evaluate how he harmonised difficulties that were faced by his predecessors. Ibn al-Qayyim maintains that human acts are necessarily caused by man's ability and will; hence, man is morally responsible for such acts. On the other hand, God's creation of the causes of human acts is within the framework of pre-eternal will. Therefore, dual agency is compatible and such compatibility is essential for Ibn al-Qayyim's optimistic human/ god centred theology. Consequently, Ibn al-Qayyim's developments may potentially reform the traditional fatalistic determinism position that has phenomenally been established as the main orthodox attitude. As a result of such potential reform, human agency and

responsibility must be emphasized- with regard to human shortcomings- instead of the widespread utilization of divine determination as a form of justification.

## **Panel 5: Contemporary Issues C**

*Room: Woburn B, Chair: Tbc*

Fouad Gehad Marei (Freie Universität Berlin), *Hezbollah's Order: A Postcolonial, Social Movement Approach*

This paper investigates the practices of social and political (re)ordering in Lebanon. Adopting a cognitive approach to the study of social movements, the research examines the intersections between neoliberal postwar reconstruction and the (re)production of spatial-cognitive projections with unique and contextualised referents. In the first section, the paper examines Hezbollah's role as an organisational backbone and centrepiece in an otherwise loosely organised 'web of connections'. This network, or social movement, brings together myriad social actors and agents of change organised in concentric circles of varying degrees of affiliation to the Party. The role of some of these actors in promulgating the Party's worldview, or 'Islamic milieu', as an all-pervasive *modus vivendi* is examined. In the second part of the paper, the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the 'Islamic milieu' are called into question. Engaging with emerging debates in postcolonial theory, the paper demonstrates that the praxis in question is, in fact, the product of a critical and dynamic process whereby Shi'ite Islamic ontology is 'authenticated' and contextually embedded within the political history and political culture of the Shi'a community. In other words, the 'Islamic milieu' is conceptualised as a thoroughly hybrid worldview anchored by cultural-religious and contextual referents and consolidated through technologies of reference. While it is produced through transnational circulations of ideas and actors, the paper argues, it is not merely 'foreign' or 'borrowed'. The paper concludes that the culturally constituted and contextually embedded 'Islamic milieu' associated with Hezbollah is not merely a religio-ideological doctrine but a politic of aesthetic shaping the sensibilities, choices and imaginaries of the community: that is to say, a spatial-cognitive order and a projection of the perceived progress, 'modernity', and civility of the Shi'a community.

Emmanuel Karagiannis (King's College London), *The Rise of Electoral Salafism in North Africa: Ideological Modification or Political Necessity?*

Although Salafis have been known for their condemnation of politics, Salafist parties have been established in Tunisia and Egypt. These political parties tend to have ultra-conservative views on social and family issues, but they have denounced the use of violence. They have chosen to campaign through the parliament and within the constitution. Egypt's Al Nour party, which came second in votes in the 2011-2012 parliamentary election, has advocated the implementation of shari'a and the Islamisation of the country. In neighbouring Tunisia, three Salafist parties have been established to participate in the democratic process, with Jabhat al-Islah being the most important one. The electoral Salafism is a phenomenon that has not been extensively researched or discussed. The paper will first describe the characteristics

of electoral Salafism in North Africa. Then it will explain why Salafist parties have emerged in post-revolution Tunisia and Egypt. More specifically, it will discuss whether it is the result of an ideological modification or the result of political necessity. The paper will also compare and contrast the Salafist parties in the two countries, focusing on their political strategies, electoral performance, and relations with secular and Islamist parties.

Zoltan Pall (National University of Singapore), *The Construction of Salafi Religious Authority in Lebanon*

The popularity of Salafism in the Sunni areas of Lebanon, especially in the north, has been rapidly increasing in the past few years. Salafi religious specialists (sheikhs) have extended their influence among ordinary Sunni believers in the expense of the traditional religious elites and other Islamic movements. This paper intends to explore what makes Salafi sheikhs authoritative for an expanding segment of the population. Explaining the success of Salafism in Northern Lebanon by describing them as sectarian entrepreneurs and only pointing to their anti-Shi'ite discourse would be superficial. I argue that the authority of Salafi religious specialists lay on something more profound than that. Salafi sheikhs attempt to redefine the boundaries of Islamic orthodoxy and practice 'mild asceticism' (in the Weberian sense). By this they manage to project themselves as imaginary or perfect Muslims in the eyes of many ordinary people. The inherent weakness of Dar al-Fatwa facilitates the attempt of Salafis to establish themselves as the ones who "truly represent" Sunni Islam. Ordinary Sunnis often compare Salafis, who live modest and pious lifestyles to the hedonistic and unmotivated traditional ulama. I will provide ethnographic examples to illustrate how the Salafis' concepts of purity and virtuous lifestyle are communicated to and received by the larger society.

Georgios Rigas (University of Edinburgh), *Hamas Egypt relations during Morsi's presidency*

The Muslim Brotherhood is Egypt's most powerful Islamic political organisation; it used to be Mubarak's main domestic foe and in June 2012, after Morsi's election, it governed Egypt for a year. Hamas is an Islamic Palestinian organisation which descends from the Muslim Brotherhood and which, since June 2007, controls the Gaza Strip. That being said Morsi's presidency marks an era when two politically related Islamic organisations simultaneously ruled two bordering entities in the Middle East. This paper traces the improvements that Hamas Egypt relations saw during this period and explains what deterred them from undergoing a radical shift. Egypt under Morsi should be seen as a part of post-Mubarak Egypt which falls into the pattern of what Siverson and Star have described as a polity undergoing regime change. According to their framework between the end of the old regime and the emergence of the new one intervenes a period which is characterised by the competition of the various elites to evolve into the new regime. Hence, in the face of the Muslim Brotherhood's need to bolster its authority inside Egypt, Hamas was willing to grant Morsi with time and not raise maximalistic demands. The paper traces the development of Hamas Egypt relations on the way Hamas responded to Morsi's election, on the handling of the implications of the lethal cross border attack

against Israel in August 2012 and on Egypt's efforts to broker a ceasefire between Hamas and Israel in November 2012.

## **Panel 6: Beyond 'Negative Perceptions of Muslims': Incorporating Elusive Manifestations of Islamophobia**

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Daniel Nilsson DeHanas (King's College London)*

Afroze Zaidi-Jivraj (University of Birmingham), *Questioning 'Identifiable Muslimness': Ethnic Minority Muslims at the Intersection of Colour Racism and Islamophobia*

As 'The Muslim Question' persists, and a deeper, more comprehensive theoretical understanding of Islamophobia continues to be sought, this paper questions Allen's (2010) contention that in order to identify Islamophobia, some sign of 'Muslimness' must be in evidence. It also looks critically at Modood's conception of cultural racism, which suggests, to a degree, the erasure of ethnic difference while recognising the racialisation of Muslims as a group. By using a cultural studies approach to examine recent news stories and media artefacts showing manifestations of Islamophobia, this paper aims to uncover what is possibly a complex intertwining of racial and religious difference for Black and Ethnic Minority Muslims in the West. In discussing the findings, it argues that in the formation of exclusionary attitudes, difference is not neatly delineated by type – 'Muslim', 'Pakistani', etc. – but rather for Black and Ethnic Minority Muslims Islamophobia becomes a case of compounded difference. To claim this is not suggest that Islamophobia and racism are two different entities, but rather that Islamophobia, as anti-Muslim racism, overlaps with 'colour racism' in the case of Black and Ethnic Minority Muslims. This concept has profound implications for the way we define "religious" versus "racial" hatred, both in UK legislature as well as academia, and it is ultimately proposed that Crenshaw's (1989) work on intersectionality and the recognition of multiply burdened groups can be applied successfully in understanding the Islamophobia faced by Black and Ethnic Minority Muslims in the West.

Stephen H Jones (Coventry University), *British Muslim Organisations, the Spectre of Political Islam and the Conceptualisation of Islamophobia*

Repeatedly over the last decade a range of politicians, policy think tanks and journalists have sought to place questions over public support that British Muslim civil society organisations receive by alleging links to Islamic political movements, especially Jamaat-i-Islami and the Muslim Brotherhood. Drawing on interview research with a number of British Muslim organisations from two research projects carried out between 2008 and 2012, this paper will critically evaluate these discourses, assessing their veracity and their implications for scholarly and wider debates about anti-Muslim prejudice and the legitimacy of Muslims' participation in public life. By exploring the internal functioning of British Muslim civil society organisations and the perceptions and affiliations of those working within them, the paper seeks to not only challenge these efforts to undermine Muslims' participation in political and governance processes, but also to evaluate the riposte among

scholars of Muslims and Islam. Finally, the paper considers the implications of this case for research and reflection on Islamophobia, outlining the difficulty of including this category of discourse as a form of anti-Muslim prejudice under currently popular definitions.

Daniel Nilsson DeHanas (King's College London), *'Rotten Borough' and 'Islamic Republic?': The Politics of Media Portrayals of Tower Hamlets*

No area of London – with the inevitable exception of Westminster – has been subject to more frequent public controversies than the East End borough of Tower Hamlets. Home to the largest concentration of Muslims in the UK, Tower Hamlets has been the focus of sustained media and government attention for more than a decade. In this paper I will briefly review major developments in the borough since 2007, when the first projects of the counter-terrorism Prevent Strategy were underway and Ed Husain's divisive book *The Islamist* was released. The paper will be based on three kinds of data collected from different projects in this period: in-depth interviews with young Muslim Bangladeshis (2007-2008), research with public figures on local and national Muslim-government relations (2010-2012), and a corpus of news articles, books, and other media collected from 2007 to present. The paper will describe the ways Tower Hamlets has been, unhelpfully, treated by the UK government and various media commentators as a microcosm of security, integration, and governance issues across Britain. The intense focus on the borough tends to 'scale up' small controversies into seemingly national predicaments, resulting in erroneous generalisations about the position of Muslims in Britain and feelings among local Muslims that they are embattled. I will address the implications of the Tower Hamlets case for broader issues of media, politics, and Islamophobia.

AbdoolKarim Vakil (King's College London), *Islamaphobia Discussant (TBC)*

AbdoolKarim Vakil is the co-editor of the influential book *Thinking through Islamophobia* (with S. Sayyid, 2011, Hurst) which provided a critical analysis of the concept of Islamophobia and a informed engagement with its political supporters and opponents. His wide-ranging theoretical and practical contributions to debates on Islamophobia will make him an ideal discussant for the three preceding papers in the session (pending confirmation).

16.00–16.30, *Refreshments*

## 16.30-18.00: SESSION 9. SIX PARALLEL PANELS

### Panel 1: Gender B

*Room: Bedford, Chair: Tbc*

Shuruq Naguib (Lancaster University), *Tahara in the light of Tafsir*

The central question in this paper is: could a study of classical Qur'anic exegesis illuminate our understanding of the Islamic law of *ṭahīra*? The paper argues that because it contains a variety of exegetical opinions, methods and scholarly traditions, *tafsir* could provide an entry point into different layers of religious discourse. Through a close reading of the classical commentaries on Qur'anic references to purification in *Surat al-Muddaththir* (Q. 74:4), and by analysing the notions which exegetes attach to purity on this occasion as well as the hermeneutic strategies they use to define the boundaries of signification, it becomes apparent that they are inclined towards a non-literal interpretation that emphasises an ethical view of purification. The paper then examines whether the application of *majāz* as a non-literal hermeneutic approach actually displaces purity to the realm of metaphor. The paper goes on to argue that *majāz* is applied on this occasion to extend the meaning of purification beyond the physical sense without negating it. As a result, the ethical view of purity is not in opposition to the juristic understanding of it. Just the contrary, this ethical view seems to underlie considerations of the law of *ṭahīra*.

Cafer Sarikayer (Boğaziçi University), *An Ottoman Woman Writer in the 1893 Chicago World's Columbian Exposition: Fatma Aliye Hanım*

The Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 organized in the United States for the celebration of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus was one of the most important international exhibitions known in the United Kingdom as *Great Exhibitions*, in France as *Expositions Universelles* and in the United States as *World's Fairs*. The Ottoman Empire participated in this exhibition with an official committee and pavilion and it was represented for the first time with an Ottoman woman writer, Fatma Aliye (1862-1936). The Ottoman women clothes sent by the Ottoman Government were shown in Women's Building placed in the exhibition. Besides, a catalogue was prepared consisting of the works of women writers from America and from other countries in Women's Library which was set up for this exhibition. The works of Fatma Aliye, an Ottoman woman writer, had also a part in this catalogue and were very much appreciated. Fatma Aliye (1862-1936) whose father Ahmet Cevdet Pasha (1822-1895) was a famous historian, politician and jurist, was one of the first Muslim woman writers in Modern Turkish Literature. After giving a brief introduction to the Ottoman State's participation in the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, this paper particularly will focus on Fatma Aliye's *Nisvân-ı İslâm* (Women of Islam), which attracted the greatest attention among all her books exhibited in the fair.

Ahmed Balto (Trinity College Dublin), *The Burqa and the right to freedom of expression: Analyzing the Place of the Islamic Veil in Europe*

In recent times, the wearing of Islamic face-veiling garments has become a controversial issue, sparking much debate around the world, particularly in Europe. Is it acceptable for women to wear the *burqa* in public and, if not, is this a violation of human rights law? Proponents of the *burqa* argue that it is an expression of religion, a right protected by international human rights law, and that any restrictions are a violation of basic human rights. Opponents of the garment assert that 'religious' veiling does not relate specifically to the Islamic religion, rather it derives from outdated culture and heritage. Moreover, they claim that the *burqa* represents a form of discrimination against women and therefore should be prohibited by law. This paper will analyze the main arguments on each side, and evaluate the grounds for criminalizing or decriminalizing the practice of face-veiling in some European states. Furthermore, the paper will consider how the ECHR treats cases where the right to freedom of expression is involved, and seeks to make a proposal for a set of criteria by which the ECHR can rule on this important issue.

Abdulrahim Vijapur (Aligarh Muslim University, India), *Women's Rights in Islamic Traditions and CEDAW: A Move towards Convergence?*

Islam is one of the great religions of the world, whose followers are found in every country and continent. As an egalitarian belief system it introduced the concepts of universal brotherhood and non-discrimination among Muslims on the ground of sex or race. Islam gave the women fundamental rights and championed all movements to improve the status of women, at a time when societies were overtly traditional and socially underdeveloped. This paper attempts to examine the following questions: Does Islam provide for gender equality? To what extent this equality of sexes is found in practice in Islamic societies? Are there any deviations from the scriptural precepts of gender equality? The fact that majority of Muslim States have ratified the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), does that imply that Shariah does not come in conflict with enforcing gender equality. Why almost all Muslim and many non-Muslim States (like India) have made reservations to some of the provisions of CEDAW? What reformative measures have been undertaken in Muslim countries to improve the status of women by enacting laws? What made the government of Tunisia to withdraw in 2014 all its reservations to CEDAW (the first Muslim country to do so)? Can other Muslim and non-Muslim States emulate Tunisia and initiate measures to reform family laws by interpreting Shariah in a progressive and dynamic way? What has been the Indian situation in this regard? An attempt to explore answers to these and related questions will be made in this paper.

## Panel 2: Law and Ethics B

Room: Bloomsbury, Chair: Tbc

Ali-Reza Bhojani (Al-Mahdi Institute), *Moral rationalism, Shari'a and Human Rights*

The tradition of a rational meta-ethics in Muslim thought has been regularly identified as holding great potential in offering theoretical resources, native to Muslim intellectual tradition, that are capable of assisting the human rights discourse. Although an ethical moral rationalism of varying degrees can be found across a wide range of early Muslim theological and jurisprudential thinking that crosses 'school' boundaries, it is a tradition most strongly associated with classical Mutazilī and Imāmī theology. Referring to themselves as *ʿAdliyya* (literally the people of Justice), proponents of such theology held that basic moral propositions can be understood by humans independent of scripture, allowing the ascription of a substantive and rational conception of Justice to God, His actions, and His regulative instructions – the *aḥkām* of Sharia. These theological premises suggest that a form of non-scriptural 'universal' moral thinking can act as an independent source of normativity, and allow non-scriptural judgments of morality to act as a 'trump' against apparently immoral inferences of Sharia at the level of *fiqh*. Despite the obvious appeal of such resources to those seeking reconciliation between the normative interpretations of Islam and Human Rights, little attention has been given as to why the classical proponents of such ethical traditions have produced readings of Sharia that are as problematic with respect to Human rights as any other. This paper will identify and reassess the theoretical obstacles limiting the impact of such moral rationalism in modern Shīʿī *uṣūl al-fiqh*, demonstrating the space for an authoritative hermeneutics that actually allows for rational morality to act as a condition for the validity of any inferred Sharia precepts attributed to a Just and Moral God.

Khadiqa Musa Latef (Prince Muhammad bin Fahd University, KSA), *Reasons of resurgence on writing on al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhiyya (Legal Maxims) in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century*

*Al-Qawā'id al-Fiqhiyya* are legal maxims or principles that provide the rationale behind the *aḥkām* (legal assessments) of the particular cases that fall under the rubric of the *qā'ida* (sng. of *qawā'id*). Examples of some of *al-qawā'id* that are accepted by the four Sunni schools of law are: *al-umūru bimaqāṣidihā* (acts are [judged by] the objectives behind them); and *al-mashaqqā tajlub al-taysīr* (hardship causes the giving of facilitation). The genre started by the Ḥanafīs in the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> century. We have two extant treatises from the Ḥanafīs from the 4<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> centuries but no extant works from other schools for this period. However, after a period of stagnation that lasted about two centuries, the genre experienced a renaissance in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, with the appearance of many systematic works on *al-qawā'id*. These were written mostly by Shāfi'ī scholars. Here the genre seems to have become a fully-fledged independent sub-discipline alongside *furū' al-fiqh*. This paper explores reasons of the resurgence of the genre and the great interest

shown by the Shāfi'īs from the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century onwards whereas they didn't show much interest in previous centuries following the birth of the genre. By examining the social, geographical and intellectual circumstances surrounding the resurfacing and flourishing of the genre in the 8<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> century, the paper argues that the Shāfi'īs might have intended the genre as an alternative, though not a replacement, of the discipline of *uṣūl al-fiqh* (legal methodology) and also as encouragement for junior *fuqahā'* to participate in developing and implementing *sharī'a* ethics.

Yahya Sabbaghchi (Sharif University of Technology), *Revising the Necessity of Theology in Jurisprudence*

The traditional approach in Islamic jurisprudence (Fiqh) relies on the study of verbal evidences -which include an obligation or a prohibition- or practical principles (al-usul al-amalia), to extract the duty of a Muslim. No theological base may be considered in this approach, as well as most of the Quran verses and the hadiths. Theoretical views may provide jurists with frameworks in which the minor jurisprudential rulings should fall and consequently, make criteria for them to reject any ruling which exceeds these frameworks. Unfortunately, the traditional jurisprudence does not mostly adopt this approach. That's why there can be seen little link among different fatwas in one subject, and that's why some fatwas contradict obvious intellectual doctrines of Islam. Undoubtedly, there needs a reform in traditional approach of extracting jurisprudential rulings; That is, understanding theoretical framework of each jurisprudential issue- at least, social issues- and extracting the rulings *in accordance with* the so called framework. Such a reform would make explicit changes in some fatwas like changing obligation of *jihad* (offensive war) to its prohibition or a change in *the punishment of the apostates*. This paper will focus on the so called reform in traditional approach of some jurists, and points out revision of the two sample fatwas, among many, regarding this reform.

Sohaira Siddiqui (Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, Qatar), *Understanding the Ethical in Islamic Legal Reform*

Reforming the Sharī'a has been the subject of debate in the modern period with a growing number of scholars advocating for the creation of new jurisprudential tools and methods which are in harmony with the classical legal tradition and can simultaneously respond to the changing contours of modern Muslim societies. The impetus behind these reform movements is the creation of a more expansive jurisprudential framework which can not only produce legal rulings, but also ethical and moral ones. This focus on the 'ethics' and 'morality' of the law, however, has not led to uniform methodologies and objectives. This paper will evaluate the reform projects of Drs. Khaled Abou Fadi and Tariq Ramadan through a close reading of their books *Reasoning with God* and *Radical Reform*, respectively, to demonstrate that while the two scholars may agree upon the necessity of the 'ethical' in Islamic law, their methodologies differ. The paper will end by exploring to what extent their

reformist projects can be reconciled and what the overall implications for the 'ethical' in Islamic law are.

### **Panel 3: Aspects of Sufism**

*Room: Gordon, Chair: Tbc*

Eyad Abuali (SOAS), *Majd al-Dīn al-Baghdādī's (d.1219) Tuḥfat al-Barara: The Development of Kubrawī Sufi Psychology*

While there have been scholarly studies regarding some key figures within Kubrawī Sufism, Majd al-Dīn al-Baghdādī (d.1219) remains largely under-studied. Despite this, al-Baghdādī's contribution to Kubrawī Sufism is extremely helpful for our understanding of the development of Kubrawī psychology, Iranian Sufism, and Sufi thought in general. By contextualising and discussing al-Baghdādī's psychology in his *Tuḥfat al-barara*, this paper will demonstrate that al-Baghdādī drew upon various Sufi and philosophical notions, in order to cultivate further a uniquely Kubrawī psychological framework. By focusing on the nature and relationship between the soul, the senses and the imagination found within the text, we will see the importance of towering figures such as Avicenna and al-Ghazālī, in addition to the influences of Sufi theorists such as al-Qushayrī, in shaping al-Baghdādī's discussion of psychology. While the same psychological framework is also seen in the works of al-Baghdādī's teacher, Najm al-Dīn Kubrā, as well as in his disciple, Najm al-Dīn Rāzī-Dayā, this paper will show that al-Baghdādī's text furthers our understanding of Kubrawī psychology, as he builds upon what we have already received from Kubrā. It also indicates how his reception and renegotiation of Sufi psychology influenced later Kubrawī writers such as Razī-Dayā and Alā' al-Dawla al-Simnānī.

Naghmeh Dadvar (Ferdowsi University of Mashhad), *The Introduction to the Karamat and its Inconsistencies through Mysticism works*

In the Islamic Mysticism, "Karamat" has been thought of as a key factor in Sufism works. Throughout Mysticism works the term Karamat will be used to refer to extraordinary activities that Mashayekh (great masters) can do. By way of example there are grounds for supposing in the Mysticism works that masters were able to travel during the time, walk on water, speak with animals and plants, know what their disciples think before they talk about it, and many other wonderful activities. But this concept has always been challenged by masters. Some of masters believe that Karamat is the best criterion for giving awareness about their honesty. They say if masters could not do some extraordinary activities, they are not real masters! In the other hand in contrast to them, other masters believe that Karamat bring vanity and selfishness for them and they must hide their Karamats of disciples and people. Debate continues about this issue for centuries and this paper will attempt to indicate the inconsistencies about the concept of Karamat through some of the literary works.

Omar Edaibat (McGill University), *Muhyiddin Ibn 'Arabī's Sharī'a: A Theory of Legal Pluralism*

While the illustrious Sufī authority Muḥyiddīn Ibn 'Arabī's (d. 638/1240) thought continues to receive a great deal of attention within the academe, particularly in terms of his cosmology, ontology, and epistemology, his legal thought, by contrast, rarely elicits the same degree of attention, despite the clearly prominent presence of the Sharī'a in his works. As such, this paper seeks to provide an overview of his highly sophisticated legal thought, in terms of his unique legal theory (*usūl al-fiqh*) and his substantive law (*furū'*). It proceeds to outline the defining features of his legal theory, highlighting his legal development and potential sources of influence, placing him within the "scripturalist" stream of Islamic legal thought, commonly associated with the Zāhiriyya. However, while Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064) certainly bears some influences on al-Shaykh al-Akbar, the Shaykh's legal theory remains markedly original in that it is ultimately rooted in his overarching metaphysical doctrine. This is most readily evident in his highly personal reframing of *ijtihād* as a process of spiritual refinement and discovery, as opposed to a methodical and predictable process of ratiocination, which leads him to develop a distinctively nuanced theory of legal pluralism that at once affirms the inescapability of legal diversity and transcends the strict orthodoxy of school conformity (*tamadhub*).

Haruka Endo (SOAS), *Al-Sha'rānī's (d. 1565) response to Controversies over Ibn 'Arabī's (d. 1240) Anthropomorphism*

In an attempt to question the relation between Sufism and theology in the medieval period, the current paper will focus on al-Sha'rānī's defence of Ibn 'Arabī from a theological perspective. Ibn 'Arabī was at the centre of polemics among community-minded scholars during the Mamluk period. His antagonists criticised him for his idea of identifying God with creatures, which they deemed heretical. Their focal concern was to defend the theological notion of God's transcendence (*tanzīh*) from the threat presented by Ibn 'Arabī's anthropomorphic teachings (*tashbīh*). The Yemeni jurist al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Ahdal (d. 1481), for example, emphasising the orthodoxy of the Ash'arī school concerning the questions of God's transcendence and anthropomorphism, harshly condemned Ibn 'Arabī as well as his followers for their deviance from it. Yet, the Egyptian jurist and mystic 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Sha'rānī, who is often seen as a mere apologetic defender of Ibn 'Arabī in current scholarship, ardently justified the latter's teachings in relation to those of Ash'arism. He maintained the orthodoxy of Ibn 'Arabī's anthropomorphic views in light of accusations like al-Ahdal's. In this paper, I will examine how al-Sha'rānī advocated Ibn 'Arabī's thought by reconciling the doctrine of God's transcendence with an anthropomorphic outlook based on the theory of divine self-manifestation (*tajallī*).

Abdulmamad Iloliev (Institute of Ismaili Studies), *Moses and Jesus in the Poetry of Mubarak-i Wakhani: An Ismaili-Sufi Perspective*

Examining the role and importance of Moses (Musa) and Jesus (Isa) in the poetry of Mubarak-i Wakhani (d.1903), this paper aims to illustrate a traditional Ismaili perspective on how differently these Islamised biblical figures are depicted in Muslim poetry. Mubarak-i Wakhani was a Persian mystic poet, musician and religious scholar, who lived in a remote mountainous region of Badakhshan in Central Asia. His poems reflect deep religious convictions based on Ismaili esotericism and Sufi mysticism. This study explores how this fusion of ideas helped him to portrait Moses and Jesus in such a way that crosses theological boundaries between Islam, Judaism and Christianity. The miracles of Moses, the life and death of Jesus and his total absorption in the life of spirit, had profoundly influenced the works of many Muslim mystics like Mubarak, who in a way sought to pursuit an ascetical lifestyle in order to reach the highest level of spiritual satisfaction.

**Panel 4: Classical Islamic Thought C**

*Room: Woburn A, Chair: Tbc*

Salimeh Maghsoudlou (Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris), *Reception of Avicenna's Argument for the Unity of God in the Sūfī Milieu of Sixth Century: the Case of 'Ayn al-Qudāt al-Hamadānī*

The question of unity of God which constituted one of the axial themes of the scriptural exegesis was not treated in the same way by all of the Islamic medieval thinkers. The *falāsifa* mostly took God's internal simplicity as a ground for His absolute unity and argued that since any numerical plurality would negate God's essential unity, the possibility of a similar for God should be dismissed. Avicenna, who likewise had accepted God's absolute essential simplicity, developed in his works an intricate demonstration for God's unity based on the impossibility of the individuation of two necessary existents. About a century after his death, 'Ayn al-Qudāt al-Hamadānī, initially a *ṣufī* and an indirect disciple of al-Ġazālī, used in two of his extant writings a simplified version of Avicenna's argument, without however naming his source or mentioning the philosopher's name. While the possibility of any direct influence of the *faylasūf* on the *ṣufī* is subject to debate, the appearance of Avicenna's argument in al-Hamadānī's work, epitomizes the beginning of a gradual process of accepting Avicenna's theological system within the non-peripatetic thinkers, and showcases the modalities of such naturalization. In this study, I will assess al-Hamadānī's possible sources and analyze the alterations which occurred in the latter's version of Avicenna's argument.

Janis Esots (The Institute of Ismaili Studies), *Being and Knowledge according to Sadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī*

My paper will deal with the opposition 'being-knowledge' (*wujūd-‘ilm*), as it is treated in the Akbarian tradition and, in particular in Ṣadr al-Dīn al-Qūnawī's (d. 1274) *Miftāḥ al-ghayb*. Al-Qūnawī treats unity as an essential attribute of *wujūd*, and multiplicity as an essential attribute of knowledge, whence his famous principle of the unity of being and multiplicity of knowledge (*waḥdat al-wujūd wa kathrat al-‘ilm*). One is tempted to treat *wujūd* as 'finding', rather than 'being' or 'existence', since the principle appears to refer to two modes of perception, which can be conventionally described as 'mystical' and 'rational'. Further investigation, however, shows, that true unity is only possessed by the True Being (*al-wujūd al-ḥaqq*), or the Real (*al-ḥaqq*), while the general or common being/existence (*wujūd ‘āmm*), which 'enwraps' or encompasses the fixed entities, and is often referred to as 'the breath of the Merciful' (*nafas al-Raḥmān*), is the product of the mutual interaction of the Real's essential names and, hence, possesses only 'the unity of bringing/being brought together' (*aḥadiyyat al-jam‘*).

Ali Fikri Yavuz (Istanbul University), *Epistemology and Beatific Vision in Shams al-Dīn al-Samarqandī (d. 1303 AC)*

In this study, Sunnī dogma of ru'yatullāh (beatific vision) will be revisited with references to epistemological advances in classical Islamic philosophy and theology. The objective of my paper is to reassess the epistemological analysis of perception and cognition in Samarqandī's works that shape later Oxon-Maturidite school of theology by his re-evaluation of perception and application of his analysis on perception to the approval of the possibility of beatific vision. My aim is to put forward Samarqandī's analysis that aims to advance over his master on this field: Fakhruddīn al-Rāzī (d. 1209). Terminology of Samarqandī on perception (*idrāk*), senses (*mashā'ir*), visual storage (*khazānah li's-suwar*) and illusive storage (*khazānah li'l-wahm*) will be discussed with cross references to al-Rāzī.

Zacky Khairul Umam (Freie Universitaet Berlin), *Our Shaykh in the intellectual formation of 17th century Medina: Religious approaches of Ahmad al-Qushāshī (1583-1660)*

Ṣafī al-Dīn Aḥmad al-Dajānī al-Qushāshī (d. 1660) was arguably the most important scholar in the Ḥijāz at his time. He inherited knowledge from his ancestral sphere from Palestine and a number of prominent scholars from Yemen, Egypt, and India. Snouck Hurgronje in 1906 called him "remarkable personage" due to his influence in the thought and practices of Sufi tradition that had reached globally, including throughout Southeast Asian archipelago where one of *ṭarīqas* was named after him: *al-ṭarīqa al-qushāshīyya*. His defense on the notion of Ibn ‘Arabī's unity of being (*waḥdat al-wujūd*) and his unique emphasis on the study of *ḥadīth* shaped Medinan religious school mesmerizing many students worldwide, one of whom became his successor and maintained his global networks: Mullā Ibrāhīm al-Kūrānī (d. 1690).

Mullā Ibrāhīm marked that Shaykh al-Qushāshī taught and wrote both *‘aqliyyāt* and *naqliyyāt*, showing the latter’s noticeable position as a renowned theologian and a master of many Sufi *ṭarīqas* as well as a *mufti* for both the Mālikī and Shāfi‘ī schools of law and a celebrated *muḥaddith*. My paper will particularly discuss religious approaches of Shaykh al-Qushāshī based on hitherto unedited manuscripts and highlight the cosmopolitan context of intellectual life in 17<sup>th</sup> century Medina

## **Panel 5: Conversion**

*Room: Woburn B, Chair: Tbc*

Ayşe Baltocioğlu-Brammer (The Ohio State University), “Turning Kızılbaş” or “Turning Safavid” Understanding Conversion within Islam in the 15th-16th Century Political Context

Religious dichotomy between the Ottoman and Safavid Empires and the development of Kızılbaş Islam in Anatolia has been the subject of sustained scholarly interest. While scholarship from the 1960s through the 1980s explained Ottoman policies against the Kızılbaş in the context of mere security concerns, revisionists, who dominated the field since 1990s, rightfully emphasized the importance of the religious motivations behind political decisions made by these two empires. My research, instead, underlines the complexity of the relationship between the Ottoman and Safavid Empires, as well as between the Ottomans and their Kızılbaş subjects. In order to maintain this argument, I study different forms of religious propaganda (including the circulation of booklets and poems, dispatching of religious agents, making marriage alliances, and allocating lands and titles) disseminated by the Safavid religious and political actors in Anatolian towns between 1450s and 1630s. I argue that the “religious dichotomy” between Ottoman Sunnism and Safavid Shi’ism was a product of the Ottoman-Safavid political rivalry rather than its cause, and it was the politicization of the Safavid movement, not the Shi’ite character of the Safaviyya order that focused the attention of Ottoman authorities on Safavid propaganda activities in Anatolia. It is, therefore, important to distinguish the real meaning(s) of conversion from one side to another in this particular period and locality. My research aims to examine changing social and religious dynamics in early modern Anatolia, as well as the conceptions of conversion, state of belonging, and religious identities, which were developed by both Ottomans and Safavids in response to the shifting dynamics.

M.A. Kevin Brice (Newcastle University), *White British Muslims – “They are all just converts, aren’t they?” Looking beyond the stereotype*

In both the media and in academic studies the dominant discourse on Islam and Muslims in Britain has become on some levels a racialised one which has led to a clear White-Muslim binary in which the visible “otherness” of Muslims is stressed and Muslims are presented as a “foreign” minority who are essentially different to the

non-Muslim dominant majority White British ethnic group. According to the 2011 Census, 77,272 individuals who self-identified as being White British further self-identified as Muslim. The very existence of White British Muslims challenges the often uncritically accepted White-Muslim binary. However, this group is frequently explained as being nothing more than converts to Islam and the numbers involved are claimed as much lower than the Census indicates (without any real explanation of the discrepancy in numbers thus created). Drawing on previous research on the relationship between markers of ethnicity and self-identified ethnic group, I will suggest that the White British Muslim group is much more diverse than just converts to Islam. Using data from large scale government surveys I will show that this group is made up of a number of distinct sub-groups as well as the more obvious sub-group of converts to Islam.

Geoffrey Nash (University of Sunderland), *Marmaduke Pickthall and Islamic Modernist Thought*

The aim of this paper is, through the evidence of his own writings and those of his fellow Muslims and contemporaries published in periodicals such as *The New Age*, *Islamic Review* and *Modern India*, and *Islamic Review*, to flesh out Pickthall's connections to Islamic modernism, investigating and assessing parallels between his ideas and those of the great modernist Muslim thinkers of his time. The Turkish and Indian influences brought him into contact at first hand with two of the major thrusts of Islamic modernism. The Indian trend in modern Islam that started with Sayyid Ahmad's Aligarh movement, moved on in the writings of Syed Ameer Ali, and came to a peak in the thought of Muhammad Iqbal, largely infused the Muslims of South Asian extraction with whom Pickthall associated and worked in Britain between 1914 and 1920. For their part, the Turkish reformers who directed the Young Turk revolution, some of whom Pickthall came into personal contact with during his visit to Istanbul in 1913 took their cue from the long heritage of the Tanzimat, Midhat Pasha and the Young Ottomans. The influence of Said Halim Pasha in particular is noticeable in Pickthall's statements concerning Islamic belief and doctrine while editor of the Hyderabad periodical *Islamic Culture*.

Dorothea Ramahi (University of Cambridge), *Situating Otherness: Perspectives on Female Converts to Islam in Britain*

This paper explores the relationships between female converts to Islam in Britain and their close friends and family. It pays attention to the perspectives of converts but focuses on the reactions of their significant others to the conversion. I argue that converts become 'intimate strangers' through conversion – estranged on the level of understanding and belief but intimate on the emotional plane. This strangeness is symbolised by the Orientalist stereotypes associated with the converts. At the same time, friends and family shun engagement with the conversion itself, thus keeping alive the stereotypes and precluding understanding. In refusing to engage with matters of belief even within the intimate space of the family, secularism's orthodox private/public divide gets busted where religiosity, instead, becomes an issue

between the (individual) private and the (family) private. Lacking reciprocity and with no access to the inner depths of the people they are closest to, the liberal rhetoric of friends and family about personal choice and equal acceptance of all paths amounts to bigotry and turns out to be painful for both the converts and their significant others

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

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Tbc*

Sejad Mekic (Cambridge Muslim College), *Husein Đozo and Islamic modernism in Tito's Yugoslavia*

My paper examines the Islamic modernist thought of Husein Đozo (1912-1982), a prominent Balkan scholar who lived and worked in Titoist Yugoslavia. Through the medium of his fatāwā (legal rulings), Qur'anic interpretation and other writings, Đozo responded to the challenges he and his people were faced with, above all the so-called 'Yugoslav Communism' and modernity. As a Muslim scholar who lived in a European, secular, multi-religious and multi-cultural society, Đozo and his work present us with a particularly exciting and dynamic case through which to examine the innovative interpretations of Islam. Moreover, in Đozo's scholarly work we are presented by a propitious moment for the academic, researcher and lay reader alike to analyse a 'European-Islamic' voice whose importance has yet to be articulated. This is particularly the case in the fields of ethics and faith, interfaith dialogue and the study of religious identity within Muslim minority communities. In the paper, we argue that Husein Đozo was the most important proponent of Islamic modernism in the countries of former Yugoslavia in the second half of the twentieth century. We also argue that through the prism of Đozo's spirit and thought the ideas of modernist and reformist interpretations of Islam gained a local "Yugoslav" dimension. And finally, Đozo's work in general and his fatāwā in particular represent a rich and unexplored resource that should be considered in assessing the development of Islamic law in the Balkan region. There are only a few works in English that deal with Islam in former Yugoslavia and almost none on the recent trends of Islamic thought found there. Likewise, nothing substantial has been written in English on Đozo and his modernist legacy. Since Đozo's writings in general, and his fatāwā in particular, have continued to be published in the Balkan lands up to the present, this paper/study should help to shed some light on certain assumptions underlying modern Islamic thought and consciousness found in the region.

Cecilie Endresen (University of Oslo), *Accommodationist and neo-fundamentalist approaches to the nation and religious others in Albania*

This paper compares different Islamic approaches to the nation and the national in Albania among two competing Sunni institutions: the Muslim Community of Albania, which represents 'official Islam', 'Albanian tradition', and is typically accommodationist (Olivier Roy), and the League of Imams, a network of Salafi

preachers directly inspired by Saudi Arabian Wahhabi doctrine, which represents a neo-fundamentalist counterpoint. The Muslim Community combines Islamic universalism and national state particularism and explicitly supports the Albanian language-based, secular, cross-religious nation-building project, summarised in its slogan 'no fatherland, no faith'. Its leaders identify closely with ethnic and national traditions, de-emphasise religious differences, theologically defend pluralism and secularism, and believe non-Muslims can be saved. The Salafi imams of the League, by contrast, emphasise orthodoxy, have 'un-Albanian' religious markers, define local Muslim traditions as heretical, and believe all religious others are doomed, including non-Salafi Muslims. However, this 'deculturalised' form of religion has also acquired certain accommodating and ethno-nationalist features, for example when secular Albanian conspiracy theories about purportedly anti-Albanian neighbouring nations are reinterpreted as 'Crusaders' or 'Zionists'.

Anna Zadrozna (UCL), 'A book for a Muslim woman': female sexuality in text books and everyday narratives

This paper analyzes narratives on female sexuality, gender roles and sexual practices present in two separate but complementary discourses. The first is a normative discourse created mainly through popular literature addressed to Muslim women. 'A book for a Muslim woman', a small booklet translated from Arabic to Macedonian, or 'Marriage and Intimate Relationships in Islam', can be found in almost every Muslim house in the Republic of Macedonia. This paper examines content of these books asking the following questions: what norms and values do they advocate? How do they depict a Muslim woman? What examples and oppositions do they operate on? What do they advise on sexuality, love and gender roles? What kind of Islam do they promote? The second part of the paper analyzes narratives and life stories of Muslim women exploring how gender roles, sexuality, femininity and love are perceived and experienced, and asking about the place and roots of religiosity among local practices and beliefs. Where do vernacular knowledge and morality take roots from, and do they embrace Islamic orthodoxy?

Sanja Bilic (University of York), Muslim Women Organising: Religion, Identity and Politics in Bosnia and the UK

The events of violence – war in Bosnia and 7/7 (and the effects of 9/11) in the UK – have had overwhelmingly gendered manifestations influencing women's reflections on what it means to be a Muslim woman in Europe. In both countries, Muslim women's post-violence re-evaluation of religious identity was followed by the emergence of Muslim women's organisations. In this article I consider different organising strategies developed by Bosnian Muslim women themselves and, in the UK, by the Government, to deal with the external challenges of the aftermath of war and 9/11 (and 7/7) respectively. In order to gain the perspective on these strategies I consider the work of three women's organisations: two grass-roots organisations in Bosnia – Nahla and Kewser – and a government-initiated organisation in the UK –

Muslim Women's Network (MWN). I explore the organisational practices that are in line with both religious needs of Muslim women as well as with the demands of the social environment they live in. The findings suggest that the bottom-up, grass-roots organizations, with actively involved and frequently consulted members, are significantly more effective in contributing to a positive sense of women's Muslim identity.

18.00-18.15, *Short Break*

**18.15–19.45: SESSION 10. Developing Islamic Studies in the UK: Future Horizons (Panel Discussion, Public Event)**

*Room: Beveridge Hall, Chair: Hugh Goddard (University of Edinburgh)*

Sophie Gilliat-Ray (Cardiff University)

Judith Pfeiffer (University of Oxford)

Zahia Salhi (University of Manchester)

**END OF DAY 2**