



Unity

Newsletter of the Cambridge Muslim College
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South Building: appeal underway!

CMC'S TEACHING AND research activities are growing steadily, and we need more space! We have recently succeeded in buying the immediately adjacent property at 20 Cambridge Place. A generous supporter has committed to 50% of the purchase price, while the College has secured an Islamic loan for the remaining 50%. To pay back this loan we urgently need to raise £800,000 from our supporters and friends around the world.

The new building is currently laid out as open-plan office space which could be readily converted for teaching purposes, with additional space for the College's growing research collection of Arabic, Persian, Turkish and Urdu books. Acquiring this property brings us closer to achieving some of our

most significant long-term development objectives. One of the most exciting of these is our proposed BA in Islamic Studies, a new course which will provide a unique opportunity for students to gain authentic Islamic knowledge in a contemporary and rigorous learning environment, without having to travel to the Middle East or elsewhere.

The addition of this property also marks a major step towards the development of the currently unused land behind the Research Wing (our row of former almshouses). CMC is the proud owner of one of the last important sites for new development in central Cambridge, which is earmarked for a world-class new building to host our BA and other planned academic programmes.



Diploma Update

WITH 18 STUDENTS enrolled, our 2013-14 cohort for the Diploma was the largest yet, culminating in a packed-out graduation ceremony held in Murray Edwards College's beautiful Kaetsu Centre. Students, families, friends, alumni and many other honoured guests and scholars enjoyed keynote speeches by Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad and Maulana Abdur Rahman Mangera. A poetry reading by award-winning poet Paul Sutherland and a series of student nasheeds and presentations completed the event. We congratulate our recent graduates on their achievements and wish them well for the future.

Meanwhile the College's sixth cohort is settling in well. Numbering 10 male and 5 female students, all are graduates of British darul ulums. Students often comment on the synergy between their education and what the College provides in its one-year Diploma. These feelings are neatly summed up by one of our current students:

"Each lesson provides a new opportunity to explore and I cannot imagine what more I could ask for ... The lectures and seminars have helped nuance and provide opportunities to develop my Islamic studies and, with all that is on offer, I feel I will be able to better serve the needs of my Muslim community."

Study Trips

OUR DIPLOMA STUDENTS always enjoy our bespoke programme of teaching trips, which are designed to supplement and broaden their classroom learning. We offer a variety of experiences and locations, from the local (Cambridge University Colleges, libraries and seminaries) to the national (including the Houses of Parliament, Greenwich Observatory, Walsingham and Canterbury Cathedral). The students' comments show how much they benefit from these trips:

"I initially began with thinking that the course would simply be professors and lecturers but was really happy to have been on trips meeting rabbis, priests and ambassadors - a great opportunity for me."

"I particularly enjoyed visiting the Department for Communities and Local Government in London, it made me realise how accessible the government is and how easy it is to make use of certain departments."

The programme of educational visits culminates with an annual trip to Rome, taking in the Vatican museums, St Peter's Basilica and a range of interfaith and theological encounters at the Gregorian University, the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies, and other key institutions.





CMC PEOPLE

New Trustees

“I have always admired the great effort that went into the creation and running of the Muslim College and wished it every success”, said **Professor Muhammad Abdel Haleem OBE**, on agreeing to become a Trustee. As Director of the Centre of Islamic Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), and author of *The Qur’an: A new translation*, Professor Abdel Haleem brings a wealth of expertise to our Board.

Professor Lejla Demiri, our newest Trustee, is Chair of Islamic Doctrine and Deputy Director of the Centre for Islamic Studies at the University of Tübingen. Her book *Muslim Exegesis of the Bible in Medieval Cairo* appeared with Brill in 2013. She is currently working on an intellectual biography of ‘Abd al-Ghanī al-Nābulī (d. 1731).

NEW DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

The college is delighted to announce that **Davina Levy**, formerly of the fundraising team at St Catherine’s College, has joined our office staff, with responsibility for fundraising and outreach. She has already launched CMC on Twitter. In 2015 Davina began an extensive tour of

CMC supporters past and present in Hong Kong, Australia and Malaysia.

Davina has been liaising with Acamedia, a film production company based in Dubai, who have created, at their own expense, an excellent new promotional film on the College, its staff and its alumni.





Ahmed Keeler, on 'Reflections of an English Muslim' | **Henry Winter**, on 'Styles of Leadership in Football Management' | **Rehanah Sadiq** on Hospital Chaplaincy | **Roger Mosey**, on 'Dealing with the Media' | **Dr Kais Dukes**, on the 'Qur'anic Arabic Corpus' | **Dr Hisham A. Hellyer**, on 'Egypt's revolution, the 'Ulama, Muslim intellectuals and Western Muslims' | **Professor Abu Sway**, on the *Ihya Ulum ud Din* | **Michael Binyon**, on religion and the media | **Mishal Hussain** on 'Engaging with the Media' | **Paul Shore**, on 'Jesuit Approaches to Studying Islam' | **Imam Suhaib Webb**, on 'The Qualities of a Religious Leader' | **Robert Irwin**, on Orientalism | **Jamil Sherif**, on 'The 2011 Census and the Muslim Question' | **Abd al-Hayy Weinman**, on 'The benefits and challenges of intra-Muslim dialogue in Muslim communities'

Visiting Speakers

The College continues to attract guests and visiting speakers of world renown. Among those we have welcomed over the past year:

Solaiman Elkhareiji (Jeddah), speaking on 'Contemporary Islamic Architecture' | **Professor Ralf Wustenberg**, on 'Mercy in the Lutheran Tradition' | **Hafiz Ather Husain**, on 'Fabricated Hadiths' | **Rabbi Yisrael Malkiel**, on 'The importance of Maimonides to the Rabbinical Tradition' | **Sh Yahya Rhodus**, on 'The Sāda Āli Bā 'Alawī and the Spiritualization of Knowledge' | **Shaykh Faraz Rabhani**, on 'How to make use of New Media Technologies' | **Professor Aisha al Mannai**, on responsibilities towards interfaith engagement | **The Bishop of Ely**, on 'The Role of the Virgin Mary in Christian and Islamic Theology' |

The College welcomed a delegation from Azerbaijan, including **Dr Elmir Guliyev**, author of over fifty theological works including the first Russian-language textbook of Qur'anic Studies; **Dr Elshad Mahmudov**, imam and khatib of Baku's largest mosque; and **Dr Goshgar Selimi**, the leading hadith specialist at the Faculty of Theology at Baku State University.

We were also honoured to receive the directors of the Ma'din Academy, the largest Islamic university in Kerala (India). The delegation included **Sheikh Umar Melmuri**, **Mr Abbas Panakkal**, **Sheikh Sayyid Bukhari**, and **Sheikh Aboobacker bin Ahmed**. It was noted that CMC has now trained its first Indian Shafi'i graduate, **Mawlana Muneeb**, who is currently leading a mosque community in London. CMC congratulates Mawlana Muneeb on his

STRATEGY REPORT COMPLETE

The CMC has been delighted to work with **Professor David Weir**, the distinguished former dean of four university Business Schools, in developing the CMC's long-term strategy. Professor Weir met with the Trustees, College staff and alumni and offered invaluable advice to the College on how to proceed through our next phase of development as we fine-tune plans for our BA degree. In his seventy-page Strategy Report he writes that CMC 'has in a short period established itself as a serious player in the field of Muslim studies and has much to be proud of. The Cambridge Muslim College is a success story.'



Research Fellows

For the 2014-15 academic year we are pleased to welcome two new Research Fellows: **Dr Harith Bin Ramli** and **Dr Ramon (Ibrahim) Harvey**.

Dr. Harith Bin Ramli works on the history of early Islamic thought, focusing on the formation of Sufism and Islamic theology. He received his BA in Arabic and Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Durham in 2004, and MPhil in Medieval Arabic Thought from the University of Oxford in 2006. He then continued

wedding, which was conducted by **Shaykh Abdal Hakim** in London shortly after his graduation.

Senior delegations from Singapore, Oman, Turkey and other countries were also received in the College during this period. We were proud to welcome **HE Pehin Mohammed Yasmin**, the Energy Minister of Brunei Darussalam, and his team. **Ambassador Dr Akbar Ahmad** also visited in the company of **Dr Amina Hoti**. We received a visit from **Basil Cousins**, Director of Open Forum Europe. We also had the pleasure of hosting **Dr Lubna Abduljabbar**, Director of the English Language Islamic Programme at the Great Imam College, Baghdad, who spent a week with us studying British Islam. The College is looking forward to the visit of a group of scholars from the Great Imam College who plan to attend a tailor-made summer course run by CMC this summer.

The CMC Public Lecture programme regularly draws high-calibre speakers to Cambridge, and attracts an audience of Cambridge academics, students and CMC members and supporters. Among the lecturers we have recently welcomed are: **Professor Deborah Howard**, Professor of Architectural History at the University of Cambridge, who spoke on 'The impact of the Islamic world on Venetian architecture'.

Haroon (Michael) Sugich chose CMC for the launch of his new book *Signs on the Horizons: Meetings with Men of Knowledge and Illumination*.

Dr Mehmet Asutay, Reader in Political Economy at Durham University, spoke on 'The Socio-Ethical Failure of Islamic Banking and Finance.'

Marwan Muhammad, Spokesman of the Collectif Contre l'Islamophobie en France, spoke on 'Fighting Islamophobia: what can we learn from the French experience?'

Dr Çefli Ademi, Lawyer and Postdoctoral Researcher, Zentrum für Islamische Theologie at the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster, spoke on 'Muslims in Germany and their Relationship to German Constitutional Law'.

Dr Leonard Lewisohn, Senior Lecturer and Iran Heritage Foundation Fellow in Persian and Sufi Literature, Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter, spoke on 'Persian Sufism and English Romantic Poets'.

Dr John Andrew Morrow, Author and Professor of Languages, IvyTech (IN, USA), spoke on 'A Prophetic Agenda for Religious Freedom: Exploring the Prophet Muhammad's Covenants with the Christians of the World'.

Dr Mohammed Siddique Seddon, Editor at Kube Publishing, spoke on 'Britain's First Muslim Community: Yemeni Muslims in Britain.'

Dr Karim Lahham, Barrister of the Inner Temple, spoke on 'Gandhi, Islam and the Principles of Non-Violence (Ahimsa) and Attachment to Truth (Satyagraha).'

Visiting icons

Several artists, poets and singers have visited us in the past year, including **Efdaluddin Kılıç**, **Baraka Blue**, **Rasheed Butt**, **Ali Keeler**, **Paul Sutherland** and **Sami Yusuf**.

as a doctoral student at Oxford, receiving his DPhil in 2012 for his thesis on epistemology and theology in the fourth/tenth century text *Qūt al-qulūb* of Abū Ṭālib al-Makkī. He has taught courses on Sufism and Islamic theology at SOAS and the University of Nottingham, where he was a teaching fellow from 2013 to 2014.

Dr Ramon (Ibrahim) Harvey studies the Islamic scriptural sources and classical disciplines with a focus on Qur'anic interpretation and the shari'ah. He received his MA and then PhD in Islamic Studies from SOAS, University of London, completing a thesis on societal justice in the Qur'an. Alongside his academic training, he has spent a number of years studying with traditionally trained Islamic scholars in the UK and has attended an intensive programme at Al-Azhar in Cairo. He has previously worked as a Senior Teaching Fellow at SOAS lecturing in Qur'an and Hadith, as well as writing biographical entries of early Islamic figures for a forthcoming collection. During his year at Cambridge Muslim College, he is working on reworking his thesis as a monograph to be published by Edinburgh University Press and continuing his research in Qur'anic studies, early Islamic legal theory and Māturīdī theology.

Associate Research Fellows

Dr Michael Berdine (Muhammad As'ad), known to the College family as our founding Principal (2009-2013), currently holds a position at the College as Associate Research Fellow. He reports excellent progress on his planned monograph on Sir Mark Sykes and the Balfour Declaration.

Mawlana Dr Abdur Rahman Mangera continues to teach and give Khutbas in London, and is the manager of White Thread Press, which publishes English translations of texts from the classical tradition.

Dr Matthew Tariq Wilkinson has published *A Fresh Look at Islam in a Multi-Faith World: a philosophy for success through education* (2015).

Dr Tim Luckcock is our newest Fellow. His book *Faith in School Leadership: Spirituality, Pastoral Ministry, Administrative Philosophy in the Practice of the Headmaster* was published in November 2014. He is currently working on Islamic theological perspectives on educational practice.

Visiting Scholar **Dr Paul Hardy**, a philosophy teacher at Rutgers University and former SOAS lecturer, spent two months at CMC working on his new book on Islamic philosophical theology.



The Dean's activities

ABDAL HAKIM MURAD gave a keynote address at a conference on 'Horizons of Islamic Theology' at Goethe University in Frankfurt, where he spoke on 'Muslim Theology in the Contemporary German University'. He also gave papers at the Universities of Oxford, Roehampton, University College London, Heythrop College London, and the Catholic Academy of Berlin. He was part of the Muslim delegation to the Catholic-Muslim Forum in Rome in November 2014. His latest writings have appeared in Dan Cohn-Sherbok (ed.), *Sensible Religion*, David Marshall (ed.), *Death, Resurrection and Human Destiny: Christian and Muslim Perspectives*, Chad Meister (ed.) *Debating Christian Theism*, Marianne Moyaert and Joris Geldhof (eds.), *Ritual Participation and Interreligious Dialogue*, Mohammed Khalil (ed.), *Between Heaven and Hell: Islam, Salvation and the Fate of Others*, and as articles and reviews in *Islamochristiana*, *Studies in Christian Ethics*, and *Modern Believing*. A collection of his writings has recently been published in Albanian translation.

Academic Director

DR ATIF IMTIAZ spoke at an event organised by the Christian-Muslim Forum at Westminster Abbey on 'Telling the Truth about Muslim Identities in Britain'. He spoke on 'Factors Shaping Contemporary Muslim Identity'. The event was aimed at parliamentarians, and many members of the Houses of Parliament attended.

He also spoke on the theme of 'Religion and Britishness' alongside Lord Rowan Williams and Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg at an event organised by the Cambridge University Jewish Society.

He presented a paper at a conference on 'Comparative Approaches to the Study of Islamophobia' at the University of Salzburg on October 9 2014. His paper was titled: 'More British than the British? Positive Representations of Muslims in the *Daily Mail* in 1989'.

Atif Imtiaz also presented on the Diploma in Contextual Islamic Studies and Leadership at an International Conference on Imams in Western Europe held at the LUISS Guido Carli University and the John Cabot

University in Rome. The conference focused on the theme of 'Authority, Training and Institutional Challenges' and was held from 5th to 7th November 2014. Atif's presentation was titled 'Contextualising Islam in the United Kingdom: A Matter of Confidence?'

Atif Imtiaz spoke with George Joffe at a seminar organised by the Woolf Institute on 'Islam and Judaism in European Politics' as part of the Woolf Institute's Panel Series on Muslim-Jewish relations organised in conjunction with the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Cambridge. Atif compared the Dreyfus Affair with the Rushdie affair while George Joffe considered Europe's interactions with its minorities from the Middle East and North Africa.

A public discussion was organised at Westcott House on Tuesday 27th January by the Woolf Institute in response to the Paris attacks in January 2015. Atif Imtiaz spoke alongside Ed Kessler of the Woolf Institute and Lord Rowan Williams of Magdalene College to a packed room.



Islamic Psychology Course

THE COLLEGE'S FIRST-EVER residential course, on 'Islamic Approaches to Psychology and Psychotherapy', was a week-long programme introducing senior mental health professionals to the philosophy and methodology of psychology from an Islamic perspective. The course, run by Professor Rasjid Skinner, consultant clinical psychologist at Lynfield Mount Hospital in Bradford, presented a faith-based theoretical understanding of mental health as well as suggesting practical ways of working with mentally distressed individuals. Evening sessions included

presentations by Sheikh Abdal Hakim Murad, Hakim Salim Khan and Rabia Malik. The course was oversubscribed and all those attending rated their experience 'excellent'. Participants were awarded a Certificate of Attendance in Islamic Approaches to Psychology and Psychotherapy. Feeding back their comments, attendees wrote of their enjoyment and interest: *'There was not a moment when I was not intrigued' ... 'A beneficial and inspiring course' ... 'I am very grateful to have learnt from an experienced psychotherapist and from an Islamic perspective'*.



ALUMNA APPOINTED TO CHAIR

We congratulate CMC graduate Sohaira Siddiqui, who has been appointed Assistant Professor of Theology at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service in Qatar. Sohaira, one of the first female graduates of our Diploma, in 2009-10, is responsible for teaching courses in classical and contemporary Islamic thought. Having completed her PhD this year, she is also working on a book and several articles on classical Islamic jurisprudence.



Cambridge Muslim College is now the primary host institution and partner of The Centre for Islam and Medicine, a new charity aiming to deliver a sustainable stream of collaborative quality research and educational resources on Islam and medicine, rooted firmly in Islamic scholarship. The Centre’s third Research Output on smoking is now almost complete. The College recently hosted the Centre’s international Round Table of Scholars and Practitioners, which brought together high-level health care professionals and senior Islamic scholars, led by Dr Asim Padela of Chicago.

Through this partnership the College provides a home for the CIM and offers the opportunity to establish it as the leading hub for Islamic reflection and research in Islamic medical ethics and related topics. We also look forward to gaining from the mutual exchange of expertise, experience and support.

ACCREDITATION GRANTED

We are delighted to report that the College has been awarded accreditation by the British Accreditation Council for Independent Further and Higher Education. This is a globally-recognised mark of quality and was achieved through a detailed two-day audit, assessing the College’s management, staffing and administration, teaching, learning and assessment, student welfare, premises and facilities. The resulting Inspection Report highlighted ‘highly esteemed teaching staff, excellent premises and clear and focused management’ among the College’s strengths, while the Diploma was praised for offering ‘a wide horizon for young Muslim leaders to gain a better understanding of their position among the world’s communities’.



CMC ONLINE

The College website now provides access to a growing curriculum of video lectures in the well-known ‘Travelling Light’ series based on the *Ihyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* of al-Ghazālī.

ESTATE DEVELOPMENTS

A modest but nonetheless important expansion has taken place over the past year, with the creation of a peaceful patio garden and the addition of a WC and car parking facilities accessible to wheelchair users.

CMC IN THE MEDIA

A variety of news agencies visited CMC in recent months. RT presented a special news feature on the College including interviews with staff and students. Michael Binyon of *The Times* wrote a long article in which he praised the College’s approach, concluding with the words: ‘Judging from the success of most of the graduates, it is working’.

PLACEMENTS BEGIN

The Diploma students are now assigned to a range of hands-on placement activities each week. These include teaching at a local Cambridge madrasa, giving khutbas, and presenting Islam in local schools. An agreement has been reached with Addenbrookes’ Hospital for our students to observe the chaplaincy team there and undertake training during Term Three.