



Al-Maktoum College
of Higher Education

enlightening
rewarding
motivating
friendly

Open Lectures Programme

2017 - 2018

Organised by Dr Masoumeh Velayati

academic intellectually stimulating

Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education, formerly known as Al-Maktoum Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies, was established in 2001. Its aim is to bridge the possible gap between the Muslim and western worlds by focusing on intelligent debate and scientific understanding of Islam and the role of Muslims in the contemporary world.

The College is an independent, not-for-profit educational charity and one of the small number of private colleges of higher education in the United Kingdom. Its Patron and Sponsor is HH Shaikh Hamdan Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai and Minister of Finance of the United Arab Emirates, whose unceasing support for multiculturalism, education and the study of Islam and Muslims lay the foundations of the College.

Al-Maktoum College, as a research-led college in Dundee, Scotland, provides an excellent centre for teaching and research of the highest standard and quality in the area of Islam and Muslims in conjunction with other religions and ethno-religious communities. Indeed, multiculturalism and religious pluralism lie at the centre of all its activities. In its relatively short history, a total of 200 students from over 40 countries have successfully graduated from the College's postgraduate degree programmes, mainly PhDs.

Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education,
124 Blackness Road, Dundee DD1 5PE

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www.almcollege.org.uk

relaxing challenging fulfilling welcome

In addition to focusing on scientific teaching and research in the area of Islam and Muslims in conjunction with other faith traditions and none, the Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education has provided a wide range of popular open lectures maintaining the College's high profile at local, national and international level. This open lecture programme includes a variety of stimulating, informative and thought provoking topics presented by prominent scholars in their field of expertise. This is highly appreciated by the College and the local communities and academics.

Open lectures are free to all but booking is required. To register for a place please email: **openlectures@almcollege.org.uk**

From time to time, open lecture details change after advertising material has been printed. We therefore strongly advise you to check the website for any last-minute changes: **www.almcollege.org.uk**

Most of the lectures are recorded with the permission of the speakers and are available online. For previous lectures, please visit:
www.youtube.com/user/AlMaktoumCollege

For a comprehensive guide to public events at the Al-Maktoum College, please visit: **www.almcollege.org.uk/events**

We look forward to welcoming you.

Open Lectures

26 October 2017 - 6pm



Professor Andrew Newman
University of Edinburgh

Safavid Architecture: Speaking to a Multi- constituency Polity in Pre-modern Iran

This lecture will first set out the main conventional wisdoms as to the history and dynamics of Iran's Safavid period (1501-1722) and identify the key secondary sources in which this discourse has been, and continues to be, found. It will then offer a rejoinder to this narrative, in the process suggesting how Safavid architecture is one of a number of the period's discourses which, if carefully examined, offers a more interesting, and decidedly more dynamic narrative, which might better explain the period's trends and events. The talk will conclude with a discussion of the relevance of the western-language field of Safavid studies in the current international political climate.

16 November 2017



Professor Mario Aguilar
University of St. Andrews

Interfaith Dialogue: Experience and Art

This lecture will explore the opportunities and complementarity between ideas and experience in inter-faith dialogue. With a visual exposition of the drawings of the Indian artist Chittaprosad, the lecture will examine the possibilities of inter-faith manifestations of the Absolute represented in humanity. Interfaith dialogue arises out of the experience of following a path with a theological reflection to follow, so that art is not only an expression of experience, but the manifestation of a commonality in action first and reflection second.

16 November 2017

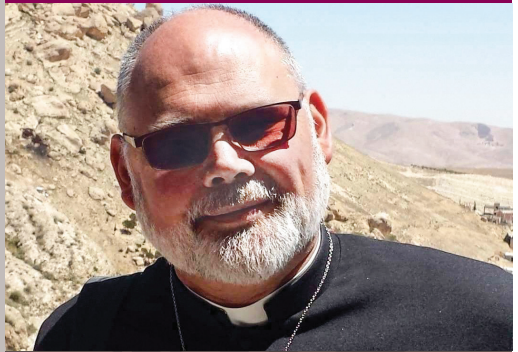


Dr. Joshua Ralston
University of Edinburgh

Bearing Witness: A Framework for Christian-Muslim Dialogue

Christians and Muslims are both instructed by God to bear witness with their lives, prayers, and practices to the truth, mercy, and justice of God's Word. Tragically, both history and recent events have shown that the combination of our theological differences and shared missionary impulse often lead to stereotypes, rivalry, mistrust, and even deadly violence. Is the only way to seek peace, inter-religious understanding, and justice to silence or ignore our particular faith commitments? Or might there be other ways for Christians and Muslims to encounter one another, debate our truth claims, and work for the common good in a pluralist society?

01 February 2018 - 6pm



Rev. Andrew Ashdown

An exploration of Christian-Muslim relations in Syria, both prior to, and in the midst of, the current conflict

By introducing the rich mosaic of both Christian and Muslim communities in Syria and the history of their primarily peaceful coexistence through the centuries, the Revd Ashdown will discuss the impact of the conflict in recent years. He will talk about how some religious communities are trying to work together to provide a humanitarian response to the crisis and stimulate reconciliation initiatives at local level, whilst acknowledging the profound fracturing that the conflict has engendered. Despite the trauma and pain that the country has suffered, the commitment of many to the recovery of coexistence and tolerance means that Muslim and Christian leaders can play an important part in reconciling the country and rebuilding trust and peace amidst her people.

15 February 2018 - 6pm



Professor Mona Siddiqui OBE
University of Edinburgh

Rethinking Hospitality: from law to ethics

Islamic ethics exists within the framework of 'commanding right and forbidding wrong'. Yet exactly what is meant by right and wrong lies within the scope of ethics, which is most often subsumed under Islamic law during the classical period. In the context of modernity, which throws up so many challenges, what does Muslim ethics look like? This lecture will explore the limits of classical legalism when rethinking and expanding the virtues of hospitality as a theological and sociological paradigm today.

15 March 2018 - 6pm



Dr. Marlé Hammond
School of Oriental and African Studies
(SOAS), University of London

Legacies of al-Khansā', 7th Century Arab Poetess

The seventh-century poet Tumāḍīr Bint 'Amr, otherwise known as the 'snub-nosed' or al-Khansā', whose life spanned the pre- and early Islamic eras, is perhaps the most renowned elegist in the whole of the Arabic poetic tradition. Her presence indeed looms large, particularly for women authors who find historical validation in her grief-stricken voice. This lecture considers her place in the canon, how it has evolved over time, and what it means today. It also asks whether and how her legacy of lamentation 'translates' into other languages and literatures.

19 April 2018 - 6pm



Dr. Andrew Bannister

Director of Solas Centre
for Public Christianity, Dundee

New Tools, Ancient Texts: Computerised Study of the Qur'an

Recently the field of Qur'anic studies has begun to be transformed by new digital tools that allow scholars to analyse the Qur'an's language, structure, formation and transmission in powerful ways. Just as they have transformed the study of other ancient texts, new computerised approaches to the Qur'an are shedding new light on an ancient scripture.

This lecture will showcase some of the latest developments in Qur'anic Computing and, as an example, demonstrate how they can shed light on one of the thorniest questions in critical scholarship: how was the Qur'an first composed and how the largely oral environment in which Islam began affected the Arabic text that we have today.

10 May 2018 - 6pm



Professor Tim Jacoby

University of Manchester

Islam and the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria: Evidence from its Magazine.

Since the emergence of the Islamic State, Da'esh, considerable debate has arisen over the relationship (or lack of therein) between its ideological discourse and broader Islamic exegeses and learning. This lecture aims to connect these broader discussions to its self-defined ideological standpoint as set out in its magazine, Dabiq. The first 15 of these, published between June 2014 and July 2016, amounting to more than 900 pages, are examined to assess their authors' (1) analysis of the Qur'an (2) use of classical scholarship and (3) engagement with contemporary readings of Islam.

21 June 2018 - 6pm



Dr. Ayman Shihadeh

School of Oriental and African Studies
(SOAS), University of London

**On Good and Evil:
Ethical Theories in
Classical Islamic
Thought**

This lecture will historically introduce a major debate in Islamic thought on the nature and sources of ethical judgement. Central to this debate is the question of whether an act is good or evil because reason judges it to be so, or because God commands, permits or prohibits it. The former position is represented by two schools of thought: one that views goodness and evilness as intrinsic to acts themselves, and another that connects them to the consequences of acts. This debate has had a deep impact on Islamic thought and practice, past and present.

Previous Speakers

- Professor The Baroness Afshar
- Professor Habib Ahmed
- Dr. Shabbir Akhtar
- Professor Joseph Alagha
- Professor John Anderson
- Professor Humayun Ansari
- M. Iqbal Asaria
- Professor Mehmet Asutay
- Dr. Jenny Berglund
- Professor Antony Black
- Professor David Bradley
- Dr. David Cheetham
- Professor Grace Davie
- Professor Mohammed El-Gomati OBE
- Dr. Max Farrar
- Professor Anne Fitzpatrick
- Professor Hugh Goddard
- Professor Philip Goodchild
- Dr. Dirk Hartwig
- Dr. Fazlun Khalid
- Professor Tony Lang
- Professor Oliver Leaman
- Professor Reina Lewis
- Dr. Ziba Mir-Hosseini
- Dr. Shuruq Naguib
- Ms. Ratna Osman
- The Very Revd. Professor Martyn Percy
- Dr. Lloyd Ridgeon
- Professor Alison Scott-Baumann
- Dr. Yafa Shanneik
- Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui
- Professor Zahia Smail Salhi
- Rev. Dr. Keith Small
- Professor David Thomas
- Dr. Nuri Tinaz
- Dr. Martin Whittingham

Biographies

Professor Andrew Newman

Professor Newman is Personal Chair of Islamic Studies and Persian at the University of Edinburgh. He holds a BA in History, summa cum laude, from Dartmouth College, USA, and an MA and PhD in Islamic Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles, USA. He joined the University of Edinburgh in 1996.

Professor Newman has published books and articles on early Twelver Shi'i history and thought, on Safavid Iran, on Shi'ism in Safavid Iran and on Islamic medicine. His most recent publication is *Twelver Shi'ism, Unity and Diversity in the Life of Islam, 632 to 1722* (Edinburgh, 2013). Professor Newman is the founder and moderator of 'Shi'i News and Resources' www.shii-news.imes.ed.ac.uk/

Professor Mario Aguilar

Professor Mario I Aguilar is Director of the Centre for the Study of Religion and Politics (CSRP) of the University of St. Andrews and President of the International Committee for Inter-religious Dialogue. He is actively involved in inter-faith dialogues and serves as Pope Francis' biographer. His latest works include his Indian trilogy: *Christian Ashrams, Hindu Caves, and Sacred Rivers: Christian-Hindu Monastic Dialogue in India 1950-1993* (2016), *The Way of the Hermit: Interfaith Encounters in Silence and Prayer* (2017), and *God, Silence, and the Partition of India: Theological Wombs in Interreligious Dialogue* (2018).

Dr. Joshua Ralston

Dr Ralston is lecturer in Muslim-Christian Relations at the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh and is the co-founder of the Christian-Muslim Studies Network. He has been a visiting lecturer in theology and Christian-Muslim Relations in both Nigeria and Cairo, Egypt.

He has published a number of essays and book chapters on Christian-Muslim relations, focusing on issues of divine law, revelation, political theology, and God's attributes. He co-edited a book on migration and religion, entitled *The Church in an Age of Migration: A Moving Body*, and his forthcoming monograph, *Law and the Rule of God: Shari'a in Christian-Muslim Debate*, will be available early next year. He is currently serving on a European-wide task force of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, which is focused on church responses to the migration crisis. He is also a member of the Church of Scotland's Middle East committee.

Rev. Andrew Ashdown

Rev Andrew Ashdown is an Anglican priest. He has been travelling and leading groups to the Middle East for over 30 years. He has engaged with Christians, Muslims and Jews in the Israel-Palestine conflict and he has met with many religious and political leaders in Palestine, Egypt, Lebanon and Syria. Andrew travelled to Syria several times, sometimes with faith delegations, but mostly independently. He has met with members of all communities and with religious and political leaders of all parties; and has travelled throughout the country in the midst of the conflict. In May 2017, he spent a month independently in Syria undertaking research into the subject of Christian-Muslim Relations in Syria.

Biographies

Professor Mona Siddiqui OBE

Mona Siddiqui, OBE is Professor of Islamic and Interreligious Studies at the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh. She is Assistant Principal for Religion and Society and Dean International for the Middle East. Her primary research interests are in the areas of Islamic jurisprudence and ethics and Christian-Muslim Encounters. Her most recent monographs include *Christians, Muslims and Jesus* (Yale UP, 2013) and *Hospitality and Islam: Welcoming in God's Name* (Yale UP, 2015). She is a regular commentator in various international media and chairs the BBC's Scottish Religious Advisory Committee. She holds various visiting professorships and is a fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Royal Society of Arts. She has received five honorary doctorates and is listed in Debretts top 500 most influential people in the UK.

Dr. Andrew Bannister

Dr Andrew G. Bannister is Adjunct Research Fellow at the Arthur Jeffery Centre for the Study of Islam, Melbourne School of Theology, and a visiting lecturer at the Centre for Islamic Studies and Muslim-Christian Relations, London School of Theology. He is the author of *An Oral-Formulaic Study of the Qur'an* (Lexington Books, 2014) as well as the best-selling popular philosophy book, *The Atheist Who Didn't Exist (or: The Dreadful Consequences of Bad Arguments)* (Monarch, 2015). He is also the Director of the Solas Centre for Public Christianity, a think tank that aims to generate conversations about faith, culture and philosophy.

Dr. Marlé Hammond

Dr Marlé Hammond is Senior Lecturer in Arabic Popular Literature and Culture at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London. Previously she held a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship at the Oriental Institute of the University of Oxford (2007-2010) as well as a Research Fellowship in the Programme of Arabic Poetry and Comparative Poetics at St. John's College, Oxford (2002-2006). Her research interests include Classical and Modern Arabic Literature and Poetics; Egyptian and Arabic Cinemas; Women's Writing and Folkloric Narrative. Dr. Hammond has written many book chapters and journal articles. She is the author of *Beyond Elegy: Classical Arabic Women's Poetry in Context* (Oxford University Press, 2010) and the editor of *Arabic Poems* (Everyman's Library Pocket Poets, 2014).

All lectures are **FREE** to attend and open to the public.

However registration is required due to capacity.

Refreshments will be available half an hour before the lectures.

There is a free car park available adjacent to the College.

Professor Tim Jacoby

Tim Jacoby is professor at the Global Development Institute and co-founder of the Humanitarian and Conflict Response Institute at the University of Manchester. He completed his PhD and an Economic and Social Research Council Post-Doctoral Fellowship in the Department of Politics at the University of York. His research has focused on state development in Turkey as well as broader topics related to political violence, civil society, Islam, nationalism and post-conflict reconstruction.

Professor Jacoby has published more than 25 articles in international journals and acted as guest editor for *Disasters*, *International Studies Review*, *Middle East Critique*, *Progress in Development Studies* and the *Journal of Peasant Studies*. He is also author of *Social Power and the Turkish State* (Frank Cass, 2004), and *Understanding Conflict & Violence: Interdisciplinary and Theoretical Approaches* (Routledge, 2008). He is also co-author of *Disaster Management and Civil Society: Earthquake Relief in Japan, Turkey and India* (I.B. Tauris, 2005.), *Peace in Turkey 2023: The Question of Human Security and Conflict Transformation*, (Lexington, 2013) and *The NGO-Military Complex in Afghanistan* (MUP, 2016).

Dr. Ayman Shihadeh

Dr Ayman Shihadeh is Reader in Arabic Intellectual History at the Department of History, Religions and Philosophies at SOAS University of London. He studied at SOAS and Oxford, and specialises in medieval Arabic philosophy and Islamic theology. His most recent monograph explores the interaction between these two traditions during the twelfth century.

Much of Dr Shihadeh's work focuses on Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 1210) and al-Ghazali (d. 1111), two hugely influential medieval thinkers whom he has been contextualising by the exploration of key, though little-known, figures and manuscript texts. One of his main current research projects investigates the transformation of the Ash'ari stance towards Avicenna's philosophical anthropology, especially his body-soul dualism, during the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

To Register

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Open Lectures at a glance

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