



BEING BRITISH MUSLIMS

Looking to the Future

Notes from the Masterclass





Islamic Society of Britain

This booklet is a composition of notes and slides for the workshops which made up the ISB Campus Masterclass held on Saturday, 19th November 2022.

The content of each section of this booklet is the property of the respective speaker for each of the three workshops: Dr Rizwan Syed, Dilwar Hussain, and Sarah Joseph. No section of this booklet may be reproduced without prior written permission from the respective speaker.

The Islamic Society of Britain (ISB) is a community based charity organised as a national membership society. Founded in 1990, we sought to bring individuals together who are inspired by the teachings repeated in the Qur'an to have faith and do good. The Islamic Society of Britain exists to help better the understanding of and relationship between Islam, a world faith, and Britain, our home.

Campus is an arm of the ISB which aims to provide a diverse space for young people to freely discuss, debate and learn about their religion in an open and safe environment. It brings people closer to the Creator through themed day courses, residential events and other activities like online learning. Campus began as a small marquee at the Living Islam Festival in 2016 and was so popular that it has since grown to become an independent, ever-expanding group of excited young people who come together to share ideas, experiences and learn more about their religion.

For more information, please visit:

The ISB website at isb.org.uk
or contact us by email at info@isb.org.uk

And finally, QR codes which can be scanned to join our various WhatsApp chats may be found at the end of this booklet.

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Timetable

Time	Duration	Title	Speaker	Chair
10:00-10:30	30 mins	Arrival and Registration		
10:30-11:00	30 mins	Welcome, House Rules, and Quran Recitation		Rasheed Miladi
11:00-11:15	15 mins	Ice Breaker 1		
11:15-12:30	1h 15 mins	Workshop 1 - Being British Muslims: The Theological Narrative of Belonging and Caring	Dr Rizwan Syed	Aaya Miladi
12:30-13:00	30 mins	Prayer and Reminder 1		
13:00-14:15	1h 15 mins	Lunch		
14:15-14:30	15 mins	Ice Breaker 2		
14:30-14:45	15 mins	Asr Prayer		
14:45-16:00	1h 15 mins	Workshop 2 - The British Muslim Scene: Where Do We Find Ourselves? Identity, Statistics, and Challenges	Dilwar Hussain	Faiz Salim
16:00-16:40	40 mins	Maghrib Prayer and Reminder 2 (Maghrib at 16:12)		
16:40-17:55	1h 15 mins	Workshop 3 - Muslims and Civil Society: Building a Better Future Together	Sarah Joseph	Rasheed Miladi
17:55-18:10	15 mins	Feedback and Closing Remarks		
18:30-20:00	1h 30 mins	Evening Dinner		

Preface

As-salaamu alaykum, and thank you for coming along to the November 2022 ISB Campus Masterclass! The theme of the masterclass is 'Being British Muslims: Looking to the Future'. This topic will be split into three sections, each presented by one of our three brilliant speakers, who we introduce below.

Dr Rizwan Syed



Dr Rizwan Syed is a GP who is professionally active in training and mentoring. He is a longstanding member of initially, the Young Muslims UK and later, the Islamic Society of Britain, where he has held numerous posts in leadership or training, including course organiser for the advanced level Summer Islamic Studies Residential courses. He is presently lead of ISB's tarbiyah department, overseeing curriculum development and implementation and ISB's unique Intelligences Framework.

He has been studying and teaching Islam at a lay level since his late teens, developing interests in comparative religion, usul al-hadith, usul al-fiqh, Islamic history and psychology. He is particularly concerned with the challenge of how to make core Islamic teachings relevant to our contemporary context. For two years he taught the online study circle for ISB Campus, running a two-year course entitled, 'Classical to Contemporary: Muslim and British'. Presently, Dr Rizwan presents in a number of online study circles and seminars, across a spread of age ranges.

Dilwar Hussain



Dilwar Hussain is Chair of New Horizons in British Islam, an Assistant Professor at Coventry University and an independent consultant. He has worked in academia, policy research and civil society over the last 30 years and has research interests in social policy, Islam and British Muslims. He occasionally blogs at: www.dilwar.org and tweets: @DilwarH.

His work has included: Evaluation of Home Office EDI Training (current); Literature Review for the Casey Report on Integration (2016); Specialist Advisor to the House of Commons Inquiry on Prevent (2010); Consultant to the Cambridge-Azhar Imams Training Project, Cambridge University and FCO; steering group of the Contextualising Islam in Britain Project, Cambridge University. Dilwar is an evaluator for the Horizon Europe grant scheme (Governance / Citizenship / Radicalisation themes).

Dilwar is a Trustee of the Faith & Belief Forum (FBF) and was President of the Islamic Society of Britain (2011-2013). He established and headed the Policy Research Centre, at the Islamic Foundation (2007-2013), was Vice-Chair (2016 – 2018) of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust. He was a Commissioner at the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) (2006-2007), served on the Archbishop of Canterbury's Commission on Urban Life and Faith (2005 – 2006), is a member of the Global Interfaith Commission on LGBT+ Lives and was on the Steering Group of the UK Freedom of Religion and Belief Forum. He was awarded an MBE for services to inter-faith understanding and community relations.

Sarah Joseph



Sarah Joseph is an internationally recognised public speaker. Renowned for her independent and innovative thinking, she has addressed audiences the world over. Her audiences are eclectic - from South Asia's leading CEOs at the Khazanah Mega Trends Forum in Malaysia to worshipers at Westminster Abbey in London; from educationalists in Singapore to academics in Georgetown University in Washington.

She was listed as one of the UK's most powerful Muslims in the Muslim Power 100 by Carter Andersen, one of Europe's 40 most influential leaders under 40 by EuropaNova, and one of the World's 500 most influential Muslims by Georgetown University and the Jordanian Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre.

Sarah was awarded an OBE in the June 2004 Queen's Birthday Honour's List for services to interfaith dialogue and the promotion of women's rights.

In 2003 Sarah founded emel - a brand which first created the concept and then detailed the progression of Muslim Lifestyle. The brand fundamentally changed the way Muslims were marketed to, and made Sarah an expert in contemporary Muslim consumers and ethics.

Sarah has made countless media appearances including for the BBC, CNN and Al-Jazeera and has written for international newspapers including the UK's The Times and The Guardian, and scripted and recorded for a variety of BBC and independent radio productions. She has a regular slot on the BBC's most listened to radio show, The Zoe Ball Breakfast Show. She was

one of a handful of members of the Muslim community selected by Downing Street to discuss with the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary issues in the aftermath of the London bombings; and was a member of the Home Office Task Force on extremism following on from that. She currently serves on the UK Government's Cross Government Working Group on Anti-Muslim hatred. She has been called in as an expert on contemporary Muslim life to numerous bodies and lectured at events across the world. Drawing on her enormous experience and connectivity, Sarah has acted as a consultant to governmental and non-governmental bodies in the UK and abroad.

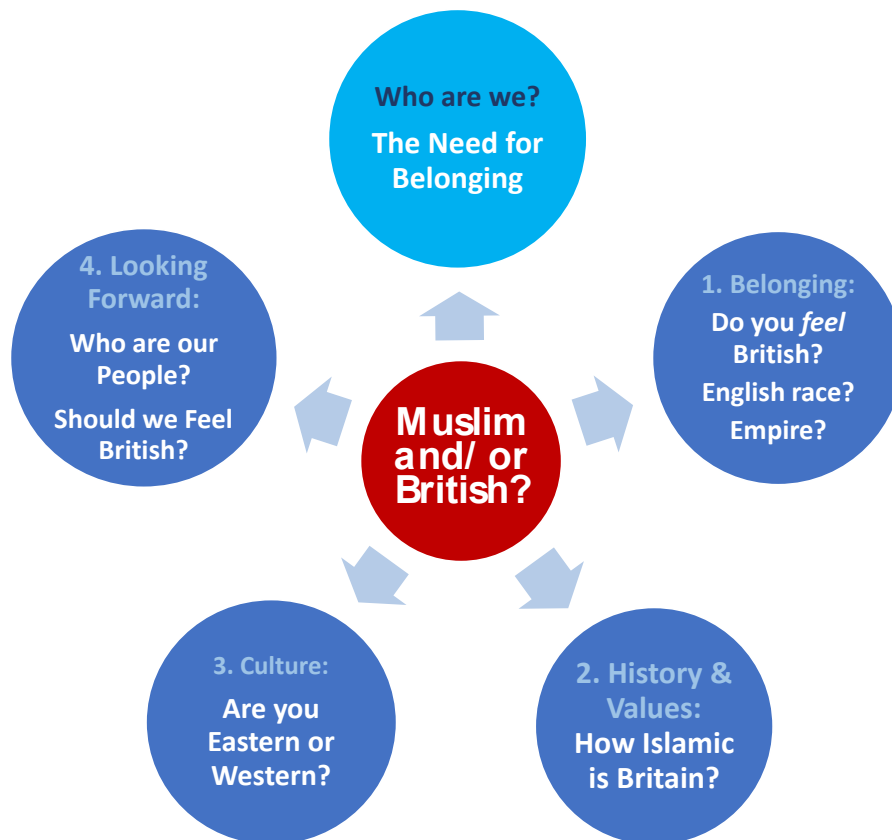
During the masterclass, we begin by exploring the Islamic, theological position on national identity and its importance. This will cover both a dive into the fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) as well as a look at historical evidence of Islam manifesting itself differently in the many areas of the world that it spread to, in Britain today. This will focus on the issues of identity, culture, and politics, and their impacts upon British Muslims, both positive and negative. We then move on from the theory to the practice, covering the reality of the current state of Muslims. It will look at our challenges as a community as well as our opportunities. We conclude by looking ahead: we explore how we can make a positive difference and build a better future in British society.

The notes on the first workshop are quite extensive and cover more than will be presented in the lectures. The second and third workshops are designed to be more interactive and so less content has been included for them in this booklet. We have, however, left space in those respective sections which can be used for note-taking.

We hope you find this booklet useful!

Being British Muslims: The Theological Narrative of Belonging and Caring

Dr Rizwan Syed



How some perceive us

- Being seen by the public as alien
- “They do not belong here”
- “Foreign in every respect”
- “Having nothing in common with the British people”
- “They have no interest in the British people”
- “Only interested in their own suffering”
- “Only see the faults in British culture – see themselves as superior”
- “A problem rather than a solution”



Who are we? The Human Species

Essentially we are animals who are determined to survive in their environment. 60,000 years ago, we were hunter gatherers in small communities. We were always exploring, moving on, and were inherently migratory.

Look at Britain- we had to have a strong sense of team, unity, belonging

Belonging can give us safety, benefit, and protection from the other. Fundamentally, belonging serves a basic need for self esteem. Nowadays, we can easily survive alone, but evidence has shown that loneliness shaves 15 years off life - comparable to an obese smoker

We still have those primordial needs of the hunter-gatherer within us, because over 100,000 years, they shaped our minds through natural selection.

The Need for Belonging

Support from a social group can help with depression and confidence. It can act as a support and buffer against stress, it can improve our performance, and it can help us to feel part of a greater cause, transcending the self.

In essence, we have a deep, psychological need for self esteem - *irdh*. It is just how we were designed, or evolved, depending on what language you want to use.

A lack of self esteem causes internal maladies that re-

sult in unhelpful behaviours like craving fame and fortune, behaving arrogantly, refusing to accept your faults or take advice. It is also leads to mental illness.

The 'Self' – our identity

Individual self: our unique traits and characteristics

Relational self: attachments to significant others – your family/community

Collective self: social groups we identify with – your people

“Yearning for connection with others”

But how? Through shared

- Experiences – including shared challenges,
- Interests,
- Values,
- Needs – socioeconomic status,
- Past/heritage,
- Culture, behaviours, traditions, norms,
- Land and languages

and through having:

- Common enemies
- A common future

The Grand Narrative

So why are we even talking about British Islam? Because the majority of the population have a story about who they are and who we are - partly based on simple things like race/skin colour. And we ourselves have a separate story about who we are.

One key way that we secure our self esteem is through stories about why we're important - forming our sense of belonging. Who we are is only partly genetics, but mainly about ideology, culture, and identity - who we feel we are. In Britain, these narratives have shaped our distinct identities and have separated us and set us on separate paths.

It's not just about knowing - knowing creates feeling. We are driven by our feelings. Motivation is a feeling.

Yuval Noah Harari (*Sapiens*) suggests that the ability to create a narrative, whether religious or otherwise, allowed humans to move from small warring communities to tribes and nations. For example, the Qur'an speaks of Bani Israel, and there is the case of the Prophet during Hajj with his tribes.

British Grand Narrative

What is the British narrative? Is it that of an island nation of ancient people - the white Anglo-Saxons, who fought off invaders to preserve their identity. Protestantism controlled the church, while parliament controlled the king.

A people who took ancient European wisdom, developed it, lead the enlightenment with new ideas of

- Science
- Freedom
- Invention
- Trade
- Industry

A people who are resourceful, tough, stoic, and fair. People who

- Give charity
- Support the underdog
- Are entrepreneurial
- Are inventive

are naturally suited to Empire, ruling it 'fairly' in order to develop 'backward' nations.

The Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) report on the decline of Britishness (2005)

White people involved in the study were invited to talk about Britishness. Many immediately and spontaneously changed the topic of the discussion slightly to talk instead about a perceived 'decline' of Britishness. This happened in all focus groups with white people. They attributed the decline to four main causes:

1. The arrival of large numbers of migrants;
2. The 'unfair' claims made by people from ethnic minorities on the welfare state;
3. The rise in moral pluralism; and the failure to manage ethnic minority groups properly, due to what participants called 'political correctness'. Political correctness was said to be present at all levels of government in Britain (local, regional and national)
4. The political and legal agenda of the European Union.

Most white participants were distressed by this perceived decline of Britishness. They felt victimised and frustrated, and many anticipated that social unrest would become inevitable. Much of their frustration was targeted at Muslims, rather than at ethnic minorities in general. Indeed, there were some indications that white respondents were drawing distinctions between ethnic minority groups.

The British Muslims in this study also felt victimised and frustrated. They resented what they perceived as being asked to display their 'loyalty' to Britishness and to choose between their Muslim and British identities. They felt that white people perceived a fundamental incompatibility between being Muslim and being British, while they saw them as compatible.

Limits of the Grand Narrative

It could be argued that this grand narrative is simply a collection of "National myths" - a simple story which is only a fraction of the truth. The narrative is there to serve a purpose:

Benedict Anderson wrote that '*The nation is an imagined community*' (1983). It is imagined because you will never know most of your fellow members. It is imagined as limited because there are other nations outside of it. It is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of divinely ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. It is imagined as a community because regardless of actual inequality/exploitation, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.

Modern nations also arose with the emergence of

new communication media, e.g printing and telegraph. The emergence of free-market capitalism and independent publishers meant that the control of culture and communications was taken out of the hand of the church or the government. Nation-states have also emerged in the context of the international system of states that surround them.



The excesses of Empire

Our feelings about empire are based on lots of stories that we have knitted into grand narrative, that colour our assumptions and hence our feelings about “the colonising race” and “the country that wallows in the obscene riches of imperial pillaging”.

35 million Indians starved to death during British rule of India, putting the scale of killing on par with World War II and Stalin’s despotic rule. There has also been the

- Great Bengal Famine (1770)
- Madras (1782-83)
- Chalisa Famine (1783-84) in Delhi and the adjoining areas
- Doji bara Famine (1791-92) around Hyderabad
- Agra Famine (1837-38)
- Orissa Famine (1866)
- Bihar Famine (1873-74)
- Southern India Famine (1876-77)
- Indian Famine (1896-1900 approx.)
- Bombay Famine (1905-06)
- Bengal Famine (1943 44)

(Shashi Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire*, pp.50-51, Hurst, London 2016)

Some excesses include:

- Nabobs - fantastically wealthy Company servants
- Concerns of corrupting Parliament through bribery
- Lobbying for interests of East India Company
- Corruption and brutality

Local response to the excesses of Empire

There was despair at the poor administration of the East India Company’s affairs. In 1772, the company’s finances collapsed. This led to the Regulating Act of 1773.

Anger at brutality of Company’s officials led to attacks in Parliament:

Robert Clive, the victor of the Battle of Plassey (1757), was attacked for three successive days in the Commons in May 1773 by General John Burgoyne, MP for Preston, who was the chairman of the committee examining his administration in India.

Edmund Burke (MP for Malton) became the most outspoken critic in Parliament against Company abuse and immorality in India - led a campaign to impeach the former Governor-General Warren Hastings (1773-85) on the grounds of misrule and corruption. His trial - the longest impeachment proceedings in Parliament’s history - began in Westminster Hall in 1788. Burke was unrestrained in his denunciations, and violently accused Hastings of being the “captain-general of iniquity”, a “spider of Hell” and a “ravenous vulture devouring the carcasses of the dead”.

Public interest and concern

There was widespread popular interest and excitement and under the influence of the Evangelical movement, there was growing public sentiment that there should be a moral foundation to British rule.

The abolition of slavery started in England. Because of the strength of public sentiment against it, the EIC had to abolish it too. ([Source](#))

Who are the British people anyway?

Humans have been living on and off in Britain for hundreds of thousands of years, but many kept dying off or retreating. 12,000 years ago, the gulf stream came back, moderating the climate and ending the Ice Age. Homo Sapiens arrived 8,000 years ago, after which Doggerland (see map below) was submerged by rising sea levels.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kk5-ynRPfs>



The early hunter gatherers were actually dark skinned, dark hair, blue eyes

[Cheddar man \(9,000 years ago\)](#)
[Scandinavia \(6,000 years ago\)](#)



Meet 'Ava' (right) the dark haired, dark skinned second-generation immigrant from 4,250 years ago: DNA reveals family secrets of 18-year-old girl who died in Scotland.

[\(Source\)](#)

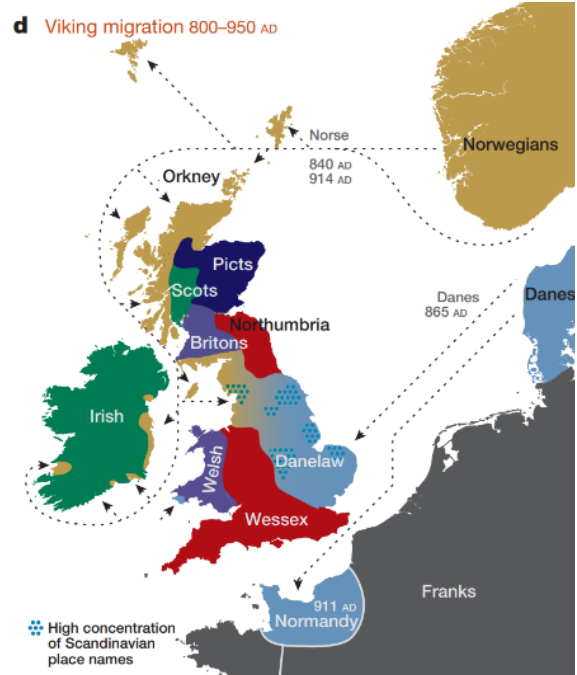
4500 years ago, the Yamnaya sweep across Northern Europe from the Steppes (Georgia/ Chechnya area). They were tall and had light to intermediate skin. Some had blond hair mutations. They mostly had brown eyes but some absorbed blue eye genes by mixing with northern hunter gatherers. They brought with them indo-European languages. British people are 60-90% Yamnaya .

(Who we are and how we got here, New Science of the Human Past, David Reich, Oxford University Press, 2018, p.113)

- 2600 YA Celts arrive and predominate Britain and Ireland
- 2000 YA Romans arrive (43CE). They rule England and part of Scotland
- The people at the time were mainly Celts but were called Britons
- There prevailed a Romano-British culture (Celtic) until 410 CE
- British Roman cities were ethnically diverse!
- Many Britons (Celts) eventually became Christian thanks to da'wah from Ireland

Celts: [Source](#)

Diverse Roman Britain: [source](#)



The Anglo-Saxons (German) invaded Britain around 440 CE. Their language became the standard, to the point where Old English has practically no Roman/Celtic influence. Most significantly, Christianity disappeared in England and was replaced by the worship of Anglo-Saxon gods. ([Source](#))

- Viking invasions 550 - 1040 CE
- Norse in Scotland and Ireland
- Danes in England – including London
- Danelaw ruled over half of England by 900 CE
- Danish King Canute took all England 1017 CE, keeping it safe for 20 years



Norman Invasion

The invasion of the Normans in 1066 CE had a dramatic impact on Britain. The Anglo-Saxon landowning elite was almost totally replaced by Normans. The system of feudalism then began to develop as William gave out lands in return for military service (either in person or a force of knights paid for by the landowner). Manorialism, a system whereby labourers worked on their lord's estate for his benefit developed and spread further. Overall, the ruling apparatus was made much more centralised with power and wealth being held in much fewer hands.

Impact of the Normans

Religion:

The majority of Anglo-Saxon bishops were replaced with Norman ones, and many dioceses' headquarters were relocated to urban centres.

International Connection:

The contact and especially trade between England and continental Europe greatly increased. The two countries of France and England became historically intertwined, initially due to the crossover of land ownership, i.e. Norman nobles holding lands in both countries.

Language:

The syntax and vocabulary of the Anglo-Saxon Germanic language were significantly influenced by the French language.

Further reading: <https://www.worldhistory.org/article/1323/the-impact-of-the-norman-conquest-of-england/>

The Union

The invention of Britain was demanded by the Act of Union in 1707, which linked Scotland to England and Wales into one United Kingdom by the name of Great Britain. Great Britain in 1707 was much less a trinity of three self-contained nations than a patchwork in which uncertain areas of Welshness, Scottishness and Englishness were cut across by strong re-

gional attachments and scored over again by loyalties to village, town, family and landscape (Linda Colley, *Britons*, 1992)

Genetics

The ancient hunter gatherers had a negligible impact on the overall genetic make-up of Britain. Turkish (Anatolian) farmers contribute between 10% and 40%, depending on the study. The Yamnaya, however, contribute around 90% - this is similar to most of Northern Europe (Georgia/ Chechnya). Celts, Normans and Anglo-Saxons are all Yamnaya descendents

The Welsh are mostly Celtic. The English, including the Cornish, are Celt with 10-40% Anglo-Saxon genes. Interestingly, Norman genes contribute a negligible amount to those of the English.

Therefore, the Anglo-Saxons enforced their identity, language and paganism but had a minor impact on English genes!

The English are considered Anglo-Saxon, but the Normans had a huge influence on our language and modern Britain generally. Genetically, though, the Norman influence is negligible. Christianity had a huge impact but there are no Jewish (Jesus) genes of note in most English people. The majority of English genes are still Celtic

People's identities are complex and are a *story*, more than anything, rather than history, genetics or race. Today, around one-sixth of British people were born outside the UK: thirteen per-cent are Black, Asian, mixed, or from other ethnic groups. Remember that the majority of British people had little control over what was done overseas and didn't have the education to scrutinise the narrative.

"The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there."

L.P. Hartley, *The Go-Between*

Any Brit today will have more values and culture in common with a British Muslim than with their ancestor from 100 years ago!

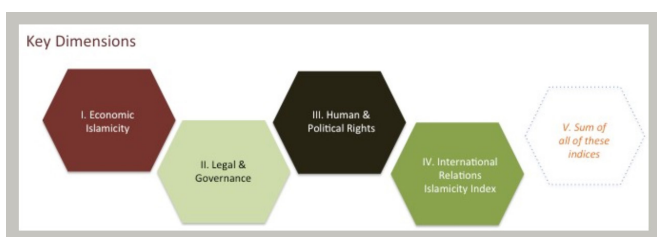
2. History & Values: How Islamic is Britain?

Based on the Maqasid - the essential objectives of Shari'ah. These are the preservation of

- Life: Health service, security, and defence,
- Faith: Freedom of conscience,
- Intellect: Free education and an open press,
- Property: Rule of law, justice, access to jobs,
- Family: Social services and family support,
- And dignity: Personal data, bullying, protection against libel

“Islamicness” – The Islamicity index

*“I went to the West and saw Islam, but no Muslims;
I got back to the East and saw Muslims, but no Islam.”
(Mohammad Abduh)*



“Today we see clerics, rulers, politicians, terrorists, institutions, organisations and individuals espousing a religion that bears very little resemblance to the teachings of the Qur’an.

“In most Muslim countries, the people have little say about the governance of their country and are prohibited from discussing and discovering their religion. Rulers and clerics have placed themselves as the only legitimate interpreters of Islam and routinely dismiss questions from Muslims as ill-informed and

not worthy of discussion.”

The disconnect between the teachings of the Qur’an and its practice has emboldened radicals, opportunists, and terrorists to fill the void and to preach a version of Islam that has perverted the religion, divided humanity, pitted Muslim against Muslim, Muslims against other communities and faiths.

From the Islamicity website:

“Our approach is to establish a benchmark (a collection of rules), based on the Qur’an and the life of the Prophet Mohammad, which Muslims can use to assess the governance and policies of their countries to establish effective institutions.

“Short-term initiatives, which have included Western support for oppressive Muslim rulers and a variety of covert and military options, have, if anything, made conditions worse and are likely to make a turnaround ever more difficult over the long run.

“The institutional scaffolding that is recommended in Islam, though similar to the structure envisaged by Adam Smith (especially in his book: The Theory of Moral Sentiments), is still different and requires a much higher degree of morality and justice. How can this turnaround in Muslim countries be initiated, developed and sustained?

The “Islamicity Indices provide the compass and the basis for establishing effective institutions, restoring hope, achieving sustainable development and for strengthening global order. These indices are based on the teachings of the Qur’an and the life and practice of the Prophet Mohammad and serve as an indication of the degree of compliance with Islamic teachings as reflected in the Islamic landscape of a community.”

“Islamicity Indices were launched in 2007 and have received publicity in Muslim countries. Malaysia has adopted a customized Islamicity Index as of 2015; the President of Iran referred to them in a speech inaugurating a Qur’an competition; the Islamic Development Bank has convened two conferences on the indices; tens of thousands of Muslims have read about these indices; a distinguished academic said of this work “this opens up a whole new area for scholarship which will enable observers to better assess which countries are serious in their efforts versus

which are using the trappings of Islamicity to justify other actions.”

(Taken from <http://islamicity-index.org/wp/>)

Further information:

<http://islamicity-index.org/wp/links-downloads/index-elements>

<http://islamicity-index.org/wp/links-downloads/index-methodology>

Table 1. High and Low Ranking in Overall Islamicity in 2020

RANK	Overall	Rank	Overall
New Zealand	1	Syria	151
Iceland	2	Afghanistan	150
Netherlands	3	Sudan	149
Sweden	4	Congo, Dem. Rep.	148
Norway	5	Chad	147
Denmark	6	Burundi	146
Ireland	7	Venezuela	145
Switzerland	8	Angola	144
Canada	9	Congo, Rep.	143
Finland	10	Libya	142
Germany	11	Iraq	141
Australia	12	Mauritania	140
Luxembourg	13	Zimbabwe	139
Austria	14	Haiti	138
United Kingdom	15	Cameroon	137

Islamicate Influence on Britain - Overview

Romans	Stoics – “monotheism” – Roman influence on Muslims
Christianity	= “Islam”: many Christians are monotheists
Law	Common law – taken from Maliki fiqh - Sicily
Universities	See paper – tidal wave of Islamicate knowledge
Science	Scientific method, maths, etc. Jim Al Khalili
Theology	Thomas Aquinas – Ibn Sina, Ibn Rushd, Al Ghazali
Architecture	Domes, gothic arches – from Islamicate
Reformation	Martin Luther, Ottoman support for protestants
Enlightenment	Arabists, Unitarians, Hayy ibn Yaqzan, Ottoman example

Romans

The Stoics - Zeno of Citium (BCE 334)

Zeno of Citium was a philosopher, born in Cyprus. Though his writings are lost, he was considered the father of Stoicism. He wrote his own ‘Republic’ about a city ruled by stoics, which was a derivative of Aristotle’s teachings.

He believed that inert matter is acted on by the ‘Logos’, a primordial fire, representing universal reason- Through this, he developed the idea of an intelligent Creator (theological argument). He reasoned that everything living is one with God, an emanation from the Logos, part of a single being. Accepting one’s fate is to live by the greater purpose of Logos - one’s will should accord with nature: "To be free from anger, envy, and jealousy". This is where we get the term ‘stoical’ from.

Epictetus: "*sick and yet happy, in peril and yet happy, dying and yet happy, in exile and happy, in disgrace and happy*".

"Constantly regard the universe as one living being,

having one substance and one soul; and observe how all things have reference to one perception, the perception of this one living being; and how all things act with one movement; and how all things are the cooperating causes of all things that exist; observe too the continuous spinning of the thread and the structure of the web".

—Marcus Aurelius, (*Meditations*, iv. 40)

Characteristics of the Stoics

- Brutal with opponents and rebellions - e.g. razed Carthage to the ground, brick by brick
- Light on government and interference once submitted to Rome
- Shared Greek gods
- Stoicism was popular; wealthy Romans were educated by Greek tutors

Originally, local legal systems were respected with Rome arbitrating disputes. However, in 212CE all free men were made Roman citizens, which necessitated the development of a standardised legal system. This endured for hundreds of years, long beyond the Roman Empire. As a result, a significant amount of legal terminology is in Latin even today.

Christianity

The similarities between Islam and Christianity are barely worth detailing.

It is worth noting that even in Creed, the differences might be few, if people do not believe in the trinity. As it is, many ordinary Christians of past and present have never really understood it and when praying, have gone straight to God, as in God, the Father.

In terms of the core teachings of Islam, Muslims believe that these are etched in our nature (*fitrah*) and were re-taught by all prophets including Jesus (pbuh). Although many of his teachings are lost or corrupted, a good deal of 'Islamic truth' is still to be found in the existing gospels.

It is difficult to even start on how Christianity has impacted modern Britain.

Pre-Islamic Muslim martyrs

But did you know that on British soil, lay buried

many great Muslim martyrs from almost 2000 years ago?

If we remember that all previous prophets taught localised versions of core Islam, then before 'Muhammadan Islam' came, there were many valid 'Islams' in each region. They all taught their followers the core teachings of belief in the One, true God, how to worship Him and live a restrained life of caring, in preparation for a judgement and afterlife.

All those brave Christians therefore, who died for their faith before the arrival of prophet Muhammad could be considered *shuhada*. The Qur'an promises faithful believers that they will be in the company of the martyrs. This group was not referring only to the companions of the Prophet (pbuh) that had been killed, but all those who died for 'previous versions' of Islam.

The martyrs celebrated for their courage in Sura Buroj predate Islam and are mentioned in hadith to have been Christian: "They ill-treated them (the martyrs) for no other reason than that they believed in God, the Almighty, the Praiseworthy." (Qur'an, 85:8)

In the first few centuries after Jesus, Britain was under Roman rule and the people saw themselves as Celts. Christianity made headway amongst the Celts of Britain, despite persecution by the pagan Romans. Early Celtic Christianity, was simple and rejected the notion of original sin. It put great emphasis on striving to worship and do good, as human nature was seen as good.

St Alban

Consider a possible early British Muslim martyr, St Alban (d. 251 CE?), who is chronicled by Bede. He was a Roman soldier. One night a stranger came to him asking for shelter. Alban took him in despite discovering that he was a priest. He was struck by the faith and devotion of this man, who would spend the night in prayer. Alban asked him more and more about the faith and started emulating the priest, eventually abandoning his pagan ways altogether.

Eventually the Romans found out that a priest was residing there and soldiers came for him. Alban courageously took on the clothes of the priest and offered himself for execution in the place of his mentor.

Alban was tortured in hope that he would denounce his faith but instead declared his *shahada*, "I worship

and adore the true and living God who created all things.”

It is said that at the point of execution, his saintly manner so impressed the Roman executioner that he refused to swing the axe. In the end, both St Alban and his executioner were martyred for their faith.

Law

The story of how Britain *chose* Shariah law 900 years ago...

Medieval law - rough justice

Early medieval justice was based on the assumption that if someone is innocent, then God will intervene to save them in a trial by ordeal. As for property, this was managed arbitrarily by the lord of the manor and contracts were entirely dependent on a mere handshake.

“The majority of medieval law was customary, unwritten law. Justice in the West was believed to be decided largely by God through trial by ordeal, which included burning people with red-hot irons or boiling water, submerging them in cold water, or trial by duel. The philosophy behind this method of proof was that God, or nature in the case of cold water (water being a ‘pure element’ that would not receive those stained with crime), would shield the innocent from injury and reveal the guilty. The law was, thus, believed to be determined by divine authority or by nature, and could not be altered by human agency, even if it could be interpreted by human beings in novel circumstances.”

(Watanabe 2012, p. 62)

The arrival of the rule of law had a direct impact on everyone’s life and has been dubbed the “Renaissance of the twelfth century.”

“The emergence of a rule of law had tremendous social, political and economic implications. It implied that individuals were free to sell and transfer property without being constrained by rules established by kinship, religious authorities or the state. It also meant that people could en-

ter freely into contracts, and that those contracts could be enforced, thus providing for predictability in trading relations.”

(Watanabe 2012, p. 62)

(Taken from Chapter 4: The Possible Contribution of Islamic Legal Institutions to the Emergence of a Rule of Law and the Modern State in Europe, Lisa Watanabe, *The Role of the Arab-Islamic World in the Rise of the West - Implications for Contemporary Trans-Cultural Relations*, Edited by Nayef R. F. Al-Rodhan 2012)

The rule of law and benefits of a common law

Law came to Norman England when King Henry II (1154–89) introduced the common law. Involving property law, contract law and trial by jury.

With the application of common law, justice was to become rational, predictable, presided over by a trained judge, whose rulings would be known and set precedents for future judges. However, judges also had the freedom to dissent and justify their reason for doing so.

Authority thus shifted from manorial courts to a centralised court system. Tenants could no longer be arbitrarily dispossessed from their land at the whim of the local lord.

Islamic societies had already had a long history of the rule of law with judges requiring many years of training in law and precedent, with certain rules divinely revealed, the Qur’anic instruction to have written contracts, to honour contracts, use witnesses and to verify any information that has a possibility of being untrue. Beyond that, rules were based on Qur’anic imperatives to establish justice and look after the welfare of people and safeguard them from harm.

Where did the idea of juries and the number 12 first emerge?

Describing elements of Maliki fiqh, John Makdisi writes:

“In the absence of adoul, that is, the witnesses presenting all the required guarantees, any others whoever are taken, but then a greater number is required. The number compensates in this case for the lack of honorability. This testimony of notoriety is used very frequently in Moroccan

notarial practice.

The number of lafif witnesses required is generally twelve. More are expected only in some exceptional cases: proof of discernment or of imbecility (sixteen to twenty witnesses). No satisfactory explanation for the fixing of this number is given by the authors. The discussion generally turns on the number of the tawatour and gives rise to abundant controversies. According to the author of the 'Aral Al-Fasi "a number superior to 10 has been chosen because it is a round number and beneath this number one counts only by ones; then the ten was increased by the two witnesses required ordinarily for a shahada."

(Makdisi 1999, p.1735)

Norman conquest of Maliki Sicily

Sicily was a Muslim state from 878 CE. A mere 250 miles northeast of both al-Qayrawan and al-Mahdiyya in North Africa it had thus been an integral part of a region known as Ifriqiyya (North Africa), governed by Maliki fiqh. It was fully captured by the Normans in 1091 CE. After the Norman conquest, Muslims continued to live and practice their faith freely and be governed by their own judges.

Sicily became a part of the Norman kingdom of Sicily, which extended into the boot of Italy and measured about four-fifths the size of England. The inhabitants were largely African and Muslim and maintained close contacts with North Africa.

"Roger II grew up imbued with Muslim culture. His father, Roger I, had been born of the house of Tancred and conquered Sicily between 1061 and 1091 after Roger I's brother, Robert Guiscard, had started the conquest. Roger I incorporated many Muslims in his armies, and these soldiers were loyal to him.

(Makdisi 1999, p.1721)

"When Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, had an occasion to meet Roger in front of the gates of Capua in 1098, he found him accompanied by a large force of Muslim soldiers who declared that they could not turn Christian if they wished because they would be punished severely by Roger I for abandoning their religion.

(Makdisi 1999, p.1722)

Roger II followed in his father's footsteps and kept close relations with his Muslim subjects, "delighting in the company of Muslim poets and scholars. His court resembled that of a Fatimite caliph with its harem and eunuchs. As Ahmad has noted, Roger's court was dominated by Arab influence in many ways: Roger assumed the Arabic title al-Muctazz bi-Allah-a title that appeared on his coinage and inscriptions; the Fatimid coin remained in use and its Norman counterpart was minted with a similar shape and with the same intrinsic value; his documents and decrees were written as often in Arabic as in Greek or Latin; Arabic documents that he did not sign bore his calama (a distinguishing mark based on a Qur'anic verse) in Arabic - the same as other Muslim rulers; he wore the mantle of an oriental emir; his physicians and geographer were Arab; his court officials duplicated in many respects those of an Arab court; and the whole tenor of his life appears to have been oriental rather than western." (Makdisi 1999, p.1723)

As well as maintaining the established rich Muslim culture of his country, Roger II also maintained its pre-existing Maliki legal system and system of government, especially as there was nothing on offer to improve on it.

Roger II was adept at incorporating many Islamic elements into the government of Sicily, including the bureaucracy and fiscal arrangements established by the Muslims. A branch of the curia, known by the Arabic term diwan, acted as a central financial body for the kingdom. The registers used by the curia were known by the Arabic term daftars, and its officers and clerks were mostly Muslim.

(Makdisi 1999, p. 1724)

The influence of Islam on Roger II was significant in all aspects of his reign. His acceptance and adaptation of Islam for the needs of Arab writers, the merciful treatment of Muslim inhabitants who were taken prisoner, the reestablishment of conquered towns under Muslim qadis and their rule of law as long as a poll tax (jizya) was paid to the king, and the general reputation for toleration at home and abroad that Roger II

received due to the actions of his commander).

"Nowhere else," Haskins remarked, "did Latin, Greek, and Arabic civilization live side by side in peace and toleration, and nowhere else was the spirit of the renaissance more clearly expressed in the policy of the rulers."

(Makdisi 1999, p. 1727)



Norman Sicily clearly had a lot to offer the developing systems of England. It made sense that the sharing of learning would be mostly in one direction, for Roger II's Sicily was the most powerful and wealthy government in Europe-the Sicily of Roger II. Furthermore,

"The Islamic legal system was far superior to the primitive legal system of England before the birth of the common law. It was natural for the more primitive system to look to the more sophisticated one as it developed three institutions that played a major role in creating the common law."

(Makdisi 1999, p. 1731)

Henry II and Sicily

In the twelfth century England and Sicily were the only two Norman states, and the Normans had a strong sense of fraternity, sharing institutions across their states. This was particularly true in the similarities between the rule of Roger II from 1130 to 1154 in Sicily and of Henry II from 1154 to 1189 in England.

"Historians have often remarked on the simi-

larity between these two states in the treasuries that administered taxation and finance, the high courts that administered justice, and the chanceries that directed and coordinated the work of the other departments.

As Henry II's reign followed that of Roger II, he had the opportunity to learn much from the Sicilian king. Henry was an energetic man, known for his physical exploits and endurance, with a hunger for power and wealth that was tempered by his great interest in law.

(Makdisi 1999, p.1727)

Henry II was known to be a 'larger than life' man, deeply intelligent and driven. His father Henry I had funded the itinerant student of knowledge and Arabist, Adelard of Bath, who travelled to France, Southern Italy, Sicily, Greece, Syria and Palestine.

To return his debt, Adelard agreed to tutor Henry I's son, Henry II. He found him a keen learner. Adelard wrote to Henry in 1150 praising his love of learning:

Thus I understand that you, Henry, since you are the grandson of a king, have understood with the complete attention of your mind, what is said Philosophy: that states are blest either if they are handed over for philosophers to rule, or if their rulers adhere to philosophy. Since your childhood was once imbued with the scent of this reasoning, your mind preserves it for a long time, and the more heavily it is weighed down by outside occupations, the more diligently it withdraws itself from them. Hence it happens that you not only read carefully and with understanding those things that the writings of the Latins contain, but you also dare to wish to understand the opinions of the Arabs concerning the sphere, and the circles and movements of the planets. For you say that whoever lives in a house, if he is ignorant of its material or composition, its size or kind, its position or parts, is not worthy of such a dwelling... nevertheless, so that I may join philosophy to nobility in an example from our own age, I will attempt to fulfil your demand as far as I am able. Therefore I shall write in Latin what I have learnt in Arabic about the world and its parts.

[sayfa 31-32]

Henry's admiration and familiarity with all things Muslim was so much that in 1168, when he fell out with Thomas Beckett, his Archbishop, he threatened the Pope, that he would convert to Islam unless Beckett was removed.

During Henry II's time, ties between England and Sicily were further strengthening due to frequent interchange of officials between the two states, who would their experience with them.

"As I have noted on a previous occasion, many officials made both England and Sicily their homes. Roger II's chancellor was Robert of Selby, an Englishman." Peter of Blois was a tutor of King William II of Sicily and a friend of King Henry I. The relationship between these two kings was cemented further by the marriage of William to Henry's youngest daughter Joanna in 1177. It is speculated that the artists of the Winchester Bible may have gone to Sicily with Joanna and taken part in designing the mosaics of Monreale, a church that is considered one of the wonders of Sicily with 7600 square meters of mosaic decoration on its walls.

Most striking of all, however, was the "ever-ready source of information" King Henry had in his special advisor, Master Thomas Brown.

(Makdisi 1999, p.1729)

The Thomas Brown connection

Born in England, Thomas Brown appears in Sicily around 1137 and was thought to be an understudy of Roger II's chancellor, Robert of Selby, who was also English.

Thomas Brown was born in England around 1120. He first appeared in Sicily about 1137 and was likely the protege of the chancellor Robert of Selby, who also came from England. In 1149, he appeared as Kaid Brun in the diwan, the fiscal department of the Sicilian government, which took its origin from Muslim antecedents and retained its Muslim character and operation.

The diwan kept records of boundaries, bought and sold land, recovered the king's property, enforced payments due him, and held court to de-

termine boundaries and decide disputes. Brown was an important and trusted officer of the royal administration in this bureau.

Henry II request Brown to return to England. He arrived in 1158, enjoying the king's confidence and a high place in his court. "He had a seat at the exchequer and kept a third roll as a check on the rolls of the treasurer and chancellor."

For King Henry II, who had a keen appreciation for new administrative devices that would bring him power and wealth, Thomas Brown must have been an invaluable source of information. He could open the door to understanding the inner workings of the most powerful and wealthy government in Europe - the Sicily of Roger II.

Thomas Brown had greatest awareness of the "Islamic Sicilian bureau, which recovered land for the king of Sicily. What a surprise it must have been for Henry to discover that the secret to Roger's administrative prowess was Islamic in origin. As Haskins remarked, however, "[a] restless experimenter like Henry II was not the man to despise a useful bit of administrative mechanism because it was foreign." (Makdisi 1999, p.1730)

Henry II had a rare opportunity to learn first hand about the *istihqaq*, which was the Islamic procedure for recovery of land, and the *lafif*, which was the Islamic jury used to establish evidence in the procedure of *istihqaq*.

Within eight short years after Thomas Brown appeared in England, the English assize of novel disseisin was decreed and the English jury in its modern form made its appearance. King Henry II was the right person at the right time to seize the opportunity for transplants that revolutionized the world with the creation of the common law."

(Makdisi 1999, p.1730)

Source: John Makdisi, *Islamic Origins of Common Law*, The (1999) North Carolina Law Review, vol.77(5), pp. 1635-1740

Universities

In the 12th century and beyond, the lands of enlightenment and progress, from which masses of novel ideas and writings were emerging, were Muslim lands – the Islamicate. It is no surprise that amongst the educated, leading Muslim thinkers were such household names that they were given Latin nicknames, for example Ibn Rushd – known as Averroes, Ibn Sina – known as Avicenna, and Ibn al Haytham – known as Alhazen.

The immense quantity of writings and ideas coming to the West in Latin translations triggered an educational revolution with many young people wanting to be taught this new knowledge. At the start of the High Middle Ages, there were only monastic schools that did not have the capacity to cope with all this information – particularly as Catholics might prefer to sift through and edit first.

This is a scant official overview of the origin of the England's first university, Oxford:

Pottery, weaving and tanning were the original trades of early Oxford. As the scholars gathered, however, so did landlords, stonemasons, paper makers, bookbinders, scribes, printers, tailors and shoemakers.

In the 12th century Henry II and his court regularly came to his palace at Beaumont, just outside the city wall. The court needed scholars trained in law to cope with the complexities of administration. Unable to travel to Paris while relations between England and France were strained, more scholars began to join them in Oxford. Education was often confined to the seven liberal arts; three of them taught together, Logic, Rhetoric and Grammar, were known as the trivium.

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/engage-with-us/local-community/part-of-oxford/history>

Willinsky (2018) details a far more exciting and highly plausible theory for the origins of a number of western universities, including the English ones of Oxford and soon after, Cambridge.

He begins the chapter by describing existing theo-

ries around the origins of Oxford, such that it begins as something of a guild of 'book teachers' offering teaching in a knowledge that is in high demand and altogether new:

"The sense of mystery around the exact origins of the universities has not prevented historians from speculating about why the studium appeared when and where it did. Some historians point to the eleventh-century reestablishment of the legal right to incorporate (from Roman law), as the master teachers formed a corporation (universitas), following the guild model.

The new studium appeared in the emerging market centers of the High Middle Ages. This was where the learned could readily attract students and find books, as well as profit by the example of other guilds.

They were, in the first instance, practicing something of a new trade, and as artisans or masters of that trade, they were ready to form "the corporation of book users," as Jacques Le Goff names them, to gain protection and privilege for their practices.

Other historians observe how both church and state had an increasing need for highly literate staff, sufficiently conversant in matters of logic and law, in which these universities specialized, to administer their burgeoning interests.

Some reflect on how cathedral and canon schools succeeded so well in generating a secular enthusiasm for scholasticism – embodied by the legendary, if tragic, brilliance of Peter Abelard – that these schools could not keep up with the intellectual demand of a growing body of students."

(Willinsky 2018, pp2-3)

Muslim emperors (Caliphs) and kings had been sponsoring learning for a number of centuries and so many remarkable Muslim polymaths from 1,000 years ago, had initially studied the works of previous civilisations, particular the Greeks, but also Indians and Persians, and then reconciled the ideas with Islamic teachings and synthesised new knowledge.

Willinsky demonstrates that it was a tidal wave of Latin translations of this Islamic learning that was triggering all the new demand:

“What typically goes missing from this list of likely causes is the great twelfth- and thirteenth-century influx of Islamic learning through the translation movement, discussed in the previous chapter. The works translated into Latin during this period introduced European scholars to such a wide and sophisticated array of works of Islamic, Hellenic, Hindu, Persian, and Jewish thinkers that it could not help but define the intellectual moment for the period and region.

(Burnett supports his claim of “the preeminence of Arabic sources for Western philosophy” in the Middle Ages with a list of 114 Arabic philosophic works translated into Latin roughly prior to 1600; “Arabic into Latin: The Reception of Arabic Philosophy into Western Europe,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, eds. Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

In Bologna, Paris, Oxford and elsewhere, the learned had then to wrestle with the relatively sudden profusion of a diverse body of works, which were, fortunately, often supported by commentaries. Before the thirteenth century was half over, “virtually the whole corpus of Greek science was accessible to the western world,” Robert W. Southern states, even as he joins those historians who tend to overlook the contributions of Islamic learning to this accessibility, “and scholars groaned [with pleasure, surely] under its weight as they strove to master it all.”

(Willinsky 2018, pp3-4)

The earliest teachers at Oxford were famed translators of Arabic works:

Still, there is evidence of a contributing cause for the Oxford settlement to be found in a trail of Latin translations leading from the farthest reaches of Christendom to Oxford. Those implicated in this learned transport include Petrus Alfonsi and Adelard of Bath, from the preceding chapter, and others such as Daniel of Morley.

(Willinsky 2018, p.8)

Daniel of Morley had notable life, studying in Oxford in 1160, thence to Paris where he encountered *doctrina Arabum* (Arab learning) while studying astronomy there. Inspired by the learning, he was informed that it had been translated from Arabic in the Spanish city of Toledo. He thence travelled there, attending the astronomy lectures of the great Arabic translator, Gerard of Cremona.

“In Daniel’s only surviving work, *Philosophia*, from around 1175, he describes how it was that, “eventually my friends begged me to come back from Spain; so, on their invitation, I arrived in England, bringing a precious multitude of books with me.” His *Philosophia* celebrates “the logical arguments of the Arabs,” as he puts it, and it is tellingly dedicated to John of Oxford, who was clearly among the more open-minded bishops, given to patronizing such adventuresome learners, with their precious cart-loads of books adding to Oxford’s ability to attract the learned to this community.”

(Willinsky 2018, pp 8-9)

Part of the reason Oxford was able to investigate freely was because the new knowledge was diverse and technical and beyond the expertise of monastic theologians:

“These works represented not just philosophy but novel branches of mathematics, astronomy, natural history, and medicine. Most of it had yet to be reconciled with the tenets of Christianity. It seems reasonable to surmise that cathedral and canon schools were overwhelmed by the stream of Latin translations from Toledo, Sicily, Antioch, and southern Italy. The works themselves called for the development of analytical skills, forms of inquiry, and ways of thinking that went well beyond the traditional training offered in Scripture and Church Fathers. The cathedral schools were clearly inadequate, as Abelard had already demonstrated earlier in the twelfth century, and before the Latin translation movement was fully underway. Something new was required and it initially took shape, not surprisingly, in a number of forms.”

(Willinsky 2018, pp2-3)

Willinsky cites further evidence that Oxford was independent of Christian officialdom in the very early days:

“At some point in the second half of the twelfth century,” Nicholas Barker, a deputy keeper at the British Library, sums up Oxford’s origins: “a swarm of the wandering scholars found all over western Europe settled at Oxford.” Adding to the mystery, the historian Gordon Leff at the University of York notes that, “indeed, the striking thing about the emergence of the university is that it was from the first untrammelled by any monastic or cathedral leading strings.”

(Willinsky 2018, p. 8)

Willinsky references the scant sources that describe the content of teaching, which included Aristotle, whose complicated writings had only come to Latin at the time, through the extensive commentaries of Ibn Rushd: “Alexander Nequam, grammarian, encyclopedist, commentator, and poet, was introducing his theology students to Aristotle during the 1190s and showed an awareness of texts by Euclid, Galen, and Isaac Israeli, as well as of a mariner’s instruments, all suggesting Islamic influence.”

“Master John Blund was another who taught Aristotle at Oxford, from around 1200 and with the help of Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and with little effort to reconcile the Greek philosopher’s views on the soul, free will, and immortality, with Christianity.

His commentary on Aristotle’s *On the Soul* is rich in references to Avicenna (Ibn Sina) and Al-Ghazali, with some mention of Plato, Cicero, Boethius, and lesser amounts of Augustine and John of Damascene.”

(Willinsky 2018, p. 9)

It is interesting to note that Blund was not under any pressure to edit Islamic learnings and shoehorn them into Christian theology but could convey them as he received them.

In 1209, there was trouble in Oxford between students and townspeople. Blund left for Paris, while

other masters headed to Cambridge to start a new university.

Source: John Willinsky, *The Intellectual Properties of Learning: A Prehistory from Saint Jerome to John Locke* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018). Chapter Seven: The Medieval Universities of Oxford and Paris

The whole book is available for free:

<https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/I/bo26774023.html>

Science

The scientific method (empiricism) is perhaps the most important development in science, and essentially outlines the concept that an idea has to be challenged and tested through experimentation before it can be established as fact.

The polymath Ibn Al-Haytham (965-1040 CE), who was known in his Latin translations as Alhazen, was subjected to a lengthy house arrest in Egypt. This gave him time to develop optical instruments and think over his ideas and how to test them and prove them. As such, he is seen as not only the father of modern optics (for explaining that vision occurs when light reflects from an object and then passes to one’s eyes) but also the first person to clearly articulate the scientific method.

He was led, no doubt, by the Islamic principle that all suggestions have to be confirmed by substantiated evidence (“If a fasiq comes to you with any news, verify it” (Qu’ran, 49:6), and the Islamic maxim “certainty cannot be overruled by doubt”).

“The duty of the man who investigates the writings of scientists, if learning the truth is his goal, is to make himself an enemy of all that he reads, and ... attack it from every side. He should also suspect himself as he performs his critical examination of it, so that he may avoid falling into either prejudice or leniency.”

- Ibn Al-Haytham

An aspect associated with Alhazen’s optical research is related to systemic and methodological reliance on experimentation (i’tibar) and controlled testing in his scientific inquiries. Moreover, his experimental directives rested on combining classical physics (ilm tabi’i)

with mathematics (ta' alim), geometry in particular).

Although only one commentary on Alhazen's optics has survived the Islamic Middle Ages, Geoffrey Chaucer mentions the work in *The Canterbury Tales*:

*"They spoke of Alhazen and Vitello,
And Aristotle, who wrote, in their lives,
On strange mirrors and optical instruments."*

Roberte Grosseteste is thought to be the first Chancellor of Oxford University. "What is clear is that Grosseteste played a major role in making the Greco-Arabic sciences a part of the university." (Willinsky p.11) Grosseteste was "introduced to the new science while serving the Bishop of Hereford, William de Vere, who organized within his household a remarkably active study of chronology, astronomy, and astrology... he appears to have acquired a master's degree at a young age, studied in Oxford and perhaps Paris (where he may well have picked up the ascription of a swelled head), and at some point, he encountered the works of Avicenna, al-Ghazali, al-Hazen and others circulating Europe at the time."

"Once established as a master at Oxford, Grosseteste taught theology, while translating Greek texts into Latin and preparing influential commentaries on Aristotle. His greatest influence on the university was introducing the standards of empiricism into the sciences. He championed the pedagogical and intellectual value of experimentation, as well as the demonstrative logic to be found in Euclid's geometry and other works. In his teaching, he drew on the commentaries of al-Kindī, Alfarabi, Ibn al-Haytham, and Avicenna. His leadership in natural philosophy and the sciences during those early years at Oxford amounted to, in the estimation of Alistair C. Crombie, University of London historian of science, "the methodological revolution to which modern science owes its origin."

"Still, what Grosseteste did for Oxford was to make a clear call for a "science acquired by demonstration" for that is a science able to arrive at "a cause of the thing known," and that, for him, is "science most strongly and most properly so called." (Willinsky pp. 12-14)

John Willinsky, *The Intellectual Properties of Learning: A Prehistory from Saint Jerome to John Locke*

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018).

Chapter Seven: The Medieval Universities of Oxford and Paris

The whole book is available free:

<https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/1/bo26774023.html>

Once the notion of experimentation and challenging established theories was introduced into Oxford, it underwent refinement over the years with leading exponents of the scientific method in later centuries being Roger Bacon, and at the threshold of the enlightenment, Francis Bacon.

Although he is sometimes called the originator of the scientific method, Francis Bacon was late on the scene of empiricism. Nonetheless, it is clear that like many others, he was aware of Islamic ideas. Francis Bacon, the father of English empiricism, strongly defended English ties with the Grand Turk and hailed Muslim anti-saint images and other idolatrous practices of the Catholic Church.

(Ali Shah, Zulfqar, *Islam and The English Enlightenment* (p. 360), Claritas Books, Kindle Edition)

In his essay "Of Boldness", Francis Bacon describes "Mahomet's miracle". Surrounded by a group of followers, the prophet points to a nearby hill and says that he will move its great mass towards him and offer up prayers from its peak. After several attempts by the prophet to call the hill to him, it remained resolutely fixed in its place. So he delivered his, now proverbial, one-liner, "If the hill will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet will go to the hill", and, with that, the problem was solved.

([Source](#))

What this saying demonstrates is his view of the pragmatic and anti-miracle qualities of Islam – in contrast to his perception of Catholicism.

Theology

A key figure in western theology is Thomas Aquinas. He took many ideas from Aristotle, but in this he was heavily indebted to Ibn Rushd for making Ar-

istotle accessible and critiquing it in order to derive meaningful concepts for Abrahamic monotheists. In fact he references Ibn Rushd by name 500 times in his works (*Reopening Muslim Minds*, Mustafa Akyol).

Aquinas developed the teleological argument (argument from design) from Imam Ghazali ("Every being which begins has a cause for its beginning; now the world is a being which begins; therefore, it possesses a cause for its beginning") and developed the cosmological/prime mover argument from Ibn Sina ("The Proof of the Truthful").

Architecture

Domes, gothic arches – all from the Islamicate!

"Christopher Wren's respect for Muslim architecture is displayed in his adoption of numerous Muslim architectural solutions within his designs. In his greatest ever project, the Cathedral of St. Paul, London, the Muslim influence can be easily traced."

Wren became convinced of the Muslim roots of the Gothic, establishing the so called "Saracenic Theory". He firmly believed that both historical facts and physical characteristics of this style pointed to a Muslim origin. He explains his theory in the following:

"This we now call the Gothic manner of architecture (so the Italians called what was not after the Roman style), though the Goths were rather destroyers than builders: I think it should with more reason be called the Saracen style; for those people (the Goths) wanted neither arts nor learning; and after we in the West had lost both, we borrowed again from them, out of their Arabic books, what they with great diligence had translated from the Greeks. They were zealots in their religion and wherever they conquered (which was with amazing rapidity) erected mosques and caravanserais in haste, which obliged them to fall into another way of building; for they built their mosques round, disliking the Christian form of a cross. The old quarries, whence the ancients took their large blocks of marble for whole columns and architraves, were neglected; and they thought both impertinent. Their carriage was by camels; therefore their buildings were fitted for small stones, and columns of their own fan-

cy, consisting of many pieces; and their arches pointed without jey-stones, which they thought too heavy. The reasons were the same in our northern climates, abounding in freestone, but wanting marble"

(Wren, *Parentalia*, p.297)

He adds further:

"Modern Gothic, as it is called, is deduced from a different quarter; it is distinguished by the lightness of its work, by the excessive boldness of its elevations, and of its sections; by the delicacy, profusion, and extravagant fancy of its ornaments. The pillars of this kind are as slender as those of the ancient Gothic are massive: such productions, so airy, cannot admit the heavy Goths for their author; how can be attributed to them a style of architecture, which was only introduced in the tenth century of our era?"

<https://muslimheritage.com/muslim-origin-of-gothic-architecture/>

See Diana Darke's excellent masterclass on Islamicate influence on western architecture [here](#) (YouTube link).

Reformation

(Taken from Chapter 3 - Re-orienting the Reformation? Prolegomena to a History of the Reformation's Connection with the Islamic World, in *The Role of the Arab-Islamic World in the Rise of the West Implications for Contemporary Trans-Cultural Relations*, Edited by Nayef R. F. Al-Rodhan 2012)

Introduction

'European representations of Islam have long remained based on ignorance, prejudice and misrepresentation. Christian theologians were not interested in obtaining a proper knowledge of Islam. They considered Mohammed's Quran a diabolically perverted derivative of their own faith, a human-made heresy of no theological value.'

‘However, they had to account for Muslims’ conspicuous successes which, according to traditional patristic [Christian theologian] thought, could be identified with religious truth.’

(p. 41)

As travel to Muslim lands increased, so did curiosity about their customs and beliefs. This led to Islam becoming, to critics of the Christian Church, a ‘contrasting image with which to denounce the spiritual and political corruption of Christian societies and ecclesiastical institutions’ (p. 41). It was also linked to the call to reform Christianity: ‘John Wycliffe (c. 1328–84), traditionally considered the “morning star of the Reformation” by Protestant historians, was the first theological scholar to compare Islam and Christianity in order to criticize the latter’ (p. 41).

Ottoman backdrop of the Protestant Reformation

A major background to the Reformation was the war against the Turks (generically meaning all Muslims). In the 1520s, the Ottomans’ advance in Central Europe spread panic. The confrontation between the Holy Roman Empire and the Ottoman Empire was a battle of religious doctrines and ‘competing universalist imperial ideologies’ (p. 42). Yet the ‘intensity and fierceness of political and religious disputes in the sixteenth century proved to be greater within each Empire... the collision between the empires remained marginal. The messianic [regarding the Messiah] rhetoric used by the Emperors was, therefore, mostly targeting a domestic audience in a context of intra-faith fragmentation’ (p. 42).

Cross-cultural exchange between the Islamic and Christian empires

As the quotes below explain, the ‘East’ and West’ did not used to be so definitively, culturally distinguished:

‘From the mid-fifteenth century up to the seventeenth, the Islamic and Christian lands had become so intimately connected as to form what Daniel Goffman has called a “greater Western

world”, with Constantinople [i.e. Istanbul] as its centre of gravity. While contact between the Christian and Muslim cultures in the Middle Ages has been rather well documented, the more intensive cross-cultural exchanges during the Reformation remain largely unexplored.’

(p. 42)

‘As Renaissance historian Jerry Brotton underlines, “there were no clear geographical or political barriers between east and west in the Renaissance. It is a much later, nineteenth-century belief in the absolute cultural and political separation of the Islamic east and Christian west that has obscured the easy exchange of trade, art and ideas between these two cultures.”’

(p. 44)

‘Many persecuted religious individuals and movements, such as Huguenots, Anglicans, Quakers, Anabaptists or even Jesuits or Capuchins, found refuge in Ottoman territories where they were given right of residence and worship. Ottoman rule in Europe was also often reported to be more benevolent than Christian feudality in terms of governance and social justice.’

(p. 43)

Converts to Islam during the Reformation

During the Reformation period, the concept of Christendom was becoming increasingly empty, and ‘even embarrassing as integration with the Ottoman Empire encouraged commercial ties, political alliances and cultural exchanges.’ This is demonstrated by the ‘largely unilateral flow of converts to Islam in the Reformation era, an uncomfortable fact which has long remained unacknowledged in Western historiography’ (p. 44).

Luther himself was ‘deeply concerned with the prospect of Christians making contact with Muslims’ and the ‘power of attraction of Islam’ (p. 45). In fact, he ‘believed that if the Turks made their way further into Europe, Christians would convert en masse to Islam’ – not by force, but because Islam was attractive, and they would be convinced by it (p. 45).

Nabil Matar writes:

‘Converts to Islam both embarrassed and provoked some of the most important writers and theologians of the European Renaissance. While the ‘direct encounter’ with Islam affected the ‘small men’ of Christendom – sailors, fishermen, merchants and soldiers – the intellectual and religious impact of that encounter challenged men whose writings and influence have been instrumental in defining early modern European culture: from Pope Pius to Martin Luther and John Locke, from John Calvin to Christopher Marlowe, from John Foxe to George Fox, from Cervantes to Shakespeare, Massinger and Dryden – all reflected to varying degrees in their writings, on the interaction between Christendom and Islam. Furthermore, all recognized that Christians were converting to Islam more often than Muslims were to Christianity and that the ‘infidels’ challenged Europe not only by their sword but also by their religious allure.’

(p. 45)

Ottoman Support of the Protestant Reformation

There is evidence to suggest that the Protestant Reformation’s success in Europe was possible ‘to a great extent thanks to the assistance provided by the Ottomans to the Protestant movements’ (pp. 45-46).

‘This multifaceted rapprochement between the Protestant Reformation and Muslim powers... was one of the main factors that contributed to the ultimate success of the Reformation movements... new scholarly works have suggested that there were more than just reasons of state or sectarianism in the Protestant-Islamic entente... Protestants and Muslims had common doctrinal affinities, which arouse feelings of congeniality.’

(p. 46)

In fact, ‘Reformers were called upon to distinguish their new faith not only from Catholicism but also from Islam’ (p. 50).

Some examples of Ottoman support and influences

include:

- During their revolt against Spanish-Catholic rule, Dutch Calvinists, used ‘ideological symbols that referred to the famous Ottoman religious tolerance’, like ‘silver medallions in form of the Islamic crescent moon on which the slogan *Liever Turks dan Paaps* (“Rather Turkish than Papist”) was engraved’ (p. 46).

- Elizabethan England entered into a strategic alliance with the Ottoman Empire and Barbary States (p. 46).

- Religious tolerance was a key development during the Reformation that was ‘directly inspired by Islamic influences’, for example, the ‘1557 Edict of Torda, a document which historians have celebrated as the first European text articulating expansive religious toleration, was adopted in Transylvania in the sixteenth century under Ottoman protection’ (p. 51).

- (dubious on the first): ‘The establishment of universities in Medieval Europe on the model of Islamic institutions of learning and the use of paper and block printing are two imports from the East that contributed directly to the spread of Reformation ideas.’ (p. 50)

‘On the influence of Islamic scholarly institutions on the rise of universities in Europe, see G. Makdisi (1981), *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press). On the role of the press in the Protestant Reformation, see R. G. Cole (1984), ‘Reformation Printers: *Unsung Heroes*’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 327–39; M. U. Edwards (2004)’

Islam’s role in European capitalism

‘The Islamic-Protestant entente played an important role in the genesis of European capitalism... Protestant traders had critical trading advantages over their Catholic counterparts that were granted by Istanbul in the framework of specific agreements. Elizabethan England, for example, enjoyed a quasi monopoly in the trade of weapons with Muslim powers because it did not feel constrained by the papal ban on a trade

in metals with the infidels.’

(pp. 50-51)

Martin Luther on conversion and the allure of Islam

Aspects of Luther’s attitude towards Islam have been ‘traditionally overlooked’ by scholars. Adam Francisco states that Luther had a ‘quite substantial knowledge of the Muslim religion and culture, given the standards of his time, and was well aware of the allure of Islam’ (p. 47), as can be seen below.

Luther:

‘From this book [the Quran], accordingly, we see that the religion of the Turks or Muhammad is far more splendid in ceremonies – and I might almost say, in customs – than ours, even including that of the religious or all the clerics. The modesty and simplicity of their food, clothing, dwellings, and everything else, as well as the fasts, prayers, and common gatherings of the people that this book reveals are nowhere seen among us ... Our religious are mere shadows when compared to them, and our people clearly profane when compared to theirs. ... This is the reason why many persons so easily depart from faith in Christ for Muhammadanism and adhere to it so tenaciously. I sincerely believe that no papist, monk, cleric, or their equal in faith would be able to remain in their faith if they should spend three days among the Turks.’

(pp. 47-48)

This extract demonstrates how Luther viewed Islam as a ‘living, dynamic and vibrant faith, which aroused feeling of inferiority in Christendom. His sincere desire to obtain a reliable translation of the Quran placed the infidel text in the same position as the Holy Scriptures. The recognition of Islam’s worldly superiority profoundly unsettled the theologian’ (p. 48). Interestingly, the extract highlights the ambiguity of Luther’s hatred for the Turks:

‘...the ambiguity of hatred itself; the fact that hatred, like love, is a relationship of intimacy, an act of negative devotion. Hatred, like love, re-

quires attention and energy; it brings the object of hatred into the world of the hater, accords it a privileged place, imbues it with an incontestable (if unenviable) significance.’

(p. 48)

Conclusion

‘As new scholarship in early modern European history and in Ottoman studies increasingly reveals how integrated the Christian European and Muslim Ottoman worlds were in the sixteenth century, a reassessment of the role played by Islam in the intellectual turmoil that shook Europe during that century is in order. While the state of research remains sketchy in this field, recent scholarly works are increasingly revealing that Islam was an important and dynamic factor in the intellectual debates and political affairs of Reformation Europe.’

(p. 52)

The Enlightenment

Fascination with the Muslim world (1600s - 1700s)

Quoting Allison P. Coudert: “the Eurocentric nature of most European history writing minimises or obscures altogether the fact that Europe was not a dominant power in the early modern period, just as it obscures the role that Islam played in shaping European identities. Few people realise how terrifying and threatening, but at the same time how awe-inspiring, Islam appeared to early modern Europeans.”

Ali Shah, Zulfqar, *Islam and The English Enlightenment* (p. 176), Claritas Books (Kindle Edition)

(Note: all references in this section on *the Enlightenment*, unless specified otherwise, are for the above text. Only the page number will be given for these)

Britain was a small, impoverished and isolated isle before its participation in the world trade circles through its overseas adventures. Its capitalism, commercialism, natural philosophy, educational systems, and religio-political theology were all shaped by and constructed through encounter and dialogue with the superior East-

ern civilisations of early modern era. That era belonged to the dominant Ottoman, Mughal, Persian and Ming dynasties and not to European national states.

(p. 207)

The Muslim world was also offered as a contrast to the perceived backwardness of Christendom at the time.

Hunger for manuscripts from the Islamicate (1600s)

There was a genuine hunger for the learning of the, then superpower, the Islamic world. The Archbishop under Charles I, William Laud, lead the charge in seeking this learning.

What was different from the 12th century was that back then individuals had to make slow, tortured journeys into Muslim lands or recently conquered lands to select a handful of manuscripts to translate into Latin, at the site. What came back was the Latin translation.

At the start of the Enlightenment, there was a desire to gather all wisdom from the East and eventually concerned individuals used whatever strategy they could to have the original manuscripts purchased and brought back. With the success of English trading, the wealth allowed purchase of the originals and funding of people who could dedicate themselves to translation.

The Anglican chaplains of the Levant and East India companies were specifically directed by Archbishop Laud and King Charles I to focus on securing Oriental knowledge, manuscripts and languages. The Irish Archbishop James Ussher (1581–1656) was also very enthusiastic about Arabic learning and manuscripts. The German orientalist Christian Ravis (also Ravius) during the 1640s, had travelled extensively in the East to collect manuscripts for him and in 1648 published “A Discourse of the Oriental Tongues in London.”

(pp. 231-232)

Laud had obtained a royal letter to the Levant Company requiring that each of their returning

ship must bring one Arabic or Persian manuscript. Laud’s collection was second only to John Selden, who donated eight thousand volumes of manuscripts to the Library in addition to donating medical manuscripts to the College of Physicians...

For instance, in 1692 Robert Huntington sold six hundred Oriental manuscripts to Bodleian Library with a record sum of over 1000 pounds.⁵²⁷ He also gave manuscripts to Oxford College, Royal Society and other bodies. His was the best collection on Islamic philosophy, history, lexicography, law, astronomy, mathematics, minerology, art, warfare and Eastern Christianity.

(p. 191)

Arabic learning

There was a widespread interest in learning the wisdom of Arabic writings, and although some Latin translations had arrived in Europe in the 12th and 13th centuries, there was a new hunger for all texts eastern and the need to gather and translate material afresh, as well as to hunt out all available wisdom. Although most texts were in Arabic, some Persian and Turkish texts were also brought back.

Paul Hazard, the famous French historian of intellectual thought, summarised the impact of Islam on the seventeenth century Europe very well. “They studied the original texts and the result was that the Arab emerged in a completely new light...

So it is always when things are judged solely from the outside. Doctrines which the Mohammedans never professed were triumphantly refuted, errors they never committed were exposed and condemned. But this sort of victory was too facile by half. In point of fact, their religion was as coherent as it was lofty and full of beauty. Nay more, their whole civilisation was admirable. When the tide of barbarism swept over the face of the earth, who was it that had championed the cause of the mind and its culture? The Arabs [...] The change-over from repulsion to sympathy was the work of but a few years. By 1708, the process was complete.” Hazard continued: “Then it was that Simon Ockley gave utterance to an opinion [...] Ockley denied that the West

was to be regarded as superior to the East. The East has witnessed the birth of as many men of genius as the West; conditions of life are better in the East. "So far as the fear of God is concerned, the control of the appetites, prudence and sobriety in the conduct of life, decency and moderation in all circumstances—in regard to all these things (and, after all, they yield to none in importance) I declare that if the West has added one single iota to the accumulated wisdom of the East, my powers of perception have been strangely in abeyance."

(pp. 250-251)

The Church and state officials also greatly encouraged Arabic language for missionary reasons, and Muslim scientific knowledge and manuscripts due to their commercial and scientific value. Arabic study was also a Christian theological affair. Arabic was considered indispensable for study of Old Testament, philology and theology. Oxford Lord Chancellor - and later Archbishop of Canterbury William Laud - spent his own money to purchase Oriental manuscripts⁷⁷², donated them to Oxford Bodleian Library and established an Arabic press at Oxford.⁷⁷³ Even his enemy Oliver Cromwell, and the parliament who hanged him, supported such a scholarly endeavour under the influence of John Selden and Samuel Hartlib.⁷⁷⁴ "Cromwell's parliament voted to give Cambridge University 500 pounds to purchase a collection of Oriental books and another 40–50 pounds for printing Arabic books.

(p. 252)

Gresham College (1597) and the Hartlib Circle (1630)

Sir Thomas Gresham (1518–79), merchant and financier, as well as the son and nephew of Lord Mayors of London, "built the Royal Exchange and left the revenue from shops there jointly to the City of London and the Mercers' Company to endow a college. Cambridge had pleaded for this money but instead, Gresham established his own college in London, run by merchants, rather than clerics, to allow practical minded training of merchants, like himself. Gresham

College took the lead in vocational mechanics and technologies. The College taught basic geometry, astronomy, geography and mathematics to adult mariners to enhance their navigational capabilities.

William Bedwell (1561-1632), the known European Arabist, an expert in Oriental languages, mathematics and geometry was the conduit, translator and connector of Greshamites. He was the enabler of Richard Hakluyt and Sir Walter Raleigh, the initial American colonisers, having insisted upon Arabic language as the vehicle of Arabic sciences. Bedwell was "a distinguished Arabic scholar, translator of the Authorised Version and of Ramus's Geometry (1636), who wrote popular science manuals for the use of carpenters and produced almanacs. Bedwell is said to have been a friend and admirer of Thomas Hood. So close was Bedwell's association with the Gresham group that Aubrey thought he had been a professor at the College.

(pp. 229-230)

For forty years Gresham College, not Oxford or Cambridge, was the hub of technical and navigational expertise, assisting overseas trading companies Royal Navy and Trinity House. It was the allure of Muslim India, Turkey and Persia, and the search for the shortest route to India, which served as the springboard for English science and technology. The existence and search of the North-West Passage to India was the top priority of English explorers.

(pp. 230-231)

Samuel Hartlib (1600-1662) has been described as the "Great Intelligencer of Europe". He declared his intention as "to record all human knowledge and to make it universally available for the education of all mankind". He wanted to enlighten, educate and improve society, as a religious person, he saw this as the work of God. In order to do this, he was particularly interested in eastern manuscripts, which he sourced from the East India and Levant companies. Hartlib was a good friend of John Milton and Samuel Pepys' neighbour.

In 1645 Hartlib was a witness against Archbish-

op Laud for high treason. His anti-royalist role in the English Civil War and Interregnum and extensive puritan circle was appreciated and rewarded during the Commonwealth Republic. He founded “the Office of Address in England through the financial support of Parliament. The objective of this state-sponsored organisation was, ideally, to arrange a system of intellectual correspondences with international scholars and scientists who could supply rare books and manuscripts from remote libraries. In this context, the aim of the Office of Address was, according to Hartlib, to increase information on “matters of Religion, learning, and all Ingenuities.”

(p. 253)

Arabic Professorships (1636 Oxford, 1646 Cambridge) and subsequent mathematics and chemistry

The position of Laudian Professor of Arabic at the University of Oxford was established in 1636 by William Laud, who at the time was Chancellor of the University of Oxford and Archbishop of Canterbury. The first professor was Edward Pococke, who was working as a chaplain in Aleppo, in what is now Syria, when Laud asked him to return to Oxford to take up the position.

Laud's regulations for the professorship required lectures on Arabic grammar and literature to be delivered weekly during university vacations and Lent. He also provided that the professor's lectures were to be attended by all medical students and Bachelors of Arts at the university (although this seems not to have happened, despite the provision for non-attenders to be fined).

Edward Pococke (1604-1691) was the son of clergyman from Berkshire, educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford and then ordained as priest. The following year, in 1630 he set off for Aleppo, Syria as chaplain to the English factor. At Aleppo he studied the Arabic language, and collected many valuable manuscripts.

He briefly became professor of Arabic before sailing to Istanbul for further studies and to collect more

books.

In fact, whilst abroad, he “learnt Arabic, Syriac and Hebrew, read the Quran, its commentaries, 520 Hadith (Prophetic sayings, actions and approvals), Islamic history, biographies and languages, collected manuscripts on religion, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, geometry, chemistry, philosophy, philology, geography, literature and engaged with Muslim, Hebrew and Christian scholarship.

His local Arab friends supplied him manuscripts and information even after his return to England. On his return to England, he translated many of these manuscripts to Latin and English and became an international luminary whose scholarship was well recognised all across Europe.

As the Arabic Chair at Oxford, he taught and interacted with high caliber Continental intelligentsia. His rational, anti-Trinitarian tendencies, objective Islamic sympathies and acknowledgements of Muslim contributions to science and human civilisation were translated to his Oxford students and colleagues such as Henry Stubbe, John Locke, Robert Boyle and others.

His close coordination with Archbishop Laud and collection of Oriental manuscripts supplemented the Oxford Bodleian Library. In 1692 the Library purchased four hundred Oriental volumes from Pococke's library.

(pp. 190-191)

Pococke married in 1646. One of his sons, Edward junior (1648–1727), published several contributions from Arabic literature: including *Al Hayy ibn Yaqzan* (Philosophus Autodidactus) of Ibn Tufayl (Abubacer).

Sir Thomas Adams, 1st Baronet (1586–1668), Lord Mayor of London in 1645, gave to Cambridge University the money needed to create the first Professorship of Arabic.

Newton's friend, Edmond Halley, translated into Latin Apollonius's *Cutting-off of a Ratio*, a work that had been lost in Greek but had been preserved via an Arabic translation.”⁷²⁴ Edmond

Castell spent eighteen years developing extensive dictionaries of Oriental languages, including Arabic. Edmond Halley (1656–1742), who gave his name to Halley's comet, also learned Arabic at the age of 50 to translate and digest the works of Muslim astronomers such as al-Battani as well as Apollonius's Conics, the advanced mathematics in antiquity.

(pp. 238-239)

Westminster School (1650s)

Westminster School became a beacon of learning from the Muslim world due to its emphasis on Arabic.

Richard Busby (1606-1695) was its Head Master for over 55 years. He was a graduate of Christ Church Oxford where he studied Arabic with Matthias Paser (1598-1658). Paser like Edward Pococke and other Orientalists hailed Arabic as the language of natural sciences, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, geography, philosophy and Oriental wisdom. In addition to other Oriental languages, the Arabic program at Westminster was initiated with great enthusiasm probably by the 1650s when Pococke's Polyglot Bible was published.

Busby himself compiled Arabic grammar resource books and taught many of his students, even after hours, mostly at the school library as well as at his home. Henry Stubbe, Robert Hooke, Christopher Wren and John Locke's Arabic interests all began at Westminster, which they further pursued in Christ Church Oxford under Dr. Pococke.

(pp. 239-240)

The Earl of Shaftesbury

Henry Stubbe and John Locke were contemporaries, both being born in 1632, and both went to Westminster School and then to Jesus college Oxford. At Oxford they were both deeply influenced by the learning and character of the Arabist Dr Pococke.

Later, both went to work for the Earl. Locke had started off a royalist and it seems that it was the gradual influence of the Earl that liberalised Locke.

Leopold van Ranke observed that "Locke's principles are those of Shaftesbury."

Both Henry Stubbe and John Locke were the best reflections of Shaftesbury's religious and political ideas. Just like Stubbe and Locke's Unitarianism, Shaftesbury died in exile in Amsterdam as an anti-Trinitarian Arian. Arianism was a generic seventeenth-century category used to represent Unitarians, Socinians and other anti-Trinitarians. We do not have many written works of Shaftesbury, because he burnt all his papers when arrested on the charges of high treason and put in the Tower of London, as well as all proof of his anti-Crown subversive activities, but Stubbe and Locke were a good reflection of his ideas and ideals.

(p. 379)

Stubbe produced very positive books on Islam, and this was when he was working closely with Shaftesbury.

Later, Boyle took over as a link to Locke and Stubbe; Locke joined him as a fellow of the Royal Society, and Boyle patronised Stubbe.

The Royal Society (1660) and coffee houses

Like the Hartlib Circle and Gresham College, the Royal Society was established, probably by Greshamites, as a forum to allow leading thinkers and scientists to share and challenge ideas. In fact it was initially hosted at Gresham College, until the Royal Society moved to its own premises.

There was a widespread fascination with Muslim sciences, culture, empires and even faith among members of Hartlibian circle, many fellows of Royal Society and some Latitudinarian clergymen. John Beale, one of those responsible for the original ideology of the Royal Society, well represents this widespread fascination with things Islamic as he was an active member of all three above mentioned circles.

(pp. 239-242)

It is evident that there was no developed, specialised scientific body in seventeenth-century Eng-

land except the Royal Society of London, which was founded in 1660 as a result of encounter with Oriental scientific knowledge and mostly to enhance overseas trade with the Muslim East. (p. 236)

John Wallis, the founding fellow of Royal Society, the Savilian Professor of Geometry at Oxford who taught John Locke as an undergraduate translated Arabic manuscripts and often quoted Arabic mathematicians in his lectures. "He included Nasir Eddin Al Tusi's five-page proof to Euclid's fifth postulate in his book, *Opera Mathematica*." (pp. 238)

Zulfiqar Ali Shah gathered references to the Royal Society studied all manner of eastern commodities, including, "Turkish coffee, Indian tea, crops, fruits, exotic herbs, Persian silk, Chinese porcelain, varnishes, masonry, paper, leather, tapestry, parchment, enamels, engravings, red glass" as well as medicinal practices in Aleppo, such as vaccination against smallpox and herbal medicines (p. 237). Once again, scientific oriental manuscripts, learning Arabic and translation were a key activity of the Royal Society in its early years:

Its natural philosophers and founding members - such as Robert Boyle (1627-1691), Robert Hooke (1635-1703), Edward Bernard (1638-1697), John Wallis (1617-1703), Henry Oldenberg (1617-1677), Edmund Castell (1606-1685) and others - read and digested Arabic, Turkish and Persian Oriental manuscripts purchased by Edward Pococke (1604-1691), Thomas Hyde (1636-1703), Edmond Halley (1656-1742), John Greaves (1602-1652) and many other chaplains, consuls and merchant, and applied the extracted ideas in their socio-scientific observations, experiments and researches.

(p. 237)

Often they met and demonstrated their ideas in coffee houses as well as taverns. When abroad, they would correspond extensively with intellectuals back home. The Enlightenment coincided with the import

of coffee from the Muslim world and the popularising of coffee houses. The first coffee house is said to have been established in Oxford. The shift from ale house to coffee house seemed to be an enlightenment phenomenon. Did the stimulant effect of coffee as opposed to the depressant effect of alcohol have something to do with the success of the enlightenment?

Dr. John Covel travelled extensively in the Ottoman Empire, collected scientific manuscripts of all sorts, exchanged ideas with religious and political leaders and wrote extensive diaries.⁵³⁰ He extensively corresponded with Locke, Newton and others while in Turkey. On his return to England, he became Chaplain to the Princess of Orange in Hague and finally the Vice Chancellor of Cambridge University. He was fully engaged with Isaac Newton and Cambridge Neoplatonists such as Joseph Mede and Henry More on multiple levels and capacities. (p. 192)

Busby was a very dynamic and well-connected member of the Royal Society and a go-between for Oxford and Cambridge.

Busby was the conduit through which several collections of books and papers passed to the Royal Society. For instance, John Pell's collection of Oriental manuscripts and writings went to the Royal Society through Busby. The Royal Society had a huge collection of Muslim manuscripts and elected three Muslim fellows in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. They were Muhammad ibn Haddu, the Moroccan ambassador to Charles II's court who himself was son of an English woman and also married to an English lady,⁷³⁵ Mohammed ibn Ali Abgali and Cassem Alqiada Aga of Tripoli.

(pp. 241)

Antitrinitarian teachings were very influential and circulated widely in the Royal Society, although not professed outwardly.

The simplistic, Unitarian, rational and natural theology of Michael Servetus, Socinians and

Unitarians was implicitly or tacitly appreciated and incorporated by individuals such as Locke and Newton. The Royal Society fellows and natural philosophers retained the outer theological skeleton, phrases and terms but transformed their meanings, conceptual parameters and implications. This was a paradigm shift from the supernatural to immutable natural laws and natural theology.

(p. 220)

The religious enlightenment

A common feature of all Enlightenment thinkers was opposition to the key Christian doctrine of original sin. Coupled with original sin is the idea that man is hopelessly flawed and irredeemable, hence needs Grace through the blood of Christ to be saved.

A key ideology of the enlightenment on the other hand, was that man can learn and grow and improve, through the exercise of reason, learning and self-restraint.

The Enlightenment leaders all across Europe focused upon three central Christian dogmas: original sin, Trinity, divine right king and clerical establishment. These were the pivots around which the Enlightenment reformation of Church Christianity mostly revolved. Matthew Kadane, in his *Original Sin and the Path to Enlightenment*, makes it crystal-clear that the difference between the pre-Enlightenment confessional Europe and Enlightened Europe was “the rejection of the doctrine of original sin [...] antagonism to the doctrine of original sin helped to define the Enlightenment.”¹⁰⁸⁶ Isaiah Berlin noted that “what the entire Enlightenment has in common is denial of the central Christian doctrine of original sin, believing instead that man is born either innocent and good, or morally neutral and malleable by education or environment, or, at worst, deeply defective but capable of radical and indefinite improvement by rational education in favourable circumstances, or by a revolutionary reorganisation of society.”¹⁰⁸⁷ Ernst Cassirer identified “the concept of original sin’ as ‘the common opponent against which all the different trends of the philosophy

of Enlightenment join forces.”

(pp. 323-324)

Deism

Deistic Christianity was identical to Toland’s Muhammadan Christianity and infected English society like a bush fire; unfortunately, many historians of the period tend to minimise its reach, influence and implications.¹³⁹⁵ “Anti-Trinitarianism was more pervasive and spread more diversely in Europe and in England than any other single unorthodox view. It was seemingly everywhere and came from every quarter. It was part of the armory of unlearned religious radicals and also educated divines and laymen.”¹³⁹⁶ It spread like a storm.

(p. 412)

Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, John Toland and many other Deists, Socinians, Unitarians, Quakers, Presbyterians and other dissenters struggled for the same goals; it is therefore no wonder that their natural law, civic religion and theories of reason were strikingly similar to Henry Stubbe’s Muhammadan Christianity.

(p. 396)

Socinianism

The original connection between the Quran and Socinian teachings is historically credible. Lelio Francesco Maria Sozzini (1525–1562), the uncle of Faustus Socinus, knew Arabic and Hebrew and gave a copy of the Quran to Theodore Bibliander (1509–1564), the Swiss orientalist who published the first printed Latin edition of the Quran, in Basel in 1543, based on the medieval translation of Robert of Ketton. Miguel Servet, the original thinker of antitrinitarianism, read and quoted Robert Ketton’s Quranic translation.

(pp. 490-491)

Islam and Unitarian beliefs

Stubbe completed in 1674 his famous book *An Account of the Rise and Progress of Mahometanism, and a Vindication of Him and His Religion from the Calumnies of the Christians*. his sympathetic writings were unusual in his efforts to find Arab biographies of the Prophet (pbuh), some based on Tabari. A move towards Unitarian thinking was a common feature of the Enlightenment, which was based on giving pre-eminence to the rational mind.

Stubbe propagated a return to the primitive Christianity of Jesus via the authentic channels of Islam, advocating for a policy of full toleration for dissenters, as practiced by the Muslim Ottomans and popularised by Anthony Ashley Cooper, the First Earl of Shaftesbury (1621-1683). Shaftesbury, the patron of Stubbe and Locke fought for a limited monarchy, toleration and religious freedom.¹²⁹⁴ He was arrested for a number of times for high treason, escaped to Amsterdam and died there. Locke followed him to Amsterdam.

(p. 382)

What is clear is that the monotheistic works of Muslim thinkers were very widely available and read by thinkers in the 1600s and 1700s. Some thinkers also studied the Qur'an and life of Prophet Muhammad (S).

"As for positive statements about the morality and devotion of Muslims, these were relatively widespread, not least among those associated with the Hartlib circle."⁷⁶⁴ Many English radicals accepted Muslims as the real inheritors of Patriarchal wisdom and asceticism who rejected the supernatural, ceremonial Church Christianity due to its pagan dogmas, cumbersome ceremonies and theoretical practices. "Muslims, Beale contended, were to be considered Abrahamites"

(p. 249)

Bury used the same argument to defend Islam and Mohammad. He argued: "So the victories of the Alcoran over the Gospel must be evi-

dence, that as the religion of Moses was better than that of the Canaanites, and the religion of Christ better than that of Moses; so must the religion of Mahomet be better than that of Christ. Thus may a Mahometan either disarm us of St. Augustine's argument, or restore it against us; for either it is of no force at all or of so much more force for Mahomet, by how much more he hath prevailed over the Churches of Christ."

(p. 559)

They were well known to actively share their ideas amongst each other.

John Beale (1608-1683) was elected fellow of the Royal Society in 1663.

He (Beale) "wish[ed] that wee had either more or lesse of Mahometanisme". He further stated: "I confesse their Doctrine more rationable, & their lives generally more righteous, than many of the succeeding sects, that have rolld over one another in pretence of confounding idoll Priests". To Beale, Islam was not ideal but "morally and theologically superior to modern, confessionalised Christianity." Islam bore resemblance to Beale's ideal of early pristine, rational, natural and Unitarian Christianity, the faith which will be restored by Turkish conquest of the Trinitarian, pagan Christendom. "I doe really expect, that wee shall bee renderd vnder the feete of Turkes, both for our juste chastisement & triall, & for their instruction & conversion. And in the meane time I am resolvd to disowne any man to bee a Christian, or of our sect, till hee bee an honest man mercifull."

(pp. 248-249)

Notable Unitarians

1. William Freke

William Freke (1662-1744) was an English mystical writer, of Wadham College, Oxford and a barrister of the Temple. He was also a friend of John Locke. He suffered at the hands of Parliament in 1694 for his anti-Trinitarian beliefs. William Freke sent his *Brief but Clear Con-*

futation of the Doctrine of the Trinity to both Houses of Parliament, which fined him and burned the book in response. Justin Champion noted that “William Freke [...] who suffered at the hands of Parliament in 1694 for his anti-Trinitarian beliefs, emphasised the connection between the Unitarian insistence on the unity of God and Islamic monotheism.”

(pp. 560-561)

2. Bury

Bury’s 1690 anti-trinitarian work, *The Naked Gospel*, first published anonymously, was commanded to burning at Oxford, and in a complex sequence of events involving legal action, Bury lost his position as rector of Exeter College, Oxford after being expelled initially in 1689. He contended that Christianity had changed so much “that were any Apostle to return into the world, he would be so far from Owing, that he would not be able to understand it.

(p. 558)

3. Toland

John Toland was the immediate instigator of the above sketched storm. In 1696 he had published *Christianity not Mysterious* to debunk the Christian mysteries, supernatural dogmas and their clerical guardians. Trevor-Roper credits this book with causing the deistic uproar.¹³⁹⁷ It “shattered the complacent ‘reasonableness’ of mainstream Anglican theology.”¹³⁹⁸ Paul Hazard noted that Toland was a “queer personage indeed, this John Toland! He had got drunk on ‘reason’; it had gone to his head. Christianity not mysterious was his war cry, in the book that made him famous in 1696. ‘No mystery about Christianity,’ he gave out, and that for the plain and sufficient reason that there are no mysteries, they simply don’t exist.

(pp. 412-413)

The work was “published without Toland’s name or details of either publisher or bookseller between December 1695 and June 1696. Draft ‘papers’ had possibly been sent to John Locke

in late March 1695, via his friend John Freke. Reports about Toland’s work were widespread in Oxford through the year [...] By early June the book was being attacked from London pulpits for its ‘most arrogant and impudent treatment of God and the Holy Scriptures’ [...] By August the book had been announced on the Continent. To accompany this revelation a ‘second edition enlarg’d’ was published with Toland’s name on the title-page. He revelled in the celebrity.”¹⁴⁰⁰ In mid-May 1697 the Grand Jury of Middlesex condemned Christianity not mysterious in the company of two other anonymous works: *The Reasonableness of Christianity* and *A Lady’s Religion*.

(pp. 413-414)

4. Locke

Both Locke’s “Reasonableness of Christianity” and Toland’s “Christianity not Mysterious” were taken as subversive works against the Holy Trinity and other Christian mysteries.¹⁴⁰² Bishop Stillingfleet “attempted to tar Locke’s work with Toland’s intellectual consequences [...] Locke merely commented that Toland ‘says something which has a conformity with some notions in my book.’”¹⁴⁰³ Locke was an active part of the anti-Trinitarian storm but prudent enough to avoid its persecutory consequences. Toland like Stubbe was an open canon.

(p. 414)

Locke was introduced to the Arabic language at Westminster, along with Latin and Hebrew; his Oxford exposure to Dr. Edward Pococke¹⁴⁴² may have strengthened that connection. Pococke’s long diplomatic stints in Aleppo and Constantinople, his command of Islamic theology, history, law and his erudition¹⁴⁴³ may well have enhanced Locke’s insatiable curiosity for knowledge of other religions and cultures, especially that of Islam. Pococke was Locke’s model and mentor, as seen above. Locke was also well connected with a number of other Levant Company chaplains, and commissioned them to collect manuscripts from the Muslim world.¹⁴⁴⁴

Chaplain Robert Huntington was Locke's fellow in Oxford and collected manuscripts for Locke while in Aleppo and Istanbul. Chaplain John Luke, who later became the chair of Arabic at Cambridge, was also actively involved in securing manuscript for Locke and Robert Boyle.

(pp. 428-429)

Locke was extremely interested in other nations' cultures, habits, beliefs and morals, and his intense study of travelogues seemed to have helped him transition from a Trinitarian royalist to an anti-absolutist revolutionary advocating for active resistance.

(pp. 431-432)

Locke's library numbered 3,641 books, most of which were on theology or travelogues from Muslim lands.

5. Newton

Stephan Snobelen, in his *Isaac Newton, heretic: the strategies of a Nicodemite*, greatly highlights Newton's reformatory and recruiting strategies. He observed that "Newton was indeed preaching his faith. It was a strategy of proselytisation carried out almost completely in the private sphere and done so [...] not only for legal and social reasons. This reconstruction of Newton's actions tallies well with his belief that the deeper things of theology should only be handled by the experienced and mature members of the remnant and, even then, only in private [...] men like Humphrey Newton, Locke, Gregory, Haynes, Clarke and Whiston were either given access to, or had knowledge of, Newton's theological manuscripts, thus suggesting one of the uses Newton intended for some of his theological writings, and possibly explaining." 1849 Newton's job, position and work environment

(pp. 536-537)

Snobelen notes that "a report deriving from Newton's Cambridge period has him believing that God had sent Muhammad to reveal the One God to Arabs, which echoes the Unitarian his-

torian monotheistica of the 1670s-1710s." 1852 This report is cited in J. Edleston, *Correspondence of Sir Isaac Newton and Professor Cotes*.

(p. 538)

John Locke and Isaac Newton were the silent supporters of this hybrid rational monotheism. Justin Champion's *Pillars of Priestcraft Shaken* has a complete chapter explaining and delineating this Unitarian Islamic syncretism, and we will return to it in the coming pages. Locke's antitrinitarian human Christology, biblical criticism and anti-clerical tendencies were identical to those of Newton. They regularly corresponded and met, cementing their friendship based on mutual religious bonds. "Religion provided what was easily the dominant theme of the correspondence and apparently of their conversation when they met. Locke later told his cousin, Peter King, that he knew few who were Newton's equal in knowledge of the Bible." 1854 Newton privately shared with Locke his total rejection of Trinity and corruption of scriptures, beliefs which Locke totally agreed with. 1855 Locke sent Newton's antitrinitarian work *Origins of Gentile Theology* to his Socinian friend Jean Le Clerc in Amsterdam for publication, but later on Newton stopped the publication for fear of persecution.

(p. 539)

God is "not eternity and infinity, but eternal and infinite, he is not duration or space, but he endures and is present. He endures forever, and is everywhere present; and, by existing always and everywhere, he constitutes duration and space [...] It is allowed by all that the Supreme God exists necessarily; and by the same necessity he exists always and everywhere. Whence also he is similar, all eye, all ear, all brain, all arm, all power to perceive, to understand, and to act; but in a manner not at all human, in a manner not at all corporeal, in a manner utterly unknown to us. As a blind man has no ideas of colours, so we have no idea of the manner by which the all-wise God perceives and understands all things. He is utterly void of all body and bodily figure, and can therefore neither be seen, nor heard, nor

touched; nor ought he to be worshipped under the representation of any corporeal thing.”1816 Newton’s above arguments resemble the Islamic transcendental notions of God,1817 to the extent that it seems as if they were copied from the arguments of Muslim philosophers and theologians such as Ibn Sina, al-Farabi, Ibn Rushd and al-Ghazali.

(p. 528-529)

6. Priestley

Horsley stigmatized Priestley “as a disguised Mahometan who seeks to overthrow church and state [...] In the Unitarian writings of the last century, it is allowed of Mahomet, that he had no other design than to restore the belief of the unity of God.—

(p. 591)

7. John Milton (1608-1674)

'No man who knows aught, can be so stupid to deny that all men naturally were born free' – The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates

'Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties' – Areopagitica

Milton lived in an age that was looking at the world in new ways, most obviously in its gradual acceptance of a heliocentric cosmos. He had met Galileo on his tour of Italy in 1638, and refers to the astronomer when, in *Paradise Lost*, he compares Satan's shield to the moon seen through a telescope.

https://www.christs.cam.ac.uk/why-milton-matters#cultural_influence

Milton was the government licenser during Cromwell's Commonwealth government and licensed publishing of Socinian Racovian Catechism, the central Socinian religious tract sometimes called the Socinian Bible. “Indeed Milton's licensing of the Socinian Racovian Catechism helped introduce antitrinitarianism into public discourse.”

(p. 499)

“Milton could have learned a great deal about Islam and the culture of Muslim peoples from reading works such as Richard Knolles's *General History of the Turks* (1603), George Sandys's *Relation of a Journey* (1615), and Andrew More's *Compendius History of the Turks* (1660) as well as Samuel Purchas's *Hakluytus Posthumous*.”

(p. 507)

Hartlib was a close friend of John Milton who dedicated his tractate *On Education* in 1644 to Hartlib.

He (Hartlib) was a close friend of Robert Boyle, Sir Kenelm Digby, Seth Ward, John Wallis, Isaac Barrow, Henry More, John Locke, Henry Stubbe, Isaac Newton and George Starkey.

(p. 253)

Milton, like Locke and Newton, tried to avoid clerical and monarchical persecutions by hiding his heterodoxy, anti-clerical and anti-monarchical radical impulses. Paul Best, John Biddle and other anti-Trinitarians were constantly imprisoned, tortured and persecuted during Milton's life.

(p. 498)

He produced a secret work which is wholly monotheistic, '*On Christian Doctrine*' but was only discovered and published 150 years later, in 1825.

Rational faith and rational investigation of the world

Newton stated that “so then twas one designe of the first institution of the true religion to propose to mankind by the frame of the ancient Temples, the study of the frame of the world as the true Temple of the great God they worshipped. And thence it was that the Priests anciently were above other men well skilled in the knowledge of the true frame of Nature & accounted it a great part of their Theology.”661 The knowledge of natural philosophy and correct interpretations of scriptures were interrelated. “The most important thing to be discovered in the Biblical records is that God has laid down the plan of human history, as well as the plan of

natural history. The latter is to be studied primarily in the Book of Nature, through scientific researches. The former is to be studied in the central prophetic statement about the course of human history, the books of Daniel and Revelation.”

(pp. 222-223)

The scientific enlightenment

Robert Boyle, the Anglo-Irish natural philosopher, chemist, inventor, the richest man in England, a director and investor of the East India Company,⁷¹⁹ was influenced by the famous Irish Orientalist and Archbishop of Armagh James Ussher (1581-1656)⁷²⁰ and Samuel Hartlib. He learned Arabic at the age of 50 to understand the Arabic manuscripts and sought the help of Arabists such as Edward Pococke, John Greaves and Thomas Hyde in translation.⁷²¹ Boyle’s antidogmatic, natural, experimental and empirical proto scientific approach was developed in conjunction with Eastern manuscripts, ideas, sciences and cultures.

(p. 238)

The idea that observation and critique is essential before fact can be confirmed, was not new – being introduced into Oxford by Grosseteste following his study of Ibn Al Haytham.

Perhaps one reason Ibn Al Haytham was able to develop the scientific method was the time his incarceration allowed for him to develop instruments to carefully test his theories and the development of instruments may have been a key reason that science could really take off in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

By incorporating the work of artisans and instrument-makers, Arab natural philosophers enhanced their powers of observation and measurement, applied mathematics to new problems, and used experimentation as a methodological tool.”⁷⁹⁶ Francis Bacon, Newton, Locke and others imitated the Muslim natural philosophers and scientists in their utilitarian merger of natural philosophy with works of artisans,

mathematicians and instrument makers. The early seventeenth-century scientific endeavours of London merchants, Greshamites and trademen were closely identical to the Eastern patterns; the later science emerged out of these alchemical and mundane experiments and efforts.

(pp. 256-257)

The civil war and Interregnum (1649-1660)

There was widespread disdain for Charles I’s financial, political and religious actions and so he and Archbishop Laud were executed in parliament in 1649, resulting in the abolition of parliament, the House of Lords, the monarchy, the Church of England and even Christmas. Thus began ‘The English Commonwealth’.

The civil war was not only a revolution against the king, but equally against the Anglican Church, which was seen mimicking many of the strictures and corruptions of Catholicism.

With the interregnum (years between kings), new freedoms of religious thought were unleashed.

John Coffey stated that “the English Revolution was a theological crisis, a struggle over the identity of British Protestantism.”

(p. 174)

Some of these ‘Protestant dissenters’ were monotheistic, and these ideas, being more rational, were eagerly accepted by enlightenment thinkers.

“The years following the regicide saw the publication of an English translation of the Koran in 1649, the ‘blasphemous’ pamphlets of the Ranters, Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* (1651), John Goodwin’s full-scale defence of Arminianism, *Redemption Redeemed* (1651), and the anti-Trinitarian *Racovian Catechism*.” (JRD Coffe, ‘Religious Thought’, p.452) The dissenting voices were finally given some room to breathe.

(p. 163)

Freed from the shackles of a domineering church and irrational theology, these leading thinkers were able to use their reason to the full and experiment freely, to reveal learning that would challenge past assump-

tions.

Interregnum resulted in religious diversity, free-thinking and a sort of tolerance often connected with material success, culture and Oriental influences.

(p. 174)

Even after the Restoration of the monarchy, all subsequent monarchs as well as the church were more careful to allow some freedom, in case the pretext for another civil war should be set. However, open objection to the core tenets of Protestantism was not usually tolerated.

There was “a genuine conviction that the civil war was a religious crusade to drive out old corruptions, and to establish new patterns of evangelism. In 1642, there was a self-confidence and energizing faith in religious renewal for which there is no secular equivalent.”

The Presbyterians mostly focused upon the Church structure and services and insisted upon a new national church with Presbyterian leadership. The Quakers, following Muslim philosopher Ibn Tufyl’s philosophical novel *Hayy bin Yaqzan*, insisted upon the inner light and conscience at the expense of organised Church, liturgy and religion.

The Unitarians, such as Paul Best and John Bidle, blasted the whole Trinitarian, incarnation-supernatural theology and demanded its replacement with Unitarianism.

The Socinians emphasised upon rational discourse, man Christology, religious tolerance, morality and scripturalism.

The Levellers extended religious equality to social inequities and oppressions of the social order, insisting upon a sort of social contract between the rulers and the ruled.

The merchants and parliament struggled to curtail monarchical and Church powers.

The divergent religio-political ideologies converged upon the fact that the historical Christianity was corrupted, religious and civil persecutions, abuses and manipulations were anti-Christian, return to pristine Christianity of Jesus would usher a new era of peace, stability

and prosperity prophesised in the Bible.”

(p. 161)

Freedom of conscience

Leveller pamphleteer and writer William Walwyn was a silk man who highly praised Islam and Turks for piety and tolerance. In his *Just Defence* (1649) Walwyn stated: “Compare but our manners unto a Turk, or a Pagan, and we must needs yeild unto them: whereas in respect of our religious superiority, we ought by much, yea, by an incomparable distance out-shine them in excellency, And well might a man say. Are they so just, so charitable, and so good, then must they be Christians.”³⁹⁶ In 1641 he called for toleration of all professions whatsoever, including Socinians and papists, whilst he later declared that even those “so far mis-informed as to deny a Deity, or the Scriptures” ³⁹⁷ should be tolerated.

(pp. 158-159)

Laws through reason, government for public interest

The anti-Christian religious Enlightenment preceded the republican, democratic, liberal political Enlightenment, and was the main backdrop of it. “The redefinition of human nature; the stress on sociability, rationality, moral conduct and improvement; the deflation of religion’s mysteries — these notions add up to a definition of the Enlightenment that twenty-first century historians would easily recognise.”¹⁰⁹³ Continental Socinians,¹⁰⁹⁴ Unitarians, Deists and other heterodox radical dissenters played a central role, especially from 1670s to 1720s, in realising the early Enlightenment.¹⁰⁹⁵

(p. 325)

Locke also proposed that the government was formed mainly for the protection of common good and interest. This was in total opposition to the Augustinian biblical dogma, which stated that the government and civil authorities were divinely established to curb the violent nature and evil acts of the fallen man.

(pp. 475-476)

Locke did not always have the same anti-innate ideas propensity. He evolved into it after reading the Spanish Muslim philosopher Ibn Tufayl's writings, as Russell has demonstrated. Following Ibn Tufayl's novel *Hayy bin Yaqzan*, which was translated to English as *The Self-Taught Philosopher*, Locke argued that a child was born with a clean slate (*Tabula Rasa*) and one's identity, ideas, and beliefs were the result of one's experiences, society, and education, "of all the men we meet with, nine parts of ten, or perhaps ninety-nine of one hundred, are what they are, good or evil, useful or not, by their education. It is that which makes the great difference in mankind."¹⁶²⁰

(p. 476)

As noted earlier, John Marshall, in his magisterial work on Locke and toleration, recognised that Islam was "central to tolerationist debates in England in the late seventeenth century," in part because "the practice of Muslim toleration for Christianity was repeatedly rehearsed by many authors."¹⁶²⁴ Religious tolerance was the "principal mark of the true church,"¹⁶²⁵ because "care of souls cannot belong to the civil ruler, because his power consists wholly in compulsion. But true and saving religion consists in an inward conviction of the mind; without it, nothing has value in the eyes of God. Such is the nature of the human understanding that it cannot be compelled by any external force. You may take away people's goods, imprison them, even inflict physical torture on their bodies, but you will not achieve anything if what you are trying to do by this punishment is change the judgement of their minds about things."

(p. 478)



3. Culture:

Are you
Eastern or
Western?

Valuing Culture

(Taken from *Islam and the Cultural Imperative*, Dr. Umar Faruq Abd-Allah, available online at <https://www.theoasisinitiative.org/islam-the-cultural-imperative>)

What is culture?

We are looking beyond just high culture – music, arts, linguistic expression, poetry.

“Beyond what is purely instinctive and unlearned, culture governs everything about us and even molds our instinctive actions and natural inclinations.”

“Culture weaves together the fabric of everything we value and need to know—beliefs, morality, expectations, skills, and knowledge—giving them functional expression by integrating them into effectual customary patterns.”

Wider culture, therefore, can include things like:

- Dress, food, birth, marriage, death
- Religious expression/ spirituality
- The way we think – psyche
- How we relate within an organisation
- How industry and agriculture work
- Business, banking, government, representation
- Gender relations
- Social habits
- Skills for coping with life’s circumstances
- Toleration and cooperation or the lack of them
- Civic habits

A successful culture

- Sense of cohesion
- Collective identity
- People interact in a mutually comprehensible way
- What is cultural conflict?

Islam is *not* culture

“Islam did not impose itself—neither among Arabs or non-Arabs—as an alien, culturally predatory worldview.

“Rather, the Prophetic message was, from the outset, based on the distinction between what was good, beneficial, and authentically human in other cultures, while seeking to alter only what was clearly detrimental.

(Positive norms originating from fitrah)

Islam purified Arab culture

- “Much of what became the Prophet’s sunna was made up of acceptable pre-Islamic Arab cultural norms,
- “and the principle of tolerating and accommodating such practices—among Arabs and non-Arabs alike in all their diversity—may be termed a supreme, overriding Prophetic sunna.
- Al-Sa’ib ibn Abdullah reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said to him, “O Sa’ib, look at the character of your deeds in the time of ignorance and continue them in Islam: honor the guest, be generous to the orphan, and be good to your neighbor.”
-
- Musnad Ahmad 15074 (Grade: Rijal al-Sahih (narrators are reliable) according to Al-Haythami)

The Crystal Clear River

“In history, Islam showed itself to be culturally friendly and, in that regard, has been likened to a crystal clear river.

“Its waters (Islam) are pure, sweet, and life-giving but—having no color of their own—reflect the bed-rock (indigenous culture) over which they flow.”

China – the Hui

yisilan jiào
(the religion of ‘Islam’)

“A foreign sounding and essentially meaningless construction to native Chinese ears”

versus

kāi tiān gù jiào:

The primordial religion from the world's beginning

Qur’anic source text

‘Accept (from the people) what comes naturally (for them). Command what is customarily (good). And turn away from the ignorant.’

(Qur'an, 7:199)

Commentary on this verse from Ibn Atiyya (Andalusian jurist and Qur’anic commentator): It “upheld the sanctity of indigenous culture”, and it gave “sweeping validity to everything the human heart regards as sound and beneficial, as long as it is not clearly repudiated in the revealed law.”

The sunnah

“The Prophet and his Companions did not look upon human culture in terms of black and white, nor did they drastically divide human societies into spheres of absolute good and absolute evil.

- “Play your games , sons of Arfida, so the Jews and Christians know there is latitude in our religion.” (Bukhari and Muslim)
- (Dancing, drums, spears, mosque!)
- “Prophet’s intervention to stop ‘Umar made it clear that the Ethiopians were not to be judged by ‘Umar’s indigenous Arabian standards or made to conform to them.

The companions

- Prophecy – Al Rum will predominate at the end of time...
- ‘Amr ibn al ‘Aas:
- “They are the most forbearing of people in times of discord.
- “They are the quickest of people to recover from calamity.
- “They are the most likely of people to renew an attack after retreat.
- “They are the best of people towards the poor, the orphan, and the weak.”
- “And they have a fifth attribute which is both beautiful and excellent: They are the best of people in checking the oppression of kings.”
- “‘Amr drew attention to those European cultural traits which he knew and regarded as both compatible with Islam’s ethos and universally desirable as human qualities.
- “His response demonstrates his understanding that the future prominence of Westerners would be an outgrowth of their exceptional cultural traits...

Attachment to the Land

“Identity is connected to a particular place ... by a feeling that you belong to that place. It’s a place in which you feel comfortable, or at home, because part of how you define yourself is symbolised by certain qualities of that place.”

Nikolas Rose, p.190, Questions of Cultural Identity, Chapter 8: Identity, Geneology, History, 2011

- In Islamic cultures, people were identified by their land of birth.
- Bilal Al Habashi, Salman al Farsi, Suhayb Al Rumi – captured at an early age and spent most of their life in Arabia
- Memories play an important part in one’s sense of self
- Especially the place of your childhood memories

Abdullah Az-Zuhri reported: I saw the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, while he was standing near Mecca and saying, “By Allah, verily, you are the best and most beloved land to Allah and had I not been driven away from you I would not have left you.”

Sunan At-Tirmidhi (3925) Sahih (authentic) according to At-Tirmidhi

About Medina he (pbuh) said: “...this mountain loves us and we love it...”

(Bukhari)

Culture in Islamic Jurisprudence

- Custom (al-’urf) and usage (al-’adah) - all schools of thought recognised as essential.
- All schools of thought agree that respect for culture does not mean blanket acceptance.
- Local culture had to be appraised in terms of the transcendent norms of Islamic law.
- Key maxim of Islamic Law:
- “Cultural usage shall have the weight of law”
- “Times change, and viable cultures adapt.
- It was a matter of consensus among Islamic legal thinkers that the legal judgments of earlier times had to be brought under constant review

to ensure that they remained in keeping with the times.”

The real issue is context

Here, we need opinions from scholars who are experts in our context:

- Our cultural norms
- The law of our land
- The reality of people’s lives & conditions here in Britain

Al-Tusūlī asserted: “Allowing the people to follow their customs, usages, and general aspirations in life is obligatory. To hand down rulings in opposition to this is gross deviation and tyranny.”

“Legal interpretation should change with the change in time, place, conditions, intention and customs... ignorance of this fact has resulted in grievous injustice to the shari’ah, and has caused many difficulties, hardships and sheer impossibilities, although it is known that the noble shari’ah, which serves the highest interests of mankind, would not sanction such results.”

Ibn Al Qayyim (from I’lam al Muwaqqi’in)

“Persons handing down legal judgments while adhering blindly to the texts in their books without regard for the cultural realities of their people are in gross error.

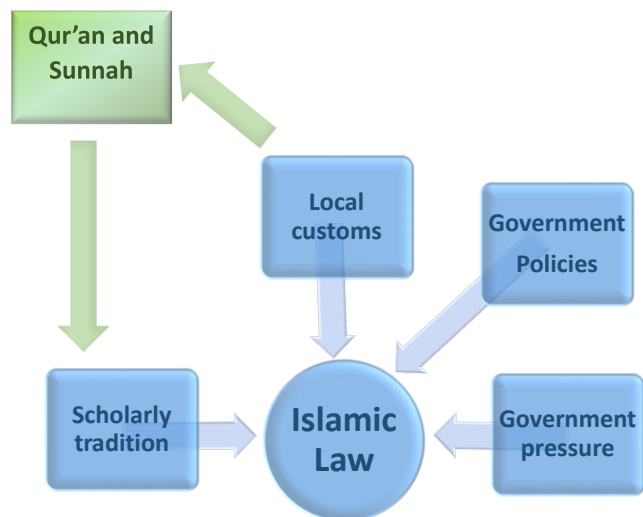
They act in contradiction to established legal consensus and are guilty of iniquity and disobedience before God, having no excuse despite their ignorance; For they have taken upon themselves the art of issuing legal rulings without being worthy of that practice.”
- Imam Al Qarafi, a leading 13th century Maliki scholar

Multi-Islams

'Legal interpretation should change with the change in time, place, conditions, intention and customs...'

- Ibn Al Qayyim

The Impact of Culture on Islamic Law



Bigamy is prohibited in Britain – even for Muslims

‘O believers! Obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.

Should you disagree on anything, then refer it to Allah and His Messenger, if you truly believe in Allah and the Last Day. This is the best and fairest resolution.’ (4:59)

Compare with slavery, which is allowed in Islamic law but forbidden by all countries now.

Sheikh Faysal Mawlawi, deputy chairman of the European Council for Fatwa and Research:

“Muslims living in non-Muslim countries are to respect the symbols of those countries such as the national anthem, national flag, etc. This is part of what citizenship dictates as per modern customs; thus, standing up for the national anthem is not a form of prohibited loyalty... At the same time, he should not obey any rules that involve disobedience to Allah.

When Muslims living in non-Muslim countries stand up to respect their national anthems, their intention is not to approve the un-Islamic rulings prevalent in those countries. They are simply performing a national duty, that is, loving their nation. And this expression of patriotism has nothing to do with worship, as there is neither prayer nor remembrance of God involved in it; thus, it cannot be called a prohibited act.”

<https://aboutislam.net/counseling/ask-about-islam/muslim-american-stand-kneel-national-anthem/>

“The Islamic legal tradition must not be seen as a program of detailed prohibitions and inhibitions but made relevant to the day-to-day imperatives of our lives with an eye to fostering positive identity and dynamic integration into American society.”

- Culture of patriarchy in many Muslim lands vs. evolving culture of equality here
- Gender relations vs culture of segregation
- Eye contact, hand shaking, music, etc.

“While cultivating sophisticated knowledge of the Arabic tongue, we-like other non-Arab Muslim cultures before us – must embrace our indigenous tongue, the English language, and make it the primary vehicle of our culture.”

“Regardless of birthplace, Muslim Americans become indigenous once they truly belong. Islam in America becomes indigenous by fashioning an integrated cultural identity that is comfortable with itself and functions naturally in the world around it.”



Being British before 9/11 and 7/7, there were anxieties over changing identities of Gender, Class and Nation

From the Parekh report: The Future of Multi Ethnic Britain (1999):

A state is not only a territorial and political entity, but also an 'imagined community'. What is Britain's understanding of itself?

How are the histories of England, Scotland and Wales understood by their people? What do the separate countries stand for, and what does Britain stand for? Of what may citizens be justly proud?

How has the imagined nation stood the test of time? What should be preserved, what jettisoned, what revised or reworked? How can everyone have a recognised place within the larger picture?

These are questions about Britain as an imagined community, and about how a genuinely multicultural Britain urgently needs to reimagine itself. Among other things, such re-imagining must take account of the inescapable changes of the last 30 years: – not only postwar migration but also devolution, globalisation, and the end of empire, Britain's long-term decline as a world power, moral and cultural pluralism, and closer integration with Europe.

Being British

According to the Department for Education (DfE), 'fundamental British values' are comprised of:

- Democracy,
- The rule of law,
- Individual liberty, and
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith

But, what about:

- Having a stiff upper lip?
- Civility?
- Restraint/politeness?
- Standing up for the underdog?
- Sense of humour, self deprecation

This is our country, and we are bound to it...

Shaykh Abdullah al-Judai's fatwa:

1. As far as the Shariah is concerned, the situation of Muslims living in the UK is that they are under contractual obligations to the state in which they live. This is a natural consequence of the citizenship that we all bear. By accepting to live here, we have taken up a social contract to live within the framework of the English Legal System whilst practising and perfecting our Islamic faith. We have to realise that these agreements are ratified between two parties, i.e. the state and the individual. Therefore, even if the state breaches its contract with any other party with whom the individual has a connection of some sort, be it Muslim or otherwise, the individual remains bound by the contract between him and the state. It is totally and completely unlawful from the Islamic point of view for a Muslim individual to actively seek to breach or contravene this agreement.
2. There is nothing in the Islamic sources that compels a Muslim living in Britain to go to Afghanistan to fight. In addition to what was aforementioned in the first point, there is no obligation upon Muslims to respond to the call to fight with Muslims elsewhere because the source of such an obligation, such as an oath of allegiance or a

2:2-5 'The <i>muttaqun</i> ' – Pious Sura Baqarah	2:83-84 Covenant with Children of Israel Sura Baqarah	2:177 <i>Ayat al Birr</i> (The Piety Verse) Sura Baqarah	3:130-136 <i>Al 'Amileen</i> (Those who work and strive) Sura Ale-'Imran
4:36-40 'A great reward, multiplied over' Sura Nisa	6:150-154 God's Path, leading straight Sura An'am	16:90 'God's instruction' to us Sura Nahl	17:19-39 Wisdom and Commandments not to be violated Sura Isra
23:1-11 Characteristics of <i>Al Mu'minin</i> (True believers) Sura Mu'mininun	25:63-76 Characteristics of <i>'Ibad Ul Rahman</i> (God's devotees) Sura Furqan	31:12-22 The wisdom of Luqman Sura Luqman	42:36-43 <i>The mutawakkilun</i> (Who trust in God) Sura Shuraa
60:12 The Pledge with the Prophet Sura Mumtahinah	70:22-35 The <i>Mukramun</i> (held in honour) Sura Ma'arij	90:11-18 The steep path Sura Balad	103:1-3 Those who will not lose out Sura 'Asr

Muslim ruler, to whom obedience is obligatory, is absent. It is important to note that even if such a source was available, such as a Muslim ruler, responding to his call to take up arms falls only unto those who have pledged their allegiance, and such an oath cannot run concurrently with a ratified agreement or contract with the opposite party.

- The ruling of the Shariah in such a case is clearly expressed in the Qur'an in Surah al-Anfal. The verse is categorical, that Muslims are not allowed to take up arms against a party that they are in a treaty with, even when this is to go to the defence of other Muslims, as abiding by agreements and treaties is one of the most crucial aspects and features of Islam. Following this, it is not allowed for British Muslims to go to another country to fight in such a way that British forces would be attacked by Muslims.

(Date of fatwa: November 2001)

Being British – and a good Muslim!

See above for places in the Qur'an that tell us what Islam is really about.

Example: Surah Al-Mu'mininun (23:4)

Surah Al Mu'minoon 23:1-11

23:1. The believers will be successful,-

23:2. Those who **humble themselves in their prayers**;

23:3. Who **avoid vain talk**;

23:4. And those who **pay the Zakat** .

23:5. And those who **guard their chastity** (i.e. private parts, from illegal sexual acts)

23:6. Except from their wives or (the captives and slaves) that their right hands possess, for then, they are free from blame;

23:7. But whoever seeks beyond that, then those are the transgressors;

23:8. Those who **faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants**;

23:9. And **who (strictly) guard their prayers**;-

23:10. These will be the inheritors.

23:11. Who will inherit Paradise: they will dwell therein (for ever).

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِلزَّكَاةِ فَاعِلُونَ ﴿٤﴾

Who are **active** in deeds of charity;

— English Translation (Yusuf Ali)

Importantly, it does not say “yu’tuna az-zakata” (meaning “Pay zakah”) - it is a Meccan surah, revealed before the citizens’ 2% ‘zakat tax’. Instead, it is suggesting that Believers should balance peak experiences and service to humanity!

Example: Surah Al-Balad (93:12-18)

Sura Balad 93:12-18
 12 And what will explain to thee the path that is steep?
 13 (It is:) **freeing the bondman**;
 14 Or the **giving of food in a day of privation**
 15 To the orphan with claims of relationship
 16 Or to the indigent (down) in the dust.
 17 Then will he be of **those who believe** and enjoin **patience** (constancy and self-restraint) and **enjoin deeds of kindness and compassion**.
 18 Such are the Companions of the Right Hand.

Example: Surah Al-Luqman (31:12-22)

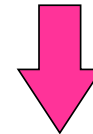
Sura Luqman 31
 31:13. Behold, Luqman said to his son by way of instruction: "O my son! join not in worship (others) with Allah. for false worship is indeed the highest wrong-doing."
 ...
 31:17 **Keep up the prayer**, my son; **command the good**; **prevent the wrongs**; bear anything that happens to you **steadfastly**: these are things to be aspired to.
 ...
 31:22. **Whoever submits his whole self to Allah, and is a doer of good**, has grasped indeed the most trustworthy hand-hold: and with Allah rests the End and Decision of (all) affairs.

Make Positive Change

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ ﴿١١﴾

أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِن لَّا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿١٢﴾

Sura Baqarah 2:12-13
 When they are told, “Do not spread corruption in the land,” they reply, “We are only putting things right.”
 Indeed, it is they who are the corruptors, but they fail to perceive it.



So who is supposed to better their country?
 (Muslihoon)

كُنتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ تَأْمُرُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ
 وَتَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتُؤْمِنُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَلَوْ

Sura Ale ‘Imran 3:110
 You are the best of peoples,
 evolved for mankind,
 enjoining the common good,
 preventing wrongs,
 whilst believing in God.

The Qur’an chooses ‘munkar’ rather than ‘shar’ which is literally ‘evil’ because munkar means rejected, i.e. what everyone *knows* to be harmful and wrong – not just what one religious community sees as such

Islam's 'Spiritual Code'

BELIEF AND WORSHIP



Believe in One God
 Believe in the Messengers & their Books
 Believe in the Judgement and Heaven and Hell
 Believe in the Unseen, being wary of Shaytan
 Guard your Prayer & obligatory devotions
 Be humble and devoted in Prayer

SPIRITUALITY



Nurture your relationship with God:
 - Love God (*hubb*)
 - Feel gratitude (*shukr*)
 - Regret your mistakes / race to forgiveness (*istighfar*)
 - Have awareness / mindfulness of God (*taqwa*)
 - Submit your self fully to your Creator (*Islam*)
 - Follow the Prophet (PBUH) (*sunnah*)

SERVICE



Stand up for justice
 Make positive change:
 - Encourage the common good
 - Address the wrongs in society
 Encourage empathy & compassion (*marhama*)
 Care for family, neighbours, friends travellers and the poor
 Free the enslaved
 Be kind to those you have authority over

COMMANDMENTS



Honour your parents
 Be generous to those in need
 Do not shed blood or take life
 Do not exploit with usury, doubled and multiplied
 Do not oppress people
 Do not turn people out of their homes
 Do not steal
 Be faithful to your promises and contracts; do not cheat
 Do not come close to adultery - be faithful
 Do not kill your own children, for fear of want

CHARACTER



Be patient and perseverant
 Be honest, just and fair at all times
 Walk on the earth lightly and with humility
 Spend but avoid waste
 Be careful with your tongue
 Control your anger
 Forgive all people
 Consult in your affairs
 Avoid all shameful deeds, including secret ones
 Have humility in knowledge and enjoy the truth



American Muslim Scholar Prof. Sherman Jackson:

“...the Prophet never ceased to identify as a member of his society and to seek to enhance and preserve Arabia’s common good.

This is clearly captured in the Qur’ān’s repeated command to the Muslims to act in accordance with what it terms “al-ma’rūf,” which literally means “that which is known by convention to be good, wholesome, and sound.”

So, at its core, Islam’s teachings are universal

About 60% of British people believe in God or a Higher Power
[\(Link to YouGov poll\)](#)

So Maybe there are 40 million Muslims in Britain...
 They just don't know it!

Psychology: with this deeper understanding, how

might it change how we think, feel and behave?

The British Muslim Scene: Where Do We Find Ourselves? Identity, Statistics and Challenges

Dilwar Hussain

Introduction

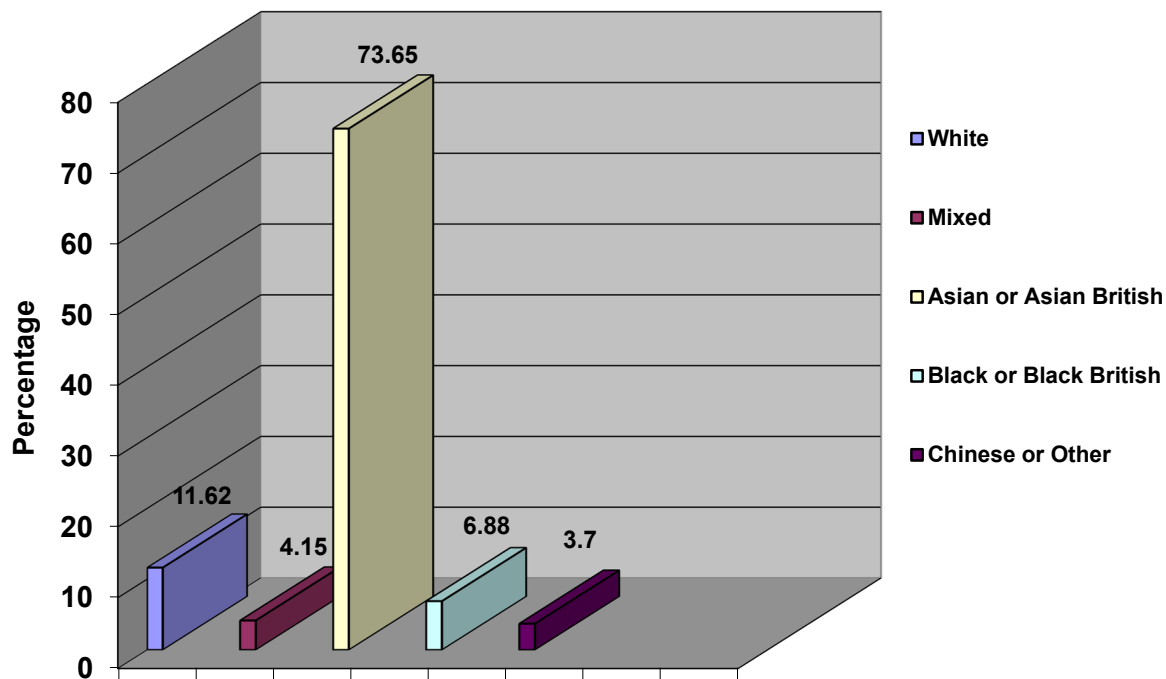
- Big picture (mixed and improving)
- Cultural impact
- Census data – religious question, huge impact
- Caveats on data – different years and sources, accuracy

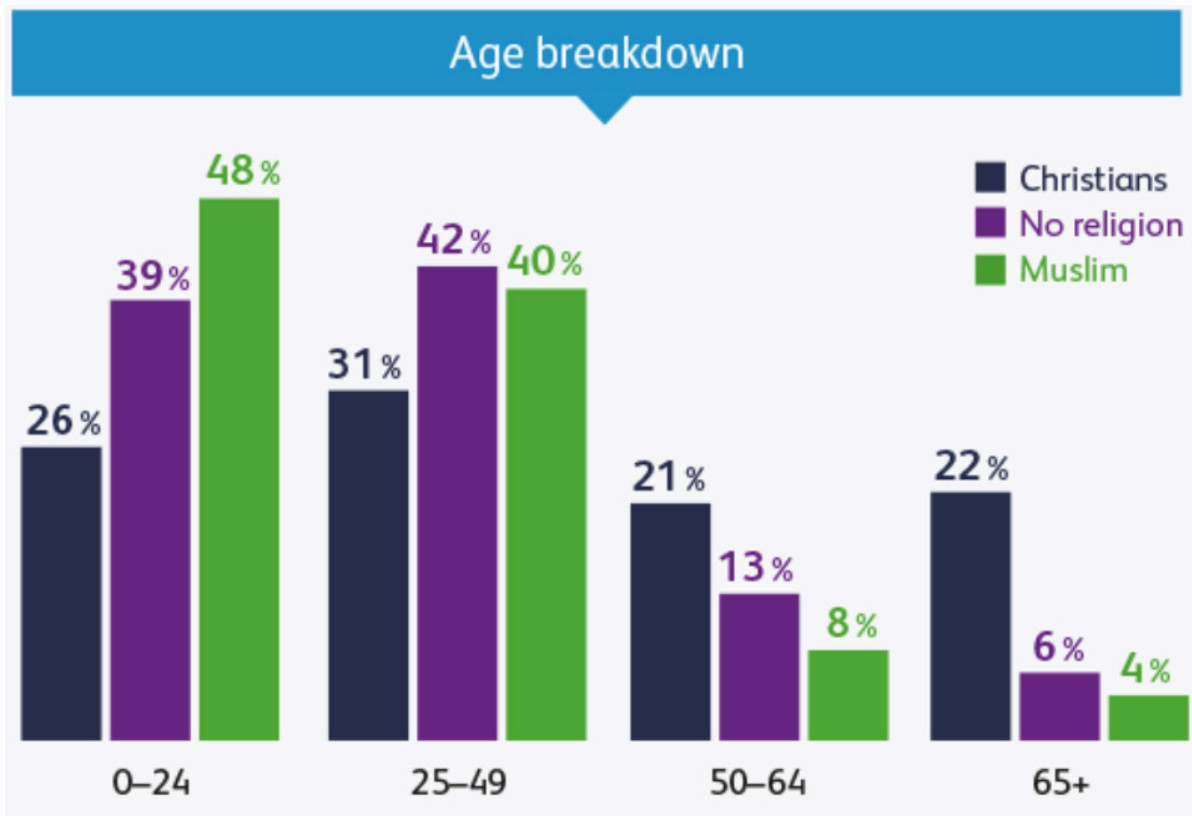
Population

- UK population ~67 million
- The Annual Population Survey (2017) puts the Muslim figure at 3.4 million
- Census 2021 results give a figure of ~3.6 million Muslims

Religious Affiliation	2001		2011	
	Number	%	Number	%
Christian	42.1m	71.6	33.2m	59.3
No Religion	9.1m	15.5	14.1m	25.1
Muslim	1.6m	2.7	2.7m	4.8
Hindu	559,000	1	817,000	1.5
Sikh	336,000	0.6	423,000	0.8
Jewish	267,000	0.5	263,000	0.5
Buddhist	152,000	0.3	248,000	0.4
Other	179,000	0.3	240,000	0.4
Not Stated	4.3m	7.3		7.2
Other				
Pagan			57,000	
Spiritualist			39,000	
Mixed Religion			24,000	
Jain			20,000	

Chart Showing Ethnic Groups Among Muslims in England and Wales (2001 Census)





Education

Children in England with a ‘good level of development’ at Foundation Stage:

Indian	77.3%
White British	72.5%
Black	69.6%
Bangladeshi	67.1%
Pakistani	64.3%
Other White	63.9%
Gypsy, Roma and Irish Traveller children	33.2%

Universities

- ~230,000 Muslims at university
- 8-9% of the total student population
- Across 140 HE institutions
- 9 out of 10 are home students
- (Runnymede Trust)

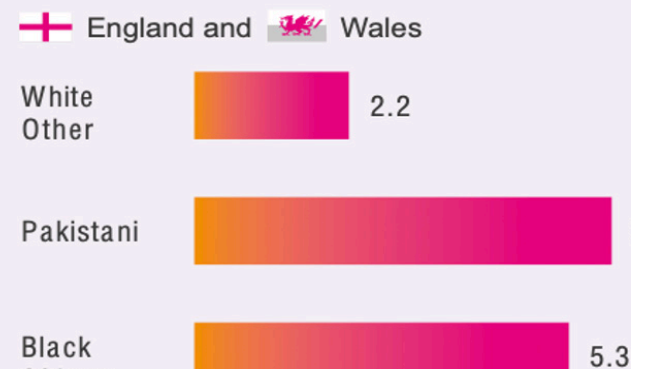
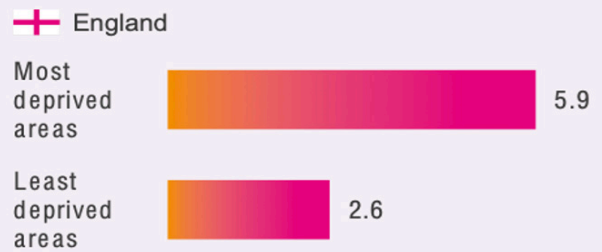
Economy

- Employment (male and female)
- Business
- White peaks and glass ceilings
- Household income

Health

- Diabetes etc
- Infant mortality
- Organ donation

Infant mortality rates per 1,000 live births (2016)



Median hourly pay of employees by religious affiliation in England and Wales, 2018



Chart: The Times and The Sunday Times • Source: ONS

Citizenship

- Identity and belonging – national / local
- Gender – local activism
- Social activism and campaigns

Belonging

Belonging to the UK across ethnic groups
(answering ‘very strongly’ and ‘fairly strongly’):

- Bangladeshi (91%)
- Indian (89%)
- Pakistani (87%)
- Black Caribbean (85%)
- Black African (84%)
- White (84%)
- Chinese / other (72%)

(The Citizenship Survey 2007)

i.e. Muslims score high on the scale

Shared Values

OSI Survey 2010: (Ranking for Muslims and non-Muslims)

- Respect for the law
- Tolerance towards others
- Freedom of speech and expression
- Respect for all faiths

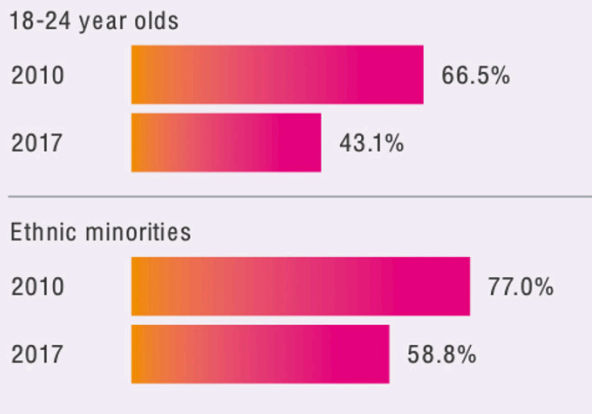
Citizenship Survey 2007: (Ranking across whole sample)

- Respect for the law
- Tolerance and politeness towards others
- Equality of opportunity
- Freedom of speech/expression

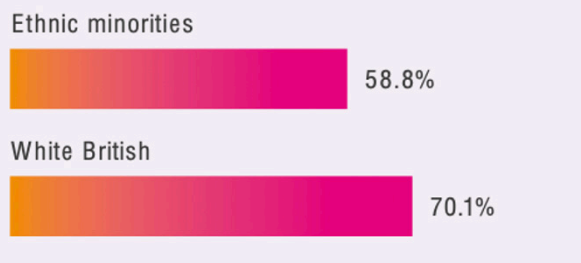
Politics

- Councillors / MPs / Lords
- Lobbying and influence
- Voter attendance and age

Voter turnout among 18-24 year olds and ethnic minorities



Voter turnout for the 2017 General Election (ethnic minorities in comparison with White British)



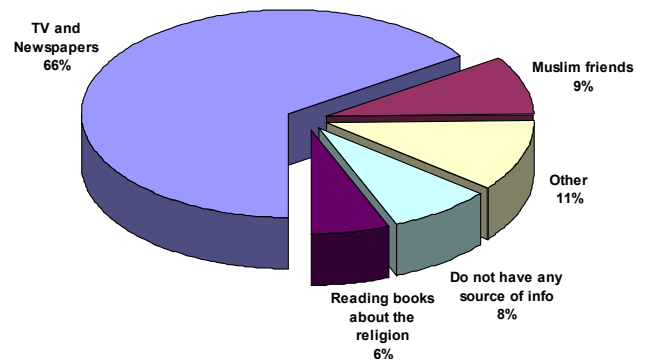
2017:

- 8% of MPs 52 of 650 in the House of Commons are from BAME background (14%)
- BAME MPs 12.5% of all women MPs (26 of 208)

Prejudice

- Hate crime
- Media
- Image
- Islamophobia (+ definition)
- Legislation
- Broader context (gender, disability, Anti-semitism, Roma, LGBTQI)

Which of these is your biggest single source of information about Britain's Muslim community?



(Source: Attitudes Towards British Muslims: a survey commissioned by the Islamic Society of Britain and conducted by YouGov, November 2002)

According to EHRC, England's 4 most disadvantaged groups (2016) are:

- Gypsies, Travellers and Roma
- Homeless people
- People with learning disabilities
- Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

Gypsy or Irish Travellers had the lowest recorded economic activity in England and Wales (47% compared with average of 63%) (2011)

Rating health as bad or very bad, England and Wales (ONS, 2013)

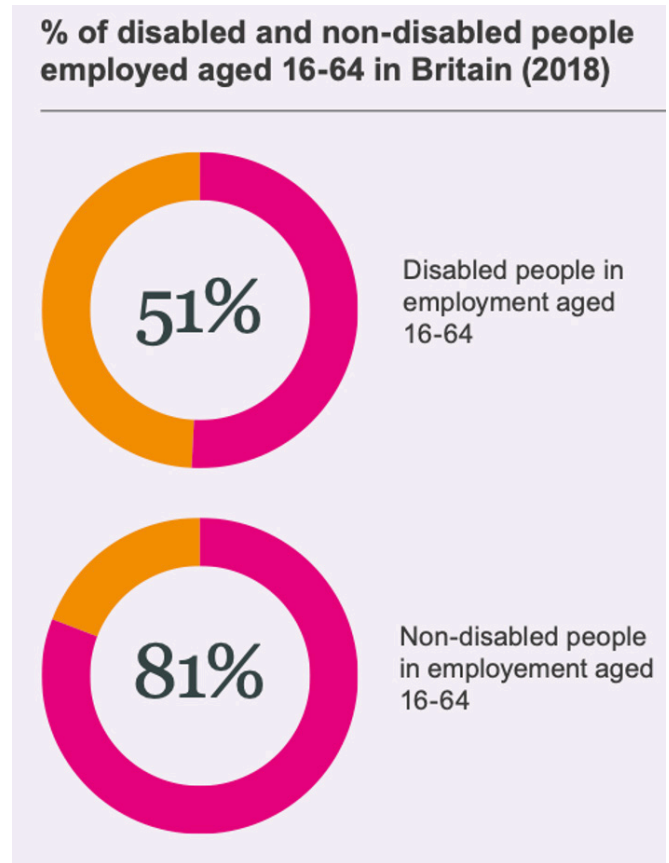
- Gypsy or Irish Travellers 14.1%
- White Irish 9.2%
- White British 5.9%

Prison population (HMIP, 2014)

- Gypsy, Roma or Traveller: 4%
(in population 0.1%) x40
- Muslim: 15%
(in population 5%) x3

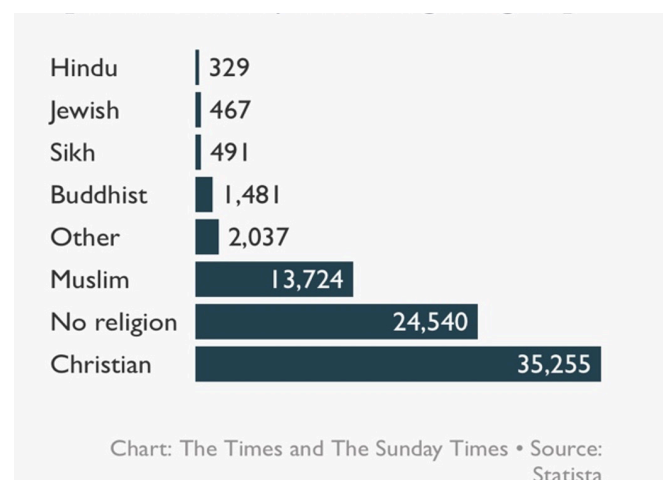
50% of people in Britain reported having an unfavourable view of Roma (Pew Research Centre, 2014).

64% of LGBTQ+ people had experienced anti-LGBT+ violence or abuse



Misc

- Prisons
- Charitable giving
- Mosques
- Conversion
- Immigration
- Culture



Prison Population, 2018

POLICY

Issues

- Migration and settlement – socio economics, social capital
- Image – public ignorance, can't dispel by giving out facts
- Leadership
- Centre ground weak
- Terrain – compromise and dispassionate planning
- Partnerships (and alienating natural friends)
- Too many fires
- Political mobilisation (too narrow)
- Lack of policy research functions
- Victimhood

Summary

- What is our role and why?
- Education => economic uplift
- Religious thought, leadership, and vision (not just Imams)
- Normalisation

Muslim Identity



It can be used positively and negatively



Is it about being a *part of* something, or being *apart from* something?



Not an isolated being



Need to escape from historical conflicts



And rise above the current difficulties / victimhood

Looking further

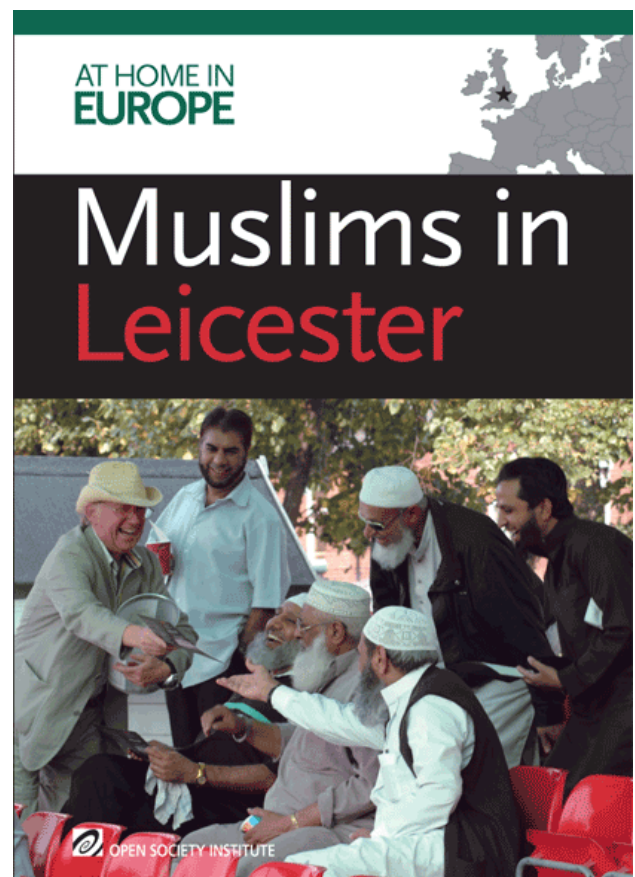
www.dilwar.org

Reports:

- Muslims in Leicester
- Somalis in Leicester
- Anti-Muslim hatred in Leeds

Articles:

- British Muslim Identity
- Political Participation
- British Islam



Muslims and Civil Society: Building a Better Future Together

Sarah Joseph

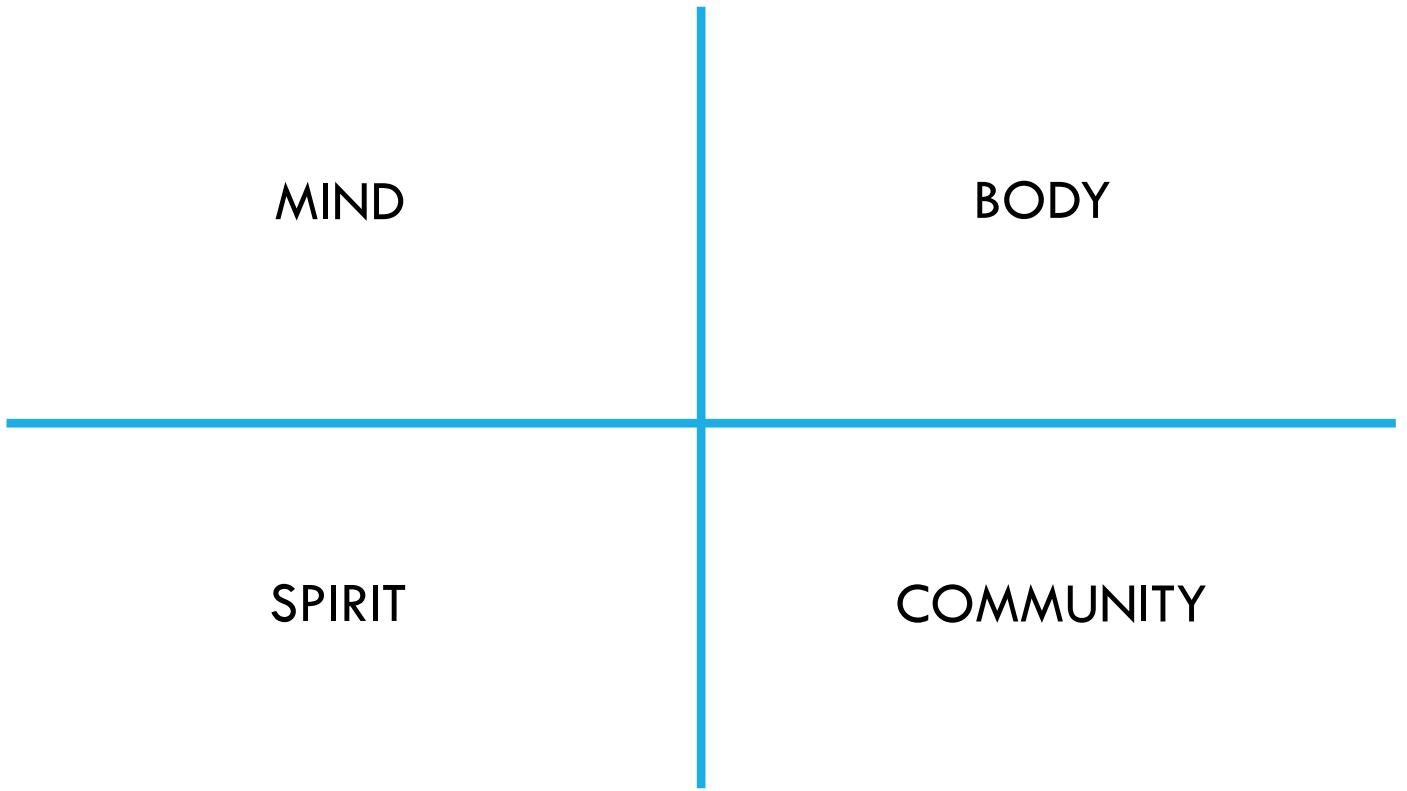
TALK OUTLINE



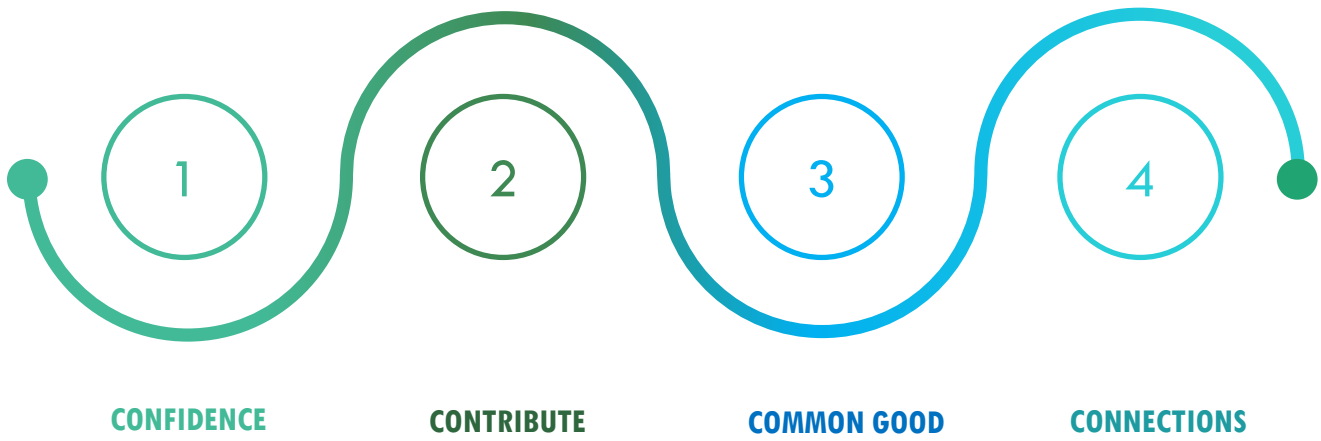
Questions to think about before the session

What movie do you think stands as a good example of social action?

What Qur'anic verses and/or hadith would you use to justify the position that action is an Islamic requirement?



THE FOUR Cs



(space for notes)

(space for notes)

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Campus Chats QR Code

Below is the QR code for the main Campus chat, where all main event announcements are made. Note the age restriction placed on the groups - please do not join the group if you fall outside of this age range. See the next page for QR codes for our regional chats.

Chat Name	Age Restriction	QR Code
Campus Chat	17-26 yrs	

Campus Chats QR Codes (continued)

Below are the QR codes for our regional chats, where we share more locally relevant events, as well as organise events of our own. Joining in with these events is a great way to make new friends in your area!

Chat Name	Age Restriction	QR Code
Campus North	17-26 yrs	
Campus Midlands	17-26 yrs	
Campus South	17-26 yrs	