Public Seminar Series 2023

Wednesday 8th February 5pm
Hanan Issa and Mariyah Zaman
Grangetown Pavilion
Grange Gardens, Cardiff
CF11 7LJ
Creativity in Conversation
Followed by buffet and social gathering 6pm–9pm
Chair: Abdul-Azim Ahmed

Hanan Issa is a Welsh-Iraqi poet, filmmaker, and artist. Her publications include her poetry collection My Body Can House Two Hearts and Welsh Platitudes: Essays on the Future of Wales. Her winning monologue With Her Back Straight was performed at the Bush Theatre as part of the Hijabi Monologues. She is part of the writers room for Channel 4’s award-winning series We Are Lady Parts. Hanan is co-founder of the Where I’m Coming From open mic series. She was the recipient of the 2020 Film Cymru/ BBC Wales commission for her short film The Golden Apple. She is the current National Poet of Wales and 2022 Hay International Fellow. Email address: hanan-issa@outlook.com

Mariyah Zaman is a BA (Hons) Creative Writing & Media Graduate from Cardiff University and the co-founder and creative director of Now In A Minute Media, an online Welsh media platform championing Welsh Muslim voices and encouraging participation amongst Muslims in creative industries. Mariyah is a social media coordinator by profession and a freelance writer whose work ranges from poetry to news articles and features with a passion for exploring Muslim youth culture and fashion. Email address: mariyah@nowinaminute.wales

Wednesday 22nd February 5pm
Dr Sufyan Dogra
John Percival Building, room 5.24
Two Tales from One City: How Mosques and Madrassas in Bradford are preventing childhood obesity and reducing health inequalities
Chair: Ifthahar Ahmed

Dr Sufyan Abid Dogra does anthropology of modern Britain. He works as a Principal Research Fellow at Born in Bradford Study, Bradford Institute for Health Research and explores ways to encourage healthy dietary habits and enhance physical activity among children and young people from ethnic/religious minorities. Sufyan has conducted pioneering research on how Islamic religious settings in the UK can be used to prevent childhood obesity. He views art, culture, poetry and music as sites of creating synergies for active civic life, better mental health and happiness for young people living with inequalities. Email address: sufyandogra@btft.nhs.uk

Wednesday 8th March 5pm
Dr Thomas Sealy
John Percival Building, room 5.24
Religion, Race, Culture: Islamophobia and British Converts to Islam
Chair: Asma Khan

Dr Thomas Sealy is Lecturer in Ethnicity and Race in the School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies at the University of Bristol. He has published journal articles and book chapters on multiculturalism, the governance of religious diversity, Islamophobia, forms of racism, converts to Islam, and Georg Simmel. His monograph, Religious and Recognition: Multiculturalism and British Converts to Islam, is published with Palgrave. Email address: thomas.sealy@bristol.ac.uk

Wednesday 26th April 5pm
Dr Abdallah Rothman
John Percival Building, room 5.24
Faithful Wellbeing: Traditional Islamic Psychology and Contemporary Applications
Chair: Fatima Khan

Dr Abdallah Rothman is the Principal of Cambridge Muslim College, founder of Shifaa Integrative Counseling, co-founder and Executive Director of the International Association of Islamic Psychology, and visiting professor of psychology at Zaim University Istanbul, International Islamic University Islamabad, and Al-Neelain University Khartoum. He holds an MA and a PhD in psychology and is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) and a Board Certified Registered Art Therapist (ATR-BC), licensed in the United States and currently living in the UK. Email address: aero@cambridgemuslimcollege.ac.uk

Book here: https://AbdallahRothman.eventbrite.co.uk
Laura Jones
PhD topic: Ramadan in the UK: A Month of Ambiguity
Generously funded by the Jameel Scholarship Programme.

Project summary: My research explores the fasting month of Ramadan from the everyday, lived perspectives of over fifty British Muslims. I use photo diaries from participants and follow-up interviews to explore the practices and meanings associated with Ramadan during the 2020 lockdown and beyond. My thesis has been examined successfully and I am currently completing minor corrections. I argue that Ramadan can be conceived as a month of ambiguity applying Bauer's (2021) theory of “cultural ambiguity”. This is argued through three main topics: worship (ibadah) and spirituality, sacredness, and food. I demonstrate how Muslims in my study displayed paradoxical and practices in relation to these spheres yet were largely “tolerant” of these ambiguities. This contrasts Bauer’s (2021) argument that such “tolerance” of ambiguity is diminishing in Muslim societies today due to the detrimental impact of the modern West.

Furthermore, my participant-led and flexible methods gave agency to participants which is useful in addressing power imbalances within the research process and wider society. Finally, this project is one of the few sociological, in-depth studies of Ramadan in the UK providing a valuable empirical contribution to British Muslim Studies.

Email address: JonesLA24@cardiff.ac.uk

Laiqah Osman
PhD topic: Muslim Women in Britain and the Authority of Online Islamic Content
Generously funded by the Jameel Scholarship Programme.

Project summary: Muslim women in Britain use, interact, and engage with different sources of Islamic authority. Since the advent of Islam on the internet, media sources have become increasingly popular in facilitating this exchange. These can include, but are not limited to, fatwa websites, Islamic scholars’ profiles on social media, Islamic Q&A shows/ forums and the automation of Islamic legal literature. My research suggests that this development has significantly transformed women’s role and subsequently, the function of authority in this engagement. By studying women’s use of the internet to access religious knowledge, we will have a greater understanding of the impact that these sources have on their lived religious experiences. Using a gendered approach will also help us to explore the role of individual agency in their religious exploration, shifting the narrative beyond the traditional male guardians of knowledge. This study has used a combination of traditional social science methods (semi-structured oral history interviews) and internet research (online ethnography) to understand how, and in what context, Muslim women use these sources to guide and direct their religious practice.

This project is in the analysis stage, in preparation for write up in 2023.

Email address: OsmaniL2@cardiff.ac.uk

Fatou Sambe
PhD topic: Converts and the Next Generation of British Muslims
Generously funded by the Jameel Scholarship Programme.

Project summary: My research project explores the long-term post-conversion experiences of converts in Britain and the intersection of converts having children, as well as the experiences of (adult) children of converts. I have conducted 46 in-depth interviews with 50 participants of diverse backgrounds from all over the UK.

I explore how converts navigate their new lives, community spaces and raising children, and how children of converts navigate their mixed backgrounds and extended Muslim and non-Muslim families.

Through my research, I am hoping to contribute to a better understanding of the varying identities and unique experiences of the current generation of Muslims in Britain and ultimately the heterogeneity of Muslim communities.

I am in the final year of my PhD and currently analysing the data I have collected during my fieldwork.

Email address: SambeFB@cardiff.ac.uk
Twitter: https://twitter.com/FatouSambe1

Fatiha Khan
PhD topic: Muslims in Britain and Disabilities: An Exploration of Visual Impairment Experiences, Attitudes, and Cultural Influences Amongst British South Asian Muslims
Generously funded by the Jameel Scholarship Programme.

Project summary: This study explores the experiences of and attitudes towards visual impairments (VIs) amongst British South Asian Muslims. Within the corpus of disability studies, participant research projects are atypical due to the evidence is pointing to the stigma (if any) attached to VIs in British Muslim communities.

Consequently, the lived experiences of individuals with VIs are woven within the Muslim and academic communities on disabilities.

Email address: khanf23@cardiff.ac.uk

Shaista Chishty
PhD topic: British Muslim women, Orientalism and contemporary self-making
Generously funded by the Jameel Scholarship Programme.

Project summary: Historically, portrayals of Muslims in news and popular culture have been problematic. Muslim women in particular have been subject to changing (mis)representations. Increased opportunities for self-representation via social media suggests the potential to disrupt stereotypes and improve social inclusion.

My research explores the long-term post-conversion experiences of converts in Britain and the particular intersection of converts having children, as well as the experiences of (adult) children of converts. I have conducted 46 in-depth interviews with 50 participants of diverse backgrounds from all over the UK.

I explore how converts navigate their new lives, community spaces and raising children, and how children of converts navigate their mixed backgrounds and extended Muslim and non-Muslim families.

Through my research, I am hoping to contribute to a better understanding of the challenges faced by British Muslims with VIs; and secondly, to develop an understanding of the social stigma (if any) attached to VIs in British Muslim communities.

The aim is to create a narrative into which the lived experiences of individuals with VIs are woven with an insight into the attitudes held by the wider British Muslim communities towards such impairments. This will (hopefully) not only give a voice to Muslims with VIs to express their experiences and raise awareness regarding the challenges associated with having a disability but also encourage an open dialogue within the Muslim and academic communities on disabilities.

Email address: ChishtyS@cardiff.ac.uk

Abdul-Subhan Dalvi
PhD topic: Ramadan in London – Diversity Among Imam’s & their Congregations: An Ethnography of Three Varying Mosques
Self funded.

Project summary: This doctoral project seeks to explore the ways in which London Muslims from different mosques spend their Ramadan. It provides an ethnographic account of the various activities congregants of varying Islamic backgrounds engage in during the month and
investigates how diverse Islamic practice is among Muslims residing in London. In this context, I also examine and compare the roles and responsibilities of imams during this month. Through my research, I seek to contribute to a better understanding of diversity among London Muslims and highlight similarities and differences in their routines during Ramadān.

Email address: dalvim@cardiff.ac.uk

**Ifthahar Ahmed**

**PhD topic:** Imamship and Advocacy: An Interdisciplinary Study on the Barriers to Successful Advocacy Amongst British Imams

**Generously funded by the Jameel Scholarship Programme.**

**Project summary:**

I am examining three case studies to ascertain how some British imams have encountered barriers to successful advocacy. This will help us to understand the challenges British imams face and, consequently, identify what barriers require addressing for successful advocacy. I will elicit the views of key Muslim organisations on what they believe to be the main barriers to successful advocacy amongst British imams. Based on the findings, I will propose recommendations to interested stakeholder organisations on how best to support British imams in successful advocacy.

Email address: ahmedi19@cardiff.ac.uk

**Feyza Goren**

**PhD topic:** A Study of Hanafi Hadith Methodology within the al-Mabsūt of al- Sarakhsī

**Scholarship student funded by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Türkiye**

**Project summary:**

My research examines the ever-growing number of English Quran translations and their potential impact on exegetical typologies. I use a range of English Quran translations to showcase how their method impacts the mode through which the Quran is interpreted in English. The translations are from the modern day and represent a notable shift in ‘doing translation’. Through this I aim to examine the unique features included in English translations which could represent an ‘Anglophone genre of the Quran’. As such, this project grapples with the question of genre and religious scripture as well as challenging historical notions of translation.

My interest stemmed from experiencing a range of English translations during my Masters. In addition, English translations have played an important role in the spiritual development of my close family members. I hope this research contributes to illustrating how tools used in English translations are positive engagements with understanding the Quran.

I am in the third year of my research and in the middle of data collection and analysis.

Email address: GorenF@cardiff.ac.uk

**Afsan Redwan**

**PhD topic:** Quranic Hermeneutics: A Study on the Influence of English Quran Translations on Exegetical Typologies.

**Self-funded**

**Project summary:**

My research examines the ever-growing number of English Quran translations and their potential impact on exegetical typologies. I use a range of English Quran translations to showcase how their method impacts the mode through which the Quran is interpreted in English. The translations are from the modern day and represent a notable shift in ‘doing translation’. Through this I aim to examine the unique features included in English translations which could represent an ‘Anglophone genre of the Quran’. As such, this project grapples with the question of genre and religious scripture as well as challenging historical notions of translation.

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Email address: Redwan@cardiff.ac.uk

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**Activities in 2022**

Zara Mohammed (centre), Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Britain visited the Centre in May 2022 as part of her nationwide tour.

The Muslims in Wales project was launched in Main Building November 2022 with an exhibit of photos from our recent public competition.

The Understanding Muslim Mental Health online course was launched May 2022.

From left: Sheikh Dr Asim Yusuf, Dr Abdallah Rothman, Masira Hans, Prof Ghazala Mir

The Muslims in Britain Research Network held their annual conference in September 2022 in the Main Building of Cardiff University, in conjunction with the Centre.

The Understanding Muslim Mental Heath online course was launched May 2022.
in the New Year Honours list in
Gilliat-Ray was appointed an OBE
was elected as a Fellow of the
she has been associated with
Over the course of her career,
the Muslims in Britain Research
in Britain, and she was Chair of
articles about Islam and Muslims
books and peer-review journal
She has authored numerous
She was a member of the 2021
founding Director of the Centre.
Professor Gilliat-Ray is the
Tel:
Gilliat-RayS@cardiff.ac.uk
Professor Sophie Gilliat-Ray
Director
Tel:
Gilliat-RayS@cardiff.ac.uk
Deputy Director and Research
Associate
Dr Abdul-Azim Ahmed
AhmedMA1@cardiff.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 5634
Dr Abdul-Azim Ahmed is
Deputy
Director of the Islam-UK
Centre and Research
Associate. He is currently
researching the history of Muslims in Wales
through innovative oral history
methods and community-based
researchers. Previously he has
worked on the role and function of
British mosques. He serves as
Secretary General of the Muslim
Council of Wales.

Development Officer
Mark Bryant
BryantMW@cardiff.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)7738 932376
Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 0121
Mark Bryant provides essential
administrative and technical
support for the Centre. This
includes managing the database
and website and promoting the
Centre’s work via social
media. He is a member of the Centre’s
Advisory Board and is working on the various
projects within the Jameel Research
Programme. Mark is currently
developing the online teaching
and learning aspects of the
Centre’s provision.

Senior Lecturer in Islamic
Studies
Maulana Dr Mansur Ali
almim1@cardiff.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 6297
Dr. Mansur Ali is a senior lecturer in
Arabic and Islamic studies at
Cardiff University. He is a Darul Ulom
graduate as well as holding a
degree from the prestigious Al-Azhar University,
Egypt, and postgraduate degrees from the University of
Manchester. He is interested in
Hadith studies, Islamic legal
theory, fiqh al-fataawa, Muslim
chaplaincy, and Islam and
bioethics. Currently he is
researching various aspects of
organ transplantation and Islam.
In addition to his post at the
University, he is also a khatib at
Darul Isra Mosque, Cardiff, UK.
In 2015 he was the recipient of the
British Imams and Scholars Award.

Senior Lecturer in Social
Science Research Methods
Dr Michael Munnik
MunnikMW@cardiff.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 5646
Dr Michael Munnik teaches
sociology and qualitative
research methods to postgraduate
students at the Centre. He also
teaches on religion and the
news and digital religion
undergraduates at Cardiff
University. His expertise was
completed during his doctoral
research at the University of
Edinburgh, supported by the
Alwaleed Centre for the Study of
Islam in the Contemporary
World, and his interest in news
media and journalistic practice is
informed by his prior professional
experience as a broadcast
journalist in Ottawa, Canada.
Michael serves as Director of
Learning and Teaching for the
School of History, Archaeology
and Religion.

Research Associate
Maulana Dr Haroon Sidat
Sidathe@cardiff.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 6560
Dr Haroon Sidat
completed his PhD in 2019
looking at the formation
and training of imams and
British Muslim
religious leadership (ulama). He
completed his traditional Islamic
Studies at a Dar al Ulom. He has
a background in economics,
accounting, and finance, and a
PGCE in education. He has
started work on a new three-
year project called ‘Legacies of
Learning’ which explores the lives
of Muslim scholars to discover
how the Islamic intellectual
culture can contribute to the
pursuit of knowledge and human
flourishing. He is interested in
the sociology of religious
professionals, tradition, authority,
and religious embodiment.

Research Associate
Dr Asma Khan
asmakhan@cardiff.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)29 2087 4864
Asma is Research Associate on
the ‘Transforming: Converts in
British Muslim Life’ project,
and Principal Investigator on
an ESRC/AHRC funded impact
project titled ‘Pathways to Work
for Muslim Women’.
Last year, Asma led the
successful development of the
‘Understanding Mental Health
in Muslim Communities’
FutureLearn short course and an
associated project to secure
accreditation for the course by the
Royal College of Psychiatrists.
She has been shortlisted as a
finalist for a Cardiff University
Celebrating Excellence Award in
the Excellence in Leadership
category for her work on these
projects.

Principal Investigator
PRIMO (Prison-based
Interventions for Muslim
Offenders)
Professor Matthew Wilkinson
WilkinsonMW@cardiff.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)29 2251 1806
Professor Matthew Wilkinson
is Professor of Religion in
Public Life.
His empirical research
develops and implements
interventions to promote
productive
manifestations
of faith in prisons and schools.
He is currently Principal
Investigator of Prison-based
Interventions for Muslim
Offenders (PRIMO) which is
designing and trialling courses
for Prisoners, Prison Chaplains
and Prison Officers to maximise
the beneficial effects of Islam in
prison.
PRIMO is based on the largest
ever study into Islam in prison
published in, Islam in Prison:
Finding Faith, Freedom and
Matthew is also the originator of
the philosophy of Islamic Critical
Realism which is designed to
facilitate the research and


Abdullah Quilliam and Islam in the West with Jamie Gilham, both published in 2017.

He has delivered papers at over one hundred conferences, including invitations to Russia, USA, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Germany, Switzerland, Mauritius and India.

Honorary Research Fellow
Dr Ayesha Khan

Dr Ayesha Khan completed her doctoral studies at Cardiff University (2020) in the Sociology of Religion and British Muslim Studies. The interaction between transnational Sufism and the sociological landscape in Britain have led to new forms of Sufi expression. Ayesha’s research defined the concept of ‘post-tariqa’ Sufism, exploring diversity within religious practices and what young British Muslims interpret as Sufism. Using ethnographic and netnographic research methods, she looked at how British Muslims ‘consumed’ and ‘produced’ religious expression in physical and online spaces, in a commercial culture. Ayesha is a research and policy specialist, and founder of the charity CareStart. She is passionate about bridging research and policy and using this to overcome inequalities amongst grassroot communities. She is currently working on the Government’s Covid-19 policies, as well as within mental health, rehabilitation, education and social mobility.

Current Centre Projects
Legacies of Learning: From Turath to Transformation 2022-2025

This three-year project aims to explore Islamic scholarship during an historical period of exceptional intellectual and scientific growth in the Islamic world. Our focus will be the biography and motivation of the scholars most closely associated with this historical era. These scholars reflected and shaped an educational and philosophical approach which can be characterised as outward facing, cosmopolitan, inter-disciplinary, holistic, committed to human flourishing and the pursuit of knowledge as a form of ‘worship’. This epistemic openness to all forms of knowledge led to a tradition that was intellectually curious, respectful of other traditions, and driven by values of civility and tolerance. Based on our research about the motivations and context of these scholars, we will seek to analyse and draw out principles as to how Islam enables human and scholarly flourishing. The aim is to bring some of the defining principles and meanings of Islamic education to the fore, potentially re-shaping approaches to modern education.

For further details, please contact:
Maulana Dr Haroon Sidat
Email: Sidathe@cardiff.ac.uk

Transformational: Converts in British Muslim Life 2022-2025

Overview
The aim of this three-year project is to explore if, and how, converts play a role in shaping Muslim communities in Britain by exercising leadership in public and religious life. We will explore how converts demonstrate leadership in three distinct areas: academia, religious leadership, and the cultural and creative sectors. We want to find out where, and how, converts are contributing to, or leading, the development of life in contemporary British Muslim communities.

Research Aims
• Examine what resources – social, economic, cultural and religious - Muslim converts utilise to achieve positions of leadership in their professional roles and/or within Muslim communities. Export the extent to which Muslim converts in leadership positions feel that they hold unique positions as ‘bridge builders’ between British Muslim communities and wider society, and the implications of this for their personal and professional development. Understand the extent to which the ‘integrative potential’ of Muslim converts informs their personal and professional development, and the roles they undertake in their work and in Muslim communities.

• Share the experiences of Muslims converts in leadership positions to inform and improve recognition of their contributions to an indigenised British Islam among converts, Muslim communities, and wider British society.

Collaborative Approach
The project will be informed throughout by our collaborative work with our research partner, the Muslim Convert Foundation. The project is guided by a steering group of Muslim and non-Muslim members who have expert knowledge of British Muslim converts.

Who will benefit?
Findings from this project will be shared in a number of ways, with the aim of creating positive impacts for convert and non-convert Muslim communities.

For further details, please contact:
Dr Asma Khan Email: asmakhan@cardiff.ac.uk
Most detailed and rigorous study ever undertaken

4-year project aims to fill this gap by conducting the subject of in-depth research. This exciting

paradoxically, the British imam has only rarely been constructive or destructive ways. Yet, somewhat

a figure who may guide his flock in either measures become increasingly conflated with

Further, the pressures of a post-9/11 and 7/7 projects such as inter-faith activity or civic events.

is being expanded to encompass pastoral care, there is growing evidence to suggest that this role providing guidance to their congregations. However, Imams are the largest group of Muslim religious professionals in Britain who work principally within mosques leading prayers, delivering sermons and collecting important documents and items for archiving. The “participant researchers” will be trained in oral history and social scientific research methods and ethics. Similar research will also be undertaken by the Principal Investigator, Abdul-Azim Ahmed, who will also look into archives and existing records.

At the end of the project, the goal is to establish an archive of interviews, records, and important documents related to Muslim settlement in Wales that is publicly accessible for future researchers, to author a book on the story of Islam in Wales, and to produce a travelling exhibition for use in museums, schools, and mosques to bring this research into the wider community.

For more information, or take support the project as a Participant Researcher, please contact the project team. Abdul-Azim Ahmed: ahmedma1@cardiff.ac.uk

Mark Bryant: bryantmw@cardiff.ac.uk

Understanding British Imams 2018-2023

Imams are the largest group of Muslim religious professionals in Britain who work principally within mosques leading prayers, delivering sermons and providing guidance to their congregations. However, there is growing evidence to suggest that this role is being expanded to encompass pastoral care, chaplaincy, charity work or wider community projects such as inter-faith activity or civic events.

Further, the pressures of a post-9/11 and 7/7 socio-political climate, in which counter-terrorism measures become increasingly conflated with integration issues, have foregrounded the imam as a figure who may guide his flock in either constructively or destructive ways. Yet, somewhat paradoxically, the British imam has only rarely been the subject of in-depth research. This exciting 4-year project aims to fill this gap by conducting the most detailed and rigorous study ever undertaken of British imams thus making a substantial contribution to debates about Muslim religious leadership in the West.

For further details, please contact: Dr Riyaz Timol Email: timolr1@cardiff.ac.uk

Understanding Mental Health in Muslim Communities 2021-2022

In response to an identified need among health, social care and religious practitioners to develop better understandings of Muslim experiences of mental health, we produced a free, online course that explores some of the distinctive ways in which Muslims experience mental health and supports practitioners to consider how they might provide more effective support.

Between April 2021 and May 2022, Asma Khan led a small team to produce the course, working closely with Mark Bryant, colleagues from the Learning and Teaching Academy, and Consultant Psychiatrist and Islamic scholar Shaykh Dr Asim Yusuf. The project was overseen and guided by Sophie Gilliat-Ray.

Course materials include written and video contributions from a range of Muslim and non-Muslim experts on mental health including: academics; religious scholars; practitioners; and, importantly, people with lived experience of mental health problems.

The four-week course was launched on the FutureLearn platform on the 16th of May and has engaged around 2000 learners by the end of 2022. Although most learners are from Britain, learners have signed up from 81 different countries, including: USA; Pakistan; India; South Africa.

PRIMO is designing and testing a rehabilitative strategy to enable Muslim prisoners to use their Islamic faith to build successful lives both in prison and post-release.

To do this, PRIMO will address four key areas of evidenced need identified by our prior research programme Understanding Conversion to Islam in Prison (UCIP):

1. To develop the ‘religious literacy’ of prisoners in a way that is relevant to prison life and that is geared towards the avoidance of future crime, PRIMO is designing and trialling a six-week course of Religious Education for prisoners; 2. To improve the ‘prisons-literacy’ of Muslim Prison Chaplains, including their Continuing Professional Development, PRIMO is developing an accredited course in Muslim Prison Chaplaincy; 3. To boost ‘religious literacy’ of Prison Officers, including obvious gaps in their basic Prison Officer training, PRIMO is designing, piloting and testing a module of HMPPS Prison Officer Entry Level Training (POELT); 4. To improve the administrative process of changing religion in prison which at present leaves prisoners vulnerable to coercive conversion and abuse by other prisoners, PRIMO is developing a fit-for-purpose Prison Service Instruction (PSI) for prisoners to change faith in prison.

PRIMO is supported and guided by a world-class team of criminal justice practitioners, Muslim community figures, leading theologians and criminologists. PRIMO is funded independently by the Dawes Trust. The PRIMO Principal Investigator is Professor Matthew Wilkinson: https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/people/view/2604379-wilkinson-matthew

PRIMO aims to bring about an enduring and tested improvement in the way that Islam affects life in prison for the sustainable well-being of prisoners’ lives and for the knowledge and well-being of criminal justice professionals.

For further details, please contact: Mrs Lucy Wilkinson, PRIMO Project Director Email: WilkinsonL7@cardiff.ac.uk

PRIMO (Prison-based Interventions for Muslim Offenders) 2022-2026

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Islam in Wales/Islam yng Nghymru 2021-2024

Opening of Nur al-Islam/ Peel Street Mosque in Cardiff 17th July 1947. Shaykh Abdullah Ali al-Hakimi is pictured, along with a young James Cailaghan, then MP and who would become Prime Minister of Britain.

Muslims have been part of the fabric and history of Wales for over a century, with some links between Wales and Islamic civilisations reaching back into the seventh century. There is, however, very little research and very little material documented about modern Muslim Welsh history. The absence of this knowledge is especially crucial as the Welsh Muslim community matures and diversifies. Many younger Muslims seek to know more about their own history and place in the world, and many older Muslims, especially the pioneer generation who first settled in Wales, are passing away. Parts of this valued history are being lost.

Understanding British Imams 2018-2023

PRIMO is a 4-year project that aims to fill this gap by conducting the subject of in-depth research. This exciting project will document and tell the “story” of Islam in Wales and make the history of Muslims in Wales accessible to academics, the wider public, and Welsh Muslims themselves so as to broaden public understanding of a multicultural and multireligious Wales.

The project will work with community volunteers who will act as “participant researchers”, undertaking interviews, documenting their own family history, and collecting important documents and items for archiving. The “participant researchers” will be trained in oral history and social scientific research methods and ethics. Similar research will also be undertaken by the Principal Investigator, Abdul-Azim Ahmed, who will also look into archives and existing records.

At the end of the project, the goal is to establish an archive of interviews, records, and important documents related to Muslim settlement in Wales that is publicly accessible for future researchers, to author a book on the story of Islam in Wales, and to produce a travelling exhibition for use in museums, schools, and mosques to bring this research into the wider community.

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Understanding British Imams 2018-2023

Imams are the largest group of Muslim religious professionals in Britain who work principally within mosques leading prayers, delivering sermons and providing guidance to their congregations. However, there is growing evidence to suggest that this role is being expanded to encompass pastoral care, chaplaincy, charity work or wider community projects such as inter-faith activity or civic events.

Further, the pressures of a post-9/11 and 7/7 socio-political climate, in which counter-terrorism measures become increasingly conflated with integration issues, have foregrounded the imam as a figure who may guide his flock in either constructively or destructive ways. Yet, somewhat paradoxically, the British imam has only rarely been the subject of in-depth research. This exciting 4-year project aims to fill this gap by conducting the most detailed and rigorous study ever undertaken of British imams thus making a substantial contribution to debates about Muslim religious leadership in the West.

For further details, please contact: Dr Riyaz Timol Email: timolr1@cardiff.ac.uk

Understanding Mental Health in Muslim Communities 2021-2022

In response to an identified need among health, social care and religious practitioners to develop better understandings of Muslim experiences of mental health, we produced a free, online course that explores some of the distinctive ways in which Muslims experience mental health and supports practitioners to consider how they might provide more effective support.

Between April 2021 and May 2022, Asma Khan led a small team to produce the course, working closely with Mark Bryant, colleagues from the Learning and Teaching Academy, and Consultant Psychiatrist and Islamic scholar Shaykh Dr Asim Yusuf. The project was overseen and guided by Sophie Gilliat-Ray.

Course materials include written and video contributions from a range of Muslim and non-Muslim experts on mental health including: academics; religious scholars; practitioners; and, importantly, people with lived experience of mental health problems.

The four-week course was launched on the FutureLearn platform on the 16th of May and has engaged around 2000 learners by the end of 2022. Although most learners are from Britain, learners have signed up from 81 different countries, including: USA; Pakistan; India; South Africa.

Continued on next page
Results from the end of course survey (67 responses) tell us that:

- 61% say the course was better than they expected;
- 96% say they gained new knowledge or skills by taking the course;
- since starting the course, 70% have applied what they learned, and 81% have shared what they learned with other people.

There has also been lots of engagement between learners, including learners asking and answering questions, and sharing thoughts and experiences of receiving, or providing, mental health support. From March 2022, we worked closely with the Royal College of Psychiatrists to secure accreditation for the course and this was achieved in September 2022. The Royal College’s accreditation quality mark is a “seal of approval for mental healthcare training for the public, and demonstrates the providers commitment to best practice by ensuring that the training is delivered to a high standard.” We are looking forward to seeing the impact of accreditation on course uptake over the coming months.

For further details, please contact:
Dr Asma Khan  Email: asmakhan@cardiff.ac.uk

**Pathways into Journalism for Muslim Trainees in Britain 2022-2023**

Inequalities in British society are both narrated and reinforced by media representations. Michael Munnik wants to examine the participation of Muslims in the production of these representations, including strategies to change the narrative.

Since the attacks of 11 September 2001, Muslims have received disproportionate attention in the news media, and the scholarship of news content confirms that much of it negative, associating Muslims with conflict and questioning their fit with British values. Yet some who identify as Muslim choose to work in the field, and civil society groups concerned either with diversity in journalism or with supporting Muslims in Britain are taking steps to encourage them in this work.

Michael’s larger goal is to study Muslim trainee journalists, examining whether and how they connect their faith identification to their socialisation into the profession, and gauge the impact of their participation on journalism in the future. This year, with the help of seed corn funding from the Sociology of Religion Study Group of the British Sociological Association, he will meet with organisations that support journalism trainees by providing scholarships for people from underrepresented and marginalised communities.

**Discovering Muslims in Britain: for Key Stage 3 2018-present**

Discovering Muslims for RE aims to support Religious Education (RE) in schools through the development of a fully resourced Key Stage 3 scheme of work investigating Muslims in Britain. Based on the Islam-UK Centre’s hugely successful Muslims in Britain Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), we aim to embed sociological perspectives on religion in the RE classroom by using cutting-edge sociological research and academic scholarship in teaching resources to draw attention to the lived experiences of Muslims living across Britain. These resources feature interviews, photographs and accounts from Muslims on Islam, their identities as Muslims, and contemporary issues, and they are freely available to download and edit. Alongside the resources, we have designed an accompanying accessible Professional Learning course.

Feedback from our original resources aimed primarily at Key Stage 3 has led to us to adapt the original resources to be used by primary school teachers.

To find out more and how to access these resources and training visit the project website at https://bit.ly/discoveringmuslims4re

**Members of the Islam-UK Centre Management Board**

- **Professor James Hegarty**  Chair of the Management Board and Head of the School of History, Archaeology and Religion
- **Ali Abdi**  Partnerships and Facilities Manager, Community Gateway, Cardiff University
- **Dr Abdul-Azim Ahmed**  Research Associate
- **Dr Mansur Ali**  Senior Lecturer in Islamic Studies
- **Mark Bryant**  Development Officer
- **Venice Cowper**  Diversity and inclusion manager, Cardiff University
- **Prof Sophie Gilliat-Ray**  Director
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- **Saleem Kidwai OBE**  Former Secretary General of the Muslim Council of Wales
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- **Vineeta Simms**  Equality and Human Rights Commission
- **Paul Webb**  Head of Housing Strategy Services, Welsh Government
- **Dr David Wyatt**  Community Engagement, School of History, Archaeology and Religion

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**For further details, please contact:**

- **Mark Bryant**  Email: BryantMW@cardiff.ac.uk

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The opening Seminar on February 8th will be held in the Grangetown Pavilion, Grange Gardens, Cardiff CF11 7LJ. All other seminars will be held at 5pm in the John Percival Building, Colum Drive, Cardiff, CF10 3EU, Room 5.24.

Please note that photographs and a video will be taken of the lectures. Cardiff University will assume the consent of all those in attendance and those that appear in the media footage taken. Photographs and videos are taken with the view to use in University and link organisations’ websites, marketing materials and related media coverage. If you DO NOT agree to this, please inform a staff member on the evening. If you do wish to withdraw permission at a later date you must inform Mark Bryant in writing (BryantMW@cardiff.ac.uk).

Diary of Public Seminars 2023

Wednesday 8th February 5pm

Hanan Issa & Mariyah Zaman

Creativity in Conversation
Chair: Abdul-Azim Ahmed
Book here: https://HananIssa.eventbrite.co.uk

Wednesday 22th February 5pm

Dr Sufyan Dogra

Two Tales from One City: How Mosques and Madrassas in Bradford are preventing childhood obesity and reducing health inequalities
Chair: Ifthahar Ahmed
Book here: https://SufyanDogra.eventbrite.co.uk

Wednesday 8th March 5pm

Dr Thomas Sealy

Religion, Race, Culture: Islamophobia and British Converts to Islam
Chair: Asma Khan
Book here: https://ThomasSealy.eventbrite.co.uk

Wednesday 26th April 5pm

Dr Abdallah Rothman

Faithful Wellbeing: Traditional Islamic Psychology and Contemporary Applications
Chair: Fatima Khan
Book here: https://AbdallahRothman.eventbrite.co.uk

Wednesday 10th May 5pm

Sadiya Ahmed

Everyday Muslim: Preserving and documenting Muslim history in Britain
Chair: Shaista Chishty
Book here: https://SadiyaAhmed.eventbrite.co.uk

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