



Baroness Hale of Richmond

Former President of the Supreme Court appointed as Sultan Azlan Shah Fellow



Rt Hon Baroness Hale of Richmond during her visit to the Centre

The Centre is delighted to announce that the Rt Hon Baroness Hale of Richmond joined its Fellowship as the Sultan Azlan Shah Fellow in law. Baroness Hale has had a distinguished legal career. She was the first woman

to be appointed as the Lord of Appeal in Ordinary in the House of Lords. She served for many years on the Supreme Court, of which she retired

as President. She is also a non-permanent judge of the Court of Final Appeal of Hong Kong and the Honorary President of the Cambridge University Law Society.

Many senior British lawyers, including Baroness Hale, have lectured under the programme of Centre lectures organized under the aegis of this Fellowship. The Fellowship is named after Malaysia's first Chief Justice and was previously held by Lord Phillips of Worth Matravers. The Centre takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to Lord Phillips and looks forward to Baroness Hale's contribution to the Fellowship and the Centre's academic programmes.

The Centre organised a dinner to introduce Baroness Hale as a Centre Fellow, which was attended by many lawyers around the University, and it continues to work to promote an interest in Islamic legal perspective and legal issues of importance to Muslims.

The Rt Hon Jack Straw speaks on Foreign Policy in a Fracturing World

On 5th March the Centre welcomed the Rt Hon Jack Straw to lecture on "Foreign Policy in a Fracturing World". In a wide-ranging presentation Mr Straw recalled the history of recent Western interventions in the Middle East and the failed promise of the "Arab Spring", which had ultimately caused additional turmoil in the region. Despite the best efforts of its allies, the US had failed to implement an effective policy in Iraq in the aftermath of the invasion and further tension had resulted from the US decision to abandon the nuclear deal so painstakingly negotiated with Iran. It was also harder than ever to see how a formula could be found to meet the legitimate expectations and rights of the Palestinians. Unilateral actions and the rise of populism in so many countries had made the world a more uncertain and dangerous place.

He called for a renewed recognition that diplomacy required negotiation and compromise and that seemingly intractable international problems and crises could only

be resolved through international co-operation, recalling successful efforts of US and UK to avert the risk of a potentially nuclear confrontation between India and Pakistan. He hoped that the UK would continue to play an active outward-looking role in the world and not lose sight of the importance of continuing to work with other



Rt Hon Jack Straw during his lecture at the Centre

leading European countries to address international problems and challenges: notably climate change and other threats which cross national boundaries.

On 27th February 2020 the Centre hosted its now traditional study day for participants of Oxford University's Diplomatic Studies Programme, a postgraduate course designed primarily for in-service diplomats and a group of fast stream new entrants from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

Participants learnt about the work and objectives of the Centre and toured the building. They also participated in a range of exercises and seminars delivered by tutors from the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office.

The keynote speaker was Dr Eugene Rogan, Director of the Middle East Centre, who addressed some of the prime causes of instability and conflict in the region. Participants also enjoyed a panel discussion on climate change, chaired by the President of Wolfson College.

Lt Gen Sir John Lorimer

On 9th January 2020 the Centre hosted a visit by Lieutenant General Sir John Gordon Lorimer, UK Defence Senior Adviser to the Middle East and North Africa. He met a number of Centre Fellows, and members of the wider academic community in Oxford over lunch. He was briefed on the range of the Centre's academic activities and partnerships.

International Contacts

Algeria



HE Mr Abderrahmane Benguerah with the Director

The Director hosted the newly arrived Ambassador of Algeria, HE Mr Abderrahmane Benguerah, on 4th February 2020. This was an opportunity to introduce the Ambassador to the Centre's work and its links with Algeria, as well as to discuss possible joint academic projects in the future. The Ambassador also toured the building and viewed an exhibition showcasing the range of the Centre's academic work.

United Arab Emirates



HE Mr Mansoor Abulhoul

The Centre hosted a visit on 15th November by HE Mr Mansoor Abulhoul, the newly appointed Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates to the United Kingdom. This was a welcome opportunity to introduce the Ambassador to the work of the Centre and its many academic links with the United Arab Emirates.

On 19th November 2019 the Centre was visited by the Assistant Minister for

Saudi Arabia

On 16th September 2020, the Centre hosted an online webinar on 'Saudi-UK Relations: New Decade, New Opportunities' by HRH Prince Khalid bin Bandar, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the United Kingdom. He was joined by Sir William Patey, the former British Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The webinar was attended online by Centre members and guests, including some Heads of House and other senior members of

Malaysia

The British High Commission in Malaysia brought a group of young and aspirant Malaysian



Members of the Young Leadership Programme with the Registrar

leaders to the Centre on 16th January 2020 to learn about its work and many links with Malaysia. The visitors were on a study tour of the United Kingdom to learn more about British political and legal institutions and key policy concerns such as human rights and personal freedoms.

Cultural Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, Dr Omar Ghobash. His meeting with the Director focused on the importance of promoting inter-cultural dialogue, in all its forms, and in encouraging young people to show an intelligent and respectful interest in other cultures.

This was also an opportunity to discuss joint objectives in the area of science and technology.



Dr Omar Ghobash

the University and the Lord Lieutenant of Oxfordshire who joined the Ambassador for a socially-distanced lunch in the dining hall arranged in his honour.



HRH Prince Khalid bin Bandar with the Director

Mr Michael Binyon speaks on

What in the world will happen this year?

The Centre was fortunate to host on 12th February 2020 a wide-ranging survey of contemporary international affairs by the experienced and respected foreign correspondent, Mr Michael Binyon, currently a leading writer for The Times. He worked previously as bureau chief for that newspaper in Washington, Moscow and Bonn, and was also present at many key events in the Middle East as the paper's foreign editor. Having reported as a journalist from many of the world's trouble-spots he gave a comprehensive account of political issues on every continent and also tackled

a large number of questions in the subsequent discussion. Key themes included the implication of the American approach to foreign policy under President Trump, competition with China and the rise of populist parties around the globe, not least in Europe.



Mr Michael Binyon

Michaelmas Term 2020 Seminars

The following seminars will be held online during Michaelmas Term 2020:

Dr Yaqub Chaudhary (Cambridge Muslim College), 'AI: Simulation and Dissimulation'

Professor Bernard Haykel (Princeton University), 'Saudi Arabia and the Rise and Fall of Political Islam'

Dr Rory McCarthy (Durham University), 'Islamist Transformations after the Arab Uprisings: Tunisia's Ennahda Movement'

Dr Fozia Bora (University of Leeds), 'Archives and Archival Sensibilities in Medieval Arabic Historiography'

Dr Adam Hanieh (SOAS), 'Money, Markets and Monarchies: The Gulf Cooperation Council and Political Economy of the Middle East'

Dr Stephen H. Jones (University of Birmingham), 'Islam, Liberalism and National Identity: Lessons from British Islamic Institutions'

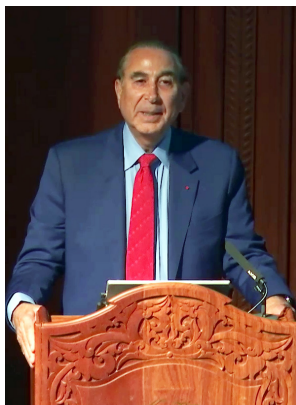
Professor Christopher Melchert (University of Oxford), 'Counting Shaykhs in Hadith Collections'

Professor Adam Osman (University of Illinois), 'Using Field Experiments to Learn about Religious Behaviour'

Dr Minlib Dallh (University of Oxford), 'Nana Asma'u (d. 1864): The Erudite Poet and Mystic of the Sokoto Caliphate'

Professor Ahmet Kuru (San Diego State University), 'Book Talk: Islam, Authoritarianism, and Underdevelopment'

Professor Sir Nasser David Khalili speaks on Hajj and the Arts of Pilgrimage



Professor Sir Nasser David Khalili

presented on 26th February 2020 a ground-breaking and richly illustrated account of the importance and modalities of the Hajj, or Muslim pilgrimage, through the medium of Hajj-related

artefacts, documents and artistic creations from his celebrated collection of Islamic art.

He also introduced a large audience to the mission of his collection: to encourage appreciation of the richness of Muslim culture and heritage and understanding and dialogue between different cultural traditions. His presentation covered the Hajj from its earliest days to the modern era, demonstrating how the tradition of pilgrimage has influenced the artistic and scientific life of the Muslim world, and vice versa.

New Fellowship appointments



Dr Dagmer Riedel

Dr Dagmer A. Riedel was appointed as a Research Fellow. She is a Middle East historian whose research focuses on manuscripts and printed books

in Arabic script as a material foundation of intellectual and cultural history. Previously, she was an Associate Research Scholar at Columbia University.

Dr Salman Younas was also appointed as a Research Fellow. His research focuses on Islamic law in the classical and modern periods, specifically on the history of

law, legal philosophy and contemporary legal thought. Before joining the Centre, he worked at the Oxford Department of International Development (ODID).



Dr Salman Younas

The latest issue of the *Journal of Islamic Studies* contains articles by Ibrahim Zein and Ahmed El-Wakil, on *Khālīd b. al-Wālīd's Treaty with the People of Damascus: Identifying the Source Document through Shared and Competing Historical Memories*, Angelika Brodersen, on *New Light on the Emergence of Māturīdism: Abū Shakūr al-Sālīmī (fifth/eleventh century) and his Kitāb al-Tamhīd fī bayān al-tawhīd*, and Thomas Hegghammer, on *Weeping in Modern Jihadi Groups*. The issue also contains 15 book reviews of some of the most recent publications about Islam and the Muslim World.

An online symposium on Al-Farabi: Life and Legacy

On July 17, 2020, the Centre, in cooperation with the Embassy of Kazakhstan in London, organized an online symposium entitled 'Al-Farabi: Life and Legacy'. The symposium explored the ideas and contributions of Abu Nasr al-Farabi (d. 950), a Central Asian philosopher and polymath known as 'the Second Teacher' after Aristotle.

The event opened with speeches of welcome by the Centre's Director and the Ambassador of Kazakhstan, His Excellency Mr Erlan Idrissof. A keynote speech highlighting the continued importance of al-Farabi was then delivered by Professor Gallimkair Mutanov, Rector of the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. There followed three presentations highlighting the work of Al-Farabi: Dr Feriel Bouhafa (University of Cambridge) on good and evil in the philosophy of al-Farabi; Professor Peter Adamson (Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich) on al-Farabi's political philosophy; and Professor Saida Daukeyeva (Wesleyan



Ambassador Erlan Idrissof and the Director during the symposium

University) on al-Farabi's contributions to musical theory. The symposium was coordinated by Dr Talal Al-Azem.

This event was attended by participants from all over the world. The structure of the event allowed for questions to be posed to the presenters, with lively discussions, all of which underscored the continued importance of al-Farabi, and the need for research and public engagement with his ideas and those of other major figures from Central Asia and the Muslim world.

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OXFORD CENTRE FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES

Marston Road, Oxford, OX3 0EE, UK

Tel: +44 1865 278730 Fax: +44 1865 248942 Email: islamic.studies@oxcis.ac.uk

www.oxcis.ac.uk