

LECTURE

The history of medieval and early modern European writings about the Prophet Muhammad shows a consistent pattern of misunderstanding. Until the nineteenth century, only one writer challenged that history: the English physician Henry Stubbe (1632-1676), author of "Originall & Progress of Mahometanism." Neither an Orientalist nor a theologian, Henry Stubbe approached Islam as a historian of religion, perhaps the first in early modern Europe, arguing that the study of another religion should rely on historical evidence derived from indigenous documents, and not on foreign accounts. The result of his new historiographical approach was a "Copernican revolution" in the study of the figure of Muhammad, the Qur'an, and Islam. It shifted the focus from faith to scholarship. Had his treatise been published, the course of Western understanding of Islam might have been different. Upholding the primacy of Arabic writings, rather than of European literary/imaginative or theological works, Stubbe focused on the Latin translations of medieval Christian Arabic writers who had presented a positive and nuanced view of the Prophet. His treatise gave primacy to the views of those Arabic writers who had lived in the midst of the Islamic polity and whose chronicles conveyed a history completely different from that of their European counterparts.

ORGANISED BY

- The Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS UK)
- HRH Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge

The **Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS UK)**, is a non-profit organization based in London and committed to the development of perspectives on contemporary local and global issues through research, scholarship, conferences and publications. The AMSS UK presents two annual Awards which are given to either one or two recipients: the Building Bridges Award and the Lifetime Achievement Award. The Lifetime Achievement Award was inaugurated in 2000 and the Building Bridges Award in 2002.

The **Centre of Islamic Studies** seeks to develop a constructive and critical understanding of Islam in the modern world. Its priority is to develop high-quality research and outreach programmes about Islam in the United Kingdom and Europe. Through its roster of scholarship, symposia, reports and interactive educational events, the Centre is committed to engaging with academics, policy-makers and wider society.

THE AMSS (UK) BUILDING BRIDGES AWARD

The AMSS (UK) introduced this prestigious award to recognise and highlight the achievements of individuals who have made a significant contribution either to their field of expertise, or to the promotion of social harmony, to interfaith dialogue or to Islamic thought. Previous recipients are:

- Professor Jack Goody (2011)
- Professor Ahmet Davutoglu, Minister Of Foreign Affairs, Turkey (2010)
- Jointly, the British Council's 'Our Shared Europe' Project and the '1001 Inventions' Project (2009)
- A Common Word (2008)
- Professor Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu (2007)
- HE Prime Minister Tayip Recep Erdogan of Turkey (2006)
- HE Prime Minister Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero of Spain (2006)
- His Grace, The Archbishop Of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams (2005)
- Karen Armstrong (2004)
- Charles Le Gai Eaton (2003)

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HENRY STUBBE & THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

Challenging Misrepresentation – A Flash from the Past

28 MARCH 2012
THE MOLLER CENTRE, University of Cambridge

PROFESSOR NABIL MATAR

Professor Nabil Matar was born in Beirut, Lebanon to Palestinian parents and studied at the American University of Beirut. In 1976 he completed his Ph.D. at Cambridge University and went on to teach at Jordan University, the American University of Beirut, Florida Institute of Technology, and the University of Minnesota where he is currently Presidential Professor in the English Department. He received postdoctoral grants from the British Council (to Clare Hall, Cambridge University), Fulbright (to Harvard Divinity School), the British Academy, and École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales. Professor Matar's research in the past two decades has focused on relations between early modern Britain, the West, and the Islamic Mediterranean. He is author of numerous articles, chapters in books, and encyclopedia entries, and the trilogy: **Islam in Britain, 1558-1685** (Cambridge UP, 1998), **Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the Age of Discovery** (Columbia UP, 1999), and **Britain and Barbary, 1589-1689** (UP of Florida, 2005). He wrote the Introduction to **Piracy, Slavery and Redemption** (Columbia UP, 2001) and began a second trilogy on **Arabs and Europeans in the Early Modern World: In the Lands of the Christians** (Routledge, 2003), and **Europe through Arab Eyes, 1578-1727** (Columbia UP, 2009). He is currently working on the third installment, **Britain, France, and the Arabic-speaking World, 1598-1798**. His most recent publication is with Professor Gerald MacLean, **Britain and the Islamic World, 1558-1713** (Oxford UP, 2011). With Professor Judy Hayden he is co-editing a collection of essays on early modern travel to the Holy Land (forthcoming Brill, 2012), and is editing and introducing **Henry Stubbe's The Originall & Progress of Mahometanism** (forthcoming, Columbia UP, 2013).

PROGRAMME

3.30 – 4.00	ARRIVAL
4.00 – 4.20	Welcome and Opening Remarks Professor Yasir Suleiman, CBE, FRSE Director, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies, Cambridge Professor Riad Nourallah Director of Research, London Academy of Diplomacy University of East Anglia; Executive Committee Member, AMSS UK Dr. Jeremy Henzell-Thomas Visiting Fellow, Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre of Islamic Studies, Cambridge; Executive Committee Member, AMSS UK
4.20 – 5.15	<i>Lecture</i> <i>Chair</i> Dr. Paul Anderson Assistant Director, Prince Alwaleed Centre of Islamic Studies Henry Stubbe & the Prophet Muhammad Challenging Misrepresentation: A Flash from the Past
5.15 – 5.30	Q & A
5.30 – 5.40	Presentation of the 2012 AMSS (UK) Building Bridges Award Dr. Anas S. Al-Shaikh-Ali, CBE, FRSA Chair, AMSS (UK)
5.40 – 5.45	Vote of Thanks Professor Yasir Suleiman