

Title: Harmony Through Interconnectedness: Historical lessons from Islamic and Western civilisation.

Abstract:

Since the events of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent “War on Terror”, concerns and arguments over Islam, its history and its adherents have become a central theme in media, academic and political discourse. Overwhelmingly, this discussion has been underpinned by a reductive vision in which the historical trajectories of “Islam” and the “West” are not only painted as two monolithic and mutually exclusive civilizations, but also as having a long and violent history of war, opposition and disagreement. In order to see beyond this overly simplistic image, this lecture illuminates the rich and complex relationship between Islam and the West, arguing that they in fact have another history altogether, one of collaboration, co-existence and co-operation. This lecture considers the role that such a history might play as a powerful political and discursive tool in creating better dialogue and in fostering better relations between Islam and the West.

Biography of Professor Mohamad Abdalla:

Professor Mohamad Abdalla is the Founding Director of the Centre for Islamic Thought and Education (CITE) at the University of South Australia. Previously, he was the Founding Director of the National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies and the Griffith Islamic Research Unit (GIRU) at Griffith University. His authored and co-authored books include *Islamic schooling in the West: Pathways to Renewal*; *Leadership in Islam: Processes and Solutions in Australian Organizations*; *Islamic Science: The myth of the decline theory*; and *Islam in the Australian News Media*. Professor Abdalla is one of Australia’s most prominent and respected Muslim leaders, who held multiple distinguished community and academic posts, and received multiple civic awards, including the Ambassador of Peace Award, the Community Leadership Award, the Islamic Council of Queensland Community Service Award, and the Crescents of Brisbane Special Achievement Award.