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CONFERENCE ON CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM THOUGHT
MÜSLÜMAN DÜNYADA ÇAĞDAŞ DÜŞÜNCE KONFERANSI

ABSTRACTS
ÖZET KİTAPÇIĞI



THE PLATFORM
CURRENT MUSLIM AFFAIRS

CONFERENCE ON CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM THOUGHT
MÜSLÜMAN DÜNYADA ÇAĞDAŞ DÜŞÜNCE KONGRESİ

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Conference on Contemporary Muslim Thought
Müslüman Dünyada Çağdaş Düşünce Konferansı

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Content | İçindekiler

Program

11

Abstracts | Özetler

Imagining Egypt After in Postnormal Times: The State of War <i>Heba Raouf Ezzat</i>	18
The Academic Study of Islam in Africa <i>Ousmane Kane</i>	19
The Decolonization of the Social Sciences and the Muslim Intellectual Tradition <i>Syed Farid Alatas</i>	20
New Challenges to Islamic Movements in the Changing World Politics: An Institutionalization-Based Analysis <i>M. Hüseyin Mercan</i>	21
Destinies of the Islamic World between the Rising East and the Setting West <i>M. Mukhtar Shinqiti</i>	22
The Islamic World and the Future of the World Order <i>Wadah Khanfar</i>	23
Why Are We All Palestinians? <i>Salman Sayyid</i>	24
Symbolic Liberalism in the Muslim world: Liberalism, Religion, Arab World <i>Sari Hanafi</i>	25
How (Not) to Write Muslim Thoughts: Notes on Shahab Ahmed's "What is Islam?" <i>Irfan Ahmad</i>	26
Has Islamic Revivalism Failed? Is It Time to Think of Muslim Revival? <i>Muqtedar Khan</i>	27

The Future of the Islamic Political: Resources of the Ummatic Imaginary <i>Ovampir Anjum</i>	28
Connections of Maghrebini and Sub-Saharan Intellectuals: Trajectories and Representations <i>Mansour Kedidir</i>	29
The Muslim Image in Early Cinema: A Colonial Beginning <i>Yusuf Ziya Gökçek</i>	30
Pan-Africanism and Muslims in Africa <i>Serhat Orakçı</i>	31
Social Justice in Islam: Perspectives in Moral and Political Economy <i>Adeel Malek</i>	32
Two Contributions to Philosophy of History in 20th Century Muslim Thought: Malek Bennabi's and Alija Izetbegovic's Approaches <i>Mahmut Hakkı Akın</i>	33
Challenges of State Building and Institutionalization in Middle East: Egyptian Experience <i>Taha Eğri</i>	34
Contemporary Muslim Thought and Debates in Uzbekistan <i>Burak Çalışkan</i>	35
Write to Reform: Muslim Intellectualism in Southeast Asia <i>Khairudin Aljunied</i>	36
Debates and Development of the Social Sciences in Iran <i>Khosrow Bagheri Noaparast</i>	37
Muslim Worldview as an Alternative Paradigm or Only Possible for Muslim Geography <i>Admir Mulaosmanović</i>	38
Modern Muslim Thought in Bosnia: New Trends Among the Muslim Scholars <i>Hazim Fazlic</i>	39
Muslim Identity in the Balkans: Nationalism/Other, Official Ideologies, and the Muslim World <i>Sevba Abdula</i>	40

Müslüman Dünyada Çağdaş Düşünce Projesi

Sınırların aşındığı ve mesafelerin daraldığı bir dünyada, toplumlarımızı şekillendiren farklı bakış açılarını anlamak ve bunların birbiriyle olan irtibatlarını idrak etmek mühim bir husus. Entelektüel, sosyal ve siyasal anlamda dünya toplumları arasında önemli bir yere sahip olan çağdaş Müslüman düşüncesinin izlerini sürmek ve zengin ve nitelikli fikri birikimi ortaya çıkarmanın evrensel düşünce sistemlerine yapılacak en önemli katkılardan biri olduğunu düşünüyoruz.

Bu şiarla Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar (YTB) tarafından yürütülen Müslüman Dünyada Çağdaş Düşünce projesi Müslüman dünyanın fikri gelişimlerini ve entelektüel gündemlerini takip ve analiz etmeyi amaçlıyor. Müslüman dünyada ortaya çıkan temel temaları, tartışmaları ve entelektüel eğilimleri keşfederek, çağdaş Müslüman düşüncesini şekillendiren çeşitli seslere ve bakış açılarına ışık tutuyoruz. Proje kapsamında Ortadoğu'dan Asya'ya, Sahra Altı'ndan Hint alt kıtasına dair geniş coğrafyaya yayılan bu zengin ve bir o kadar da karmaşık düşünce dünyaları açığa çıkartılıyor. Proje, Müslüman dünyadaki çağdaş birikimi bir araya getirmesi ve analiz ederek sunması bakımından özgün ve öncü bir duruş sergiliyor.

Müslüman Dünyada Çağdaş Düşünce projesi Müslüman dünyada neşet eden düşüncenin entelektüel, kültürel ve sosyal boyutlarına dair derin ve kapsamlı bir inceleme sunarak, giderek birbirine daha fazla bağlanan dünyamızı oluşturan farklı topluluklar arasında daha fazla empati, anlayış ve diyalogu teşvik etmeye yönelik ortak çabalarımıza hayati bir katkı sağlıyor.

Müslüman Dünyada Çağdaş Düşünce projesi 11 ciltlik kitap serisinden oluşuyor. 2020'de yayımlanan projenin ilk dört kitabı Türkiye, Mısır, İran ve Hint Alt Kıtası düşüncesine yoğunlaşırken ikinci dört ciltte Kuzey Afrika, Güneydoğu Asya, Balkanlar ve Batı'da (Avrupa / ABD) Müslüman toplumların çağdaş

birikimleri ele alınıyor. 2023'te yayımlanan son üç cilt Türk Dünyası, Mısır ve Kuzey Afrika dışındaki Arap Dünyası ve Sahra Altı Afrika'da güncel fikrî eğilimler ve gelişmelere odaklanıyor. Bu kitaplar, Müslüman toplumların zengin entelektüel yapısını keşfetmek ve ana akım medyaya sıklıkla hâkim olan basmakalıp anlatıların ötesine geçerek çağdaş İslam düşüncesiyle ilişki kurmak için eşsiz bir fırsat sunuyor.

İnanç, siyaset, kültür ve kimliğin bütünlüğü içinde Müslüman dünyadaki âlimlerin, düşünürlerin ve aktivistlerin zihin ve fikir dünyalarına kapsamlı bir yolculuk sunan bu görkemli projeye farklı ülkelerden 127 araştırmacı ve akademisyenin katkıda bulundu. Yazarlar, disiplinlerarası zengin kaynaklardan yararlanarak, Müslüman düşüncesinin neşet ettiği entelektüel ortamının karmaşıklığı içinde ustalıkla gezinmekte ve Müslüman dünyanın kendine özgü tarihsel, kültürel ve sosyo-politik bağlamları etrafında çağdaş Müslüman düşüncesinin gelişimini sunuyor.

Proje yalnızca Müslüman düşüncesine dair yazılar içermekle kalmayıp aynı zamanda çağdaş Müslüman düşüncenin kronolojisi ile de son iki yüzyıldaki ilmi, fikri, teknik gelişme ve olayların zaman akışını da okuyuculara sunuyor. Böylece Müslüman düşüncesine ilişkin önemli gelişmeleri bütüncül ve interaktif bir şekilde sunarak çağdaş fikri birikime önemli katkılarda bulunuyor.

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Contemporary Thought in the Muslim World

In a world where boundaries are blurred, and distances are shrinking, understanding the diverse perspectives that shape our societies and comprehending their interconnectedness is of great significance. We believe that tracing the path and unearthing the rich and qualitative intellectual wealth of contemporary Muslim thought, which holds a crucial place in the global intellectual, social, and political landscape, is one of the most important contributions to universal thought systems.

With this motto, the Project of Contemporary Thought in the Muslim World, led by the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), aims to monitor and analyse the intellectual developments and agendas in the Muslim world. By exploring the fundamental themes, debates, and intellectual trends emerging in the Muslim world, we shed light on the various voices and perspectives that shape contemporary Muslim thought. The project reveals these rich and complex worlds of thought that span a vast geography from the Middle East to Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa to the Indian subcontinent. In this respect, the project's unique and pioneering stance lies in bringing together and presenting the contemporary accumulation of Muslim thought in the Muslim world.

The Project of Contemporary Thought in the Muslim World significantly contributes to promoting greater empathy, understanding, and dialogue among the different communities that increasingly interconnect our world. It offers a deep and comprehensive examination of the intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions of thought arising in the Muslim world.

The project, aiming to provide an overview of the current intellectual framework of Muslim societies, consists of an 11-volume book series. The first four volumes, published in 2020, focus on the intellectual thought of Turkey, Egypt, Iran, and the Indian subcontinent. The next four volumes explore the

contemporary accumulation of Muslim communities in North Africa, Southeast Asia, the Balkans, and the Western world (Europe/USA). The final three volumes concentrate on current intellectual trends and developments in the Turkic world, Egypt and non-Arab Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. These books offer a unique opportunity to explore the rich intellectual structure of Muslim societies and go beyond the conventional narratives often dominant in mainstream media to engage with contemporary Islamic thought.

127 researchers and academics have contributed to this grand project, offering a comprehensive journey into the minds and thought worlds of scholars, thinkers, and activists in the Muslim world within the context of faith, politics, culture, and identity. Authors navigate the complexity of the intellectual environment from which Muslim thought arises, drawing from interdisciplinary rich sources and presenting the development of contemporary Muslim thought within the unique historical, cultural, and socio-political contexts of the Muslim world.

The project not only includes writings on Muslim thought but also provides a chronological presentation of the intellectual, ideological, technical developments, and events of the past two centuries related to contemporary Muslim thought. Thus, it significantly contributes to contemporary intellectual wealth by offering a comprehensive and interactive presentation of critical developments in Muslim thought.

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Konferans Hakkında

Müslüman Dünyada Çağdaş Düşünce Konferansı, Yurtdışı Türkler ve Akraba Topluluklar Başkanlığı'nın (YTB) "Müslüman Dünyada Çağdaş Düşünce" projesinin 11 ciltlik çıktılarında hareketle çağdaş Müslüman düşüncesine ilişkin anlayışımızı derinleştirmek amacıyla yapılmaktadır. Konferans, Müslüman toplulukları dünya genelinde etkileyen çağdaş meseleleri masaya yatırmayı hedeflemektedir.

Müslüman Dünyada Çağdaş Düşünce Konferansı, Müslüman dünyadaki sorunları, trendleri ve süregelen gelişmeleri kritik eden bir mahiyettedir. Bu konferansa Müslüman dünyanın çok yönlü kültürlerini ve fikirlerini idrak etmeyi amaçlıyor; çağdaş düşüncenin farklı yönlerini ele alarak, günümüzün karmaşık gerçeklerine uygun bakış açıları ve çözümler sunmayı hedefliyoruz. Böylece sempozyumla birlikte Müslüman topluluklarının entelektüel zenginliğine katkıda bulunmayı arzuluyoruz.

18-19 Kasım 2023 tarihlerinde İstanbul'da gerçekleşen Müslüman Dünyada Çağdaş Düşünce Konferansı, dünyanın dört bir yanından önde gelen entelektüelleri, akademisyenleri ve araştırmacıları bir araya getirmeyi hedefliyor ve geniş halk katılımıyla zengin entelektüel etkileşim için bir alan oluşturmayı amaçlıyor. Amacımız yalnızca bir sempozyum değil; entelektüel ilerleme, incelikli analiz, açık diyalog ve küresel işbirliği doğrultusunda bir harekete öncülük etmek. Birlikte, çağın acil sorunlarına çözümler üretelim ve küresel anlayış ve işbirliği doğru yol alalım.

About the Conference

The Conference on Contemporary Muslim Thought is an initiative designed to expound upon and deepen the impact of the “Contemporary Thought in the Muslim World” project, a noteworthy endeavour by YTB over the last five years. At the heart of this conference is the ambition to address a multitude of contemporary issues that affect Muslim communities worldwide.

The conference stands as a beacon of critical analysis, and is intended at delving deeper into the problems, trends, and ongoing developments of the Muslim world. We are resolute in our mission to cultivate a profound understanding of the multifaceted societies, cultures, and ideas that constitute the Muslim world today. In addressing the myriad shades of contemporary thought, this symposium illuminates insights and solutions tailored to the intricate realities of our times by enriching and fostering the intellectual growth of Muslim communities.

The Conference on Contemporary Muslim Thought held in Istanbul on November 18-19, 2023, aims to bring together leading intellectuals, academics, and researchers from around the world, fostering a platform for extensive public engagement and rich intellectual interaction. Our primary goal at the conference is to contribute to the intellectual accumulation in the Muslim thought, advance the literature through in-depth analysis and open dialogues, and provide solutions to our challenges.

Be a part of this intellectual journey.

Dive deep into contemporary Muslim thought with us.

PROGRAM

18 KASIM/NOVEMBER CUMARTESİ/SATURDAY

09.30- 10.10 | OPENING SPEECHES

Lütfi Sunar, *Chairman of İLKE Foundation*

Mürteza Bedir, *Chairman of İSAM*

Abdullah Eren, *President of YTB*

10.10- 11.30 | SESSION 1: Islam: A Worldwide Phenomenon

Moderator: Necmettin Kızılkaya, *Istanbul University*

Imagining Egypt in Postnormal Times: The State of War

Heba Raof Ezzat, *Ibn Haldun University*

The Academic Study of Islam in Africa

Ousman Oumar Kane, *Harvard University*

The Decolonization of the Social Sciences and the Muslim Intellectual Tradition

Syed Farid Alatas, *National University of Singapore*

12.00- 13.20 | SESSION 2: On the Threshold of a New Global Politics

Moderator: Alev Erkilet, *Ibn Haldun University*

New Challenges to Islamic Movements in the Changing World Politics

Hüseyin Mercan, *Marmara University*

Destinies of the Islamic World between the Rising East and the Setting West

M. Mukhtar Shinqiti, *Qatar University*

The Islamic World and The Future of the World Order

Wadah Khanfar, *Al Sharq Forum*

14.00- 15.20 | SESSION 3: From Theory to Reality: Social Dimensions of Muslim Thought

Moderator: Elyesa Koytak, *Istanbul Medeniyet University*

Why Are We All Palestinians?

Salman Sayyid, *Leeds University*

Symbolic Liberalism in the Muslim World: Liberalism, Religion, Arab World

Sari Hanafi, *American University of Beirut*

How (Not) to Write Muslim Thoughts: Notes on Shahab Ahmed's "What is Islam"

Irfan Ahmad, *Ibn Haldun University*

15.50-17.10 | SESSION 4: Reimagining Islam between Past and Future

Moderator: Muhammad Affan, *Al Sharq Forum*

Political Thought of Malcolm X

Farid Hafez, *Williams College*

Has Islamic Revivalism Failed? Is it Time to think of Muslim Revival

Muqtedar Khan, *University of Delaware*

The Future of the Islamic Political: Resources of the Ummatic Imaginary

Ovamer Anjum, *University of Toledo*

10.00- 11.40 | SESSION 5: Decoloniality and Muslims

Moderator: Berdal Aral, *Istanbul Medeniyet University*

Connections of Maghrebini and Sub-Saharan Intellectuals: Trajectories and Representations

Mansour Kedidir, *Centre of Research in Social and Cultural Anthropology (CRASC)*

The Muslim Image in Early Cinema: A Colonial Beginning

Yusuf Ziya Gökçek, *Marmara University*

Pan-Africanism and Muslims in Africa

Serhat Orakçı, *İHH Research Centre*

12.00- 13.20 | SESSION 6: Society and Economy: Practical Challenges of Muslim Thought

Moderator: Serhan Afacan, *Istanbul University*

Social Justice in Islam: Perspectives in Moral and Political Economy

Adeel Malik, *Oxford University*

Two Contributions to Philosophy of History in 20th Century Muslim Thought: Malek Bennabi's and Alija Izetbegovic's Approaches

M. Hakkı Akın, *Istanbul Medeniyet University*

Challenges of State Building and Institutionalization in the Middle East: Egyptian Experience

Taha Eğri, *Kırklareli University*

14.00- 15.20 | SESSION 7: Asia: New Perspectives Beyond Geographies

Moderator: Alpaslan Açıkgenç, *Üsküdar University*

Contemporary Muslim Thought and Debates in Uzbekistan

Burak Çalışkan, *University of York*

Write to Reform: Muslim Intellectualism in Southeast Asia

Khairudin Aljunied, *National University of Singapore*

Debates and Development of the Social Sciences in Iran

Khosrow Bahgeri Naoparast, *Tehran University*

15.50- 17.10 | SESSION 8: Balkans: Resilient Identities, Authentic Quests

Moderator: Ahsan Shafiq, *Ibn Haldun University*

Muslim Worldview as an Alternative Paradigm or Only Possible for Muslim Geography

Admir Mulaosmanovic, *International University of Sarajevo*

Modern Muslim Thought in Bosnia: New Trends Among the Muslim Scholars

Hazım Fazlıć, *Lake Forest College*

Muslim Identity in the Balkans: Nationalism/Other, Official Ideologies, and the Muslim World

Sevba Abdulla, *Balkan Studies Foundation*

ABSTRACTS
ÖZETLER

Imagining Egypt After in Postnormal Times: The State of War

Heba Raouf Ezzat

Ibn Haldun University, Türkiye

Egypt witnessed an uprising in 2011 that unveiled the dynamics of power within the urban space, as the daily unfolding of events took place on the theatre of the city. Applying the approach of “politics as war” that was developed in the writings of Carl Schmitt, Giorgio Agamben, Michel Foucault, and Paul Virilio, the urban/spatial domain is examined as space of war since 2011. Not only is the army controlling the urban space, but they are also creating new separate urban areas (neighbourhoods, military bases, and roads), and a new capital. The impact of such developments on civil peace, civility, and the future of democracy and politics in Egypt is analysed. The role of law as a tool of hegemony – rather than maintaining order and securing rights – will also be addressed, as well as the corrosion of citizenship, governance strategies and nodal security. The nature of the political imagination and its substantial shift after the Arab uprising will be highlighted.

Keywords: Arab uprisings, civil society, hegemony, Egypt, politics as war

The Academic Study of Islam in Africa

Ousmane Kane

Harvard University, USA

The field of Islam in Africa used to be a neglected area. In recent decades, it has been subject to successive reconfigurations driven by a combination of changing policy interests, involvement of new players, and paradigm shifts in the social sciences. This paper looks first at colonial writings aimed at the surveillance of Muslim communities. Then, it discusses the interventions of social scientists seeking to make sense of the role of Islam in the process of nation building. Subsequently, it addresses the ways in which globalization, transnationalism studies, gender studies, and decolonial studies have affected the field. It concludes that it has become a crowded field and is likely to grow in complexity due to a combination of factors, including the involvement of a larger number of African and non-African scholars in the field, the shift in the centre of gravity of Islam to sub-Saharan Africa the emergence of new sites of research, and increasing opportunities for research dissemination including via new platforms facilitated by information and communication technologies.

Keywords: Academy, colonialism, Islamic studies, Africa, nation building

The Decolonization of the Social Sciences and the Muslim Intellectual Tradition

Syed Farid Alatas

National University of Singapore

This paper examines the dominant narrative of the history and emergence of the social sciences in which the core features of Eurocentrism are reflected. This narrative is also one of the emergence of modern Europe which is said to have begun with the “discovery” of America, the following voyages of “discovery”, the series of political revolutions, scientific and technological advancements, the Enlightenment, and the Industrial Revolution. The critique of this narrative the central features of Eurocentrism, that is, universalism, silencing and distortion. Recognition of this leads to specific understanding of decolonization of knowledge that can be seen in terms of critique, construction and reconstruction in the process of knowledge creation. Also important is the place of anti-colonial thought within the effort to decolonize knowledge. The paper provides examples of all three from both the intellectual tradition of Muslims as well as from current conditions, such as the protracted Palestinian anti-colonial struggle for independence, and discusses both theory and methodology.

Keywords: decolonization of knowledge, anti-colonial thought, Eurocentrism, universalism, silencing, distortion

New Challenges to Islamic Movements in the Changing World Politics: An Institutionalization-Based Analysis

M. Hüseyin Mercan

Marmara University, Türkiye

In Islamic movements literature, academics and experts often overlook the political institutionalization dimension due to the mainstream tendency that they are social movements rather than political ones. However, institutionalization is a crucial concept for understanding the development and transformation of the Islamic movements in their history. Taking the post-Arab Uprisings dynamics into consideration, the institutionalization level of the Islamic movements -with internal and external factors- can be regarded as the central reference point for an accurate analysis of why Islamists have not survived them in power as less institutionalization or lack of institutionalization has forced Islamic movement to face many unexpected problems in governing process. In this context, the presentation focuses on the new challenges faced by Islamic movements in recent years. It also discusses how their political institutionalization level and capacity would have a role in the survival of the Islamic movements in the changing world politics.

Keywords: Arab uprisings, Islamic movements, political institutionalization, world politics,

Destinies of the Islamic World between the Rising East and the Setting West

M. Mukhtar Shinqiti

Qatar University, Qatar

This is a close geopolitical examination of the resurgence of polarization in the international system over the past two decades, with a special focus on the challenges this new split imposes on the Islamic world. We propose that this new global polarization will deepen the shift of power from the Atlantic West to the Asian/Eurasian East. While this phenomenon has been underway for decades and has accelerated since the beginning of the twenty-first century with China's economic rise and Russia's religious-nationalistic awakening, it seems that the current war in Ukraine will hasten the course of history and will increase the acceleration of this noteworthy phenomenon. We deal here with this shift in the global power within the context of the historic clash between the great land powers and great sea powers, as well as the relationship between emerging and established powers. We also explore the impact of this shift of the global power on the Islamic World, emphasizing the need to face this challenge with determination, political awareness, and strategic sense.

Keywords: Eurasia, geopolitics, world politics, Islamic world, power

The Islamic World and the Future of the World Order

Wadah Khanfar

Al Sharq Forum, Türkiye

The world is undergoing a significant transformation on multiple levels: geopolitical, social, economic, and technological. This is creating opportunities and challenges to Muslims. The current geopolitical shift is an opportunity for the Global South and the Islamic World. We could break away from the Western hegemonic centrality, and we may become partners with other nations in shaping the future based on a new paradigm. The last three centuries have been dominated by the West, and the current shift to the East is an opportunity, therefore we need to think of what could be done to be part of a real global debate that goes beyond the Western Hegemonic Approach to world affairs. The status of the Ummah has been significantly weakened by the rise of the modern Nation State, the concept of political consensus has been shattered, and we could not develop an alternative that could preserve our collective bond. In this intervention I would love to shed some light on possible approaches to this dilemma.

Keywords: Hegemony, Islamic world, world politics, ummah, nation states

Why Are We All Palestinians?

Salman Sayyid

University of Leeds, UK

Islamophobia paves the road to genocide. In the face of the accelerated carnage inflicted upon the people of Gaza, what can we think? Can something as nebulous as Muslim political thought offer guidance? Gaza shows with horrific clarity the violence of the colonial-racial war machine, and the inability of the current world order to protect the people of colour, the dispossessed and those that are considered not to be fully human. The dehumanisation of Palestinians and the Palestinization of Muslimness and dreams of a better world confront political theory not in an abstract way but in concrete terms: what must be done. If one of the key purposes of political thought is to advise the prince, what advice can we give to the rapacious kleptocrats and Turcopole technocrats who seem to hold sway over the Islamosphere?

In this presentation, I want to reflect upon a chant in Britain, which is often heard by those protesting in favour of Palestinians: “In our thousands, in our millions, we are all Palestinian.” The sentiment of this sentence is one of solidarity and admiration for the courage of the Palestinian people as they endure the slaughter of Western weaponry and the gaslighting by the Western establishment, but it is also a condensation of acute political insight that recognizes the opposition to genocide and its products in the form of an ethno-racial state order is not a particular but a general concern with a global reach. For what seems to be at stake in the decolonization of Palestine is the possibility of a new social contract underwritten by reorienting a post-Western history of the future. In my presentation, I will connect these dots and provide a narrative in the jump cuts of this abstract.

Keywords: Decolonisation, Palestine, social movement, post-Western, Islamophobia

Symbolic Liberalism in the Muslim World: Liberalism, Religion, Arab World

Sari Hanafi

American University of Beirut, Lebanon

Abstract: In the first quarter of the 21st century, we are witnessing the emergence of entangled pathologies of late modernity across political, socio-economic, and cultural domains. These include the simultaneous rise of authoritarianism in the South and Right populism in the North, increasing trends of inequality, precarity, and exclusion, as well as the emergence of hierarchical social polarizations in various societies. This prompts a crucial question: How should the social sciences, particularly sociology, respond to these late modernity pathologies? I would argue that the bulk of the responses of the social sciences and/or sociology to these pathologies are defined as being classically liberal but politically illiberal – I call this peculiar combination “Symbolic Liberalism” (SL). Symbolic liberalism is not a problem for sociology alone; rather, it manifests itself through many sectors of public life including the media, politics, law, and education. Furthermore, the problem of SL is present not only in the Global North but also in the Global South, thanks to a wide range of global convergence forces. To address the inherent problems with SL and as an alternative to it, I propose Dialogical Sociology (DS) as a form of balance between collective and individual political liberal project, acting seriously against social inequality and in favour of the conception of justice while allowing the plurality of the conception of the good.

Key words: Dialogical sociology, symbolic liberalism, late modernity, social sciences, politics

How (Not) to Write Muslim Thoughts: Notes on Shahab Ahmed’s “What is Islam?”

Irfan Ahmad

Ibn Haldun University, Türkiye

Shahab Ahmed’s (2016) *What Is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic* has been hailed as “field-changing,” “the boldest” (Noah Feldman), “nothing short of a new way of looking at Islam” (Qasim Zaman) and “strikingly original” (Engseng Ho). In another accolade, it is a “weighty tome of monumental significance” and a “classic” (Pregill 2017: 149). I find such judgements unpersuasive and lacking in depth. Taking Ahmed’s exposition on alcohol as paradigmatic of his claim to theorize Islam anew, I instead argue that his thesis is less than sophisticated and far from original. It is also shot through with confusions and inconsistencies conceptual and methodological. Ahmed’s question about wine is indeed an old one, already broached by anthropologists like Michael Gilks and Christian priest-orientalist Cyprian Rice, both of whom are absent from Ahmed’s text. In fact, Ahmed’s question is considerably Christian, later inscribed in the language of secularism/Christianity. By dwelling on such themes in critical engagement with Ahmed’s text, I shed light on how (not) to write Muslim thoughts.

Keywords: Revelation, hermeneutics, meaning-making, Islam, secularism

Has Islamic Revivalism Failed? Is It Time to Think of Muslim Revival?

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Since Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Muslims have been struggling with the movement broadly known as Islamic Revivalism. It has taken many forms, but it is time to ask if after 150 years has this movement has failed? The Muslim Brotherhood, the primary vehicle of Islamic revivalism is in tatters and has failed against the resilience of nation states and their militaries in the Arab World. Revivalist movements have generated wide support but not enough to fully transform Muslim societies. Some of the states that are in the grip of Islamic movements are not exactly inspiring, like Pakistan and Afghanistan. Muslim countries that are stable are either monarchies with oil reserves like Saudi Arabia or democratizing states with some experience with secularism like Turkey, Malaysia, and Indonesia. 99 years after the end of the Islamic caliphate perhaps it is time to talk about a new way of thinking about Muslim revival. I propose to suggest a few paradigmatic principles that could help revitalize Muslim societies.

Keywords: Islamic movements, Islamic revivalism, regimes in Muslim world, paradigm, nation states

The Future of the Islamic Political: Resources of the Ummatic Imaginary

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It addresses how politics is ultimately about vision, and the resources for visions of the future are necessarily found in some past, and, hence, investigations into Islamic political theology and history mutually necessitate each other, and to neglect either is to impoverish both. Here it is necessary to mention that in contrast to common implications of “politics”, in Islam it is about upholding the divine message as stewards on earth and establishing justice and prosperity in a way that fulfills the divine imperative. This collective mission since a historic reality as well, can be traced back to the golden times of Islam which serves as a reflection of what such a political system looks like in practice.

Keywords: Ummah, political theology, history

Connections of Maghreb and Sub-Saharan Intellectuals: Trajectories and Representations

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Struggling with the complex reality of their countries in the throes of multifaceted crises, the intellectuals of the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa are confused. Faced with the complexity of the problems and their heterogeneity, these intellectuals find themselves dispersed. Yet, in the past, they were linked for the same purposes. Thus, if the Maghreb religious elites had, during the fifteenth century, forged links with the scholars of sub-Saharan Africa, a second wave of intellectuals succeeded them to think, in a colonial and post-colonial context, the liberation of Africa. However, as soon as this generation disappeared, the one that followed it did not resist in the face of the disenchantment of the populations and the expansion of Arabism which influenced the formation of a generation of thinkers. With the bankruptcy of the socialist regimes, this hiatus augured an era of fragmentation of intellectuals so that with the globalization, the intellectual of these countries found themselves helpless.

Keywords: History of thoughts, Maghreb, Sub-Saharan Africa, intellectuals, secularism

The Muslim Image in Early Cinema: A Colonial Beginning

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The emergence of cinema in the late 19th century is a parallel development to the formation of the colonial network that was active in the Islamic geography and the cultural hegemony of the West, which was decisive with its strong cultural dominance. There is also a historical symmetry between the use of movies as a colonial apparatus and the occupation and colonial activities in the Islamic geography. The use of cinema as a tool of colonial domination, and its placing non-Western geographies, especially the Islamic geography, in a fixed, stereotypical bracket of primitivism and primitivism also begins in this historical interval. Using the metonymic abstraction model, this study focuses on the representation of the Muslim image (on and off screen) in the films of early cinema, especially in the films of countries that emerged as a power after the First World War. The absence of significant film production in non-Western geographies and Islamic geography in the early period of cinema, and the presence of those that existed, has been a determinant on societies with distorted representations of Muslims and misconceptions and misinformation about Islam. While the image of the Muslim becomes the representation of the anticolonial effort of Islamism, in the movies, for example in Soviet films of the 1920s, it is transformed into a primitive spectre, and in Hollywood Orientalist films, it is transformed into a bloodthirsty subversive.

Keywords: Cinema, colonialism, orientalism, metonymic abstraction, Muslim images

Pan-Africanism and Muslims in Africa

Serhat Orakçı

Humanitarian and Social Research Centre, Türkiye

In the early 20th century, during the peak period of racism and colonial activities, Pan-Africanism emerged as a thought and movement with political, economic, and cultural dimensions. Representing a mega-scaled concept, Pan-Africanism aims to unite people of African descent under the framework of an African state, while enhancing economic and cultural interaction among Africans to transform African identity into a real-world power. This ideology, rooted in race and cultural awareness, was developed in response to colonialism and racism. Founding fathers of this ideology, such as Edward W. Blyden, Henry Sylvester-Williams, George Padmore, Marcus Garvey, and W.E.B. du Bois, played significant roles in the Western world where Africans were represented. It blossomed after World War II and gained influence in Africa, with leaders like Kwame Nkrumah, Patrice Lumumba, and Julius Nyerere emerging prominently, advocating Pan-Africanism in their speeches. Certainly, African Muslim intellectuals, academics, activists, and politicians living on the continent or connected to it have occasionally engaged with Pan-Africanism, attempting to harmonize their Muslim identities with Pan-African identity. This paper seeks to explore influence of Pan-African thought on Muslims in Africa.

Keywords: Decolonialism, Muslim identity, Pan-Africanism, intellectuals, racism

Social Justice in Islam: Perspectives in Moral and Political Economy

Adeel Malek

Oxford University, UK

There is a large body of literature on the idea of social justice in Islam. In this presentation, I will take stock of this literature and situate it in contemporary challenges of economic development in Muslim societies. In doing so, I will seek to draw on (and develop) paradigms in moral and political economy. The promotion of justice, equity, and responsibility towards society figures prominently in the Islamic worldview. The term for economy in classic Islamic literature is *Iqtisad*, which is essentially described as an act of “seeking and realizing what is judicious”. Although Islam does not espouse the utopian ideal of perfect equality, it abhors gross inequality and discrimination. The Arabic word for justice is *Adl*, which captures related dimensions, such as non-discrimination, evenness, proportion, and counterbalance. Muslims are enjoined always to uphold justice and to deal fairly, even if it entails acting against one’s own self-interest. A central theme in my talk would be to link social justice with the fundamental principles in Islam (including those pertaining to the very idea of *Tawheed*, *riba*, and trade) and to connect them with the political economy of authoritarian rule, which has defined the Muslim world for much of its history.

Keywords: Political economy, social justice, *tawhid*, authoritarianism, Muslim world

Two Contributions to Philosophy of History in 20th Century Muslim Thought: Malek Bennabi's and Alija Izetbegovic's Approaches

Mahmut Hakkı Akın

Istanbul Medeniyet University, Türkiye

Malek Bennabi and Alija Izetbegovic are two Muslim intellectuals whose ideas were influential in the 20th century. Both thinkers were concerned with and wrote about the historical, intellectual and political problems in general that Muslim societies faced. The period and social structure in they lived affected their ideas and works. The impact of the French experience of colonialism in Algeria is significant in the formation of Malik bin Nabi's thought. He also reinterpreted Ibn Khaldun's philosophy of history. According to him, Muslims have a responsibility to become actors in history again. Thus, he tried to develop a system of thought focusing on individual and social change. There are differences as well as similarities between two intellectuals. In his two major works, Islamic Declaration and Islam Between East and West, Aliya Izzetbegovic also emphasized the need for Muslims to assume their role in history for the benefit of all humanity. He tried to explain history based on the concepts of human, morality and freedom. However, he interpreted culture and civilization, the basic concepts of the philosophy of history, differently from Malek Bennabi. In this presentation, two influential Muslim intellectuals of the 20th century will be compared through their approaches to the philosophy of history.

Keywords: Alija Izzetbegovic, Malek Bennabi, Islamic political thought, intellectuals, sociology of ideas

Challenges of State Building and Institutionalization in the Middle East: Egyptian Experience

Taha Eğri

Kırklareli University, Türkiye

To understand state building capacity in the Middle East, it is crucial to consider the historical, geopolitical, and economic factors that have shaped the region. Lu & Thies (2012) argue that state capacity in the Middle East was influenced by international pressure rather than solely domestic factors, suggesting that external dynamics played a significant role in shaping state-building efforts in the region. Especially, impact of colonialism on the Middle East has had significant implications for the region's political, social, and economic landscapes. The Middle East has faced challenges in state building and institutionalization following independence. The region has seen the emergence of direct authoritarian regimes, which prioritize the continuation of their rule. This has led to difficulties in achieving state capacity and completing institutionalization, as the focus of these regimes has been on maintaining power rather than building strong and inclusive institutions. The impact of war and geopolitical changes, particularly the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, has influenced the nation-building process in the Middle East. These dynamics have shaped the context of militarization of the economy and politics in countries such as Egypt, impacting their post-independence experiences. In conclusion, the Middle East's post-independence experience, particularly in countries like Egypt, has been characterized by challenges in state building and institutionalization.

Keywords: State building, Egypt, authoritarian regimes, political economy, independence

Contemporary Muslim Thought and Debates in Uzbekistan

Burak Çalışkan

University of York, Uk

Uzbekistan, which has hosted many Islamic scholars and movements, also has an important part of Transoxiana and Fergana Valley, which are important for Islamic culture and civilization. During the Russian / Soviet colonization period, which started with the capture of the khanates, religious restrictions, the closure of mosques and religious institutions had significant effects on state-society relations. In Uzbekistan after independence, the official Islamic understanding, which was supported and tried to be controlled by the state, and the unofficial Islamic movements carried out by groups that were not satisfied with it, created two different types. Concern about the radical groups, especially concentrated in the Fergana Valley, led to the construction of a solid nation-state in the country under the leadership of Islam Karimov. The softening between the state and society, which started with the coming to power of Şevket Mirziyoyev in 2016, is seen as a new hope for the country.

Keywords: Central Asia, Islamic studies, Uzbekistan, nation state, state-society relations

Write to Reform: Muslim Intellectualism in Southeast Asia

Khairudin Aljunied

National University of Singapore

This talk captures the progressive and pluralistic nature of Muslim intellectualism in Southeast Asia beginning with the sixteenth century with a special focus on the mid-twentieth century onward, a period that can now be regarded as the age of networked Islam. I argue that several Muslim intellectuals have been especially influential in giving rise to what I term the “Islamic reformist mosaic” in Southeast Asia. Although different in terms of their specializations, social backgrounds, and styles of writing, Muslim intellectuals from the reformist current of thinking counter established cultures and paradigms of the day to free their societies from *beban sejarah* (the burden of history). They sought to overcome and mediate the effects of secularism, modernity, and other ideologies. These intellectuals reconstructed and provided alternatives to the various political, social, and economic systems put in place by the forces of colonialism and neo-colonialism. They underlined and accentuated the importance of ethics, virtues, and values in the shaping of Muslim societies in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: Islamic revivalism, Muslim intellectuals, Southeast Asia, neo-colonialism, burden of history

Debates and Development of the Social Sciences in Iran

Khosrow Bagheri Noaparast

University of Tehran, Iran

After the revolution in Iran, a new stream of thought was raised in order to provide a new trend in social sciences derived from Islamic thought or at least compatible with the Islamic sphere of the society. There have been approaches in this regard including encyclopaedic, edification, and cultural approach. I have critiqued these approaches and have shown their strengths and weaknesses. I have supported the constructive approach. The construction holds that; a) Islamic social science needs to be constructed; b) for its construction, there should be rich Islamic doctrines about the nature of human and social relations; c) these doctrines need to be so rich that scholars can regard them as their presuppositions and be inspired by them in developing relevant hypotheses about human social relations; d) the hypotheses need to be examined empirically and obtain positive evidence; e) the supported hypotheses need to be enormous to build a theory; f) this theory should have communication and rivalry with other social theories.

Keywords: Iran, Islamic studies, social sciences, constructive approach, social theories

Muslim Worldview as an Alternative Paradigm or Only Possible for Muslim Geography

Admir Mulaosmanović

International University of Sarajevo, Bosnia Herzegovina

In this presentation I will focus on the very lively debate within Muslim intellectual circles about the post unipolar world and the position of Islam and Muslims in it. The goal is to open a space for critical reflection about the key elements of which should be the integration of the space of Islam (Muslim geography) on the basis of the only possible worldview, Islamic. In this regard, I will try to argue that this is precisely the time when the construction of a multipolar world begins, in which Muslims also have the opportunity to become a global political subject. In order to achieve this, the first step is to overcome the lack of confidence, intellectual in the first place. I will also try to give my own perspective on the good and bad sides of the debate and underline and emphasize a possible foundation from which new initiatives could start.

Keywords: Islamic paradigm, Muslim intellectuals, social sciences, worldview, multipolar world

Modern Muslim Thought in Bosnia: New Trends Among the Muslim Scholars

Hazim Fazlic

Lake Forest College, USA

My presentation is focused on new discussions among Bosnian Muslim authors that have not been dealt with before to the greater extent and scope in the last three decades. Presented are five areas where Bosnian Muslim authors have made contributions: the Bosnian War, the challenges of new interpretations of Islam, emphasis on the Islamic tradition of Bosniaks, discussions on Islam and violence, and the place of Muslims in Europe. The authors presented and their works are taken as examples of wider trends within Bosnian-Muslim intellectual circles over the past three decades and not as a full account of the discussions that have taken place during that period.

Keywords: Bosnia, Muslim intellectuals, identity, tradition, Europe

Muslim Identity in the Balkans: Nationalism/Other, Official Ideologies, and the Muslim World

Sevba Abdula

Balkan Studies Foundation, North Macedonia

The withdrawal of the Ottoman Empire from the Balkan region and the subsequent establishment of new nation-states with repressive policies led to significant waves of migration among Muslims. This process, which continued throughout the 20th century, resulted in a substantial transformation of the demographic structure. However, even today, it is possible to talk about a Balkan region where nearly 8 million Muslims reside. In the 20th century, Muslims largely lost their political, cultural, and intellectual power and were excluded from the processes of state, nation, and society-building. Consequently, the changes in regimes and authorities, ideologies, transformations in societal structures, differentiation in the international and Islamic world, affected Muslim identity, producing various sub-identities (Albanian, Turkish, Bosniak, traditionalist, secular, modernist, Salafi, etc.) that differ from one another. This study particularly examines Muslim identity, focusing on the Albanian and Bosniak populations. The study scrutinizes the transformation of Muslim identity in the Balkans after World War I, its position in the context of nation-building processes, the impact of existing authorities/official identity, the influence of changes in societal structure (modernization, socialism, democratization), and the differentiation resulting from the transformation in the Islamic world.

Keywords: Balkans, Muslim identity, nation states, nationalism, societal structure

Speakers | Konuşmacılar

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