

Online Lecture Series

ReOrienting the Global Study of Religion

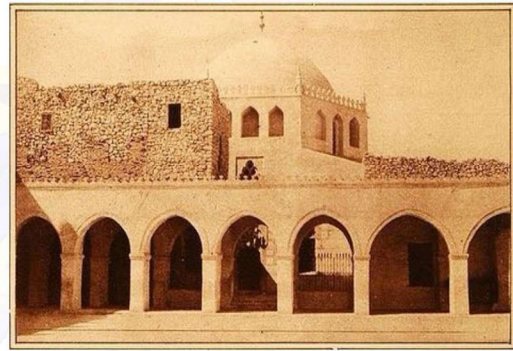
History, Theory, and Society

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The Ibn Khaldun of the long 19th century is usually either conjured as a theoretical framework in order to make sense of the venture of Islamic reform or broken down to a cluster of atomized concepts which then one attempts to trace in the thought of said Islamic reformers. Both these readings partake in the uneasy assumption of a “European discovery” of Ibn Khaldun, and both obfuscate the fact that while the 14th century historian did not advocate reform, reformists had no vested interest in the discipline of history.

Taking a step back from the usual genealogies of Islamic reform, this lecture explores the impact of such disjunctive readings on our reconstructions of individual trajectories that made up this long 19th century. It posits that the significance of their Khaldunian engagements by such Islamic entrepreneurs as the mystic Muhammad ibn ‘Ali al-Sanusi (1787-1859), the statesman Khayreddine Pasha (1822-1890) and the publicist Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935) can only accrue if we problematize the extent to which Ibn Khaldun had become naturalized by the time of the Tanzimat and the Nahda, within the so-called Ottoman center and its peripheries, in sufi networks, bureaucratic practice and the public sphere.



(De)commissioning Ibn Khaldun?

Sufis, Statesmen and Publicists during the Long Nineteenth century

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7

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