

4<sup>e</sup>

# CONGRESS

Middle East and Muslim Worlds  
Studies

28 June - 2 July 2021



## Roundtable

---

### On reform in Islam: what positioning of researchers in the field of public debate ?

In France, public and even sometimes academic debates around Islam are saturated by a cleavage between two antagonistic tendencies: on the one hand, the supporters of «post-colonial studies» who focus on the real or presumed traces of old colonialists prejudices, thus tracking down all kinds of phenomena such as «native-informant», «Islamophobia», «arabophobia», etc. ; on the other hand, the proponents of next-to-security vigilance who perceive in the mobilizations against racism and Islamophobia - which worry them - a global process of presupposed «Islamist», «separatist» demands, thus denying all types of cyclical or structural effect of discriminations that can affect, among others, Muslim minorities in Europe.

This polarization of a culturalist posture versus a security posture overshadows a phenomenon which appears to us to take more and more space in the French Islamic field as well as stimulate “sellers of religious goods” and promoters of a repressive orthodoxy: the question of the renewal of the worship practices by the female imamate and, more generally, the various calls for a “renewed”, “liberal”, “reformed” Islam which aim at taking into consideration the minority and/or female voices.

This theme will allow us to ask the fundamental side question of the position and role of researchers, attached to a faith or not :can they escape polarizing, overhanging or even normative positions?

**Convenors : Steven Duarte (Sorbonne Paris Nord) and Haoues Seniguer (Sciences Po Lyon)**

**Hicham Gawad Abdel (UCL - Louvain)**

*Quests of young believers: an analysis from the perspective of social symbolism*

**Kahina Bahloul (EPHE - Paris)**

*Classical authors as sources of inspiration for reformist movements*

**Steven Duarte (Sorbonne Paris Nord)**

*From «reverse orientalism» to security expertise, what place for the Islamologist?*

**Haoues Seniguer (Sciences Po Lyon)**

*The researcher, the believer, the witness: meaning and counter-meaning of «axiological neutrality*