

On Arab-Islamism, Afrabism and Contrapunctual Criticism

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Abstract

The lecture is divided into four main parts. In the first, the autobiographical, I provided data on critical aspects of my early life, particularly those cultural and educational trajectories that have circumscribed my academic career and have proved foundational for my development up till when I first got admission into this University to pursue a degree in Arabic language and Literature in the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies. In the second section, the scholarly, I focused on the field of my specialization which, for methodological reasons, I have referred to in this lecture as Arab-Islamism. The section equally paid attention to, in my view three main cultural streams in the field namely, disaffiliation, affiliation and filiation. This schematic reordering of approaches to Arab-Islamism serves as basis for the discussion of my major contributions to the field. In the third main section, I engaged the second major category of interest in this lecture, namely *Afrabism*. I explored the conceptual arguments in favour of this construct across such disciplinary barriers as history, religion, economy and diplomacy and paid attention to how these readings have fed and have been reflected in literary writings of Afrabic writers. The fourth section on contrapunctual criticism sourced its arguments from previous sections especially as the lecture attempted to merge between text and contexts, between theory and practice and between scholarly exposition and communal reorientation.