



International Association of Contemporary Iraqi Studies

3rd Annual Conference, 16-17 July 2008

SOAS, University of London

Abstract of paper to be presented at the conference.

For details of the conference programme go to www.iraqistudies.org

Speaker: Seif Da'Na, University Of Wisconsin-Parkside

Title: The New Islam: Re-inventing Arab Culture and Nationalism

Abstract:

Novel theological and political orientations in Islam that have been rapidly evolving since the late 1970s culminated eventually in a new Islamic discourse that broke sharply with canons of traditional political Islam. This new Islamic discourse, embraced by newly rising movements and distinguished as nationally conscious, notably enfolded, contrary to the fundamentalist and traditional brands of Islam, considerably less disquiet and agony regarding religious doxology and parochialism, and particularly more practical politics and emphasis on social justice.

This paper develops a theoretical framework to examine and explain the rise of new trends in political Islam since the late 1970s. Historically situating the new Islamic movements, and politically and theologically distinguishing the new discourse from traditional Islamic orientations, this paper argues that a new Islam sprouted in the bare wrack bastion of Arab national liberation movements, a religion belonging to a different genre; liberation theology.