



Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Husayn Muruwah and Ernst Bloch encounter Ibn Sina: On Marxist discoveries of Arab-Islamic philosophy circa 1952

NMC Talk
with Professor Jens Hanssen,
University of Toronto

3 pm - 5 pm
Thursday, October 24, 2024
200B (4 Bancroft Avenue, Toronto)

This talk is part of a chapter in Professor Jens Hanssen's ongoing research on Arabic-German intellectual entanglement in the 20th century. It is about two philosophers, one German, one Lebanese, who were inspired by the Iranian Tudeh party's millennial commemoration of Ibn Sina's life and work in 1952 in Hamadan. Both independently invoked a materialist tradition of philosophy that they claimed had been buried under civilizational accounts of cultural heritage in Europe and the Muslim World. Professor Hanssen will juxtapose Ernst Bloch's matter/form discussion in his essay *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Left* and Husayn Muruwah's *al-Thaqafa al-Wataniyya* article "*Ibn Sina: fikra taqaddumiyya*" both of 1952. He asks: What were modern Arab intellectuals' stakes in Abbasi-Andalusian and continental philosophy in the 20th century? He offers some thoughts on Husayn Muruwah's 1979 masterpiece *Materialist Trends in Arab-Islamic Philosophy*. Finally, He considers how this subversive materialist tradition might challenge the civilizationalist discourses curated by Jürgen Habermas and Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri.

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