

Saud Al-Sarhan (University of Exeter), “‘Patience is better than sedition’: The political thought of Ahmad Ibn Hanbal”

Many scholars have noted that political quietism lies at the heart of Sunnī political doctrine and particularly that of the Ḥanbalīs. However, it is argued in this presentation that both activism and quietism were trends among the people of the Sunnah, and that it was thanks to Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal that quietism became a dominant over activism as a doctrine of the Sunnīs. To this end, four points will be addressed in this presentation: 1- how did quietism become a formal doctrine of Sunnism and what role did Aḥmad play in making this the case; 2- what were Aḥmad's methods for supporting quietism and rejecting activism; 3- how did Aḥmad understand the relationship between the individual and the state?; and 4- why did Aḥmad supported quietism?