

# UNDER CONSTRUCTION

## LECTURE SERIES FB07

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(Ethnology)

### **Şalīl al-Şawārim: Consolidating and Defying the Islamic State Through Chants and Music**

Anāshīd (singular: nashīd) describe certain hymns or chants that appear in various manifestations and form an integral part of Muslim practices. For centuries, anāshīd have been predominant within Sufism. Today, pop cultural, religious manifestations are particularly popular among Muslim youth worldwide. Within the past decades, however, Islamist and jihadist groups and movements have increasingly appropriated anāshīd for their purposes, as

anāshīd come along with expressions of religiosity, culture and identity, hence serving as powerful tools to convey messages.

This is also true for the Islamic State (IS), whose anāshīd unite three core influences: first Islamic religious practices, second pop cultural elements, such as autotune, and third Salafi-Wahhabi doctrine to highlight the centrality of the lyrics that convey a religiously framed message. A well-known example is the nashīd Şalīl al-Şawārim released shortly before the proclamation of the caliphate in 2014, which highlights its importance in the state-building agenda of IS.

In order to challenge this agenda as well as its religious legitimisation, creative recipients opposing IS appropriate IS anāshīd and alter certain elements both on an audio and on a visual level. This talk will thus depict various appropriation strategies based on the example of Şalīl al-Şawārim, encompassing the alteration of the visual as well as the sonic dimension, for instance by adding instruments to distract from the lyrics and to extract the Salafi-Wahhabi dimension. We argue that these strategies and practices participate in defying IS as a whole.