



The Remaking of “Islamic” Cities

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The interventions aimed to regularize and modernize urban fabrics during the second half of the nineteenth century had global significance. Nevertheless, the seemingly uniform forms carried shifting meanings, stemming from specific social, political, and ideological agendas. My paper will situate the transformation of “Islamic cities” (a controversial concept) within this general framework. Arguing that there was a connected world of empires in the nineteenth century, where ideas, technologies, and strategies traveled smoothly, I will engage in a comparative examination of the cities of French North Africa and Ottoman Middle East. I will focus on new circulation networks, public spaces and the monuments that define them, and urban images. The frenetic planning activities will reveal much about the political goals and ambitions in each context, while displaying complex webs of interactions between the two.