

ABSTRACT

Panel 3: Charities as Surrogates of the State or Competitors of the State

State, Shiism and Sunnism in Bahrain: Networks of Trust [Waqf, Ma'tam] and Normative Fluorescence in Kinship, Religion and Islamic Capitalism

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The main focus of this paper is the Islamic endowment, the Waqf and its institution the Ma'tam[funeral house]. Throughout the 19th and twentieth centuries it has through the building of mosques,, madrasas, ma'tamis and as custodian of Islamic law and Islamic courts encouraged the creation of a philanthropy, coordinating acquisition of land, property and thereby filtered divisive political and economic power within Sunnis and Shiis This introduced an enduring legacy of ethnic, religious sensitivities which while permitting space for self-definition, also inflamed conflict. I am however only concentrating on the dynamic economic aspects of this philanthropy while power both symbolic and discursive is pursued only with an examination of civic activities that shape this ethical capitalism in both domestic and global interactions.