



# RELIGION AND IDEAS ROUNDTABLE

## MODERN THINKING IN ISLAM SERIES 2019



### SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & COMMUNICATION ARTS

Religion and Society Research Cluster,  
School of Social Sciences & Psychology,

By Dr Milad Milani (WSU)  
& Dr Vassilis Adrahtas (Macquarie)

**Presenter: Dr Vassilis Adrahtas**

### TITLE

*From Tradition to Modernity and Vice  
Versa: The Progressive Islam of  
Mahmud Muhammad Taha*

### ACADEMIC PROFILE

Vassilis Adrahtas is an Honorary Research Fellow at Macquarie University. His specialisation is in Early Christianity, Patristics, Byzantine Philosophy, Islamic Studies and Indigenous Religions. He has taught at a number of universities (Sydney, Macquarie, Western Sydney, UNSW, Athens, Hellenic Open University), and is the author of five books, as well as numerous book chapters and peer-reviewed articles.

### ABSTRACT

Mahmud Muhammad Taha (1909-1985) was the most original Muslim modernist reformist of the 20th century. His *The Second Message of Islam* is a work that reflects a genuine Islamic experience and at the same

time engages boldly and creatively with the challenges of modernity. Taha developed his idea of progressive Islam by drawing upon the spiritual fountains of tradition in order to promote the relevance and viability of the message of Islam within the modern world. The presentation will attempt to show the transactions between tradition and modernity in the work of Taha, based on his hermeneutics of the Qur'an and Hadith. The final aim is to put forward Taha's major ideas, namely, Mecca over Medina revelations, the inversion of *naskh*, the concept of evolution in Islam, the intention of Revelation and the ethico-religious core of Islam, as a plea for justice.

### LOCATION AND TIME

Western Sydney University  
Parramatta South Campus, The Female  
Orphan School, PS-EZ.1.57 (Geoffrey  
Roberson Boardroom)  
Friday, 7 June, 10.00am – 12.00pm

