“Why Do You Want to Know?”: An Outsider’s Perspective on Khaleeji Historical Record

Mark C. Gleason
Date: Monday 25 September 2017
Time: 12:00-01:00 pm
Place: Lecture Hall 238

ABSTRACT:

When writing a people’s history, the historian seeks to begin with how they record themselves. The presentation aims to look at various factors regarding how Gulf Arab peoples evaluate and write their past. While Western historiography generally purports to leave nothing unexamined, Khaleeji narratives intentionally avoid certain parts of the history. Specifically, the discussion will examine various elements in local culture which trend toward keeping public history “private.” These elements include concepts of honor and shame, tribalism, and “the outsider” in local context. Such themes appear not only in the historical record, but manifest themselves in published works, as well as how modern Gulf Arabs approach their own past.

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