According to Saba Mahmood, feminists project a Western form of consciousness onto “other” women when they portray them as yearning to be free of patriarchal traditions. Since Mahmood sees feminism as indebted to an “imaginary of freedom,” it is unclear whether feminism itself can survive her critique.

Prof. Khader will argue that feminism can take Mahmood’s major concerns on board without sacrificing its status as a normative doctrine, because opposition to sexist oppression does not require commitment to value for what she calls “Enlightenment freedom.” She will argue that feminism does not require the view of convention, tradition, or religion as constraints—and that it is thus possible to oppose sexist practices on traditionalist grounds.

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Linda M. Alcoff, Professor of Philosophy at Hunter College and the Graduate Center, CUNY, and Director of the Center for the Study of Women and Society, will offer comments.