

An International Workshop

Imagining an Alternative 'Post-Secular' State: Historicizing and Comparing National Struggles over Re-secularization”

On February 17, 2017, the the MEXT Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research on Innovative Areas (1801) “Relational Studies on Global Crisis” Unit A01 “States and Institutions” held an international workshop focusing on themes of re-secularization and understanding the ‘Post-Secular’ state in the context of comparative historical analysis of select Muslim states. The workshop featured six international speakers from Turkey, Iran, the U.S.A, and Australia and the audience consisted of graduate students and professors from TUFs and other universities. The content of each presentation was rich, deeply contextual and at the same time clearly elucidated, allowing even non-specialists to intellectually engage with the speakers in an academic discussion. The speaker’s wealth of academic experience and deep knowledge of their respective cases made for a very interesting question and answer period during the group discussion. The discussion was moderated by Andrew March from Yale University who did an excellent job of summarizing and comparing the contrasting and sometimes bold assertions made by the speakers. Certainly, the most engaging part of the workshop, the discussion served as a forum for the speakers to scrutinize each other’s arguments and to defend their own claims. The audience was encouraged to not only ask questions, but also to create theoretical linkages between the speaker’s case’s and their own area of study. Personally, I found the theoretical frameworks presented during the workshop quite useful and will certainly be exploring them further in relation to my own research. I am sure that many of the attendees, particularly the graduate students, found this workshop to be very engaging and the content though-provoking and useful in their own research.

(Michael Rajkovic)

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