

Secularization has been the most prominent paradigm for describing the dynamics between religion and society in the 20th century. All over the world the constitutional separation of state and church, of a religious and a secular sphere has been recognized as one of the basic principles of liberal constitutionalism. Yet, today the concept and its implications for the future development of modern societies are called into question: In countries all over the world reverse processes of (re-)sacralization, of a revival of religious groups and sentiments may go along with economic and even political modernization.

Even in Europe the conceptual matrix of “secularization” is comparatively young, much younger than the phenomena we are used to describe with it. From here the question arises whether the concept of secularization is an adequate descriptive tool not only in regard to societies traditionally less heavily dominated by a religious sphere, but also in regard to Christian Europe.

Starting from these observations, we propose a four-fold approach. Firstly, it seems fruitful to discuss secularization as a concept we use to structure historical and actual experience, rather than as an objectified and quantifiable phenomenon. Secondly, such a semantic approach will necessarily profit considerably from due regard to historical semantics. Thirdly, the usefulness and the limits of extension of this concept may become even clearer through inter-cultural comparative studies. And fourthly, in such inter-cultural comparison, the term secularization should not be unquestioningly superimposed; we therefore propose to use it heuristically, but in all openness to possible conceptual alternatives in looking at processes of de-legitimation of tradition and reconfigurations of the relations between “religion” and “politics” in non-European cultures.

For this endeavor, we would like to call together scholars from various fields and backgrounds to discuss the following questions with us: What gave rise and momentum to the concept of secularization in Europe and beyond? To what extent is the paradigm of secularization at all useful for describing processes of modernization in different cultural settings? How has the concept of secularization been translated into and applied in the respective home discourses, and has it been used in corresponding politics? Which conceptual alternatives to the dichotomy of the “secular” and the “religious” or the “sacred” have been developed, and to what purposes have they been employed? How do political and institutional changes relate to reconfigurations of the religious field, especially in the context of nation building?

Tuesday, 1 December 2009

18.00 h **Conference Reception**

19.00 h **Welcome Addresses**

19.30 h **The Influence of Foreign Knowledge on Eighteenth Century European Secularism**
Heiner Roetz (Bochum, Germany)

Wednesday, 2 December 2009

09.30 h SECTION 1: EUROPE I

Semantic Reconfigurations of the Religious Field in Central Europe Around 1800
Lucian Hölscher (Bochum, Germany)

The Origin of the Concept of “Laïcité” in Nineteenth-Century France
Sylvie Le Grand-Ticchi (Paris, France)

11.00 h **Coffee-Break**

11.30 h SECTION 2: EUROPE II

Secularization, Re-enchantment or Something In-between
Volkhard Krech (Bochum, Germany)

12.30 h **Lunch**

15.00 h SECTION 3: FAR EAST I

Religion and the Secular in Modern Japan: the Separation of State and Religion, Concepts of Religion, and State Shinto
Isomae Jun'ichi (Kyoto, Japan)

Japanese Discoveries of “Secularization” Abroad and at Home, 1870-1905
Hans Martin Krämer (Bochum, Germany)

16.30 h **Coffee-Break**

17.00 h SECTION 4: FAR EAST II

Religion and Secularity in Late Imperial and Early Republican China
Chen Hsi-Yuan (Taipei, China)

The Conceptual Formation of the “Secular” in Colonial Korea: Anti-Religious Discourse and the Establishment of the Principle of Separation Between Religion and Politics in 1920-1930s Korea
Jang Sukman (Seoul, Korea)

Thursday, 3 December 2009

09.30 h SECTION 5: SOUTH ASIA / MIDDLE EAST

Secularism, Re-sacralization, and Legitimation in Buddhist Modernism
David McMahan (Santa Barbara, USA)

Ali Akbar Dehkhoda and Articulations of Secularism in Constitutional Iran
Nahid Mozaffari (New York, USA)

11.00 h **Coffee-Break**

11.30 h PRESENTATIONS OF PhD-STUDENTS

Sven-Daniel Gettys (Bochum, Germany)
Oliver Glatz (Bochum, Germany)
Jens Schlamelcher (Bochum, Germany)

12.30 h **Lunch**

15.00 h SECTION 6: NEAR EAST I

Christians and Secular Nationalism in the Near East: The Diaries of Khalil Sakakini (1878-1953)
Susanne Enderwitz (Heidelberg)

The History of the Concepts of “Religion” and “Secularism” in Hebrew and Its Meanings in Current Processes in Israel
Yochi Fischer (Jerusalem, Israel)

16.30 h **Coffee-Break**

17.00 h SECTION 7: NEAR EAST II

Secularization and Its Introduction into Public Discourse in Turkey
Anat Lapidot Firilla (Jerusalem, Israel)

18.00 h **Final Discussion**

CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

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REGISTRATION

Please register via secularization2009@gmail.com until November 10th. You will receive a registration form, which provides you with all necessary information. Your registration will be confirmed and becomes binding as soon as the attendance fee is paid. Members of the IKGf and of the Research School are free of charge.

FEES

Attendance Fees (incl. Lunch & Coffee Breaks during the conference)	50 €
Concessions to students (upon presentation of proof)	30 €

ARRIVAL

By plane or train:

From Dusseldorf Airport via, or directly from, Bochum Hauptbahnhof (Central Station) take the U35 towards Bochum Querenburg (Hustadt) and get off at stop "Ruhr-Universität" (→) (Ticket needed: Preisstufe A). The Veranstaltungszentrum is right behind the Audimax (→).

By car:

Motorway A 43, interchange "Bochum-Witten", exit at "Bochum-Querenburg/Universität" (exit no. 19). Universitätsstraße direction Universität/Zentrum, exit at "Uni-Mitte" (→), about 2 km. Free parking is sign posted.



INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Reconfigurations of the Religious Field. "Secularization" and Related Semantics in Intercultural, Historical and Political Perspective

1 - 3 December 2009



International Consortium for Research in the Humanities
"Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe"
and the Research School in Bochum, Germany

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