

# THE POLITICIZATION OF ISLAM IN EAST ASIA, 1850-1950



University of  
Zurich<sup>UZH</sup>



Image courtesy by Umar Ryad

## INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM 18-20 AUGUST 2022

University of Zurich  
Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies  
Ulrich Brandenburg, Yasemin Rende



# CONVENERS

Ulrich Brandenburg (University of Zurich)

Yasemin Rende (University of Zurich)

# DESCRIPTION

Throughout the modern age, Islam and the imaginary Muslim World have played important roles in geopolitical speculation and strategy-making. The Ottoman Empire from the late nineteenth century onwards actively tried to refashion its legitimacy to become the political and religious center of global Islam, stressing in particular the relevance of the Ottoman Caliphate. All major empires, at one point or another, became aware of the strategic importance of Muslims within their imperial borders, whose loyalty or disloyalty was deemed crucial for the stability of the imperial framework. As a visible symbol of the inclusion of Muslims into imperial community-building, mosques were built in various capitals during the first half of the twentieth century with political support. At the same time, imperial powers attempted to mobilize their own Muslim representatives and populations to increase their influence abroad or to delegitimize and destabilize competitors. During the two world wars, even non-Muslim states such as Germany, Italy, or Japan energetically tried to gain the support of Muslim communities through anti-colonialist propaganda, pan-Islamic symbolism, or financial incentives. Muslim intellectuals, in conjunction with academic Orientalists and imperial strategists, participated in the imagination of a unified Muslim World to further their own interests and empower Muslim communities. While the politicization of Islam in the contexts of the Ottoman Empire, the two world wars, or rivalries between European empires has been addressed in a considerable body of research, the history of Islam and politics in East Asia still remains patchy. This symposium brings together scholars working on different aspects related to the politicization of Islam in East Asia to discuss research results and address open questions.

# VENUE/PARTICIPATION

Andreasstrasse 15, 8050 Zürich, Room: AND-4-02

To participate please register here: [yasemin.rende@uzh.ch](mailto:yasemin.rende@uzh.ch)

# PROGRAM: DAY 1

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 2022

AND-4-02

**9:00 - 9:30**

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

**Ulrich Brandenburg (University of Zurich)**

**9:30-11:30**

## PANEL 1: BETWEEN THE PAST AND THE TODAY

*Chair: Ulrich Brandenburg (University of Zurich)*

**Hee-Soo Lee (Hanyang University):**

"Islamic Politicization in Korea: The Background and Current Situation"

**Sinan Levent (Ankara University):**

"Post-war Asianism in Japan: Focusing on Nakatani Takeyo and Japan-Middle East Relations"

**11:30-13:00**

*Lunch break*

**13:00-16:30**

## **PANEL 2: APPROACHING ISLAM IN EAST ASIA**

*Chair: Ryosuke Ono (Waseda University)*

**Raja Adal (University of Pittsburgh):**

“Conceptualizing a Space beyond the Political: Islam in the Context of Japanese History”

**Noriko Kanahara (Waseda University):**

“Defining Religion in the Midst of Global Religious and Ideological War: The Japanese Imperial Diet Discussions on the Inclusion of Islam in the Religious Organization Law of 1939”

**Aaron Glasserman (Harvard University):**

“Minority Elite Networks, Majoritarian Chauvinism, and State Incapacity: The Politicization of Hui Identity in Central China”

**15:00-15:30**

*Coffee break*

**17:00-18:30**

## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**Cemil Aydin (University of North Carolina):**

“Politicization of Islam in the Contested Asian Civilizational Narratives of the Global Order”

# PROGRAM: DAY 2

FRIDAY, AUGUST 19, 2022

AND-4-02

9:30 - 11:30

## PANEL 3: ASIAN MUSLIM MOBILITIES

*Chair: Yasemin Rende (University of Zurich)*

**Ali Merthan Dündar (Ankara University):**

"An Ottoman Officer in Japan: Some Notes on Ahmet Tevfik El Sherif"

**Samee Siddiqui (University of North Carolina):**

"'World Religions' and the 'Problem of Origins' in Pan-Asianist Discourse, 1880-1914"

11:30-13:00

*Lunch break*

13:00-16:30

## PANEL 4: ISLAM IN TIMES OF WAR

*Chair: Eliza Isabaeva (University of Zurich)*

**Janice Jeong (University of Göttingen):**

"Coalescence of Sino-Islamic Routes in Inter-War Shanghai and their Wartime Politicization"

**Ryosuke Ono (Waseda University):**

"From Afghanistan with Love: Anti-Soviet Activities of Turkestani Émigrés and Japanese Agents in the Late 1930s"

**Masumi Matsumoto (Muroran Institute of Technology):**

"Occupation and Solidarity: The Recognition of the Middle Eastern Situation in the Muslim Magazine Huijiao Zhoubao (Islam Weekly), published in the Japanese Occupied Territory"

15:00-15:30

*Coffee break*

# PROGRAM: DAY 3

SATURDAY, AUGUST 20, 2022

AND-4-02

9:30 - 11:30

## PANEL 5: HISTORICAL ENCOUNTERS

*Chair: Gian Carlo Danuser (University of Zurich)*

**Larisa Usmanova (Russian State University for the Humanities):**

“Islamic Religious Life and Activities of Turk-Tatar Emigrant Communities in East Asia: Institutional Structure, Features, Actors”

**James Harry Morris (Waseda University):**

“Discovering the Religious Other: Christian and Muslim Interactions in Meiji Period Japan”

11:30-13:00

*Lunch break*

13:00-15:00

## PANEL 6: TRANSFERS AND ENTANGLEMENTS

*Chair: Janice Jeong (University of Göttingen)*

**Tariq Sheikh (English and Foreign Languages University):**

“Medium of Instruction as Identity: Osmania University, the Princely State of Hyderabad, and the Japanese Model”

**Mikiya Koyagi (University of Texas at Austin):**

“An Eastern Hero: Biographies of Muhammad in Imperial Japan”

15:00-15:30

*Coffee break*

15:30-16:30

*Final discussion*