



Visualizing Secularism and Religion: Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, India

Maha Yahya

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Over the past two decades secular polities across the globe have witnessed an increasing turn to religion-based political movements, such as the rise of political Islam and Hindu nationalism, which have been fueling new and alternative notions of nationhood and national ideologies. The rise of such movements has initiated widespread debates over the meaning, efficacy, and normative worth of secularism. *Visualizing Secularism and Religion* examines the constitutive role of religion in the formation of secular-national public spheres in the Middle East and South Asia, arguing that in order to establish secularism as the dominant national ideology of countries such as Turkey, Lebanon, and India, the discourses, practices, and institutions of secular nation-building include rather than exclude religion as a presence within the public sphere. The contributors examine three fields---urban space and architecture, media, and public rituals such as parades, processions, and commemorative festivals---with a view to exploring how the relation between secularism, religion, and nationalism is displayed and performed. This approach demands a reconceptualization of secularism as an array of contextually specific practices, ideologies, subjectivities, and "performances" rather than as simply an abstract legal bundle of rights and policies.

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