Workshop on Military Regimes, Diversity and Sectarianism in Muslim Societies October 24-25, 2014

Military regimes have ruled Muslim societies for much of the twentieth century. Their management or mismanagement of diversity has had a profound effect upon development of state institutions of accommodation and also of relations among communities. As these have arisen or faltered, how well or how poorly have they served as tools of governance?

More recently, the Arab Spring was a clear manifestation of citizens struggling for democratic and accountable governance. Yet, at this transitional moment, the dislocation of the established order has meant that religious and ethnic minorities have become flash points for conflict in several countries in the Arab world and beyond.

We will invite panelists to reflect upon the record and legacy of military regimes in the twentieth century against the backdrop of recent citizens' movements and political struggles with their resonances and variants across many Muslim-majority societies. How have efforts to move beyond military governing regimes increasingly taken on a sectarian guise in certain instances? What are the indigenous resources and articulations, inherited or freshly imagined, toward accommodation in local or national contexts in Muslim societies at large? What is the role of Islamist political movements in this regard in the Middle East, South Asia and Africa? How have they framed the question of religious and ethnic minority accommodation?

Workshop Schedule

Panel One, October 24, 4 - 6 pm,

Robinson Lower Library, Robinson Hall

Post-colonial military regimes and the management of diversity (Cemal Kafadar, Harvard University, Chair)

Marcus Mietzner (Australian National University) on Indonesia

Ayesha Jalal (Tufts University) on Pakistan

Joshua Landis (University of Oklahoma) on Iraq

Panel Two, October 25, 10 am – 12 noon

Robinson Lower Library, Robinson Hall

The shifting political economy of majorities and minorities (Elif Babül, Mount Holyoke College, Chair)

Kabir Tambar (Stanford University) on Turkey

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Murray Last (University College London) on Nigeria

Edin Hajdarpasic (Loyola University of Chicago) on Bosnia

Panel Three, October 25, 2-4 pm

Robinson Lower Library, Robinson Hall

Islamist political movements and the return of the Praetorian Guard (Ousmane Kane, Harvard University, Chair)

Roger Owen (Harvard University) on Egypt

Bruce Hall (Duke University) on Mali

Michael Semple (Queens University Belfast) on Afghanistan