

IPW LECTURES

Simple Twists of Faith. Accommodating Muslim Minorities in Secular Societies — The Case of Quebec

Vortragende: **Beesan Sarrouh**
(Ryerson University Toronto)

Discussant: Dominique Bauer
(Islamisch-Theologische Studien, Universität Wien)

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Abstract:

Quebec offers an interesting perspective on the relationship between minority nationalism and the integration of immigrants. Immigration into the homeland of a national minority often reinforces its sense of cultural insecurity. Quebec has responded by exercising its substantial jurisdiction within the Canadian federation to develop a distinctive approach to immigrant integration, known as interculturalism. The presentation examines the controversies surrounding Quebec's approach. I argue that the content of the current debates, which increasingly focus on the accommodation of religious diversity, is driven primarily by the church-state settlement reached in the province in the middle of the 20th century. However, Quebecers' minority status does matter. It increases the frequency and intensity of conflict about diversity policy. In addition, it shapes attitudes towards the process for managing disputes. Quebecers' believe such issues should be resolved in Quebec, and they resist the idea that pan-Canadian institutions should have a central role.

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