Center for Global Islamic Studies

Politics of Desecularization: Law and the Minority Question in Pakistan

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The movement away from secularist practices and toward political Islam is a prominent trend across Muslim polities. Yet this shift remains under-theorized. Why do modern Muslim polities adopt policies that cater to religious sensibilities? How are these encoded in law and with what effects? Sadia Saeed addresses these questions through examining shifts in Pakistan's official state policies toward the rights of religious minorities, in particular the controversial Ahmadiyya community. Looking closely at the 'Ahmadi question', Saeed develops a framework for understanding modern desecularization processes that emphasizes the critical role of nation-state formation, political majoritarianism, and struggles between 'secularist' and 'religious' ideologues in evolving political and legal fields.

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Roemmele Global Commons, Williams Hall

Sadia Saeed is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of San Francisco. She is a historical sociologist with substantive interests in sociology of religion, political sociology, human rights, and international law. Her first book, *Politics of Desecularization: Law and the Minority Question in Pakistan*, examines how the contentious relationship between Islam, nationalism, and rights of religious minorities has been debated and institutionalized in colonial India and Pakistan. Her current research focuses on the emergence and evolution of minority rights in international law. Saeed received her PhD in Sociology from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Previously, she held postdoctoral fellowships at the Maurer School of Law and Indiana University, Bloomington and Yale University.

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