



Geneva's 2019 Secularism Law

Interdisciplinary Considerations

Friday, 31 January 2020, from 09h00 until 15h15
Uni-S, Room B-105, Schanzenbeckstrasse 1, 3012 Bern

A workshop for PhD- and undergraduate students by the doctoral program of the Theological Faculty at the University of Berne.

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Institute for Systematic Theology
Ass. Angela Ullmann
Prof. Dr. Mathias Wirth

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Workshop on 31 January 2020

The canton of Geneva pursues a model of separation of state and church (since 1907) and has reaffirmed it in 2012 with a constitutional revision. After years of negotiation, Geneva's populace has said yes to the new secularism law in February of 2019. Yet renewed resistance has already been announced in front of Geneva's constitutional court. Limiting the law only to its ban on wearing religious symbols for state officials is unjust, as the law also aims at preserving religious peace and the freedom of religion and belief. What is this new secularism law in the canton of Geneva about?

The workshop aims at taking a closer look at the backgrounds and impacts of the law from the perspective of different disciplines. How did the need for a secularism law arise and what are the origins of the law? How is the voted-upon text of the law constructed and what traces have the years of negotiations left in the text? What are potential and already recognizable effects of the law on majority and minority populations? Should the '*pacte laïque*' be assessed as secular, religiously-neutral, anti-religious or differently? And how can such categories be handled with care to facilitate peaceful living together between the religious and non-religious? At the heart of the workshop are an epistemic interest in the context and the search for practicable interdisciplinarity.

Costs: The workshop is free of charge.

Language: English (without translation).

Registration: Please register with angela.ullmann@theol.unibe.ch by 19 January and address any questions to her.

Preparatory Readings: will be sent out by 22 January.

Program

08h40 Registration

09h00 Welcome & Introduction

Prof. Dr. Mathias Wirth, University of Berne
Angela Ullmann, University of Berne

09h15 Process Overview and Reading the Text of the Law

Sylvain Odier, Horrizon Parrhésia
Angela Ullmann, University of Berne

10h00 Input 1: Legal Perspective

Prof. Dr. René Pahud de Mortanges, University of Fribourg

10h30 Coffee Break

11h00 Input 2: Socio-Scientific Perspective

Prof. Dr. Irene Becci, University of Lausanne

11h30 Input 3: Dialogical-Ethical Perspective

Agnete Holm, Danmission

12h00 Lunch

13h00 Moderated Exchange (incl. 20' coffee break)

Facilitation by Angela Ullmann

14h50 Considerations on Interdisciplinarity & Synthesis

15h15 End of Workshop

