

Freedom for Us or for All? ***(Non-)Religious Communities and FORB Rights***

Thursday, 5 May 2022

9:00-10:00	Arrival, registration & coffee	
10:00-11:30	PLENARY SESSION 1 (moderator: Jelle Creemers) Welcome by Prof. Dr Jos De Kock (Rector ETF Leuven) Mutual Introductions I “Me”, “Us” and “Them”: Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Coexistence of European (Non-) Religious Communities Dr Georgia Alida DuPlessis (ISFORB/ETF Leuven)	
11:30-12:30	SMALL PAPERS SESSION 1 Room A: (moderator: Bosco Bangura) - Reappraising a Torn Down Monastery in Antwerp: an Augustinian Theological Response to Catholic-Protestant Conflict – Davi Lin - Violations of Religious Freedom by Russian Invaders in Ukraine – Oleksandra Kovalenko Room B: (moderator: Rosita Šorytė) - The Xie Jiao Tradition, Taiwanese Governments, and Minority Religions, 1949–2021 – Massimo Introvigne - The Tai Ji Men Case in Taiwan – Annie Cheng and Liu Yin-Chun	
12:30-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:15	PLENARY SESSION 2 (moderator: Tatiana Kopaleishvili) Mutual Introductions II You’re Free To Do Anything We Want: How States Enable and/or Constrain the Freedoms of Religious Communities Prof. Em. Dr Eileen Barker (INFORM/London School of Economics)	
15:30-16:30	SMALL PAPERS SESSION 2 Room A: (moderator: Davi Lin) - The Jewish Question and the Challenge of a Religious Minority: Gerhard Kittel’s Die Judenfrage (1933): A Critical Discourse Analysis – Anne-Cathérine Pardon - <i>“For Our Freedom and Yours”?</i> <i>Designing the Discourse of Religious Freedom in the Late USSR</i> – Nadezhda Beliakova Room B: (moderator: Dennis Petri) - “Secretphobia”: The Modern Prejudice Against Religious and Spiritual Secrets – Rosita Šorytė - The Secret of the Confession: A Thing of the Past? – Massimo Introvigne	
18:00	Conference Dinner (Optional)	

Friday, 6 May 2022

8:00-9:00	Breakfast	(Optional)
9:30-10:15	PLENARY SESSION 3 (moderator: Jelle Creemers) Queens in the King's Business: Gendered Paradoxes and Religious Freedom Within Religious Communities Dr Brenda Bartelink (Groningen University)	
10:30-11:30	SMALL PAPERS SESSION 3 Room A: (moderator: Davi Lin) - <i>"Diminishing Religious Freedom and Subversive Adaptation of Christianity by Hindu Converts"</i> – John Varughese - Challenges to Religious Freedom in the Indigenous Communities of Latin America – Dennis Petri Room B: (moderator: A-C Pardon) - The Status of Non-Religious Communities in Italy Between Old Tensions and New Challenges – Adelaide Madera - The Freedom of Thought Report of the International Humanist and Ethical Union: A Critical Assessment of Methods and Outcomes of a Transnational Comparison of FoRB – Christof Sauer	
11:45-12:45	PLENARY SESSION 4: Looking into the future	
12:45-13:45	Lunch	
13:45-14:30	PLENARY SESSION 5 (moderator: Tatiana Kopaleishvili) Immigrant Pentecostal Communities in Liberal Belgium: An African Intercultural Conversation Dr Bosco Bangura (ISFORB/ETF Leuven)	
14:45-15:45	SMALL PAPERS SESSION 4 (moderator: Massimo Introvigne) - Abuse of State Control of Minority and New Religious Movements Through Taxation: A FORB Problem – Willy Fautré - Religious Confession Privilege and Scientology in the U.S. and Europe – Eric Roux	
15:45-16:00	PLENARY SESSION 6: Closing Words	

Paper in italics are presented online.

Saturday, 7 May 2022

OPTIONAL: for those who stay longer, we will organize an informal city tour in Leuven, ending with a Belgian beer on a terrace (if the weather allows...)!

WIFI Code: ETF/LCCS-Guests Password: ETF/LCCS-Guests

PLENARY PAPER 1

“Me”, “Us” and “Them”: Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Coexistence of European (Non-) Religious Communities

Dr Georgia Alida DuPlessis (ISFORB/ETF Leuven)

This paper illuminates, by way of illustrative examples, the various aspects and controversies that might arise from the relationship between (non-) religious communities and the right to freedom of religion or belief.

It is trite that the right to freedom of religion or belief, and all its (sometimes controversial) elements as provided in Article 9 of the *European Convention on Human Rights*, applies to each and every *individual* without distinction. Can a (non-) religious community also hold and exercise the right to freedom of religion or belief (either fully or in part)? If so, what will this look like and what are the complexities that will arise?

It is predicted that (at least) three levels of interaction will play a role in establishing how the right to freedom of religion or belief will manifest within (non-) religious communities – the “me”, the “us” and the “them”. The “us” concerns the extent to which (non-) religious communities are given the autonomy to self-organize in line with their doctrines. The scope of the extent to which they can “selforganize” under the right to freedom of religion or belief is especially relevant in the event of clashes with the state. At the level of the (non-) religious individual (the “me”) in relation to, and sometimes as a member of, the (non-) religious community (the “us”), various human rights aspects come to the fore especially when the rights of the individual come into conflict with that of the religious community to which that individual belongs. Finally, complexities can exist when different (non-) religious communities (the “them”) have difficulty to coexist or one community is favored or is perceived to be favored above another by the state.

PLENARY PAPER 2

You’re Free To Do Anything We Want: How States Enable and/or Constrain the Freedoms of Religious Communities

Prof. Em. Dr Eileen Barker (INFORM/London School of Economics)

Many are the ways in which a state can protect and/or control the religious communities falling within its judicial system. Sometimes its stated rationale is to protect the religions’ rights; sometimes it is to protect its citizens from a religion’s (potentially) harmful practices. This paper will focus of the variety of methods employed by states to regulate minority religions, ranging from execution, through torture, banning, imprisonment, and a wide range of restrictions, to ‘tolerant discrimination’. Examples will be drawn from around the globe, including China, Russia, Pakistan, France, Estonia and the United States of America. While a distinction will be recognised between what Jonathan Fox has called government-based religious discrimination (GRD) and societal religious discrimination (SRD), an attempt will be made to explore ways in which states can influence and be influenced by such variables as supra-national Conventions, the media, mainstream religions and ‘public opinion’.

PLENARY PAPER 3

Queens in the King's Business: Gendered Paradoxes and Religious Freedom Within Religious Communities

Dr Brenda Bartelink (Groningen University)

This paper offers some insights and reflections on the religious freedom of individuals within religious communities. It builds on ethnographic research in African-Dutch churches in The Netherlands and their understandings and approaches to gender and sexual wellbeing. The lecture engages with the findings of this research to offer reflections on two levels.

First, it looks at the lived religious practices, asking how gender and intergenerational differences are shaped and negotiated within religious communities between people of different genders and ages. Example of female leadership in African Dutch Pentecostal churches in particular, present certain paradoxes of how gender roles are affirmed as well as challenged at the same time.

Second, these paradoxes question common secular assumptions and biases around the roles and positions of women in religious communities. What is by now well-known among researchers of Pentecostal Christianity, is that Pentecostal women do become religious leaders. Being a female leader in a context (e.g. Christianity) in which female authority was for many centuries hardly possible, comes with its challenges. Yet, rather than being disempowered, Pentecostal female leaders mirror secular feminists in their efforts to break through the 'so-called glass ceilings'. In doing so they create the necessary space for a more sensitive approach to challenging and precarious matters related to sexuality and gender that affect women and young people in particular.

The paper concludes with advocating a more critical and nuanced understanding of how gendered power differences within communities affect individuals' abilities to choose and exercise their religious beliefs freely, arguing that religious AND secular actors have their own work to do to ensure equal access to FoRB rights and navigate the tensions between communal and individual approaches to this.

PLENARY CONVERSATION (4)

Immigrant Pentecostal Communities in Liberal Belgium: An African Intercultural Conversation

Dr Bosco Bangura (ISFORB/ETF Leuven)

My plenary paper will introduce a conversation which: (i) begins with a discussion of the opportunities presented by a state that operates an inclusive and non-doctrinal secularism; (ii) assesses how African Pentecostal churches in (Flanders) Belgium relate with other churches in their networks; (iii) discuss the ongoing catalogue of relationships that link these immigrant Christian communities with churches, movements and networks from countries of origin; (iv) explore the missiological and intercultural implications that arise when churches of a migration background decide to consciously operate within the confines of an inclusive and non-doctrinal secular state such as Belgium.

SMALL PAPER SESSION 1 – Room A:

Reappraising a Torn Down Monastery in Antwerp: an Augustinian Theological Response to Catholic-Protestant Conflict

Davi Lin, Seminário Teológico Servo de Cristo (STSC)/ISFORB Visiting Researcher

This paper offers an Augustinian theological response to interreligious conflict between Catholics and Protestants considering two different historical moments at Sint-Andrieskerk (Saint Andrew's) church in Antwerp. At the time of the 16th Century Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther and the Augustinian order were regarded as the initiators who disrupted unity and brought misfortune to the Catholic Church. The Protestant Reformation was born within the Augustinian Order and its first martyrs were two Flemish Augustinian friars from Antwerp, Hendrik Voes and Johann Esch, condemned in a Brussels trial in 1523. Since the Augustinian monastery in Antwerp had been crucial to spread Luther's ideas, it was destroyed by the Catholic Church and replaced by the building of the Sint-Andrieskerk (Saint Andrew's) church. Although Saint Andrew's church had been an epicenter of conflict and Catholic repression in Antwerp, during the Reformation 500th anniversary in 2017 the exposition entitled "Lutheran Spring in Antwerp: Tolerance and Repression in the Sixteenth Century" offered a fundamentally ecumenical position. It highlighted the widespread discontent with the 16th century Catholic Church as a fertile ground for Luther's well-intentioned ideas, and sought to raise awareness to the memory of the Protestant "first victims". Furthermore, it acknowledged the common challenges Catholics and Protestants face in secularized 21st century Europe. Since present-day Catholics and Protestants regard the Augustinian tradition as their own heritage, this paper offers an Augustinian theological response to Catholic-Protestant conflict. Although the Augustinian monastery in Antwerp has been destroyed, the dialogical character that highlights church unity in this same tradition offers an inspiration for ecumenical dialogue. The theological response will be based by highlighting three of Augustine of Hippo's conceptions towards Christian unity: the dialogical character of Confessions, the meaning of concordia, and the church as Totus Christus in common pilgrimage towards the City of God.

Violations of Religious Freedom by Russian invaders in Ukraine

Oleksandra Kovalenko, ISFORB Visiting Researcher

On February 24, 2022, at 5 AM Russia started a full-scale military invasion of Ukraine, with multiple cities, including the capital, hit by missile strikes. Russian troops attacked simultaneously from every possible direction, crossing the Ukrainian border from the territories of Russia, Belarus and occupied Crimea. The unjustified and unprovoked Russian aggression affected every sphere of life of the Ukrainian people, including religion.

At least 98 churches and religious buildings were damaged or destroyed, on average – two per day. Some of them were historical monuments that survived two World Wars and a 70-year atheistic regime. Numerous killings of priests have been reported – including father Maxym Kozachyna, the priest of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, who was wearing a soutane when he was shot dead by Russian soldiers. At least 5 priests are in captivity – one of them, Father Vasyl Vyrozub, was a member of the Ukrainian border rescue mission on Zmiiny Island when he and the crew of the Sapphire Civil Rescue Ship were taken prisoner. Since then, the priest and chaplain of the OCU have been in captivity, suffering from moral and physical torture, which was reported by other crew members.

Most religious communities are actively participating in resisting the occupiers: by providing humanitarian aid, raising money for different needs, assisting in evacuation, joining the army as chaplains, engaging in cultural activities, providing moral support, etc. Even though religious freedom is now in danger because of the war, Ukrainian Churches and religious organisations are staying strong together with the Ukrainian people.

SMALL PAPER SESSION 1 – Room B:

The Xie Jiao Tradition, Taiwanese Governments, and Minority Religions, 1949–2021

Massimo Introvigne, CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions), Torino, Italy

From early Middle Ages, Imperial China has used the expression xie jiao (“heterodox teachings,” translated only recently as “evil cults”) to designate groups perceived as hostile to the state power and as such prohibited. This legal and political tradition passed to Republican China, and Communist China. It passed also to Taiwan, where several groups were considered xie jiao and had their activities limited during the Martial Law Period, including Soka Gakkai and Yiguandao. The end of the Martial Law Period saw a broader religious liberty. However, groups perceived as hostile to the ruling party were still labeled xie jiao, and a crackdown on several religious movements occurred in 1996, including Fo Guang Shan, Chung Tai Shan, the Taiwan Zen Buddhist Association, the Sung Chi-Li Miracle Association, and Tai Ji Men. Scholars discuss when exactly the “post-authoritarian” period ended and a transition to a full-blown democracy started. However, there are still relics in Taiwan of discrimination against groups labeled as xie jiao, particularly in the tax system.

The Tai Ji Men Case in Taiwan

Annie Cheng and Liu Yin-Chun, FOWPAL (Federation of World Peace and Love)

The paper will move from the author’s experiences within FOWPAL, an ECOSOC-accredited NGO founded by Dr. Hong Tao-Tze, the leader of Tai Ji Men, to present an economic and legal analysis of the Tai Ji Men case in Taiwan. After the politically motivated crackdown of 1996, which resulted in their arrest, Dr. Hong and his co-defendants were declared innocent of all charges up to Taiwan’s Supreme Court, and even awarded compensation for their past unjust detention. Yet, although they had been declared not guilty of tax evasion too, the National Taxation Bureau continued to issue tax bills, creating the “Tai Ji Men case” that has generated widespread street protests in Taiwan, and considerable domestic and international attention. The paper will also discuss the Tai Ji Men case within the context of tax reform problems in Taiwan and their relations with the tax status of religious and spiritual groups and FORB.

SMALL PAPER SESSION 2 – Room A:

The Jewish Question and the Challenge of a Religious Minority

Gerhard Kittel's *Die Judenfrage* (1933): A Critical Discourse Analysis

Anne-Cathérine Pardon, ETF Leuven/VUB Brussels

In addition to economic and religious developments, important socio-political changes take place in 19th century Europe, including the emancipation of the Jews. As soon as they leave the ghettos and actively participate in Western society, the latter sees itself confronted and challenged by the sudden visibility of a religious minority: the Jewish people. Moreover, since the emancipation occurred along with economic depressions and existential crises, the Jewish people quickly became a scapegoat and the so-called *Jewish Problem* (or *Jewish Question*) was seen as the source of all that was going wrong.

Gerhard Kittel (1886-1948) was a Lutheran theologian active in Nazi Germany. As a New Testament and Jewish Studies scholar, his main area of expertise concerned the relationship between the religion of the then majority, Christianity, and that of a minority, Judaism. Kittel is notorious for his *Die Judenfrage* (1933), which focused specifically on this 'Jewish problem' and appeared in several editions.

In the paper, a general introduction to the aforementioned oeuvre will be provided and insight will be given into why the theologian considered a guest status for the Jewish people as a solution (the other options being pogroms [extermination]), Zionism or assimilation), and what exactly this guest status of the religious minority implied. Moreover, going from the first to the second edition, Kittel made some changes to the work. Hence, by means of a critical discourse analysis, the linguistic and thematic modifications will be highlighted in the second part of the paper, and it will be verified to what extent a modification of Kittel's ideology and approach towards the Jewish people and Judaism can be unveiled.

"For Our Freedom and Yours"? Designing the Discourse of Religious Freedom in the Late USSR

Nadezhda Beliakova, Senior Scientific Fellow at the Institute of World History, Russian Academy of Sciences

In my topic I will analyse the formation of the concept of religious freedom in the late Soviet Union. The focus will be on an analysis of texts from three religious groups who issued a discourse on religious rights/religious freedom during the 1970s and early 1980s. The focus of my research is on texts on religious rights, that appeared in "samizdat". These texts were regularly published in the periodicals "Bulletin of the Council of Evangelical Christian Baptists", "Chronicle of the Catholic Church of Lithuania", and documents of "The Christian Committee for the Defence of Believers' Rights in the USSR". We will look at how the concept of religious freedom was formed in different religious communities - Evangelical Christian Baptists (illegal wing), Lithuanian Catholics and Orthodox. The focus will be on what kind of believers' rights were clearly articulated and which did not come into focus. We also formulate the question of whether it has been proposed to fight for freedom of religious or belief for all believers and denominations. All the analysed groups were a marginal religious minority (in the context of Soviet secular society). Their human rights discourse was formed in the context of the right to "the freedom of conscience" proclaimed by the Soviet state as freedom from religion. A comparison of "Soviet-style freedom of conscience" with the "freedom of religion or belief" of the religious communities in the USSR will make it possible to answer the question of what kind of freedom these individual human rights initiatives were about.

SMALL PAPER SESSION 2 – Room B:

“Secretphobia”: The Modern Prejudice Against Religious and Spiritual Secrets

Rosita Šorytė, FOB (European Federation for Freedom of Belief)

Based on her experience as a diplomat and an activist for religious liberty, the author examines the idea that religious and spiritual movements should not have secrets, and that secrets are “bad” and indicate that a “cult” is at work. This prejudice applies to different form of secrets that are part and parcel of several religious traditions, and may create serious problems of FORB.

The Secret of the Confession: A Thing of the Past?

Massimo Introvigne, CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions)

Because of the cases of pedophile priests, some countries have introduced provisions that would compel priests who learn of instances of sexual abuses in confession to disclose them to secular authorities. In other countries, this is being proposed by politicians and scholars. The Catholic Church answers that the secret of the confession is inviolable, and priests who breach the seal of confession are excommunicated. The paper argues that the secret of the confession in a secular society cannot be maintained as a privilege protecting one specific religion, i.e., the Catholic Church, but should be protected as part of a religious confidential exchanges privilege applicable to all religions.

SMALL PAPER SESSION 3 – Room A:

Diminishing Religious Freedom and Subversive Adaptation of Christianity by Hindu Converts

John Varughese, Department of Theology, SAIACS, Bangalore, India

In the Indian subcontinent, Freedom of Religion or Belief [FORB] is increasingly becoming constricted by majoritarian politics, specifically targeting Muslims and Christians. Building on an injured social psyche about its colonial past, the nationalist agenda tends to alienate the minorities by tying their identities to the foreign oppressors: Muslims with the Moghul invasion and Christians with the British Raj.

Religious conversion in the subcontinent is a complex phenomenon since it is viewed as a loss to Hinduism. Religious converts feel that they have to prove their loyalty to the nation in the light of accusations of betrayal. “Hybridity”, a concept that Homi Bhabha popularized to capture the mixing of Eastern and Western cultures in postcolonial literature, is seen as a subversive tool within political and cultural spheres and can be applied in the religious sphere as well. While challenged by Christian missionaries, Arya Samaj and Brahmo Samaj adopted certain missionary attitudes; converts to Christianity can also be seen combining multiple identities in response to the contextual challenges they face.

Building on my earlier work on religious conversion (see, “Religious Freedom: Freedom of Conversion or Freedom from Conversion,” IBMR, Vol: 45 (4): 388–396, 2021; “Religious Conversion in India: Four Portraits of a Complex and Controversial Phenomenon,” JAET, Vol. 25 (1): 97–118, 2021), this paper examines how Christians tend to navigate this complex landscape by occupying hybridized sites seeking to remain Hindu while following Christ. It explores how marginalized communities like the Dalits adopt a method of subversive assertiveness by intentionally breaking with their past and how converts from the upper caste groups see a cultural continuity with the Hindu traditions occupying hybridized identities as in the case of the Krista Bhakta movement.

Challenges to Religious Freedom in the Indigenous Communities of Latin America

Dennis P. Petri, IIRF

During the last decades of the twentieth century, indigenous movements emerged throughout Latin America. The demands of these movements went beyond the social inclusion of indigenous communities in the economic system. They demanded the recognition of group rights and ethnic determination. This unprecedented mobilization of indigenous groups, often referred to as *indigenismo*, had major political consequences. A milestone for the indigenous movement was the adoption in 1989 of the International Labor Organization’s (ILO) “Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries”, which formally recognized the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples, among other things. As a result, countries such as Colombia and Mexico granted indigenous communities far-reaching self-determination rights. Whilst indigenous autonomy is generally regarded as something positive, the existence of human rights abuses inside indigenous communities has received relatively little attention in legal scholarship. Human rights abuses include severe violations of religious freedom, particularly of converts away from the traditional religion. Indeed, when indigenous Christians refuse to obey the orders of the indigenous leaders, they suffer human security threats including imprisonment, forced displacement, denial of access to water, healthcare and education, confiscation of homes and farmland, torture, and even death. Whilst Christians in these communities claim they have a right to religious freedom, Christianity is considered by community leaders as a threat to the preservation of the indigenous culture and of social cohesion. Based on original empirical field research conducted in indigenous communities in Colombia and Mexico, I discuss the challenge of balancing the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples and the individual human rights of people living in indigenous territories, particularly religious minorities. I show this has implications for the analysis of “minority in the minority” situations beyond the context of Latin America.

SMALL PAPER SESSION 3 – Room B:

The Status of Non-Religious Communities in Italy Between Old Tensions and New Challenges

Adelaide Madera, University of Messina, Italy

Starting from an analysis of the Italian model of church- state relationships, which is based on a problematic reconciliation of the constitutional principles of secularism, equal freedom of all religious communities and a kind of “selective” church-state cooperation, the present paper focuses on the status of atheistic convictions in Italy, analyzing the case of the Union of Atheist and Rationalist Agnostics (UARR).

Since the 1990s, where the UAAR claimed its right to start negotiations to enter into an agreement with the State, Italian courts have faced the crucial issue of the legal definition of a religious denomination, as a preliminary requirement to have access to an agreement. The decision of the Constitutional Court no. 52/2016 has been the final result of a long travailed process. The Italian supreme judicial board held that the Government enjoys broad political discretion with regard to the decision to start negotiations grounded on article 8.3 of our Constitution with religious communities and courts cannot second-guess such a political choice. Following this perspective, the Constitutional Court dissociated the principles of equal liberty of religious communities and religious pluralism from the bilateralism method, exacerbating the risk of a disparate treatment of certain philosophical and even religious groups (i.e. Islam, new religious movements).

The paper will explore the consistence of the decision with the Italian Constitutional framework as a whole and with article 17 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which emphasizes the need for a dialogue between the State and non-religious and philosophical communities. Finally, the paper will investigate whether and to what extent an action of the Italian lawmaker aimed at enforcing an updated law regulating religious freedom would affect the status of non-religious communities, with a view to opening new channels of communication between the State and all social actors.

The Freedom of Thought Report of the International Humanist and Ethical Union: A Critical Assessment of Methods and Outcomes of a Transnational Comparison of FoRB

Christof Sauer, FTH Giessen/ISFORB/ETF Leuven

The few extant transnational assessments of freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) worldwide are usually undertaken by government bodies or by NGOs and independent research institutions. Depending on capacity and funding they either cover all countries or only the worst perpetrators of violations of FoRB. Depending on perspective and interest they balance comprehensiveness and depth differently. Some assess FoRB for all, usually at the expense of depth when it comes to particular groups. Others focus on one particular belief group at substantial depth but with little or no coverage of others. Some approaches are mainly descriptive, while others attempt a transnational comparison by some type of ranking and scoring, and further approaches try to combine both. Obviously, methodologies and outcomes vary in depth and quality depending on the approaches chosen.

The Freedom of Thought Report of the International Humanist and Ethical Union (IHEU) is one among the few annual reports focusing on discrimination and persecution of a particular world view group and simultaneously attempting a broad international coverage. The report, which focuses on the non-religious, has first been published in 2012, is continuously evolving and seeks to grow in coverage and quality. This paper undertakes a critical assessment of the approach employed and the outcomes presented in the latest report of 2017, while using the online database and prior reports as a background. A key question of interest is whether the criteria used could be equally employed to assess the freedom of religion or belief of religious people, and whether the questions lend themselves to generalization and adaptation.

SMALL PAPER SESSION 4:

Abuse of State Control of Minority & New Religious Movements Through Taxation: A FORB Problem Willy Fautré, Human Rights Without Frontiers, Brussels

For 25 years the spiritual movement Tai Ji Men in Taiwan has been fighting for justice to be done in its conflict with the National Taxation Bureau despite having been declared non-guilty of tax evasion by the Supreme Court in 2007. The paper will cover a number of court cases concerning discriminatory and deliberate persecution of minority and new religious movements by public taxation administration agencies in three democratic countries: France (Jehovah's Witnesses, an Evangelical church and two Aumist movements in France), Canada (Taoist Tai Chi Institutes in Canada), India (The Catholic Church), and compare them to the situation in Taiwan. The paper will explain why such practices are to be considered breaches of freedom of religion or belief.

Religious Confession Privilege and Scientology in the U.S. and Europe Eric Roux, European Interreligious Forum for Religious Freedom

In the recent book *Religious Confession and Evidential Privilege in the 21st Century*, a chapter by Eric Lieberman discusses in detail the application of this privilege to the unique practices of Scientology under U.S. law. But what about Europe? Indeed, Europe may see different appreciations of what should be considered as religious confidential exchanges privilege that deserves full protection of the law, depending on which State is considered. The underlying basis for such privilege is to be found in European human rights law, namely the European Convention on Human Rights. The paper discusses how this applies to Scientology practices, and why, whilst each member state has a "margin of appreciation" in evaluating the existence and extent of need for an interference into FORB, this could not be used to deny religious confession privilege to any religion, including Scientology [of which the presenter is a member].