



RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: ITS CONFIRMATION AND VIOLATION DURING THE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES



In memoriam, Professor Juha Seppo (1939-2018)

Conference at the University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu, 22-27 February 2018

Address: Yliopistokatu 4, Joensuu

THURSDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2018

Room AT100 (School of Theology, Agora Building)

14:30

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Ilkka HUHTA (Head of School of Theology at the University of Eastern Finland)

15:00

PANEL I: GENERAL CONCEPTS

Chair: Katarzyna STOKŁOSA (University of Southern Denmark, Sønderborg)

1. Ringo RINGVEE (Religious Affairs Department, Tallinn): "Securitization of Religion - From Real Threats to Imagined Ones"
2. Ina MERDŽANOVA (Trinity College Dublin): "Religion and Politics in Post-Communist Society: The Case of Muslims in the Balkans"
3. Patricia DUVAL (Attorney-at-Law, Paris): "Anti-sect Movements and State Neutrality, the Case of FECRIS (European Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Sectarianism)"
4. Ilkka HUHTA (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu): "The Understanding of Religious Freedom between Lutheranism and Orthodoxy in Finland"

19:00

DINNER at Teatteri Restaurant (Rantakatu 20)

FRIDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2018

Room AG101 (School of Humanities, Agora Building)

10:00

PANEL II: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & THE EU I

Chair: Max WÖRNHARD (University of Bern)

1. Willy FAUTRE (Human Rights without Frontiers, Brussels): "The Contribution of the European Court of Human Rights to Religious Freedom in the EU Space/ Jurisprudence on some Sect/ Cult Issues."
2. Gerhard BESIER (Sigmund Neumann Institute, Berlin/Dresden/Flensburg): "The Co-operation Between Church and State in Germany"
3. James T. RICHARDSON (University of Nevada, Reno): "The European Court of Human Rights: Changes and Challenges in the Social Construction of Religious freedom"
4. Rosita ŠORYTĖ (Vilnius/New York): "Religious Persecution, Refugees, and the Right of Asylum: A European Perspective"

12:30

LUNCH at Aura Restaurant (Aurora Building, UEF)

14:00

PANEL III: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & THE EU II

Chair: Hannu MUSTAKALLIO (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu)

1. Régis DERICQUEBOURG (FVG and Group of Sociology of Religion and Secularism, CNRS, Paris): "Laïcité – The French Model of Religious Freedom"
2. Matti KOTIRANTA (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu): "Religious Freedom and the Legislative Framework of Tackling Radicalization and Extremism in Finland"
3. Martin NYKVIST (Lund University): "Different Denominations Living Together in an Egalitarian Multicultural Society – Sweden as a Model for Europe?"
4. Corneliu PINTILESCU (George Baritiu Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca): "From Repressed Religious Group to Official Denomination: Jehovah's Witnesses and Religious Freedom in Post-Communist Romania"

19.00

DINNER at Torero Restaurant (Siltakatu 8)

SATURDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2018

Room AT100 (School of Theology, Agora Building)

10:00

PANEL IV: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN RUSSIA

Chair: Max WÖRNHARD (University of Bern)

1. Michael BOURDEAUX (St. Edmund Hall/Keston College, Oxford/Moscow University): "Memory and Oblivion: An Aspect of the Historiography of the Russian Orthodox Church Today"
2. Heta HURSKAINEN (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu): "The Russian Orthodox Church's Position on Religious Freedom before the 1997 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations"
3. Jeanne KORMINA (Higher School of Economics at St. Petersburg): "The Church Should Know Its Place": Cultural Heritage, Social Protests and the Limits of Desecularisation in Russia"

12:00

LUNCH at Carelia Restaurant (Carelia Building, UEF)

13:00

PANEL V: NEW RELIGIONS

Chair: Katarzyna STOKŁOSA (University of Southern Denmark, Sønderborg)

1. Eileen BARKER (London School of Economics): "Religious Freedom and the 'New Religions'"
2. Sanja NILSSON (Dalarna University, Falun): "New Religious Movements, Totalitarian Regimes, and Authoritarian Governments"
3. Massimo INTROVIGNE (CESNUR, New York/Torino): "Religious Liberty Issues in Russia and Hungary: A Case Study of the Church of Scientology"

15:00

COFFEE BREAK at Carelia Restaurant (Carelia Building, UEF)

15:30

PANEL VI: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM & JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Chair: Teuvo LAITILA (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu)

1. George D. CHRYSSIDES (University of Birmingham): "Be Not Conformed – A Historical Survey of the Watch Tower Society's Relationships with Society".
2. Wolfram SLUPINA (Jehovah's Witnesses Central Europe Office, Sellers): "Religious Freedom and Jehovah's Witnesses in Putin's Russia, Georgia and CIS"
3. Zoe KNOX (University of Leicester): "The Origins of Conscientious Objection in the Watch Tower Organisation"

17:30

CLOSING WORDS

SUNDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2018

Sokos Hotel Vaakuna, Torikatu 20/ St. Petersburg

Excursion to St. Petersburg, 25-27 February

- 8:00 DEPARTURE BY BUS FROM OUTSIDE THE HOTEL VAAKUNA
Lunch en route before crossing the border.
- 18:00 ARRIVAL IN ST. PETERSBURG (approx.)
Helvetia Hotel, Ulitsa Marata 11
- 19:00 DINNER at Claret Café (Ulitsa Marata 11)

MONDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2018

St. Petersburg, Hotel Helvetia, Ulitsa Marata 11

- 9:00 GUIDED BUS TOUR OF ST. PETERSBURG - guide Angelina
- 11.00 Visit to the St. Petersburg Jewish Community/ Great Choral Synagogue
- 13.00 LUNCH Polotsov Mansion restaurant, Bolshaia Morskaia ulitsa 52
- 14.30 Piskarevskoe Memorial Cemetery
- 19.00 DINNER at Etnos Kafe (Kuznechnyi Pereulok 8) Georgian cuisine

TUESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2018

Hotel Helvetia, Ulitsa Marata 11/ Joensuu

- 10:00 DEPARTURE BY BUS FROM OUTSIDE THE HOTEL
Taxis will be arranged for participants departing by train or plane.
- 18:00 ARRIVAL IN JOENSUU (approx.)
Arriving at the Sokos Hotel Vaakuna, Torikatu 20

Important phone numbers:

- Taxi Joensuu +358 601 10100
- Prof. Gerhard Besier +49 172 588 7992
- Dr. Paul Fryer +358 40 547 3429
- Dr. Jussi Laine +358 50 433 8252
- Sokos Hotel Vaakuna +358 10 7823 100
- Cumulus Hotel: +358 200 48118
- Emergency number: 112
- Raimo Lappalainen +358 40 027 6960
(driver to St. Petersburg)

Maps

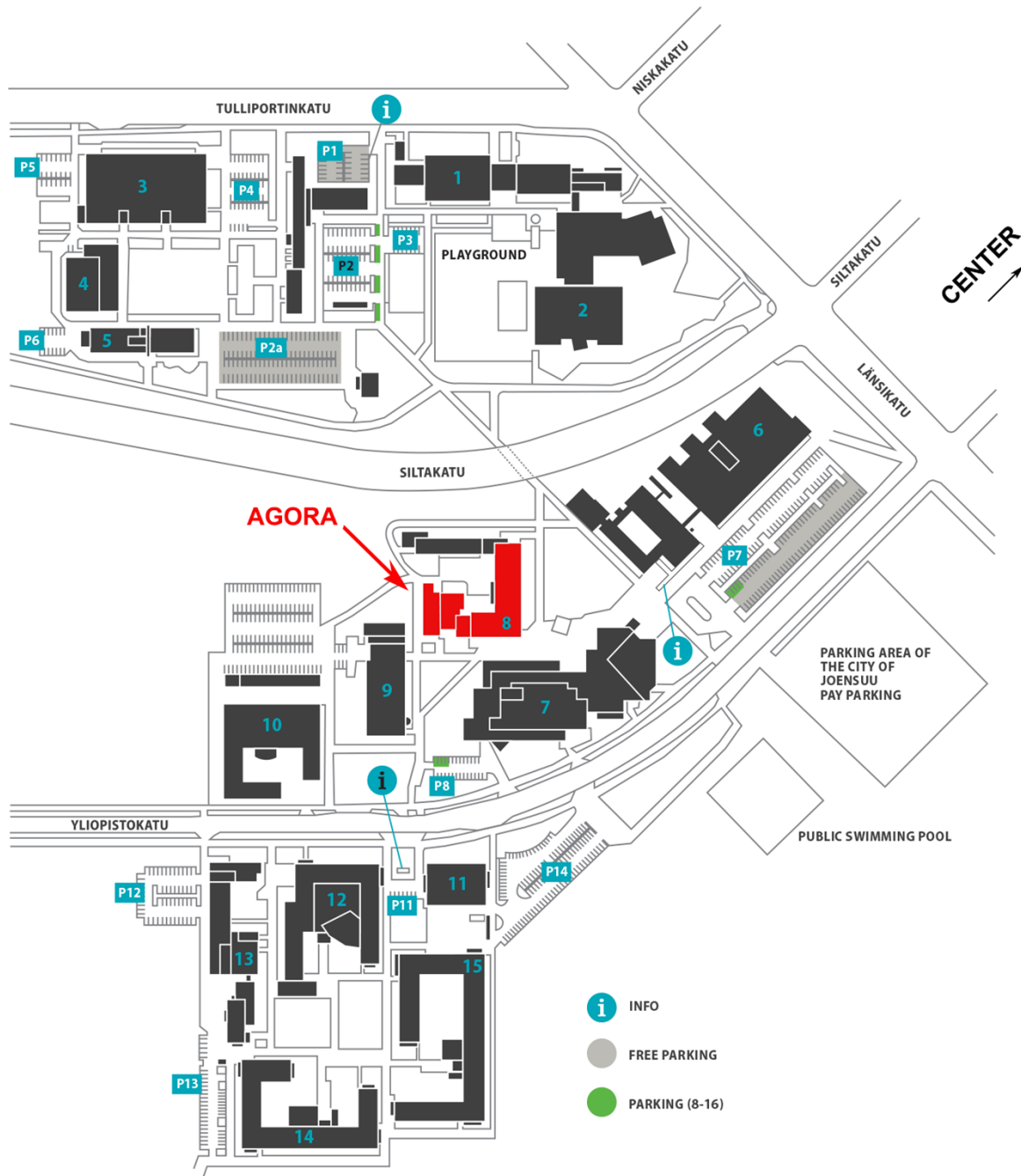
- [Printable campus map](#) (pdf)
- [Printable city map of Joensuu](#) (pdf)
- [Joensuu on Google maps](#)

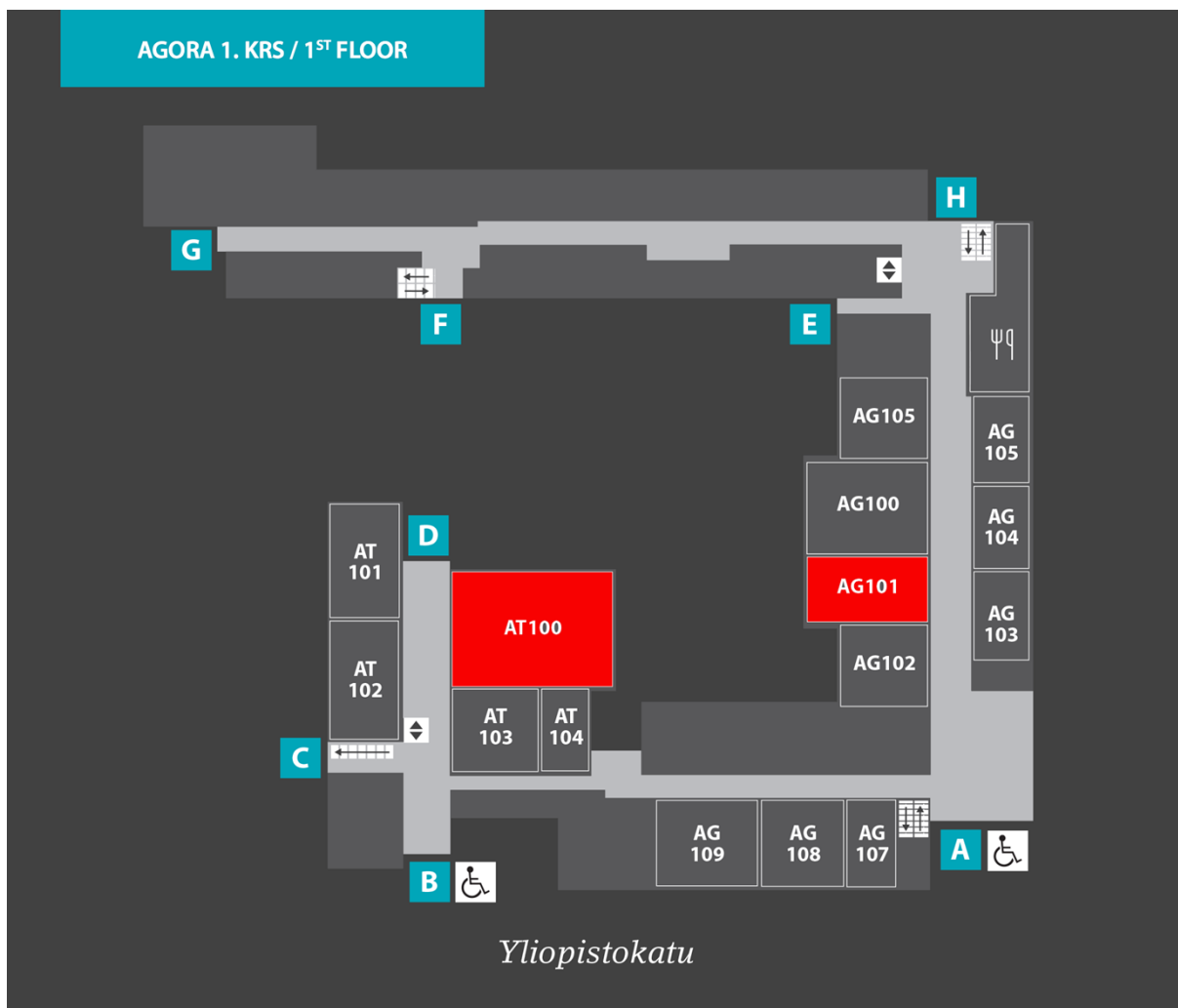
Suggested restaurants in Joensuu:

[Local Bistro](#), Koskikatu 9 (Regional)
[Kielo](#), Suvantokatu 12 (Regional)
[Torero](#), Siltakatu 8 (Spanish)
[Rosso](#), Siltakatu 8 (Italian)
[Amarillo](#), Torikatu 20 (Tex-Mex)
[Martina](#), Kirkkokatu 20 (Southern European)
[Mount Ganesh](#), Kauppakatu 23A (Nepalese)
[Hyve&Pahe](#), Kauppakatu 27 (Fusion)
[Roihu](#), Yläsatamakatu 9 (Pizza)
Jecika, Kirkkokatu 25 (Indian)
[Kerubi](#), Siltakatu 1 (pub and music)
[Kreeta](#), Rantakatu 32 (Greek)
[Pan Buddha](#), Torikatu 20 (Asian Fusion)

The conference is held in the **Agora building** of the Joensuu campus of the University of Eastern Finland (UEF). It takes approximately 15 minutes on foot to the University from the city centre.

UEF Joensuu Campus is compact, easy to reach and accessible. The campus is home to nearly 8000 degree students. The campus is located right by the city centre.





ARRIVING IN JOENSUU

Joensuu airport is located in the municipality of Liperi about 11 kilometres from Joensuu city centre.

Bus transportation from Joensuu airport to the city centre is available after every arriving flight. The bus waits for the passengers outside the terminal building. The bus fare is between 3 and 5 euro (CASH ONLY), depending on the time of the day. Please note that there is no ATM at Joensuu airport. Should you need to take out cash, please do so at Helsinki airport.

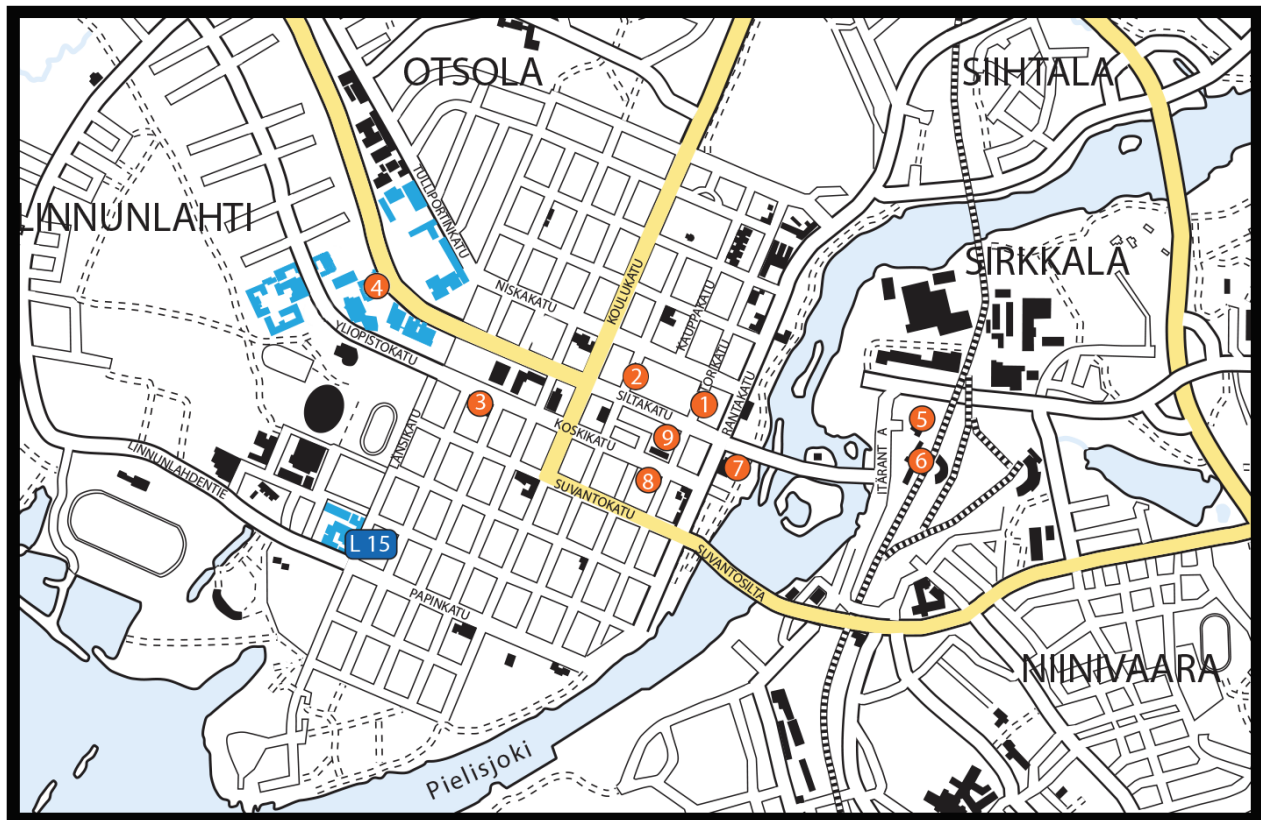
The bus stop in the city centre on Siltakatu Street (by the Market Square) is the closest one to both the Sokos Hotel Vaakuna and the Cumulus Hotel.

Taxis operating in the Joensuu region are on call at the taxi stand in front of the airport during the scheduled arrival times. Note that the number of taxis on call at the airport is limited and they operate on a first come, first served basis. To request an additional taxi to the airport, please call: 0601 10100.

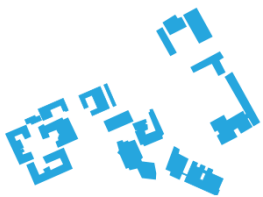
JOENSUU CLIMATE

Joensuu has a sub-Arctic continental climate. The effect of the Gulfstream, which warms most of Finland, is felt less in Joensuu than in southern and western Finland since Joensuu is relatively far from the coast. Temperatures in Joensuu are affected by continuing cold weather from inland Russia. In comparison with Finnish coastal areas Joensuu has considerably more snow in winter.

For the current weather: please click [here](#)



CAMPUS OF THE UNIVERSITY



L15 LÄNSIKATU 15
JOENSUU SCIENCE PARK

- ① Sokos Hotel Vaakuna / Torero restaurant
- ② Cumulus Hotel
- ③ City Library
- ④ University (Agora Building)
- ⑤ Buss station
- ⑥ Railway station
- ⑦ Town hall / Theatre restaurant
- ⑧ Carelicum - Cultural and tourism centre
- ⑨ Market Square

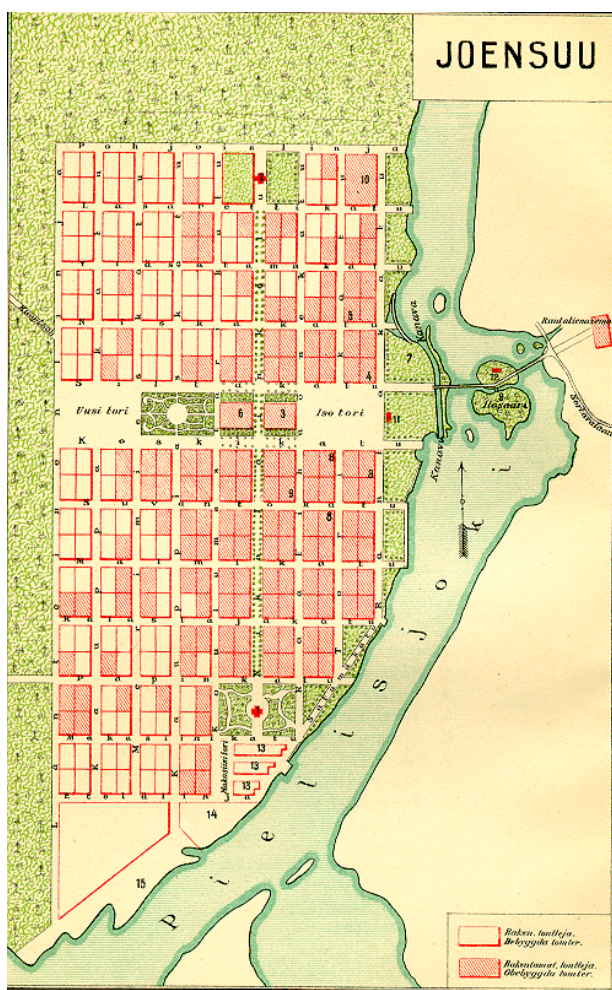
HISTORY

The city of Joensuu was founded by Tsar Nicholas I of Russia in 1848 and has grown to become the regional capital of North Karelia. During the 19th century Joensuu was a city of manufacture and commerce. Starting in 1860 local sawmills started to grow and prosper as the city received commercial rights and restrictions against industrial activities were lifted. An important centre of the glass industry developed in Utra neighbourhood – it had a considerable foreign population of about 11%. There was even a Swedish language school in those days.

Water traffic improved with the building of the [Saimaa Canal](#) in 1856. This made possible lively trade between the regions of North Karelia, St. Petersburg and Central Europe. At the beginning of the 20th century Joensuu was one of the largest port cities in Finland.

The River Pielisjoki has always been the heart of Joensuu. Throughout the centuries Karelian traders have travelled along the river and the canals that were completed at the end of 1870 and increased river traffic. Thousands of steamboats, barges and logging boats sailed along the river during this golden age of river traffic. The River Pielisjoki also has been an important route for log-floating and has provided wood to sawmills and the entire lumber industry.

In recent decades, the small agrarian town has developed into the vital centre of the North Karelia region. Joensuu had a population of 24,000 in 1954. Since 1960 economic growth in Finland has been strong and that decade saw the beginning of the urbanisation process. In the 1960s the population of North Karelia province decreased by more than 8% while the population of Joensuu grew by 28%. In 1960, an administrative region for North Karelia was also established and Joensuu became the capital of the region. In the 1970s, the kindergarten and comprehensive school systems were created and many improvements were made in the field of social benefits.



The establishment of the University of Joensuu in 1969 (now [University of Eastern Finland](#) after merging with the University of Kuopio in 2010) and the further growth of the university have been crucial to the development of the city. Currently, the Joensuu campus comprises three faculties and several independent research and teaching units and has close to 8000 full-time students. The university's diversified international co-operation in science, industry and commerce benefits the whole region.

The proximity of the eastern border has been an important factor throughout the history of the city. The Republic of Karelia in Russia has become – once again – a significant area for cross-border co-operation. The border station Värtsilä – Niirala is about an hour's drive from Joensuu. It was opened in 1991 and nowadays 1.5 million people cross the border annually. Export companies in Joensuu continue the traditions of past centuries in foreign trade. The cultural life also flourishes and gains new influences and reflections from the cultural diversity along the border.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. **BARKER, Eileen** (London School of Economics)
2. **BESIER, Gerhard** (Sigmund Neumann Institute, Berlin/Dresden/Flensburg)
3. **BOURDEAUX, Michael** (St. Edmund Hall/Keston College, Oxford/Moscow University)
4. **CHRYSSIDES, George D.** (University of Birmingham)
5. **DERICQUEBOURG, Régis** (FVG and Group of Sociology of Religion and Secularism, CNRS, Paris)
6. **DUVAL, Patricia** (Attorney-at-Law, Paris)
7. **FAUTRÉ, Willy** (Human Rights without Frontiers, Brussels)
8. **FRYER, Paul** (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu)
9. **HUHTA, Iikka** (Head of School of Theology at the University of Eastern Finland)
10. **HURSKAINEN, Heta** (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu)
11. **INTROVIGNE, Massimo** (CESNUR, New York/Torino)
12. **KNOX, Zoe** (University of Leicester)
13. **KORMINA, Jeanne** (Higher School of Economics at St. Petersburg)
14. **KOTIRANTA, Matti** (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu)
15. **LAINE, Jussi** (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu)
16. **LAILA, Teuvo** (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu)

17. **MERDŽANOVA, Ina** (Trinity College Dublin)
18. **MUSTAKALLIO, Hannu** (University of Eastern Finland, Joensuu)
19. **NILSSON, Sanja** (Dalarna University, Falun)
20. **NYKVIST, Martin** (Lund University)
21. **PINTILESCU, Corneliu** (George Baritiu Institute of History of the Romanian Academy, Cluj-Napoca)
22. **RICHARDSON, James T.** (University of Nevada, Reno)
23. **RINGVEE, Ringo** (Religious Affairs Department, Tallinn)
24. **SLUPINA, Wolfram** (Jehovah's Witnesses Central Europe Office, Sellers)
25. **ŠORYTĖ, Rosita** (Vilnius/New York)
26. **STOKŁOSA, Katarzyna** (University of Southern Denmark, Sønderborg)
27. **WÖRNHARD, Max** (University of Bern)

LIST OF ABSTRACTS

Securitization of Religion - From Real Threats to Imagined Ones

– *Ringo RINGVEE*

Religion as security matter is nothing new in the human history although it has not been in the interest of academia until recently. Religion in the 21st century has had a distinct flavour. In this century religion has become increasingly a security issue for the Western governments, but not exclusively so. It may be argued that religion as a national security matter has become a global issue. Although the threats may be much of a country specific one of the most serious challenge for many countries around the globe today is IS, ISIS or Daesh and terrorism inspired by their salafi-jihadist interpretation of Islam. In that context the securitization of Islam has emerged to be a topic in public discourse. In the 1980s the security studies emerged in the framework of the discipline of international relations. 'Copenhagen school' in security studies, Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde (1998) defined the central concept of security studies the securitization as a process in which someone defines a security threat by a "speech act" and the threat legitimizes urgent and exceptional means for restoring security.

Islam is not the first religion in the West seen through the security lenses. In the 20th century one of these religious groups were the Bible Students/Jehovah's Witnesses. From historical perspective, the reactions to the Bible Students/Jehovah's Witnesses contentious objection during the both World Wars were un-proportionate and taking ideas about theocracy to reflect their political agenda seriously flawed. Although Jehovah's Witnesses have been considered over the last century as a problematic religious movement in several countries in the Western hemisphere the threats from the Witnesses against the society have been imagined ones. Threat to democratic societies and people's lives by violent religiously motivated actors must be taken seriously and the state should step in with necessary legal and law enforcement measures when there is immediate threat to (national) security. However, the implementation of anti-extremism laws may become a useful tool also for fighting against different imagined threats. Example of this practice is Russia where the anti-extremist legislation (Yarovaya package) from 2016, initially intended to tackle terrorism, especially religiously motivated terrorism, is used against Jehovah's Witnesses, radical but non-violent religious group.

Religion and Politics in Post-Communist Society: The Case of Muslims in the Balkans

– *Ina MERDŽANOVA*

After 1989, Islam reappeared as an important social and political factor in the Balkans. With the newly-emerged religious freedom, and in the context of multiple structural and cultural post-communist transitions, Muslim communities underwent remarkable transformations. They sought to renegotiate their place in formally secular legal and normative environments, mostly as minorities in majority-Christian societies. They reclaimed their Islamic faith, practices and identities in a complex geopolitical situation dominated by anti-Muslim sentiments, particularly after 9/11, which mapped upon already existing national and regional apprehension of Islam related to the legacies of the five centuries of Ottoman rule in the Balkans. Post-communism created conditions for a rising political and cultural

awareness of Muslims, which was frequently expressed by recourse to two frames of reference: the national and the transnational. Despite a certain level of tension between those two perspectives, they were closely intertwined. Generally, it can be argued that transnational Islamic influences in the region often reinforced Muslim ethno-national identities rather than prompting a radical redefinition of religious allegiances in the key of a “universalist” Islam.

Anti-sect Movements and State Neutrality, the Case of FECRIS (European Federation of Centres of Research and Information on Sectarianism)

– *Patricia DUVAL*

The European Federation of Centres of Information and Research against Sectarianism (FECRIS) was created in France in 1994 by the French anti-sect movement, nearly entirely financed by the French State, with the intent to reach and influence the European and international scene in order to export the “French anti-sect model” abroad. In spite of its public financing, FECRIS has a Russian Vice-President, Alexander Dvorkin, who belongs to the Russian Orthodox Church and has devoted to fight against religious minorities seen as competitors to the Orthodox faith. Dvorkin and the FECRIS Russian chapter have been engaged in hate speech and disparagement against so-called “sects” for over twenty years, fuelling suspicion and prejudice that lead to repression such as banning and imprisonment, not to mention incitement of hatred that lead to physical violence, threats, vandalism and similar aggression. Most of the centres under the Russian chapter of FECRIS are “rehabilitation centres” where followers of minority religions are induced under pressure to recant their faith and return to the Orthodox fold. Dvorkin is also the deputy head of the Expert Religious Studies Council whose role is to advise the Russian Ministry of Justice about which groups should be permitted to register as religious organizations. This situation is of great concern and it infringes the duty of neutrality of States in religious matters under the international human rights instruments that France and Russia have committed to.

The Understanding of Religious Freedom between Lutheranism and Orthodoxy in Finland

– *Ilkka HUHTA*

Finland’s position between East and West has for a long time brought special characteristics not only to the country’s religious policy decisions but also to the interpretations of freedom of religion. My paper demonstrates how the understanding of religious freedom of two state churches, Lutheran and Orthodox, have been influenced by the historical situations and political contexts of Finland. When explaining the interpretations of freedom of religion formulated by churches, it manifests that historical context has a higher effect than church traditions or doctrines.

The analysis focuses on the discussions of the Freedom of Religion Acts 1923 & 2003 and the statements made by churches during these legislative processes. The contexts of the Freedom of Religion Act 1923 and the Freedom of Religion Act 2003 were immensely different. Only the fall of Russian central authority followed by the independence of Finland in 1917 created the political conditions necessary for the independent enactment of Finland’s own law. This enactment paved the way for Freedom of Religion Act 1923. The background of Finland’s latest Freedom of Religion Act was in the reform of basic rights in the ‘90s after the collapse of Soviet Union. The intention was to formulate new regulations on the most important economic, social and cultural rights and to identify clearly and broaden the current constitutional rights. International human rights agreements were also taken into account in the Freedom of Religion Act reform. I question in my paper how the Orthodox and Lutherans understood the concept of freedom of religion and how their interpretation differed from each other. Finland’s location between eastern and western cultures and its’ unique model of two state churches offers an exceptionally interesting context for this kind of comparative analysis.

The Contribution of the European Court of Human Rights to Religious Freedom in the EU Space/ Jurisprudence on some Sect/Cult Issues

– *Willy FAUTRE*

“The European Union respects and does not prejudice the status under national law of churches and religious associations or communities in the Member States. The European Union equally respects the status of philosophical and non-confessional organizations.”

This is the official text of Joint Declaration 11 on the Status of churches and non-confessional organizations which is to be found in the Final Act to the Treaty of Amsterdam signed by the fifteen Member States of the European Union on 2nd October 1997. The main consequence of this provision is that relations between State and Churches, religious or belief associations remain a competence of the EU member states and do not fall within the mandate of the European Union. This does not mean that there cannot be a dialogue between the EU and these entities. In the Lisbon Treaty signed in December 2007, the EU committed itself to maintain an “open, transparent and open dialogue” with them. On 24th June 2013, the EU adopted Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief. It first must be stressed that this EU Document in the drafting process of which we were involved along with religious communities and civil society is as important as the International Religious Freedom Act adopted by the United States in 1998. However, like the US Act, the EU Guidelines are not to be used domestically but outside the EU space.

The European Convention on Human Rights and its sword arm, the European Court of Human Rights, therefore remain the only instruments which can be used to develop religious freedom in the member states of the European Union. Jehovah's Witnesses have massively contributed to the jurisprudence of the European Court and its implementation in the EU member states and beyond in the northern hemisphere. This paper will focus on areas of enlargement of the religious freedom space in the European Union, especially for the benefit of new religious movements.

The Co-operation Between Church and State in Germany

– Gerhard *BESIER*

The German Weimar Reich Constitution of August 11th, 1919 involved an increase of people's rights by fixing the basic rights in the Constitution, and by rendering possible the people's participation in politics through petitions and referenda. The Protestant state church ceased to exist. The Constitution contained a provision for the separation of state and church. Still, both mainline churches, Protestants as well as Catholics, kept many of their privileges and were protected by the state against small religious communities who now could proselytize freely. Even though numerous smaller religious communities were able to gain a foothold alongside the privileged official churches, the apologetic nature and activity of the mainstream churches and the state's critical stance ensured that these smaller congregations remained largely marginal occurrences. Not even the discussions that were frequently generated by the churches regarding the right of “so called sects and psycho-groups or cults” to exist had the power to unsettle the established state-church relationship in the Federal Republic of Germany. In spite of the fact that most of these smaller religious communities belong to the broad field of Christianity and only have some separate doctrines the reservations in the society against them are raked by the mainline churches until today.

Against this background it is noteworthy that the mainline churches behaved in a completely different way when confronted with the world religion Islam. In an effort to keep alive the current Church-State-constellations in Germany, the churches advocated for the development of a third pillar. This pillar would manifestly be represented in Centres for Islamic Theology that would be established in the form of state theological faculties, and be integrated into or administered alongside the current Christian theology faculties in order to offer a solid academic training to the Islamic clergy. In this way, or so it was assumed, an impact could be made on the Muslim communities' faith life, which would, in turn, come closer to the needs of the general population. This German project of making Islam into a “church like institution” – which can be seen more at some German universities – is still in its very early stages and suffers from the fact that the Muslim communities in Germany are not unified. The question is, why behave the mainline churches so different, faced with religious competitors?

The European Court of Human Rights: Changes and Challenges in the Social Construction of Religious freedom

– James T. *RICHARDSON*

Enforcement mechanisms for the European Convention on Human Rights have undergone many changes over its nearly seven decades of existence. This presentation will highlight some of the major changes that have occurred, including the establishment of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR or the Court) and several significant protocols that have embellished the operation of the Court. In recent times the Court seems to be seeking to function more as a “Supreme Court” for the 47 member nations, with the concept of “pilot judgments” paying a crucial role in this evolution. The Court has also undergone significant changes in how it handles the many thousands of cases that have been submitted

for adjudication. Included in the new approach has been a willingness to allow intervention by NGOs in major areas of case law, including those dealing with religion. In spite of the many modifications in how cases are dealt with by the Court, there are substantive issues that should be examined in the jurisprudential pattern being developed by the court regarding religious matters. Although there have been significant rulings in recent decades that seemingly defend and expand religious freedom, there are significant lacunae and inconsistencies in this area of the Court's jurisprudence. Especially concerning are some decisions involving individual religious freedom for Muslim women within European region.

Religious Persecution, Refugees, and the Right of Asylum: A European Perspective

– *Rosita ŠORYTĖ*

International conventions and both United Nations and European Union guidelines establish general principles about religion-based refugee claims. They clarify that “religion” should be broadly interpreted, and that it is not necessary for the asylum seekers to prove that they have been individually persecuted. Membership in a persecuted group and a reasonable “fear of persecution” are enough. Proving that the asylum seeker is deeply conversant with the theology of the persecuted group is also not required. However, these general principles are rarely applied by states. The paper discussed the case of The Church of Almighty God, whose members are often denied refugee status in South Korea and Europe, based both on an incorrect interpretation of the international conventions and on inaccurate information about their Church.

Laïcité – The French Model of Religious Freedom

– *Régis DERICQUEBOURG*

In my paper, I examine the French model of the State policy about the religions. This model, called ‘laïcité’, is based on the 1905 law. In principle, this latter separates the States and all the Churches and establishes a State's neutrality about them. Furthermore, it must protect the freedom of conscience. In spite of the will to create a peaceful religious climate, the 1905 law has failed to envision a new religious pluralism with new religious actors such as minority religious groups and Islam. I show that this failure originates in the ambiguities of the 1905 law, public opinions, nationalist interest and electoral considerations.

Religious Freedom and the Legislative Framework of Tackling Radicalization and Extremism in Finland

– *Matti KOTIRANTA*

Although Finland, compared to many European countries, has been saved from violent terrorism, the terrorist strikes of September 11th, 2001, woke up Finland to a new reality. The events became a watershed and initiated new thinking on security issues also in Finland. Since 2001 and after several terroristic attacks in Belgium, France, Germany and in the United Kingdom (2014–2017), Finland has introduced a wide range of legal and policy measures to prevent terrorism, extremism and radicalisation. As a member of the international community, Finland participates also actively in counter-terrorism activities. New emphasis has been placed on terrorism in the Government Report on Security and Defence Policy, submitted to Parliament in September 2004. For Finland, the most important frameworks in counter-terrorism activities are the EU, the UN, the OSCE, the Council of Europe and other international organisations. The UN continues to play the key role as provider of international norms. When it comes to practical matters, the European Union is the central frame of reference for Finland.

Several authorities participate in counter-terrorism activities in Finland: The Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior and its subordinate authorities (specifically the Finnish Security Intelligence Service (Supo) and the Frontier Guard), the Ministry of Justice, the Government Secretariat for EU affairs, the Office of the Prosecutor General, Financial Supervision, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Defence, and the Defence Forces. At the same time, the attention has also extended from terrorism to radicalization and extremism. The brief look at the Finnish legislation gives the impression that the legislator doesn't have any interest of getting into conflict with the constitutional norm of religious freedom while fighting against extremism and (religiously motivated) terrorism. The reasons for prohibitions don't touch the religious beliefs but only the criminal violation of law.

Different Denominations Living Together in an Egalitarian Multicultural Society – Sweden as a Model for Europe?

– *Martin NYKVIST*

Even though Sweden has a long history of politics regarding religious pluralism, it can be argued that it remained a religiously unitary society until the 1960s. Immigration during the latter part of the twentieth century caused a change in the religious demography, and for the first time since the Reformation, Sweden had a considerable minority of non-Protestant confessors. Simultaneously, many new religious movements were established and consolidated in the country; together with the so-called immigrant religions, they created a religious manifoldness without precedent in Sweden. By accounting for legislative aspects of religious freedom and providing examples of how it is implemented, this paper wants to contribute to the understanding of religious plurality in Sweden. The paper will give an outline of the development of religious freedom in Sweden, from the early-modern emphasis on religious unity to contemporary debates on and implementation of freedom of religion. Since the law on freedom of religion came into effect in 1952, it has frequently been discussed whether it should be interpreted as securing the right *to* or *from* religion. In light of this, the paper will also discuss initiatives to abolish the legislation on freedom of religion.

From Repressed Religious Group to Official Denomination: Jehovah's Witnesses and Religious Freedom in Post-Communist Romania

– *Corneliu PINTILESCU*

The paper analyses how the interaction between the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Romanian authorities (1989-2007) shaped the patterns of state-church relations in post-communist Romania. It argues that the endeavours of Jehovah's Witnesses to acquire the status of official religious denomination in post-communist Romania had a strong impact on the process of creating a new legal framework which regulates the relations between the state and the religious denominations. These endeavours were marked by several tense moments between the state authorities and Jehovah's Witnesses, that revealed the limits of religious freedom in post-communist Romania and the strong links between the state and the Romanian Orthodox Church, the dominant church in the country. It will be argued that the process of acquiring the status of official religious denomination by Jehovah's Witnesses and the improvement of the situation with respect to religious freedom in Romania were heavily influenced by an external factor: the pressure exerted by Western entities on Romanian authorities to comply with several standards with respect to religious freedom during the process of the country's accession to NATO and European Union.

Memory and Oblivion: An Aspect of the Historiography of the Russian Orthodox Church Today

– *Michael BOURDEAUX*

Following the concessions Stalin offered to the Russian Orthodox Church after World War Two, the sharp deterioration in religious liberty under the Khrushchev regime from 1959 shocked the leadership of the Orthodox Church and of the Baptists into making new concessions to the political power. However, in contrast to the persecution of the 1920s and '30s, this time there was significant open opposition among the ranks of believers. The Orthodox priests Fr Gleb Yakunin and Nikolai Eshliman propounded a reasoned response to the new restrictions, as did Pastor Georgi Vins for the Baptists.

Beginning in the 1960s and strengthening over the next two decades, there was a religious revival of significant proportions. A growing number of individuals were prepared to sign their names to documents claiming the rights, even under Soviet law, to religious freedom. This presentation will cite some of the key names, men and women who were prepared to sacrifice education, careers, often their liberty and sometimes their lives, in defence of their faith. They often criticised the leadership of their own Church for being only too willing to collaborate with the regime in its reduction of the space for religious liberty.

Focussing on the leadership of the Russian Orthodox Church, this presentation notes that, in circumstances of freedom, the Moscow Patriarchate has systematically failed to give due credit to the heroes of the previous 30 years, who never gained support from the hierarchy of their Church. Officially, the Patriarchate cites the persecution under Stalin and glorifies the martyrs of those early years, while completely ignoring the sacrifices of the more recent period. The late Metropolitan Anthony Bloom recommended a Russian equivalent of the South African "Truth and Reconciliation Commission", but this never happened, consigning those who deserve memory to oblivion and weakening the moral standing of the Moscow Patriarchate.

The Russian Orthodox Church's Position on Religious Freedom before the 1997 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations

– Heta *HURSKAINEN*

The primary aim of this presentation is to describe the Russian Orthodox Church's motives and theological reasoning during the discussion about religious freedom that took place before the passage of the Russian 1997 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations. The 1997 law set a new standard for religious freedom in Russia. It gave a special position to the Russian Orthodox Church and other traditional religions compared to other religions and religious movements in Russia. Thus the 1997 law on the one hand implicitly included the element of inequality between religions and on the other hand promised religious equality to all. The issue of tension is a starting point for the presentation's analysis of the position taken by the Russian Orthodox Church preceding the law, with the view of answering these questions: In what ways did the Russian Orthodox Church support and justify the conditions of equality and inequality between religions before the 1997 law? To what degree was religious freedom understood as an indispensable part of Human Rights in the arguments put forward by the Russian Orthodox Church? What kind of theological reasoning was given for the Church's understanding of religious freedom?

'The Church Should Know Its Place': Cultural Heritage, Social Protests and the Limits of Desecularisation in Russia

– Jeanne *KORMINA*

In January 2017 the news spread that the Governor of St Petersburg has decided to give (*peredat'*) St Isaac's Cathedral to the Russian Orthodox Church. Until then, the Cathedral has been functioning as a museum which attracted lots of tourists. For the last decade or so the museum has been sharing the space and time within this building, one of the main symbols of the former capital of Russian Empire, with an Orthodox parish. It was allowed to conduct the church services in particular part of the Cathedral and in particular hours. For many, this combination looked ideal, even exemplar coexistence of the sacred secular (museum) and sacred religious (religion). The parishioners were allowed to come for free through the special entrance, used as an exit by the secular visitors. They used one of the altars (not the central one), had a nice choir and, presumably, attracted some tourists and were tolerated by museum personnel as representatives of the living past, as a part of cultural heritage which the museum preserved.

The public discussions about St Isaac's Cathedral's destiny were unexpectedly heated and emotional. Mass media publications, debates in social media and public actions attracted a lot of attention in very broad public. As one friend, an academic, explained me why she was concerned about the Cathedral, "You know, I feel that they push me, us out of the places where we were left in piece, in our culture ghetto". One Orthodox priest who knew about my research, advised me to be careful, as "they" (those church authorities who wanted the Cathedral to be given back to the Church) "would not stop at nothing". Some commentators in the social media confessed that they cannot be Christians any more, after the St Isaac's affair. "The Church Should Know Its Place" was a handwritten sign on a placard of one of the protesters at St Isaac's Cathedral. The paper discusses how the secular society in Russia defines the role of the church in its life.

Religious Freedom and the 'New Religions'

– Eileen *BARKER*

New religious movements (NRMs) are, according to some definitions, religions that are in tension with society. But even if they are defined as religions that consist primarily of a first-generation movement, it is not altogether surprising that their history has, more frequently than not, been one of mistrust, discrimination and persecution. However, since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was declaimed on 10 December 1948, lip service, at least, has been paid in the vast majority of countries to the acknowledged right of all individuals to be free to practise – or not practise – any religion of their choice. Why then, is religious freedom not experienced by so many religions? And why would it seem that new religious movements are especially unlikely to be allowed such a right? This paper will draw on the situation in which a variety of NRMs have found and continue to find their freedoms curtailed to a greater or lesser extent in a wide range of countries, and will attempt to indicate some of the factors that make it more or less likely that 'the new kid on the block' will be either welcomed or shunned by the various sectors of society.

New Religious Movements, Totalitarian Regimes, and Authoritarian Governments

– Sanja NILSSON

The concept new religious movements defines groups that rose out of the counter culture in the Western world in the latter half of the twentieth century. Some were founded on Christian belief, but broke with the established churches and added new doctrines and practices to their belief system. Others were imports from other cultures, predominantly Asian, that took on a new form when exported to the West. Still others were syncretistic, blending a variety of beliefs into new forms. Included in the concept new religious movements is often “older” new religions, consisting of groups that emerged during the nineteenth century, which have persisted and kept their uniqueness and tension in relation to society.

Many of the new religious movements reached beyond the Western world, including nations characterized by authoritarian or totalitarian regimes. Engaging in religious activities in countries that, in theory, embrace religious freedom but in practice severely punish opponents can indeed pose a risk with implications differing from doing the same in a democracy. This paper investigates the experiences of a few new religious movements with authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, exemplified by the histories of the Jehovah’s Witnesses in Singapore, Falun Gong in China, the Baha’is in Iran, and The Children of God (now The Family International) in the Philippines. Each case is summarized, highlighting the means of restrictions and grounds for persecution, in order to enhance understanding of the sacrifices on the part of the members who choose to hold on to their faith regardless of the consequences.

Religious Liberty Issues in Russia and Hungary: A Case Study of the Church of Scientology

– Massimo INTROVIGNE

In 2017, the Supreme Court in Russia confirmed the “liquidation” of the Jehovah’s Witnesses as an “extremist” group (Arnold 2017a). Steps were taken towards a similar “liquidation” as “extremist” of the Church of Scientology, whose churches were raided and whose leaders in St. Petersburg were arrested. “Extremism” is a broad notion in Russia. Based on anti-cult propaganda, the prosecutor in Tomsk asked a local court to band an ISKCON Russian translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* as “extremist.” The case caused widespread protest in India, which the Russian ambassador to India tried to placate describing those trying to ban the *Gita* as irrelevant “madmen” (Corley 2012). Although the prosecutor lost the first-degree case in 2011 and the appeal in 2012, accusations of extremism against the *Bhagavad Gita* are still heard in Russia (Corley 2012). Banned in Russia as “extremist” were also the works of renowned Turkish Islamic theologian Said Nursi (1878-1960), including his famous *Risale-i Nur* (Arnold 2016a). Nursi’s books are also quoted by some Muslim fundamentalists, but so is the *Quran*, and most of Nursi’s followers are certainly not radical (Vahide 2005, Markham and Pirim 2011). On July 14, 2017, the District Court of Sochi also banned as “extremist” the book *Forced to Convert* by the German rabbi Marcus Lehmann (1831-1890), on forced conversions of Jews to Christianity in Poland and Lithuania in the Middle Ages. The decision was strongly condemned by Boruch Gorin, the spokesperson for the Federation of Jewish Communities of Russia (Arnold 2017c). In 2016, as part of the so called Yarovaya laws, Russia introduced provisions prohibiting proselytization on behalf of religious minorities outside of religious buildings.

Be Not Conformed – A Historical Survey of the Watch Tower Society’s Relationships with Society

– George D. CHRYSSIDES

The proposed presentation explores the causes and consequences of the religious freedom problems experienced by the Watch Tower Society, with particular reference to the West. From its inception, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (originally Zion’s Watch Tower Society) was already controversial, deriving from the 19th century Adventist movement in the US. Its focus on teachings rather than social endeavours attracted early criticism, as did the Society’s anti-clerical position. The Great War, and to a greater extent the Second World War, brought the Bible students (subsequently known as Jehovah’s Witnesses) into increased conflict with the US and European governments, as well as the mainstream churches, and their plight in Germany is particularly noteworthy. The post-war availability of blood transfusion, and the Society’s teaching that the practice is contrary to scripture, did much to increase antagonism towards the organisation. From the early 1950s, the Society subjected its members to more stringent judicial procedures, which again aroused public attention, and the introduction of its own New

World Translation of the Bible provoked further criticism. The fact that the Society has maintained a high profile, with house-to-house evangelism, information marches, and – most recently – the use of literature carts in public places, has tended to reinforce public attitudes.

The antipathy towards the Watch Tower Society has had various repercussions for religious freedom: issues relating to government recognition and registration, threat of discriminatory legislation, and problems entailed by refusing military service. Some of the religious freedom problems are incurred by minority religions more widely, while other issues (such as blood and conscription) are directly related to Jehovah's Witnesses' distinctive teachings. It is concluded that there are little signs of change regarding the situation of Jehovah's Witnesses, either in governmental attitudes, or in the Society's own position. Indeed, Jehovah's Witnesses perceive opposition as being predicted in scripture, and as evidence that humankind is living in the last days.

Religious Freedom and Jehovah's Witnesses in Putin's Russia, Georgia and CIS

– Wolfram SLUPINA

This analysis explores the rise of human rights violations on religious minorities with the focus on Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia and its former Soviet republics. The application of laws initially meant to protect its citizens, has in fact led to the restriction or outright ban of freedom of religion – a basic right. In 1991 the Russian Federation legally recognised Jehovah's Witnesses and other former Soviet republics followed the same path. With the backing of the Russian Orthodox Church the Law on Religion of 1990 was amended in 1997. This revision greatly compromised the status of Jehovah's Witnesses and other religious groups to receive full rights. It made it virtually impossible for them to keep a legal standing even though, between 1990 and 1997, they had enjoyed full recognition under the previous liberal Russian law. This amendment stated that in order for a religious minority group to be recognised, it needed to be operating in Russia for at least 15 years. Only then would it be possible to re-register with the government and receive full privileges. This posed a problem since only the religious organisations and churches that had previously cooperated with the Communist regime during Soviet era met this requirement. The Law on Religion unwittingly would facilitate how the state authorities handled the activities of the Witnesses. In the following years other laws would be enacted that would impact all facets of this religious community in Russia. Misapplication of these laws has led to unjustified restrictions, unlawful imprisonment, putting the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses on the extremist list, including the "New World Translation" Bible and their official Websites, only to finally ban and liquidate the religious organisation and the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses in all of Russia again in April 2017. Several ECHR rulings in favour of Jehovah's Witnesses and international protests were not helpful. The entire property of the 395 local religious communities – including their church buildings – was seized. This verdict has impacted the lives of 170,000 Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. Even the peaceful exercise of their faith, such as praying and conducting religious meetings leads to prosecution.

Similar laws have been adopted in some CIS countries and autonomous regions which has led to restrictions and bans. Due to their unwavering faith thousands of Jehovah's Witnesses suffered for decades under the former Soviet regime in prisons, labour camps and Siberian special settlements; many even lost their lives. With the collapse of communism, it was hoped that a more tolerant era would usher in greater religious freedom. It seems that with the increasing violations of religious freedom and human rights Putin's Russia, the CIS nations and autonomous regions are on the path of "forward into the past."

The Origins of Conscientious Objection in the Watch Tower Organisation

– Zoe KNOX

In July 1917, the International Bible Students Association (IBSA) published *The Finished Mystery*, the seventh and final volume of the *Studies in the Scriptures* series. A short section of *The Finished Mystery* criticised the position of the United States government on World War I, discouraged Bible Students from taking up arms, and argued that patriotism was an 'untruth' spread by Satan. In 1918, eight leaders of IBSA (including Joseph Rutherford, the president) were convicted under the United States Espionage Act for undermining national security. The trial, held in Brooklyn, New York, where the organisation was based, centred on *The Finished Mystery*, a book IBSA leaders repeatedly stated was religious rather than political. This paper will identify the origins of the Bible Students' opposition to war, consider why *The Finished Mystery* proved so controversial, and examine the legal trial against the men. Finally, it will argue that the case had a profound influence on the Watch Tower organisation, one which continues to shape its beliefs and practices to the present day.