

# Freedom of/for/from/within Religion: Differing Dimensions of a Common Right?

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**Fourth Conference of the  
International Consortium of Law and Religion Studies  
Oxford, United Kingdom  
September 8-11, 2016**

Freedom of religion or belief (FoRB), once considered to be the “first” freedom, has become a controversial right. In particular, the practical possibility of implementing FoRB in impartial ways are increasingly questioned. Critics argue that FoRB cannot deliver what it promises: an equal share of freedom for people of different or no religion. Further, it is claimed that the right of FoRB, as it is regulated in international and constitutional law, is intrinsically biased because it reflects its Western and Christian origins.

Part of the problem is due to the fact that FoRB is a complex notion, including different dimensions that require careful consideration. *Freedom of religion or belief*, as a right recognized for every human being, is the first dimension, but not the only one. *Freedom from religion*, that is the right to live one’s life without being compelled to perform religious acts, is another and *freedom for religion*, which concerns the institutional side of this right (what was once called “*libertas ecclesiae*”) is a third dimension that demands consideration. Finally, *freedom in religion* concerns the rights that the faithful (and sometimes not so faithful) are entitled to enjoy within their religious communities.

These four dimensions of FoRB are the focus of the fourth conference of the International Consortium for Law and Religion Studies. A plenary session will be devoted to each of them and a number of parallel sessions will explore the implication of these four dimensions (see the attached provisional program). A session devoted to young scholars will help launch the conference and two final sessions addressed by representatives of law and religion centers and journals will complete the program.

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

Scholars are invited to submit papers for the conference, sending an abstract of no more than 300 words, in English, to [Cristiana.cianitto@unimi.it](mailto:Cristiana.cianitto@unimi.it) and by March 31, 2016. A separate session is reserved for young scholars (35 years or younger) who may apply for a contribution to cover travel and accommodation expenses.

## **KEY DATES**

Deadline for submitting paper proposals and opening of registration: March 31, 2016

Notification of paper acceptance: April 10, 2016

Deadline for being assured housing at conference venue, April 15, 2016

Deadline for registering: July 31, 2016

Publication of the final program: July 31, 2016