RELIGION, FREEDOM, EQUALITY

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Hosted by

University of Texas
Magdalen College, University of Oxford

SUMMER COMMON ROOM
MAGDALEN COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
MONDAY 3RD JUNE – TUESDAY 4TH JUNE

Monday 3rd June

9:45-10:15 – Coffee and registration

10:15-11:15 – Religious Speech and Association

Maria Cahill, University of Cork - *Rationales for Protecting Freedom of Association*

Rebecca Aviel, University of Denver - *From Gods to Google*

11:15-12:15 - Religion, Equality, and Discrimination

Nomi Stolzenberg, University of Southern Carolina - *Blindspot Discrimination: The Misinterpretation of Sherbert and the Reconstruction of* Smith

Myriam Hunter-Henin, University College London - *Resisting Risks of Exclusivity*

12:15-13:30 – Lunch

13:30-15:30 – Religion and the Workplace

Sabine Tsuruda, Queens University - *Religion, Equality, and Market Activity*

James Nelson, University of Houston - *Disestablishing Work*

Julian Rivers, University of Bristol - *The Etiquette of Conscience*

Isabelle Rorive, University of Brussels - *Looking at Legal Cases: How does the Ground of Religion and Belief Affect Non-discrimination Law?*

15:30-16:00 – Coffee

16:00-17:00 - Religion, Civility, and Political Discourse

Valentina Gentile, Luiss University - *Reconciling the Social, Moral, and Political Features of Civility*

Baldwin Wong, Hong Kong Baptist University - *Contributing to Public Deliberation by Religious Behavior: Beyond the Inclusivism-Exclusivism debate*

19:00 – Drinks Reception and Dinner (for speakers)

Tuesday 4th June

9:30-11:00 – Religious Arguments in Public Discourse

Kevin Vallier, Bowling Green State University - *The (Updated) Justice Argument Against Catholic Integralism*

Alexander Livingston, Cornell University - *Parable and Politics: Martin Luther King, Jr's Critique of Idolatry*

Chris Eberle, US Naval Academy - *Military Officers, Command Authority, and Liberal Democracy: What Role for Faith?*

11:00-11:30 – Coffee

11:30-13:00 – Religion, Equality, and Liberty

Larry Sager and Nelson Tebbe, University of Texas & Cornell University - *Salvaging Tandon*

Jim Oleske, Lewis and Clark Law School - *The Inescapable Inequality of "Equal Value"*

Stephanie Barclay, Notre Dame Law School - *Necessity, Equality, and Religious Liberty*

13:00-14:15 – Lunch

14:15-15:45 – Religious Pluralism and Difference

Tariq Modood and Simon Thompson, University of Bristol & University of the West of England - *The Normative Structure of Multicultural Secularism*

Marietta van der Tol, University of Oxford - *Constitutional Intolerance: the Fashioning of 'the Other' in Europe's Constitutional Repertoires*

Francois Boucher, University of Leuven - *Religion and Language: Comparing Normative Arguments for\against Establishment*

15:45 – Closing remarks

ORGANISERS:
Larry Sager -- University of Texas
Cécile Laborde -- University of Oxford
Paul Billingham -- University of Oxford

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Jacob Williams -- University of Oxford

MONDAY 3rd JUNE

Religious Speech and Association

"Rationales for Protecting Freedom of Association" - Maria Cahill, University of Cork

Freedom of Association protects individuals in their sociality, in the wide multiplicity and variety of social clubs, societies, unions and other associations in which they engage and cooperate with others. The two principal rationales invoked in courts for vindicating this right have to do with its protection of personnal autonomy and its defence of pluralism and democracy. A third, which is sometimes present in the background if less widespread, is that freedom of association protects other rights, such as freedom of expression. I find these rationales toubling, not because they are inaccurate or misguided, but because they seem to miss something (more) fundamental about why freedom of association deserves protection, namely, its capacity to protect something essential – something essentially social – about the human experience. At one level, this matters because it is worthwhile to problematise and understand more fully what we are trying to do when we articulate and purport to defend this fundamental right. At another level, this matters because the rationales in play during the resolution of freedom of association disputes in courts around the world (whether they are "*association v. state*" disputes or "member v. association" disputes) often condition the resolution being reached. Although the comparative project on which this presentation relies is focussed on the latter rather than the former, for the purposes of this presentation I will discuss some examples from different jurisdictions that bear on freedom of religion as well as freedom of association.

"From Gods to Google" - Rebecca Aviel, University of Denver

The Court's extraordinary solicitude for religious expression, manifested across a series of cases involving free exercise, free speech, and establishment clause principles, has been the subject of sustained scholarly attention. Much of that research has focused on evaluating whether the Court is drawing an appropriate balance between the rights of religious believers and government regulatory objectives. In this Article we observe that the Court's most recent set of moves in this arena – first choosing free speech rather than free exercise doctrine and then diverging considerably from decades of speech jurisprudence – will have ramifications that go well beyond the claims of conscience that have so animated the Court's sympathies. The range of "speakers" protected by this expansive jurisprudence will include information technology companies that generate algorithms and artificial intelligence – speech producers with no conscience at all, much less the kind of sincere religious conviction that the Roberts Court has seen fit to protect against government regulation. As we demonstrate, thee free expression principles the Court has developed for religious believers, when added to the Court's expansive reading of free speech more generally, will make it exceedingly difficult to protect against the significant harms that these speech-producing technologies can cause – including to speakers and readers whom the Court might wish to enable regulators to protect.

Religion, Equality, and Discrimination

"Blindspot Discrimination: The Misinterpretation of *Sherbert* and the Reconstruction of *Smith*"
- Nomi Stolzenberg, University of Southern Carolina

This Article argues that the 1963 United States Supreme Court decision, *Sherbert v. Verner*, which recognized a right to religious accommodation under the 1st Amendment's Free Exercise Clause, has been misunderstood and that, properly construed, *Sherbert* provides the answer to the challenge posed by Justice Barrett in the 2021 case of *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*: to find an alternative to the U.S. Supreme Court's 1990 decision in *Employment Division v. Smith*, which categorically denied the right to religious exemptions from neutral laws of general application, other than the "equally categorical strict scrutiny regime" associated with *Sherbert*. Against the conventional wisdom that *Sherbert* dictates applying strict scrutiny to every neutral and generally applicable law that substantially burdens the exercise of religion, and against the view of *Sherbert* adopted in *Smith*, according to which it stands for the proposition that strict scrutiny applies whenever there is a system in place for granting exceptions, this Article contends that *Sherbert* was actually exclusively concerned with the problem of "blindspot discrimination," which occurs when policies are adopted and implemented without considering how they will affect people with practices and beliefs that deviate from mainstream norms. This Article explicates the concept of blindspot discrimination, differentiating it not only from intentional and unconscious forms of discrimination, but also from other forms of unintentional discrimination. Most critically, it identifies a category of situations in which the effect of burdening the exercise of religion is the product of neither intentional nor unintentional (i.e., blindspot) discrimination—situations in which that "discriminatory" effect is incidental, but not unforeseen and therefore not, strictly speaking, unintended. Such situations, this Article contends, should be insulated from claims to religious exemptions and should not be characterized as instances of religious discrimination (in keeping with *Smith*). There should be a judicial remedy for intentional religious discrimination and (contra *Smith*) there should also be a remedy for blindspot discrimination; but the remedies and the analytic frameworks for adjudicating claims of intentional and blindspot discrimination are different, and neither applies to this third category of situations, where the discriminatory impact of a rule or practice is incidental but is not unintended/unconsidered/unforeseen. Once we recognize this, we can see that using strict scrutiny to provide a remedy for blindspot discrimination, as dictated by a proper reading of *Sherbert*, is consistent with *Smith's* general rule of insulating neutral generally applicable laws from free exercise challenges because many such laws are not reflective of cultural blindspots.

"Resisting Risks of Exclusivity" - Myriam Hunter-Henin, University College London

Comparative constitutional law scholarship has often entertained the notion that European case-law is guided by a theory of proportionality whereas the US Supreme Court prefers a rule-based approach. Taking the recent ruling by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) of Commune d'Ans as a case-study, this paper argues that European case-law also embraces what I call a "delegation-style reasoning", that is a reasoning in which the CJEU grants maximum discretion to national member states and moves away in my view as a result from proportionality requirements, at the risk of conferring exclusive consideration to one set of interests. This paper submits that this reasoning entails a quadruple shift: from proportionality to circularity and consistency (i); from deference to delegation towards national authorities (ii); from a substantive to a formal conception of equality and finally, from a balancing or hierarchical ordering between underlying competing interests to the exclusivity granted to employers' interests (iv). The paper goes on to warn that courts should resist the appeal of this delegation-based reasoning. Such delegation is problematic for two reasons: epistemically, it yields but a partial view of the problem; democratically, it may betray the expectation of justification and hope for self-revision at the core of a democratic and inclusive legal reasoning.

Religion and the Workplace

"Religion, Equality, and Market Activity" - Sabine Tsuruda, Queens University

The paper will center on religious exemptions to anti-discrimination law, in both employment and the sale of goods and services. More broadly, the paper will aim to tease out and, tentatively, to resolve some tensions in liberal egalitarianism through an examination of these two types of exemptions.

"Disestablishing Work" - James Nelson, University of Houston

Across the country, courts are inundated with employee claims for religious accommodation. These claims demand exemptions from vaccine mandates, rules against misgendering, diversity programming, and more. But in the wake of *Groff v. DeJoy*, which unsettled nearly fifty years of law on religious accommodation at work, judges are in urgent need of guidance on how to handle this new wave of cases.

This Article excavates and defends three principles to guide adjudication: non-disparagement, reciprocity, and proportionality. Striking a balance between worker free exercise and the disestablishment value of avoiding imposition on third parties, these principles can help judges resolve novel religious accommodation disputes in coherent and attractive ways. Moving beyond the courts, they might also anchor alternative strategies to protect the basic rights of employees in a diverse modern workplace.

"The Etiquette of Conscience" - Julian Rivers, University of Bristol

In recent years, a claim of discrimination or harassment in the workplace because of religion or belief has become the most common remedy by which disputes over the protection of conscience have come before the courts. Its easy availability can also be used in strategic attempts to surmount obstacles to other cognate remedies such as unfair dismissal. Since the seminal decision of the Employment Appeal Tribunal in *Grainger v Nicholson* (2009) it has been possible for employees to seek protection for a wide range of ethical positions by this route, regardless of any religious grounding, a development which has recently been reinforced in *Forstater* (2021). The decoupling of ethics from religion has benefitted both religious and non-religious dissenters. Recent decisions in *Page* (CA, 2021) and *Higgs* (EAT, 2023) have sought to secure very close alignment between protection against religion or belief discrimination and the standards of the ECHR, shifting the focus from claims of indirect discrimination to claims of direct discrimination and harassment. This, too, has had an expansionary effect. Thus, anti-discrimination law has become a proxy for liberty claims in the private sphere, rendering the workplace a key site of legal contestation in contemporary social, political and ethical disagreements. However, demonstrating that the opinions and actions of an employee constitute a protected characteristic is only the first hurdle. Courts have interpreted the requirements of direct and indirect discrimination to generate what is, in effect, a duty of reasonable mutual accommodation between the employee and employer. This focuses increasingly not on what ones believe, but how one expresses those beliefs and engages with others who do the same. This duty potentially extends even to behaviour outside the workplace, imposing a restraining influence on the whole life of the employee. The question is how we are to view this legal development. Does it have a generally benign civilising effect, enabling us to live on terms of fair and peaceful cooperation in spite of our ethical differences, or does it permit unwarranted incursions into freedom of conscience and allied freedoms, requiring a more robust legal response?

"Looking at Legal Cases: How does the Ground of Religion and Belief Affect Non-discrimination Law?" - Isabelle Rorive, University of Brussels

Although discrimination based on religion or belief is in some cases closely linked to racial or gender discrimination, the relationship between religion and other grounds of discrimination can be much more complex. Exemptions from non-discrimination law in the name of religious freedom exist alongside uses of non-discrimination law to sustain conscience claims. Reliance on religious belief justifies other forms of discrimination and the law also protects some non-religious beliefs that might lead to discrimination. In European law, these cases are captured by legal concepts, sometimes borrowed from North America, which respond to and intertwine with each other. By examining various cases that touch on questions of definitions, forms of discrimination and exemptions, this paper looks at different ways in which religious freedom constructs or deconstructs non-discrimination law.

Religion, Civility and Political Discourse

"Reconciling the Social, Moral, and Political Features of Civility" - Valentina Gentile, Luiss University

In this chapter, I reconceptualise the virtue of civility in a way that is both consistent with Rawls' political view and yet takes seriously the various social and moral features that drive the appeal to civility in contemporary diverse democracies. Building on my earlier works (see especially, Gentile 2018), I elaborate on the idea of a 'culture of civility'. Such a culture is distinct from both the 'background culture' of civil society and the more robust 'public political culture' on which the ideal of political liberal civility rests. A 'culture of civility', informed by a set of widely shared social and cultural norms and practices, provides citizens with the proper (social and cultural) context for everyday deliberation.

In the following sections I unpack the concept of civility, understood as a pro-social disposition of citizens to engage with one another in circumstances of deep disagreement. I then identify three distinct conceptions of civility, which I label 'mere civility', 'moral civility' and 'political liberal civility'. Whereas the first realist conception offers a minimalist view of how political interactions among citizens of deeply diverse societies should be regulated, the second, thick view considers civility as chiefly a moral regulative ideal governing the personal as well as the political relations among autonomous agents. Between these two conceptions lies what I call 'political liberal civility'. Here, the substantive dimension, once again understood as a regulative moral ideal governing the relationship between autonomous agents embedded in a scheme of social cooperation, is limited in scope. In what follows, I proceed by considering the concept and each of these conceptions in turn. In the last section, I focus on the ideal of a culture of civility and its connections with the political liberal civility

"Contributing to Public Deliberation by Religious Behavior: Beyond the Inclusivism-Exclusivism debate" - Baldwin Wong, Hong Kong Baptist University

In recent years, many political philosophers and theologians have been at odds regarding the role of religious reasons and arguments in public deliberations. Exclusivists, such as Rawls, Quong, Hartley, and Watson, argue that religious reasons should be denied or excluded from any major role, while inclusivists, such as Gaus, Vallier, and Billingham, oppose such categorical exclusion. Nevertheless, the debate appears to be predominantly focused on religious reasons and arguments. In this paper, I will argue that religious behaviors—defined as actions and dispositions fostered by various virtues cultivated within religious contexts—can exert positive influences on public deliberation. Here I shall use Confucianism as an example. A Confucian uses a conception of "oneness" to perceive the world, seeing himself as inextricably intertwined with, a part of, or in some sense identical with the rest of the world. Consequently, a Confucian regards the suffering of any creature as their own, and is consistently prepared to offer their own resources and efforts to assist others. This perspective offers an alternative means of influencing individuals and fostering mutual understanding. While non-religious citizens may not be convinced by religious reasons and arguments, the altruistic behaviors exhibited by that Confucian could inspire curiosity about their religious tradition, including the underlying reasons and arguments that motivate such behaviors. For inclusivists, these religious behaviors represent a more effective method for introducing religious perspectives into public deliberation, as they attract the voluntary interest of non-religious citizens. Exclusivists, on the other hand, should also acknowledge the value of religious behaviors, as they promote a deeper mutual understanding among citizens with diverse comprehensive doctrines.

TUESDAY 4th JUNE

Religious Arguments In Public Discourse

"The (Updated) Justice Argument Against Catholic Integralism" - Kevin Vallier, Bowling Green State University

The new Catholic integralism calls for a church-state union. It allows the church to direct the state to punish the baptized for canonical crimes. In past work, I have argued that integralism is unjust. It rejects religious coercion of the unbaptized but allows it for the baptized. These claims are inconsistent. The same arguments for freedom for the unbaptized apply to the baptized.

Some object that my original justice argument begs the question against the integralist by presupposing liberal freedom of association. The original argument is not question-begging. In this updated version of the justice argument, however, the non-question-begging character of the argument is much more apparent. The argument objects to religious coercion on Catholic grounds alone. I draw on moral principles in *Dignitatis Humanae*, Vatican II's 1965 statement on religious freedom.

Integralists object based on an associative theory of political obligation. We can acquire duties to the Church and Church-authorized (integralist) states simply by being members. However, the Church's stress on free faith does not weaken post-baptism. Membership is neither here nor there. Respect for human dignity applies to persons regardless of their baptismal status, which we can see from Catholic principles alone.

"Parable and Politics: Martin Luther King, Jr's Critique of Idolatry" - Alexander Livingston, Cornell University

Martin Luther King, Jr's commitment to the claims of conscience has been a persistent source of fascination and discomfort for political theorists. Prioritizing conscience over law has made King an icon of civil disobedience while the religious terms of this vision of obligation have proven challenging to the discipline's secularist conceits. Thinking of conscientious service as a practice of worship, this paper seeks to shed new light on the ways King's public philosophy exceeds the familiar discourses of civil disobedience it has become associated with. In naming commitment to conscience as a means of worship I mean to highlight the ways King figured the sources of injustice he railed against – racism, materialism, militarism – as cases of false worship. One name we can give to such false worship is uncivil obedience. Another is idolatry. Affirming rather than avoiding King's religious thought offers new insight into how King figured the problem of conscience as a challenge of reattuning and reeducating Americans' alienated capacity for seeing and feeling the claims of equality. Taking the religious King seriously in this way means to challenge not just how political theorists read King but what we read. I argue that the hundreds of sermons he delivered offer the fullest and most important archive of King's thinking on the meaning of conscience, obligation, and citizenship. Across this canon, King returned again and again to series of parables as the medium for articulating his moral and political thought. This paper focuses on King's retelling of one such parable, the parable of the Good Samaritan, as a means of rhetorically unsettling idolatrous attachment and reeducating the proper democratic worship of the conscientious citizen.

"Military Officers, Command Authority, and Liberal Democracy: What Role for Faith?"
Chris Eberle, US Naval Academy

My intention in this paper is to reflect on the role that religious reasons may and may not play in the social role of military officer in a liberal democracy. One feature that defines that social role is command authority: constitutive of being an officer in the military is having the authority to generate moral and legal obligations that bind subordinates by way of issuing legal orders. These orders can be quite coercive: disobedience can be punished by fines, demotion, imprisonment, expulsion, and the like. Given its impact on the well-being of others, an officer ought to exercise command authority over others only given adequate reason to do so. But what counts as an adequate reason? Might a religious reason qualify? Correlatively, as state officials, may military officers determine how to exercise command authority by having recourse to their religious convictions? Must they restrain themselves from using their authority in ways that depend decisively on their faith commitments? No: although the exercise of command authority ought to be constrained in various important ways -- liberal values, relevant legislation, military regulation, and superior orders, military officers may be guided by their faith commitments as they exercise command authority within those constraints. More particularly, an officer may direct an order to subordinates, and thereby bind them morally and legally, even though that order depends decisively for its justification on a religious rationale. I will explicate and defend these claims by reflecting on a number of cases from recent military history: Prayer in Ramadi, Abortion in Diego Garcia, and Tactics in Fallujah.

Religion, Equality, and Liberty

"Salvaging *Tandon*" - Larry Sager University of Texas and Nelson Tebbe Cornell University

Tandon v. Newsom sets out a principle of religious equality under the Free Exercise Clause. That model shows every sign of becoming the Court's dominant approach to religious liberty. It is celebrated by some, and harshly criticized by others. On our view, it is misconstrued by almost everyone.

In this essay, we argue that *Tandon* is best understood as embracing a two-part judicial inquiry into the question of whether a governmental act constitutes a failure of equal regard and thereby violates the Constitution. The first step is relatively blunt and mechanical: Differences in treatment across religious fault lines trigger a close look to determine whether the difference flows from a failure of equal regard. The second step is that close look, which is neither blunt nor mechanical. So understood, *Tandon* charts an attractive course for the development of religious liberty doctrine — in the eyes of some, the only attractive course.

We need to worry, however, about a foreshortened version of *Tandon*, a version in which the second step is omitted or short-changed. There are signs that at least some members of the Court are inclined take *Tandon* in this direction. That would be extremely unfortunate. Without its second step, Tandon gives on to a one-sided and hair-trigger approach to religious liberty, an approach that is constitutionally, morally, and practically unsupportable. Many of *Tandon's* critics are prone to the same foreshortened reading. This too is a problem, since these critics are inclined to take the contracted reading of *Tandon* to demonstrate that an equal regard approach to religious liberty is intrinsically flawed. On both sides, the abridged reading of *Tandon* thwarts the opportunity to make good sense out of our constitutional commitment to religious liberty. Our purpose in this essay is to redeem *Tandon* from this flawed, foreshortened form, and in the course of doing so, to establish the soundness of an equal regard principle of religious liberty.

"The Inescapable Inequality of "Equal Value"" - Jim Oleske, Lewis and Clark Law School

The United States Supreme Court's new approach to religious exemptions under the Free Exercise Clause—that they are presumptively required whenever government rules treat any "comparable" secular activity more favorably than religious activity—is often described as a "most favored nation" approach to religious exemptions. But in one of the most thorough examinations of the origins, merits, and potential pitfalls of Court's new doctrine, Professor Nelson Tebbe offers the alternative frame of "equal value" to describe what he views as the "new equality" rule. Although Tebbe is concerned that the rule is being misused by the current Court to promote a "problematic political program," he maintains that "equal value holds real attraction as a matter of ideal theory" and "may well represent a defensible reading of constitutional equality."

This paper questions Tebbe's premise that the concept underlying the Court's new exemption doctrine can be accurately described and defended in equality terms. In doing so, it draws on and adds to Professor Christopher Lund's "multiple secular baselines" critique of an important precursor to Tebbe's equal value theory: the "equal liberty/equal regard" approach to exemptions advocated by Professors Christopher Eisgruber and Lawrence Sager. Ultimately, the paper concludes that while Tebbe is right that "the government can wrongly burden protected actors through disregard or devaluing," the Court's new most-favored-nation approach to religious exemptions does not promise—even in theory—"equal value."

"Necessity, Equality, and Religious Liberty" - Stephanie Barclay, Notre Dame Law School

I'll argue that many of the tools in proportionality and strict scrutiny that analyze whether the government has acted in an even-handed/equal way with respect to religion are often just proxy questions to ask whether the government's interference with religion was necessary for the government to accomplish its other permissible interests.

Religious Pluralism and Difference

"The Normative Structure of Multicultural Secularism" - Tariq Modood and Simon Thompson, University of Bristol & University of the West of England

In several recent co-authored publications, we have developed and refined a conception of secularism which we call 'multicultural secularism'. This normative mode of religious governance takes existing modes of governance, and adds multiculturalism's commitment to the positive valuing and recognition of difference, in order to come up with a system of religion-state relations which religious – and non-religious – communities enjoy appropriate recognition and accommodation. In other recent co-authored work, we have sought to argue that an idea of 'intersubjective alienation' can and should be a relevant consideration in evaluating forms of relations between religion and state. We have also articulated a normative 'principle of identification', according to which the state should endeavour to ensure that citizens can identify with their political community. Hence we have contended that, in light of this principle, if some religious communities experience alienation, this may form part of the case for what we have called the 'multidimensional recognition of religion'.

Our aim in this paper is to weave together and extend these two strands of our previous work in order to restate and further develop the case for multicultural secularism. We do so by undertaking three principal tasks. First, drawing on the work of Sune Lægaard, we seek to clearly delineate the normative structure of multicultural secularism by identifying its 'basic values', 'intermediate political principles' and 'derived normative prescriptions'. Second, we return to and slightly reformulate our account of intersubjective alienation, in order to show that it is neither a subjective psychological experience nor a purportedly objective normative standard for evaluating political arrangements. Third, we draw out the implications of the foregoing, by showing how a commitment to multicultural secularism, combined with an understanding of alienation as a mode of collective experience, may justify a range of types of relations between religion and state, including, in some circumstances, multifaith establishment.

"Constitutional Intolerance: the Fashioning of 'the Other' in Europe's Constitutional Repertoires" - Marietta van der Tol, University of Oxford

I will offer a sneak peek into my forthcoming book *Constitutional Intolerance*. The book offers a deeper reflection on intolerance in politics and society today, explaining why minorities face the contestation of their public visibility, and how the law could protect them. It refers to historical practices of toleration, distilling from it the category of 'the other' to the political community, whose presence, representation, and visibility is not self-evident and is often subject to regulation. The book considers 'the other' in the context of modern constitutions, with reference to (ethno)religious, ethnic, and sexual groups. Theoretical chapters engage questions about the time and temporality of otherness, and their ambivalent relationship with (public) space. It offers examples from across the liberal-illiberal divide: France, the Netherlands, Hungary, and Poland. It highlights that vulnerability towards intolerance is inscribed in the structures of the law, and is not merely inherent to either liberalism or illiberalism, as is often inferred.

"Religion and Language: Comparing Normative Arguments for\against Establishment" - Francois Boucher, University of Leuven

In a recent paper titled 'Comparing language and religion in normative arguments about linguistic justice' (*Metaphilosophy*, 2023,54\5) I examine how linguistic justice theorists compare language and religion to justify the adoption of language laws promoting the language of the cultural majority. In this paper, I revisit the language-religion comparison in order to draw conclusions regarding the place of religion in public life. I show that theories of linguistic justice offer an interesting framework to classify normative theories of secularism (*laïcité*) and offer some insights to think about the permissibility of weak forms of symbolic religious establishments.

THE ORGANISERS WISH TO EXPRESS THEIR GRATITUDE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AND MAGDALEN COLLEGE FOR THE GENEROUS FUNDING OF THIS EVENT, AND TO ATTENDEES FOR THEIR PARTICIPATION