



Annual Report 2019, Centre for Religion and Law, Faculty of Religion and Theology & Faculty of Law, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

<https://centre-religion-law.org/nl/>

The Centre for Religion and Law

In 2001 Leon van den Broeke initiated the Centre for Religion and Law. It is a joint venture of the Faculty of Religion and Theology, and the Faculty of Law. Members of the board and of the supervisory board are theologians, experts in religious studies and jurists. The aim of the Centre is to organize courses, research, advice, lectures, publications, symposia/conferences/expertmeeting in the multidisciplinary field of religion and law in national and international perspective. The network of the Centre includes about 200 persons, 60 addresses of members of parliament and/or political parties (First and Second Chamber), 100 addresses of faith communities, and 40 addresses of universities.

General description of 2019

In the past year there were less possibilities to organize activities, because of the workload of the chair, Leon van den Broeke, due to his responsibilities as Educational Director of the Bachelor Programmes at the Faculty of Religion and Theology at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Nevertheless, there were some nice, important and relevant activities and invitations.

On 23 January 2019 Teunis van Kooten contributed as an expert to the television programme 'Uitgelicht' of Omroep Family 7.

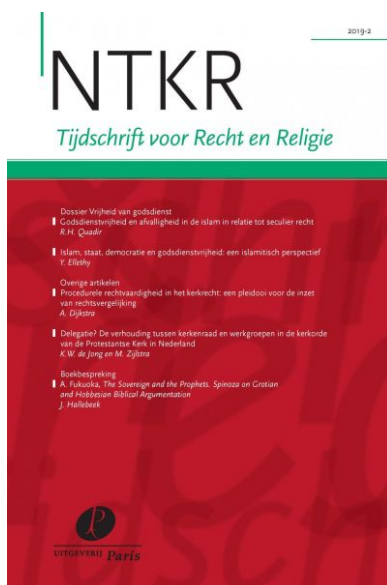
On 29 January 2019 Yaser Ellethy presented the Europe Lecture 2019 on Islam and the Democratic Rule of Law for the Vereniging Democratisch Europa. De lezing wordt gepubliceerd in boekvorm.



On 7 february 2019 the Centre organized a book presentation *Perspectieven op godsdienstvrijheid en de verhouding tussen staat en religie*.



The occasion was the tenth anniversary of the NTKR: Tijdschrift voor Recht en Religie.





Among others drs. Jaap Smit, the King's Commissioner of the Province of Zuid-Holland lectured at this symposium.

Leon van den Broeke received the invitation of professor Jocelyne Cesari to participate in a Roundtable and closed meeting about Fostering the Public Understanding of Religion in Europe at the European Academy of Religion, 4-7 March 2019, Bologna, Italy. This project was continued.

In April 2019 Leon van den Broeke was again invited for the Directors Colloquium in Uppsala, Sweden, for the bi-annual IMPACT-conference, The Impact of Religion: Challenges for Society, Law and Democracy. The theme of 2019 was Innovation in Research on Religion in contemporary society: Seeking new methods, meeting new challenges. Besides, he wrote a book chapter for the conference proceedings on Doing multidisciplinary research on religion – methodological, conceptual and theoretical challenges.

On 15 April 2019 Teunis van Kooten was present at the graduation ceremony of the Professionalization Programme Imams in the Netherlands. He and Leon van den Broeke had been teaching in this programme..

In June 2019 the Centre for Religion and Law organized an interesting conference on the faith communities finance themselves, because of the draft bill on the Transparency of Societal Organizations which effects the donations of faith communities. A conference proceedings will be the research output of this symposium.



Two journalists, Romee Boots and Karel Smouter of the De Correspondent interviewed Leon van den Broeke, Teunis van Kooten and Pieter van den Boogaard about financial abuse within faith communities, also in relationship to concept of the prosperity gospel. On 8 July 2019 the interview was published.¹

In August 2019 Leon van den Broeke was invited for a work session on the prohibition of conversion therapy (of lhbt-ers) and religious freedom organized by the Ministry of Justice and Security, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

In September 2019 Leon van den Broeke was invited by the Pontificio Universidad Javeriana in Bogota, Colombia for the co-organization of the international expertmeeting Religión, la secular democracia y el estado: Las relaciones entre las iglesias y el Estado to prepare an international conference in 2020/2021 on the contribution of faith communities to the peace process in Colombia.

On 25 September 2019 Teunis van Kooten was invited for a Round Table of the Committee LNV (Agriculture, Nature and Fishery) of the Second Chamber of the Dutch parliament.

It concerned the initiative for a new bill of the political party for the rights of animals with view to ritual slaughter.

In November 2019 Leon van den Broeke was invited by the North-West University, Potchefstroom, South-Africa to present a keynote lecture at the conference Doing What is Just, Right and Fair: Law, Justice and Justification. Afterwards, former president of South-Africa, Frederik W. de Klerk, presented a lecture and a dinner was organized for the presenters with De Klerk as special guest.

¹ <https://decorrespondent.nl/9678/zo-krijgen-pinksterkerken-mensen-zover-10-procent-van-hun-jaarsalaris-af-te-staan/1283842387212-e940f571>



On 6 December 2019 the Centre of Religion and Law organized an expertmeeting on religious freedom and ritual slaughter. Lecturer was dr. Matthijs de Blois (University of Utrecht, legal theory and legal philosophy). A member of the Second Chamber of the Dutch parliament also joined the expertmeeting.

In the first half year of 2019 student Wouter Muskee of the Master Programma Exploring a Discipline – Religion, Law and Society, did his internship partially at the Centre for Religion and Law.

Members of the board of the Centre for Religion and Law published in books, conference proceedings, journals, newspapers and online. Two volumes of the journal NTKR: Tijdschrift voor Recht en Religie were published. One of these volumes included a special contribution of the Minister of Justice and Security, mr.dr. F.B.J. Grapperhaus.

2020

The Erasmus School of Law, Rotterdam, invited Leon van den Broeke and Teunis van Kooten to present guest lectures on Faith Communities and Law in the Honours Programme of this university.

Leon van den Broeke, Teunis van Kooten and Jan-Willem Sap prepare with guest lecturers the minor Religion, Law and Society of the Faculty of Religion and Theology. This minor will start as from 1 September 2020 and consists of five modules of each 6 EC:

- Religious Freedom, the State, and Security
- Religions, Law and Human Rights
- Religious Communities, Leadership and Law
- Religious Communities, Finance and Law
- Religious Conflict, Justice and Law



The Centre for Religion and Law keep on organizing the electives Faith Communities and Law I and Faith Communities and Law II at the Faculty of Law at the Vrije Universiteit.

Leon van den Broeke and Teunis van Kooten prepare an advice on request by the Jewish community in the Netherlands with view to the new Dutch bill on organ donation and the new way of registration. The Jewish community also asked our advice with view to religious marriage and divorce.

Due to the COVID19-virus several meetings and conferences in the first part of 2020 had to be cancelled.