

Call for Papers – History of Freedom of Expression in Modern Western Societies (c. 1800-1960)

We invite **chapter proposals for a forthcoming handbook** on the history of freedom of expression and related expressive rights, currently **accepted and under contract with Routledge**. This handbook aims to bring together scholars across the humanities and the social sciences; it seeks to use history to foster interdisciplinary dialogue in the study of expressive freedom in the broadest sense (including religious toleration, media freedom, censorship, freedom of thought, etc.).

We welcome chapter proposals that address these issues across **diverse geographical contexts and themes within modern, so-called “Western” societies**, roughly between the Age of Revolutions and May 1968. Chapters covering other parts of the world are welcome if they consider the relationships between other regions and “Western” societies (e.g., imperial domination, anticolonial struggles).

While focused case studies are welcome, contributions should connect local or specific instances to broader thematic trends. Ideally, proposed chapters should aim to: (1) provide a “bird’s-eye” perspective on the overarching topic, historical period, political tradition, social movement, geographical region, etc.; (2) illuminate more general conceptual, normative, or institutional dimensions of freedom of expression and related rights; and (3) contribute to understanding long-term change. **We welcome scholars at any career stage and from different disciplines and methodologies, provided historical research is a central form of empirical evidence in their chapter.** For example, our confirmed contributors include political theorists, philosophers, legal scholars, historians (of ideas, media, science and technology, and social movements), sociologists, political scientists, and scholars working in literature, art, and area studies. We also welcome co-authored chapters.

Submission Guidelines

The table of contents is currently almost complete, so this call for papers will prioritize proposals that revolve around one or several of the following topics:

- **Religion:** Evangelical justifications of expressive liberties (any religion, esp. 1800-1900); pre-1945 church-state conflicts (e.g., *Kulturkampf*, Catholic freedom of association, schooling, etc.); connections between expressive freedom and freedom of association; religious criticism of expressive freedom.
- **The “woman question” before the 1900s:** Suffragist or early feminist arguments on free speech or freedom of thought.
- **Anarchism:** Normative justifications of expressive rights; social movements and thinkers, especially outside the UK and the US.
- **Media, technology, infrastructure:** Free speech and postal systems (e.g., postal censorship, press subsidies); advertising and free speech; telegraphy; news agencies; photography.
- **The Netherlands and/or Belgium:** Especially contributions dealing with practices or discourses around “pillarization” (applied to religious toleration and/or media markets), any chronology.
- **Conflicts/relationships between expressive liberties and other values:** Intellectual property; war and national security; privacy.
- **Liberalism overseas:** Transformations, inconsistencies, and problems of liberal ideas on expressive freedom in colonial/imperial contexts.

If you are not sure whether your research fits any of the above, please consider sending us an informal email detailing your previous and planned work before preparing your abstract.

Proposals must include a title, a 300-word abstract or outline, and a short bio of the author(s). They should be submitted by email to the two volume editors **before 30 November 2026**. Authors will be notified of the decision by 15 December 2026. Final chapters should be between 6,000 and 6,500 words (inclusive of notes and references) and are expected to be submitted in Fall 2027.

Contact: David Guerrero (david.guerrero@upf.edu) and Andrea Pérez (aperezfernandez5@uoc.edu).