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# EASR 2016 Conference

## Relocating Religion

Helsinki 28 June – 1 July 2016

Annual conference of the EASR  
Special conference of the IAHR

Welcome to the annual conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR) that will be held from **28 June – 1 July 2016**, at the University of Helsinki, Finland. The theme of the conference is **Relocating religion**.

Religion has always been a moving concept. Throughout history, it has changed place, shape, function and content; conceptions of religion have been dependent on theoretical or political interests and strategies. Religion can be framed as a means of identity-work, world-building and well-being, but it can also be perceived as a consumer good or a security threat. Due to the open, fragile, and inherently negotiable nature of the category of ‘religion’, rigid definitions produce simplistic and distorted representations of the complexities involved in the formation of religious phenomena. At the same time, attempts to define and redefine religion in various contexts are themselves an important topic of research. All of this requires interdisciplinary scholarly imagination and critical new approaches.

In recent scholarship, religious change has been conceptualized from a variety of theoretical perspectives. When focusing on the modern period, some scholars speak about the vitalization of religions, secularization and post-secularity, while others refer to re-sacralization and re-enchantment. Concurrently, the need for more knowledge and understanding not only of religion, but also of secularization, secular positions and non-religion has been underlined. Many of these perspectives highlight the significance of religious change as a cultural and social phenomenon. Such perspectives are, however, equally applicable to the study of religious transformations in other contexts than the modern period. The conference will offer the opportunity to explore changes and continuities in the forms, practices and implications of religion at all levels of societies and cultures, in the past as well as in the present.

Language of the conference is English.

**The keynote speakers are:**

Giovanni Filoromo, University of Turin  
Anne-Marie Korte, University of Utrecht  
James R. Lewis, University of Tromsø  
Linda Woodhead, University of Lancaster

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**Call for session proposals:**

1 September to 30 October 2015

We invite proposals for closed sessions (with a fixed chair and speakers) and open sessions (with a chair and a theme).

Notification of acceptance:

15 November 2016 at the latest

**Call for individual papers:**

15 November to 31 December 2015

Notification of acceptance:

15 February 2016 at the latest

**Registration:**

15 February to 1 May 2016

**Organizers:** The conference will be organized by the Study of Religions at the University of Helsinki in collaboration with the Finnish Society for the Study of Religion, Comparative Religion at the Åbo Akademi University and the Donner Institute, Turku.

**Welcome:** On behalf of the organizing committee, cordially welcome to Helsinki,

Tuula Sakaranaho, President of the conference

Heidi Rautalahti, Conference secretary

For further information, please, contact: <http://blogs.helsinki.fi/easr-2016/>

