

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

### **Compassion, Social Engagement, and Discontent: Believing and the Politics of Belonging in Europe Today**

Leiden University Centre for the Study of Religion (LUCSoR), Thursday 10 and Friday 11 November 2016

Convener: Dr. Nathal M. Dessing

This LUCSoR conference aims to investigate forms and elements of religion in public settings and technologies of belonging in Europe today by taking compassion as a locus. We approach compassion not primarily as an emotion but as a social relation. Compassion may lead to social engagement, but also to the desire not to connect, to refuse engagement, or to turn away.

The conference is intended for scholars of religion of various disciplinary backgrounds interested in exploring new ways of studying religion in public settings.

We invite papers starting from small stories or vignettes of:

(1) Compassion and social engagement of religious community groups and individuals

These may vary from local-based initiatives of informal care and volunteer aid, to more institutionalized forms of aid provided by religious community groups, such as faith-based refugee work and social service agencies caring for the poor and homeless. The vignettes should provide a window into forms and elements of religion today and the politics of belonging: who deserves compassion, who is excluded or undeserving, and what does the response toward suffering entail?

(2) Discontent and anxiety about multiculturalism in everyday life

This category of papers engages with a relatively under-researched topic: the discontent of the "angry" citizen, who feels ignored by politicians, who, unlike the elites in their ivory tower, experiences daily what it means to live in a multicultural society, and who may express her- or himself in riotous protests against the resettlement of refugees. What values underlie their discontent? What makes them reject certain forms of compassionate action and choose others?

We are looking for papers that are theoretically informed and based on fieldwork or detailed case studies. The focus of the conference is Europe today, but we also welcome proposals based on historical research or with a different geographical emphasis that deepen our understanding of believing and technologies of belonging in Europe today.

#### **Practical Details**

– Abstracts (max. 200 words) should address the relation between your paper and the theme of the conference, the empirical material (texts, cases, interviews, observations) with which you work, and the theoretical contribution of your paper.

- Please send title and abstract, name and contact details by 1 June 2016 to Dr. Nathal M. Dessing at [LUCSoRconference@religion.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:LUCSoRconference@religion.leidenuniv.nl). Subject line: "Abstract LUCSoR conference 2016".
- Notifications of acceptance by 1 July 2016.
- Papers will be precirculated. Deadline for full papers: 1 October 2016.
- Presentation time for papers is 10 minutes followed by 20 minutes discussion.
- Confirmed speakers will be offered hotel accommodation in Leiden. We are unable to reimburse travel expenses, but we hope that you will secure funding from other sources.
- Please direct any questions or registration requests to Dr. Nathal M. Dessing at [LUCSoRconference@religion.leidenuniv.nl](mailto:LUCSoRconference@religion.leidenuniv.nl).