



# INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON RELIGIONS

**1-4 March 2023**

*Università Roma Tre*  
*Dipartimento Scienze della Formazione*  
*Via del Castro Pretorio, 20 | Rome*

*Organising Committee: Irena Borowik, Roberto Cipriani, Grace Davie, Enzo Pace, Philippe Portier, Helena Vilaça, Fenggang Yang, Siniša Zrinščak*

*World religions are no longer the same as in the more or less recent past. They seem to have changed internally, but also to be participating in the processes of globalization. Both, quantitatively (attendance at rituals, participation in activities, and contributions to institutional expenses) and qualitatively (intensity of belief, commitment to militancy, adherence to fundamental principles), there have been significant changes, which cannot be adequately understood with the traditional tools of scientific knowledge, but which require new approaches, for a more in-depth analysis.*

*The International Forum on Religions is an opportunity to recover and relaunch the supranational debate in the field of social science applied to the religious phenomenon, thanks to the participation of the most accredited and reliable scholars. Particularly worthy of attention is the new reality of knowledge about religions operating in the Asian world, which is not usually taken into account in the current debate. This is why the Forum represents an almost unique opportunity to revitalise the international debate on religions.*

Organizers:



Partners:



The Forum is sponsored by the Italian Episcopal Conference

# PROGRAMME

## Wednesday 1st March 2023

9.00 | *Chair:* **Enzo Pace** (University of Padua)

Opening welcome by **Massimiliano Fiorucci** (Roma Tre University Rector) and **Paola Perucchini** (Head of Education Department)

*Introduction* by **Roberto Cipriani** (Roma Tre University)

*Opening speech* by **Patrice Brodeur** (University of Montreal)

*Coffee break*

11:00 | *Chair:* **Paul-André Turcotte** (University of Ottawa)

*Lecture on "Judaism"* by **Sergio DellaPergola** (Hebrew University, Jerusalem)

*Discussants:*

**David Meghnagi** (Roma Tre University)

**Ephraim Tabory** (Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan)

*On-site catering*

15.00 | *Chair:* **Paolo Naso** (Sapienza University of Rome)

*Lecture on "Christian Churches"* by **José Casanova** (Georgetown University, Washington)

*Discussants:*

**Anthony Blasi** (St. Mary's University, San Antonio)

**Franco Garelli** (University of Turin)

**Siniša Zrinščak** (University of Zagreb)

*Coffee break*

17:00 | *Chair:* **Siniša Zrinščak** (University of Zagreb)

*Lecture on "Sunni and Shia Islam"* by **Farhad Khosrokhavar** (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris)

*Discussants:*

**Enzo Pace** (University of Padua)

**Roberta Ricucci** (University of Turin)

## Thursday 2nd March 2023

9:00 | *Chair:* **Massimo Introvigne** (CESNUR, Turin)

*Lecture on “Shinto”* by **Mark R. Mullins** (University of Auckland)

*Discussants:*

**Erica Baffelli** (University of Manchester)

**Massimo Raveri** (Ca' Foscari University, Venice)

*Coffe break*

11:00 | *Chair:* **Vincent Goossaert** (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris)

*Lecture on “Confucianism”* by **Anna Sun** (Duke University, Durham)

*Discussants:*

**Ambrogio Selusi** (University of Macerata)

**Fenggang Yang** (Purdue University, West Lafayette)

*On-site catering*

15:00 | *Chair:* **Mark R. Mullins** (University of Auckland)

*Lecture on “Taoism”* by **Vincent Goossaert** (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris)

*Discussants:*

**Jacopo Scarin** (Ca' Foscari University, Venice)

**Maurizio Paolillo** (L'Orientale University, Naples)

*Coffee break*

17:00 | *Chair:* **Emma Tomalin** (University of Leeds)

*Lecture on “Hinduism”* by **Arvind Sharma** (McGill University, Montreal)

*Discussants:*

**Prema Kurien** (Syracuse University)

**Federico Squarcini** (Ca' Foscari University, Venice)

## Friday 3rd March 2023

9:00 | *Chair:* **Erica Baffelli** (University of Manchester)

*Lecture on “Buddhism”* by **Emma Tomalin** (University of Leeds)

*Discussants:*

**Raphaël Liogier** (Institut d'Études Politiques, Aix-en-Provence)

**Lionel Obadia** (Université Lumière Lyon 2)

*Coffe break*

11:00 | *Chair:* **Raphaël Liogier** (Institut d'Études Politiques, Aix-en-Provence)

*Lecture on “Sikhism”* by **Gurinder Singh Mann** (Global Institute for Sikh Studies, New York)

*Discussants:*

**Samuele Davide Molli** (University of Milan)

**Barbara Bertolani** (University of Trento)

*On-site catering*

15:00 | *Chair:* **Philippe Portier** (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris)

*Lecture on “New Spirituality”* by **Giuseppe Giordan** (University of Padua)

*Discussants:*

**Stefania Palmisano** (University of Turin)

**Adriana Valente** (CNR-IRPPS, Rome)

**Helena Vilaça** (University of Porto)

**Raquel Weiss** (University of Rio Grande do Sul)

*Coffee break*

17:00 | *Chair:* **Carlo Nardella** (University of Milan)

*Lecture on “Digital Religion”* by **Massimo Leone** (FBK-Trento, University of Turin)

*Discussants:*

**Paolo Peverini** (LUISS, Rome)

**Piero Polidoro** (LUMSA, Rome)

**Alessandra Vitullo** (Sapienza University of Rome)

## Saturday 4th March 2023

9:00 | Chair: **Vittorio Cotesta** (Roma Tre University)

Lecture on “Atheism” by **Lois Lee** (University of Kent)

Discussants:

**Irena Borowik** (Jagiellonian University, Krakow)

**Philippe Portier** (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris)

*Coffe break*

11:00 | Concluding discussion and approval of the final document

Conveners:

**Grace Davie, Irena Borowik, Siniša Zrinščak, Fenggang Yang** (chair)

Conclusion by **Emanuela C. Del Re**, European Union Special Representative

*The lectures will be followed by an open discussion*

## SPEAKERS

### ROBERTO CIPRIANI

Roberto Cipriani is a Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Roma Tre University, where he has been Chairman of the Department of Education. He has taught at the Universities of Sao Paulo, Recife, Buenos Aires and Laval (Québec). His best-known theory is “diffused religion” based on the socialization processes. He did comparative empirical research in Greece, Mexico and Israel. He made 20 research films. In 2014, he was one of two candidates for the Presidency of the International Sociological Association. He is an Advisory Editor of the Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology. He has been Directeur d’Études at Maison des Sciences de l’Homme in Paris, “Chancellor Dunning Trust Lecturer” at Queen’s University in Kingston (Canada), President of the ISA Research Committee for the Sociology of Religion, Editor-in-Chief of *International Sociology*, member of the Executive Committees of the International Association of French-Speaking Sociologists, the International Society for the Sociology of Religion and the International Institute of Sociology, and President of the European Council of National Sociological Associations. He is also Past President of the Italian Association of University Teachers.

### PATRICE BRODEUR

Patrice Brodeur is an expert in Islamic studies and comparative Abrahamic religions. His research has focused on the intersection between Islam, pluralism and globalisation, including issues of integration, radicalisation, and Islamophobia. In applied research, he has worked on different forms of dialogue as an approach to glocal conflict transformation: intra-religious, inter-religious, inter-cultural, inter-civilizational and inter-worldview, in particular how Muslims have contributed to contemporary transnational dialogue dynamics.

## **SERGIO DELLAPERGOLA**

Born in Trieste, Sergio is the son of journalist Massimo DellaPergola (1912-2006). After the war, he and his family moved to Milan, where he was part of various Jewish youth organisations. After graduating from the University of Pavia, he emigrated to Israel in 1966. He teaches demography and population studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and is considered the foremost expert on the world's Jewish population, both Israeli and Diaspora. DellaPergola is Professor Emeritus at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, specialising in the demography of Judaism in the world and in Israel. He has written many essays and articles on demography, migration, Jewish identity and the Israeli and Palestinian populations. He has lectured at over 100 universities in Europe, North and Latin America, South Africa and Australia, and has been a consultant to the Israeli government, the Jerusalem municipality and Israel's Central Statistical Institute. He was member of the advisory committee of the Pew Research Center surveys of Jewish Americans, and of the European Union's FRA surveys of Experiences and perception of antisemitism. He taught at the Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies, Brandeis University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of California at Los Angeles, the Universidade de São Paulo and the Universidad Iberoamericana in Mexico City. He is a member of the Yad Vashem Commission for the Righteous Among the Nations.

## **JOSÉ CASANOVA**

José Casanova is one of the world's leading scholars in the sociology of religion and a senior fellow at the Berkley Center, where his work focuses on globalization, religions, and secularization. He is also professor emeritus at Georgetown University, where he previously taught in the Department of Sociology and the Department of Theology and Religious Studies. During 2017 he was the Kluge Chair in Countries and Cultures of the North at the U.S. Library of Congress' John W. Kluge Center, where he worked on a book manuscript on *Early Modern Globalization through a Jesuit Prism*. He has published works on a broad range of subjects, including religion and globalization, migration and religious pluralism, transnational religions, and sociological theory. His best-known work, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (University of Chicago Press, 1994), has become a modern classic in the field and has been translated into several languages, including Japanese, Arabic, and Turkish. In 2012, Casanova was awarded the Theology Prize from the Salzburger Hochschulwochen in recognition of his life-long achievement in the field of theology.

## **FARHAD KHOSROKHAVAR**

Farhad Khosrokhavar (Tehran, 21 March 1948) is an Iranian sociologist. Since 1998, he has been research director at EHESS, the École des hautes études en sciences sociales in Paris. His research interests include political sociology, sociology of religion, contemporary Islam and Iran. From 1977 to 1979 he was an assistant professor at Bou Ali University in Hamadan, Iran and from 1979 to 1990 an associate professor at the Centre for Political Science, Ministry of Culture and Higher Education. In 1990-1991 he was Rockefeller Fellow and from 1991 to 1998 associate professor at EHESS-CADIS (Centre d'Analyse et d'Intervention Sociologiques).

## **MARK R. MULLINS**

Mark R. Mullins is Professor of Japanese Studies and Director of the New Zealand Asia Institute's Japan Studies Centre at the University of Auckland. Prior to this appointment, he was engaged in academic work in Japan for twenty-seven years and taught at Shikoku Gakuin University, Meiji Gakuin University, and Sophia University. His teaching and research focus is on the role of Japanese religions in modern societies both within and outside of Japan. He is the author and co-editor of a number of works, including *Christianity Made in Japan: A Study of Indigenous Movements* (University of Hawai'i Press, 1998), *Disasters and Social Crisis in Contemporary Japan* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), and most recently *Yasukuni Fundamentalism: Japanese Religions and the Politics of Restoration* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2021). In 2019, he was awarded the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon, by the Japanese Government in recognition of his contribution to the sociology of religion in Japan and the development of academic exchanges and mutual understanding between Japan and New Zealand.

## **ANNA SUN**

Anna Sun is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Duke University. She earned her Ph.D. in sociology from Princeton and her B.A from Berkeley. Sun is a scholar of Confucianism in particular and of contemporary Chinese religious life in general. Her research interests include the 19th century production of knowledge about Chinese religions; the development of Global Confucianism in the 21st century; comparative ritual theory; and theoretical and methodological issues underlying the social scientific study of religion. Her first book, *Confucianism as a World Religion: Contested Histories and Contemporary Realities* (Princeton University Press, 2013), received the “Distinguished Book Award” in sociology of religion from the American Sociological Association and the “Best First Book in the History of Religion Award” from the American Academy of Religion. She co-edited the volume *Situating Spirituality: Context, Practice, and Power* (with Brian Steensland and Jaime Kucinkas), published by Oxford University Press in 2021. She is currently working on *The Social Life of Prayer in Contemporary Urban China*, a book manuscript addressing conceptual issues in the study of contemporary religious practice based on her ethnographic research in China over the past decade. She has served as Vice President of the Society for the Study of Chinese Religions (2017-2020) and two-term Co-Chair of the Chinese Religions Unit of the American Academy of Religion (2015-2021).

## **VINCENT GOOSSAERT**

Vincent Goossaert is a historian and professor at EPHE, PSL (Paris). He was a guest professor at Geneva University and Chinese University of Hong Kong. He works on the social history of modern Chinese religion, and has focused on Daoism, on religious specialists as professionals and social roles, on the politics of religion, and on the production of moral norms. He is codirecting an international project on “Religious Text Production and Identity Formation in China, 17th to 21st Centuries” (grants from DFG, Germany and ANR, France). He is coeditor of *T'oung Pao*, a major journal of Chinese studies. Recent publications include *Making the Gods Speak. The Ritual Production of Revelation in Chinese History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2022).

## **ARVIND SHARMA**

Arvind Sharma was born on 13 January 1940 in Varanasi, India. Sharma is the Birks Professor of Comparative Religion at McGill University. Sharma's works focus on Hinduism, philosophy of religion. In editing books his works include *Our Religions and Women in World Religions*, *Feminism in World Religions* was selected as a Choice Outstanding Academic Book (1999). He served in civil services in Gujarat until 1968. He went to US to pursue higher studies in economics at the Syracuse University, obtaining a Masters in economics in 1970. While pursuing the role of non-economic factors in economic development he became interested in religion and joined Harvard Divinity School in 1972. After obtaining a Masters in Theological Studies, he earned his PhD from the Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies in 1978. While at Harvard he was recruited in 1976 by the newly founded Department of Studies in Religion at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. In 1980 he moved to the University of Sydney. In 1994 he was appointed the Birks Professor of Comparative Religion at McGill University, where he teaches. The archives fonds of Arvind Sharma is held at McGill University Archives (MUA).

## **EMMA TOMALIN**

Emma Tomalin is the director of the Centre for Religion and Public Life and a senior lecturer in Religious Studies at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom. She has been a member of the American Academy of Religion's Committee for the Public Understanding of Religion since 2014. Her main research interests are focused around religions and global development and religion, gender, and society. Her articles have been published in *Oxford Development Studies* and *Gender and Development*, among others. Her most recent book is *The Routledge Handbook of Religions and Global Development* (2015); she is also the author of *Religions and Development* (2013) and *Gender, Faith and Development* (2011), among others, and co-editor of *Writing the City in British Asian Diasporas* (2014).

## **GURINDER SINGH MANN**

Gurinder Singh Mann is a Punjabi-American scholar and professor of Sikh studies, and the author of multiple books on Sikh religion and society. Mann taught religion at Columbia University from 1988 to 1999 and then held the Kundan Kaur Kapany Chair in Sikh Studies from 1999 to 2015 at the University of California, Santa Barbara. He retired from Santa Barbara in 2015, and founded the Global Institute for Sikh Studies in New York City, which he presently directs. Mann studied for a master's degree in English from Baring Union Christian College in Batala, Punjab, from 1965 to 1971, and then completed a diploma in English Studies at the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages in Hyderabad, India, in 1975. He earned a second master's degree in English from the University of Kent at Canterbury, England, in 1976. From 1984 to 1987 he studied for Master of Theological Studies at Harvard University. He joined the doctoral program in Religion at Columbia University in 1987, and completed his Ph.D. there in 1993. Mann taught English at Baring Union Christian College, Batala from 1971 to 1984, religion at Columbia University from 1988 to 1999 and then held the Kundan Kaur Kapany Chair in Sikh Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara from 1999 to 2015.

## **GIUSEPPE GIORDAN**

Giuseppe Giordan is a professor of sociology at the Department of Philosophy, Sociology, Education, and Applied Psychology at University of Padova. His research interests include spirituality, religious pluralism, conversion, interfaith dialogue, Eastern Orthodoxy, and religious freedom. He has recently co-edited the volumes *Religious Freedom: Social-Scientific Approaches* (2021), *Global Eastern Orthodoxy. Politics, Religion, and Human Rights* (2020), *Chinese Religions Going Global* (2021), *Interreligious Dialogue: From Religion to Geopolitics* (2019), and *The Social Scientific Study of Exorcism in Christianity* (2020). He co-authored *Sociology of Exorcism in Late Modernity* (2018).

## **MASSIMO LEONE**

Massimo Leone is Director of the Centre for Religious Studies, Bruno Kessler Foundation. He is Tenured Full Professor of Philosophy of Communication, Cultural Semiotics, and Visual Semiotics at the Department of Philosophy and Educational Sciences, University of Turin, Italy, Vice-Director for research at the same University, and part-time Professor of Semiotics in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature, University of Shanghai, China, Associate Member of Cambridge Digital Humanities, Cambridge University. He has been visiting professor at several universities in the five continents. He has single-authored twelve books, edited more than thirty collective volumes, and published more than five hundred articles in semiotics, religious studies, and visual studies. He is the chief editor of *Lexia*, the Semiotic Journal of the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Communication, University of Torino, Italy (SCOPUS). He is the winner of a 2018 ERC Consolidator Grant, the most prestigious research grant in Europe.

## **LOIS LEE**

Lois Lee is Senior Lecturer in Secular Studies at the University of Kent and a leading sociologist of nonreligious existential traditions including Atheism and Humanism. As well her work in the sociology of values, meaning and ethics, her research explores secularism and pluralism in politics and public life. She took a leading role in establishing the study of nonreligion and atheism in the social sciences, founding the Nonreligion and Secularity Research Network in 2008 and co-founding the first academic journal for the field, *Secularism and Nonreligion*, in 2011. She was Principal Investigator of the *Understanding Unbelief* research programme (2017-2021) and is currently co-PI of the *Explaining Atheism* research programme (2022-2024) – international collaborative projects working across the human sciences to investigate so-called non-belief around the world. Her books include *Recognizing the Non-religious: Reimagining the Secular* (2015), *The Oxford Dictionary of Atheism* (with Stephen Bullivant, 2016), *Secularity and Nonreligion* (edited with Stephen Bullivant and Elisabeth Arweck), *Negotiating Religion: Cross-disciplinary Perspectives* (edited with François Guesnet and Cécile Laborde), and *Diversity, Inclusion and Decolonisation: Practical Tools for Improving Teaching, Research and Scholarship* (edited with Abby Day, David Thomas and James Spickard, 2022).