

# *XXIII International Association for the History of Religions World Congress*

*Out of Europe: Studying Religion(s) in Interconnected Worlds*

**August 24–30, 2025**

**Jagiellonian University**

**Kraków, Poland**

## **Open panel:**

### ***31. Rethinking the History of Religious Studies: Beyond Post-Colonialism and Eurocentrism***

**Convenor: Augusto Cosentino (Società Italiana di Storia delle Religioni)**

A dominant trend in the field of religious studies criticizes its colonial and Eurocentric nature, arguing that traditional approaches have privileged Euro-American perspectives to the detriment of others. This criticism has led to questioning the notion itself of religion, as a Western construct unapplicable to non-Western cultures.

This panel aims to critically examine this position, challenging the idea of a monolithic essentialized West and arguing for “religion” as an analogous historical concept. It will also explore the potentially negative consequences of the adoption of critical theory or indiscriminate reflexivity for the discipline, implying the risk of fragmenting the study of religions and removing any attempt at comparison. Arguably, it is possible to preserve the epistemological validity of the religious historical (comparative ) approach while recognizing and enhancing the plurality and diversity of cultural traditions.

In sum. this panel intends to challenge traditional emic/etic dichotomies, arguing that both scholars and the phenomena they study, are involved in a historical reflective process. It will consider how other cultural traditions have developed alternative views and approaches applicable to religio-historical investigation.

Finally, we intend to contribute to the understanding of the concept of religion, following its variations throughout the diverse cultures and the history of religious historiography.

To submit your abstract, please visit <https://iahr2025.org/call-for-panels-papers/submit-an-abstract/> and follow the instructions provided for abstract submissions.

If you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at [augusto.cosentino@sisrweb.it](mailto:augusto.cosentino@sisrweb.it)