

# Interdisciplinary symposium: Religion and urban transformations: perspectives from the global South and beyond

3 September 2024  
University of Bremen (Germany)

## Abstract

This interdisciplinary symposium will explore the complex and dynamic entanglements of religion with modes of life, meaning- and space-making and community formation in contemporary cities across the world. With a specific analytical focus on global and mega-cities – but also on other metropolitan areas, more generally, the symposium will seek to explicate processes of social transformation, intergroup interactions and urban development through the lens of urban religion as a lived reality for believers and practitioners. Theoretically, the symposium builds upon recent work on urban religiosity which has sought to explain how religious practices and religious institutions feature in the everyday lives of urbanites and consequently, how their religious creativity is both enacted in and informed by the urban landscapes (cf. Orsi 1999, Bielo ed. 2013, van der Veer ed. 2015).

Some of the questions that the symposium participants will consider, but not exclusively, are:

- What is the distinctive contribution of religion to social transformation processes in urban areas?
- How is urban religion experienced and enacted by believers?
- What religious choices do people make on the rich spiritual market of super-diverse (cf. Vertovec 2007) cities?
- What (new) spaces does religion open up in cities – and how are cityscapes transformed by this?
- Are urban religious spaces loci of integration and/or contestation and how does this play out in people's lived experiences?
- What visions and versions of modernity do religious practitioners construct for themselves in the urban environment?
- In what ways is religious knowledge constructed, transmitted and re-enacted in urban settings?
- How does religion influence people's identity constructions and negotiations with others, both within and outside their particular communities? etc.

The symposium will offer scholars the opportunity to reflect upon their research on the intersection between religion, the urban and social life and to connect with each other in order to foster future collaborations and joint projects. Submissions are welcome from scholars from any discipline within the social sciences and humanities who engage in empirical research, particularly, but not exclusively, Social Anthropology, Sociology, Area Studies, Development Studies, Religious Studies etc.

Paper proposals should include a title, an abstract of approximately **300 words** and a brief personal **biography** of the presenter, including department and university affiliation as relevant.

Submission deadline: **1 April 2024**

Please email all submissions to **UrbanReligion2024@gmail.com**

Successful applicants will be notified in late April. The organisers will cover the accommodation costs of the selected participants and possibly some of their travel costs too.