



Urban Studies Seminar 2018–2019

Annual Theme:

The Urban Spatialities of Religion in the Middle East, Africa and South-East Asia

Monday, 3 December 2018, 5 pm

Religion and Urbanity: A Research Agenda

Lecture by **Jörg Rüpke** and **Susanne Rau** (Max Weber Center for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies at the University of Erfurt)

In July 2018 the German Research Council approved the setting up of a new research project entitled 'Religion and Urbanity: Reciprocal Formations' at the Max Weber Centre for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies at the University of Erfurt. With its interdisciplinary orientation, it will offer a forum for a broad field of research into urban and religious histories, and at the same time provide a space for theoretical reflection on how cities and religions interact as they change and develop. One central assumption of the project is that cities and religions have deeply formed each other reciprocally. The majority of research in urban history and history of historiography has had a focus on religion in cities – any interdependency of religious practices and urban space was at best analysed with emphasis on the present and "global cities". Instead, this project intends to analyse reciprocal formations of religion and urbanity in settlements from the first millennium before Christ to the present day in Europe, the Mediterranean World, and South Asia. In considering this interaction, two specific guiding questions will be at the forefront: 1) What role do religious agents, practices, and ideas play for the emergence and ongoing development of cities and "urbanity"? And 2) What role do urban agents, spaces, and practices play for the emergence and ongoing development of religious groups and "religion"?

The presentation will elucidate and set out in detail the thoughts and considerations that have led to the formation of this project. Thus, it attempts to outline a set of questions and the state of research relevant to them as well as to develop further questions for future research.

Susanne Rau (M.A. in History, Roman Languages and Literatures and Philosophy in 1997, PhD in Medieval and Modern History in 2001 at Hamburg University, Habilitation in 2008 at Dresden University) is professor of spatial history and cultures at the University of Erfurt, Germany. Since 2011, she is also a regular visiting professor at the ENS Lyon and the CIHAM, France, and spokesperson of the research group "Spatio-Temporal Studies Erfurt". She has published widely in urban history and in the theory, history and anthropology of spaces. Currently, she leads a research project on the history of cartography in Europe and India.

Jörg Rüpke studied at Bonn, Lancaster and Tübingen, where he earned his doctorate (*Domi militiae*, 1990) and habilitation (*Kalender und Öffentlichkeit*, 1999). He is now a fellow in Religious Studies and vice-director of the Max Weber Centre for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies at the University of Erfurt. He has led projects on Lived Ancient Religion, Religious Individualisation in Historical Perspectives and Roman Imperial and Provincial Religion. Rüpke has published widely on Roman culture and religion.

Venue

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In cooperation with:

