

Worldwide, new religious movements are changing the cultures, economies and everyday life in the metropolis. In Lagos, the largest church building holds five times more people than the world's biggest soccer stadium. In Beirut, Muslim organizations conduct the rebuilding of war-ravaged neighborhoods and are in charge of housing provision. In the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, evangelicals are active in drug prevention; in Mumbai, Hindu nationalists are officially part of the municipal government. Right across the religious spectrum, these new movements and organizations have become political actors and global players who frequently substitute state agencies. At the same time, urban cultures, in their turn, are permeated by new modes of religious expression like – for example – religious hip-hop and Christian Nollywood films. Through science and art, the project **global prayers · redemption and liberation in the city** investigates new manifestations of the religious in urban space and the influence of urban cultures on the religious. In making use of collaborations between art and science-based researchers, **global prayers** takes a new approach to exploring the images and sounds, spaces and practices that the religious adapts in the age of globalization. It creates trans-regional networks and advances interdisciplinary approaches. Since May 2010, over 20 academics and artists from more than ten countries have been working on case studies in nine of the world's metropolises: Lagos, Rio de Janeiro, Mumbai, Istanbul, Beirut, Jakarta, Kinshasa, Nairobi and Berlin. The ongoing research pro-

Events

12.11.2011 – 08.01.2012 > Exhibition

NGBK: the Urban Cultures of Global Prayers

Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst / NGBK, Oranienstr.25, D-10999 Berlin, www.ngbk.de

27.01. – 9.4.2012 > Exhibition

Camera Austria: the Urban Cultures of Global Prayers

Camera Austria, Lendkai 1, A-8020 Graz, www.camera-austria.at

23. – 26.02.2012 > Theme Days

Haus der Kulturen der Welt: global prayers

Haus der Kulturen der Welt / HKW, John-Foster-Dulles-Allee 10, D-10557 Berlin, www.hkw.de

Publications

metroZones (Hg)

Urban Prayers – Neue religiöse Bewegungen in der globalen Stadt

metroZones 10

Verlag Assoziation A

Berlin/Hamburg, 2011

ISBN 978-3-935936-78-1

metroZones (Hg)

the Urban Cultures of Global Prayers / 2012

Verlag b_books

A comprehensive publication on the project

global prayers · redemption and liberation in the city

will be published at the end of 2012.

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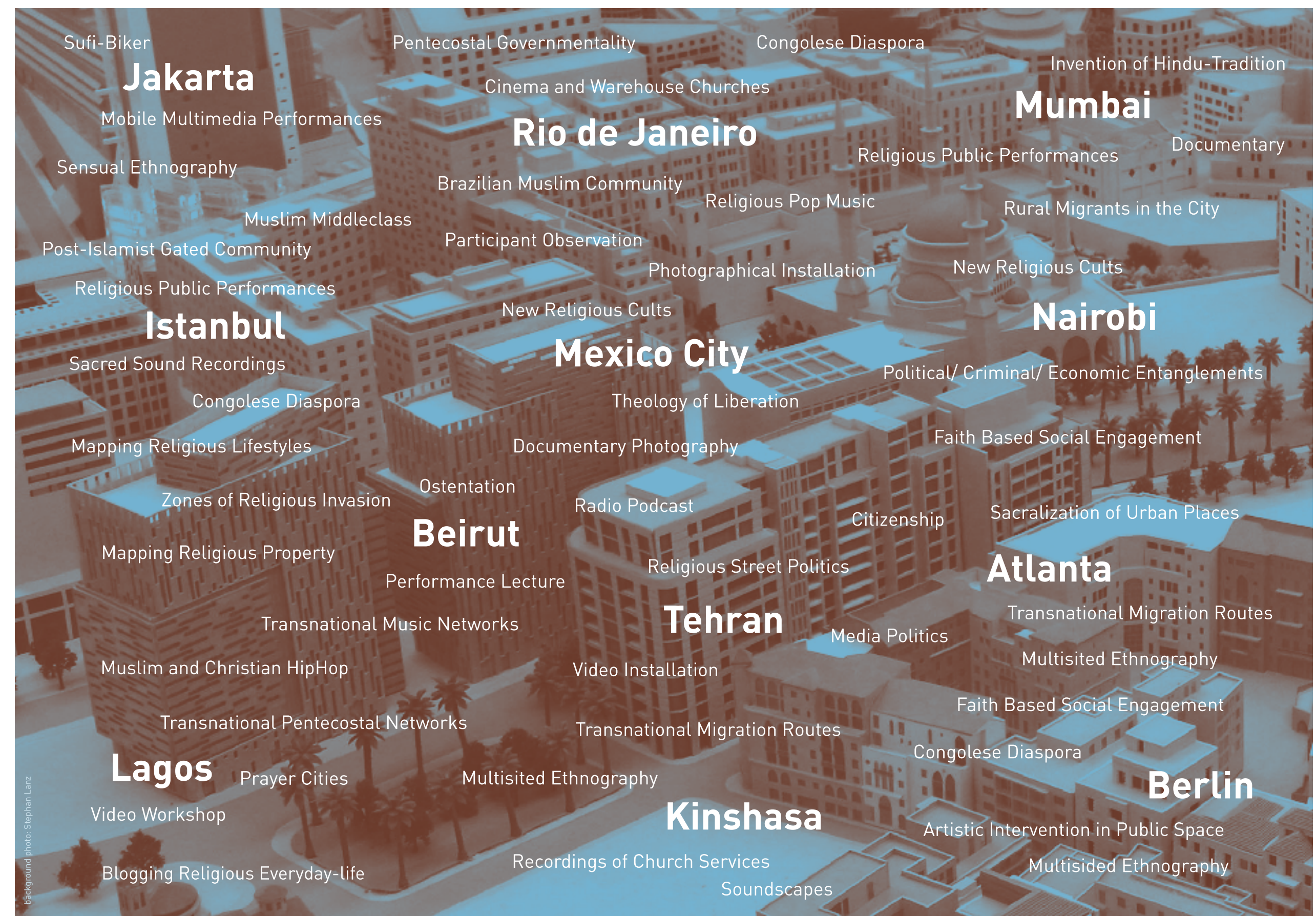
For more information see: www.globalprayers.info
www.hkw.de | www.metroZones.info



cess is presented to the public through a number of forums and intervention pieces: on-location symposia and workshops in the metropolises provide an opportunity to gain a closer understanding of religious communities and their activities. The **globalPrayers. saloons** provide a forum for discussion on the politics of knowledge. The results of the project's art-based research will be presented in the exhibition **the Urban Cultures of Global Prayers**, which will open at the Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst (NGBK) in Berlin in November 2011, and move to the Camera Austria in Graz in January 2012. The **global prayers theme days**, which will take place at the Haus der Kulturen der Welt in February 2012, will include performance pieces, films, readings and lectures, providing a platform for an exchange of ideas with international guests and representatives of new religious formations. Scientific and audio-visual research will be complemented by new artistic and documentary works. Updates on the project's research can be found at the website: www.globalprayers.info. This research project will run until 2014. It has been made possible through the collaboration of a number of institutions. Initiated in 2009 by academics, curators and artists affiliated with the project agency metroZones e.V., the **global prayers** project is a joint endeavor of the Haus der Kulturen der Welt and the Europa-Universität Viadrina. **global prayers** is a project at the Forum Transregionale Studien. The project is coproduced by the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung, the Goethe-Institut, and the NGBK.



Europa-Universität Viadrina | Haus der Kulturen der Welt | metroZones – Center for Urban Affairs e.V. Forum Transregionale Studien | NGBK | Heinrich-Böll Stiftung | Goethe-Institute | Camera Austria



Topics and Research Fields

global prayers · redemption and liberation in the city explores urban settings in which new religious communities and movements have multiplied over the past several decades. The project focuses on urban spaces, urban cultures and lifestyles as well as on different forms of regulation and governance in contemporary cities.

How, for example, religious practices shape material and social spaces and are expressed in diverse forms of mobility from street processions and public interactions to transnational networks. Moreover, **global prayers** investigates how particular forms of media are used to establish visual and auditory markers in urban space; and how urban societies are transformed by the social and political engagement of religious movements.

global prayers explores as well the question of how urban space affects and generates new forms of religion. In many cases, the city as such becomes a central element of the aspirations of urban religions: as a 'den of iniquity' that needs to be redeemed through religious means; as territory for spatial missionary practices; or as an imaginary City of God.

The case studies that comprise **global prayers** cover four main areas of research:

ZONES AND BORDERS: THE RELIGIOUS PRODUCTION OF URBAN SPACE

Research focuses on the material production of space by urban religious communities on three distinct scales: the production or conversion of individual buildings; the religious conversion of existing local areas; and the creation of new urban spaces which are shaped by aspirations of religious communities to create godly cities.

STAGES AND SPACES FOR ACTION: RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATIONS OF URBAN EVERYDAY LIFE

The urban character of religious communities is manifested in the deployment of streets and squares as symbolically charged stages: as spaces for action, missionary work, and celebratory rituals. This use of public space aims to make visible minority religious communities, to distinguish one group from another, and to spread and disseminate religious beliefs. Additionally, new urban religious communities appropriate and change existing urban cultural practices.

URBAN LOCALIZATIONS OF TRANS-REGIONAL RELIGIOUS NETWORKS

Facilitated by the ever-increasing mobility of people, objects and media, new urban religious communities are often interlinked and networked on a global scale. Like diasporic communities, these communities de- and reterritorialize in globally linked metropolises. The project analyzes the relationship between global networks and local manifestations of these religious communities.

CITY OF GOD: THE POLITICS OF NEW URBAN RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

Focusing on the political character of new urban religious communities, **global prayers** explores the myriad interconnections between the political and the religious in cities. The project looks at the differentiated forms in which the relationship between state and religious community is played out in urban space; it places an emphasis on the local micro-politics, in which religious communities act.

Institutions

metroZones – Center for Urban Affairs

metroZones – Center for Urban Affairs e.V. was founded in 2007 as an independent association. Its mandate is to bring together different approaches in research, knowledge production, cultural practice, and political intervention at the interface of art, academia and politics, and to provide a forum for their public discussion. metroZones' expertise is grounded in the many years of experience of its members in research, culture, arts, media and urban politics across a network of disciplines and regions. As a result of former projects in the urban field, **global prayers** was initiated and firstly conceptualized by metroZones. www.metrozones.info

Haus der Kulturen der Welt

The Haus der Kulturen der Welt (HKW) is a place for international contemporary arts and a forum for current developments and discourse. Located in the capital city of Berlin, it presents artistic productions from around the world, with a special focus on non-European cultures and societies. Visual arts, music, literature, performing arts, film, academic discussions and digital media are all linked in an interdisciplinary program that is unique in Europe. In a time when local and national issues are inextricably tied to international developments, the HKW enables the voices of the world to be heard in their great diversity and gives them a productive place in the inner-social dialogue. The HKW organizes and coordinates the overall project **global prayers**. www.hkw.de

Europa-Universität Viadrina

The Europa-Universität Viadrina is a German university located in Frankfurt at the Oder on the border between Germany and Poland. Over the years the Viadrina has become a 'specialist' for transcending borders and geographic spaces; intercultural competence in a culturally multifaceted society; interdisciplinarity in a world that requires more than a single perspective; and for multilingualism in both a literal and figurative sense. In the context of the project **global prayers** the Europa-Universität Viadrina coordinates, organizes, and supervises the academic part of the project. www.europa-uni.de

Forum Transregionale Studien

global prayers is a project at the Forum Transregionale Studien (FTS), which is a research platform of the Land of Berlin, designed to promote research, that connects systematic and region-specific questions in a perspective that addresses entanglements and interactions beyond national, cultural or regional frames. The FTS works in tandem with already existing research institutes mainly based in Berlin and networks with international institutions engaged in transregional studies. As main funding body for **global prayers** the FTS supports the academic and artistic research conducted within the project, it sponsors the central activities of **global prayers** and funds its administration. www.forum-transregionale-studien.de

NGBK

The New Society for Visual Arts (NGBK) – an art society with over 850 members, people with different professions and ambitions. Through their work as volunteers they all go to make up the organization's distinctive structure, in which all project-related decisions are taken at grass-roots and realized jointly. Project groups made up of members of the society conceive all NGBK exhibitions and events. The NGBK project group the **Urban Cultures of Global Prayers** is curating an exhibition, which is also part of the project **global prayers · redemption and liberation in the city**. The exhibition is on view from November 12, 2011 until January 8, 2012. www.ngbk.de

Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung

The Heinrich Böll Foundation has been supporting the **global prayers** project since its early development stage through its main office in Berlin. One of the Foundation's contributions was the funding of the workshop **global prayers to Go** in June 2009. Beginning in February 2010, the Heinrich Böll Foundation has been funding a number of case studies in Rio de Janeiro, Lagos, Istanbul, Beirut and Mexico City/ Buenos Aires through its respective regional offices. Additionally, the Heinrich Böll Foundation is funding the publication **the Urban Cultures of Global Prayers** (2012) that focuses on the artistic research side of the project. www.boell.de

Goethe-Institut

The Goethe Institute supports the **global prayers** project through its local branches in Lagos and Nairobi. In Lagos, the Institute has funded a film workshop with young Nigerian filmmakers and a documentary as a result of the workshop. Together with the Goethe Institute in Kano, Lagos as well did finance a series of workshops with young Nigerian religious rappers. The Goethe Institute Nairobi enabled the production of a multi-media installation, which will be shown at the exhibition **the Urban Cultures of Global Prayers**. www.goethe.de

Camera Austria

Camera Austria is an exhibition space in Graz, Austria. It gives particular attention to current approaches that focus, against the backdrop of overall cultural conditions, on the dispositions of photography, new image technologies, as well as their methods of agency and patterns of reception. Camera Austria funds parts of the production of the exhibition **the Urban Cultures of Global Prayers**. The magazine Camera Austria focuses on the **Urban Cultures of Global Prayers** in December 2011. The exhibition will be on view at Camera Austria from January 28, 2012 until April 9, 2012. www.camera-austria.at

