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**Workshop of the ERC Research Project “Lived Ancient Religion: Questioning ‘Cults’ and ‘Polis Religion”**

**Picture:** Nightview at Shanghai Pudong from the Eton Hotel ([https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5d/Shanghai-pudong\\_night.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/5d/Shanghai-pudong_night.jpg))

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## Lived Religion in Metropolis: A Comparative View

21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016

Venue: Augustinerkloster Erfurt

The Lived Religion approach to ancient religion, as developed at the Max Weber Center, has highlighted the importance of local spatial and social contexts, of materiality and communication as much as of social imaginaries and knowledge. One of these most important contexts is the urban. Through the collaboration with the new Center for Urban Network Evolutions at Aarhus University and with specialists in social geography, this conference explores the mutual constitution of religious and urban spaces by focusing on big cities. Ancient metropoleis of more than 100,000 inhabitants were characterized by density of exchange and speed of interaction, plurality of religious practices and groups, violence of critique and boundary drawing, as well as economic opportunities and medical dangers unknown to rural spaces. The degree of reading competences and the presence of texts in public spaces were elevated there as well. At the same time, the sheer size would have offered the possibility of segmentation, of hiding or simply refraining from claiming public space. Spatial distance might have lowered frequency of specific religious interactions and hence degrees of institutionalisation, the diversity of public spaces could have ensured a large number of shared practices and reduced the salience of discrepant religious identities. These metropoleis were also present as imaginaries. They penetrated as places of attraction even into the most distant places and they grew imaginaries of rural life and solitude at the same time. Once urbanity had gained foothold there was nowhere which was not somehow effected by having “become urban”. How did these facts translate into religious agency, communication and identities within the mega-cities? What would ancient religion had looked like without the specific contribution of these centres to the shaping of religion and religious traditions? Are we able to narrate religious change in a way that pays sufficient attention to it? Given the growing percentage of urban population in today’s world, the role of mega-cities in contemporary life has become a thriving field of research. However, even here the role of religion in such environments is under-researched. Thus, looking onto ancient metropoleis might also contribute to a pressing field of research that so far has been dominated by a concentration on public spaces and dissolution of tradition social forms of bondage and their consequences to religion. This invites to attempt a comparative approach focusing on the interaction of scale and lived religion and demanding to employ larger diachronic views.

## Programme

### Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> June 2016

13:45 | Welcome

**Chair: Anna-Katharina Rieger**

14:00 | **Jörg Rüpke (Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt):** Metropoleis and Religion: An Uneasy Companionship

15:00 | **Benno Werlen (University of Jena):** Religious and Geographical Conditions of Urban Realities: An Interpretive Approach to Geographical Urban Research

16:00 | Coffee Break

**Chair: Benno Werlen**

16:30 | **Michael Stausberg (University of Bergen):** Reflections on Religion in Asian Metropoleis

17:30 | **Rubina Raja (Centre for Urban Network Evolutions, Aarhus University):** Urban Religion in Antiocheia-on-the-Orontes - Lost in the Hinterland? Creating Images of the Metropolis through Religious Strategies (with Michael Blömer)

19:00 | Dinner

### Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016

**Chair: Janico Albrecht**

09:00 | **Esther Eidinow (Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt):** Serapis at Alexandria: Networks and Narratives of Creation and Destruction

10:00 | **Jan N. Bremmer (Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt):** The First Pogrom? Religious Violence in Alexandria in AD 38

10:30 | Coffee Break

**Chair: Georgia Petridou**

11:00 | **Nicole Belayche (École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris):** Mithraism in a Megalopolis’ Context (Rome and Ostia): An Impact? Which Impact?

12:00 | **Csaba Szabó (Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt):** Miniature Metropoleis: The Impact of Rome’s Sacred Landscape on the Urban Religion in the Provinces of Illyricum

12:45 | Lunch

**Chair: Richard Gordon**

14:00 | **Anna Sun (Stanford University):** Prayer Life in Shanghai: Lived Religions in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Metropolis

15:00 | **Paul Lichterman (University of Southern California):** Repositioned Religious Ritual in Contemporary U.S. Civic Settings

16:00 | Coffee Break

**Chair: Maik Patzelt**

16:20 | **Karsten Johanning (University of Copenhagen):** Religious Discourse in Dio Chrysostom’s Representation of Metropolis and Backwater – as Seen in Orations 32 and 36

16:50 | **Giorgia Grandi (Fondazione Collegio San Carlo di Modena):** From the Saint to the Saints: Hilarion, Jerome and Lived Religion in Late Antiquity

17:20 | **Birgit van der Lans (University of Bergen):** Controlling Religion in the Metropolis: Symbolic politics and ‘un-Roman’ Religion in Rome

17:50 | **Greg Woolf (University of London):** Very Large Cities and Very Large Sanctuaries in Preindustrial Societies

19:30 | Dinner

### Thursday, 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016

**Chair: Emiliano Rubens Urciuoli**

09:00 | **Teresa Morgan (Oriel College, Oxford):** The Role of Big Cities in the Early Evolution of Christianity

10:00 | **Cristiana Facchini (University of Bologna):** Judaism, diaspora religions, and the urban condition

10:30 | Coffee Break

**Chair: Valentino Gasparini**

10:50 | **Miguel John Versluys (Leiden University):** Unpacking the Cosmopolitan Node: Alexandria, Alexandrianism and Religious Innovation

11:50 | **Nicola Luciani (Sapienza University of Roma) and Paolo Rosati (University of L’Aquila):** The Role of Senatorial Dynasties on Mons Caelius in Shaping Religious Identities in the Late-Antique Metropolis, from the Core to the Suburbia

12:45 | Lunch

**Chair: Benjamin Sippel**

14:00 | **Markus Vinzent (Max-Weber-Kolleg Erfurt):** Rome: The 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Magnet

15:00 | **Annette Weissenrieder (San Francisco Theological Seminary):** From Peripheral Temple State to the Center of the Empire in Early Christianity

16:00 | Coffee Break

16:30 | Final discussion

19:00 | Dinner