

Practices of Multiple (Religious) Affiliations

Spatial and Practical Negotiations in Havana, Cuba

By

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The Cuban capital Havana has a long history of religious diversity due to its intertwined (colonial) history. At present, Catholicism, established Protestantism, new evangelical communities and Cuban religions of African origin are among the major groups alongside numerous religious minorities. During my field research on religious plurality in Havana, practices of multiple affiliation to different religious groups as well as their spatial manifestations and practical negotiations have come into focus. In this lecture, I will explore the question of how the spaces and practices resulting from multiple affiliations are negotiated. In doing so, I will look at multiple religious affiliations in two ways: on one hand, as spatio-temporal overlaps of religious or esoteric practices and, on the other, as multiple affiliations of one and the same person. What precisely occurs in these instances, and how can they be conceptualized in a way that is both accurate and coherent? After a historical introduction and reflections on the conceptualization of religion and esoterism in my research, I will pursue these questions using empirical data (field notes, photography) from my ethnographic work in Havana, focusing on the overlaps between Cuban religions of African origin and Catholicism.



Altar in Havana, 2021
(Photo: Joanna K. Kiefer)



Joanna Katharina Kiefer is Research Associate at the Institute of Sociology at FAU since 2020. Her PhD project focuses on religious plurality in Havana, Cuba. She spent several research stays in Havana between 2021 and 2024. Her professional background is in an interdisciplinary social science program at the Institute for the Study of Culture at Leipzig University, the Hebrew University Jerusalem and the Universidad de La Habana.

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**Big Seminar Room
Hartmannstr. 14, Building D1, Erlangen**

Link for virtual attendance



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