



CENTRE FOR ASIAN AND  
TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES  
**SOUTH ASIA INSTITUTE**



**UNIVERSITÄT  
HEIDELBERG**  
ZUKUNFT  
SEIT 1386

The Medical Anthropology Forum presents

**“A Massive Bomb Went Up”:  
Religious Communities’ Affective Trajectories Through The COVID-19 Pandemic in Berlin**



**Dominik Mattes**

Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Freie University Berlin, Germany

The COVID-19 pandemic impacts religious practice as profoundly as religion shapes people’s response to the pandemic. Drawing on recent surveys by one of Berlin’s largest interreligious initiatives as well as in-depth interviews with members of various religious communities in the city, this paper attends to multiple affective and emotional facets of this mutuality and explores how the groups ‘feel their way’ through the pandemic. How do religious communities with distinct political positions within Berlin’s highly diverse religious landscape affectively respond to the challenges the pandemic poses to their belief and hitherto unquestioned ethical certainties? How do they struggle with lockdown-related restrictions on religious gatherings and routines? Which difficulties do they experience in their attempts to sustain a sense of collectivity and belonging, and which impact does the pandemic have on relationships of care within particular groups in emotional, material, and conceptual terms?

**Tuesday, January 11**

**17:15–18:45 (CET)**

**Online Lecture**

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/95968345236?pwd=M0dCMlBMVDJFVnIjZWVzMmhOd0tVUT09>

Meeting ID: 959 6834 5236, Passcode: 124106