

■ **The Academy of World Religions** at Hamburg University is the institutional home for research, teaching and contributions to society in the area of interreligious dialogue. It embraces a dialogical approach that concerns itself not only with religions coexisting but also with their interacting.

■ **Research:** The 'Religion and Dialogue in Modern Societies' project described in this brochure is currently the main research project of the Academy of World Religions. It is funded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Other research projects include, for example, our postgraduate programme on Islamic Theology, supported by the *Mercator Foundation*.

■ **Visiting Professorships:** Our Forum Humanum Visiting Professorships, funded by the *Udo Keller Foundation Forum Humanum*, allow us to invite distinguished researchers with different academic profiles to teach a semester at our institution. In addition, we host the Emmanuel Lévinas Visiting Professorship for Jewish Dialogue Studies, funded by the *Veronika and Volker Putz Foundation*.

■ **Teaching:** Since winter 2011, the Academy of World Religions has offered an MA programme 'Religion, Dialogue and Education'. It also supports pluralistic approaches in Religious Education teacher training as well as offering a public lecture series on relevant topics every winter term.

■ **Dialogue in the City:** To foster understanding and mutual acceptance throughout society, the Academy of World Religions offers regular dialogue events in different formats. 'Religions and Dialogue in the City' is organised in cooperation with Hamburg's Parliament, the 'Long Night of World Religions' in cooperation with the Thalia Theatre, and 'Art in Interreligious Dialogue' together with Hamburg's Kunsthalle.

## The ReDi Project at the Academy of World Religions (AWR), Hamburg University

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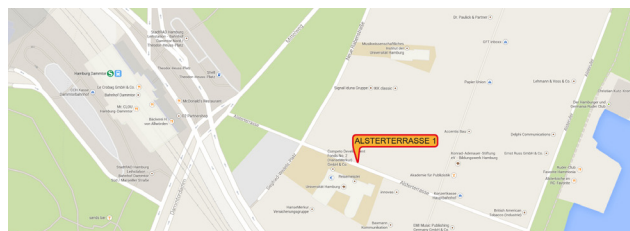
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For further information on the ReDi Project, see the website of the Academy of World Religions:  
[www.awr.uni-hamburg.de](http://www.awr.uni-hamburg.de)



## Religion and Dialogue in Modern Societies ReDi

A research project of the  
Academy of World Religions  
Hamburg University

## Goals and Key Data

- **Title:** “Religion and Dialogue in Modern Societies. Interdisciplinary and Internationally Comparative Studies on the Possibilities and Limitations of Inter-religious Dialogue” (ReDi).
- **Goals:** The ReDi Project aims to study and understand the complex phenomenon of interreligious dialogue, with special attention to its potential to aid social processes of integration and peace education. It also aims to contribute to the productive shaping of those processes. The project integrates the fields of theology, social sciences and education in a study of the possibilities and limitations of interreligious dialogue at a theological and empirical level.
- **Locations:** The project is coordinated by the Academy of World Religions, Hamburg University, with cooperation partners in the Rhine-Ruhr, London, Oslo and Stockholm metropolitan regions.
- **Research Team:** Research is carried out by an interdisciplinary and interreligious team of experts supported by an international advisory board.
- **Duration:** 5 years, 1 February 2013 to 31 January 2018.
- **Funding:** The Federal Ministry of Education and Research supports the ReDi Project with a grant of over 3 million euros.

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## Dialogue in Theory and Practice

- **Dialogical Theology:** We apply hermeneutical approaches to explore the potentials and limitations of dialogue in the theologies of various religions. Integrating approaches of pluralistic, intercultural and interreligious theology, we will develop a dialogical theology. Our research encompasses the Christian, Islamic, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu and Alevi traditions. We will also take into account questions of dialogue between religions and secular society.
- **Dialogical Practice:** Methods of empirical social science are used to study the actual practices of religion and dialogue in people's lives. Our study will include religious communities and secular institutions (e.g. cultural, political and administrative entities) as well as the public education system, where it will explore the possibilities and limitations of dialogical learning and interreligious understanding.
- **Contextualisation:** All interreligious dialogue is influenced by its religious, political and socio-economic conditions, prevailing discourses and other local factors. The ReDi Project takes particular account of these, and analyses dialogue in its broader context.
- **International Cooperation:** Our research is internationally comparative, focusing on several European metropolitan regions. The comparison is intended to both understand what they have in common and what their specific features are with regard to religion and dialogue.

## Religious Diversity

- **Background:** The increasing religious pluralisation of modern societies and the present challenges of managing peaceful coexistence make the issue of ‘religion and dialogue’ more relevant than ever. These developments require a detached analysis of religious diversity and dialogue between people of different religious and philosophical beliefs.
- **Religion in the Plural:** The emerging situation in Europe is shaped not only by Christian and Muslim traditions, but by an increasing number of faiths and their intrareligious differentiation into distinct confessions and traditions. In addition, individual forms of religiosity or spirituality, beyond the scope of traditional religion, as well as secular trends, play a role.
- **The benefits of diversity:** The future of our society depends crucially on the ability of people from different cultures and religions to meet each other in a spirit of mutual understanding and acceptance and to view differences not as a threat, but as an enrichment.

## Developments in modern societies

Increasing religious  
and cultural  
pluralisation

Increasing religious  
individualisation

Increasing  
intercultural and  
interreligious  
interaction

Growing importance of dialogue at the nexus of religion,  
context, and actors