

NEWSLETTER

Applications for the ReD Global master's programme are now OPEN



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Knowledge Transfer or Knowledge Migration in Ancient Cosmology?



The poster features the University of Sharjah logo at the top center, with the text 'Sharjah International Foundation for the History of Arab and Muslim Sciences (SIFHAMS) and the College of Communication at the University of Sharjah invite:'. Below this is the title 'Rethinking East-West Cultural Exchanges: Knowledge Transfer and Knowledge Migration in Ancient Cosmology' in red. The speaker is identified as 'Guest Speaker Professor Dr. Lautaro Roig Lanzillotta', with his credentials listed. The event details are: 'Monday 16th of February, 2026', '11:00 AM', and 'SIFHAMS Meeting Room, Building A7 (Formerly M16), Male Library'. A photograph of Professor Lanzillotta in a tuxedo holding a book is on the right. A red banner at the bottom reads 'MAKING A DIFFERENCE TOGETHER'.

Hend Eltaher, Cohort I, From Egypt

Lautaro Roig Lanzillotta, Professor of Early Christian Studies and Director of the ReD Global EMJM, will deliver a lecture at the University of Sharjah (United Arab Emirates-UAE) on 16 February.

Titled “Rethinking East–West Cultural Exchanges: Knowledge Transfer and Knowledge Migration in Ancient Cosmology,” the lecture examines ancient cosmological models and their reception during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. It offers a compelling case study for rethinking how knowledge moved and transformed across cultures and historical periods.

Professor Lanzillotta argues that cosmological ideas were not mechanically transmitted from one context to another, but were continuously reinterpreted and reshaped as they migrated through successive intellectual environments. By reframing East–West exchanges as processes of knowledge migration rather than linear knowledge transfer, his research highlights the fluidity, adaptability, and interconnectedness of ancient cosmological thought across time and traditions.

Call for Applications!

Hend Eltaher, Cohort I, Egypt

Students who were unable to meet the 15 January 2026 scholarship deadline for the Religious Diversity in a Globalised World (ReD Global) MA Programme may still be eligible to apply for alternative funding opportunities.

Funding is allocated on the basis of academic merit, student portfolio, and financial need. Further information can be obtained from the ReD Global Secretariat via red-global@rug.nl.



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The ReD Global MA is a two-year research-oriented programme designed for ambitious students who wish to deepen their knowledge and sharpen their analytical and professional skills in the field of religious diversity. The programme combines rigorous academic training with rich international and cultural exposure, including Erasmus mobility periods in Spain, Portugal, and Latin America.

Graduates of the programme pursue a wide range of career paths, ranging from academic research to field-based work with international non-governmental organisations and diplomatic institutions, depending on their interests and professional competencies.

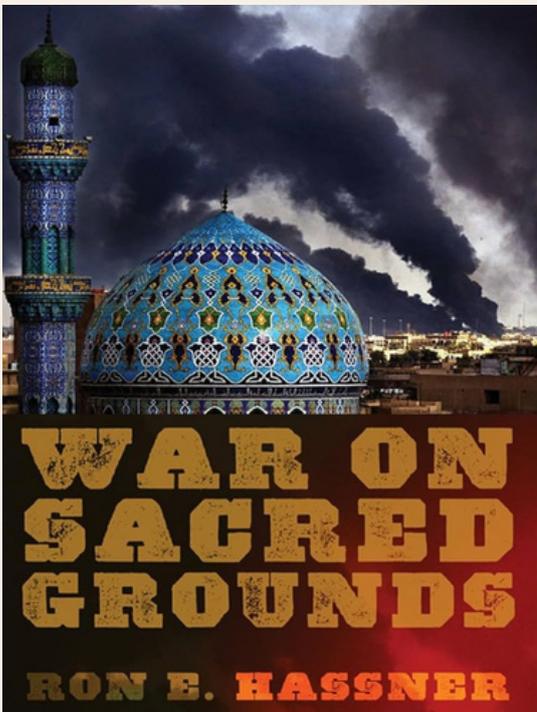
To explore the courses and begin your application, please visit www.red-global.eu.

War on Sacred Grounds

Maria Freire, Cohort II, Brazil

This book explores how “sacred places are both awesome and dreadful.” In *War on Sacred Grounds*, we dive into the different smells, tastes, beauties, and terrors that compose the path to the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

The narratives and theoretical issues that structure this book show how sacred sites are capable of crossing the boundaries between the divine world and the world of humanity. There is a constant tension rooted in the site's indivisibility, which often leads outsiders to ask: “Why do they not divide it?” Hassner’s discussion points to the cosmogonic beliefs that sacred sites carry; one possible answer to the previous question is the fear of desecration.



These places serve a cohesive purpose: to convey a message of religious order to believers. If any part of a sacred site is removed or destroyed, the site is rendered meaningless. However, the sacred has its space guaranteed through a process that, in a certain way, is capable of limiting the spiritual experience by restricting who accesses and how one should access this divine.

To read the full book review, check www.redglobalplatform.eu

Special Forms of Peaceful Coexistence

Alessia Martucci, Cohort II, Italy

As a student of ReD Global and Anthropology, I have long been interested in practices of sharing among different faith communities and in how these experiences invite broader reflections on interfaith cooperation and the possibility of exploring potential ways to address contemporary conflicts.

I have recently written an article that explores how migration routes and globalisation dynamics can foster shared sacred spaces as alternative ways in which cultural and religious identities confront each other, engage in dialogue, break boundaries, and find original ways of understanding their diversity. Rather than framing religious differences in encounters only in terms of conflict, some experiences reveal how belonging to different religious groups is negotiated through everyday practices, and spatial, material and symbolic elements.

More specifically, in the article I analyse three interrelated dynamics of spatial sharing: the top-down dynamics, the middle-middle dynamics, and the bottom-up dynamics, ranging from institutional to grassroots practices. The top-down dynamic is explored through the example of the United Nations, Room of Quiet, which is considered the first official case of the inauguration of a multi-religious top-down space. The shared spaces of some Baptist Churches in Rome serve as a case study for the middle-middle dynamics.

Click [here](#) for the full article published in Religions for Peace's Blog Mindful Peace.

My Internship Journey with IIRF



Lorena Peña Rodríguez, Cohort II, Colombia

I am happy to share that I have satisfactorily completed my internship at the International Institute for Religious Freedom (IIRF). It was a six-month journey through very different global contexts, many of which I was previously unfamiliar with, and which deeply touched me both intellectually and emotionally. Throughout this time, my main task was to work with the IIRF's Violent Incidents Database, monitoring websites specialising in human rights and religious freedom. In total, I collected 910 incidents of violations of freedom of religion or belief from around the world.

Engaging daily with cases from Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America challenged my own frames of reference and pushed me to look beyond the contexts I know best. I learned how religion, power, violence, and governance intersect in complex and often painful ways, both in conflict zones and in societies that are usually perceived as safe or stable. While this work strengthened my research and analytical skills, it also required emotional awareness, as reading about violence and persecution daily can be heavy and unsettling.

Despite these challenges, this experience reaffirmed my motivation to continue studying and contributing to conversations on religion-related issues in a globalised world. I am especially grateful to my supervisor for her guidance and constant support, to my friends who listened patiently to my reflections, and to the ReD Global Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's programme for the academic training that made this journey possible.

Where Prayers Change, but Meaning Remains

Tri Hermawan, Cohort III, Indonesia

On a quiet winter afternoon, I attended Friday prayer at Ayoup Mosque, a place that carries layers of history within its walls. What makes this mosque especially meaningful is its past; it was once a church. Standing there, surrounded by snow and silence, I was reminded that religious spaces are never static, they move, adapt, and continue to serve communities in new ways.

The building itself feels like a living archive of religious diversity. Long before the sound of the adhan filled the air, the space echoed with diverse prayers, rituals, and traditions. Yet the purpose has remained strikingly similar. People gather to seek meaning, comfort, and connection with the Divine. This continuity, despite visible change, offers a powerful lesson about coexistence and transformation.

For me, praying in the Ayoup Mosque was not just a personal spiritual moment, but also a lived experience of what Religious Diversity in a Globalised World truly means. It reflects how migration, dialogue, and historical change reshape religious landscapes without erasing their pasts. Rather than seeing religious difference as a rupture, this space shows how it can become a bridge, linking histories, communities, and beliefs. In a global context where religion is often framed through conflict, places like Ayoup Mosque quietly tell a different story, one of adaptation, mutual presence, and shared humanity.



Arabic Language Course Available to Erasmus Students at The University of Coimbra

Hend Eltaher, Cohort I, Egypt



Students undertaking an Erasmus Mobility period at the University of Coimbra now have the opportunity to enrol in an Arabic language course, following the recent inauguration of The Center for Arabic Studies.

The course was launched by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities (FLUC) after the inauguration of the Centre in October 2025. The centre was established with the support of Sheikh Sultan bin Muhammad Al-Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah (United Arab Emirates), marking a significant step in strengthening academic cooperation and language exchange.

The new course broadens the academic offerings available to international students in Coimbra and enhances the university's commitment to intercultural and multilingual education. To learn more and enrol, visit <https://www.uc.pt/en/fluc/cl/arab-1/>