

Symposium “Religion in Public Space”

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Ökumenische Rundschau (ÖR) is one of the most prominent German ecumenical journals published by the German Ecumenical Study Committee which includes theologians of different confessions from all over Europe. ÖR organizes every year, along with the meeting of its editorial team, a symposium on themes of large interest. The symposium this year was dedicated to the theme of “Religion in public space”.

After an introduction made by Bishop Friedrich Weber (Evangelical-Lutheran Church, province of Braunschweig), there followed an introductory lecture presented by Christian Polke (University of Hamburg), *Theology before new challenges? Religion and Religions in public space*. Polke described the new dimension of religious presence in the public space after 11th September, focusing on the situation in Central Europe. This religious space is determined by many factors including globalization, migration and other factors. Polke pleaded for developing a common terminology which could be used by all religions in public spaces. In order to achieve this, a stronger collaboration between theological faculties and departments of religion studies is needed. A “public theology” could be useful not only for religions, but also for the entire society in order to understand each other.

The second presentation entitled *Religion in public space – a Jewish Perspective* was presented by Micha Brumlik (Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-University, Frankfurt am Main). He presented the actual situation of Jewish communities in Germany. According to their origin, there are three different categories of Jews in Germany: the survivors of holocaust and their successors, new migrants from former Soviet Union and Israelis citizens that have taken German citizenship and live in big cities, without a regular connection with the Jewish local communities. According to their religious practice, there are both a traditional Jewish group and a reformed group in Germany. They educate their rabbis in different theological schools and two separate conferences of German rabbis have been established. German Judaism struggles to find its internal unity. In terms of relationship with the public space, German Jews –

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