

Call for Papers: "**Private and Intimate Spaces of Spirituality**"

Special Issue of *Implicit Religion*

Guest Editors:

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Timeline:

- Submission of abstracts: 15th of January 2025
- Notifications: 15th of February 2025
- Submission of full papers: 15th November 2025
- Envisaged publication: summer 2026

Overview

Implicit Religion invites submissions for a special issue titled "Private and Intimate Spaces of Spirituality," which seeks to explore the dynamic and intimate interconnections between physical spaces, religious creativity, and spiritual experience. This issue aims to broaden the discourse on spiritual spaces and practices and their impact on individual and collective spirituality. We encourage contributors to critically engage with notions like private (as opposed to public) and categories like spirituality and religion in their contributions as part of the journal's focus on interrogating the boundaries between categories and the assumptions underlying the distinctions they produce. We also encourage contributors to situate these notions and categories against their particular cultural, social and geographical contexts.

Scope

The connection between space and place on the one hand and religious and spiritual experience on the other is a long-standing one across world traditions. The setting aside or recognising places of spiritual significance is a process that has occurred from ancient times and continues to be a part of recent and new forms of spirituality (Williams 2010, Herzfeld 2015, Rousseau 2023). Seeking to extend the ways in which these spaces have been explored, in this special issue, we invite submissions that delve into the nuanced ways in which spirituality is negotiated and cultivated in various intimate and private settings in particular. This includes, but is not limited to, studies on home-based religious practices, small semi-private spaces (such as gardens) used for spiritual purposes, interactions between personal (physical) and digital spaces in worship, the role of personal rituals in spaces perceived as public, and the negotiations taking place in relation to these experiences and manifestations.

As well as accounts of the religious and spiritual standing of set-aside places of religious encounter, we would be interested in receiving proposals exploring the blurry categories and processes of religious/spiritual vs. secular spaces (Kong 2001, 2002) and places as well as

the accidental, inadvertent or impromptu formation of places of individual spiritual power: for example, commemorations at scenes of personal tragedy, small personal and familial shrines, informal and unaligned places of reflection like hospital multi-faith prayer rooms. We encourage contributors to critically interrogate the assumptions underlying the distinctions between these categories as part of their submissions.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- The role of private spaces in spiritual practices and experiences
- Influence of religious media infrastructures on personal spirituality
- Comparative studies of intimate spiritual spaces across different faiths and cultures
- Interactions between architecture, urban design, and personal religious practices
- Ethnographic insights into the everyday spirituality of diverse communities
- Negotiations, processes, and contestations related to spiritual or religious place-making in relation to secular or non-religious spaces and understandings
- Study of the creation of gardens within religious settings or those used for religious purposes
- Cemeteries and gardens of remembrance, especially those established following the great wars of the 20th century
- Methodological innovations combining approaches related to religious studies and design-related perspectives.

Who Should Submit

We welcome contributions from academics, practitioners, and interdisciplinary researchers in religious studies, architecture, theology, urban planning, anthropology, sociology, psychology, media studies, and others exploring the intersection of physical spaces and spirituality.

Abstracts (max. 500 words) should be submitted to Krzysztof Nawratek (k.nawratek@sheffield.ac.uk). The submission deadline for abstracts is 15th of January 2025.