

Given the ubiquity of sound, and its centrality to human communication and expression, the acoustic and auditory dimensions of religion remain remarkably underresearched. This can be attributed in part to the visualist emphasis of Western thought and the challenges of conducting research on sound, listening, and hearing. However, influenced by the burgeoning field of sound studies and the revolution in audio and communication technologies, along with new multisensory approaches to historical and cultural studies, some exciting research is emerging. The lecture will discuss these trends and consider whether we can—and why we should—aspire to a sonic turn, or at least more sonically aware research and teaching, in the historical and comparative study of religion.

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