

Common grounds: urban spaces, everyday religious encounters, and the dynamics and techniques of coexistence in Madina, Accra (1959-Present) Fosu-Ankrah, J.F.B.B.

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Propositions relating to the dissertation

Common Grounds: Urban Spaces, Everyday Religious Encounters, and the Dynamics and Techniques of Coexistence in Madina, Accra (1959–Present)

By Joseph Fiifi B.-B. Fosu-Ankrah

- 1. Coexistence constitutes a historically sedimented, materially embedded, and performatively enacted phenomenon, articulated through quotidian practices and lived techniques. (This thesis)
- 2. Common ground denotes shared urban spaces characterised by ambiguous ownership and inherent contestation, serving as critical nodes where social, religious, economic, and cultural interactions become deeply entangled. (This thesis)
- 3. Not all shared urban spaces are public; some are common ground. (This thesis)
- 4. 'Unfriendly tolerance'—a muted disapproval of the religious other, voiced indirectly and often triggered by unrelated acts, is key to understanding coexistence in plural societies. (This thesis)
- 5. Collaborative research grounded in African epistemologies, lived expertise, and innovative methodologies can challenge dominant narratives and generate new understandings of the social realities and modes of coexistence in plural societies.
- 6. The contested nature of some shared urban spaces calls for a conceptual rethinking of what constitutes 'public space' in Ghanaian cities, particularly amid the contemporary commodification of land.
- 7. The (re)naming of places such as Madina transcends mere geographical demarcation, but functions as historically situated and strategic acts that articulate collective identity, cultural memory, and political agency.
- 8. The common ground should be conceptualised as a socio-spatial laboratory where intersecting religious ideologies and secular interactions shape Madina's complex and evolving framework of coexistence.
- 9. Theological scholarship on Africa must transcend reductive binaries like 'peace versus conflict,' which oversimplify interfaith realities and flatten the complexity of everyday modes of coexistence.
- 10. African Indigenous religions continue to function as normative moral frameworks that regulate conduct, administer justice, and sustain social order shared in urban spaces in Ghanaian cities.
- 11. A diverse religious soundscape shapes the acoustic environment and mediates coexistence through both harmony and tension in shared social spaces.
- 12. Nighttime use of shared urban spaces, often overlooked in studies of interreligious coexistence, is central to understanding the spatial-temporal dynamics and practices through which coexistence is enacted, contested, and sustained.