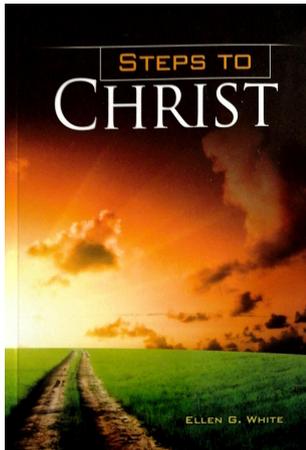


## **Religion as Infrastructure: Performances and Practices of Faith**

### **Moving within the Space of an International Seventh Day Adventist Church in Paris**



Although we have seen a decrease in religion and an increase of atheism in many European countries, faith is on the rise globally. In a world, which has become more and more focused on individualism and independence, on reason and enlightenment thought, many hold on to religion as an infrastructure of belonging and community. Especially in the context of mobility, religion remains essential.

I will be conducting ethnographic fieldwork in an International Seventh Day Adventist Church in Paris. I suggest that the church offers an infrastructure to its followers and that the possibilities that it provides to its members go far beyond the weekly service. Members can turn to the church or to each other in difficult times. This is important, especially in terms of the international character of the church: It provides an anchor to people who have moved to Paris from elsewhere, as well as to the children of those who have arrived in Paris recently or many years ago.

I suggest that the affiliation to this church in Paris comes with certain advantages for the individual and the group. On the one hand, membership to this church in Paris provides its followers with a religious infrastructure that is located at an intersection with other infrastructures. This gives them a sense of faith, salvation, and stability, support and connections to other people and institutions. On the other hand, members of church live and express their faith in an individual way. I therefore examine the church's collective service as well as the more individual religious everyday life of the members at their homes. This will help me to understand how the members live and perform affiliation to their religious infrastructure - individually and collectively - and what this religious infrastructure does for its members, especially in the context of a life in motion.