

## **URBAN EXPANSION, PERI-URBANIZATION AND THE LIFE OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN SEMARANG**

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**U**rban expansion has become an ongoing trend in many big cities in contemporary Indonesia. This can be seen, for example, from the installations of many new buildings that are easily found not only in urban but also rural area. This rapid change of land use, by and large, has affected the way people give a meaning of this change. In turn, this expansion has created what so called as peri-urban, a place located between urban and rural area. Peri-urban area has been described as a battle front area where the urban “civilization” and rural “tradition” compete to each other. Moreover, this area has been seen as a place always associated with the naming of problems such as lack of planning and governance. This paper is an initial attempt to look at the peri-urbanization process in Semarang, a city which has been renowned as one of the cities in northern coastal area that is claimed to be “peaceful”. There has been no notable conflict between different religious communities in Semarang, particularly in the urban area. However, the life of religious communities in the peri-urban area exhibits a different picture. This paper will discuss the issue of peri-urbanization process and how this process may impact to the religious life in this city.