The International Exchange on Media and Religion was founded in 2006. It aims to bring together researchers from different fields in a broader methodological exchange on religion, visuality and media. Since then, the group has been meeting almost every year for a workshop. The meeting have been held in Oxford, Bigorio/CH, Zürich, Cambridge, Trento and London.

The results of the debates and research projects are presented in the following volumes:


The volumes scrutinize different aspects of the relationship of media and religion. In the first phase (Approaches to the Visual in Religion) different methods for analysing and interpreting images in research on religion were discussed. In the second project (Religion in Cultural Imaginary) we focussed on a general theory to understand visual communication in transmission processes along the diachronic time line and in synchronic exchanges between different social spheres. The third research was based on a performative approach to visuality and materiality. All contribution were related to the same topic, the Highgate Cemetery. By doing research on a common topic, the group explored the manifold ramifications of researching visual and material religion within the broader frame of cultural and communication theory.

In this decade of cooperation, the International Exchange on Media and Religion has developed in many directions, with new members and disciplinary competences joining the network. Still, some constant lines characterise the cooperation:

- a strong interest in bringing together theoretical reflection and methodological accuracy as well as the analysis of religious-historical and contemporary sources;
- a development of a common language allowing a deep inter- and transdisciplinary debate and a careful hermeneutical reflection;
- a working style where the differences between diverse academic traditions are highlighted and the creative power of multilinguism is valorised.

The new project of the International Exchange on Media and Religion focuses on a theoretical question that has so far been neglected in research on media and religion. We are interested in deepening the normative dimension of (audio-)visual and material communication within religious traditions and in exploring their influence on broader cultural contexts. The theoretical reflection about the normative significance and impact of (audio-)visual and material communication is articulated on different levels:

- the normative dimensions in theoretical approaches to religion in visual and material culture from different disciplinary perspectives;
- the normative dimensions on the empirical level within historical and / or contemporary sources as well as in transmission processes within religious traditions and cultures;
- the normative dimension in the hermeneutical reflection that links theoretical frames with empirical aspects of research in religion.

These general questions will be discussed dealing with a selected, concrete question: the representation of Europe with a particular focus on material and visual culture.
In the contemporary society, “Europe” is a broadly debated concept. The project focuses on the normative aspects and impacts of (audio-)visual and material communication that shapes general ideas of Europe as a common, yet ambivalent and contested frame for identity processes. Particularly, we are interested in the role of religion in visual and material culture and the related practices that produce an idea of Europe as a common ground, in a spatial, temporal, or societal sense. By considering the religious dimensions of historical or contemporary aspects of European culture, the case studies could focus on questions like:

- material, visual, or medial representations of Europe and their normative performance,
- the relationship between dominant and subversive medial representations of Europe,
- dynamics of and transformations in representing of Europe,
- the negotiation of diversity and equality in representing Europe,
- localisation and specificity of different representation of Europe and their normative agendas in European countries,
- localisation and specificity of different representation of Europe and their normative agendas in countries in other continents,
- identity processes linked to representations of Europe.

### Imagining Europe

Daria Pezzoli-Olgiati, Prof. Dr., LMU, DE, Study of Religion
Carla Danani, Prof. Dr., Università di Macerata, IT, Political Philosophy
Verena Eberhardt, MA, LMU, DE, Study of Religion
Natalie Fritz, Dr., Katholischer Mediendienst/LMU, CH/DE, Study of Religion
Jacob Given, Villanova University, US, Theology and Religious Studies
Bettina Gräf, Dr., LMU, DE, Islam Studies
Anna-Katharina Höpflinger, Dr., LMU, DE, Study of Religion
Ann Jeffers, Dr., University of Roehampton, UK, Biblical Studies
Stefanie Knauß, Prof. Dr., Villanova University, US, Theology (paper)
Marie-Therese Mäder, Dr., LMU, DE, Study of Religion
Daria Pezzoli-Olgiati, Prof. Dr., LMU, DE, Study of Religion
Natasha O’Hear, Dr., University of St Andrews, UK, Reception History
Alexander Ornella, Dr., University of Hull, UK, Theology and Religions Studies
Sean Ryan, Dr., University of Roehampton, UK, Biblical Studies
Alberto Saviello, Dr., Freie Universität Berlin, DE, History of Arts
Peter Seele, Prof. Dr., Università della Svizzera Italiana, CH, Economics (paper)
Andreas Schwab, Prof. Dr., LMU, DE, Classical Philology
Baldassare Scolari, Dr. des., HTW Chur, CH, Study of Religion (paper)
Michael Ulrich, Dr. des., Study of Religion
Paola von Wyss-Giacosa, Dr., Universität Zürich, CH, Anthropology, History of Arts

### Organisation and Information

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Contact during the conference: 0041 79 51 864 51 (mobile)
In this first meeting, the focus lies on discussion in order to plan and write a strong, consistent volume. Therefore, your contributions should highlight the core question of your research. The presentations are to be kept very short (15’), they should inform about:

- the visual/material source(s) the case study deal with
- the general theoretical horizon of your contribution
- the contribution to the general topics of the project: defining the concepts of “imagining Europe”, religion and normativity as well as their mutual relationship

Wednesday 28. August 2019

16.00 Welcome

16.15–18.00 Back to the Roots

Voices on “Asia” and “Europe” from Ancient Greek Drama
Andreas Schwab

Beyond the Edge of the World. Anglo-Saxon Britain, Chaos and the Continent
Sean Ryan

The Road to Nowhere. A Critique and a Re-imagining of Europe in Sir Thomas More’s Utopia
Ann Jeffers

Discussion

18.15–19.30 Looking at Europe from Outside

Imagining Europe at the Early Modern Mughal Court
Alberto Saviello

Tibetan Imagination of Europe
Dolores Zoé Bertschinger

Discussion

Thursday 29. August 2019

09.15–10.30 Borders in Europe

A Shattered Whole? Imagining Europe in Pieces
Alexander D. Ornella

Mormonism in Europe. A Complex and Ongoing Adaptation Process
Marie-Therese Mäder

Discussion

11.00–12.15 Economical Representations

Consumption and Material Culture. A Possible Source of European Identity-Formation
Michael Ulrich

Immaterial Materiality. Money as “Absolute Aean” and the Temples of Monetary Authority
Peter Seele (skype or paper)

Discussion

12.30–14.00 Lunch
14.00–15.45 Performing Representations

Arab Media Representations of Drone Technology and Europe’s Visible and Invisible Connections to the Global War on Terror
Bettina Gräf

Europe in Children’s Literature
Religions, Legends and Customs through the Eyes of Music
Verena Eberhardt

The Image of Europe Seen Through the Lens of Festivals of European Film, in Europe and Beyond (paper)
Stefanie Knauss and Jacob Given (skype)

15.45–16.15 Break

16.15–17.30 European Rock’n’Roll Angels. The Band Lordi as an Example of the Staging of Religion in the Eurovision Song Contest
Anna-Katharina Höpflinger

‘Many Tongues, One Voice’. Bruegel’s Tower of Babel as Multivalent Symbol of Europe and the EU
Natasha O’Hear

Discussion

18.00–19.15 A Woman, a Bull, and a Horn of Plenty – or Twelve Golden Stars Representations of Europe
Natalie Fritz and Paola von Wyss-Giacosa

House of European History in Brussels
Constructions of Memory and Identity in a Museum
Carla Danani and Daria Pezzoli-Olgiati

Discussion

Friday 30. August 2019

LMU | Ludwigstraße 28 | back premises | room 024

09.00–10.15 Eating What We Are, Being What We Eat, Imagining Europe Through Food
Natalie Fritz and Paola von Wyss-Giacosa

«To be the Soul of Europe» Analysis of Pope Francis’ Interventions in the Debates and Discourses about the Future of Europe
Baldassare Scolari (Skype or Paper)

Discussion

10.15–12.00 Cross reading and next steps

Timeline

28.–30.08.2019 First meeting: exploration of case studies and general theoretical debates

March 2021 Second meeting: Discussion of the final chapters and common work on the introduction

2022 Manuscript and publication
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Addresses and Maps

Workshop Venues

Wednesday 28.08.2019
Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Ludwigstraße 28 back premises, room 024

Thursday 29.08.2019
St. Markus Church, Gabelsbergerstraße 6, back premises

Friday 30.08.2019
Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Ludwigstraße 28 back premises, room 024

Hotel
Leonardo Boutique Hotel, Amalienstraße 25