

Dimiter Daphinoff / Franziska Metzger (eds.)

Appropriation as Practice of Memory

Inventions, Uses and Transformations
of Religious Memory



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Dimitar Daphinoff / Franziska Metzger

Appropriation as Practice of Memory in Literature, Art, Popular Culture and Social Discourse

Appropriation is a time-honoured practice in a variety of fields ranging from dietary habits to religious rituals, from literature, music and the arts to film and computer games. Unlike adaptation, appropriation has only recently become a topic of substantial research. Both, however, received a marked boost in the wake of the reception of Mikhail Bakhtin and Julia Kristeva's work on intertextuality.¹ Both Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia and Kristeva's studies on how works of literature communicate with each other promoted the idea that literary works not only form an intensive dialogue with each other but also take over, adopt and adapt extant texts for their own purposes – be they aesthetic, moral, religious or political. But while adaptations of works by – mostly well-known – authors have traditionally been a fertile field of both literary practice and literary criticism², appropriations have not until recently received the attention they deserve.³ This may be owing to the assumption that while adaptations generally pay respect to the model text, appropriations can be ruthless and aggressive, taking possession of an author's work without much regard for its artistic integrity. The most obvious case of such unauthorized appropriation is the (mis)use of another's cultural traditions for a dominant culture's own benefit. Cultural appropriation thus involves “imbalances of power”, which in the sphere of cultural studies came to the fore in the context of post-colonial approaches.⁴ Objections to simplistic binary conceptions only recently started to

1 See Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*; Kristeva, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*.

2 Since its publication in 2006, Linda Hutcheon's *A Theory of Adaptation* has become a reference text in the field. A notable (early) study on adaptation is Ruby Cohn's *Modern Shakespeare Offshoots*.

3 As in adaptation studies, Shakespeare often features as the prime example in appropriation studies. See for example Vickers, *Appropriating Shakespeare*; Desmet and Sawyer (eds.), *Shakespeare and Appropriation*; Fazel and Gedds (eds.), *The Shakespeare User. Critical and Creative Appropriations in a Network Culture*; Bronfen, *Serial Shakespeare. An infinite variety of appropriations in American TV*; Desmet, Iyengar and Jacobson (eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Shakespeare and Global Appropriation*; Corredera, Pittman and Way (eds.), *Shakespeare and Cultural Appropriation*.

4 Hatala Matthes, “Cultural appropriation and oppression”. Matthes speaks of “the oppression account of cultural oppression” (ibid., p. 1004) and defines “wrongful” cultural appropriation “as a descriptive term that refers to the use of the stories, motifs, etc. of a particular cultural group by outsiders of that group” (ibid.). See also Hatala Matthes, “Cultural Appropriation Without Cultural Essentialism?”

point out that appropriation is not always – and not necessarily – seen as objectionable by members of the targeted group, and that appropriation can be a reciprocal phenomenon.⁵ In a more complex perspective on (cultural) appropriation the ‘subaltern’ and ‘others’ are seen as agents rather than as powerless victims.⁶

Although ‘cultural appropriation’ in the narrow usage of the term does not feature prominently in the essays of this volume, it is important to highlight that the aspect of power is inherent in most acts of appropriation.⁷ The term suggests a “hostile takeover, a seizure of authority over the original”⁸, or “an abduction”⁹; hence, “because appropriation carries strong overtones of agency, potentially for the appropriated as well as the appropriator, it can convey political, cultural, and [...] ethical advocacy”.¹⁰ In their collection of essays on the ethics of appropriation, Huang and Rivlin call attention to the French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, whose “vision of ethics makes it possible to see appropriating texts as hostages instead of, or in addition to, as hostage-takers”.¹¹ The ethical dimension of acts of appropriation is reflected in the essay on Mermillod’s appropriation of Byron’s poem “The Prisoner of Chillon” in this volume (see below pp. 157–182).

However, not all appropriation is *per se* inappropriate, hostile or malicious inasmuch as it can be conceived as drawing on a reservoir of cultural memory with a view of transmitting, recycling, refiguring and transforming the materials it uses.¹² Seen this way, appropriation is not only a form of taking possession but also a means

5 See C. Thi Nguyen and Matthew Strohl, for example, who affirm: “In many cases, an act of appropriation could be taken as objectionable, but group members do not in fact find it to be objectionable. Consider, for instance, David Bowie’s influential take on soul music. This act of appropriation and its resounding popularity could be interpreted as objectionably enacting the dynamics of white hegemony, but could also be celebrated as a mutually beneficial cultural exchange, as it has been by those Black writers who point to Bowie as an exemplar of how to borrow from other cultures without causing offense.” (Nguyen and Strohl, “Cultural appropriation and the intimacy of groups”, p. 986.) And Craig Latrell states: “The idea that artists in other societies might be using elements of Western culture for their own reasons is rarely entertained. [...] But [...] why should we assume that intercultural transfer is primarily a politically based, one-way phenomenon – a cultural monologue rather than a dialogue?” (Latrell, “After Appropriation”, p. 45.)

6 See also Ashley, “The Cultural Processes of ‘Appropriation’”, p. 4.

7 Marsden defines appropriation as an act of “taking by force”. See Marsden, “Introduction”, p. 1.

8 Fischlin and Fortier, “General Introduction”, p. 3.

9 Cartelli, *Repositioning Shakespeare*, p. 14.

10 Huang and Rivlin, “Introduction”, p. 2.

11 Ibid., p. 4. Huang and Rivlin refer to Levinas’ *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonse Lingis. Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1991, p. 114.

12 See for a similar approach: Schneider, “On ‘appropriation’: a critical reappraisal”; Lafrenz, “Art Across Cultures and Art by Appropriation”; Boon, “On Appropriation”.

of preservation. It often goes back to the past for the sake of the future. Moreover, stripped of its negative connotations, appropriation “is, or at least can be, an act of artistic creation”.¹³ Some of the essays in the first two sections of this volume deal precisely with the creative – and often also subversive – potential of appropriation.¹⁴ In his vigorous defence of appropriation Marcus Boon contends that “[a]ppropriation is [...] that which takes up the random, the aleatory, the unconnected and chaotic, and does something with it – places it in pattern or resonance. [...] in this sense appropriation underlies our very ability to make meaning of ourselves and the world we find ourselves in.”¹⁵ The essays in the present volume invite readers to form their own opinion on the nature and the workings of appropriation, and more particularly on its function as practice of memory.

Modes of Religious Appropriation

Based on the delineation of three entangled modes of memory – linguistic and iconographic / visual codes as memory, symbolic ritual and ritualized practices of memory, and narrative memory, including narratives of memory¹⁶ –, the essays of this trans-disciplinary volume deal with art and popular culture, literature, and social discourses and practices with a thematic focus on religion.¹⁷ All three modes form spaces of memory¹⁸ composed of textures that are used, reproduced and transformed by different agents and communities. Images, narratives and ritual practices as well as discourses in parts of society or specific communities both create spaces of memory – as imagined, ‘narrated’ spaces – and result from narrated, visually and materially pro-

13 Lafrenz, “Art Across Cultures and Art by Appropriation”, p. 2.

14 In a highly stimulating essay, Marcus Boon focuses on appropriation in music and affirms that “all musical experience involves and is constituted by appropriation”. Although he does not deny “the long history of colonial appropriation”, Boon claims that “the practice of appropriation [...] is a practice of many cultures around the world that has taken place throughout history. In particular, folk cultures in the industrial age [...] are often engaged in appropriating techniques from high or mass culture and ‘subordinating them’ to their own purposes.” (Boon, “On Appropriation”, p. 7.)

15 Ibid., p. 13.

16 See for these conceptual reflections: Metzger, “Memory of the Sacred Heart”.

17 On religion and memory see the contributions in the issue on “Devotion and Memory” of *Kirchliche Zeitgeschichte / Contemporary Church History* 31 (2018); Metzger and Tertünte (eds.). *Sacred Heart Devotion*.

18 On the concept of ‘spaces of memory’ see: Daphinoff and Metzger, “Zur Einführung”; Metzger, “Erinnerungsräume”. The dynamic conception is close to Michel de Certeau’s conception of space as ‘lieu pratique’ (*L’invention du quotidien*, p. 173).

duced and ritually staged spaces of memory. As a mechanism in both processes, appropriation is to be conceived as highly dynamic: it creates new instances of memory by using and transforming 'older' codes, narrations and practices.

A first mode of 'religious appropriation' relates to how religious narratives, narrative or iconographic particles, semantics and discourses are reimagined and used in different or transformed religious contexts in relation to those in which they had been created. These questions are on the one hand approached with a focus on pluri-religious contexts (synchronous and to some degree asynchronous) in which through appropriation religion or the role of religion is transformed (see the essays by Jürg Rüpke and Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus). On the other hand, they are approached with a focus on religiously – and more precisely denominationally – exclusive contexts, in which appropriation is intended to foster and consolidate narratives and practices in the formation of religious communities (see the essays by Paul Oberholzer and Stefan Laube).

A second mode is concerned with how religious narratives, discourses and iconographic practices are reimagined and used in not *per se* religious contexts in literature, art and material culture. In some cases, this leads to a transformed and newly conceived, artistically created 'religion' (see the essays by Giuliana Ferreccio, Franziska Metzger and Jacques Picard), whereas in other cases religious narratives, images and discourses are radically deconstructed (see the essays by Roland Innerhofer, Franziska Metzger and Jacques Picard). In yet another type, religious codes, symbols and particles of narration build just one layer of memory among a variety of other layers appropriated in a literary text, work of art or popular artefact (see the essays by David Morgan and Jude Nixon).

A third mode of 'religious appropriation' explores how narratives and iconographic codes in literature, art, material culture and social, political and economic discourses, which did not originate with – and were not primarily used by – religious agents, were appropriated and thereby radically transformed by religious agents, movements and communities. Integrated in religious narratives or societal discourses with a certain public performance, they were immediately used to create and 'adjust' identity against the background of social and political changes (see the essays by Thomas Zaugg and Sandra Frühauf, Maria Schubert and Florian Bock) and they could be used in closed, exclusive discourses of identity politics and fundamentalist construction of difference (see the essay by Dimiter Daphinoff).

Appropriation as Practice of Memory

To think about appropriation in relation to the category of memory will contribute to a more differentiated assessment of practices of appropriation. In this framework the individual articles therefore focus on the complex forms and modes of appropriation and the dynamics of functions and functionalisation by individual agents, in society and in a particular community or part of society.

Modes of appropriation conceived as uses of memory can be systematised as: (a) reuse, that is reproduction of significant parts of narratives, iconographic and semantic codes or discourses, their transfer into new contexts and therefore into new combinations, often with the central aim of constructing and making visible continuities to past imagination; (b) adaptation, that is significant modification of the appropriated instance, creating new meaning, as can be seen, for example, in the 'actualisation' of a community's discourses through the integration of discourses or parts of discourses of other communities; (c) radical transformation and reflected deconstruction in which the transformed instance of memory remains decodable as a negative foil, aiming to criticize, especially through ironisation; (d) radical transformation and – sometimes aggressive – shifting away from the 'original' meaning, even turning it into its opposite, in order to create difference and exclusion with effects of self-aggrandisement and fostering of identity; (e) mnemonic practices, understood as appropriation by the agents of a community, often linked to the preservation and fostering of dominant narratives and practices.

As regards functions and functionalisation of appropriation, the case studies in this volume allow to systematise a number of types. (a) Appropriation in literature and art can have an aspect of 'playing' with instances of memory without immediate function beyond the work of art. (b) Appropriation can be used to create continuity – a connection to a past – with the intentional focalisation on the creation of memory. (c) The appropriation of particularly powerful instances of narratives, iconographic codes or discourses can be used in order to reduce complexity and enhance visibility (of problems, crises, existential questions) and to explain societal circumstances, especially crises (and possibly giving solutions to solve them). (d) Beyond this, appropriation can be used to legitimise discourses of a community, and (e) to militantly construct difference in order to foster their own community through radical differentiation in identity politics. (f) Furthermore, appropriation can aim at transforming conceptions – in our case of religion – and to reflect on these, but also (g) to deconstruct and radically question codes, narratives, and practices, especially in art and literature.

Appropriation in Art and Popular Culture

Dealing with fictional and non-fictional narrations, works of art – from paintings to sculptures and film – and everyday practices such as cooking and eating, the essays in section I all deal with instances in the past and present in which appropriation plays the role of a mechanism of transformation. These transformations are either the result of social interaction as a central factor in creating intersections and divisions that bring about altered perceptions regarding the religious past (Jürg Rüpke) or regarding everyday practices (Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus). Or these transformations are the consequence of changed perceptions of society, religious beliefs, theological concepts and the persistence and power of religious interpretations (Jacques Picard, Franziska Metzger). In all these cases, layers of memory are central, and in all of them religious interpretations, narratives, symbols and ritual meaning are more or less radically transformed in the process of appropriation.

Jürg Rüpke analyses narratives of memory and ritual practices as instances of memory producing layers of memory that were appropriated by various authors and religious communities in Mediterranean antiquity from the first century BC to the fourth century AD. In an analysis of Numa's books, Varro's "Antiquities", Ovid's "Calendar books" and Iuvencus' "Deeds of Jesus" he demonstrates how complex processes of appropriating one's own memories related to the foundation of religious narratives and practices, and of appropriating selected parts of other communities' memories result in transformations and dynamic creations of narratives and ritual practices. He shows that the complex relation of shared memories is an important force in the transformation of perceptions, interpretations and discourses of identity in the *longue durée*.

Reflecting also on the 'intended' or 'implied' readers, Rüpke opens another field in the analysis of appropriation: the reader / observer as permanent appropriator¹⁹. *David Morgan* focuses on it fundamentally in his article. He entwines methodological reflection regarding the analysis of strata of memory in material objects with the concrete exploration of the sculpture *Darwin's Ape* (produced in the early 1960s) which serves as a bookend. He demonstrates that the longer the process of reflection on codes of memory becomes, the more complex and interwoven the layers of meaning of the observed object grow. In *Darwin's Ape* – as in the other objects and images

19 For Paul Ricœur appropriation "actualizes the meaning of the text for the present reader", insofar as interpretation in any given time "releases something like an event, an event of discourse, an event in the present time" (Ricœur, "Appropriation", p. 147). On Ricœur's conception of 'appropriation' see also: McCall, "Notes and Commentary upon Paul Ricœur, 'Appropriation'".

adduced in the article – instances of religious memory represent one layer of memory among others, especially Darwinism and anti-Darwinism.

Jacques Picard reflects on iconographic and narrative memory of the Last Judgement and Resurrection in a perspective of *longue durée* from medieval and early modern artistic traditions of Jewish and Christian source to the modernist paintings by artists such as Friedrich Dürrenmatt and Neta Harari Navon. He combines this approach on visual culture with an analysis of the transformations of concepts of justice and judgement in the religious sphere and beyond, as they are reflected in fictional and non-fictional texts. He makes visible transformations that amount to a fundamental re-formation and -narration since the Enlightenment and – in a more radical way – since the Second World War, as after the Holocaust the appropriation of suffering and damnation, terror and guilt as forceful religious memory cannot but be radically deconstructed in form and meaning.

With a focus on art, literature and film, *Franziska Metzger* explores how in apocalyptic discourses the communication about a not yet experienced radical ‘other’ that is projected into the future is centrally based on the appropriation of inventories of apocalyptic memory, of spaces of memory constituted of codes, images and narratives. These include not only biblical narratives, but also images of natural catastrophes and (nuclear) war, and ‘contemporary’ mouldings of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries such as the topos of the Last Man designed in the early 1800s and transformed in various ways in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, not least in popular movies. Metzger analyses how such instances of memory – whole narratives, particles of narratives and iconographic codes but also narrative structure – are repeated, reconfigured and transformed to the point of alienation and radical deconstruction.

With *Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus’* essay this section returns to the Mediterranean with which it had begun and to shared and divided pasts, and especially to present time practices. In his analysis of the relation and transformations of religious and non-religious imaginations of Palestinian Cuisine in Israel/Palestine, Brumberg-Kraus understands cultural interaction as appropriation producing intersections and shifts in ascriptions and interpretations regarding the meaning of vegetarian and vegan-friendly dishes, some of which are symbolically charged (culturally, religiously, nationally). He demonstrates how this is the case both for agents within the respective religious communities and for various other social communities like those of the restaurateurs and of consumers and visitors, among which tourists play a significant role.

Whereas Picard and Metzger show continuities and transformations in religious codes and narratives which create both new conceptions of religion, especially in modernism, and radical questioning and deconstruction, Rüpke and Brumberg

demonstrate how shared and divided instances of religious codes transform religion through appropriation. Morgan shows how the interaction of observer and object leads to a complex dialogue of various layers of memory, a dimension that will also be taken up in the next section.

Appropriation in Literature

Section II assembles four articles that focus on forms and functions of appropriation of religious narratives in individual texts or in a corpus of one or several authors (see the contributions by Roland Innerhofer and Jude Nixon), or on the entanglement of different *oeuvres*, that is on the ‘appropriated’ and the ‘appropriator’ – the twelfth-century theologian Richard of St. Victor used in various ways by the modernist poet Ezra Pound (see Giuliana Ferreccio’s essay) and Lord Byron’s “The Prisoner of Chillon” used by a catholic activist and pamphleteer in mid-nineteenth-century Switzerland (see Dimiter Daphinoff’s essay). Appropriation in these four contributions varies in form and function, and especially also regarding the role of religion. The workings of memory in these acts of literary appropriation can be detected in (a) the reference in new contexts to certain symbolically loaded, ‘programmatically’ core instances such as names or images (as in Nixon’s case), in more or less radical transformation, both as (b) ‘positive’ incorporation through adaptation (as in Ferreccio’s case) and with (c) deconstructive or even destructive objectives (as in Innerhofer’s case), or in (d) repetition (or almost copying) in the context of a reversal of meaning (as in Daphinoff’s case). Appropriation can thereby greatly differ in complexity: from simplification to complex montage and idiosyncratic new creations.

Dimiter Daphinoff analyses the functioning of a particularly aggressive type of appropriation: the use and radical transformation of a celebrated literary work of art for ideological purposes. In 1848, the later Swiss Cardinal Mermillod published a fiery pamphlet in defence of Bishop Marilley, who was briefly incarcerated in Castle Chillon in the autumn of 1848. Mermillod uses Lord Byron’s famous poem “The Prisoner of Chillon” and the attendant “Sonnet on Chillon”, which pay tribute to a sixteenth-century Genevan (Protestant) fighter for religious and political liberty, François Bonivard, to grant prestige to a contemporary Catholic dignitary and to hyperbolically elevate him to the mythical status of Byron’s hero, in the process of which he radically transforms, among other things, Byron’s discourse of liberty. Not only does Mermillod quote from Byron’s poem, he also adds a poem of his own to the polemical tract. Called “Captif”, this amateur poem enters in competition with Byron’s work and thereby boldly appropriates both Byron’s prisoner and the castle which had

become an international cult object and an iconic space of memory through yet other processes of appropriation in art and literature to which Daphinoff's contribution refers in an entangled history of multiple appropriations.

Giuliana Ferreccio investigates Ezra Pound's modes of appropriation of the ideas and work fragments of a twelfth-century Scottish-French theologian, Richard of St. Victor, both in Pound's prose, especially in *The Spirit of Romance*, and in some of his poetry, for example *Rock-Drill*, a section of the *Cantos*. Ferreccio demonstrates how transformation through appropriation includes in Pound's case the creation of ambiguities and uncertainties, the reformulation of religious imagination as well as the amalgamation with diverse other spaces of memory of different ages. Ferreccio interprets Pound's appropriation as essential to his creation of concepts of an 'alternative religion' based on a new mysticism and a spiritualisation of the inner-worldly, especially love.

Whereas *Giuliana Ferreccio's* article shows that new, especially inner-worldly oriented sacralisation is one of the effects of Pound's appropriation, *Roland Innerhofer's* analysis of Austrian neo-avant-garde poetry of the second half of the twentieth century demonstrates how biblical narratives, prayers, hymns and ritual formulas were radically profaned. This profanation by Ernst Jandl, Gerhard Rühm and H.C. Artmann was often formally and aesthetically enacted through radical linguistic disintegration, creating a sometimes ironizing, sometimes blasphemous deconstruction of Christian key narratives, codes and ritual practices as expression of anti-authoritarian discourses. Innerhofer shows how in various poems sensual experience is produced as a kind of counter-image for religion.

Jude Nixon focuses his in-depth analysis of Samuel Selvon's novel *The Lonely Londoners* on the amalgamation of different spaces of memory, religious and non-religious. Mythical narratives and symbolic elements, figures and places from the Bible, the legend of King Arthur, Shakespeare and T.S. Eliot as well as popular Caribbean culture (music and dance) are appropriated and brought into relation to each other in order to create new meaning in the entangled social sphere of the diasporic displacement of Caribbean immigrants. Nixon's analysis based on the concepts of intertextuality and heteroglossia shows how appropriation is always to be seen as a network rather than as a one-dimensional or singular phenomenon.

Literary appropriation of religious narratives, semantics, icons or ritual practices as well as the appropriation of non-religious literary narratives in a religious context can take on various forms, and often more than just one at the same time. With respect to religion, too, the four authors deal with a spectrum of complex relations, ranging from (a) radical political instrumentalization of literary narratives through conscious alienation (see Daphinoff) to (b) its contrary, that is to the critique of polit-

ical usage of religion (see Innerhofer), but also to (c) idiosyncratic, syncretistic transformations of religion in and through poetry (see Ferreccio), and to (d) the superposition of numerous textures of memory, among which also religious ones, as part of a cultural reservoir (see Nixon).

Appropriation in Social Discourses and Practices

Section III of the volume is dedicated to religious communities in the early modern period and in twentieth-century Catholicism. Both can be considered as *Sattelzeiten* for the respective communities, that is as times of increased uncertainty and crisis, of reinterpretations of experiences and changing expectations for the future.²⁰ In these essays, appropriation is related to narratives and narrative practices, to discourses regarding political, social and economic questions, to the interrelation of the visual and material with religious discourses, as well as to activism in the public sphere. Appropriation in these fields is directed towards identity construction, on the one hand focused on the formation of new religious movements and communities (see the essays of Stefan Laube and Paul Oberholzer), on the other hand directed towards society under the influence of non-religious discourses and through respective interaction, participation, and co-operation (in the Green Party, in corporatist think-tanks etc., see the essays of Thomas Zaugg and of Sandra Frühauf, Maria Schubert and Florian Bock). In the first two articles, memory plays a role as practice in the creation of social cohesion, in the latter two as texture of semantics, discourses and ritual practices which through actualisation enabled new positionings in the public sphere.

Stefan Laube describes Martin Luther's medial transmission of the religious principles of belief and ritual practice in the form of condensed texts, especially the *Small* and *Large Catechism*, which took on the role of "model books" for the Christian way of life. In this, the practice of mnemonic appropriation played a key-role, especially through oral repetition. The mnemonic function of the catechism has relevance in the protestant religious culture far beyond Luther, with a particular significance in a more institutionalised and diversified field of religious education – especially in Sunday schools – in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In *Paul Oberholzer's* contribution appropriation involving the transmission of narratives and iconographic codes plays a role, too: the communitarian dimension of appropriating a narrative once it had become dominant and canonised. Oberholzer explores specifically

20 See Koselleck, "Einige Fragen an die Begriffsgeschichte von 'Krise'"; id., "'Erfahrungsraum' und 'Erwartungshorizont'"; Hölscher, "Religiöse Begriffe im Widerspruch".

the establishment of a foundational narrative of memory of the Jesuit Order through the construction of a biography of its founder, Ignatius of Loyola, based on a bundle of partially divergent memoirs circling around his presumed vision. Both articles focus on the fixation of narratives through educational diffusion, on dogmatism, institutionalisation, social integration and the construction of difference regarding the rival denomination. In both contributions, social disciplining plays a role, the closedness of what can be said – and what must not be said – about the fundamentals of religious belief in Luther's case and about the foundational narratives of the religious community in the case of the Jesuits.

A more dynamic negotiation of religious identity that leads to shifts in central discourses of the catholic communities in Switzerland in the inter-war and post-war period and in Western Germany from the 1970s to the 1980s becomes visible in the essays of Thomas Zaugg and Sandra Frühauf, Maria Schubert and Florian Bock. Both contributions show how through the appropriation of societal discourses that were not marked by religious discourses, the catholic community of communication was transformed. Focusing on Switzerland, *Thomas Zaugg* demonstrates how in the interwar and post-war period under the influence of a young generation of Catholics concepts and iconographic and discursive elements of artistic modernism were incorporated into new projects in Church architecture, interpreted as part of new conceptions of Church structure and liturgy. Zaugg also shows how conceptions of corporatism, which Catholic elites had marked since the early twentieth century were shifted as they were appropriated by neoliberal circles in dialogue with catholic intellectuals in the Cold War period. Focusing on the peace movement, the environmental movement and the Green Party in Western Germany, *Sandra Frühauf*, *Maria Schubert* and *Florian Bock* explore how Catholic agents incorporated discourses and practices of the new social movements (e.g. semantics of solidarity) in their social action and how parts of Catholic semantics and discourses – as particles of religious memory – influenced ways of speaking in the new social movements and the Green Party. This article demonstrates that appropriation in the field of social discourses and discourse communities must not be seen as a one-directional process. Regarding religion, this section shows two types of effects and functions of appropriation: identitarian closure and fixation on the one hand, and transformation of religion in order to cope with and enhance the presence of religion in the public sphere on the other.

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1 APPROPRIATION IN ART AND POPULAR CULTURE

Jörg Rüpke

Creating Shared and Divided Memories

Appropriations of Different Pasts

In everyday language ‘memory’ often includes notions of personal remembrance and hence authentic representations of the past, often connected to emotional states remembered and revived. At the same time, there is the possibility of misremembering, selecting, and constructing memories in popular discourse. Thus, even without the further conceptual reflections that will be presented in the next section, it is plausible to ask about changes in memories over time. In this contribution the focus is on Mediterranean antiquity, mainly on the *Imperium Romanum*, from the first century BC to the fourth century AD. This was a world of many people staying in their rural settlements for most of their life, of whose memories and knowledge we know very little due to the lack or scarcity of written documents. Our evidence is based on the five to ten percent of the population living in a few thousand tiny cities or a few (nearly) mega-cities (above all Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, later Constantinople) and the even smaller number of people moving over larger distances attracted by nearby urban settlements, enslaved people moved against their will, military personnel, a few merchants, specialists, or administrators.

Yet, these small numbers were nevertheless highly important in what we can conceptualize as religious changes, if we define religious action as human acts of communication with one or several superior, ‘divine’ addressee(s) in order to involve them in human affairs.¹ Changes in practices and actions of sacralising in objects accompanying and securing such communication, and related processes of institutionalization and reflection form the cultural field ‘religion’ on which this essay will focus. The hegemonic position of urban hubs and urban agents in this process allows one to glimpse at how such changes were reflected in, and influenced by, changes in memory. How did appropriation of different memories enable religious agents to create a shared or divided past and thus promote changes in religious practices or group formations? This, then, is what this essay tries to elucidate, using ‘appropriation’, which I understand in the tradition of Michel de Certeau² as an analytical lens on the reception *and* individual modification of pasts that could be built into memories.

1 Rüpke, *Religion and Its History*.

2 de Certeau, *Practice of everyday life* (French: *Arts de faire*; German: *Kunst des Handelns*).

Memory and Religion³

‘Memory’ has become a central concept in various recent discourses, especially since the 1980s. The very series, in which this volume is published, is evidence of that. The concept of ‘memory’ competes with a concept of ‘history’ that reduces the latter to narratives of the past or even academic historiography.⁴ On the one hand, the concept based on Maurice Halbwachs and the originally rhetorical concept of places of memory (*loci*) as ‘places of remembrance’, recast by Pierre Nora, played an important role.⁵ On the other hand, psychological and neurological memory research has provided a new basis for modelling retention or forgetting, thus revealing also the constructive character of memory for the individual.⁶ Accordingly, memory presents itself as a complex process of perception, associations, temporal marking of such memory contents, individual appropriation of narratives or data related to content and circumstances and conscious evocation of memories. This suggests that memory should be understood as a form of knowledge that includes a self-reflexive awareness of the past temporal circumstances of the sedimentation of this knowledge. This concept, which combines the transfer of content into memory and the aspect of active self-remembering (according to Aristotle, *De memoria et reminiscencia: mnêmê* and *anamnêsis*) will also be taken as a basis in what follows.

Religion played a limited but important role in these discourses. Above all, with its mimetic rituals or rituals interpreted as mimetic, it offered a prime example of collective memory and its cultural sedimentation up to ritual scripts and written narratives. Aleida Assmann and the recently departed Jan Assmann systematized this under the concept of the transition from ‘communicative’ to ‘cultural memory’.⁷ This also made it possible to connect an anthropologic concept of memory to a rhetorical one aimed at the memorization of speech content for the purposes of performance.⁸ Points of departure for ritual memory were provided by central Jewish and Christian rituals, in particular the Passover, which served to commemorate the suffering in and the exodus from Egypt, as well as the Christian Eucharistic celebration which, with the Lord’s Supper, aimed to commemorate the suffering and resurrection

3 This section is based on Rüpke, “Erinnerung”.

4 On the competition: Le Goff, *History and Memory*; Cubitt, *History and Memory*.

5 Halbwachs, *Les Cadres sociaux* (already 1925); Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*, and François, *Erinnerungs-orte*.

6 This is developed from a cultural studies perspective in Berek, *Kollektives Gedächtnis*, p. 70; see the older summary: Welzer, *Das kommunikative Gedächtnis*.

7 Aleida Assmann, *Erinnerungsräume*; Jan Assmann, *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis*.

8 Haverkamp and Lachmann, *Memoria*.

of Jesus.⁹ This ‘anamnestic’ function of ritual, or in Jewish-Christian terminology ‘liturgy’, continues to determine important areas of research into historical rituals as well as the discussion of current commemorations and anniversaries. The power of images of the gods and the architectural contribution to the sacralization of spaces is closely linked to their role in memory practices and the triggering of memories. Texts within the ritual, prayers and hymns can focus on and shape memories, as can be seen in the enormous importance of songs in the proliferation and stabilization of nearly all religious traditions. The history and the controversy surrounding the formulation of central Jewish and Christian prayers (the Eighteen *Prayer/Amida*, the *Birkat ha-Minim* and still recent versions of the Good Friday prayer for the “apostate Jews”) provide impressive examples of the potential of such texts to create shared or divided memories.

Often, narrative texts cited in ritual context do not only offer secondary ritual interpretations but are themselves part of a practice of remembrance. Here, they play a central role in recitation, commentary or reading and can themselves become places of remembrance. Such observations add to Brian Stock’s concept of textual communities, emphasising shared practices of interpretation rather than shared memory.¹⁰ Evidently, texts are a central medium of religion and not just a reflection on religion, even if they do not feature within ritual frameworks. Yet, a great deal of Mediterranean literary production was designed to be performed in such frameworks, above all dramatic productions and all kinds of songs. Further genres like philosophical treatises and many narrative texts such as historiographies, biographies, and novels with an often considerable amount of religious semantics and a high number of divinely driven protagonists, were intended for individual reading and the formation of memories and identities.¹¹

For contemporary Europe, the French sociologist of religion, Danièle Hervieu-Léger, has generalized the memory-relatedness of religion beyond the textual and ritual element. She understands religion under the conditions of modernity (which she uses in the singular) as the collective memory of a distant founding event that is constructed as having unlimited meaning. What is important is the resulting paradox that religiosity is thus, on the one hand, extremely past-oriented and that, on the other, it constructs itself as ahistorical and supratemporal.¹²

9 Ex 12:14; Luke 22:19 and others: “Do this in remembrance of me”.

10 Stock, *Implications of Literacy*; id., *Listening for the text*; see Kranemann and Rüpke, *Das Gedächtnis des Gedächtnisses*.

11 E.g. Rüpke, “Räume literarischer Kommunikation”; id., “Fighting for differences”.

12 Hervieu-Léger, “Religion as Memory”.