

**Zeitschrift:** Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Religions- und Kulturgeschichte = Revue suisse d'histoire religieuse et culturelle = Rivista svizzera di storia religiosa e culturale

**Herausgeber:** Vereinigung für Schweizerische Kirchengeschichte

**Band:** 113 (2019)

**Artikel:** Memory of the Sacred Heart : iconographic and ritual variations

**Autor:** Metzger, Franziska

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-847024>

### **Nutzungsbedingungen**

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

### **Conditions d'utilisation**

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

### **Terms of use**

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

**Download PDF:** 03.04.2026

**ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>**

# Memory of the Sacred Heart – Iconographic and Ritual Variations

Franziska Metzger

The two images of the Sacred Heart on the following page, a procession banner from Tirol dated around 1800 and a devotional image from the late 19th century, both used as ritual objects, can productively be analysed with regard to the category of memory. Repetition, serial iconographic reproduction, ritualisation, materiality and sensual tangibility which the two objects and their history of usage demonstrate, are central mechanisms of religious memory as are different modes of transformation on the iconographic, semantic and narrative level.<sup>1</sup> Iconography and closely linked to it practices of seeing and of demonstrating, as in the examples by angels and by Christ himself – also doubly in the first image with the angels demonstrating the Sacred Heart and the banner as object presented in a procession – are central modes in the practice of devotional memory.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, the examples represent the close entanglement of the visual, ritual and narrative dimensions of memory. Against the background of a threefold understanding of the relation of religion and memory and their entanglement, the focus of this article lies on the iconographic and ritual variations of the Sacred Heart. A long-term perspective on continuities is linked to one on discontinuities and ruptures of codes.

<sup>1</sup> On religious memory cf. by the author of this contribution: Franziska Metzger, *Das Gedächtnis der Religion. Gedächtnis als Kategorie für die Katholizismusforschung*, in: Andreas Henkelmann/Christoph Kösters/Mark Edward Ruff/Rosel Oehmen-Vieregge (ed.), *Katholizismus – transnational*, Münster 2019, 123–144; id., *Devotion and Memory – Discourses and Practices*, in: *Contemporary Church History*, 31/2 (2018).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. in a perspective of religious studies and history of art: David Morgan, *Rhetoric of the Heart: Figuring the Body in Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus*, in: Dick Houtman/ Birgit Meyer (ed.), *Things. Religion and the question of materiality*, New York 2012, 90–111.



*Image 1: Burning Sacred Heart with Chalice and Host, procession banner, Tirol, around 1800.<sup>3</sup>*



*Image 2: Devotional image, late 19th century.<sup>4</sup>*

*Memory as space of selection and different modes of memory construction – systematisations with a focus on the Sacred Heart*

The complex relation of religion and memory can be regarded as an essential mechanism of religious communication. Mechanisms of memory are central for the modelling and stabilisation of religious language, of ritual practices and – through communication – of the formation and fostering of religious communities. This contribution is based on a conception of religion as system of meaning production, focusing on religious communication – discourses (semantics, images, narratives) and ritual practices –, and on the public dimension of religion.<sup>5</sup> It is equally grounded on a constructivist, post-structuralist approach in memory studies, as it conceptualises memory as space of selection – not unlike Jacques Derrida’s notion of ‘archive’ and approaches to memory by representatives of systems theory differing from conceptions dichotomising bet-

<sup>3</sup> The picture is accessible on the following site: [www.kulturraumtirol.at/index.php?id=126&no\\_cache=1&tx\\_ttnews\[tt\\_news\]=217](http://www.kulturraumtirol.at/index.php?id=126&no_cache=1&tx_ttnews[tt_news]=217).

<sup>4</sup> The picture is accessible on the following site: <http://rosenkranzbeten.info/rosenkranzbeten/kinder-im-herz-jesu-monat>.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. for a comparable approach among others: Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, *Die Wiederkehr der Götter. Religion in der modernen Kultur*, München 2004; id./Klaus Große Kracht (ed.), *Religion und Gesellschaft. Europa im 20. Jahrhundert*, Köln 2007; Lucian Hölscher (ed.), *Baupläne der sichtbaren Kirche. Sprachliche Konzepte religiöser Vergemeinschaftung in Europa*, Göttingen 2007; Urs Altermatt, *Konfession, Nation, Rom. Metamorphosen im schweizerischen und europäischen Katholizismus des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, Zürich 2009; Wilhelm Damberg (ed.), *Soziale Strukturen und Semantiken des Religiösen im Wandel. Transformationen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1949–1989*, Essen 2011.

ween memory as <storage> and <functional memory> –, as fundamentally the result of processes of construction and not as something <neutral> and <given>.<sup>6</sup>

Based on my previous research and conceptualisation in the field of memory and religion,<sup>7</sup> I define three modes of religious memory: I. Religious language as space of memory, i.e. linguistic and iconographic/visual codes, the decoding of which enables the understanding of discourses and marks ways of seeing; II. Symbolic and ritual practices as memory and III. Narratives of memory and narrative memory (memory through narratives). In a dynamic perspective, memory can be regarded as complex structure of layers, as texture of codes, of modes of interpretation, of ritual and narrative use, of reiteration, adoption, transmission and (more or less fundamental and radical) transformations, not least in a long-term perspective.<sup>8</sup> The communication theoretical approach entails a conception of entanglement of discourses (semantics, iconography, narratives) and of symbolic and ritual practices. It deconstructs dichotomic conceptions of discourse vs. practice, language vs. image, rites vs. language, language vs. emotion. Concretely this becomes manifest in the immediate interrelation of the three modes of religious memory. In and through all three modes – but especially through the first two – memory of the Sacred Heart is created, and Sacred Heart devotion is modelled as memory.

### *Religious language as memory*

Religious language, i.e. linguistic and iconographic/visual codes including forms of seeing as space of memory constitutes the fundamental frame for the two other modes of memory. In a communication theoretical perception linking semiotic and discourse analytical approaches, language can be considered as a web of possibilities of symbolisation including visual objects. This conceptualisation is based on the post-structuralist philosophical premise that memory is linguistically and visually constructed. It emphasises on the one hand the dimension of memory of language, while it presumes on the other hand that memory is

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Jacques Derrida, *Mal d'Archive*, Paris 1995. Cf. also: Niklas Luhmann, *Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft*, Frankfurt a. M. 1997; Elena Esposito, *Soziales Vergessen. Formen und Medien des Gedächtnisses der Gesellschaft*, Frankfurt a. M. 2002; Moritz Csáky, *Die Mehrdeutigkeit von Gedächtnis und Erinnerung*, in: *Digitales Handbuch zur Geschichte und Kultur Russlands und Osteuropas*, vol. 9, s. 1. 2004. – It is more constructivist than conceptions which differentiate between memory as storage and functional memory «Speicher-» and «Funktionsgedächtnis» (cf. Aleida Assmann, *Funktionsgedächtnis und Speichergedächtnis – zwei Modi der Erinnerung*, in: Kristin Platt/Mihran Dabag, *Generation und Gedächtnis. Erinnerungen und kollektive Identitäten*, Opladen 1997, 133–142).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. especially Metzger, *Devotion and Memory* (see note 3).

<sup>8</sup> For the concept of textures of memory cf. Franziska Metzger, *Apokalyptische Diskurse als Gedächtnis- und Erwartungsräume in der Sattelzeit um 1900*, in: *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Religions- und Kulturgeschichte*, 110 (2016), 23–51.

eminently created by linguistic and visual codes as polyvalently deployable and combinable inventories of memory that are stabilised through (and that equally form) communities of communication.<sup>9</sup>

The codification and reproduction of decodable discourses – semantics, images, narratives – related to a religious community and its positioning within different fields of society is a strong producer of multi-layered textures of memory. Therein, iconography and forms of seeing (as decoding) are intrinsically bound together: what a viewer sees and how he sees it – that is his gaze – is conditioned by the respective communicative community. The Sacred Heart in all its iconographic variations – with thorns, blood, beaming, as emblem (integrating text in the case of Alacoque's image),<sup>10</sup> lifted out of Christ's body as in Pompeo Batoni's painting in the Chiesa del Santissimo Nome di Gesù all'Argentina in Rome from 1767,<sup>11</sup> or integrated in his chest as in many devotional images of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century – can be interpreted as complex icon, purporting the living presence of sanctity in paintings and serial prints alike. As icon, within which variations of the complex relationship of the bodily/embodyed and the symbolic dimension become visible, sometimes closer to a synecdoche (as *pars pro toto*, i.e. visual excerpt for the larger corporal setting), sometimes mainly as a metaphor (as figurative heart). In fact, visualisation enables simultaneity of corporality and its symbolic transcendence, making present, demonstrating the visceral dimension of the essence of Christ's corporality and its sacralised transformation, a simultaneity favoured by the Jesuits in the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and more or less immediately presented on the iconographic surface structure ever since.<sup>12</sup> With Stephen Jaeger we could (in certain cases) speak of hyper-mimesis with regard to the icon of the Sacred Heart,<sup>13</sup> inasmuch as it does not attempt realism, but goes beyond by establishing the extraordinary of Christ's physiognomy, going to the boundaries of the «humane», indicating sanctity, magnifying humanity into divinity.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. the fundamental post-structuralist positions in philosophy of history: Hayden White, *Metahistory*, Baltimore/London 1973; Allan Megill, *Recounting the Past: «Description», Explanation, and Narrative in Historiography*, in: *The American Historical Review*, 94,3 (1989), 627–653.

<sup>10</sup> On Alacoque's image as well as her visions and devotion cf. David Morgan, *The Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Visual Evolution of a Devotion*, Amsterdam 2008, 9–12, 24; id. *Rhetoric of the Heart* (as note 4), especially 94; Jon L. Seydl, *Contesting the Sacred Heart of Jesus in late eighteenth-century Rome*, in: Andrew Hopkins/Maria Wyke (ed.), *Roman Bodies. Antiquity to the eighteenth century*, London 2005, 215–227, 216.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Seydl, *Contesting the Sacred Heart of Jesus* (as note 10); Mario Rosa, *Settecento religioso: politica della religione e religione del cuore*, Venice 1999.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Morgan, *The Sacred Heart of Jesus* (as note 10).

<sup>13</sup> Stephen Jaeger, *Enchantment. On Charisma and the Sublime in the Arts of the West*, Philadelphia 2012, 99–199.



Image 3: Emblematic image of the Sacred Heart, produced originally in 1685 at Margaret-Mary Alacoque's direction.

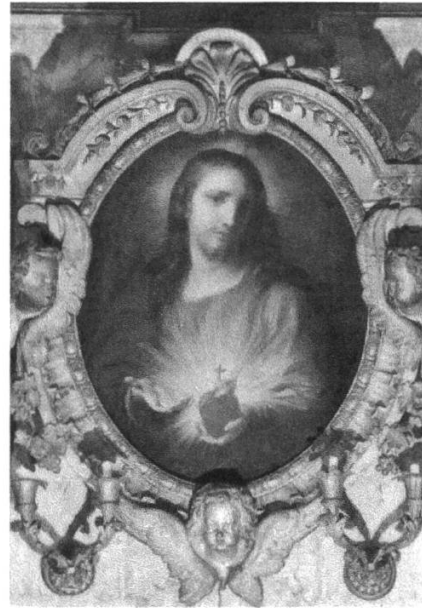


Image 4: Pompeo Batoni, The Sacred Heart of Jesus, 1767, oil on copper, Chiesa del Santissimo Nome di Gesù in Rome.

The usage of codes and their interrelation as texture of memory relies on the stabilisation of communication over time and is significantly marked by intertextuality, inasmuch as new iconographic elements and transformed meanings are added, appropriated and modified within a religious community, whereas discourses belonging to religious memory are integrated in new contexts. The integration into non-religious discourses, sites and spaces (such as human bodies as in tattoos) makes the texture of linguistic and iconographic memory even more complex. Also for this, the Sacred Heart is an excellent example, inasmuch as the (growing) polyvalence of the icon enables its reimagining and re-imagining, its rewriting and transformation. Two examples shall demonstrate this. In Odilon Redon's *Sacred Heart* painting the figure of Christ – whose face is transformed compared to the serially reproduced memory of Christ's «portrait» – neither reveals his heart nor does this introspective Christ gaze at the believer: the heart, which is only slightly hinted at, is an invisible space and reverses the mechanism of making the invisible visible. In this painting, the icon is lost; what remains is the symbolism of the Sacred Heart that does without icon, the signified with only an allusion of the signifier. Tattoos of the Sacred Heart, as one can see thousands in a short Google-search, both in an immediate context of catholic iconography or very often in a transformed religious field frequently use variations of the icon of the heart without the figure of Christ – therein being close to Alacoque's emblem – or are part of a montage of various icons (sacral or not). Iconographic bodily spaces thus become highly intertextual – and at the same time highly idiosyncratic – embodiments of memory.



Image 5: Odilon Redon, *Le Sacré Coeur*, 1910, Musée d'Orsay, conservé au musée du Louvre, Paris.  
© Réunion des Musées Nationaux-Grand Palais.

Radical questioning and deconstruction of codes of religious language, and their reintroduction in new contexts as ironic citation create a complex self-reflexive relation to instances of religious memory.<sup>14</sup> A deconstruction and ironic reintroduction of the icon of the Sacred Heart and its staging can be analysed in modern and contemporary art, as the following two examples shall show. In Salvador Dali's *The Sacred Heart of Jesus* (1962),<sup>15</sup> the seriality of Sacred Heart iconography is exposed: The card that the figure of Christ (resembling a pop singer) is holding like a devotional image is strikingly displayed as article of daily use and mass production. Christ's *gestus* of showing is uncovered, ironised and deconstructed – a typical effect of alienation/defamiliarisation (*Verfremdung*) – by a Christ who no longer identifies with the heart he displays. The heart on the card is decorporalised, whereas Christ is exclusively «body», bringing to expression what the rite has turned it into: the icon though transformed is still recognizable, but has lost its meaning. Damian Hirst's several recent Sacred Heart sculptures – again expression of the play with seriality, with different titles, however referring to the Sacred Heart iconography – are radical, ironic alienations citing central narratives and exposing them (doubly) in containers filled with formaldehyde.<sup>16</sup> The latter stands for the human and not transcendent creation of eternity and immortality,

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Metzger, *Apokalyptische Diskurse* (see note 8).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. the painting on: <https://www.wikiart.org/en/salvador-dali/the-sacred-heart-of-jesus>.

<sup>16</sup> Damian Hirst, *The Sacred Heart of Jesus*, 2005 (Exhibition: *The Death of God – Towards a Better Understanding of a Life Without God Aboard the Ship of Fools*, Mexico City, 2006), <http://damienhirst.com/the-sacred-heart-of-jesus>. Cf. Damian Hirst, *The Immaculate Heart – Sacred*, 2008, <http://damienhirst.com/the-immaculate-heart-a-sacre>; Damian Hirst, *The Kiss of Death*, 2005, <http://damienhirst.com/the-kiss-of-death>.

using a chemical substance, which is at the same time highly toxic – which however is of no consequence to the artificial heart.

### *Ritual and ritualised practices as memory*

The linguistic and iconographic dimension of religious memory and specifically of that of the Sacred Heart can only be thoroughly analysed if looked at against the background of ritual and ritualised practices on various levels. With regard to symbolical and ritual practices as memory – from the veneration of Saints and Mary to sacralised (created and «natural») spaces, including the space of images, to pilgrimages and processions as well as to ritual objects and holy texts – the following systematisation shall be proposed. a) The veneration and commemoration of Jesus, Mary and Saints can be described as production of memory created through symbolical and ritual practices. This field links the dimensions of spirituality and memory, both within a community and of the individual devotee. b) Mechanisms of memory are central for the functioning of devotional practices. We could speak of the creation and mediation of memory in performance. Religious rites can be conceptualised as «techniques of memory» that make the invisible visible and sensually experiencable.<sup>17</sup> A relation to transcendence is created forcefully through repetition and thus through memorial reproduction. Dalí's painting reflects not least on this dimension. c) Further on, memory is also created through materiality – including sacred/sacralised objects, monuments, buildings, places, spaces, paths and bodies or parts of bodies –, a dimension that in memory studies has mostly been neglected up to now and has been focused on by religious studies and to a much lesser degree by religious history only quite recently. Sacral objects, images and bodies can be conceptualised as *lieux de mémoire* created through their materiality,<sup>18</sup> producing at the same time sensuous and material routines as memory (including sounds, smells) enabling and enacting religious belief.

This systematisation is based on a position in which 1) demonstrating/ showing in or through images and objects – by Christ (angels), by the producers of the image or by its mediators (pastoral, educational) as officialised demonstration, 2) seeing and interpreting images, objects and actions, 3) narrating and listening/interpreting, and 4) complex embodiment – more concretely the interplay of bodies, of the body of Christ or Saints, of the body of the individual viewer and/or the

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Macho, *Das zeremonielle Tier. Rituale – Feste – Zeiten zwischen den Zeiten*, Graz 2004, 16–17.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Elke Pahud de Mortanges, «Be a somebody with a body». Christus-Heterotopien in Kunst und Kommerz des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts am Beispiel von Andy Warhol, Joseph Beuys und Conchita Wurst, in: Franziska Metzger/Elke Pahud de Mortanges (ed.), *Orte und Räume des Religiösen im 19.–21. Jahrhundert*, Paderborn 2016, 223–245; Stefan Laube, *Von der Reliquie zum Ding. Heiliger Ort – Wunderkammer – Museum*, Berlin 2011; Morgan, *Rhetoric of the Heart* (see note 4).

devotee and of his relation to other devotees in a community – play a central role as often closely entwined practices. They all are sensual communicative practices, in which the construction and promulgation of codes as shown above is essential.

Seeing and bodies stand in a complex relationship in the enactment of devotional memory, be it linked to paintings, devotional images or monuments. The body of the viewer – David Morgan uses the term *embodied I* – and the icon as embodiment – the *embodied eye* – are both marked by gazes and their entanglement.<sup>19</sup> Although being generated by the viewer, the code of devotional gaze is based on the illusion of reciprocal viewing initiated by Christ's gaze. One could in the case of the Sacred Heart even go further and see the *sacred eye* transposed into the heart as focal object (in the case where it is detached from the figure of Christ) or doubled, producing a triangle of gazes (eyes-heart-eyes).<sup>20</sup> The *eye* becomes the sacred *other* of the *I*, inducing absorption and contemplation with the aspired effect of self-transcendence.<sup>21</sup>

### *Narratives of memory and narrative memory*

Narratives of memory and narrative memory, i.e. the construction of memory through narratives consisting of layers of discourses can be considered as a third mode of the relationship of religion and memory.<sup>22</sup> Agencies of narratives of memory include historiography, history teaching, literature, film and art, monuments, sites in nature, staging of the past in festivities, and the media. Central discourses forming the meaning of the Sacred Heart such as the discourse of sacrifice and atonement, of love (and the eternity of this love), sympathy, and mercifulness linked to moral discourses, their transmission and their mediation were not least narratively produced, i.e. created narrative memory. We therefore can speak of a narrative stabiliser of Sacred Heart memory through references to the bible, through texts (including encyclicals) established by those propagating the devotion, through pastoral and didactic narratives as well as through spiritual texts as expressions of individual devotional experience. All of these are practices of narrative memory. In

<sup>19</sup> David Morgan, *The Embodied Eye. Religious Visual Culture and the Social Life of Feeling*, Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, analyzing especially the passion imagery of the medieval and early modern period; id., *Rhetoric of the Heart* (see note 4).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Morgan, *Images at Work. The Material Culture of Enchantment*, Oxford 2018, especially 97; id., *The Embodied Eye* (see note 19), 59, 67–73.

<sup>21</sup> Morgan, *The Embodied Eye* (see note 19), 74.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Metzger, *Devotion* (see note 3). Research on memory has often focused on the complex relation of national and religions narratives. Cf. among others: Heinz-Gerhard Haupt/Dieter Langewiesche (ed.), *Nation und Religion in Europa*, Frankfurt a. M. 2004; Urs Altermatt/Franziska Metzger (ed.), *Religion und Nation. Katholizismus im Europa des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart 2007; Kerstin Armbrorst-Weihs/Stefanie Wiehl (ed.), *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein zwischen religiöser und konfessioneller Toleranz und Identitätsfindung*, Göttingen 2010; Bernd Otto et al. (ed.), *Historiography and Religion*, Berlin 2015.

contrast to paintings of Christ in a biblical environment, as they became not least *en vogue* in the 19th century and can be seen as a variant of orientalist paintings,<sup>23</sup> Sacred Heart images for their part were no narrative staging of memory, as they lacked narrativity. The Heart of Christ became the symbol of the central discourses of memory – especially in images of mass production in the 19th and 20th centuries –, which were fostered by more narrative modes of commemoration (pastoral, didactic) closely linking the moral, aesthetic, emotional and sensual dimension.

*Spaces of memory: reflexions on the functioning of the Sacred Heart as memory*

The communication theoretical perspective focuses on the functioning of codes, discourses and practices of religious memory, on ritual, symbolic and narrative patterns, iconographic strategies and modes of staging – on the «conditions formelles»<sup>24</sup> of memory construction. A number of mechanisms in the dynamics of devotion and memory seem to be especially interesting: the relation between the visible and invisible, between the present and absent, between the past, the future and the eternal, between body and spirituality, between sensual experience and the spiritual dimension, the creation of sacred spaces and objects as well as their transformation.

Based on my previous research on religious memory<sup>25</sup> – starting with historiography, the maybe most atypical variation – a number of mechanisms can be systematised in general and specified with regard to Sacred Heart Devotion:

Detemporalisation is a central mechanism of religious memory and of non-religious memory alike, as research on national memory construction shows. Detemporalisation is created 1) through the construction of continuity from the past to the present and future in semantics, discourses and images, in which retro-projection (especially in narratives) and repetition (especially in rites, ritual objects and images, as has been demonstrated for Sacred Heart iconography in the previous chapters) play a central role. 2) Past, future and «eternity» are bound together by an all-encompassing teleological perspective, which is expression of a providential dimension in religious memory. In the Sacred Heart iconography from the 18th to the 20th century the providential dimension is visually made present both in the lack of historical specificity and reinforced through the im-

<sup>23</sup> For this genre and its apocalyptic narrative with a focus on British painters cf.: Metzger, *Apokalyptische Diskurse* (see note 8); Alison Smith, *The Sublime in Crisis: Landscape Painting after Turner*, in: Nigel Llewellyn/Christine Riding (ed.), *The Art of the Sublime*, Tate Research Publication, January 2013, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/the-sublime/alison-smith-the-sublime-in-crisis-landscape-painting-after-turner-r1109220>.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Michel Foucault, *L'Archéologie du savoir*, Paris 1969.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Franziska Metzger, *Religion, Geschichte, Nation. Katholische Geschichtsschreibung in der Schweiz im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert – kommunikationstheoretische Perspektiven*, Stuttgart 2010; id., *Devotion and Memory*.

portant mechanism of repetition and seriality as central mechanisms of memory, foreshadowing future eternity. 3) Different times are synchronised (different past times as well as past, present and future) creating simultaneity of the not simultaneous (in narratives, paintings, ritual practices). In the case of Sacred Heart devotion simultaneity regards the devotee and the eternal figure of Christ as well as an implied communion with a past and present community of believers.

The creation of presence, both temporally and spatially, or in Hans-Georg Soeffner's words ‹appresentation›<sup>26</sup> is a second important mechanism of religious memory, which immediately manifests itself in paintings and monuments, but also in rites, places and spaces, as well as in (historiographic) narratives. In general, it relies on mechanisms of repetition, ritualisation, and personalisation. As shown before, visual mechanisms of making Christ present create immediacy of the transcendent. We could speak of a *mise en scène* of the transcendent not least with material means. In devotional images of the Sacred Heart presence is enacted through the intersecting gazes and the fluctuation and dynamism of embodiment and disembodiment, making the unseen visible in the seemingly interactive relation of the practice of religious memory creating revelation.<sup>27</sup>

This fluctuation is fundamentally due to the visualisation of the invisible, which can not be underestimated as mechanism of religious memory. It fixes the absent past as well as the eternal and transcendent. Visualisation of the invisible is of great importance in many devotions and their respective iconography.

All three mechanisms are effective in images, religious practices and narratives – although in the latter in an abstract way because of the linear and therefore always ‹temporal› structure of narratives. Through the synchronic immediacy that images and religious rites create, ‹appresentation› and visualisation of the not present and visually not known radically different ‹other› are particularly effective. Two variations of Sacred Heart images function in this mode, even reinforcing each other if combined: The icon as focal object stands in the place of the absent ‹object›, of Christ who cannot be present.<sup>28</sup> In the iconographic variation where Christ appears, embodiment makes present the transcendent absolute ‹other›, the ultimately unimaginable that cannot be visualised. Everything that makes Christ different from ordinary humans – his gaze, his gesture, and pivotally the heart – stages transcendence. Presence enacts sacrality and eternity. This is even more the case as Sacred Heart imagery desists from narrative settings and spaces. Space plays an important role, though.

<sup>26</sup> Hans-Georg Soeffner, Protosoziologische Überlegungen zur Soziologie des Symbols und des Rituals, in: Rudolf Schlögl et al. (ed.), *Die Wirklichkeit der Symbole. Grundlagen der Kommunikation in historischen und gegenwärtigen Gesellschaften*, Konstanz 2004, 41–72; id., *Zur Soziologie des Symbols und des Rituals*, Weilerswist 2010. Cf. Hansl Belting, *Bild-Anthropologie. Entwürfe für eine Bildwissenschaft*, München 2001.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Morgan, *Images at Work* (see note 20).

<sup>28</sup> Cf. on this interpretation: Morgan, *Images at Work* (see note 20).

A fourth mechanism regards the dimension of space, particularly the creation of sacred spaces through memory. (Ritual) objects, images, human bodies, bodies of Saints or of Christ, shaped spaces and ‹natural› spaces, paths of pilgrimage, processions in the public sphere, but in a more abstract sense also narrative spaces are turned into sacralised spaces through the dimension of memory. Sacred spaces can be conceptualised as ‹heterotopia› in Foucault’s conception, as real, but utterly different spaces, as «contestation à la fois mythique et réelle de l’espace où nous vivons»,<sup>29</sup> inasmuch as they link immanence to transcendence, the past, present and future, creating eternity through memory.<sup>30</sup> The space of the image itself (*Bildraum*) and the spatial dimension of the heart – and Christ’s body – as the essence of sacrality are heterotopic spaces as they transcend immanence within the immanent, fostered by ritual practices. Tattoos too – if only for the respective individual – transform the body into a heterotopia, a longed-for reality. Let me shortly look once more at the examples of modern and contemporary art. In Dalí’s and Hirst’s works of art heterotopia is exposed as created and manipulated by humans.

All mechanisms of memory are fostered more pronouncedly in Sacred Heart devotion than in other devotions through repetition and seriality – for which the two pictures in the introduction to this article are paradigmatic examples – and thus through memorial reproduction conveying stability to the icon with long continuities – including variation in the visual and the narrative expressions – and, as long as they are reproduced and mediated on the discursive level, also in their meaning.

#### *Memory of the Sacred Heart. Iconographic and Ritual Variations*

Against the background of a threefold understanding of the entangled relationship between religion and memory, the focus of this article lies on the iconographic and ritual variations of the Sacred Heart. A long-term perspective on continuities is linked to a perspective on discontinuities and ruptures of codes, which are analysed not least with regard to works of modern art. An in-depth perspective on the functioning of the Sacred Heart as memory is presented as theme for further research. A number of mechanisms, such as «de-temporalization», «externalization» and «appresentation», are delineated especially through visualization of the invisible and the relation of seeing and showing as well as the creation of sacred spaces (objects, body, the Heart of Jesus) as heterotopia.

Modes of religious memory – Sacred Heart devotion – iconography and ritual – detemporalisation and eternalization – visualisation of the invisible – heterotopia.

<sup>29</sup> Michel Foucault, *Des espaces autres*, 1967/1984, in: id., *Dits et écrits*, vol. 4, Paris 1994, 752–762, 756.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Dimiter Daphinoff, *Sakraler Raum, Erinnerungsraum und das Ringen um Deutungshoheit*. T.S. Elios Murder in the Cathedral und G.B. Shaws Saint Joan, in: Metzger/Pahud de Mortanges (ed.), *Orte und Räume des Religiösen*, 121–132; in the same volume: Jürgen Mohn, *Inszenierte Sinnsysteme – Gärten als Heterotopien in der europäischen Religionsgeschichte*, 55–87; Joachim Valentin, *Spiegel, Reisen, Klänge*. Jim Jarmuschs Filme eröffnen Räume jenseits der Alltagsrealität, 133–146; Metzger, *Apokalyptische Diskurse* (see note 8); Pahud de Mortanges, «Be a somebody with a body» (see note 18).

*Herz-Jesu Gedächtnis. Ikonographische und rituelle Variationen*

Vor dem Hintergrund einer dreifachen Verhältnisbestimmung von Religion und Gedächtnis legt der Beitrag den Fokus auf ikonographische und rituelle Variationen der Herz-Jesu Frömmigkeit. Eine Langzeitperspektive auf Kontinuitäten wird mit einer solchen auf Diskontinuitäten und Brüche von Codes gelegt, welche nicht zuletzt mit Blick auf moderne Kunst untersucht werden. Eine Tiefenperspektive auf das Funktionieren des Herzens Jesu als Gedächtnis wird als für die Forschung weiterführend präsentiert. Verschiedene Mechanismen werden ausgeführt wie Entzeitlichung und Eternisierung, «Appräsentation», besonders durch Visualisierung des Unsichtbaren und das Verhältnis von Sehen und Zeigen sowie die Schaffung von sakralen/sakralisierten Räumen (Objekten, Körpern, dem Herzen Jesu) als Heterotopien.

Modi religiösen Gedächtnisses – Herz-Jesu-Frömmigkeit – Ikonographie und Ritual – Entzeitlichung und Eternisierung – Visualisierung des Unsichtbaren – Heterotopien.

*Mémoire du Sacré-Cœur. Variations iconographiques et rituelles*

Dans le contexte d'une triple compréhension de la relation entre religion et mémoire et de leur enchevêtrement, le présent article se concentre sur les variations iconographiques et rituelles du Sacré-Cœur. Une perspective de longue durée sur les continuités est liée à une perspective sur les discontinuités et les ruptures de codes, qui sont analysées notamment au regard des œuvres d'art moderne. Une perspective approfondie sur le fonctionnement du Sacré-Cœur en tant que mémoire est présentée comme bénéficiaire pour les recherches futures. Un certain nombre de mécanismes sont décrits tels que la détemporalisation et l'éternisation, «l'apprésentation», notamment par la visualisation de l'invisible et la relation de voir et de montrer ainsi que la création d'espaces sacrés (objets, corps, Cœur de Jésus) comme hétérotopies.

Modes de mémoire religieuse – dévotion du Sacré-Cœur – iconographie et rituel – détemporalisation et éternisation – visualisation de l'invisible – hétérotopie.

*La memoria del Sacro Cuore. Variazioni iconografiche e rituali*

Sullo sfondo di una comprensione tripla della relazione di religione e memoria e loro intreccio, l'articolo si concentra sulle variazioni iconografiche e rituali del Sacro Cuore. Una prospettiva a lungo termine sulle continuità viene collegata a una sulle discontinuità e le rotture di codici, che sono analizzati attraverso uno sguardo alle opere d'arte moderna. Una prospettiva approfondita sul funzionamento del Cuore di Gesù come memoria viene presentata come proficuo per ulteriori ricerche. Un certo numero di meccanismi sono delineati come la detemporalizzazione e l'eternalizzazione, «appresentazione», specialmente attraverso la visualizzazione dell'invisibile e la relazione tra vedere e mostrare, come anche la creazione della spazio sacro (oggetti, corpi, il Cuore di Gesù) come eterotopia.

Modi di memoria religiosa – devozione del Sacro Cuore – iconografia e rituale – detemporalizzazione e eternalizzazione – visualizzazione dell'invisibile – spazi sacri quali eterotopia.

*Franziska Metzger*, Prof. Dr. phil, Professorin für Geschichte an der Pädagogischen Hochschule Luzern, Chefredakteurin der *Schweizerischen Zeitschrift für Religions- und Kulturgeschichte*.