

VISUAL GODS: FROM EXORCISM TO COMPLEXITY IN RENAISSANCE STUDIES*

KOCKU VON STUCKRAD

The pagan divinities are a hardy breed
(Joscelyn Godwin)

1. *The Problem of “Renaissance Paganism”*

Academic research into the cultural changes that took place in Europe between 1400 and 1650 is notoriously fraught with terminological difficulties. With regard to the place of paganism and polytheism in Western culture, three questions in particular stand in the foreground. Most generally, is it adequate to isolate a period as “Renaissance” or “early modernity” and what is gained by doing so? Is the period called “Renaissance” characterized by a *continuity* of pagan and polytheistic elements or do we have to address the presence of pagan semantics as *reception*, *revival*, or, rather, *invention*? And finally, in terms of concepts of “religion”, is the presence of pagan deities in public spheres an expression of “lived religion” or of a Renaissance “dream” of a pagan past that is syncretistically built into Christian “religion”?

Although Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374) already spoke of the ‘dark ages’ (*tenebrae*), caused by the invasion of Rome, ‘the civilized world’, by the ‘Nordic barbarians’, his contrast does not signify a contrast between the pre-Christian and Christian worlds. The idea of *rinascita* (the Italian precursor of the Renaissance concept) was first expressed by Giorgio Vasari (1511-1574) but still restricted to the context of art history. *Rinascita* did not become an historical concept in Italy but in France, there known as *Renaissance*, through Voltaire (1694-1778) and other Enlightenment writers. The cultural

* The theses of this article were first presented at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Antonio, in November 2004. I thank Steven M. Wasserstrom as respondent, the panelists, and the audience for a fruitful and stimulating discussion that helped me considerably in reconsidering my argument. I am also grateful to Peter J. Bräunlein, Wouter J. Hanegraaff, Hans G. Kippenberg, and Michael Stausberg for their comments on earlier versions of this article.

circumstances of the nineteenth century first produced the concept of the Renaissance as a prominent and unique cultural age of preparation for “modernity”. This occurred between 1820 and 1830, before Jules Michelet’s great study *La Renaissance* (2nd ed. 1857) and Jacob Burckhardt’s classic *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien* (1860) finally established its usage. These concepts reflect the notions of the nineteenth century, rather than the actual events in the fifteenth century¹. Therefore, many scholars today discard the notion of “Renaissance” as a useful category²; the alternative term “early modernity”, however, has also been criticized, because it carries a teleological ideology, thus constructing a straight development into “modernity”³.

Art historians in general and the Warburg School in particular played a crucial role in the twentieth-century debate about Renaissance paganism and the question of continuity and reform. Starting with Aby Warburg’s celebrated *Die Erneuerung der heidnischen Antike* (1932)⁴, scholars described the existence of pagan symbolism in Renaissance art and culture as a conscious reception of ancient paganism. Subsequently, Erwin Panofsky introduced a differentiation between “Renaissances”—i.e. the “rebirths” of the gods in the eleventh and twelfth centuries—and the full-blown “Renaissance” of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. According to Panofsky, what we witness here is a ‘principle of disjunction’ that led to a ‘perspective distancing’ from ancient culture in the ‘real’ Renaissance⁵. In Panofsky’s words:

The “distance” created by the Renaissance deprived antiquity of its realness. The classical world ceased to be both a possession and a menace. It became instead the object of a passionate nostalgia . . . The Renaissance came to realize that Pan was dead . . . The classical past was looked upon, for the first time, as a totality cut off from the present; and, therefore, as an ideal to be longed for

¹ A critical analysis of notions of “Renaissance”, “Early Modernity”, and others is provided by Herzog & Koselleck, *Epochenschwelle und Epochenbewußtsein* (see particularly Stierle, ‘Renaissance’); on Michelet, Burckhardt, and Huizinga see also Tollebeek, ‘“Renaissance” and “Fossilization”’.

² To be sure, the critical assessment of ideological biases of “Renaissance” is by no means new, as Ferguson’s influential study on *The Renaissance in Historical Thought* (1948) shows. But for today, Grendler, ‘The Italian Renaissance’, 15-17, even speaks of a ‘Renaissance bashing’; on the construction and meaning of “Renaissance” see also Gombrich, ‘The Renaissance’. Even art historians are critical about the usefulness of the category “Renaissance”, for instance Warnke, *Geschichte der deutschen Kunst*.

³ Grendler, ‘The Italian Renaissance’, 17-18; on the concept of “Early Modernity” see also Dürr et al., *Eigene und fremde Frühe Neuzeiten*.

⁴ See Warburg, *Renewal of Pagan Antiquity*.

⁵ Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renaissances in Western Art*, 84-85 and 108. On a critique of Panofsky’s concepts, see Hoffmann, ‘Panofsky’s Renaissance’.

instead of a reality to be both utilized and feared. The Middle Ages had left antiquity unburied and alternately galvanized and exorcised its corpse. The Renaissance stood weeping at its grave and tried to resurrect its soul⁶.

The French Romanist Jean Seznec had already in 1940 argued somewhat differently, questioning the notion of a “break with antiquity” in Renaissance culture. For Seznec, there was no “rebirth of the gods”, while the significant change took place as late as in the sixteenth century:

From being objects of love, the gods are transformed into a subject of study . . . Increasingly erudite and diminishingly alive, less and less felt but more and more intellectualized—such, from now on, it seems, is to be the inescapable evolution of mythology⁷.

Categories of “Paganism”—or, rather, “Heathendom”—had been prominent in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century descriptions of Renaissance culture, from Friedrich Schlegel to Jacob Burckhardt to Friedrich Nietzsche. They reflect the dissociation of Christianity and modern culture and can be seen as a projection of contemporary identities onto an imagined past⁸. Twentieth-century analyses are no exception to this. Severe battles were fought between representatives of the Warburg School, such as Edgar Wind, who interpreted Renaissance art as a Neoplatonic charging of ancient paganism, and critics such as Horst Bredekamp and Jörg Traeger who hurled fundamental attacks against this “arcanization” of art history⁹. No matter how modern scholars decide to position themselves in this ongoing debate, it is apparent that the very notions of “Renaissance” and “paganism” are a powerful projection screen for historical imagination.

For the problem that concerns us here, special mention has to be made of E.H. Gombrich. In a revised version of his famous essay ‘*Icones Symbolicae: Philosophies of Symbolism and their Bearing on Art*’¹⁰, Gombrich critically assesses the way historians of art analyze the function of symbolic representation in Renaissance art. ‘One thing is clear’, Gombrich says:

⁶ Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, 112–113.

⁷ Seznec, *The Survival of the Pagan Gods*, 321. The original French study was published in the *Studies of the Warburg Institute* in 1940 under the title ‘La Survivance des dieux antiques’; note the shift from ‘dieux antiques’ to ‘Pagan gods’ in the translation.

⁸ See Stausberg, ‘Die Renaissance des Paganen’, 3–6.

⁹ Wind’s classic study is *Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance*; cf. Bredekamp, *Edgar Wind*, and Idem, ‘Götterdämmerung des Neoplatonismus’. Traeger, *Renaissance und Religion*, 23–24, even notes: ‘Mit der Wiederkehr des antiken Geistes wurde so zugleich das Geheimnis seiner unsichtbaren Wirkungsweise beschworen. Die Kunstgeschichte war damit ihrerseits unterwegs zu einer Arkanwissenschaft, welche die Bilder gleichermaßen enträtselte und entmündigte’.

¹⁰ Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, 123–195.

We cannot tackle this kind of question at all unless we are ready to abandon the assumptions about the functions of the image we usually take for granted. We are used to making a clear distinction between two of these functions—that of representation and that of symbolization . . . As soon, however, as we leave the ground of rational analysis we find that these neat distinctions no longer hold. We know that in magical practice the image not only represents an enemy but may take his place . . . We know that the “fetish” not only “symbolizes” fertility but “has” it. In short, our attitude towards the image is inextricably bound up with our whole idea about the universe¹¹.

Both “representation” and “symbolization” can be interpreted as academic strategies of “distancing” the presumed inherent power of images. Gombrich does not carry his analysis that far. But he raises the crucial point: ‘To the modern critic, in other words, the problem of personifications and indeed of all symbolism in art is an aesthetic rather than an ontological problem’¹². After tackling the Aristotelian and the Platonic doctrines of images, including the ‘non-discursive way’ which is superior for accessing higher truths, he uses the opinion of Renaissance Platonists for his own interpretation of Renaissance art—the idea that images have an inherent power if they preserve the proportions and rules of the Divine Intellect¹³. Botticelli’s *Birth of Venus*, for instance, renders the impression that

all these influences unite in it as rays in a burning-glass. Whatever the actual “programme” was that underlies this commission we know that it is the result of passionate efforts to re-evoke the “true” image of the goddess of love such as it had been created by the ancients¹⁴.

In coming to terms with the inherent “power” of images, Gombrich makes use of psychological—mainly Freudian—terminology. ‘In the dark recesses of our mind we all believe in image magic’¹⁵. He talks of the ‘dreamlike reactions to the image which always lurk on the fringe of our consciousness’¹⁶. But is the category of “dream” an appropriate analytical tool? Fritz Saxl had already in 1939 introduced the interpretational model of “dream” but questioned its usefulness¹⁷. These cautionary remarks notwithstanding,

¹¹ Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, 124-125.

¹² Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, 126.

¹³ Of particular importance here is Ficino; see Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, 172-175.

¹⁴ Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, 174-175.

¹⁵ Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, 179.

¹⁶ Gombrich, *Symbolic Images*, 175.

¹⁷ ‘Their creations are descriptions of dreams, but who would say that they are *only* dreams? From the end of antiquity down to the 15th century these pagan ideas had never entered the mind of the dreamer in such a way as to be represented in art’ (Saxl, ‘Pagan Sacrifice’, 363).

many interpreters of Renaissance art in general and of the role of “pagan” divinities in public spheres in particular still cling to the image of “dream-like states” as an element of their interpretation. The most recent example of such an approach is a study by Joscelyn Godwin on *The Pagan Dream of the Renaissance*. Godwin introduces his book as a study

about a state of mind and soul that arose in fifteenth-century Italy, spread through Europe along certain clearly-defined fault-lines, and persisted for about two hundred years, during which, although no one believed in the gods, many people acted as though they existed¹⁸.

It is a book about ‘cultivators of pagan fantasies’¹⁹ who are ‘touched by the pagan spirit’²⁰. In a review of Godwin’s intriguing book I argued that its underlying rationale is a religionist approach to religion that—artificially—differentiates between “real religion”, i.e. religion that people “believe in”, and some sort of mental state that is vaguely described as “fantasy” or “dream”²¹. Besides the fact that analytical categories such as “dream” or “fantasy” are too vague and too close to unverifiable concepts of “inner states of mind”²², the main problem of these interpretations lies in a discourse of *singularization* that rhetorically differentiates *the* religion from alternative religious options, ultimately leading to a discourse of “true” versus “false” religion²³.

In this article, I want to approach the problem of Renaissance polytheism and “paganism” from a different point of view. Under the headline of *material* and *visual culture*, cultural studies have recently broken grounds for a new understanding of religious dynamics in public spheres. Instead of harking back to religionist concepts of religion as “belief”, the visual, material, and public aspects of religion are moved to the center of scrutiny. I will first make reference to major contributions to medieval and early modern visual culture. Subsequently, I will apply these to examples of Renaissance pagan discourse. My goal in doing so is very modest, and mainly methodological:

¹⁸ Godwin, *Pagan Dream*, 1. Neither Saxl nor Gombrich are mentioned in Godwin’s book.

¹⁹ Godwin, *Pagan Dream*, 11.

²⁰ Godwin, *Pagan Dream*, 13.

²¹ Von Stuckrad, ‘Review Godwin’.

²² Consequently, they are no analytical categories in the strict sense. On this problematic see von Stuckrad, ‘Discursive Study of Religion’; on Godwin’s dependence on Jungian archetypal theory, see von Stuckrad, ‘Review Godwin’.

²³ On the concepts of “singularization” see Gladigow, ‘Meaning/Signification’; Smith, ‘Religion, Religions, Religious’.

I do not claim a new interpretational “paradigm” in order to establish something like a “pagan religion” in Renaissance Europe; instead, I want to introduce visual and material aspects into the study of Western esotericism and reflect on the underlying discourses of inclusion and exclusion that so often have characterized academic study of religion. By questioning the scholarly focus on belief and text, new aspects of a *pagan discourse* will surface that reveal the complexity of polytheism and paganism in Europe between the twelfth and the seventeenth centuries.

This pagan discourse also sheds new light on the complexities of an *esoteric discourse*. The persistence of pagan divinities in Renaissance culture—from Pletho’s exclusive polytheism to the scholarly revaluation of Hermes Trismegistus—is an expression of religious conflicts that ultimately fostered a pluralization of identities. If we want to scrutinize these processes, we will have to broaden our understanding of “esotericism”. I argued elsewhere that typological approaches to Western esotericism—notably Antoine Faivre’s influential list of characteristics—are of only limited use when it comes to questions of interreligious dynamics and processes of exchange between various cultural domains, such as religion, science, art, politics, philosophy, or law²⁴. An *esoteric field of discourse* crystallizes around claims of higher knowledge and ways of accessing such knowledge²⁵, thus transgressing the boundaries of religious traditions and cultural domains. It is precisely the—often rhetorical—negotiation of identities and the competition between various forms of knowledge that is at stake here. From a Foucauldian point of view²⁶, discourses are not the ideas that stand behind these negotiations, but the instruments of power and the strategies of inclusion and exclusion, which “materialize” in public spheres and societal organizations²⁷.

2. *Visual Culture*

Referring to the images of demons that were part of Romanic church portals and capitals, Bernard of Clairvaux (1091–1153) once wrote to the abbot

²⁴ See especially von Stuckrad, ‘Western Esotericism’; and, more general, idem, *Western Esotericism*, ch. 1.

²⁵ As ways of attaining higher knowledge, “mediation” and “individual experience” are of paramount importance.

²⁶ See particularly Foucault, *L’ordre du discours*.

²⁷ With regard to visual culture, we can adopt Linda Simonis’s notion of *Verdichtung von Kommunikationszusammenhängen* in literature and art (Simonis, *Die Kunst des Geheimen*, 27); cf. my review of her book in the present issue of *Aries*.

William: ‘The multitude of these diverse forms is so rich and strange that it seems more pleasant to read in the marble stones than in books, and to spend the day with admiration of these details rather than with reflection about God’s commandment’²⁸. In a nutshell Bernard’s comment summarizes a major characteristic of Western culture from late antiquity to the present—a severe critique of images and their inherent seductive power, on the one hand, and an obsessive fascination with images, on the other. The skeptical attitude vis-à-vis images has often bordered on the phobic and led to iconoclastic action, even more so because this attitude was linked to accusations of idolatry and heresy²⁹.

Another important aspect of this discourse is the Western opinion that language and writing are the main achievements of civilization and the necessary precondition of “history”³⁰. As Peter J. Bräunlein notes:

Der Umgang mit Bildern wird der Sphäre des A-Logischen, des Irrationalen, des Magischen zugeordnet, Schreiben und Lesen der Sphäre des Rationalen. Das Bild verwirrt die Sinne, die Sprache ordnet Wirklichkeit und trennt Schein von Sein. Die Angst erregende Fantasie von einer Welt, die gänzlich von Bildern beherrscht ist, ist also keineswegs ein postmodernes Phänomen³¹.

This ambivalent attitude towards the power of images has had tremendous impact on how historians of art and religion approached their objects. Whereas many art historians have held that an image must be “read like a text”, as an “illustration” of something that might also be expressed in words³², scholars of religion have focused mainly on philological approaches

²⁸ *Apologia ad Guillelmum Sancti Theoderici abbatem* XII, in: *Patrologia latina* 182, 893-913; see Mertin, ‘Ikonoklasmus’, and Bräunlein, ‘Bildakte’, 202. Cf. the contextualization in Rudolph, *Things of Greater Importance*.

²⁹ See Besançon, *The Forbidden Image*; Bryer & Herrin, *Iconoclasm*; Engelbart, ‘Image/Iconoclasm’.

³⁰ This attitude has been criticized by anthropologists in particular, because it is part of a colonial and ‘normalizing discourse’ that intends ‘to fix the Other in a timeless present’ (Pratt, ‘Scratches on the Face of the Country’, 139). See also Fabian, *Time and the Other*, 1-35; von Stuckrad, *Schamanismus und Esoterik*, 110-112.

³¹ Bräunlein, ‘Bildakte’, 202.

³² See Gombrich’s analyses, discussed above. For an anthropological approach, see Kohl, *Die Macht der Dinge*. Not surprisingly, the new tendency to move the *materiality* of culture from the margins into the center of scrutiny is paralleled by developments in contemporary art: in the 1960s and 1970s the key terms in art were “concept” and “materiality”; see Schneede, *Die Geschichte der Kunst im 20. Jahrhundert*, 215-235 (‘Der Ausstieg aus dem Bild: Material und Konzept’). The large field of *material culture* is made accessible in Buchli, *Material Culture*.

to religion, regarding images merely as phenomena that fostered the “readability” of religion³³. I think Charles Zika is right in pointing out that with the help of these scholarly models of interpretation Europe exorcised her demons to the margins of power, subsequently applying strategies to secure their distance³⁴. Liza Bakewell even talks of an ‘academic iconoclasm’: ‘images were kept to a minimum in scholarly publications, including ethnographies, because they were considered superficial and interfered with good (verbal) scholarship’³⁵.

At the same time, the ancient and medieval conceptualization of the power of images survived. Despite an ongoing critique (beginning with Xenophanes and Heraclitus) ‘bleibt das Muster “Präsenz der Bilder, Präsenz der Götter” Element einer longue durée in der Religionsgeschichte, gegen das sich jeweils ikonoklastische Appelle erst durchsetzen mußten’³⁶. The swaying between fascination with and exorcism of images has been even more fundamental because it was inseparably bound to the question of idolatry³⁷.

New Approaches to the Visual

That cultural studies during the last two decades increasingly turned their attention to the visual doubtlessly has to do with the emergence of new media, a presumed “loss of literacy”, and developments in twentieth-century art. A cornucopia of new studies addresses the *pictorial turn*, and a few scholars even talk of a shift of paradigm that has taken place in the various disciplines collaborating under the rubric of cultural studies. Exemplary is W.J.T. Mitchell who defines the ‘pictorial turn’ as ‘a postlinguistic, postsemiotic

³³ For both of these approaches the interpretation of Colonna’s *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* is a telling example, and Godwin (*Pagan Dream*, 21-37) is correct in pointing at the difficulties of analyzing its splendid design only as a masterpiece of art and printing or as mere illustration; see also Wilson, ‘Oneiriconographia’.

³⁴ ‘We exorcise them [the demons] to the geographical, cultural and chronological margins—to the underdeveloped, the poor, the disadvantaged, the colonized; to the primitive, the savage, the uncivilised; to the medieval imaginary of magic and mysticism and dark age barbarism’ (Zika, *Exorcising Our Demons*, 4).

³⁵ Bakewell, ‘Image Acts’, 26.

³⁶ Gladigow, ‘Von der “Lesbarkeit” der Religion’, 118. He adds: ‘Kernproblem der systematischen Differenzierung von Bildlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit bleibt—über religionshistorische Epochen und Religionstypen hinweg—der Divinationsaspekt: Ist das Bild ein Epiphanie-Modus des Gottes, trägt die Schrift eine Offenbarung?’. See also Gladigow, ‘Präsenz der Bilder—Präsenz der Götter’.

³⁷ Kamerick, *Popular Piety*; see also note 29 above.

rediscovery of the picture as a complex interplay between visibility, apparatus, institutions, discourse, bodies, and figurality³⁸. The difference between these approaches and the concepts of art historians, mainly of the Warburg School, is, first, that the image is no longer seen as a mere “representation” of an “idea” but as an element of discourse that is to be studied on its own terms³⁹; ‘the presented image is, at least in part, its own referent’⁴⁰. Second, focusing on the *materiality* and public *use* of images, a new interpretational framework is needed that transcends earlier concepts of art historians⁴¹. This does not mean that scholars have reached a consensus about the appropriate analytical instruments. In fact, as Hans Belting notes: ‘Eine allgemeine Theorie der Bildmedien steht . . . noch aus’⁴².

Instead of giving a general overview of these new approaches, I want to highlight three contributions that seem particularly important for our understanding of the role of the visual in medieval and early modern culture⁴³. The first one is the pictorial theory of Hans Belting that breaks new ground for future research. In contrast to other approaches to Renaissance visual culture, which still refer to the visual as representation⁴⁴, Belting goes a step further and construes a “pictorial anthropology” (*Bild-Anthropologie*) that

³⁸ Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 16. From the perspective of religious studies, a very good assessment of the state of the art is Bräunlein, ‘Bildakte’; see also Bräunlein, ‘“Zurück zu den Sachen”’. As examples of the new scholarly interest in the visual see Mitchell, *Iconology*; Jenks, *Visual Culture*; Walker, *Visual Culture*; Heywood & Sandywell, *Interpreting Visual Culture*; Gladigow, ‘Von der “Lesbarkeit” der Religion’; Knieper & Müller, *Kommunikation visuell*; Mirzoeff, *Introduction to Visual Culture*; Barnard, *Approaches*; Belting, *Bild-Anthropologie*; Sturken & Cartwright, *Practices of Looking*; Faßler, *Bildlichkeit*; Howells, *Visual Culture*. Cf. also Schanze, *Handbuch*; Klimkeit, *Götterbild*. Of particular importance are the publications that emerge from the very fruitful interdisciplinary research center at the University of Münster, Germany. Of the new series *KultBild. Visualität und Religion in der Vormoderne*, I want to highlight Ganz & Lentjes, *Ästhetik des Unsichtbaren*, and Ganz & Henkel, *Rahmen-Diskurse*.

³⁹ Gombrich’s analyses stand somehow on the interface between these approaches and the *visual culture* concepts. While he rightly criticizes the artificial rationalizations of art historians, he does not take the next step that systematically asks for the practice of looking and the acts of displaying artifacts in the public sphere.

⁴⁰ Bakewell, ‘Image Acts’, 22.

⁴¹ For these developments in twentieth-century art, see Schneede, *Die Geschichte der Kunst im 20. Jahrhundert*.

⁴² Belting, ‘Medium-Bild-Körper’, 14; see also Boehm, ‘Bilderfrage’, 326: ‘Vergeblich fahnden wir nach einer entwickelten “Bildtheorie” oder “Bildwissenschaft” und die kunsthistorische Ikonologie, die das gesuchte Programm einer “bildlichen Logik” scheinbar im Namen führt, baut doch primär auf sprachliche Referenzen des Bildes und kaum auf seine visuelle Präsenz’.

⁴³ See Bräunlein, ‘Bildakte’, 207–216; Bräunlein, ‘Religionsgeschichte als Mediengeschichte’.

⁴⁴ See, for instance, Farago, *Reframing the Renaissance*, and Erickson & Hulse, *Early Modern Visual Culture*.

integrates the three elements of *medium*, *image*, and *body*. In so doing, the materiality of the picture and image is not separated from its message, quite the contrary:

Das Medium ist gerade dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß es als Form (Vermittlung) des Bildes beides umfaßt, was man in Kunstwerken und ästhetischen Objekten von einander trennt. Der beliebte Diskurs von Form und Materie, in dem sich die alte Rede von Geist und Materie fortsetzt, läßt sich nicht auf das Trägermedium des Bildes anwenden. Man kann ein Bild nicht auf die Form reduzieren, die ein Medium empfängt, wenn es ein Bild trägt: ebenso wenig gilt für das Verhältnis von Bild und Medium der Unterschied von Idee und Ausführung. In diesem Verhältnis liegt eine Dynamik, die mit den herkömmlichen Argumenten der Bilderfrage nicht erfasst wird⁴⁵.

The dynamic can only be appreciated if the sensual and bodily aspect is taken into consideration. As Belting notes, the semiotic theory as

Abstraktionsleistung der Moderne trennte die Welt der Zeichen von der Welt der Körper in dem Sinne, daß Zeichen in sozialen Systemen zu Hause sind und auf Vereinbarung fußen. Sie wenden sich an eine kognitive statt an eine sinnliche, körperbezogene Wahrnehmung: selbst Bilder reduzierten sich dabei zu ikonischen Zeichen⁴⁶.

Belting's approach can be combined with what Liza Bakewell calls *image acts*⁴⁷, i.e. an application of Austin's theory of speech acts to the field of pictorial communication. Now we no longer ask, 'How to do things with words' (Austin), but 'How to do things with images' and 'What to do with pictures'. Bakewell understands images to mean human-made images, 'from body gestures to "great works of art" and everything in between'⁴⁸. Hence, it is not only the materiality that is at stake here, but the *visual act of communication* that images involve.

A third important contribution to the theorizing of visual culture comes from Thomas Lentjes. His research is crucial here because Lentjes conceptu-

⁴⁵ Belting, 'Medium-Bild-Körper', 13. On the development of Belting's theory see Belting, *Bild und Kult* (particularly pp. 11-19 on 'Die Macht der Bilder und die Ohnmacht der Theologen'), and, most recently, Belting, *Das echte Bild*.

⁴⁶ Belting, 'Medium-Bild-Körper', 14. Cf. also the theoretical considerations in Lanwerd, *Religionsästhetik*.

⁴⁷ Similar to Belting, Liza Bakewell notes that the study of image acts begins 'not with texts or objects . . . but with the human body' (Bakewell, 'Image Acts', 27-28).

⁴⁸ Bakewell, 'Image Acts', 22. Reference could be made to Jan Assmann, as well, who developed the idea of "iconic action" and showed its applicability for understanding pictorial communication in ancient Egypt; see Assmann, 'Macht der Bilder'. Cf. also the notion of "Bildakte" by Bräunlein, 'Bildakte'.

alizes the role of the visual in medieval and early modern discourse⁴⁹. To understand the *image acts* of that time, it is necessary to take concepts of medieval anthropology and aesthetic theory into account⁵⁰. Well into the sixteenth century, when the Reformation⁵¹ started to challenge these assumptions about the visual, outer images were often regarded as being closely linked to the inner visions of human beings. The interior of the human being was a projection surface for good and evil images, subsequently transforming him- or herself into these images. The ideal case, of course, was the *imago Dei*, the transformation of the inner person into Christ. With reference to Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola's *De Imaginatione Lentes* makes clear that *imago*, *imaginatio*, and *imitatio* were closely related in a medieval culture of seeing⁵². Tentatively he argues:

Letztlich wäre zu prüfen, ob die *imago Dei*-Lehre nicht den grundlegenden Schlüssel darstellt, um zu erklären, wieso die Imaginationstheorien weit über theologische Bestimmungen hinaus auf den imaginären Apparat ganzer Gesellschaften auszugreifen in der Lage waren: weil der Mensch immer schon Bild war, so sei wenigstens als These formuliert, funktionierte alle menschliche Bildung, Veränderung und Kommunikation über das Sehen und Gesehenwerden⁵³.

With regard to ritual practice, this attitude—which we can describe as a *communicational approach to images*—had a decisive effect on the way pre-Reformation culture handled images and artifacts, from limitations of sight in monasteries and their fashioning as visual spaces, to the development of complex exercises of imagination and the ritualized form of showing relics. The latter is particularly interesting, because the ritual “unveiling” of relics, statues, and other material objects is a crucial element of religious culture

⁴⁹ Lentes, ‘Inneres Auge’; cf. the whole volume, which is an example of the new appreciation of materiality and the body in historiography. See also Mertin, ‘Ikonoklasmus’; Ganz & Lentes, *Ästhetik des Unsichtbaren*.

⁵⁰ As has been done by Gombrich (see above); cf. also Ganz & Lentes, *Die Ästhetik des Unsichtbaren*. The complicated scientific, religious, aesthetic, and philosophical discussions often focus on the concept of imagination; on this, see the overview and literature in van den Doel & Hanegraaff, ‘Imagination’.

⁵¹ As many contributions in Ganz & Henkel, *Rahmen-Diskurse*, demonstrate, the actual discursive processes were much more complex, however. Strategies for legitimizing cultic veneration of images were also applied in Protestant contexts; at the same time, the revival of image cults played a decisive role for Catholic identities in the age of confessionalization.

⁵² Lentes, ‘Inneres Auge’, 193–195.

⁵³ Lentes, ‘Inneres Auge’, 195.

until the Reformation⁵⁴. These rituals were full-blown image acts that aimed at the invocation of an image inside the observer.

Die Konfrontation mit Bildern wurde als elementarer Kommunikationsvorgang—als Tausch der Blicke—verstanden. Nicht nur der Betrachter erfasst das Bild mit seinen Augen, sondern er wird umgekehrt von diesem angeblickt. Das Beten und die Ausrichtung des Blickes—*intentio* . . . waren untrennbar verbunden, und die Erwidern dieses Blickes galt als selbstverständlich. Angestrebt wurde über den Augenkontakt eine physische Verbindung, in der es letztlich um die Übertragung von Kraft ging⁵⁵.

Hence, the practice of looking, displaying, visualizing, and imagination is a sensual action that creates a relationship between the observer and the object of observation.

3. *The Presence of Images as Visual Practice*

The *materiality* of pagan and polytheistic images—and their *uses*—in medieval and Renaissance culture is in my view a superb test case for the dynamic between image, medium, and body. As we have seen, recent contributions to pictorial theory and interpretation bring in a new dimension of analysis: the element of action and public performance. Put differently, the concept of visual culture allows us to interpret Renaissance artifacts and pictures with a framework of analysis that includes the sensual and bodily acts of imaging. Although this article is primarily concerned with methodological considerations, let me briefly elucidate the dimension of visual practice with two examples.

Diana and Actaeon

The ancient myth of the hunter Actaeon, who happened to observe the naked Diana with her Nymphs during their bath and subsequently was transformed into a stag and killed by his own hounds, was a favorite theme for sixteenth-century artists and their patrons. As Godwin tells us, this theme

⁵⁴ See particularly Schnitzler, 'Illusion'; Kühne, 'Ostensio reliquiarum'. Bräunlein, 'Bildakte', 215-216, gives further references, for instance of the pilgrimage to the Nuremberg *Heiltumschau* where since 1424 once a year the holy lance, a nail of Jesus's cross, and other objects were shown to the public. When the audience was not able to view the relic directly, people used mirrors to get contact, a "glance", of the relic.

⁵⁵ Bräunlein, 'Bildakte', 215, with reference to Guy P. Machal and Bob Scribner who relate this concept to medieval optical theories.

afforded the pleasure of painting as many nymphs as one liked, yet with a wholesome and simplistic moral: that for men to look lustfully at women drags them down to the animal level. Thus the joke is on the viewer, who by enjoying the painting is also spying on Diana's bath, and sharing in Actaeon's offense. Is it, however, an offense, or was Actaeon's punishment unjust? Does his painful metamorphosis, like the flaying of Marsyas, have a redeeming, spiritual meaning? Is it esoterically about using sexuality as a path towards the initiatic death of the ego? It all depends on one's point of view⁵⁶.

This is, of course, an apt remark that calms down overextended interpretations and generalizations, which too easily derive fundamental theses from individual contexts. For me here, it is not so much the art historians' interpretation that is at stake but the very effect of these images on the visitors.

We can compare two quite different visualizations of the Diana-Actaeon-Myth in the sixteenth century—the cycle of frescos by Correggio in the Camera di San Paolo in Parma (1518/19), and that by Parmigianino in the Rocca Sanvitale in Fontanellato, which was created in 1523 and 1524⁵⁷. The first of these frescos was painted for the Benedictine abbess Giovanna Piacenza who received in her “camera” nuns and visitors—hence, the images decorated a more or less public Christian room (see ill. 1). As Nova argues, the themes of the fresco purposely strengthen the absolute power of the abbess herself, who is identified with Diana and able to punish and control her nuns⁵⁸. Diana on the chimney (see ill. 2), as well as a Putto carrying Actaeon's head, dogs, and even ram heads, directly *face* the visitor. As visitors,

[w]ir finden alles bezaubernd, aber wir sind auch beunruhigt. . . . Der Betrachter fühlte sich isoliert, eingekreist und bedroht. Die Camera di San Paolo war als eine selbstbewußte manipulative Maschine der Macht geplant. Der Betrachter wird, wenn er nicht aufpaßt, wie Aktäon gejagt, weil Giovanna ihn überwacht und bestraft⁵⁹.

With regard to our guiding question, we can say that we are confronted with an image act that transfers Diana's power to the person of the abbess—a Christian abbess who is carrying the power of a pagan goddess.

Five years later, Parmigianino painted the same myth for a totally different usage (see ill. 3). Although he was inspired by the Camera del Correggio, the interpretation of this image act has to take into account that here the

⁵⁶ Godwin, *Pagan Dream*, 16.

⁵⁷ See Nova, ‘Beobachten und beobachtet werden’.

⁵⁸ Nova, ‘Beobachten und beobachtet werden’, 89.

⁵⁹ Nova, ‘Beobachten und beobachtet werden’, 90.

fresco is created for very private use—maybe as a bath⁶⁰—by Galeazzo Sanvitale who ordered the fresco for his wife Paola Gonzaga. Contrasting the Correggio fresco, Parmigianino created an eroticised and voyeuristic version of the myth, in which the (male) observer can enjoy the beautiful Diana and her nymphs without feelings of guilt. ‘Es handelt sich um ein patriarchalisches Begehren des Anderen’, as Nova points out⁶¹. But this is only part of the message, because the artist worked ambivalent elements into the fresco. Most important is a real *convex mirror* that was built into the central oculus of the room, surrounded by the engraving *RESPICE FINEM* (“Consider your end” or “Consider your death”). Exactly when the observer recognizes his own—distorted—image in the mirror, he understands that he has been transformed into Actaeon because he saw the naked goddess. ‘Man kann also sagen, daß der Spiegel in der Mitte des Gewölbes das Zentrum eines ludi-schen und gleichzeitig selbstdestruktiven Vorgangs war, bei dem Galeazzo erneut die metamorphische Erfahrung Aktäons auf einer visuellen Ebene erlebte’⁶². In this image act, we can conclude, an *experience* is induced that transgresses the boundaries of “mere seeing” or intellectual rationalization.

Magic Gardens

If we consider Gladigow’s notion that the pattern of “presence of images—presence of gods” is a *long durée* in European history of religion, it will be particularly interesting to turn to the statues of pagan divinities that were part of Renaissance public spheres. Furthermore, these statues were crucial elements of Italian “magic gardens”, which rich individuals and clergy-men—interestingly enough, even high cardinals—laid out for their own use. Godwin gives a fascinating overview of these gardens and their particular “sense of wonder” that captures the visitor even today⁶³. The images of pagan divinities are integrated in a carefully constructed garden architecture, with grottos,

⁶⁰ The function as “bathroom” or boudoir is discussed in Nova, ‘Beobachten und beobachtet werden’, 90 (with references). For our purpose, it is enough to assume that the frescos decorated a private, and somehow eroticized, area of the house.

⁶¹ Nova, ‘Beobachten und beobachtet werden’, 91. Heinrich, ‘Der Untergang von Religion’, 85, interprets the Diana-Actaeon-myth as ‘eine Geschlechterspannung einbeziehende Wahrheits-Allegorie’. On the role of eroticism in Renaissance culture see Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*.

⁶² Ibid., 91. See also Nova’s discussion of the role of convex mirrors in changing attitudes toward the capability of images to directly address the observer. Heinrich, ‘Der Untergang von Religion’, talks of a ‘Verwandlungs- und Zerstückungsmächtigkeit der intellektuellen Existenz’—a community with the image that transcends the privacy of humanistic speculation into a kind of ‘Mysteriengemeinschaft’ (p. 86).

⁶³ Godwin, *Pagan Dream*, 153–180.

fountains, and sometimes even technical tricks that made the statues appear as animated.

The garden of Villa d'Este in Tivoli, near Rome, is a telling example. Constructed between 1563 and 1572 under the governor of Tivoli, Cardinal Ippolito II d'Este (1509-1572), with Pirro Ligorio as architect and archaeo-logical advisor, the garden contains huge and complex fountains depicting dragons, heroes, the Diana (Artemis) of Ephesus with water pouring forth from her many breasts, and other installations. No matter how we want to interpret the "message" of this garden—whether we see in it a Hermetic, mystical way to initiation, or a symbol of resurrection, or a Neoplatonic parable⁶⁴—from a visual culture point of view the unity of medium, image, and body created a strong impression of "divine presence"⁶⁵ in the individual visitor (note that the "visitor" is no longer a mere "observer"). That in fact the visitor is part of the whole ensemble can be seen from the fact that he or she is at times even addressed directly. The Sibyl, for instance, a classic image of the *nympha loci*, is a recurrent theme in early modern garden architecture, as here in the Ariadne Fountain of the Villa d'Este (see ill. 4)⁶⁶. She is understood as the guardian of the place, securing its sanctity as long as she is sleeping. Often, the arrangement is accompanied by a warning, addressed to the visitor, as in the Belvedere in Rome: 'I sleep, whilst I hear the murmur of the soft water. Whoever should touch this marble basin, do not interrupt my sleep. Whether you drink or wash, be silent'. Hence, the visitor is not only participating in the scene, he or she has an important role to play in securing the sanctity of the place—a clear example of image act where the visitor is drawn into a ritual practice.

The motif of the sleeping nymph is a popular element not only in Renaissance gardens⁶⁷. An example from the eighteenth century is the private garden of England's famous Enlightenment poet and architect, Alexander

⁶⁴ Cf. Godwin's discussion of the respective interpretations by David Coffin, Emanuela Kretzulesco-Quaranta, and Maria Luisa Madonna (ibid.).

⁶⁵ Here, I refer to Godwin, *Pagan Dream*, 153, who states: 'The Garden Magic is a mood that descends especially on the solitary visitor, a trancelike atmosphere of suspended excitement beyond words or the rational mind. In earlier times, when consciousness was less rigidified, it must have been stronger, leaving no doubt of the presence of Pan and his retinue'. Cf. my critical remarks in von Stuckrad, 'Review Godwin'.

⁶⁶ As Klaus Heinrich argued, the demigods and nymphs were even more powerful in the imagery of Renaissance culture than the pagan gods and goddesses; see Heinrich, 'Götter und Halbgötter'.

⁶⁷ See Godwin, *Pagan Dream*, 149-151, on the transition from grotto to nymphaeum in Italian garden architecture.

Pope (1688-1744), who in 1720 built an artistic nymphaeum accompanied by verses of consecration to the pagan divinities: ‘Nymph of the Grot, these sacred springs I keep, / And to the Murmur of these Waters sleep, / Ah spare my slumbers, gently tread the cave / and drink in Silence or in Silence lave’⁶⁸.

4. Conclusion: From Exorcism to Complexity

Now, how can we apply these examples and considerations to our initial question about the presence and discourse of polytheism and paganism in Western culture? The most general impression is that focusing on the visual presence of pagan deities challenges common notions of a “Christian occident” with a monotheistic creed that in late antiquity won the upper hand over a pagan past⁶⁹. This narrative is dependent on a conceptualization of “religion” that is based on “faith”, inner states of mind, belief-systems, and (holy) texts⁷⁰. On a deeper level of analysis, these conceptualizations correspond to two strong currents in the academic study of religion: a *religionist conviction* and a *philological orientation*. Both currents in my view reflect strategies of distancing or even purgation and exorcism.

With the focus on faith and belief-systems, largely informed by religionist traditions of the nineteenth- and early twentieth centuries, scholars employed a strategy of singularization⁷¹ and purgation on the basis of their terminological differentiation between “religion” on the one hand and “folk-belief”⁷²

⁶⁸ See Geyer-Kordesch, ‘Hieroglyphs of Nature’, 243. Geyer-Kordesch highlights the agency of place in these installations: ‘To engage the gods and the agency of place is indeed to involve oneself in ancient wisdom’ (245). Put differently: ‘The occult here is not a received tradition to be learned through the difficult ciphers of the secret world of hermetic tracts. Instead it is a place to go to and, through architectural enhancement or landscape gardening or the appreciation of nature, to participate in a glimpse of Elysium’ (246).

⁶⁹ This master-narrative is critically assessed by Perkins, *Christendom*. See also von Stuckrad, ‘Die Rede vom “Christlichen Abendland”’. On the concept of pluralism as a characteristic of European history of religion see Kippenberg & von Stuckrad, ‘Religionswissenschaftliche Überlegungen’.

⁷⁰ This is what Russell T. McCutcheon, *Manufacturing Religion*, describes as a ‘discourse of sui generis religion’.

⁷¹ See note 23 above.

⁷² Likewise, the concept of “popular piety” can be interpreted as a result of this process of othering and distancing; as an example see Kamerick, *Popular Piety*. Idolatry and image worship, we are told, are something for simple folks, but can this distinction be maintained? Definitely, talking of a “pagan field of discourse” will blur or even dismantle such normalizing differentiations.

or “superstition” on the other⁷³. In so doing, they could easily dismiss irritating pagan or polytheistic phenomena as belonging to something else, but certainly not to the “domain of religion”⁷⁴. In addition to “folk belief” or “superstition”, there are other candidates of domains where these phenomena can be “distanced to”: art⁷⁵, philosophy, music, or literature may be mentioned here. In establishing concepts of religion that work in the hands of Christian theology, the academic study of religion helped to secure the distance of these seemingly threatening elements of Western culture⁷⁶.

The focus on text as the basis of religion likewise fostered interpretations of a unified Judeo-Christian monotheistic heritage in Europe; the philological orientation of the academic study of religion, so influential in the formation of the discipline, regarded “sacred books” as a corner-stone of religions, and subsequently lost sight of the possibility that religion can happen elsewhere⁷⁷.

Discursive approaches in cultural studies in general⁷⁸, and the concept of “image acts” and “visual culture” in particular, challenge these analytical frameworks. If we take seriously the notion that religious ideas, convictions, and traditions are “acted out” in the public sphere, that they form part of people’s identities in a unity of image, message, and body, and that the materiality of religion is something to move to the center of scrutiny, we will perhaps arrive at a better understanding of the status of paganism in post-ancient Europe. ‘The pagan divinities are a hardy breed’, says Godwin⁷⁹. Maybe they are. But from the perspective of visual culture, they are definitely not a

⁷³ A classic example of this strategy is the 10-volume dictionary on superstition in German-speaking countries (Bächtold-Stäubli, *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*). This example also reveals that the singularizing discourse on superstition is inseparably linked to the discourse on “magic”.

⁷⁴ Jonathan Z. Smith makes a similar argument with regard to the presumed “incomparability” of Christian and pagan religions that emerged from Reformation discourses and was subsequently transferred to late antiquity. Smith concludes: ‘This is exorcism or purgation, not scholarship’ (Smith, *Drudgery Divine*, 143).

⁷⁵ See, once again, Heinrich, ‘Der Untergang von Religion’, who claims: ‘dann dürfen wir uns auch der Begrenzung dieses Stoffs: hier Religion und dort keine mehr, nicht anbequemen, haben wir nach Auf- und Untergang derartiger Konstruktionen . . . außerhalb der traditionellen Religion zu suchen’ (p. 78).

⁷⁶ At the same time, scholars were fascinated by the existence of these “survivals” that lurk right under the surface of modernity; see Kippenberg, *Discovering Religious History*, 51-112; Gladigow, ‘Anachronismus und Religion’.

⁷⁷ See Kippenberg & von Stuckrad, *Einführung*, 42-44.

⁷⁸ See von Stuckrad, ‘Discursive Study of Religion’.

⁷⁹ Godwin, *Pagan Dream*, 1.

“dream”, nor do they belong to a system outside “religion”. They form a crucial element of people’s identities. It is precisely the strategies of distancing, singularization, and exorcism that academic study of religion has to engage.

Kocku von Stuckrad (1966) is Assistant Professor at the subdepartment History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents of the University of Amsterdam.

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Abstract:

Academic research into the cultural changes that took place in Europe between 1400 and 1650 is notoriously fraught with terminological difficulties. With regard to the place of paganism and polytheism in Western culture, three questions in particular stand in the foreground: Most generally, is it adequate to isolate a period as "Renaissance" or "early modernity" and what is gained by doing so? Is the period called "Renaissance" characterized by a *continuity* of pagan and polytheistic elements or do we have to address the presence of pagan semantics as *reception*, *revival*, or, rather, *invention*? And finally, in terms of concepts of "religion", is the presence of pagan deities in public spheres an expression of "lived religion" or of a Renaissance "dream" of a pagan past that is syncretistically built into Christian "religion"?

After a survey of influential contributions to this discussion, the article approaches the problem of Renaissance polytheism and paganism from a different point of view. Under the headline of *material* and *visual culture*, cultural studies have recently broken grounds for a new understanding of religious dynamics in public spheres. Major contributions to medieval and early modern visual culture are presented and subsequently applied to examples of what can be called a Renaissance pagan discourse. Arguing mainly methodologically, the article aims at introducing visual and material aspects into the study of Western esotericism and reflecting on the underlying discourses of inclusion and exclusion that so often have characterized academic study of religion.

Focusing on the visual presence of pagan deities challenges common notions of a "Christian occident" with a monotheistic creed that in late antiquity won the upper hand over a pagan past. This narrative is dependent on a conceptualization of "religion" that is based on "faith", inner states of mind, belief-systems, and (holy) texts. On a deeper level of analysis, these conceptu-

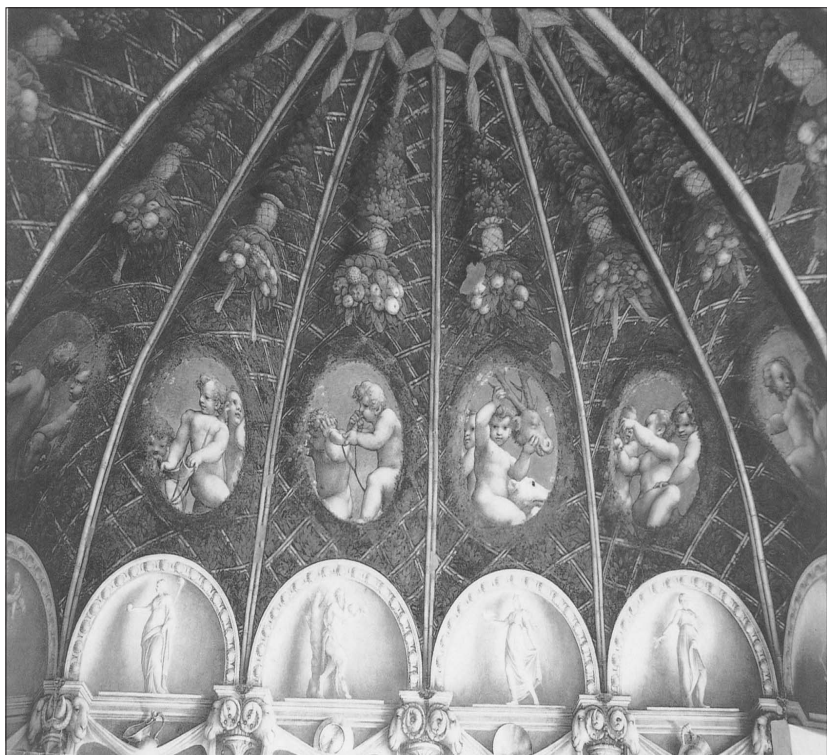
alizations correspond to two strong currents in the academic study of religion: a religionist conviction and a philological orientation. It is argued that both currents reflect strategies of distancing or even purgation and exorcism. If we take seriously the notion that religious ideas, convictions, and traditions are “acted out” in the public sphere, that they form part of people’s identities in a unity of image, message, and body, and that the materiality of religion is something to move to the center of scrutiny, we will perhaps arrive at a better understanding of the status of paganism in post-ancient Europe. From the perspective of visual culture, the pagan gods are not a “dream”, nor do they belong to a system outside “religion”. They form a crucial element of people’s identities. It is precisely the strategies of distancing, singularization, and exorcism that academic study of religion has to engage.

Sichtbare Götter: Komplexität statt Exorzismus in der Renaissanceforschung

Die wissenschaftliche Erforschung der kulturellen Veränderungen in Europa zwischen 1400 und 1650 ist bekanntermaßen mit terminologischen Schwierigkeiten behaftet. Was den Ort von Paganismus und Polytheismus in der westlichen Kultur betrifft, kommt drei Fragen besondere Bedeutung zu: Ist es überhaupt angemessen, eine Periode als „Renaissance“ oder „Frühe Neuzeit“ zu isolieren, und was ist damit gewonnen? Ist die Epoche der „Renaissance“ durch eine *Kontinuität* paganer und polytheistischer Elemente gekennzeichnet oder ist die Präsenz paganer Semantiken als *Rezeption*, *Revitalisierung* oder gar als *Erfindung* anzusprechen? Und schließlich lässt sich im Hinblick auf den wissenschaftlichen Religionsbegriff fragen, ob die Präsenz paganer Gottheiten im öffentlichen Raum Ausdruck einer „lebenden Religion“ ist oder eines „Traums“ von einer paganen Vergangenheit, den die Renaissance synkretistisch in die christliche „Religion“ integrierte?

Nach einer Übersicht über einflussreiche Beiträge zu dieser Diskussion bringt der Artikel eine neue Sicht auf das Problem von Polytheismus und Paganismus in der Renaissance ins Spiel. Unter den Stichworten *Materialität* und *Visualität* haben die Kulturwissenschaften in jüngster Zeit neue Analyseinstrumente zum Verständnis religiöser Dynamiken im öffentlichen Raum entwickelt. Wichtige Deutungsansätze mittelalterlicher und frühneuzeitlicher visueller Kultur werden vorgestellt und anschließend auf Beispiele für einen „paganen Diskurs“ der Renaissance angewandt. Die Ausrichtung des Artikels ist in erster Linie methodisch: er möchte die Elemente Visualität und Materialität in die Esoterikforschung einführen; damit ist eine kritische Reflexion auf die Diskurse von Inklusion und Exklusion verbunden, die über lange Zeit die Religionswissenschaft geprägt haben.

Die methodische Ausrichtung auf die visuelle Präsenz paganer Gottheiten stellt überkommene Auffassungen eines „Christlichen Abendlands“ in Frage, mit einer monotheistischen Überzeugung, die in der Spätantike die pagane Vergangenheit überwunden habe. Ein solches Narrativ ist eng verbunden mit einem Religionskonzept, welches auf „Glauben“, inneren Bewusstseinszuständen und (heiligen) Texten beruht. Hinter solchen Konzepten stehen wiederum zwei einflussreiche Tendenzen der Religionswissenschaft: eine religionistische Überzeugung und eine philologische Orientierung. Der Beitrag argumentiert, dass beide Strömungen Ausdruck von Strategien der Distanzierung oder gar der Purifizierung und des Exorzismus sind. Wenn wir jedoch davon ausgehen, dass religiöse Ideen, Überzeugungen und Traditionen im öffentlichen Raum „ausagiert“ und kommuniziert werden, dass sie Ausdruck von Identitäten in einer Einheit von Bild, Botschaft und Körper sind, und dass die Materialität von Religion vom Rand ins Zentrum der Aufmerksamkeit zu rücken ist, werden wir den Status des Paganismus im nachantiken Europa besser bestimmen können. Aus Sicht von *visual culture* sind die paganen Gottheiten weder ein „Traum“, noch gehören sie einem System jenseits der „Religion“ an. Sie sind ein zentrales Element von Identitäten. Es ist die Aufgabe der Religionswissenschaft, eben jene Strategien der Distanzierung, der Singularisierung und des Exorzismus zum Gegenstand ihrer Analyse zu machen.



Ill. 1. Correggio, Camera di San Paolo. Parma, San Paolo. Western Wall
From: Nova, 'Beobachten und beobachtet werden', 87



Ill. 2. Correggio, Camera di San Paolo. Diana on the Chimney
From: Nova, 'Beobachten und beobachtet werden', 88



*III. 3. Parmigianino, Sala di Diana. Fontanellato, Rocca Sanvitale
From: Nova, 'Beobachten und beobachtet werden', 83*



Ill. 4. Ariadne Fountain, Tivoli, Italy. Photo credit: Jocelyn Godwin

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