

International Summer School  
10-22 July 2014  
University of Mainz

Concepts of

# Holiness

Rethinking the Religious in Theatre, Cultural Performance, and Media

From the perspective of the late 20th century, religion in Europe could still be conceived as a waning entity: Religious practices had increasingly become invisible through their dissociation from religious institutions and by their banishment to the realm of the private. Simultaneously they seemed to have been succeeded by "the spirit of capitalism" (Max Weber) or to have found their new place within this "spirit," as in Walter Benjamin's claim that capitalism was not beyond religion, but a form of religion itself. However, the global events inaugurating the 21st century, such as the terror attacks on September 11, 2001 and the subsequent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the near collapse of the capitalistic financial markets recently, have brought the Religious back into public discourse: While Philosophers such as Alain Badiou and Giorgio Agamben use the figure of Saint Paul in order to question the hegemony of Capitalism, the rhetoric of the former US-President George W. Bush employed an ideological discourse laden with religious metaphors, thus positioning the United States as "God's own country" against the "axis of evil".

Against this background, and according to Agamben's notion of religion not derived from religare but from relegere in a sense which points at the cautious hesitation, the re-reading, in the face of forms and formulas that are to be followed when the separation of the holy and the profane is to be respected, the three year IP Programme "Concepts of Holiness" proposes an operational approach to the Religious that allows to revisit diverse concepts of holiness in a broader sense and to reevaluate the role of religion(s) in Theatre, Cultural Performance, and Media.



## Performing Belief: The Religious as Critical Practice

In its second year, the IP „Concepts of Holiness“ shall approach the concepts of faith and religion from a performative perspective: To what extent can religion become a critical practice?

Limited number of Scholarships available for postgraduate and doctoral students from the IP-partner universities: University of Vienna | Trinity College Dublin | King's College London | University of Łódź

Scholarships include: participation fee (seminars, workshops, lectures, working groups) | reimbursement of travel expenses | free accommodation & lunch | thematic excursions

**Application Deadline: 1. May 2014**  
The registration form as well as further information can be found on [www.performedia.uni-mainz.de](http://www.performedia.uni-mainz.de)

The Summer School is part of the DAAD-funded Intensive Program (IP) "Concepts of Holiness: Rethinking the Religious in Theatre. Cultural Performance and Media", which is organized in association with the international PhD Program (PPP) "Performance and Media Studies" at Mainz University.

