Dis-continuities: The role of religious motifs in contemporary art
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Is every work of art a fake acheiropoieton?
Marie-José Mondzain, 2005
Preface and Acknowledgments

At the present moment, perhaps more than ever, images are pervasively present in social life. We perceive but also have the capacity to produce and see more and more images. We are confronted with such questions as: how do we believe in images, how do they acquire their importance as public objects and how is their status produced? These are related to further questions around the power of images and concern not only their iconic or symbolic powers, but also the power mechanisms around images, related to their display and presentation.

Many artists demonstrate a distinct interest in revisiting the role of religion and the legacy of religious art as part of their reflection on these questions. This indicates a desire for situating one’s practice with regard to the past and placing it in a dialogue with a very different economy of the image. By re-appropriating and reworking religious images artists not only re-examine the complex relationship between religion and art, but also their respective regimes of visibility.

This book is about a particular fold that is happening in the space of contemporary art, which opens up a space to think about religion through images. After I began this research project, many exhibitions that dealt with the relationship between religion and art were organised, demonstrating a multiplicity of approaches, debates and lecture series, which I followed and included in my research. Some parts of this thesis have also appeared as articles in several volumes and journals.

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