



# **Materiality of Religion in Central and Eastern Europe**

International workshop

(ONLINE event)

University of Szeged, Department of  
Religious Studies

24-25<sup>th</sup> September 2021

# Call for papers

- Since the material turn in the 1960's, objects and the material evidence of religious communication became a crucial topic in the academic research of religions ([Hicks 2010](#)). The paradigmatic works of A. Appadurai ([1986](#)) and many others from cultural anthropology, archaeology and sociology (Miller 1987, [Miller 2005](#)) opened a paradigmatic perspective in the research of materiality of religion. Objects used in ritualisation, lived religious communication play a crucial role in establishing and maintaining a direct relationship between human and divine actors. Objects have also complex, social and cultural (imaginary) biographies and hierarchies too ([Gosden 2005](#)). From the relics and holy objects with divine power, to the *instrumenta sacra* (liturgical objects) and the mass produced religious souvenirs, materiality of religion represents today a rich and fascinating topic with numerous important contributions focusing on the role of objects in religious communication on various levels and contexts ([Hutchings-McKenzie 2016](#), Morgan 2017). Materiality of religion is more, than just the descriptive analysis and catalogue-like presentation of objects: it is focusing on the social history of objects and their formative role in establishing and maintaining religious and social communication and representativeness in micro -, meso- and macro-spaces of sacralisation ([Szabó 2018](#)).
- This workshop aims to unite important, new and paradigmatic papers focusing on the materiality of religion in Central and Eastern Europe, a region, where this topic was not yet researched thoroughly and in details.
- The workshop is open for papers of young researchers (PhD and postdoctoral researchers) and senior academics focusing on materiality of Religion in Central and Eastern Europe (known also as Mitteleuropa or the Danube region) in any historical period.
- The workshop host around 25-30 participants. The proposals will be carefully selected by the organising and scientific committee.

- **Suggested topics of the workshop:**
- The human body, as religious agent (mutilations/ decorations/ stigmata/ suffering/ the sick body, as religious agent)
- Religion in micro-spaces and their materiality (house shrines/ corner shrines/ private funerary inventories)
- Materiality of meso-spaces (small group religions / assembly houses and their liturgical objects / vestments/
- Objects and their impact in macro-spaces/ churches/ temples: relics, holy objects, unique liturgical objects, *instrumenta sacra* (priestly symbols), power-symbols
- Materiality of archaeothanatology: objects, as tools in death-culture and rituals
- Mass production and cultural appropriation of religious materiality (religious kitsch, religious souvenirs)

- Those who are interested in our event are asked to send the following information on the address: [szabo.csaba.pt@gmail.com](mailto:szabo.csaba.pt@gmail.com)
- Name and affiliation
- Email address
- Title of your paper
- A maximum 400 words long abstract in English
- Keywords (max. 5)
- The official conference language is English. The event will be organised by the Department of Religious Studies of the University of Szeged on an official ZOOM platform.
- Link of the event and the program of the workshop will be provided later.
- The proceedings the conference will be published in a prestigious publishing house.
- Deadline for the abstracts: **30<sup>th</sup> May 2021.**
- For further questions and remarks please contact the organisers.

- **Organisers:**

- **Csaba Szabó**

- Research fellow

- University of Szeged

- Department of Religious Studies

- **Ágnes Gresz**

- Doctoral researcher

- University of Pécs

- Interdisciplinary Doctoral School

- **Scientific committee:**

- Prof. Dr. András Máté-Tóth

- University of Szeged, Department of Religious Studies

- Dr. Réka Szilárdi

- University of Szeged, Department of Religious Studies

- Prof. Dr. Eugen Ciurtin

- Research professor, Institute of History of Religions, Romanian Academy, București