

Silence and Religion in Film

International Conference on Film and Religion
organized by the Dutch Research Group 'Moving Visions'
and the International Research Group 'Film und Theologie'

Faculty of Theology and Religious Sciences

(State) University of Groningen

30 May – 1 June 2013

Call for papers

The subject of the conference, *Silence and Religion in Film*, refers to both silence and silent moments in (contemporary) films as well as the issue of whether or not it is possible to interpret silence or silent moments in films as religious phenomena. The subject will be approached from the perspectives of theology, religious studies and film studies. The focus will be on the question of what representations of silence in film can contribute to the field of theology/religion and film studies and what theology/religion and film studies can contribute to representations of silence in film. Contributions are welcome in any of the following areas:

1. Films that explicitly represent religious traditions and therefore represent silence and silent moments as (parts of) explicit religious phenomena, such as, for example, the representation of mystical experiences, conversions, withdrawals into the 'desert', contemplative monastic or convent lives, silent moments in religious rituals, 'silence' in Biblical stories or in other religious texts.
2. Films that do not explicitly represent certain religious traditions, but still allow a religious or theological interpretation of silence or silent moments. For example, (a) a film can implicitly represent a film character as 'homo religiosus' whereby their silence or silent moments may be a representation of the experience of transcendence, the 'numinous', the 'mysterium tremendum et fascinans', or even of an experience of meaning and non-meaning, of isolation or being united with the whole of existence, of repentance or a moving-into-action. Or (b), silence or silent moments in film may also be 'represented' in the musical score, dialogue, landscapes, mise-en-scenes, colours or the film's titles.

Accordingly, there is a difference between silence in film and 'film without sound'. Film has never been silent as the presentations of the early silent movies were almost always accompanied by live music. In films silence or silent moments often mean 'falling silent'.

There is room for approximately 25 papers. Contributors should submit an abstract in English of 300 words before 1 September 2012. The organizing committee and the members of 'Moving Visions' will assess all abstracts and will decide on 15 November 2012 which authors are to be invited to present a paper at the conference.

The abstracts should be sent to:

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