

1. General information

1a. Project leader (=hoofdaanvrager)

- Name, title(s): prof.dr. Laurens ten Kate
- University/institute: Department of Care Ethics, University of Humanistic Studies Utrecht

Second project leader (=tweede aanvrager)

- Name, title(s): prof.dr. Hans Alma
- University/institute: Faculty of Religion & Theology, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam

1b. Title project

SIMAGINE: Social Imaginaries between Secularity and Religion in a Globalizing World

1c. File number

236-20-012

1d. International partners

- Centre Pieter Gillis, University of Antwerpen
- Centre for Migration and Intercultural Studies, University of Antwerpen
- Department of Philosophy & Ethics, VUB University Brussels
- Department of French Literature and Theory, University of Cambridge UK
- Research Institute for Religion & Transformation, University of Vienna
- Centre for Media, Religion and Culture, University of Colorado at Boulder USA
- Department of Religious Studies, University of St. Barbara USA
- Unit for Institutional Change & Social Justice, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein SA

Dutch partners

- Faculty of Religion & Theology, VU Amsterdam
- Research Institute for Philosophy & Religious Studies, University of Utrecht

Host university

- University of Humanistic Studies Utrecht (UvH)

1e. Starting date and end date

July 12 2017 – January 12 2021

Starting date postponed from September 1 2016 to July 12 2017 after agreement between NWO and the project leaders.

End date postponed from July 12 2020 to January 12 2021 due to the Corona-crisis.

2. Evaluation of the project

2a. Planning: developments and changes

- Compared to the initial application of 2016,
 - we concentrated on live exchanges between partners, and organized five instead of two international conferences for Simagine members and invited guest scholars; during these five conferences, we simultaneously conducted smaller member – and board meetings, replacing the intended separate annual meetings;
 - we built a website for academic - and public exposure; (<https://simagineconsortium.com>). Given technical complexities and high costs, we decided not to use the site for academic – and public exchanges; instead we invested the budget partly to support the project leaders by appointing a student-assistant in the first year, and partly in developing and editing a comprehensive application in the final year.
 - Given the worldwide corona-crisis, we decided to postpone our comprehensive application for the continuation of our collaboration to August 2021. See also below, 3b. In June 2020 we immediately informed NWO about this.
 - The starting date and end date of the consortium's term have been adjusted; see above, 1e.

2b. Cooperation within the network

- The project leaders formed a board consisting of 1 representative from each partner institution, and a small steering group. The board decided to focus on three central research lines, formulated in a position paper (start of 2018); the steering group consists of members responsible for each of the three research lines. See the position paper uploaded in ISAAC and on the consortium's website

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(https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/8eaa009f-9d0d-4937-bde3-eec64e8e5f22/downloads/Attachm%201_SIMAGINE%20Position%20Paper%20May%202018%20pub.pdf?ver=1595445558481).

- The three research lines were discussed at five conferences and in the three major joint publications of the consortium. The third major publication has been delayed. See below, 3a and 3d.
- The three research lines each contribute to the overarching theme and central aim of Simagine: new research on social imaginaries in the context of tensions between secular society and religion, and how this research can shed new light on globalization processes. The initially intended foci on urban and virtual environments were accommodated under the general framework of the overarching theme and in the three research lines, specifically in publications by consortium members. See 3a and 3c.
- Two new partner institutions have been added: The Department of Philosophy and Ethics, VU Brussels (2018), and the Unit for Institutional Change and Social Justice, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein SA (2019). From 2018, the Centre for Religion, Conflict and the Public Domain of the University of Groningen discontinued their participation in the consortium.
- Simagine granted membership to five individual international scholars with relevant expertise.
- Some members changed their university employment during the running time of the consortium. Co-project leader Hans Alma moved from the University of Humanistic Studies to the Department of Philosophy and Ethics, VU Brussels, and subsequently to the Faculty of Religion & Theology, VU Amsterdam – both partner institutions of Simagine. Stijn Latré moved from the Centre Pieter Gillis to the Centre St. Ignatius, both at the University of Antwerp. Ernst van den Hemel moved from the Research Institute for Philosophy & Religious Studies, University of Utrecht, to the Meertens Institute of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences, Amsterdam.
- Within the host university, the hosting of the consortium was re-organized; no longer limited to one department, but broadened to three relevant departments: Care Ethics, Education Studies and Citizenship & Humanization of the Public Sphere. The Department of Globalization & Dialogue Studies was discontinued. Dr. Merel Visse (Department of Care Ethics) was added to the team of members from the host university.
- Our member in the Centre for Migration & Intercultural Studies, University of Antwerp: Christiane Timmermans, sadly passed away in 2019.
- See our website for an overview of partner institutions and members: <https://simagineconsortium.com/partners>.

2c. Impact on the international humanities

- Simagine contributed to cutting-edge research in the Humanities – focusing on

the meaning and impact of imagination and imaginaries in a complex, pluralistic world while problematizing the secular-religious divide and engaging decolonial perspectives. The consortium successfully turned earlier achievements by Dutch and Belgian partners, developed in the previous decade, into productive and inspiring exchanges with leading scholarship on the international scene, in the European continent, the UK, the USA and in South Africa.

2d. Future cooperation

- The response from our international partners (see 2c.) to Simagine's initiatives to develop and conduct innovative research in the field of imagination studies has been very positive and encouraging. All partners intend to prolong and deepen their collaboration after Simagine's first term, funded by NWO.
- We focus on developing a comprehensive application to obtain substantial funding to ensure the continuation of our work. We chose the Templeton Foundation (USA) and its thematic program 'Intellectual Humility' for this, since we consider our combination of religious, cultural and political perspectives on the field of imagination studies to fit in well with Templeton's strategic priorities. Due to the corona crisis, Templeton's Call for Proposals has been now delayed to August 2021.

Three members of Simagine's steering group, Carolina Suransky and both project leaders, supported by the USA members of the consortium, will coordinate the editing and submission process of the application.

- We will also explore other future funding options. However, even if no immediate funding is possible, the eleven partners decided to continue their collaboration.
- Meanwhile, we will keep the momentum of this intense and productive synergy by organizing two conferences in 2021, both financed by one of the partners:
 - a one day conference in Utrecht entitled 'Re-imagining the Human', engaging prof. Richard Kearney (Boston/Dublin) as key note speaker, organized by the host university;
 - a three day conference in Vienna entitled 'Politics of Dis-Enclosure: Religion, Community, Violence', engaging prof. Achille Mbembe and prof. Jean-Luc Nancy as key note speakers, organized by our Viennese partner institution.

Needless to say, these events will be planned in detail as soon as the pandemic restrictions have become more flexible.

3. Research output

3a. Results

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Central research lines

We formulated three main research lines, which were developed in an orientational phase of exchanges in the first year of the consortium's running term (mid 2017-mid 2018):

1. Religion, Community, Borders: Social Imaginaries and the Secular-Religious Divide – Principal disciplinary fields: religious studies, philosophy, sociology
2. Social Imaginaries of Inclusion and Decoloniality - Principal disciplinary fields: political theory, media studies, philosophy
3. The Transformative Power of Artful Articulations of Social Imaginaries - Principal disciplinary fields: esthetics & art practice, philosophy, psychology

Key publications and Simagine conferences

These three research lines have led or will lead to the following results:

- One overarching peer reviewed publication, combining the three research lines and opening up the field of social imaginary studies for future research: *Social Imaginaries in a Globalizing World*, eds. Hans Alma & Guido Vanheeswijck, Berlin: De Gruyter 2018 (volume with consortium members and guest authors, 270 pp.)
Consortium contributors: Hans Alma, Guido Vanheeswijck, Christa Anbeek, Laurens ten Kate, Stijn Latré, Noel Clycq, Nicole Immler, Christiane Timmerman, Ernst van den Hemel, with guest contributors.
- Research line 1:
 - Conferences in Utrecht (2017) and Vienna (2018), both entitled 'Religion, Community, Borders';
 - Special issue (with consortium members and guest authors) of the peer reviewed *Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion & Transformation in Contemporary Society*, run and financed by Simagine's Viennese partner: 'Religions, Community, Borders: Social Imaginaries and the Challenge of Pluralism', eds. Ernst van den Hemel & Laurens ten Kate 2020. Open access: <https://brill.com/view/journals/jrat/5/2/jrat.5.issue-2.xml>.
Consortium contributors: Héctor Acero-Ferrer, Kurt Appel, Nabil Echchaibi, Ernst van den Hemel, Laurens ten Kate, Stewart Hoover, with guest contributors.
- Research line 2:
 - Conferences in Bloemfontein SA (2019), entitled 'Social Imaginaries, Social Inclusion and Decoloniality', and in Boulder USA (2020), entitled 'Imagined Borders, Epistemic Freedoms: The Challenge of Social Imaginaries in Media, Art, Religion and Decoloniality'; peer reviewed volume *The World in Theory*, eds. Laurens ten Kate, Peter Gratton, Philip Leonard, under contract with Edinburgh University Press 2021.
- Research line 3:
 - Conference in Brussels (2018), entitled 'Social Imaginaries and Art in a Globalizing World'; various publications and presentations (see 3c.)

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The conference in Boulder also served as a general concluding event to Simagine's three-year term and provided the basis for our comprehensive funding application (3b.). It assembled more than a hundred papers which were presented in different thematic panels.

Panels at other conferences

Apart from the aforementioned conferences organized by the consortium, we have initiated thematic panels at three international conferences:

- EARE, Bologna, March 2018
- ISRLC, Uppsala, September 2018
- SPEP, State College, October 2018.

PhD-projects

In Simagine, the projects of three PhD students have been embedded, supervised by consortium members. These doctoral candidates are all enrolled in the UvH-PhD-school:

- Joandi Hartendorp, 2016-2021: 'Social Imaginaries and the Remembrance of Holocaust and Slavery in the Netherlands'; supervision Nicole Immler and Hans Alma.
- Lindsay van Dijk, 2017-2019: 'New interactions within health care chaplaincy work engaging the social imaginaries of children in a plural-belief society'; supervision Carolina Suransky and Laurens ten Kate. This project had been transferred to Middlesex University, London, in 2020.
- Amalia Deekman, 2019-2023: 'Understanding Cultural Participation: Social Imaginaries on the Scene of the Bijlmer Gospel Festival'; supervision Laurens ten Kate, guest supervision Evert Bisschop Boele.

3b. Synthesis or larger international application

- For the final phase we decided to concentrate on a comprehensive funding application, synthesizing Simagine's work thus far, combining the three research lines, and thus designing a continued research program for 2021-2025: 'Crossing Borders through Epistemic Humility: Questioning Secular and Religious Imaginaries from Decolonial Perspectives'. We will apply to the American Templeton Foundation; see above, 2d. We will submit an Online Funding Inquiry (OFI) in August 2021. See appendix 5. This deadline has been postponed by the Templeton Foundation with one full year due to Templeton's policy in the corona-crisis. If the OFI is accepted, we will develop a full proposal in the Fall and Winter of 2021. The amount applied for will be between \$ 500.000 and \$750.000.
- Simagine's board has appointed a special working committee coordinating the writing and editing process, consisting of both coordinators and Carolina Suransky (UvH).
- In 2018, we applied for a grant of \$ 190.000 in the funding program 'The Self,

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Virtue and Public Life' by the University of Oklahoma, supported by the Templeton Religion Trust. The application was entitled: 'Social Imaginaries of the Virtuous Self in Relation to Democratic Citizenship', elaborating themes within our second research line (see 3a.). The application was rejected.

3c. Other publications

See the appendix 1 to this scientific report for a selection of other publications.

3d. Evaluation of publications

Beschrijf in hoeverre de realisatie van publicaties overeenkomt met de beoogde publicaties (qua aantal en kwaliteit). Ga hierbij s.v.p. expliciet op de synthese of het internationale onderzoeksvoorstel in. Indien de synthese nog niet is verschenen of het onderzoeksvoorstel nog niet is ingediend: vermeld een tijdsplanning van de voltooiing en de verwachte verschijningsdatum.

- As indicated in 2b. and 3c., we have achieved and planned major and smaller publications related to the three research lines. The publications contain preparatory research for the four subprojects envisaged in the larger application (see again Appendix 5):
 - Religion, secularity and border imaginaries
 - Media and colonial/decolonial imaginaries
 - Art and transformative imaginaries
 - Education and inclusive imaginaries
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3e. Research output for a broader public

Vermeld hier recent verschenen of binnenkort te verschijnen publicaties en/of komende activiteiten die interessant zijn voor een breder publiek. NWO kan dit eventueel gebruiken voor PR-doeleinden.

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4. Account of matching contributions

- See appendix 2.

5. Other



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5. Additional remarks

Appendices

1. Other publications
2. Account of matching
3. Final financial report
4. Position paper
5. Larger application Templeton Foundation (concept)