

RaT-Newsletter



Dear members and friends of RaT,

The July edition of the RaT newsletter is dedicated to the **European Academy of Religion 2025 (EuARE)**, organized by RaT, which took place from July 8 to 12 at the Main Building of the University of Vienna. The entire RaT team is delighted that the event was a complete success after such a long period of preparation! Right after this editorial, our readers can find a report on the conference written by the organizing team. For those who want even more details, a comprehensive recap of the conference is available on the RaT website.

However, this newsletter edition also offers exciting information beyond the EuARE: With the addition of **Johann Pock**, we are pleased to welcome a new member to our centre! Moreover, we are especially happy to announce that **Astrid Mattes** is once again part of the RaT team after her parental leave. Welcome back, dear Astrid!

In addition to two new RaT publications— **JRAT 11 (1/2025): Dancing with the Absence: Rethinking Theology with Michel de Certeau** and **RaT Series (Volume 34): "Child, from your youth, choose learning" (Sirach 6:18). Biblical and Judaic Contributions to Education and Wisdom**—we are also pleased to present new publications from RaT members.

Look forward to interesting contributions edited/written by **Karl Baier**, **Christian Danz**, **Marianne Grohmann**, **Rüdiger Lohlker**, Astrid Mattes, **Richard Potz**, and **Thomas Schmidinger**. As in almost every edition, we are also happy to highlight newly acquired third-party funded projects by Christian Danz, **Lukas K. Pokorny**, and **Milja Radovic**.

Following this jam-packed issue, the RaT newsletter will take a summer break and return at the start of the new academic year in early October. In the meantime, we wish all our readers a relaxing summer!

Kurt Appel, Noemi Call, Jakob Deibl, Marco Fiorletta, Sofiia-Olga Kungurtseva, Daniel Kuran, Magdalena Lorenz, Astrid Mattes, Andreas Telser, and Marian Weingartshofer

PS: Please consider forwarding our newsletter to those interested in the topics we work on! If you are not subscribed yet, just click [here](#).

To download a pdf.-version of this newsletter, [click here](#).

EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION: Conference Recap



After lengthy preparations, the annual conference of the [European Academy of Religion](#) (EuARe), organised by the *Research Centre RaT*, took place in the main building of the University of Vienna from 8 to 12 July 2025.

The organising team is particularly proud that the Rector of the University of Vienna, *Prof. Sebastian Schütze*, opened the conference with his introductory remarks on the evening of 8 July, thus emphasising the significance of the event for the university.

After the opening evening, the nearly 1,200 participants, who had travelled to Vienna from over 60 countries, spent four days exchanging ideas on the current state of research in their respective disciplines in over 200 panels.

As every year, the conference was preceded by a general theme: *Religion and Socio-Cultural Transformation: European Perspectives and Beyond*. The choice of this theme was intended to remind participants that religion plays a decisive role in the processes of change currently facing societies at the global level (digitalisation, climate crisis, migration, individualisation, etc.). The numerous questions associated with this topic were addressed through different perspectives in the opening speeches and [the six keynote lectures of the conference](#).

The research findings and theses presented at the conference will also be published: First, the keynote lectures will be published in the [EuARe publication series](#) (open access), and then in 2026, the RaT Research Centre will publish a volume of the [JRAT Supplementa Series](#) containing the keynotes and another twenty selected contributions from the conference (also open access).

An event of this magnitude would not have been possible without the support of many institutions both within and outside the university. The organizing team wishes to express its gratitude to each and every one of them:

First and foremost, we would like to thank the team of the *European Academy of Religion* for the excellent cooperation over many months. Within our university, we are grateful for the generous support by *the Faculty of Protestant Theology*, the *Faculty of Catholic Theology* and the *Faculty of Philosophy and Education*, the staff and the members of the *research centre RaT*, and the students of the *student organizing committee*, without whose work the conference would not have been possible.

Outside of our university, we want to thank the *Office of the Mayor of the City of Vienna* and the *Vienna Meeting Fund*, *Melk Abbey* and the religious institutions in Austria, which enabled us to finance a scholarship programme for young researchers, namely the *Archdiocese of Vienna*, the *dioceses of Innsbruck*, *Gurk-Klagenfurt* and *Graz-Seckau*, *Admont Abbey* and *Göttweig Abbey*, the *Protestant Church A.B. in Austria* and the *Islamic Community in Austria (IGGÖ)*.

*The EuARe 2025 organising team,
Noemi Call, Marco Fiorletta, Rudolf Kaisler, Marleen Thaler and Marian Weingartshofer*

[A full conference recap can be found here.](#)

NEW MEMBER: Welcome to RaT!



Univ.-Prof. Mag. lic. Dr. Johann Pock
*Faculty of Catholic Theology
Department of Practical Theology*

The most important stages of my academic journey are Graz (where I completed my doctorate and spent 11 years as a Postdoc), Rome (obtaining a licentiate in biblical studies), Tübingen (the place of my habilitation), Bonn (with three years as Professor of Pastoral Theology), and since 2010, Vienna.

A main field of my research is homiletics and preaching studies, with a strong ecumenical, interreligious and international network. Another field of interest is research in the area of Caritas and Diaconia, particularly questions concerning how to deal with disadvantaged or poor people. A central area for me is "pastoral liturgy" — the practical-theological examination of the context of sacramental celebrations, the development of new rituals, and the transformation of traditional ritual practices in a changing society.

Finally I am interested in practical ecclesiology, especially the development of local church communities. This practical field also includes the entire area of pastoral care, with a special emphasis on support in situations of grief.

*To learn more about Johann Pock's research,
[visit his profile on our website.](#)*

(NEW) TEAM MEMBER: Welcome back to RaT!



We welcome our scientific manager [Astrid Mattes](#) back from parental leave and at the same time have to say goodbye to her leave replacement [Sára Eszter Heidl](#). We would like to thank Sára for her dedication to the agendas of the research centre and her exceptional commitment to management, research and teaching in the past year. We would like to give her our best wishes for the future and are pleased that she will remain closely affiliated to the centre to support us with her expertise in Religious Studies and Sociology.

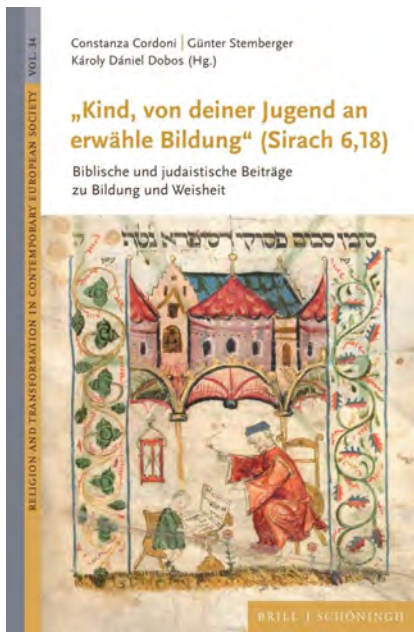
CONGRATULATIONS!



Christian Danz appointed as Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal for the History of Modern Theology*

We warmly congratulate Christian Danz on his appointment as Editor-in-Chief of the renowned [Journal for the History of Modern Theology / Zeitschrift für Neuere Theologiegeschichte](#), founded in 1994 and currently published by De Gruyter.

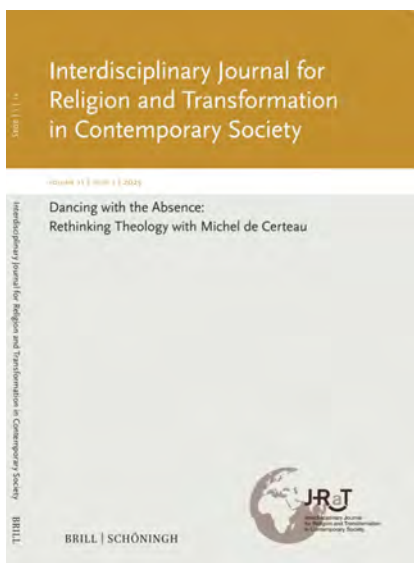
PUBLICATIONS: JRAT, JRAT Supplementa and RaT Series



RaT Series (Volume 34): „Kind, von deiner Jugend an erwähle Bildung“ (Sirach 6,18). Biblische und jüdische Beiträge zu Bildung und Weisheit, edited by Constanza Cordoní, Günter Stemberger, and Károly Dániel Dobos

The essays in this volume are, in a sense, a modern scholarly midrash on Sirach 6:18: "My child, from your youth choose education! / Until your hair turns gray, you will find wisdom" (EÜ). They explore concepts connected to the overarching themes of education and wisdom. Biblical scholars specializing in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, the New Testament, and biblical reception, as well as experts in Second Temple Jewish literature, rabbinic literature, Kabbalah, Jewish-Christian polemics, and the visual cultural history of Judaism, contribute a wide range of case studies. These span topics such as the role of Moses as a teacher, Jewish wisdom in the *Pirque Avot*, medieval interpretations of the wisdom books *Ecclesiastes* and *Proverbs*, and even the wisdom of popular culture as depicted in an Israeli comedy series.

[Link to the publication.](#)



JRAT 11 (1/2025): Dancing with the Absence: Rethinking Theology with Michel de Certeau, edited by Isabella Bruckner, Carlos Álvarez, and Stella Morra

Michel de Certeau (1925–1986), French Jesuit and student of Henri de Lubac, is renowned in the historical as well as in the field of cultural studies. His works on modern mysticism are exemplary in the section of spiritual theology, while his perspectives on anthropology and psychoanalysis tend to challenge the discussions of the experts. Likewise, Certeau profoundly interrogates the common ways of doing theology, both in a direct way – when he speaks of the absence of God or about the “founding rupture” of Christianity –, and with his style of writing, which does not allow a disciplinary classification. The anniversary of Certeau’s 100th birthday on May 17, 2025, presents a fortuitous opportunity to re-evaluate his work for the contemporary theological discourse. The issue analyzes and displays the potential of his reflections on the Christian experience which, due to the ongoing secularization and pluralization of contemporary societies, seem today more relevant than ever.

[Link to the publication \(full access\).](#)



Latest articles published online in advance (all articles are published open access):

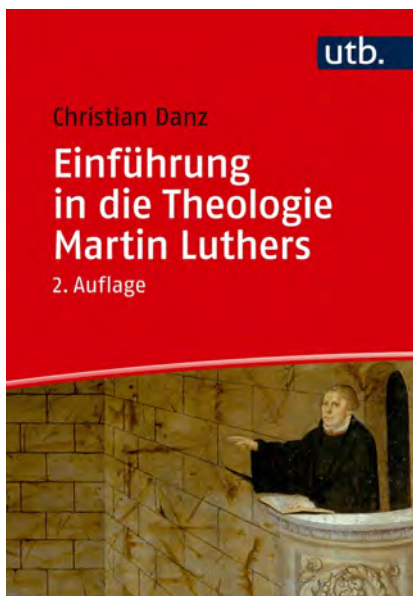
- **Martin Eleven:** [Wilfred R. Bion's Psychoanalysis Between Epistemology and Mysticism: The Dark Night, Transformation in](#)



[Q, and Mental Growth](#)

- **Hüseyin Çiçek:** [Genealogy of Light. Charismatic Leadership and Religious Authority in Alevism](#)

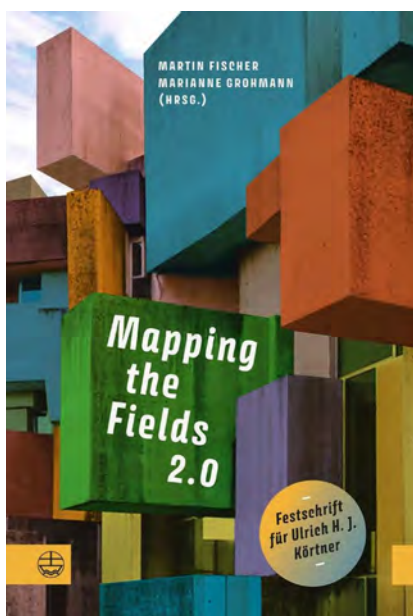
PUBLICATIONS: Monographs & Anthologies



Christian Danz: Einführung in die Theologie Martin Luthers, 2. Auflage. Tübingen: Narr Francke Attempto 2025.

The book provides a well-founded introduction to Martin Luther's theology from a historical and systematic perspective. It addresses methodological issues in interpreting Luther, the current state of research, and the development of Luther's Reformation theology. Fundamental themes of his theology, such as Luther's concept of God, his image of Christ, the anthropology derived from his foundational Reformation ideas, his understanding of the Church, and his eschatology, are discussed with regard to their historical and contextual significance. A bibliography introduces key primary sources, research tools, and secondary literature on Martin Luther's theology.

[Link to the publication.](#)

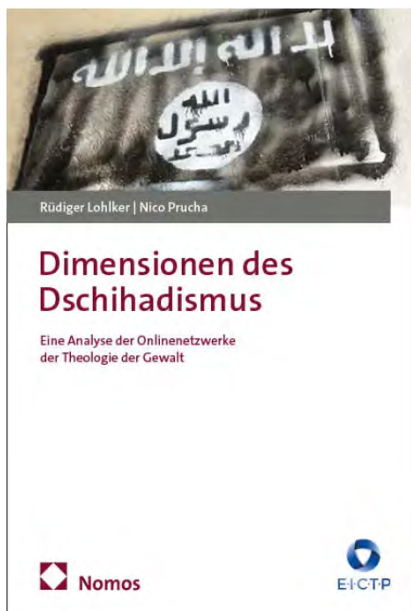


Marianne Grohmann, and Martin Fischer (eds.): Mapping the Fields 2.0. Festschrift für Ulrich H. J. Körtner. Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt 2025.

The systematic theologian Ulrich H. J. Körtner has consistently undertaken "the risk of an answer that can neither be fully explained by commentary nor exhausted by it" (P. Ricoeur) throughout the four and a half decades of his extensive academic and journalistic work. This has made him a significant voice in Protestant theology, the church, and society in the German-speaking world and beyond.

Students, colleagues, and companions, who connect some of Ulrich Körtner's impulses with their own fields of work, respond in this Festschrift from the areas of hermeneutical theology, systematic theology, theology and church in a European perspective, ethics, medical ethics, and diaconal studies, thus continuing the "mapping of the fields."

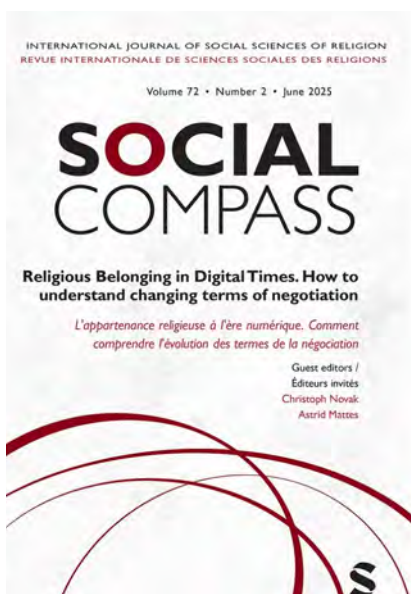
[Link to the publication.](#)



Rüdiger Lohlker, and Nico Prucha: Dimensionen des Dschihadismus: Eine Analyse der Onlinenetzwerke der Theologie der Gewalt. Baden-Baden: Nomos-Verlag 2025.

The many dimensions of jihadism are often not adequately captured. It is rarely possible to capture the entire ecosystem of jihadism. This book provides a comprehensive account of the jihadist media system up to Web 3.0 and its history. The jihadist theology of violence is analyzed in detail; jihadist technical thinking is also covered. As a case study, the Vienna attack of 2020 and the statements of the attacker are discussed.

[Link to the publication.](#)



Astrid Mattes and Christoph Novak (eds.): Religious Belonging in Digital Times. How to understand changing terms of negotiation. Social Compass, Special Issue, Volume 72, Issue 2.

This special issue examines how digital environments reshape religious belonging, moving beyond offline spaces. It explores social media, online communities, and digital rituals, raising critical questions about religious authority, practice, and authenticity. The anthology brings together diverse perspectives on religious belonging in digital contexts, highlighting how technology reshapes identity, community, and practice.

Contributions cover Muslim women on TikTok and



how their expression challenge decentralized authority, Polish Catholic women using online platforms to navigate challenges like dissatisfaction with local churches, Instagram activism of LGBTIQ* Christians, their spiritual expression, and community-building, research on a Hungarian music festival showing how digital spaces extend event-based spiritual communities, and an exploration of posthuman religion, introducing "rhizomatic belonging" that emphasizes fluid, interconnected affiliations shaped by digital technologies and ecological crises. Together, these works illuminate the evolving dynamics of religious belonging in a rapidly changing world.

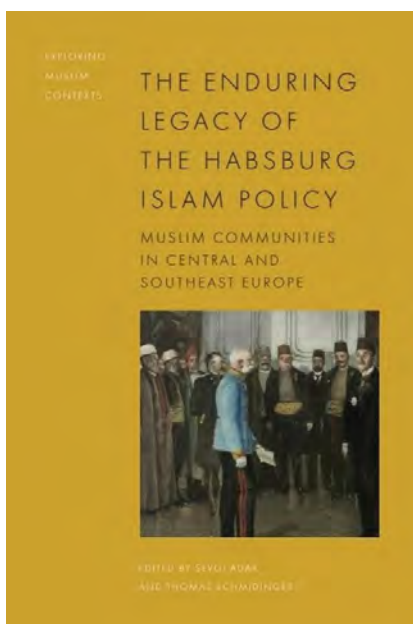
[Link to the publication \(partial access\).](#)

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H. Kalb, R. Potz, B. Schinkele, W. Wieshaider (eds.): Österreichisches Archiv für Recht & Religion 71 (2/2024), Freistadt: Plöchl Verlag.

- **Richard Potz:** *Nachruf auf Eva Maria Synek* (pp. 225-230).
- **B. J. Berkmann:** *Konkordate vor europäischen Gerichten. Spannungen mit EMRK und EU-Recht* (pp. 231-299).
- **Eva Synek:** *Aktuelle Herausforderungen für die bislang ans Patriarchat von Moskau angebotenen Lokalkirchen in der Ukraine, im Baltikum und in der Republik Moldau* (pp. 300-353).

[Link to the publication.](#)



Thomas Schmidinge and Sevgi Adak (eds.): The Enduring Legacy of the Habsburg Islam Policy. Muslim Communities in Central and Southeast Europe. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press 2025.

When Otto Habsburg – son of the last emperor of the Austria-Hungarian Empire Karl I – died in 2011, among those who prayed at the funeral was Mustafa Efendi Cerić, the Reis-ul-ulema of Bosnia and Herzegovina – the highest Islamic office in the country. This was to honour the long-lasting relationship between the bygone empire of the Catholic Habsburgs with Bosnian Muslims. The cornerstone of this relationship was the 1912 Islam Act (Islamgesetz) of the Habsburgs, which granted Islam legal recognition and incorporated it into the imperial system. This book explores the legacy of this Act and the ways in which it continues to impact the legal frameworks and political structures governing Islam and Muslim communities in the successor states of Austria-Hungary.

- Explores the cultural and political dynamics that emerged in Central Europe as the home of centuries-old Muslim communities as well as of recent Muslim

immigrants

- Maps in detail the diverse trajectories followed by the successor states to the Habsburg Empire with regards to the governance of Islam and Muslim communities

[Link to the publication \(full access\).](#)

PUBLICATIONS: Selected Articles

Karl Baier: *Friedrich Schlegels esoterischer Katholizismus im Kontext seines Werks*, in: Viktoria Vitanova-Kerber, Helmut Zander (eds.): *Esoterik Catholicism/Esoterischer Katholizismus*, Oldenbourg: De Gruyter 2025, pp. 135–188.

This paper attempts to show that Friedrich Schlegel is an outstanding example of esoteric religiosity within the Catholic Church. It is not based on any of the concepts of esotericism discussed in current research. Rather, the semantics of Schlegel's eso-/exo-distinction in the various phases of his work will be examined. His esoteric Catholicism is interpreted in particular against the background of his contributions to early Romanticism, the German scholarly debate on freemasonry and his view of mesmerism. Finally, his Viennese circle, in which the somnambulist visionary Franziska Leśniowska played a central role, is discussed in the light of his thoughts on the significance of mesmerism in the secret history of salvation and his arguments for the legitimacy of esoteric groups within the Catholic Church.

[Link to the publication \(full access\).](#)

Karl Baier: *Katholische Seherinnen der frühen Moderne*, in: Lukas Pokorny, Leona Mörth-Nicola, and Kerstin Tretina (eds.): *Blicklichter und Grenzgänge. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf Religion, Gender und das Lebensende*. Paderborn: Brill/Schöningh 2025, pp. 111–137.

The chapter's introductory considerations emphasize that seeresses have had a firm place in European religious history since antiquity. The Catholic Church is thematised as an institution in which religiously conspicuous women such as visionaries could find recognition. Three types of religious visionaries who appeared in Catholicism in the first half of the nineteenth century are then discussed, namely, Marian seeresses, clairvoyant somnambulists, and spiritualists, along with both their characteristics and various cultural and religious contexts. The chapter proceeds with an examination of the social position these women had due to their visions, and gender stereotypes linked to their status are addressed as well as and the role of men in the visionaries' careers. The result is a multifaceted depiction of a form of feminine Catholic spirituality of that era, which has received increasing scholarly attention in recent decades but deserves further investigation.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Astrid Mattes, and Christoph Novak: *Translocal feeds of faith: how mobility and digitalisation shape the religious life of young believers.*, in: *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 40.1 (2025), pp. 23-43.

Our digital and mobile world enables global connections, profoundly influencing the religious lives of young believers who leverage mobility and digitalisation. However, research on digital religion and migration has largely overlooked the role of translocal ties in shaping youth religiosity. This gap is especially significant as the Covid-19 pandemic has amplified digital communication and accelerated religious transformations. To explore how digitally maintained translocal ties impact young believers, we conducted a qualitative study in Vienna, including interviews, mapping activities, and social media tours with youth from various religious traditions.

The findings reveal that young believers use translocal connections as reference points for their individualised faith, maintaining these ties through social media. These "translocal

feeds of faith" refresh and expand offline religious experiences while fostering new digital connections based on personal interests. These feeds serve as a critical lens for understanding lived religion among young believers in a digital age.

[Link to the publication \(full access\).](#)

Astrid Mattes, Miriam Haselbacher, Katherina Limacher, and Christoph Novak:
Curating Religion Online: Young Users' Everyday Religious Consumption and Expression on Social Media. Oxford Academic 2025.

Research on online religious expression often focuses on overt religiosity or religious influencers. This study shifts focus to young, religious Instagram users' everyday digital self-expression and consumption. Using Goffman's concept of role distance, it examines how and why religion is integrated into social media practices. Based on interviews and social media tours with users from seven religious traditions in Vienna, three strategies emerged: abstinence (avoiding religious content), selectivity (targeted sharing/consumption), and high engagement (active religious expression). These strategies are shaped by Instagram's technological affordances, users' religious experiences, and societal discourse on religious diversity.

[Link to the publication \(full access\).](#)

Astrid Mattes, Miriam Haselbacher, Katherina Limacher, and Christoph Novak:
Religion and politics of belonging in digital times: Youth religiosity in focus in: *Frontiers in Political Science*, 6 - 2024 (2025).

Political responses to diversity often impose rigid collective identities, while young people in diverse urban areas navigate flexible, multifaceted belonging both on- and offline. For young believers, religion becomes a key marker of difference, often tied to discrimination. Using the "politics of belonging" framework, this study examines how digital spaces shape identity and boundary-making among young believers. Based on social media tours and interviews with youth from various religious traditions, findings reveal that digital spaces reinforce some boundaries (e.g., between religions) while blurring others (e.g., confessional lines). Algorithms and inclusion-seeking behaviors shape these dynamics, enabling resistance to exclusion.

[Link to the publication \(full access\).](#)

[Discover more publications by our members](#)

RESEARCH: Projects

THIRD PARTY FUNDED PROJECTS



FWF Project: "Open Access Edition 'Schelling's Berlin Philosophy of Revelation'"

By **Christian Danz**. Project number: PUB 1259-P.
Funding amount: 10.680,00 €

The book project Schelling's Berlin Lectures on the Philosophy of Revelation (PUB 1259-P) presents the first scholarly results from the editorial project "Electronic Hybrid Edition of Schelling's Berlin Philosophy of Revelation (1841–1845)" (P 34383-G). It offers an initial evaluation of the sources from F.W.J. Schelling's estate edited in the project and makes them accessible to academic discourse. By drawing on new sources (manuscripts, lecture notes,

diaries), the contributions to this volume clearly show that and how Schelling gradually developed and reshaped his late philosophy and his philosophy of revelation in Berlin from 1841/42 onwards. The project thus makes an important contribution to the study of the historical development of Schelling's philosophy in Berlin against the backdrop of contemporary philosophical and theological debates.

The volume is published in the 'Schellingiana' series by frommann-holzboog (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt). This is obvious because frommann-holzboog also publishes the new sources edited in the edition project in the series F.W.J. Schelling, Münchener und Berliner Nachlass 1811–1854 (ed. by C. Binkelman, C. Danz, P. Schwab). The internationally renowned 'Schellingiana' series (edited by C. Danz, W.E. Ehrhardt, S. Peetz) is the ideal venue for the publication of this volume, as the series is dedicated to the exploration and evaluation of newer sources on Schelling's philosophy. The planned volume Schellings Berliner Vorlesungen über Philosophie der Offenbarung in the Schellingiana series will serve as a commentary on the critical edition of the posthumous texts of the Berlin Philosophy of Revelation in the series 'Münchener und Berliner Nachlass 1811–1854.'

[More information about the project can be found here.](#)



FWF Project: "Traditionalist East Asia"

*In May 2025, the FWF approved the three-years research project "Traditionalist East Asia" (PAT7032224), led by **Lukas K. Pokorny** (University of Vienna) in collaboration with Franz Winter (University of Graz). The project with a budget of 458.527,00 EUR will begin on October 1, 2025.*

Traditionalism is an anti-modernist movement that falls under the alternative religious context and is primarily based on the teachings of French thinker René Guénon (1886–1951).

At its core, Traditionalism is committed to the notion of "perennialism," that is, the idea that there is a universal truth underlying all major religions which must be unearthed. Traditionalists primarily draw on Asian religions and their concepts, such as Islamic Sufism and Indian Vedanta, as well as East Asian religions like Japanese Zen Buddhism, Shinto, and Chinese Daoism, selectively adapting them to their own intellectual framework in an Orientalist manner.

Although Traditionalism's most prominent figures have long since passed away, their ideas and works continue to exert a significant influence to this day. The teachings of the Italian thinker Julius Evola (1898–1974), for example, are an important source of inspiration for the alt-right movement and its various esoteric and neo-pagan offshoots.

Evola's interpretation of Zen Buddhism is particularly

significant in this context. Moreover, Traditionalist interpretations of (East) Asian religions continue to influence their general perception to this day. This project explores how eminent Traditionalist thinkers negotiate East Asian religions and their concepts, and how these continue to live on in various religious and political discourses, sometimes in highly controversial ways, to the present day.

[More information about the project can be found here.](#)



FWF PI Project: CINEMA AND RELIGION IN YUGOSLAVIA 1945-1989 (CINEYU)

Since the end of the Second World War and the establishment of the new socialist state of Yugoslavia religion fell into the margins of society and consequently the cultural scene and was replaced by more historical narratives. These historical narratives focused on the Second World War, especially in the early post-war period became the focal point of the filmmakers. History served for understanding the present and the future: understanding the past including the war to boost the sense of solidarity and the prosperous future of the new state formed on different principles and ethos. Religion became a 'monument of culture' and symbol of the past, generally avoided in cinema in the first decades, only to re-emerge in the decades to follow in peculiar ways: as a critique of society and as the means of cinematic expression.

Was religion really absent from cinema and if not, what was its role in cinema and how did it connect to historical times? In the state of the art no study exists on the subject while existing scholarship is predominantly focused on the 1990s and post-Yugoslav cinema. Cinema and Religion in Yugoslavia 1945-1989 (CINEYU) is the first scientific study that investigates cinematic representations of religion in Yugoslavia between 1945 and 1989, filling the glaring gap in the scientific research. The aim of this project is to analyse the complex interplay between religion and cinema under state socialism. Examining the unexpected and innovative ways in which religion was depicted in Yugoslav films, CINEYU provides a novel methodology and theoretical framework in the scholarly examination of the intersection between religion and film.

The hypothesis of the Project is that the role of religion in society can be assessed through film and specifically through the analysis of film language. CINEYU approaches film as a primary rather than secondary source and introduces historical-archival analysis consolidating *frame* as the method of critical analysis to offer a novel methodology in reading faith through film, placing film language at the heart of scientific inquiry. The Project enhances the historical inquiry into the role of religion in the Balkan Peninsula and serves as a model for future investigations on the subject across different countries in Eastern Europe. As the first systematic study on cinema and religion in

Socialist Yugoslavia the Project led by PI Dr **Milja Radovic** revitalizes the works of seminal film theorists and advances our understandings of cinematic heritage and cultural history of the Yugoslav space.

[More information about the project can be found here.](#)

PAST EVENTS



Conference of the Austrian Society for Religious Studies

On Thursday, 5 June, this year's conference of the Austrian Society for Religious Studies (ÖGRW) on "Animal Ethics and Religions" took place at the Otto Mauer Centre in Vienna. During the event, this highly relevant topic was analysed and discussed by experts from various disciplines as well as from both religious and non-religious perspectives.

[The detailed programme for the conference can be found here.](#)

Farewell lecture by Birgit Heller



On Tuesday, 17 June, Prof. Birgit Heller gave her farewell lecture entitled "Religious knowledge – a male privilege? On the relationship between education and power in religions" in Lecture Hall 6 at the University of Vienna.

Birgit Heller joined the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Vienna as a university assistant in 1985. As she now enters retirement, she can look back on 40 years of continuous academic work at our faculty. In addition to topics in systematic and comparative religious studies, she conducted intensive and wide research in the field of religion(s) and gender.

After welcoming remarks by the dean, Prof. Lehner-Hartmann, and Prof. Hödl as well as students, Prof. Pokorny, Kerstin Tretina and Leona-Mörth-Nicola presented the official celebratory publication dedicated to Prof. Heller, entitled "Blicklichter und Grenzgänge. Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf Religion, Gender und das Lebensende [Illuminations

and Border Walks/Crossings: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Religion, Gender, and the End of Life].” After the farewell lecture, a reception was held in the Arcade Courtyard of the main building of the University of Vienna, which provided an opportunity for exchange and personal conversations. We thank Birgit Heller for her years and her work and research at the faculty and wish her all the best for the future.

RAT-BLOG

During the last months we published articles by our members and guest authors that cover a broad range of topics:

- **Milja Radovic:** [Between Apocalypse and New Life. The 78th Festival de Cannes: 13th – 24th May 2025](#)
 - In this contribution, Milja Radovic reflects on the festival's highlights, the role of the Ecumenical Jury and her own experience as a jury member. The articles explore some of the most interesting movies from the festival, offering thoughtful reviews and insights from the author's perspective.
- **Florian Klug:** [Wenn Bildung nur noch einen Marktwert behält. Die marktwirtschaftliche Ausrichtung von katholischen Hochschulen in den USA und die weitreichende Gefahr eines Ausverkaufs von katholischer Bildungstradition](#)
 - Values become a problem when they are no longer oriented toward the underlying experiences but instead when the capitalist market becomes the decisive factor that determines whether these values are relevant and what their market value is. Massimo Faggioli addresses this issue in his latest book – *Theology and Catholic Higher Education: Beyond Our Identity Crisis, Maryknoll 2024* – in which he examines the current status of the Catholic educational tradition in the United States.

THIRD MISSION ACTIVITIES

RaT members contribute to public discourse by writing in newspapers, giving statements in television and podcasts, and by publishing on our blog:

Notable Media Appearances

- **VDTR Audioguide:** [Exploring Vienna's Religious Tapestry](#)
 - Vienna has always been a place where different cultures and religions come together. Situated at the crossroads between Eastern and Western Europe and the former capital of the multi-ethnic Habsburg Empire, Vienna has a long and rich religious history. It has been marked by contacts between a Roman Catholic majority and Protestantism, Judaism and, relatively early on, Islam. Since the end of the Second World War, Vienna has been characterised by processes of religious diversification through migration and progressive secularisation, which have shaped the city's identity. The Vienna Doctoral School of Theology and Religious Studies VDTR has produced an audio guide that explores the historical and contemporary religious characteristics of Vienna. The city tour invites visitors to learn about Vienna's religious history and present through the themes currently being researched in the theological and religious studies disciplines at the University of Vienna.
- **Magdalena Miedl (ORF Topos):** [Audioguide zeigt das religiöse Wien](#)
 - Why there is still a trace of anti-Semitism even on Judenplatz, what a Viennese coffeehouse has to do with worldviews, and how the Votive Church, consecrated in 1879, recently gained political significance: Religious studies scholars, theologians, and other researchers have contributed their expertise to an audio guide by the University of Vienna. The guide highlights the

diversity of religions that have shaped Vienna since the time of the Roman Vindobona.

Impressum

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