



## RaT-Newsletter



### Dear members and friends of RaT,

With the summer term now behind us, we are pleased to present this latest edition of our newsletter, offering an overview of recent activities and developments at our centre. As always, we highlight some of the key features of this issue in this introduction:

This time, we particularly want to draw your attention to [two new Predoc position openings](#) at the **Vienna Doctoral School of Theology and Research on Religion (VDTR)** (the application deadline is July 19). More details can be found below. **Please spread the word!**

This newsletter also opens with congratulations to RaT fellow and longtime member **Isabella Guanzini** on her new professorship at the Department of Intercultural Philosophy of Religion! Scroll down to learn more about her plans. Our members also continue to make significant contributions to the field, with new publications by **Alexander Filipović**, **Deniz Coşan Eke**, **Agnethe Siquans**, and **Jan-Heiner Tück**. We are also proud to present two new RaT-publications: [RaT Series Volume 42: Robert Musil und die Bibel. „Laientheologie“ zwischen Dichtung und Religion](#), edited by **Artur R. Boelderl**, **Franziska Mader**, and **Andreas S. Telser** and [JRAT 12 \(1/2026\): Religions, Taxes and Societies in History](#), edited by **Idris Nassery** and **Korinna Schönhärl** [forthcoming in July]. Additionally, we are happy to present multiple new third party funded projects, including an FWF Esprit Project on Agamben and Avicenna by **Christopher Rogers** that will be conducted at RaT, starting in October 2026.

The past months have seen a series of **workshops and conferences**, which have fostered lively academic exchange. You can find multiple reports on events organized by RaT and our members below, including a reflection on the farewell lecture by RaT member **Wolfgang Treitler**, a workshop on Antisemitism prevention organized by **Regina Polak** and an international conference on **Alevi studies**.

**We wish all our readers a restful and inspiring summer break!**

Kurt Appel, Noemi Call, Jakob Deibl, Marco Fiorletta, Daniel Kuran, Magdalena Lorenz, Astrid Mattes, Maximilian Stadler, 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](#).

## CONGRATULATIONS!

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New Professorship at the [Department of Intercultural Philosophy of Religion \(Faculty of Catholic Theology\)](#):

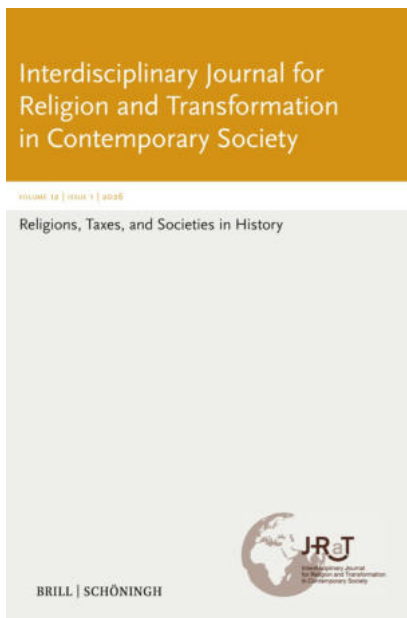
**RaT Senior Research Fellow and longtime member Isabella Guanzini appointed Professor of Philosophy of Religion and Philosophical Anthropology**

The role of the professorship is to address, in both research and teaching, the fields of philosophy of religion, philosophical anthropology, philosophy of God, metaphysics, and other disciplines of philosophy anchored in the curricula, for the degree programs in theology and religious studies. The professorship is intended to continue the department's tradition of engaging with the religious-philosophical and anthropological currents of so-called "Continental Philosophy," in particular those of modernity and contemporary philosophy, and to strengthen the research focus on questions of non-European philosophies and on interreligious and intercultural dialogue.

*We congratulate Isabella Guanzini on her appointment and look forward to collaborating with her on future projects!*

## PUBLICATIONS: JRAT, JRAT Supplementa and RaT Series

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## JRAT 12 (1/2026): Religions, Taxes and Societies in History, edited by Idris Nassery and Korinna Schönhärl

This volume explores the underexamined intersection of religion, taxation, and social order across cultures and centuries. Drawing on Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and Buddhist traditions, the contributions analyze how religious actors and institutions have legitimized, ritualized, contested, or reshaped fiscal systems. Case studies range from rabbinic concepts of tax and citizenship, Islamic legal reasoning on zakāt, Christian social ethics, to Buddhist sacred economies. Rather than viewing taxation as a purely technical or secular matter, the volume approaches it as a site of moral negotiation and theological meaning-making – deeply embedded in visions of justice, solidarity, and divine authority. By tracing the ways in which religious norms have influenced fiscal practices, supported or challenged state power, and articulated ethical obligations around wealth and redistribution, this issue offers new perspectives on the moral economies of past and present. It thereby bridges theology, history, and political economy to illuminate the sacred foundations of taxation.

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



## RaT Series (Volume 41): Robert Musil und die Bibel. „Laientheologie“ zwischen Dichtung und Religion, edited by Artur R. Boelderl, Franziska Mader, and Andreas S. Telser

Building on previous research on Robert Musil's reception and integration of the Bible in his literary and essayistic oeuvre, the essays in the present volume examine interdisciplinary connections among literature, religion, and religious studies, as well as between literature and theology, from historical and systematic perspectives. In addition to more general biblical references, particular attention is paid to Musil's understanding of "God" across the entire spectrum: ranging from God's absence or lack in the further following of Nietzsche on the one hand to God's omnipresence - or even hyperpresence - in secularized form (whether mathematical or artistic) on the other. This oscillation between hope for the Parousia and expectation of the Apocalypse offers a glimpse of the insight that the Austrian writer hoped to gain from what he outlined toward the end of his life under the term "Laientheologie" (lay theology).

[Link to the publication.](#)



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

- **Kurt Appel:** [The Qu'ran as a Gospel for Christians. What Christians can Learn from the Qu'ran about Trinity, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit](#)



- **Fabio Rambelli:** [The Buddha's Dues. Taxation in Historic Buddhist Societies in East Asia, with Special Focus on Japan](#)
- **Idris Nassery:** [The Islamic Ethics of Tax Evasion. Interdependence of Law, Theology and Practice](#)
- **Elisa Klapheck:** [The Privilege of Paying Taxes. Talmudic Views on Taxation and the Creation of a Polity](#)

## PUBLICATIONS: Monographs & Anthologies



**Sigrid Eder, Agnethe Siquans, Kathrin Gies, Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher, Johannes Schnocks (eds.): Psalmen und Macht. Studien zu Macht und Ohnmacht im Psalmenbuch und seiner Rezeption (Bonner Biblische Beiträge 194).** Göttingen: Brill 2026.

As the large amount of evidence shows, power can be identified as a central theme of the Psalter. This volume is dedicated to the discourses of power in the Psalms and the historical contexts in which they were created, received or interpreted. The individual contributions analyse the constructions of the power discourses applying various methodological and hermeneutical approaches used in current research on the Psalms.

They analyse the representation of divine and human power, of powerlessness and resistance, of enemy images and strategies for dealing with them. Examples of reception in Christianity and Islam show the effectiveness of the (re-)presentations of power constructed and reflected in the Psalms.

[Link to the publication.](#)



**Alexander Filipovic: Pragmatismus, Gerechtigkeit, Technikethik.** Paderborn: Brill 2026.

From the perspective of Christian social ethics, this volume sheds light on pragmatism, sharpens the normative approach of just participation, and confronts central anthropological and techno-ethical challenges of the 21st century. It shows how socio-ethical challenges can be better met through philosophical, political-ethical, and techno-ethical reassurances.

[Link to the publication.](#)

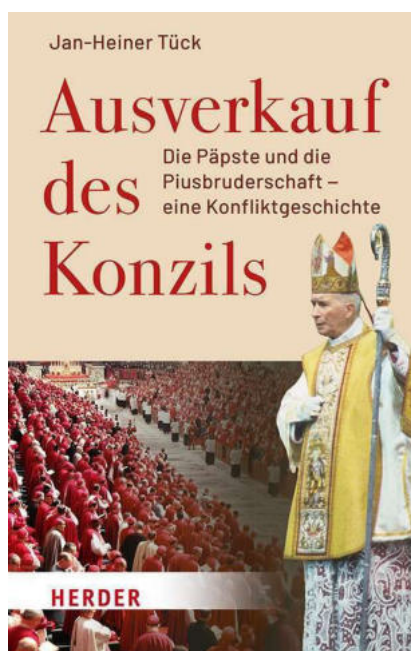


**Corinna Körting, Annette Schellenberg-Lagler (eds.): Gerichtsprophetie. Zum aktuellen Stand der alttestamentlichen Forschung.** Evangelische Verlagsanstalt 2026.

Prophecy of judgment is an integral part of the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible. But is it also the catalyst for the transformation of prophecy into literature? Under what religious and political conditions is prophecy of judgment transmitted and reinterpreted? What does it say about the relationship between Israel and the nations? What function does it serve in times of salvation?

The contributions in this volume address these questions through analyses of individual prophetic writings. They were first presented and discussed at the conference of the Old Testament section of the WGTh, which took place in Tübingen from March 14 to 16, 2025.

[Link to the publication.](#)



**Jan-Heiner Tück: Ausverkauf des Konzils. Die Päpste und die Piusbruderschaft – eine Konfliktgeschichte.** Freiburg i. Br.: Herder 2026.

With the Society of St. Pius X's announcement that it will consecrate bishops on July 1, 2026, the specter of a schism looms once again. Jan-Heiner Tück examines the history of conflict between the post-conciliar popes and the Society of St. Pius X and its founder, Marcel Lefebvre.

At the center stands the dispute over the Second Vatican Council. Do the renewed liturgy, ecumenical and interreligious openness, and the recognition of religious freedom amount to a "betrayal of tradition," or are the reforms to be read as a renewal from the origin? Despite decades of efforts at dialogue, the theological differences in teaching could not be resolved.

Thus, a pastoral strategy in the spirit of charity seems to present itself. But does such an approach not lead to a relativization of the Council? Pope Leo XIV, who aligns his pontificate explicitly with the teachings of Vatican II, cannot at the same time endorse a sell-out of the Council. That would be a contradiction. But what room for maneuver does he have?

[Link to the publication.](#)



**Senol Yagdi, Christian Danz (eds.): Die Wahrheitsfrage als Herausforderung interreligiöser Hermeneutik. Herausforderungen und Chancen in einer pluralen Gesellschaft.** Göttingen: Brill 2026.



This volume explores the question of truth from the perspective of interreligious hermeneutics and invites readers to reconsider the question of truth within its theological, philosophical, and interreligious context. The contributions offer different perspectives on how to address religious diversity and, at the same time, provide insights for a hermeneutics capable of accommodating plurality.

[Link to the publication.](#)

## PUBLICATIONS: Selected Articles

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**Deniz Coşan Eke: The construction of collective religious memory through religious education: the (In)visibility of Alevis at schools in the European context**, in: British Journal of Religious Education 2026, pp. 1–17.

This article examines how religious education in schools shapes the construction of collective religious memory among minority groups, focusing on the Alevis as a religious minority community in European contexts. With increasing migration and official recognition of Alevis in European countries, different conditions for teaching Alevism in public schools have arisen regarding the standardisation and incorporation of Alevi teachings into school curricula. Using a comparative qualitative case study of Turkey, Germany, Austria, and England, the article analyzes how different governance regimes of religious education structure the visibility, standardisation, and legitimacy of Alevi religious knowledge. The findings indicate that while institutional inclusion enhances recognition, it also generates pressures towards standardisation that reshape internal diversity. By advocating for the promotion of common religious values in education, this research seeks to foster a deeper understanding of the role of religious education in shaping collective memory and identity formation and to shed light on the challenges and opportunities for minority religious groups in Europe.

[Link to the publication.](#)

**Christian Danz: Faith and Paradox: A Contemporary Consideration of Karl Barth's and Paul Tillich's Reception of Martin Luther's Conception of Faith**, in: Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie 2026, pp. 1–15.

The article discusses the concept of faith in three sections based on Paul Tillich's and Karl Barth's reflections. For both, the concept of paradox becomes the focus of their understanding of faith, especially in their writings after the First World War, and both refer to the theology of Martin Luther. However, both Tillich and Barth use the reference to the Reformation's understanding of faith to construct a specifically modern understanding of religion. This is taken up in the concluding section of this article and developed into a hermeneutical conception. Faith, according to the proposal of these explanations, is to be understood as a symbolically productive reality of the Christian religion.

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

[Discover more publications by our members](#)

## THIRD PARTY FUNDED PROJECTS

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New FWF Project at the Chair of Eastern Christian Studies (at the Faculty of Catholic Theology):

**"Greek Catholic Elite Formation in Vienna (1775–1918). People, Networks,**



## and Ecclesial Identities in the Habsburg Empire"

In March 2026, the FWF approved a research project submitted by Univ.-Prof. Dr. Dr. Thomas Mark Németh, titled "Greek Catholic Elite Formation in Vienna (1775–1918). People, Networks, and Ecclesial Identities in the Habsburg Empire."

One subproject aims to create a prosopographic database of the approximately 1,200 Greek Catholic students in Vienna in collaboration with the Austrian Center for Digital Humanities at the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ACDH, ÖAW). The second subproject focuses on the Greek Catholic students at the St. Augustine Seminary (Frintaneum, 1816–1918). The project is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2026.

- **Start: Starting date pending**
- **Funding amount: € 450,943**



New FWF project/DFG research group on Ancient Israelite Epistemology (KIN4363725):

## "Thinking About the (Non-)Knowability of God"

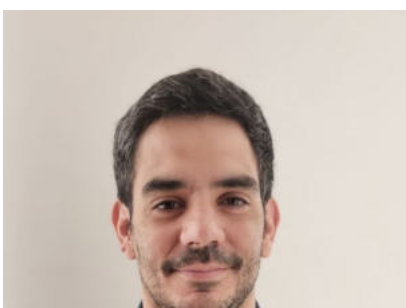
Led by **Prof. Dr. Annette Schellenberg-Lagler**, the project examines how the ancient Israelites thought about the question of how God can be known.

The project is **part of the DFG Research group *Epistemologies of the Divine: In Search of the Religious Thought Structures (Denkstrukturen) of Ancient Palestine/Israel*** (Bonn, Leipzig, Wuppertal, Vienna), which investigates the intellectual history of ancient Israel and explores how knowledge of the divine was constructed, structured, remembered, transmitted, and expressed.

In the Austrian subproject the focus is on the question of God's knowability, an aspect which is essential for all knowledge constructions about the divine.

- **Start: September 1, 2026**
- **End: August 31, 2030**
- **Funding amount: € 451,926**

[For more information, please visit the project website.](#)



New FWF Esprit Project at the Research Centre RaT (10.55776/ESP2214725 ):

## "Ma'na and the Hole of Language: Agamben and Avicenna"

The project by **Christopher Rogers** investigates the relationship between Islamic philosophy, especially



the thought of Ibn Sīnā (980–1037), and Giorgio Agamben's philosophy of language. Its central aim is to rethink the relation between philosophy, revelation, and language through the Arabic concept *ma'nā* and Agamben's notion of the "sayable."

Drawing on Agamben's claim that Western metaphysics is grounded in the simultaneous exclusion and presupposition of language's outside, the project investigates how Avicennian thought both reproduces and exceeds this structure.

To clarify its status, the project places *ma'nā* in dialogue with Agamben's interpretation of the Stoic λεκτόν (*lekton*) as an incorporeal threshold between words, concepts, and things. While Avicenna ultimately subordinates language to a hierarchical metaphysics of intellect and emanation, traces of the excluded linguistic dimension remain embedded in the structural role of *ma'nā*.

On this basis, the project proposes a new understanding of revelation not as a set of propositions but as a linguistic event that exposes the limits of metaphysics. Combining close readings of Arabic philosophical texts with contemporary continental philosophy, it seeks to develop new intercultural perspectives on Islamic and Western traditions of thought beyond the opposition between reason and revelation.

- **Start: October 1, 2026**
- **End: September 30, 2029**
- **Funding amount: € 349,732**

Two new Principal Investigator Projects at the Department of Biblical Studies (Old Testament):

## **The Development of the Manichaean and Christian Doctrines in the course of Biblical Polemics in the Latin West (Evgenia Moiseeva)**

This project hypothesizes that biblical polemics were a primary catalyst in the development of both Western Manichaean and early Latin Christian self-definition. Rather than evolving in isolation, the tradition of Manichaean biblical criticism emerged through direct, competitive interaction with early Catholic communities in the West. Concurrently, anti-Manichaean discourse fundamentally shaped the exegetical frameworks of foundational Latin Christian thinkers, ranging from Ambrose of Milan and Ambrosiaster to Caesarius of Arles. This suggests that the early Latin tradition of biblical exegesis was forged directly in the course of this inter-religious conflict.

To test this hypothesis, the study implements a methodology that pairs rigorous, historically grounded textual analysis with the philosophy of dialogue. This approach will help explain the mutual long-term impact of the opponents who took radical position vis-à-vis each other, while moving closer to each other in some instances.

- **Start: November 1, 2026**
- **End: October 31, 2030**
- **Funding amount: € 466,949**

## **Lexicographical Analysis of Jerome's Genesis Translation (Konrad Kremser)**

A new FWF project at the department of Biblical Studies will be devoted to Jerome's translation of Genesis and its significance for biblical and intellectual history. The project, submitted by Dr. Konrad Kremser, was recently approved and, for the first time, systematically examines the Church Father's translation decisions in comparison with the Hebrew source text. It focuses on the Vulgate's Genesis version as well as the

Hebraicae quaestiones in Genesim.

By aligning the Hebrew lemmas with their Latin equivalents, the project aims to produce an analytical Hebrew–Latin dictionary that will offer new insights into Jerome’s working methods, late antique translation practices, and the development of theological terminology. Bringing together biblical philology, Latin linguistics, and translation studies, the project closes an existing research gap. The results are also intended to lay a foundation for further research on the Vulgate.

- **Start:** Starting date pending
- **Funding amount:** € 435,816

## GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

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### Two Ernst Mach Grants awarded in association with RaT:

We are pleased to announce that during the summer term of 2026, two prestigious Ernst Mach Grants – funded by Austria’s Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD) – have been awarded to young researchers to conduct their projects at the Research Centre RaT (host institution) under the supervision of Kurt Appel.

#### **Paolo Colizzi: A Platonic Peace for Europe. Nicholas of Cusa on Interreligious Dialogue**

The project aims to analyze the philosophy of peace developed by Nicholas of Cusa, a crucial chapter in Renaissance reflection on interreligious dialogue, by placing at its center his *De pace fidei*, written in response to the fall of Constantinople in 1453. To address this crisis, Cusanus develops a model of interreligious peace grounded in a philosophical and theological reconfiguration of the conditions of knowledge and truth. The main objective of the research is to show how, through a creative reappropriation of Platonism, Cusanus develops a conception of knowledge rooted in the ineffability of the divine and in the conjectural nature of human understanding. On this basis, interreligious dialogue does not emerge as a merely pragmatic strategy of coexistence. Rather, it expresses a structural necessity grounded in the plurality and limits of human perspectives. In this way, religious differences are interpreted as diverse modes of participation in a truth that transcends every single doctrinal formulation—even Christian theology itself. In reconstructing the metaphysical and epistemological foundations of this model, the project situates *De pace fidei* within Cusanus’ broader philosophical system and explores its contemporary relevance for debates on interreligious dialogue and the idea of Europe as a space of cultural and religious mediation.

#### **Mattia Fiorilli: Idealist Foundations of Performativity: Kantian-Hegelian Roots of Butler’s Theory of Subjectivity**

The project investigates the German Idealist roots of Judith Butler’s conception of subjectivity. It first shows how Butler’s early framework is rooted in a conception of critique and constituted ontology inherited from Foucault, whose philosophical lineage traces back to Kant. It then reconstructs Butler’s subsequent attempt to overcome the solipsistic and normative limits of Foucauldian critique by drawing on Hegelian recognition and a conception of interdependent, ec-static subjectivity from which political and moral obligations emerge. In doing so, it will show that Butler develops an ethico-political proposal grounded in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* and his theory of recognition, yet one that ultimately gives their dialectical movement a quasi-transcendental character.

## VDTR: Vienna Doctoral School of Theology and Research on Religion

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### Spread the word: Job announcement for two predoc-positions!

We would like to share [a job announcement at the University of Vienna for two predoctoral University assistants](#) as part of the [Vienna Doctoral School of Theology and Research on Religion VDTR](#).

The VDTR is a joint doctoral school of the Faculty of Catholic Theology, the Faculty of Protestant Theology, and the Research Centre "Religion and Transformation." It offers research-led, interdisciplinary doctoral education spanning Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox and Islamic theology; religious studies; Islamic studies; Jewish studies; and philosophy of religion.

- **Application deadline: July 19, 2026.**
- **Full job posting and application:** <https://jobs.univie.ac.at/job/University-assistant-predocctoral/1409324833/>
- **More on the VDTR:** <https://vdtr.univie.ac.at/>

For questions about the position, please contact the VDTR ([contact.vdtr@univie.ac.at](mailto:contact.vdtr@univie.ac.at))



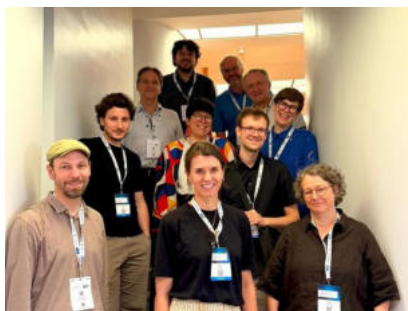
## PhD Writing Week: September 14–18, 2026

The VDTR cordially invites its PhD students to join the Phd Writing Week. We look forward to daily writing sessions and informal discussions over coffee or tea breaks. You can organise your time as you wish and participate as much or as little as you like. Please bring your laptops and everything else you need for writing.

Together, we will create a productive atmosphere in which to achieve our writing goals! Join us to get some thesis writing done in good company and enjoy coffee breaks with your colleagues!

*If you have any questions, please email [contact.vdtr@univie.ac.at](mailto:contact.vdtr@univie.ac.at).*

## PAST EVENTS



### June 30–July 3, 2026: Closed Panel of the Research Centre RaT at the European Academy of Religion: Religion in Dialogue. Transformations, Challenges, and Chances

At the 2026 European Academy of Religion (EuARe) in Rome, the closed panel *Religion in Dialogue: Transformations, Challenges, and Chances* brought together twelve members of the Research Centre RaT from a range of disciplinary backgrounds for a two-day exchange on how dialogue can be understood as a transformative practice under contemporary social, political, ecological, and cultural conditions. Rather than limiting dialogue to interreligious exchange, the panel approached it as a broader engagement between religious and secular worlds, encompassing encounters with politics, the arts, the natural sciences, ecology, and critical theory. The contributions examined both the opportunities and the tensions that emerge where religious traditions interact with other forms of knowledge and practice.

[Click here to read the full report.](#)



### June 26–27, 2026: International Conference on Alevi Studies: Alevi Education



The 1st "International Conference on Alevi Studies: Alevi Education", organised by the discipline of Alevi Theological Studies and held on 26 and 27 June 2026 in the Dekanatssitzungssaal of the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Vienna, proved to be a great academic success.

Researchers from various countries gathered in Vienna to discuss current developments, challenges and future prospects for Alevi education. With its interdisciplinary programme, the conference sent a strong signal regarding the growing international recognition of Alevi Theological studies as an independent field of research.

The conference programme was characterised by a wide variety of topics. The talks highlighted historical, theological, religious educational and social aspects of Alevi education and presented both ongoing and completed research projects. In doing so, they brought together different national and institutional perspectives and embedded them within a shared academic dialogue.

[Click here to read the full conference report.](#)

*Photocredits: (C) Erdal Kalayci and Nurten Kalayci*



### **June 23, 2026: Farewell Lecture by Prof. Wolfgang Treitler: „Wer wird bleiben?“ Abraham Sutzkevers Gedicht – ein Schlusspunkt.**

Since literature recalls what is lost or marginalized in (theological) theoretical frameworks, it can become a thorn in the side of theological thought. This thorn digs all the deeper when Christianity fails to recognize its belonging to the Jewish tradition. That is why, in his farewell lecture, Wolfgang Treitler began with a poem by Abraham Sutzkever, who was born in Smorgon in 1913 and survived the Shoah. Sutzkever took Yiddish – a relic from vanished days, widely ignored – with him to Israel. Even there, it remained on the margins. Yet by continuing to write poetry in Yiddish, he kept the sound of that language audible in Israel. In this, a fundamental dynamic reveals itself, one that remains watchful for history's vanquished.

In parting, Treitler placed the poem that gave the lecture its title, *Was wird bleiben?* („What Will Remain?“), at the center and drew out its thematic motifs: allusions to the Ten Words and the Shema Yisrael with its life-affirming imperative, passed down through generations. The form of poetry can give Christian theology something to think about: the content expressed in it remains open to interpretation, resisting any final determination. A thorn in the side of every need for conceptual fixity.

Another lesson can be learned from Sutzkever's poem: in his lyric, he takes up key strands of the Jewish tradition, breaks them, and transforms them. *Was wird bleiben? Wer wird bleiben?* ("What will remain? Who will remain?") What will remain is the

nameless mystery that yields to no chatter and emerges in silence—that silence which ought to form the core of all theology.

(We want to thank Lukas Pallitsch for providing this recap.)



### **June 18, 2026: Celebrating 16 Years of RaT!**

On June 18, the Research Centre Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society (RaT) marked its 16th anniversary with a festive gathering in the Dean's Hall of the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Vienna. Around 60 guests - current and former staff, members, and long-time companions - came together to celebrate this milestone.

The evening began with a warm welcome and a reflective address by our speaker, Kurt Appel, who looked back on RaT's successful journey over the past 16 years. The atmosphere was lively and full of appreciation for the centre's achievements.

A highlight of the night was a musical performance by Noemi Call, Jakob Deibl, and Jakob Kammerer, which added a special touch to the celebration. It was a wonderful opportunity to reconnect, share memories, and look ahead to the future of RaT.



### **June 15, 2026: Transdisciplinary Workshop: „Was tun nach dem 7. Oktober? Relektüre der Antisemitismusprävention und des Kampfes gegen Antisemitismus“**

In cooperation with the Research Centre *"Religion and Transformation"* and the Coordinating Committee for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, the Faculty of Catholic Theology at the University of Vienna, under the direction of Regina Polak, hosted a full-day transdisciplinary workshop on the topic „Was tun nach dem 7. Oktober? Relektüre der Antisemitismusprävention und des Kampfes gegen Antisemitismus“ (*"What to Do After October 7? Re-reading Antisemitism Prevention and the Struggle Against Antisemitism"*).

In their keynote presentations, Dr. Eva Zeglovits (social scientist, IFES), Prof. Helga Embacher (contemporary historian, University of Salzburg), Prof. Martina Bär (fundamental theologian, University of Graz), and Prof. Julia Bernstein (sociologist, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences) provided an overview of current challenges in the field of antisemitism. These include, among others, Israel-related antisemitism, antisemitic attitudes among young people and university-educated individuals, as well as a general lack of understanding of antisemitism. A study commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Education (BMBWF), which examined the fight against and prevention of antisemitism at public universities in Austria, found, for example, that while universities are already undertaking extensive work against antisemitism, they predominantly treat it as a historical phenomenon, whereas present-day manifestations are still insufficiently addressed at the structural, didactic, and institutional levels.

In the subsequent discussions, experts from academia, civil society, the media, and religious communities focused on identifying challenges, research questions, and practical measures for the prevention and combating of antisemitism. Topics included the role of social media as an "accelerant," the responsibilities in the training of teachers and students at universities of teacher education, and the need for interdisciplinary cooperation between Christian, Jewish, and Islamic theologies, Jewish studies, the social

sciences, and religious studies—among other fields—on questions such as the role of emotions in antisemitism or theological interpretations of contemporary forms of antisemitism.



The event concluded in the evening with a lecture by Dr. Doron Rabinovici on the topic: „Es war einmal nie wieder. Angesichts der Ausbreitung des neuen Antisemitismus“ (*"Once Upon a Time, Never Again: Facing the Spread of the New Antisemitism."*). In front of 80 participants, Dr. Rabinovici outlined, using numerous disturbing examples, the historically unprecedented form of Jew-hatred that Jews have been confronting globally since October 7, 2023 – a hatred that threatens their safety and lives in Austria as well as democracy itself. He concluded with the words: „Es wird schärfer werden. Es wird mehr Rückgrat brauchen, und es wird auch mehr Rückgrat geben.“ (*"It will grow more intense. It will require more backbone – and there will be more backbone."*).

**The lecture can be listened to here:** <https://youtu.be/DR2McGuXPIs>

The event was covered by *Die FURCHE* on June 18, 2026, and by the Ö1 program *"Im Fokus: Religion und Ethik"* on June 17, 2026.

*Portrait of Doron Rabinovici: (C) Lukas Beck*

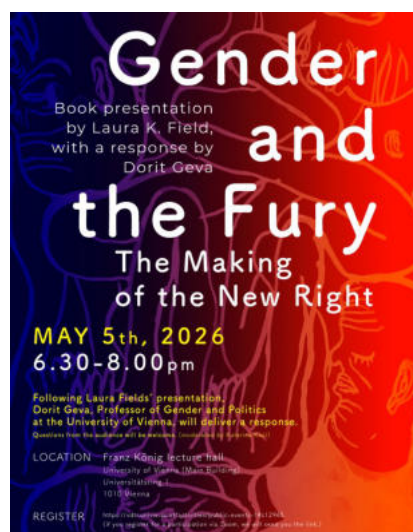
## June 08–09, 2026: International Conference: Aesthetics of Scripture: Contemporary Approaches to the Bible and Art



[\(C\) Wikimedia Commons](#)

From June 8 to 9, the conference “Aesthetics of Scripture: Contemporary Approaches to the Bible and Art” took place in the meeting room of the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Catholic Theology. The event was organized by the Research Centre “Religion and Transformation” in collaboration with the “Center for the Study of Bible, Culture, and Modernity” and the “Network for European Philosophy and the Jewish Tradition” at the University of Antwerp.

We were particularly pleased that Sebastian Schütze, Rector of the University of Vienna, opened the conference with an address. The participants - including speakers from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Harvard, and Stanford - presented their contributions on the dialogue between biblical narrative and visual art from the fields of art history, philosophy of religion, and literature.



### May 05, 2026: Gender and the Fury. The Making of the New Right. Book Presentation by Laura K. Field

On 5 May 2026, Laura Field, a political scientist focusing on the rise of the new right in the USA, presented her book *Furious Minds* in a workshop with specialists on the religious right from the University of Vienna, working in social ethics, sociology of religion, and fundamental theology: Linda Kreuzer, Katharina Limacher, Astrid Mattes, and Andreas Telser. The session brought together scholars working on related questions for a close, discussion-based engagement with the book's arguments. A summary of the book is available [here](#).

In the evening, a public lecture opened the discussion to a broader audience, with comments from Dorit Geva, Professor of Politics and Gender at the University of Vienna, and moderation by Katerina Koci. The event was organised by Katerina Koci as part of her FWF project *Two Sarahs: Victimhood in the Bible and Its Reception* (10.55776/N1047), together with the Research Centre for Religion and

## THIRD MISSION ACTIVITIES

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

### Contributions to the Press

- **Elisabeth Holzleithner:** [Ohne Solidarität keine Demokratie](#) - Rudolphina
  - In a video discussion, legal philosopher Elisabeth Holzleithner and political scientist Barbara Prainsack explore the vital role of solidarity in democratic societies. They delve into why solidarity means far more than mere willingness to help, how trust in institutions is essential, and the ways in which social security fosters democratic cohesion.
  - [Click here to watch the discussion on YouTube.](#)
- **Elisabeth Holzleithner:** [Gedanken - Ö1](#) - "The Wary Virtue" - Legal philosopher Elisabeth Holzleithner on justice and how we might bridge our differences.

### Impressum

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