

RaT-Newsletter



Dear members and friends of RaT,

The summer term 2024 has arrived and with it comes a new edition of our newsletter!

In this edition, we want to welcome our two newest members, **Christoph Augustynowicz** and **Constanza Cordoni** and present the research centre's latest publications: A new volume in the JRAT Supplementa series: *Religious Experience, Secular Reason and Politics around 1945. Sources for Rethinking Religion and Spirituality in Contemporary Societies* (edited by **Hans Schelkshorn** and **Johan Westerink**), and two new volumes of our RaT series: *Agents of Violence. Non-Governmental Armed Forces in Southwest Asia, North Africa and beyond* (edited by **Rüdiger Lohker** and **Katharina Ivanyi**), and the monography *The Heir. A Christology*, by **Leonardo Paris**.

Furthermore, we want to congratulate VDTR graduate **Esther Heiss** on her new appointment as director of the Jewish Museum Eisenstadt! Last but not least, we want to mention a newly approved third party funded project, led by **Regina Polak**, carried out in cooperation with RaT, titled: *Between Intensification and Relativisation. Modalities and Mechanisms of Religious Change among Muslim and Christian Refugees from Syria in Germany, Austria and Switzerland*.

Scroll down to learn more about upcoming events, other books and articles by our members, the latest entries in our [blog](#), and much more...

We wish everyone a good start into the new semester!

Kurt Appel, Noemi Call, Jakob Deibl, Daniel Kuran, Magdalena Lorenz, Astrid

Mattes, and Marian Weingartshofer

PS: Please consider forwarding our newsletter to those interested in the topics we work on! Want to subscribe? Just click [here](#).

NEW MEMBERS: Welcome to RaT!



ao. Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Christoph Augustynowicz

*Head of the Department of Eastern European History
Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies*

My academic interests are focused on relations between the Habsburgs and Eastern Europe in the early modern period on the Galician-Polish border region research on the cultural history of Poland, on social history of Poland(-Lithuania) with special consideration of the Jews and images and stereotypes of Eastern Europe (vampire(ism) belief) and recently especially on history of historiography (concepts of East Central Europe). Concerning the activities of the Research Centre „Religion and Transformation“ my interests in jewish-christian coexistence with a focus on Poland on the one hand and on the belief in Vampires on the other hand can be stressed.

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



Mag. Dr. Dr. Constanza Cordoni de Gmeinbauer, Privatdoz.

*Department of Jewish Studies
Faculty of Historical and Cultural Studies*

As a scholar of Jewish Studies, I am delighted to have joined the interdisciplinary research centre Religion and Transformation.

My research focuses on the literature and culture of rabbinic Judaism in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. I am particularly interested in the so-called literature of the sages, a literature that can be regarded as exegetical in character and that is rich in its combination of hermeneutics and narrative.

A common denominator of my two current lines of research is an interest in sources from the early Middle Ages. On the one hand, I am investigating the literary representation of the Land of Israel in late antique and early medieval Jewish sources in a project funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) - *The Land of Israel in Geonic Times*. On the other hand, I am working on the reception of the Book of Job in early medieval Jewish literature.

To learn more about Constanza Cordoni's research, [visit her profile on our website](#).

PUBLICATIONS: JRAT and RaT Series



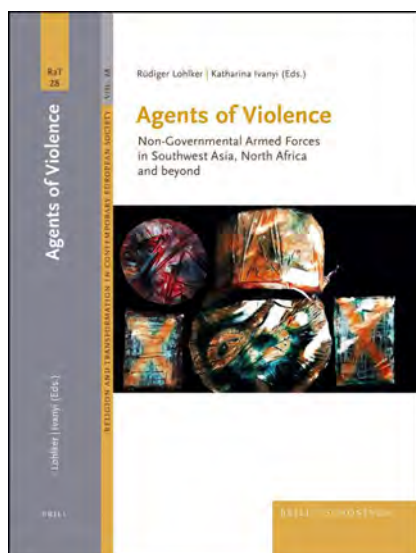
JRAT Supplementa, Volume 3: *Religious Experience, Secular Reason and Politics around 1945. Sources for Rethinking Religion and Spirituality in Contemporary Societies*, edited by **Hans Schelkshorn** and **Herman Westerink**.

The emergence and downfall of fascism and the Nazi regime in the mid-twentieth century mark the definitive decline of Europe's geopolitical hegemony. The end of the Second World War is the beginning of both decolonization processes and the founding of the United Nations as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this context, we find a variety of philosophical interpretations on religious traditions, secular conceptualizations of reason and political theories. In and outside of Europe, philosophical and spiritual movements develop different political orientations, whereas fruitful dialogues between religious and secular philosophical positions emerge. In this volume, such positions and interactions are explored in an exemplary way.

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

Hans Schelkshorn and Herman Westerink have previously co-edited several, thematically connected RaT publications:

- [JRAT 5 \(1/2019\): Religious Experience, Secular Reason and Politics around 1900. Sources of the Contemporary Turn to Spirituality](#)
- [RaT Series volume 12: Reformation\(en\) und Moderne. Philosophisch-theologische Erkundungen](#)

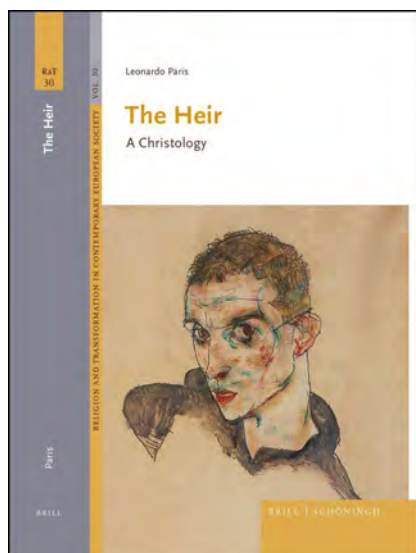


RaT Series Volume 28: *Agents of Violence. Non-Governmental Armed Forces in Southwest Asia, North Africa and beyond*, edited by **Rüdiger Lohker** and **Katharina Ivanyi**.

The violent conflicts of recent decades in Southwest Asia, North Africa and adjacent regions are often read in terms of the conventional parameters of an international order of sovereign nation states. However, in recent years, non-governmental armed forces have emerged to play an increasingly significant role in the political, social and military fields of the region. These forces are usually analyzed as isolated actors, operating in their respective local or regional spheres, without attention to wider structural commonalities. The aim of this volume is to examine

these groups not only as military actors, but also as forces of social significance, indicative of substantial historical shifts relating to notions of sovereignty, beyond the usual prioritization of the state. Comparing the nature, operation and discourses of such forces allows for new understandings of their social impact, beyond common reductionist approaches of securitized worldviews and essentializing lines of inquiry centered on religion.

[Link to the publication.](#)



RaT Series Volume 30: *The Heir. A Christology*, by **Leonardo Paris**

A man stands out on the scene, a free man. He puts forth a new way of relating to the God of Israel. He is the heir. He is the one who knows how to receive and communicate what has been given to him. He does so by impressing his unique trait on it. Many are fascinated by this figure. Others are scared to the point of precipitating events until the man is killed. However, precisely in his death, this figure will release his vision of God in all its strength. A vision that, from that moment in time, will never cease to attract, to scandalize, and to provoke reality. Today as yesterday. From this story, the idea of God emerges forever overturned, and with it the forms of power, freedom, and human identity. In this book, Christian theology is presented through engaging events, with the flavour of a contemporary novel. A fresh and groundbreaking Christology.

[Link to the publication.](#)

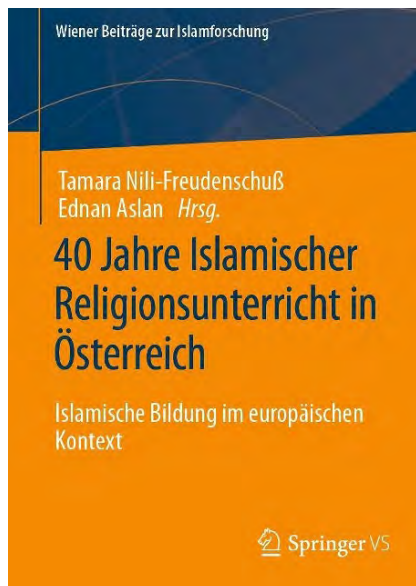
Interdisciplinary Journal for
Religion and Transformation in
Contemporary Society



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

- [Global Religious History and Religious Comparison: a Programmatic Outline](#), by **Julian Strube**
- [Church Life LIVE! Ritual Innovations and Repertoires of Belonging in Czech and Slovak Christian Communities during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), by **Barbora Spalová** and **Adam Gajdoš**
- [Encounters of the Brahmanical Sanskrit Tradition with Persian Scholarship in the Mughal Empire. Genealogical Critique and the Relevance of the Pre-colonial Past in a Global Religious History](#), by **Michael Bergunder**
- [The Potentials and Limits of Going Global Islam's Social Contingency and Absolute Truth in Arabic Sociologies of Religion](#), by **Florian Zemmin**

PUBLICATIONS: Monographs & Anthologies



Ednan Aslan, Tamara Nili-Freudenschuß (eds.): *40 Jahre Islamischer Religionsunterricht in Österreich. Islamische Bildung im europäischen Kontext.* Wiesbaden: Springer VS 2024.

Austria was one of the first Western European countries to recognize Islam as a public corporation. This historic recognition goes back to the long, multifaceted history of Islam in Austria and fulfilled a long-cherished wish of Muslims in Austria, which also exists in many other European countries.

For 40 years, this recognition has enabled Muslims to teach Islam as a regular subject in public schools. The findings from these many years of experience in the field of Islamic religious education are of great importance for other European countries that are also striving to integrate Islamic religious education into the public school system.

This volume offers a comprehensive overview from the perspectives of religious education and didactics, social and educational policy, law and empirical research. It sheds light on the 40-year history of Islamic religious education in Austria and shows what contribution religious education can make to the integration of Muslim children into society.

[Link to the publication.](#)



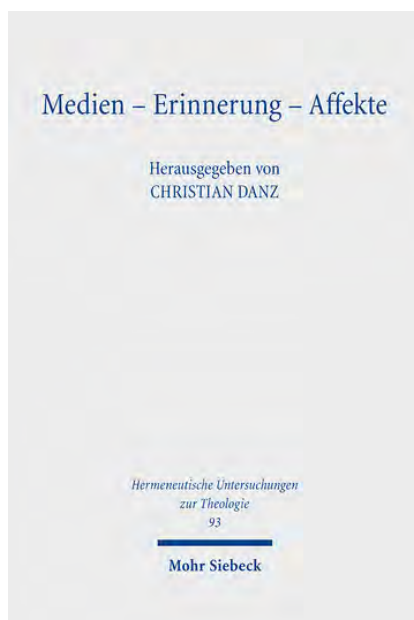
Constanza Cordoni: *Reconfiguring the Land of Israel. A Rabbinic Project.* Leiden/Boston: Brill 2024.

This book is about ways in which the land of Israel, the homeland of the most paradigmatic of all diasporas, was envisioned in late antiquity and the early Middle Ages in the literature of the sages. It is about the Land according to the redefined Judaism that emerged in the centuries following the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE. This Judaism replaced the temple cult with Torah study - a study that pertained in part to that very temple cult, that became a portable homeland, and that reconfigured the Land.

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

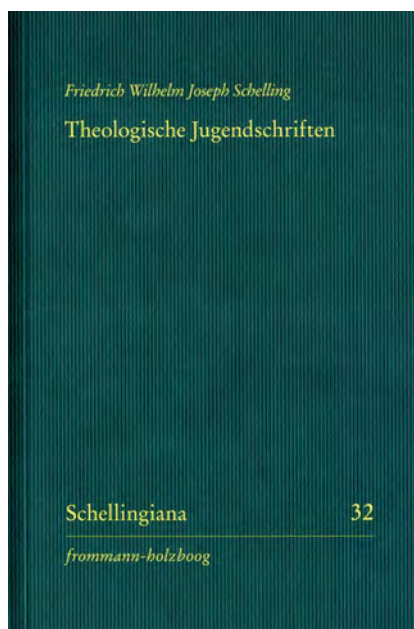
Christian Danz (ed.): *Medien – Erinnerung – Affekte. Dimensionen einer Theologie der Kultur.* Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2024.

Media, memory and affects are fundamental phenomena of culture and religion. For many years now, they have been the focus of cultural, social and religious studies as well as theology. How these



phenomena are understood and discussed depends on the underlying understanding of theology, religion and culture. Depending on what one understands by religion, one will have a different view of its function in and for culture and its forms. This volume takes up these complex, heterogeneous and controversial debates on media, memory and affects and attempts to bring them together under the guiding concept of "theology of culture".

[Link to the publication.](#)



Christopher Arnold, Christian Danz, Michael Hackl (eds.): *Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling: Theologische Jugendschriften*. Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog 2023.

This volume presents a selection of all of Schelling's major early writings for the first time. They provide an insight into Schelling's theological, historical and philosophical areas of interest during his time as a student in Tübingen in the years 1790-1794 and document his intensive reception of the many upheavals and innovations in Old and New Testament scholarship, as well as his engagement with the philosophy of Kant and Plato. Furthermore, during this period Schelling presented an innovative concept of biblical hermeneutics that takes into account the historical-critical standards of the time. These writings are significant not least for the understanding of Schelling's later historical and moral philosophical work. The volume contains a detailed introduction, explanatory notes on the texts, an extensive bibliography and indexes.

[Link to the publication.](#)



Christian Danz (ed.): *The Impact of German Idealism on Religion*. Special Issue of Religions 12 (2023)

The intention of the Special Issue "The Impact of German Idealism on Religion" is to comprehensively reconstruct the developments of modern philosophy of religion emanating from German Idealism in a systematic perspective and to analyze the contribution of German Idealism to the formation of the modern understanding of religion.

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



Birgit Heller, Edith Franke (eds.): *Religion und Geschlecht*. Berlin: De Gruyter 2024.

Religion and gender are closely intertwined: Religious traditions, beliefs, symbols and practices are gendered; gender roles, stereotypes and ideals are religiously underpinned and sanctioned. Not only religious traditions themselves, but also the study and presentation of religions are predominantly characterized by androcentric perspectives. The subject of this introduction is an overview of the methodological and theoretical foundations of gender studies in religious studies as well as a revision of data and perspectives on the history of religion based on extensive research findings. In addition, selected systematic analyses reveal connections and differences between various religious traditions with regard to the construction, idealization, standardization and symbolic use of gender. In addition, exemplary fields of social interaction are used to illustrate the diverse interactions and intersectionality of religion, gender and society. The volume demonstrates the aims and approach of gender-sensitive religious studies and offers correspondingly revised insights into the history of religion.

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



H. Kalb, R. Potz, B. Schinkele, W. Wieshaider (eds.): *Österreichisches Archiv für Recht & Religion* 70 (1/2023), Freistadt: Plöchl Verlag.

With articles by the following RaT members:

- **Eva Synek**, „Man braucht Zeit, bis eine gewisse Sache reif wird“. Die Orthodoxe Kirche in Nordmazedonien (58-93)
- **Richard Potz** (Judikatur):
 - OGH 26. 1. 2022, 7 Ob 25/21h
Verbandsverantwortlichkeit, kirchliche juristische Person, Missbrauchsfälle (R. Potz 198)
 - EuGH 13. 10. 2022, C-344/20, L. F. / S.C.R.L. Gleichbehandlung, islamisches Kopftuch einer Arbeitnehmerin (R. Potz 216)

Markus Öhler: *Ecclesia und Collegium. Christliche Versammlungen und griechisch-römische Vereinigungen. Gesammelte Aufsätze*. Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck 2024.

The contextualisation of early Christian assemblies within Greco-Roman associations has led to



significant insights into the history of early Christianity. The fifteen essays collected here deal with the legal status of associations, association rules, local characteristics, and even burials.

[Link to the publication.](#)

PUBLICATIONS: Selected Articles

Jakob Deibl: *The divine and the open text: Five steps for reading Hölderlin's Homburger Folioheft*, in: *The German Quarterly* 97(2). DOI: [10.1111/gequ.12407](https://doi.org/10.1111/gequ.12407).

This article deals with Hölderlin's Homburger Folioheft. It elaborates on the thesis that the question of God or the divine can contribute to exploring both the richness of the poet's extensive manuscript, which fans out in many textual stages, and its fragmentary form. I argue that, despite its fragile textual form, the collection must be perceived as a unity and that reading it means oscillating between the textual stages without privileging the last version. I show that the reference to the divine often can be found at the core of the poet's vast changes to the text. The absence and return of the divine introduces a transformative dynamic into the text, a dynamic about which Hölderlin himself reflects in some passages.

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

Christian Danz: *God, Religion and History. The Significance of Schelling's Philosophy of Religion for Determining the Concept of Religion*, in: *Religions* 2024, 15(2) 154. Special Issue: The Impact of German Idealism on Religion. Ed. by C. Danz. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15020154>.

The article discusses Schelling's contribution to the definition of the concept of religion in post-Kantian philosophy. In three lines of argument, it is shown that Schelling's late lectures on the philosophy of mythology and revelation place religion in a history of development in which religion is successively understood as religion. Schelling assumes that religion is independent of reason and is based on a real relationship with God that is connected to the nature of man. This makes philosophy of religion an independent academic discipline. Schelling links the historical development of religion and the history of God in his concept of monotheism. This is the content of Schelling's formula that God is the Lord of Being.

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

Rüdiger Lohker: *Non-violent Theology in the Syrian Protests: A Critical Analysis of Jawdat Sa'īd's Qur'anic Exegesis*, in: *International Journal of Islamic Khazanah* 14i (2024).

The non-violent protests in Syria against the government, before eventually being co-opted by armed forces, marked a unique resistance against the regime during that period. Jawdat Sa'īd, a theorist, writer, and activist, inspired activists during this time by advocating for a theology of non-violence as the authentic foundation for Islamic life. The theological basis was drawn from a specific interpretation of the Quran. Sa'īd's understanding of the Quranic revelation was analysed using the approach formulated by Shahab Ahmed, demonstrating its validity in comprehending Islamic thought deeply. The research problem addressed the non-violent characteristics of the Syrian protests, while the research goal aimed to unveil the critical role of Sa'īd's interpretation of the Quran in shaping this movement. Through methods involving text analysis and Sa'īd's understanding of specific verses, the research findings highlighted the impact of Sa'īd's non-violent theology on activists and the foundation for peaceful resistance. The research conclusion emphasised the importance of contextual understanding of the Quran and a non-violent perspective in shaping social movements. This study contributes to a better understanding of contemporary Islamic thought and strategies for resistance that can be adopted in similar contexts.

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

Rüdiger Lohlker: *Der muslimische Herrscher: Fürstenspiegel als Spiegel islamischer Philosophien der Herrschaft*, in: Ahmad Milad Karimi (ed.), *Politische Philosophie. falsafa, Yearbook for Islamic Philosophy of Religion*, Baden-Baden: Karl Alber 2024.

Mirrors for princes are a special sub-genre of the Islamic literature on rulership. They can be characterized as advice literature for rulers on the way of ruling effectively. They were written in several languages, esp., in Arabic and Persian. The works are situated in their historical context. Of special importance is the focus on the necessity of ruling in a just way. Other issues discussed, are the selection of capable people for the administrative service and the court. Islam plays an important role, thus, making it possible to categorize the sub-genre as Islamic. We will read these Islamic mirrors for princes as merging ideas on the practise of rulership and religious ideas. The methodological approach of this article uses Deleuze's concept of the fold. The works analyzed are to some extent already well-known. Nevertheless, the interpretations have sometimes been reconfigured. Other mirrors for princes that have not been analyzed previously are added. A look at Weber's typology links the material to broader analytical concerns.

Christoph Novak, Astrid Mattes, Miriam Haselbacher, Katharina Limacher: *Digital, mobil und gläubig : On- und offline Lebenswelten religiöser Jugendlicher*, in: Viera Pirker, Paula Paschke (eds.): *Religion auf Instagram: Analysen und Perspektiven*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2024, 257-275.

Young believers in particular are contributing to the renewal of religious forms and interpretations. One area in which where this connection between religion and popular and youth cultural forms is particularly evident in social media. The project YouBeOn (Young Believers Online) explores the question of how religious young people from the greater Vienna area negotiate their religious affiliation online and offline. A particular focus on the role of Instagram in the (religious) lives of young believers. We ask what religious content on Instagram look like and which religious transformation processes can be can be recognized there; in what relationship religion in the social media with the religion practiced offline in Vienna and how this identification processes and constructions of belonging change as a result.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Regina Polak: *Du sollst dir kein Bild machen. Der fremde Mensch als Projektionsfläche und spirituelle Erfahrung*, in: Herbert Haslinger (ed.): *Menschenbild und Menschenbildung. Anspruch an die Kirche in der Welt von heute*. Freiburg: Herder 2023, 175-199.

Based on the empirical results of her interdisciplinary research on values and migration Regina Polak tries a ressourcement of biblical perspectives on pastoral co-existence with migrants and refugees, which is also shaped by antimigrant attitudes.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Markus Riedenauer: *Krise des Unverfügbaren. Zur spirituellen Relevanz von Hartmut Rosas Resonanztheorie*, in: *Studies in Spirituality* 32 (2022-23), 111-127.

The theory of modernity which Hartmut Rosa developed and his concept of resonance are highly relevant for understanding spirituality and religion in our society. As experiences of resonance cannot be intentionally produced or reproduced at will, they are characterised by uncontrollability ('Unverfügbarkeit'). Spirituality, as it is understood in this article, implies to refrain from controlling and to become free for resonant experiences, for a call and for answering it. In any field of human experience, such dialogical transcending of control and dominance may happen. Religions with their rites, teachings and ethos do interpret and unfold, encourage and stabilise experiences of resonance. In so far as they recognise the fundamental importance of resonance, insofar as they cultivate a responsive way of life in a spiritual relationship, they might become very important in societies marked by a crisis of uncontrollability. This article explains the core concepts of Hartmut Rosa and analyses the relevance and potential of his theories for understanding the spiritual foundation of religion.

Markus Riedenauer: *Musik als Transzendenz Erfahrung. Überlegungen zu einer Musikphilosophie in philosophisch-theologischer Absicht*, in: R. Esterbauer (Hg.): *Das Unfassbare vor Augen. Neue phänomenologische Annäherungen an Religion*, Baden-Baden: Karl Alber 2023, 271-293.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Markus Riedenauer: *Reife Religion im Zeitalter von Pluralität und Fundamentalismus nach Nicolaus Cusanus*, in: E. Heinrich-Ramharter / M. Staudigl (Hg.): *Religionsphilosophie heute. Stimmen - Schauplätze - Systeme*, Baden-Baden: Karl Alber 2023, 29-63.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Markus Riedenauer: *Konfrontation - Konfirmation - Konversion - Konkordanz. Auseinandersetzungen des lateinischen Christentums mit dem Islam im Mittelalter*, in: Evrim Ersan Akkiliç / Christine Ratkowitsch (eds.): *Christentum und Islam in der Geschichte. Zwischen Bewunderung und Polemik* Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 5-34.

From the many and varied medieval sources on the relationship between Christianity and Islam, the most important works from the Latin cultural area are taken up and their main themes, forms of rationality and strands of discourse are distinguished. Thus - despite thematic overlaps and regressions - three main phases and models of the literary treatment of Islam in the West can be identified, from confrontation with little understanding to confirmation of one's own Christian faith with conversion efforts and up to ideas of concordance. Thomas Aquinas, Raimundus Lullus and Nicolaus Cusanus are treated in more detail as paradigmatic thinkers. An appended table with the authors and works consulted, outlining their orientation and assigning them to the phases of the debate, provides a better overview.

[Link to the publication.](#)

[Discover more publications by our members](#)

Vienna Doctoral School of Theology and Research on Religion (VDTR)



Congratulations! VDTR graduate Esther Heiss has been appointed as director of the Jewish Museum Eisenstadt (Burgenland)!

Esther Heiss completed her dissertation on *Humor als Coping-Mechanismus im Kontext von Einzelschicksalen und zentralen Ereignissen der jüdischen Traditionsgeschichte (bes. am Beispiel des Babylonischen Talmuds)* in the fall of 2023 and started her new job in December of the same year.

We wish her and the Jewish Museum Eisenstadt the best of luck in these challenging times!

If you want to know more about her appointment, a report by the Austrian national public broadcaster ORF can be found [here](#).

VDTR Public Lecture with Kristina Stoeckl: "The Christian Right in Europe: Content, Actors and Transnational Links"

April 10, 2024, 05 p.m. - 06:30 p.m.

Dekanatssitzungssaal at the Faculty of Catholic Theology, Universitätsring 1, staircase 8, 2nd floor

Kristina Stoeckl, Professor of Sociology at LUISS in Rome and SAB member of the VDTR, has been researching Christian conservative groups in Europe and their links to Russia and the USA since 2016.

Her book (together with Dmitry Uzlaner) *The Moralists International. Russia in the Global Culture Wars* (Fordham 2022) documents the emergence of a "Christian right" in the Orthodox context and analyzes the movement's key players and topics. With the war in Ukraine since 2022, the conflict around "traditional values against the liberal West" has intensified. What does the Russian militarization of "culture wars" mean for civil society, politics and churches within the EU?

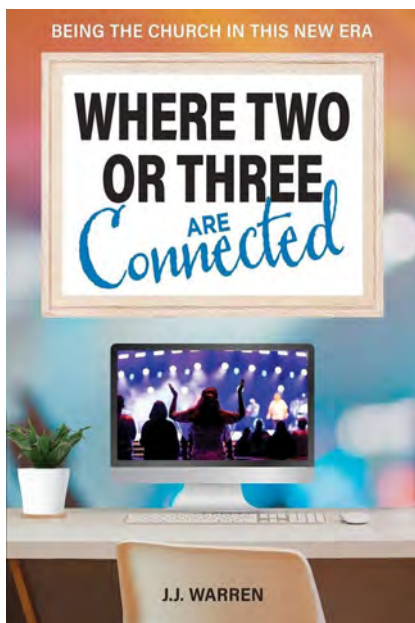
At the VDTR Public Lecture, Kristina Stöckl will speak about "The Christian Right in Europe: Content, Actors and Transnational Links". We look forward to seeing you there!

Book Presentation and Panel Discussion

April 18, 2024, 05:30 p.m. - 08 p.m.

Dekanatssitzungssaal at the Faculty of Catholic Theology, Universitätsring 1, staircase 8, 2nd floor

To mark the launch of his new book "Where two or three are connected", VDTR PhD candidate and United Methodist pastor Reverend J.J. Warren invites people to reflect on the challenges and opportunities that a global pandemic presents for contemporary



church life.

While JJ explores questions of building community online, sharing his own experiences and those of his interviewees, the panel discussion with invited guests will focus on how church communities can be inclusive across the digital divide, inviting different perspectives - such as gender and disability - and denominations into the conversation.

The event marks the launch of a [new presentation format in which we seek to give the research of our doctoral students the spotlight it deserves.](#)

Congratulations to VDTR members Julius Günther and Mattia Coser for successfully completing their dissertations!



Mattia Coser: Das Böse in Gott? Ontologie des Bösen und des Leidens in der Philosophie Luigi Pareyson

The question of evil and suffering presents one of the most important challenges to philosophy and Christian theology. The doctoral thesis attempts to address this question in a critical manner by the analysis of the philosophical propositions of the Italian philosopher Luigi Pareyson. One key for a new philosophical elaboration of the question of evil Pareyson sees on the one hand in a development of ontology of freedom which is tied closely to Schelling and on the other in a hermeneutic of myth. Schelling already emphasised that the question of evil and suffering cannot be solved reflexively especially by the idea of an “ecstasy of reason” as a transition from a purely rational (metaphysical) philosophy into a “positive” (Christian-salvation-historical) philosophy, which resorts to myth as a genuine form of language. Continuing this thought, Pareyson considers a hermeneutics of myths as the only suitable philosophical tool which allows to develop a new perspective upon the question of evil and suffering. [...]

To read the full abstract in English, [click here](#).

Julius Günther: Geschichte der Persönlichkeit.



Untersuchungen zur Dynamik des Religiösen und des Unbewussten bei F. W. J. von Schelling

After an explanation of the method of Schelling's philosophy, the study is divided into a part about the religious dimension of the unconscious and a part about the unconscious dimension of religion in Schelling's work. In the beginning, the stages of transcendental-historical becoming conscious are first presented within the framework of the "System of Transcendental Idealism", thus providing an initial religious conception of the unconscious in Schelling. From there, the religious unconscious is illuminated in the "Philosophy of Art" by means of Schelling's theory of imagination and fantasy as symbolic gods of mythology. The extent to which the unconscious functions as the ground of God's and man's freedom, and is therefore religiously conceived, is traced with the transition from Schelling's philosophy of identity to the philosophy of freedom and ages of the world. [...]

To read the full abstract in German and English, [click here](#).

RESEARCH: Projects

THIRD PARTY FUNDED PROJECTS



New Third Party Funded Project (in cooperation with the Research Centre RaT):

„WEAVE-Projekt: „Between Intensification and Relativisation. Modalities and Mechanisms of Religious Change among Muslim and Christian Refugees from Syria in Germany, Austria and Switzerland”, 2024-2027

This research project, which was approved by the FWF in January 2024, will start at the Department of Practical Theology on April 1, 2024 and will be led by Regina Polak (University of Vienna) together with Martin Baumann (University of Lucerne/Switzerland, Religious Studies, lead of the whole project) and Alexander-Kenneth Nagel (Social Sciences) as part of an international WEAVE project. The project is carried out in cooperation with the Research Centre Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society.

Syrian refugees, who arrived in Austria, Germany and Switzerland in the wake of the 'Arab Spring' and the war, represent the largest or second largest group of asylum seekers in these countries. Since then, the religion of refugees has increasingly become the focus of attention in the political discourses of these countries. Despite this high level of attention to the religion of refugees, however, neither the characteristic differences between Muslim and Christian refugees nor the processes of change in the

religiosity of refugees in the course of the migration process have been scientifically researched. The project aims to close this research gap. The aim of the project is to investigate the changes in individual and group-related religiosity in the course of flight and migration from a comparative country perspective. The project assumes that religious change moves along a spectrum: religious beliefs, religious practices and group ties can intensify or be relativized, i.e. become stronger or weaker, in the course of flight and migration. The project suggests, that in this process of change, systemic structures of the host countries also have an impact on the changes in religiosity, i.e. that the country-specific migration and welfare regimes, the politicization of Islamophobic discourses and institutional framework conditions for religious minorities also have an influence.

For more information about the project, [click here](#).

EVENTS

UPCOMING EVENTS

universität wien
Institut für Philosophie

RfP
Forum Religionsphilosophie

Katharina Limacher
„...denn schließlich ist man nicht nur für sich selbst verantwortlich, sondern für eine ganze Religion!“
Religionsphilosophie und empirische Religionswissenschaft – ein Werkstattbericht.
Dienstag, 23. April 2024, 09:45-11:15 Uhr
NH, FH 3D
Institut für Philosophie
Universitätsstraße 7, 1010 Wien

Martin Koci
After Deconstruction:
Jean-Luc Nancy on the
Essence of Christianity
Monday, May 13th, 03:00-04:30
NH, FH 3D
Institut für Philosophie
Universitätsstraße 7, 1010 Wien

FORUM RELIGIONS- PHILOSOPHIE

Olaf Müller
Warte, bis Du stirbst.
Postmortale Hausaufgaben
von Moritz Schlick
Mittwoch, 19. Juni 2024, 04:45-06:15 Uhr
NH, FH 3C
Institut für Philosophie
Universitätsstraße 7, 1010 Wien

Forum Religionsphilosophie Summer Term 2024

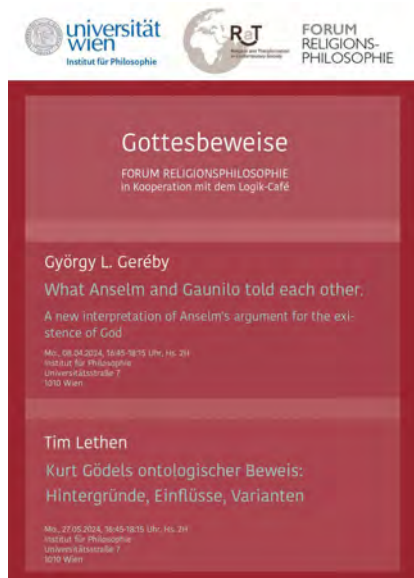
- **Katharina Limacher:** „...denn schließlich ist man nicht nur für sich selbst verantwortlich, sondern für eine ganze Religion!“
Religionsphilosophie und empirische Religionswissenschaft – ein Werkstattbericht.
 - April 23, 2024, 09:45 a.m.-11:15 a.m.
Lecture Hall 3D, Department of Philosophy, Universitätsstraße 7
1010 Vienna
- **Martin Koci:** After Deconstruction: Jean-Luc Nancy on the Essence of Christianity
 - May 13, 2024, 03 p.m.-04:30 p.m..
Lecture Hall 3D, Department of Philosophy, Universitätsstraße 7
1010 Vienna
- **Olaf Müller:** Warte, bis Du stirbst. Postmortale Hausaufgaben von Moritz Schlick
 - June 19, 2024, 04:45 p.m.-06:15 p.m.
Lecture Hall 3C, Department of Philosophy, Universitätsstraße 7
1010 Vienna

To view the full program, [click here](#).

Gottesbeweise

Forum Religionsphilosophie in cooperation with Logik-Café

- **György L. Geréby:** What Anselm and Gaunilo told each other. A new interpretation of Anselm's argument for the existence of God



- April 08, 2024, 04:45 p.m.-06:15 p.m.
Lecture Hall 2H, Department of Philosophy, Universitätsstraße 7
1010 Vienna
- **Tim Lethen:** Kurt Gödels ontologischer Beweis: Hintergründe, Einflüsse, Varianten
 - May 27, 2024, 04:45 p.m.-06:15 p.m.
Lecture Hall 2H, Department of Philosophy, Universitätsstraße 7
1010 Vienna

To view the full program, [click here](#).



CRS Book Launch: "The Christian Right in Europe: Movement, Networks, and Denominations"

March 14, 2024, 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Vienna Campus of the Central European University,
Quellenstrasse 51, Room: D-001

With lectures by: **Gionathan Lo Mascolo, Andras Bozoki, Armin Langer, Zsolt Enyedi, Katharina Limacher, Astrid Mattes-Zippenfenig**

To view the full program, [click here](#).



Religionskunde im Ethikunterricht – Anfragen aus Theorie und Praxis. Fachtagung der Österreichischen Gesellschaft für Religionswissenschaft (ÖGRW)

March 15, 2024, 09 a.m. - 01 p.m.
Otto-Mauer-Zentrum, Währinger Straße 2-4, 1010 Vienna

For the detailed program, [click here](#).

If you are interested, please register until March 11 at religionswissenschaft@univie.ac.at.

Second Austrian Hebrew Bible colloquium

April 5, 2024

08:30 a.m. - 03:45 p.m.

On April 5, 2024, Hebrew Bible scholars (doctoral students, post-doctoral researchers, and professors) from the various Austrian theological faculties will come together and meet for the second Austrian Hebrew Bible colloquium. This time, the meeting will take place in Vienna, organized by **Agneth Siquans** (KTG), **Marianne Grohmann** (ETF), and **Annette Schellenberg** (ETF). The program includes presentations of current research

projects as well as time for informal discussions. The meeting is open to interested students from other fields as well.

Please register with Annette Schellenberg (annette.schellenberg@univie.ac.at).

To view the full program, [click here](#).



u:africa talks: Missionary Ethnography: Indigenous Knowledge and/or African Christian Modernity?

Lecture by Lize Kriel

May 7, 2024, 05 p.m. - 07 p.m.

Department of African Studies, University of Vienna
Campus, Spitalgasse 2, courtyard 5, seminar room 1

To view the full program for the summer term 2024, [click here](#).



Religious Exits: Transitions into Alternative Symbolical and Political Worlds?

RaT Panel at the Upcoming European Academy of Religion in Palermo

May 20-23, 2024

The quest for exits out of our established cultural, social and political orders has become a ubiquitous existential mood characterizing our times and is, therefore, one of the most urgent topics in contemporary society. The sense of living in a world without escape presses the urge to exit which can manifest in alienation, destruction or the potential to transform world orders. In this last scenario exits become redemptive and the pressure to exit discharges itself in the creation of an immense number of exit strategies into alternative worlds. Not only can these worlds often resemble new forms of religion, but against this background also traditional forms of religion can be interpreted as exit strategies. Understood in this way, religions and religious practices are ambivalent as they can enforce destructions, but are also capable of radically opening established orders, insofar as the world of transcendence contains neither a definite territory nor an immovable order of time.

To view the full program of the RaT panel, [click here](#).

Workshop: Komparative Theologie aus islamisch-theologischer Perspektive

May 22, 2024, 09 a.m. - 01:30 p.m.

Faculty of Catholic Theology, Deans Office, Universitätsring 1 (stairway 8, 2nd floor), 1010 Vienna

In cooperation with the [Paderborner Institut für Islamische Theologie](#)

With contributions by:

- **Muna Tatari:** Systematisch-theologischer Zugang zur KT
- **Naciye Kamcili-Yildiz:** Religionspädagogischer Zugang aus der Perspektive der islamischen Religionspädagogik

- **Idris Nassery:** Zugang zur KT aus der Perspektive der islamischen Jurisprudenz

The detailed program can be found [here](#).

All those interested are welcome! However, if you want to attend, please register by e-mail: marian.weingartshofer@univie.ac.at.

PAST EVENTS

November 2-3, 2023: OSCE Workshop at the University of Dublin



In her honorary role as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on Combating Racism, Xenophobia and Discrimination, also focusing on Intolerance and Discrimination against Christians and Members of Other Religions, **Regina Polak** participated in a workshop at the University of Dublin, which was organized in cooperation with ODIHR on the role of interreligious and intercultural dialogue as a diplomatic tool to support peacebuilding and sustainability. There, her research results were also discussed. Furthermore, she participated in the development of a guide that will provide measures against the discrimination of Christians for the 57 participating member states.

February 25-27, 2024: Department of New Testament Studies: IDok9 in Vienna



From the 25th of February to the 27th, 2024, the 9th International Doctoral Colloquium (IDok9) took place at the Faculty of Protestant Theology in Vienna under the direction of **Christine Gerber** (University of Berlin), **Jens Herzer** (University of Leipzig) and **Markus**

Öhler (University of Vienna). The guests were 19 doctoral students and university assistants (prae doc & post doc) from the Department of New Testament Studies at the Faculties of Theology in Leipzig, Berlin and Vienna. The annual conference was particularly aimed at cross-university exchange through the presentation of current dissertation and habilitation projects, the subsequent academic discourse for mutual consultation and international academic networking. In addition, the international guests have experienced a bit of Austrian culture through a visit to a Heurigen and a guided tour through the Natural History Museum.

RAT-BLOG

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

- *Apokalypse und Weltuntergangsszenarien. Werkstattgespräche zwischen Musik und Theologie*, by **Dorothee Bauer**
 - An interdisciplinary block seminar on the Apocalypse took place in the winter semester 2023/24 as a joint seminar between the Faculty of Catholic Theology in Vienna and the Mozarteum University Salzburg. In her article, Dorothee Bauer, who led the seminar together with Juliane Brandes, provides insights into a project that brings academic theology into a creative dialog with contemporary composition.
 - [Click here to read the full article.](#)
- “What do we want?” — “The future of theology”. “When do we want it?” — “Now...”, by **Barnabas Palfrey**
 - *Beyond the Analogical Imagination: The Theological and Cultural Vision of David Tracy* is a recently published collection of essays that explore and develop the vision of the American theologian David Tracy. In his contribution, Barnabas Palfrey, one of the volumes editors, introduces some of the major themes of Tracy’s work that tries to offer new ways of thinking to respond to the challenges that both society and theology are facing today.
 - [Click here to read the full article.](#)
- *Synode über Synodalität: Ein Ereignis zur Erneuerung des Selbstverständnisses der Kirche*, by **Eduard Prenga**
 - In the course of the 2021-2024 World Synod convened by Pope Francis, the question of the future shape of the Catholic Church is being intensively discussed. In his article, Eduard Prenga sheds light on the church-historical background and current challenges, which are reflected in the use of the phrase “synod on synodality”.
 - [Click here to read the full article.](#)
- *Gender-Affirming Surgery as a Liberation of the Self*, by **Paul Draganoff**
 - At the end of last year, the conference of the Association of Bioethicists in Central Europe (BCE), with a focus on the topic of gender-affirming surgery took place in Vienna. In his contribution, Paul Draganoff reflects on the different perspectives that need to be taken into account to properly understand the phenomenon and closes with a view on the current state of the theological debate on the issue.
 - [Click here to read the full article.](#)

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

Katharina Limacher has been interviewed for: *Allwissende, allmächtige, göttliche KI?*, Ö1 (Austrian Public Radio Station)

It's been a year and a half since ChatGPT arrived in society at large and has left teachers, ethicists and researchers wondering ever since. Artificial intelligence is more accessible than ever before, although AI has been firmly integrated into our everyday lives for several years now, for example in digital voice assistants or algorithms in social media. Tech companies promise us programs and machines that make our everyday lives easier, do the thinking for us, collect knowledge and are always there for us. For some, this sounds like a science fiction dystopia come true, for others it may give the impression of an omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent existence. A kind of deity?

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

Regina Polak:

- *Umgang mit Kickl: Die Gefahren umgekehrter Verantwortung*, in: Die Furche, October 11, 2023.
 - In the wake of discussions about the Austrian FPÖ's consistently high approval rating among the Austrian population, Regina Polak wrote an article for the Furche on the topic of "Dealing with Kickl: The dangers of reversed responsibility".
 - [Link to the publication.](#)
- Interview for: *Aktiv gelebte Religiosität stärkt die Demokratie*, in: Die Presse, 04.12.2023
 - Regina Polak was also interviewed in the daily paper "Die Presse" about the importance of religion for democracy.
 - [Link to the publication.](#)
- *Wie hängen religiöse und politische Einstellungen zusammen?*, in: kurier.tv
 - In the "Kurier-TV" series organized by the "Interdisciplinary Values Research" network of the University of Vienna, Regina Polak discussed the results of the European Values Study with Christoph Konrath (lawyer, political scientist, head of the scientific department of the Austrian Parliament) and Maria Katharina Moser (director of the Austrian Protestant Diakonie), moderated by journalist Ute Brühl on October 28, 2023. The focus was on the question of how religious and political attitudes are connected.
 - [Link to the video \(full access\).](#)

Sieglinde Rosenberger: *Auf Seiten der Autokraten?*, in: Die Furche, December 21, 2023.

It is not only in Russia, Hungary and Poland that the Christian churches are currently strengthening rather than disrupting autocratic politics. This shows a relationship in the interests of both sides - but at the expense of democracy. But there have been and still are counter-examples. A guest commentary.

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

Impressum

Research Centre "Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society" | Schenkenstraße 8-10, 1010 Wien

| religionandtransformation.at | [Unsubscribe here](#)

[Datenschutz](#)