



RaT-Newsletter



Dear members and friends of RaT,

At the start of the new academic year, we once again present you the recent activities of our members: As always, you can find an overview of recent publications, newly acquired third party funded projects, information about upcoming and past events and much more!

This time, we especially want to highlight that **RaT is going to host a panel on: "Religion and Socio-Cultural Transformation: Perspectives from Vienna-based Researchers" at the upcoming EuARe conference.** We invite all our members to participate. Those interested need to send us a proposal for a title until October 31. Detailed information can be found below.

Apart from that, there is also general news regarding the conference: The **Call for Proposals** is now open and **Early Bird registration** will start on November 4, 2024.

We also want to present you our new team members: **Sára Heidl**, **Sofiia-Olga Kungurtseva** and **Marleen Thaler** have all joined our team during the last months. We warmly welcome them to RaT! In addition to that, we also want to welcome three new researchers as RaT members: **Clarissa Breu**, **Nikola Pantic** and **Gunter Prüller-Jagenteufel**. You can find their detailed portraits below.

We wish all of you a good start to the new academic year!

Kurt Appel, Noemi Call, Jakob Deibl, Sára Heidl, Sofiia-Olga Kungurtseva, Daniel Kuran, Magdalena Lorenz, 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](#).

RAT-NEWS: EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION



Preparations for the next edition of the European Academy of Religion under the overarching topic **Religion and Socio-Cultural Transformation: European Perspectives and Beyond** are already in full swing. We want to use this opportunity to send you some important information:

- The **Call for Proposals** is now open: proposals can be submitted via [the EuARe website](#) until December 15, 2024
- **Early Bird registration** will start on November 4, 2024
- All other important dates and deadlines can already be found [on the conference website](#) as well.

In order to highlight the quality and diversity of the research on religion and theology conducted in the research institutions in Vienna in front of this international audience, **RaT is going to host a panel on: "Religion and Socio-Cultural Transformation: Perspectives from Vienna-based Researchers"**.

- The panel will run continually throughout all conference days. In total, there are 40 slots available, 30 of which are reserved for researchers from the University of Vienna. Membership and conference fees for all participants will be paid for by RaT.
- Those interested in participating need to **send a proposal for the title** of their presentation to euare2025@univie.ac.at **by October 31**. Please keep in mind that all presentations must have a thematic connection to the overarching topic of next years conference.

To learn more about the conference topic, visit [the EuARe website](#). Further details will be published there as the conference organisation progresses.

NEW TEAM MEMBERS: Welcome to RaT!



Dr. Sára Eszter Heidl

I have a degree in Sociology and in Religious Studies - both from the University of Szeged (HU) - which I combined in my Ph.D. at the University of Erfurt (DE) and the University of Graz (Cotutelle de thèse, 2024) in my dissertation project "Event Religion". I am interested in contemporary social anthropological and sociological theories and methods, with a focus on event studies, alternative forms of religion and spirituality, and religious experience. I am joining the

Religion and Transformation research team to take part in the editorial process of free contributions in the RaT Journal and the research group's blog and homepage. I am joining the last phase of the "Was Glaubte Österreich?" project and will teach sociological and religious studies courses in the next semesters. In addition, I am preparing to submit a postdoctoral project which focuses on the religious experience.

To learn more about Sára Heidls' research, [visit her profile on our website.](#)



Sofiia-Olga Kungurtseva, BA

After earning a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy (UA), I moved to Vienna in 2021 to pursue a Master's in Philosophy at the University of Vienna. I am currently writing my thesis on Hegel's concept of sacrifice and working as a study assistant at RaT. My research interests are evolving through the questions I encounter, not least at various RaT events. I am strongly committed to contributing to RaT what I have learned by now while continuing to learn further.



Marleen Thaler, BA BA MA

I am a historian of religion with degrees in Religious Studies, Social and Cultural Anthropology, and Oriental Studies, all from my alma mater, the University of Vienna. My research interests include global religious history, alternative religious currents, esoteric studies, the history of modern yoga, eco-spirituality, and religious traditionalism. I have just completed my doctoral thesis, which examines modern interpretations of kundalini, focusing on its transformation and scientification during the late twentieth century. My current projects involve my upcoming monography on the English author John Michell and a co-edited volume on subtle energies together with Julian Strube and Dominic Zoehrer. In my new position at the research center RaT, I will assume the role of communication manager as part of the organizational team for the upcoming EuARE conference, which will take place in Vienna in July 2025.

To learn more about Marleen Thalers' research, [visit her profile on our website.](#)

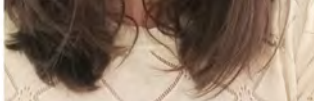
NEW MEMBERS: Welcome to RaT!



Mag. Mag. Dr. Clarissa Breu

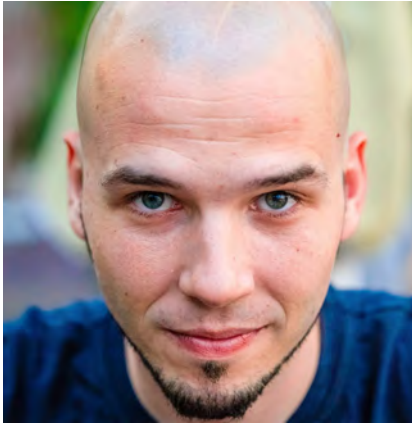
*Faculty of Protestant Theology
Department of New Testament Studies*

As a Protestant theologian and literary scholar, I am particularly interested in areas of overlap between the two disciplines. I wrote my dissertation on theories of authorship (Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault). For my habilitation I am currently working on the



question of how verbal and physical violence interact in ancient texts. I am also working on a project on gestures, drawing on Judith Butler's performative approach. Overall, I am interested in interdisciplinary endeavors that open up new perspectives on New Testament texts.

To learn more about Clarissa Breus' research, [visit her profile on our website](#).



Nikola Pantic, MA PhD

*Faculty for Philological and Cultural Studies
Department of Near Eastern Studies*

I specialize in comparative historical and socio-anthropological studies of religions, with particular focus on the history of Ottoman Sunnism, early modern Sufism, and thaumaturgy. Ever since I completed my doctoral research on early modern Ottoman Syria, I am working on the development and revision of theoretical methods for studying Sunni Islam in comparison with other world religions. Specifically, I am focusing on Weberian and post-Weberian charismatic theories and examining how they apply to the Ottoman context, with aims to re-appraise the socio-anthropological and historical implications of the concept of sainthood in Sunni Islam. On a broader level, I am interested in examining how results of cognitive research may be co-opted in historical and anthropological studies of early modern Sunnism.

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



ao. Univ.-Prof. Mag. Mag. Dr. Gunter Prüller-Jagenteufel

*Faculty of Catholic Theology
Department of Systematic Theology and Ethics*

As an ethicist with a special interest in political theology and theology of liberation I am delighted that I have been invited to be part of RaT. Especially the international and interdisciplinary cooperation is of highly interesting because it is essential for a meaningful ethics that answers to the challenges of our time.

One of my favorite theologians is Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who is famous for his stand against the Nazi Regime. But even more he is important for my ethical theology because he stresses the importance of "today and here" as the primordial "locus ethicus". And this is exactly what I seek - and hopefully find - in RaT: The expertise for today's challenges. And I hope that my ethical considerations can contribute the the endeavour of RaT.

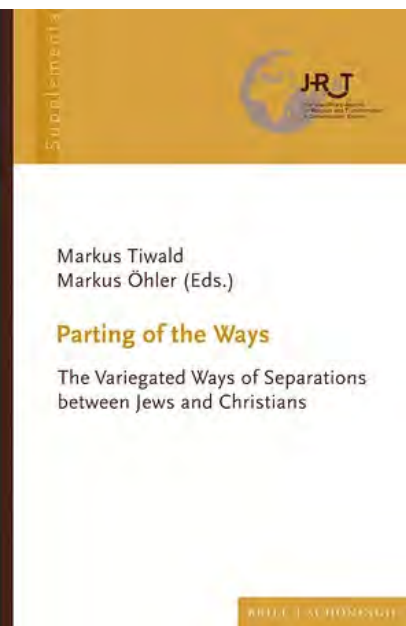
To learn more about Gunter Prüller-Jagenteufel's research, [visit his profile on our website](#).

PUBLICATIONS: JRAT, JRAT Supplementa and RaT Series



This special issue proposes concrete methodological steps to constructively advance debates on one of the most contentious issues in religious studies, namely religious comparison. The contributions result from ongoing conversations about combining approaches from religious studies, global history, and area studies under the heading of Global Religious History, or Global History of Religion (globale Religionsgeschichte). A programmatic introduction outlines the state of scholarship and the theoretical and methodological foundations for rethinking religious comparison. A major goal is to avoid both “classical” Eurocentric perspectives and some tendencies within the postcolonial spectrum that arguably mirror Eurocentric shortcomings, such as unilateral cultural diffusionism and incommensurability. The articles revolve around key issues such as genealogy, entangled and decentered historiography, and translation. They focus on different time periods and geographical areas, ranging from the fifteenth century to the present, and from Europe, Africa, and the Arab-speaking world to the (South-)East of Asia.

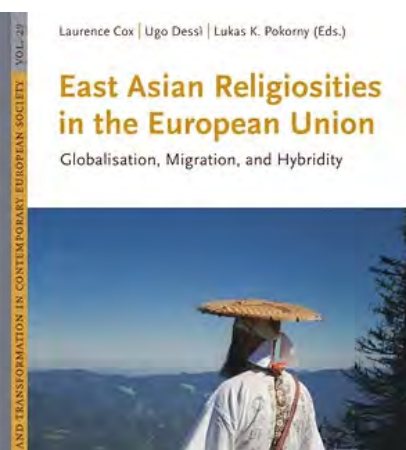
[Link to the publication \(full access\).](#)



JRAT Supplementa (Volume 4): *Parting of the Ways. The Variegated Ways of Separations between Jews and Christians*, edited by Markus Tiwald and Markus Öhler

The essays collected in this volume are the proceedings of an international conference held in Vienna (Austria) in September 2022 on the “parting of the ways” between Jews and Christians. They demonstrate that the beginnings of what we today call “Christianity” were fully embedded in early Judaism in the first century CE. The 18 chapters of this collection span from considerations about early Jewish identity/identities (Tiwald/Öhler, Grohmann, Magness) to Pauline theology (Tiwald, Ehrensperger, Eschner), the Sayings Source (Heil), the Gospels of Matthew (Konradt), Johannine and Biblical theology (Schreiber, Scherer, Förster), the Didache (Doering) to Ignatius of Antioch (Foster, Öhler), Origen (Siquans), and the Rabbis (Stemberger). The volume ends with systematic-theological considerations on the “parting of the ways” and perspectives of Jewish-Christian dialogue (Tück, Danz).

[Link to the publication.](#)



RaT Series (Volume 29): *East Asian Religiosities in the European Union. Globalisation, Migration, and Hybridity*, edited by Laurence Cox, Ugo Dessì und Lukas K. Pokorny

This book explores how East Asian religions affect EU countries, both through Asian diaspora communities and through European converts and sympathisers. East Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Vietnam) and the EU are two of the planet's most dynamic regions economically,



politically, and culturally. East Asian diasporas have a long history in Europe and represent a growing part of the EU's population. Meanwhile, Europeans have long been attracted to and interested in East Asian religion and are increasingly converting or incorporating elements of East Asian religiosities into their own identities. For the first time ever, this book presents the state of the art of research in this area, with chapters on most of the EU's 27 countries and on themes such as migration, Orientalism, gender and sexuality. It covers, among others, East Asian Buddhism and Christianity, Daoism and new religious movements, as well as martial arts and other looser forms of spirituality.

[Link to the publication.](#)



RaT Series (Volume 32): *Das Böse in Gott? Ontologie des Bösen und des Leidens in der Philosophie Luigi Pareyson's*, by **Mattia Coser**

Luigi Pareyson opposes philosophical solutions that implicitly or explicitly negate the reality of evil. In order to develop the problem in its tragic depth and ontological dimension, philosophy needs a new way of thinking. Following Schelling's positive philosophy, Pareyson finds the new approach to the problem he is looking for: on the one hand in the elaboration of an ontology of freedom and on the other in a hermeneutics of myth and religious experience. His hermeneutic sensibility leads Pareyson to interpret the modern novel as an expression of a new form of myth. This also demonstrates the great topicality of his thinking, as the approach to myth that he opens up can make an important contribution to bringing the postmodern need for a new myth into view.

[Link to the publication.](#)



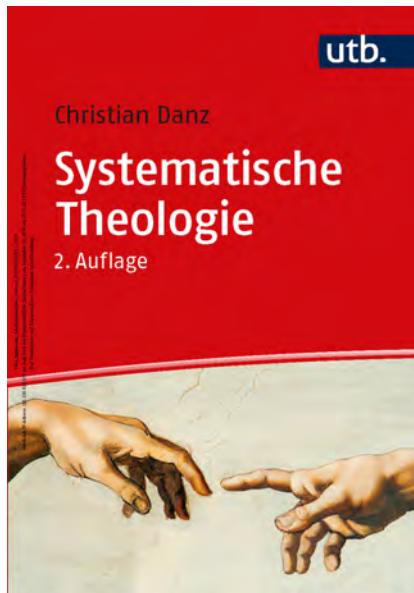
Latest articles published online in advance (all articles are published open access):

- [Encounters with the Absolute – The Absolute as Encounter. Mark 16:1–8 and John 20:11–18](#), by **Kurt Appel**
- [The Oral Other and the Question of Discipleship in Michel de Certeau. A Brief Psychoanalytical Approach with Reference to Jacques Derrida](#), by **Martin Eleven**
- [The Theological Resources of Michel de Certeau's Thought for Envisioning a Synodal Church](#), by **Christoph Theobald**
- [Michel de Certeau, lecteur/auditeur des mystiques. Ecouter le murmure de l'Absent](#), by **Yu Watanabe**
- [Divine Violence Suffered: Another Reading of Walter Benjamin's Toward the Critique of Violence](#), by **Sandra Lehmann**
- [The Speaking Body. Philosophical Approaches to the Song of Songs](#), by **Isabella Guanzini**
- [Pratiques spirituelles et prière incarnée chez Michel de Certeau](#), by **Margit Eckholt**



- [Understanding the 'Spirit' of Qur'ānic Laws in Contemporary Shī'ī Islamic Thought](#), by **Akif Tahiev**
- [La Blessure de l'Autre : la Vulnérabilité comme Clé Anthropologique et Théologique de la Pensée de Michel de Certeau](#), by **Tiziano Ferraroni**

PUBLICATIONS: Monographs & Anthologies

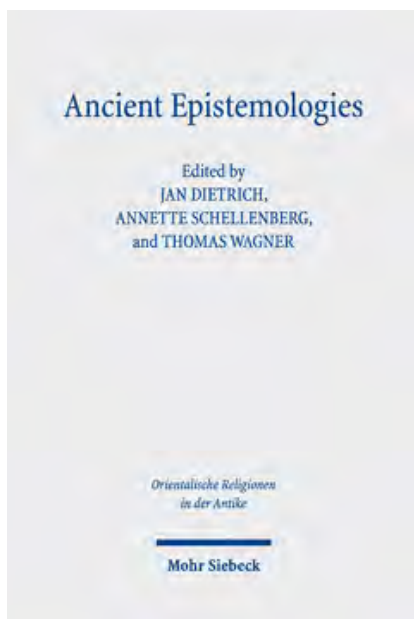


Christian Danz: *Systematische Theologie*. 2. vollst. überarb. Aufl. Tübingen: utb 2024.

This volume offers an elementary introduction to systematic theology and an overview of the subject.

The book explores fundamental theological-dogmatic problems in their context, without presupposing specialized knowledge on the part of the reader. A comprehensive introduction to basic questions and central topics in systematic theology, which encourages readers to think along and think differently.

[Link to the publication.](#)



Jan Dietrich, Annette Schellenberg-Lagler, and Thomas Wagner (eds.): *Ancient Epistemologies*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2024.

Reflection on knowledge is often assumed to have emerged with Greek philosophy. Earlier and contemporary modes of thinking in the ancient Near East, including ancient Israel, are assumed to be archaic and often left out of the picture. Against this view, the contributors of this volume aim to reconstruct the ancient epistemologies, the »paradigms«, »discourses«, and »episteme«, that developed in the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean region and formed the conditions for developing more distinct forms of cultural and scientific knowledge. In doing this, they include the search for second order thinking as part of ancient epistemologies: the capability to think about thinking, to adopt a theoretical attitude that involves the ability to reflect and self-reflect, to criticize and transcend the given, and to anticipate new realms by thinking outside the box. The ancient Near Eastern cultures were not characterized by a 'lukewarm mind' but they were capable, in their own cultural-specific ways, of unfolding epistemologies that included forms of second order thinking that may well be termed 'early philosophy'.

[Link to the publication.](#)



H. Kalb, R. Potz, B. Schinkele, W. Wieshaider (eds.): *Österreichisches Archiv für Recht & Religion* 70 (2/2023), Freistadt: Plöchl Verlag.

Aufsätze	
A. E. Grünmann, Lehrpersonen eines interreligiösen Religionsunterrichts im österreichischen Schulwesen	725
S. Leidenberger, Recht und Ökonomie: Ein kirchliches Rechtsplädoyer für ein theologisch verantwortetes Kirchenrecht	736
R. Potz & B. Schinkele, Das Islamgesetz 2015 und die Verfassungsänderungen der Islamischen Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich. Überlegungen aus Anlass der Rechtssache VGW-101/042/5151/2020	289
Neues Recht	
S. Schima, Neues Bundes- und Landesrecht 2018	325
Judikatur	
VGW 8.10.2022, VGW-101/042/5151/2020 IGG, Verfassungsänderungen	380
BVG 21.1.2019, W195 2211187-1	381
BVG 26.9.2022, W176 2259738-1	397
BVG 22.5.2023, W176 2259738-1	402
Denkmalschutz, ehemalige Synagoge Gänserndorf (W. Wieshaider)	420
Luft 10.7.2018, C-25/17, Jehovah's Witnesses – „personelles physisches“	426
Tür-zu-Tür-Vermittlung, Österreich (H. Kalb 436)	426
EGMR 5.4.2022, 20.185/20, Assemblée Chrétienne des Témoins de Jéhovah d'Andelst et al. / Belgique, Anerkennung als Religionsgemeinschaft (L.-L. Christens)	438
EGMR 5.5.2023, 31.172/19, Jehovah's Witnesses [Jehovan Todistajat] / Finland, Tür-zu-Tür-Vermittlung, Datenschutz (H. Kalb)	444
Halbjahresschrift · 70. Jahrgang 2023 · 2	
hgg. von H. Kalb, R. Potz, B. Schinkele & W. Wieshaider	
Verlag Pöschel · Freistadt	

R. Potz & B. Schinkele: *Das Islamgesetz 2015 und die Verfassungsänderungen der Islamischen Glaubensgemeinschaft in Österreich. Überlegungen aus Anlass der Rechtssache VGW-101/042/5151/2020*, pp. 289-324.

[Link to the publication.](#)



Violetta L. Waibel, Christian Danz, Jürgen Stolzenberg (eds.): *Metaphysik des Konkreten und der Geschichtlichkeit. Systeme der Vernunft 1821–1854. System der Vernunft. Kant und der deutsche Idealismus. Band VI.* Hamburg: Meiner 2024.

This volume concludes the six-part series "System of Reason - Kant and German Idealism". The subject of the series, which opened with the volume "Architektonik und System in der Philosophie Kants", is the development of philosophical system theories in philosophy at the end of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century, examined not along the lines of the thought developments of the individual representatives, but in the horizontal of distinctive periods and in the cross-connections between the representatives. The series rejects the widespread but inaccurate idea that the system concepts of philosophy after Kant are firmly established, petrified doctrines. In truth, the systems have been subject to developments in their development that have made them open, dynamic systems per se. To this day, some of the system drafts allow for further developments that reveal highly topical systematic concepts, as some of the contributions in this series have shown. In the years 1821 to 1854, the period covered by this volume, the remaining post-Kantians were less concerned with fundamental questions than with particular aspects of philosophical systems and with conceptions of the historicity of philosophy.

[Link to the publication.](#)

PUBLICATIONS: Selected Articles

Kurt Appel: *Der Schluss von Hegels "Enzyklopädie"*, in: Violetta Waibel / Christian Danz / Jürgen Stolzenberg (eds.), *Metaphysik des Konkreten und der Geschichtlichkeit. Systeme der Vernunft 1821-1854. System der Vernunft. Kant und der deutsche Idealismus (Band VI).* Hamburg: Meiner 2024, pp. 53-80.

This article addresses the topic of The Conclusion of Hegel's 'Encyclopaedia'. The article deals with the concept of absolute spirit with a view to a deeper understanding of the role of freedom in Hegel's thought. Based on a precise interpretation of the three conclusions of religion and philosophy in the Encyclopaedia of 1830 against the background of the Science of Logic and the Phenomenology of Spirit, the relationship between objective and absolute spirit is presented and it is shown that the latter is not completely absorbed in the process of human self-reflection. Rather, it leads to a concept of freedom in which the relationship between language, consciousness and being is conceived as a release of the other that can no longer be represented positively. The opening of the ego and the release of the other take place as an opening of language, which abolishes its denotative-

instrumental function in the Hegelian sense and becomes the designation of the rupture between being and consciousness, which is always able to keep human access to the world open for something new. The argumentation of the article shows how this emergence of the Other corresponds to the dialectical method of double negation and also depotentiates death as the absolute and undialectical master of being.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Kurt Appel: *Hegel's Concept of the Cosmic Body and the Absolute Reflections on the Written and Unwritten Body Based on the Science of Logic*, in: Rebekka A. Klein / Calvin D. Ullrich (eds.): *The Unthinkable Body. Challenges of Embodiment in Religion, Politics, and Ethics*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2024, pp. 195-220.

Hegel is usually not associated with a philosophy of the body. Based on the *Science of Logic*, this article demonstrates that Hegel offers a differentiated philosophy of the body in his *Logic*, at least implicitly. However, the body in Hegel's thought never coincides with the "visible" body, but is always also the body of the Absolute, which brings Hegel's philosophy surprisingly close to Merleau-Ponty's late work. The article interprets key-passages from the "Doctrine of Essence" and the "Doctrine of the Concept" that reveal a dimension of the body which is more than a visible object. The respective chapters depart from Hegel's concept of the Absolute considered as a cosmic body which - by virtue of the self-sublation of the Absolute - exceeds the category of identity and is, therefore, radically open. Subsequently an interpretation of the categories of actuality and possibility demonstrates that the actuality of the body consists in the latter's open-ended possibilities.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Karl Baier: *Die magnetische Isis: Natur im Denken Franz Anton Mesmers*, in: Thomas Ruhland and Friedemann Stengel, eds.: *Von der Physikotheologie zum Vitalismus? Transformationen des Verhältnisses von Naturforschung und Religion im späten 18. und frühen 19. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2024, pp. 545–591.

Nature was at the centre of the research of the physician Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815), who, after studying medicine in Vienna, became the founder of a medical system that was later named after him and made him both famous and infamous. This article analyses Mesmer's harmonic corpuscular mechanics, which was influenced by Descartes, Newton and Kepler, and his deistic theology of creation. Furthermore, it is shown that his approach to nature is coloured by a sensitive sensualism, which in the 18th century represented an important variant of empiricism. In the last years of his life, he adopted romantic natural philosophy and vitalistic thinking in collaboration with the Berlin-based physician Karl Christian Wolfart (1778–1832), who was partly responsible for the rediscovery of his teachings in the early 19th century.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Karl Baier: *Intentionality and Non-Intentionality in Jung's Active Imagination*, in: Sarah Perez, Bastiaan van Rijn and Jens Schlieter, eds.: *Intentional Transformative Experiences: Theorizing Self-Cultivation in Religion and Philosophy*. Berlin: De Gruyter 2024, pp. 243–270.

This article examines the relationship between intentionality and non-intentionality in self-cultivation practices using the example of active imagination. This form of meditation goes back to C.G. Jung, who made it a cornerstone of his psychotherapeutic method. In the first section, the theoretical framework used for the investigation of the topic is presented. Then the author argues to interpret the discovery of the active imagination as a ritualisation of a conversion-like experience, in which both in the experience and in its ritualisation intentional and non-intentional elements interact. This is followed by a look at representative post-Jungian approaches to formalising the technique. Finally, the problematic transition from the kind of being-in-the-world which is determined by deliberate thought and intentional action, to an attunement to the experience of the world in undirected openness is being discussed. Jung's statements about this change in the practice of active imagination are compared with Heidegger's reflections on the transition from will-controlled objective thinking to contemplative thinking and to serenity.

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

Karl Baier: The Archetypal Dao: A Look at C. G. Jung's Reception of Chinese Thought, in: Lukas K. Pokorny and Franz Winter, eds.: *Appropriating the Dao: The Euro-American Esoteric Reception of China*. London and New York: Bloomsbury 2024, pp. 163–200.

The introductory part of this chapter deals with the reluctant treatment of C. G. Jung's (1875–1961) relationship to Chinese thought in the history of Jung studies. As basis for understanding the significance of Jung's reception of Chinese sources, his work is placed in the context of modern psychology and religion. Afterwards, his early reception of Daoism in *Psychological Types* (1921) is highlighted. Therein Jung interprets the dao in the context of a vitalistic reinterpretation of the Freudian notion of libido and the problem of how to unite opposing tendencies within the psyche whose conflict blocks the natural flow of life force. A key section of the chapter then treats Jung's relationship and collaboration with Richard Wilhelm (1873–1920). This leads to a discussion of Jung's orientalism that framed his approach to "the East." Finally, it is shown how and why his interpretation of the Yijing as synchronicity-based science is an exceptional case that relativizes Jung's prevailing orientalist juxtaposition of East and West.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Hüseyin I. Çiçek: *Alevitische Identität in der Diaspora: Erfahrungen von Exklusion und soziale Integration im deutschsprachigen Raum*, in: *Zeitschrift für Religion, Gesellschaft und Politik*, Volume 8 (2024), pp. 109–128.

This article examines the experiences of exclusion and social integration faced by Alevis in the German-speaking region. Although Alevis represent a minority compared to Sunni Muslims of Turkish origin, they hold significant relevance in both migration and religious studies. Drawing on qualitative interviews with Alevis aged 20 to 56, born in Germany, Austria, or Turkey, the article explores how Alevis maintain their religious and cultural traditions in everyday life and their encounters with exclusion based on their Alevi identity. Additionally, it investigates the role of the Alevi diaspora in Germany and Austria, as well as their interactions with Turkish Sunni organizations and the Turkish state.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Marianne Grohmann: *Das Verhältnis von Altem und Neuem Testament und die Frage nach der Einheit der Schrift*, in: "Altes" Testament unterrichten. Jahrbuch der Religionspädagogik (JRP), Band 040. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2024, p.107-116.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Elisabeth Holzleithner: *Sexuality, gender, and the law: Queer perspectives in legal philosophy*, in: *Oxford Handbook on LGBTI Law*, Oxford University Press 2024, published online "in advance".

This chapter explores the complex relation of sexuality, gender, and the law from the perspectives of legal philosophy, legal gender studies, and queer legal theory. Its point of departure is modern law's promise of equal freedom, which is enshrined in human rights and in the constitutions of liberal democracies. The chapter starts out by introducing two approaches to sexuality, gender, and the law: the paradigm of conventional morality and that of equal freedom (autonomy). Having established autonomy as the central reference point, that principle is illuminated by spelling out the conditions necessary for its realization. Autonomy provides the basis for developing a concept of emancipatory law, including an outline of three paths to achieving it: legislation, popular referenda, and litigation. The chapter continues by delineating the specifics of the LGBTIQ+ equal rights approach, followed by the critiques brought forth in queer legal theory. Both approaches are analysed in terms of their strengths and weaknesses. In concluding the chapter provides suggestions for furthering autonomy in the realm of gender and sexuality as part of an encompassing conception of social justice.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Elisabeth Holzleithner and Christian Demmelbauer: *"Good Trouble" im Ringen um Menschenrechte: Ziviler Ungehorsam in der grafischen*

[Link to the publication.](#)

Lukas K. Pokorny: *Possession and Exorcism in Kōfuku no Kagaku*, in: Nicole Bauer and Andrew Doole, eds.: *Ideas of Possession: Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press 2024, pp. 303–322.

Kofuku no Kagaku is a major Japanese new religious movement with branches operating worldwide. A core subject in recent years is the potential of possession by evil spirits. In this respect Kōfuku no Kagaku offers a variety of exorcist and apotropaic rituals. This chapter examines how spirit possession is understood in Kōfuku no Kagaku doctrine and delineates a broad range of practical measures offered to members to combat and ward off possession.

[Link to the publication.](#)

Lukas K. Pokorny and Dominic S. Zoehrer: *'All evil spirits must be brushed off': Possession and Liberation in the Unification Movement*, in: Nicole M. Bauer and J. Andrew Doole, eds.: *Ideas of Possession: Interdisciplinary and Transcultural Perspectives*. New York: Oxford University Press 2024, pp. 285–302.

Emerging out of a messianic Protestant environment steeped in the Korean religious heritage, the Unification Movement has become one of the most well-known new religious movements in the world. However, little is known about the impact of mediumistic activities in Unificationism, articulated particularly in the so-called Ch'ŏngp'yŏng Providence. At the heart of this novel soteriological programme within wider Unificationist millenarianism are practices specifically targeting the separation of evil spirits and the liberation of ancestral spirits.

[Link to the publication.](#)

[Discover more publications by our members](#)

VDTR: Vienna Doctoral School of Theology and Research on Religion



October 28, 2024: VDTR Open Research Day- Registration open

If you are new to the VDTR, [please find here more information about the Open Research Day](#). Attendance is mandatory for VDTR members, online participation is possible. [Please register your participation for our sixth Open Research Day here by 10th Octobre!](#)

We are looking forward to seeing you again!



VDTR Trainings: Onboarding Workshop Series in November

In this series of workshops, led by coach Dr Melanie Sindelair, we will focus on a variety of topics that are particularly relevant in the early stages of your



doctoral studies, but also throughout your research career. From making the most of your PhD, to building a positive and rewarding relationship with your supervisor(s), to managing your research project in an intelligent and efficient way, we aim to provide you with the knowledge, skills and support you need.

Dates:

07 November 2024: 11am - 12.30pm

14 November 2024: 2 - 3.30pm

21 November 2024: 2 - 3.30 pm

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


Please register in a timely manner with an email to contact.vdtr@univie.ac.at. Places are limited.

RESEARCH: Projects

THIRD PARTY FUNDED PROJECTS



„Edition of Paul Tillich's Correspondence (1933–1951)“ (PIN 547042)

- Project lead: Christian Danz
- Project staff: Emil Lusser, Gerrit Mauritz, Dr. Friedrich Schumann
- Joint Partners: Prof. em. Dr. Dr. h.c. Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, Faculty of Protestant Theology, University of Munich; Austrian Academy of Sciences
- (FWF) Grant-DOI: 10.55776/PIN5470423 
- Start: October 1, 2024
- End: September 30, 2027
- Funding amount: €881.482

In August 2024, the FWF approved the International Joint Project "Edition of Paul Tillich's Correspondence (1933-1951)" (PIN 5470423). It follows on from the previous project (I 4857), in which Tillich's correspondence from his German period from 1887 to 1933 was edited text-critically and researched academically. In the open access hybrid edition project, which will be carried out from October 2024 to September 2027 at the Institute for Systematic Theology and Religious Studies of the Protestant Theological Faculty of the University of Vienna (headed by Prof. C. Danz) and at the Protestant Theological Faculty of the University of Munich (headed by Prof. F.W. Graf), Paul Tillich's extensive correspondence from his early American period from 1933 to 1951 will be edited digitally in three clusters and in a print edition.

With the edition of Tillich's correspondence from his early American period, the project not only provides fundamental groundwork for an intellectual and intellectual-historical analysis of his work, it also brings aspects and contexts of his work into focus that have not been considered to date. As a result, it opens up completely new perspectives on the history of his thought in the complex theological-philosophical and political debates of the 20th century. It is precisely because of the heterogeneity of Tillich's work and his diverse contacts in the social, cultural and various other sciences that his

correspondence is of outstanding importance for the development of the intellectual and political history of the 20th century.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS



Forum Religionsphilosophie: Lectures winter term 2024/25

All lectures take place at HS 2G, NIG, 2nd floor.

- **October 28, 04:45-6:15 p.m.: Thomas M. Schmidt:** Aufhebung oder Übersetzung? Hegel und Habermas über das Verhältnis von Religion und Philosophie. Vortrag im Rahmen des "Forums Religionsphilosophie"
- **November 4, 04:45-6:15 p.m.: Gerhard Weinberger:** Ethik und Transzendenz bei Levinas und F. Jullien. Vortrag im Rahmen des "Forums Religionsphilosophie"
- **November 18, 04:45-6:15 p.m.: Sarah Scotti:** Heilige Immanenz – Grundkonzepte des religiösen Naturalismus. Vortrag im Rahmen des "Forums Religionsphilosophie"
- **December 2, 04:45-6:15 p.m.: Naomi Osorio-Kupferblum:** Ontological disputes and divine topics. Vortrag im Rahmen des "Forums Religionsphilosophie"
- **January 13, 04:45-6:15 p.m.: Marie Schülert:** Schönheit und Aufmerksamkeit im Leben Simone Weils und ihre Bedeutung für unsere Zeit. Vortrag im Rahmen des "Forums Religionsphilosophie"



Valedictory lecture by Prof Hans Gerald Hödl

Prof Hödl's valedictory lecture entitled "The 'African High God' - fact or fiction?" will take place on 22 October 2024 at 5 pm in HS 6 (main building 'Franz König Saal'). After the lecture, a reception will be held in the Dean's Hall of the Faculty of Catholic Theology.

Please register by 18 October 2024 via religionswissenschaft@univie.ac.at



„Reading Benjamin's Origin of the German Tragic Drama (Trauerspiel)“

Workshop October 24-25, 2024

A two-day workshop is dedicated to a highlight in Walter Benjamin's work. The *Origin of the German Tragic Drama* (Trauerspiel), which was written almost



one hundred years ago, still poses a challenge for reading today. Benjamin's contemporaries already judged the book to be interesting but difficult to read. The workshop, organized by the *Department of Intercultural Philosophy of Religion* in cooperation with the *Research Centre RaT*, therefore aims to contribute to a better understanding of this work and its theological, philosophical, artistic and epistemological content through lectures and joint readings of key passages. To this end, Benjamin researchers from several countries will give lectures on individual aspects of Benjamin's book from October 24-25.

For more details on the event, click [here](#).

One God. One Mission. The Significance of the Abrahamic Others Today

Conference February 2-4, 2025

In front of the many crises that are currently troubling humanity, this conference aims to focus on the fundamental question that unites the three Abrahamic religions: the Manifestation of the one God. This question not only represents the common center of theological reflection, but is also linked to the mission of performing a life in accordance with God's will. As such, it also affects the life practice and coexistence of the members of the religions in question, to whom God sent respectively the Torah, Jesus and the Qur'an. For this reason, *the question of the significance of and the relation to the two others is intrinsically connected to the question of the One God.*

This international conference will consist of two parts: the first bilateral part (Christianity and Islam) will take place in February 2025; the second trilateral part (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) will take place in February 2027. The conclusion of the first part will include a panel with inputs from Christian, Muslim as well as Jewish scholars, as a bridge towards the second part. The aim of both parts is to renew and deepen our theological understanding of what links the three main branches within the Abrahamic family, within the broader human fraternity.

On this occasion, the Research Center *Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society* (and the Faculty of Catholic Theology of the University of Vienna; in conjunction with the University of Montreal and the Sophia-University of Loppiano) has invited internationally recognized scholars from all three Abrahamic traditions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) to reflect on the significance of the other traditions for a deeper understanding of God's will, based on their own understanding of God's manifestation.

To learn more about the conference, [click here](#).

PAST EVENTS

September 13-14: Workshop: Time Diagnostics of Religious Plurality in Vienna and Austria

A report by HS-Prof. Dr. Karsten Lehmann:

On September 13 and 14, 2024, an international workshop on the contemporary diagnosis of religious diversity in Vienna and Austria took place in the Dean's Hall of the Faculty of Catholic Theology. The focus was on the following questions: What characterizes religious diversity in Vienna and Austria? How can it be defined in a practical way? What are the special features of the local situation in international comparison? What does this mean for professional action? The workshop was organized and conducted by HS-Prof. Dr. Karsten Lehmann. It was financed by the City of Vienna, the research center "Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society" and the KPH Vienna/Krems.

The starting point of the workshop was the observation that people who are professionally confronted with religion and religious diversity (such as teachers, police officers, administrative staff or journalists) often lack the conceptual tools to deal with such

phenomena. Drawing on current research in the sociology of religion and religious studies as well as the concept of social science time diagnostics, the workshop aimed to make an innovative contribution to dealing with this particular situation.

To read more about the workshop, [click here](#).

October 8-9: Revelation, Manifestation, Appearance. Philosophical and theological reflections on the existence of God in the margin of Fichte's *Anweisung zum seligen Leben*

On October 8 and 9, the conference entitled “Revelation, Manifestation, Appearance. Philosophical and theological reflections on the existence of God in the margin of Fichte's *Anweisung zum seligen Leben*” was hosted by the research centre *Religion and Transformation*. The organization of the event was supervised by Daniel Kuran, Maurizio M. Malimpensa and Maurizio Trudu and was the result of the scientific and material collaboration of the following institutions and research facilities: Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society, Università degli Studi di Ferrara, University of Vienna, Archivbibliothek für Post-Neukantianismus und kritischen Idealismus der Gegenwart, Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici, Laboratorio di Filosofia Trascendentale e Fenomenologia, Rete Italiana per la Ricerca su Fichte and School of Religious Studies (McGill University). The two-day event was structured in such a way that on Tuesday and Wednesday morning the lectures by Prof. Alexander Schnell (Bergische Universität Wuppertal) and Prof. Marco Ivaldo (emeritus of the University of Naples Federico II) took place, while in the afternoon shorter contributions by researchers and doctoral students were presented.

As indicated in the title of the event, the participants' reflections focused on a central theme, namely the relationship between the Absolute and its manifestation or, to use the terminology of Fichte's text, which formed the guiding thread of most of the lectures, between *Sein* and *Dasein*. Both keynote lectures focused on the first five lectures of *Anweisung zum seligen Leben*, demonstrating that Fichte's position not only provides a historically significant locus for observing the convergence of philosophy and theology in relation to the fundamental questions of human thought and experience, but also that Fichte's theory continues to provide an indispensable conceptual resource for contemporary reflection on these issues. In the discussion rounds, Alexander Schnell specified the need for contemporary phenomenology not to degenerate into mere phenomenism, but to arrive at a radical justification of experience in the absolute principle, and outlined his original philosophical position, which he himself described as “theo-ontological”.

To read more about the conference, [click here](#).

RAT-BLOG

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

- [Religion, Kunst, Protest – Versuch einer Kontextualisierung der Ereignisse rund um die Zerstörung der Linzer Marienskulptur](#), by **Jakob Deibl** and **Katharina Limacher**
- [Menschenwürde auf katholisch](#), by **Gerhard Marschütz**
- [„Patriarch des Abendlandes“ – Rückkehr eines „historischen“ und zukunftsweisenden Titels](#), by **Mirosljub Gligorić**
- [The Defence and the Last Days. Ecological Uprising – The battle of Drina](#), by **Milja Radovic**
- [Workshop Zeitdiagnostik religiöser Vielfalt in Wien und Österreich](#), by **Karsten Lehmann**
- [“You can leave your head on...! Reflections on Ester Strauß's “Crowning” from a theological viewpoint](#), by **Andreas Telser**

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:

RaT@derstandard

As part of our cooperation with the Austrian daily derstandard, a new article has recently been published on their website:

- [Versuch einer Kontextualisierung der Zerstörung der Linzer Marienskulptur](#), by **Jakob Deibl** and **Katharina Limacher**: Religion, art, protest: The events surrounding the destruction of the sculpture "Crowning" by artist Esther Strauss have made waves and raised many questions
- [Menschenwürde auf katholisch](#), by **Gerhard Marschütz**: A critical look at the declaration approved by Pope Francis and its implications for contemporary human rights discourse

Notable Media Appearances

- **Jakob Deibl** was interviewed by the Austrian public radio Ö1 about the damage to a statue of the Virgin Mary on display in Linz's St. Mary's Cathedral
 - <https://oe1.orf.at/programm/20240820/766597/Rechtskatholiken-Ukraine-UOK-Rachegelueste>
- **Jan-Heiner Tück**, Papst Franziskus und die Literatur: Interview mit Jan-Heiner Tück im Domradio
 - https://www.domradio.de/artikel/franziskus-fordert-kurswechsel-priesterausbildung_

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