

# RaT Newsletter

Edition XII  
February 2018



## Overview

### 1. PERSONNEL MATTERS

- Staff
- New Members

### 2. PUBLICATIONS

- Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society
- Recent monographs and edited volumes published by RaT members (selection)
- Monographs and edited volumes (forthcoming, selection)
- Recent articles published by RaT members in edited volumes and journals (selection)

### 3. PREVIEW

### 4. REVIEW

### 5. THIRD-PARTY FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS

- Newly approved projects
- Current projects
- Completed projects

### 6. PRESS REVIEW



### *Future of the platform:*

*3 positive reviews received.*

*Evaluation report is available here:*

[www.religionandtransformation.at](http://www.religionandtransformation.at)

# 1. PERSONALIA

## STAFF

### Marlene DEIBL



**Marlene Deibl** started her work as a prae-doc-assistant in October and additionally supports the RaT team in administrative tasks. She has completed her studies in philosophy, theology and South Asian studies with a master's thesis in philosophy on Giorgio Agamben and his reading of Pontius Pilate in the New Testament. Following up to this theme, her doctoral dissertation in fundamental theology will deal with theories on the links between normativity

and affectivity both from a medieval and a contemporary perspective.

### Astrid MATTES

The RaT team kindly thanks **Astrid Mattes** for her sheer inexhaustible, highly competent and much appreciated work at the platform. She inspired all of us with her openness and cordiality and was an amazing asset to our team and to the platform. We are very happy to congratulate Astrid to her new position at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, hope for a continuing collaboration and wish her all the best for her future.



### Daniel KURAN



**Daniel Kuran** supports the research platform since October 2017 as prae-doc-assistant. He studies history, philosophy and theology and wrote his master's thesis in philosophy on the topic of the historical-philosophical significance of the „messianic“ in writings of Walter Benjamin. Currently he works on a dissertation project in the realms of fundamental theology in which he addresses the intermediation between historical-theological and aesthetic categories in Hegel

and Benjamin.

## NEW MEMBERS

### Univ.-Prof. Dr. Elisabeth HOLZLEITHNER



We warmly welcome **Elisabeth Holzleithner** as the newest member of the RaT-platform! Prof. Holzleithner is Professor of Legal Philosophy and Legal Gender Studies and Head of Department of Legal Philosophy. She is also Vice Dean of the Doctoral Studies Program and Speaker of the Research Network „Gender and Agency“ since March 2017.

In fall 2007, Elisabeth Holzleithner was Guest Professor for Legal Gender Studies at the University of Zurich. In 2014, she has taken up her current position as Professor of Legal Philosophy and Legal Gender Studies at the University of Vienna.

Elisabeth Holzleithner has received numerous awards, among the most prestigious are the Käthe Leichter-Award for Women's History of the Labor Movement 2000 (Ministry of Social Security and Generations in 2001) and the Gabriele Possanner-Award for Scientific Achievements to promote Gender Democracy in Austria (Ministry of Education, Science and Research) in the same year. Recently, she has received the Frauenring-Award and the Gabriele Possaner State Award, both in 2017. Her research focuses on Legal Gender and Queer Studies, Political Philosophy, especially concerning human rights and theories of justice as well as the law in literature and popular culture.

#### *Selected English publications:*

- Mainstreaming Equality: Dis/Entangling Grounds of Discrimination, in: Transnational Law and Contemporary Problems 14:3 (2005), 927-957.

#### *Selected publications in German:*

- Gerechtigkeit, utb.profile, Wien: facultas:wuv 2009
- Recht Macht Geschlecht: Legal Gender Studies. Eine Einführung, Wien: WUV

### Univ.-Prof. Dr. Abdullah TAKIM, MA

Recently Univ.-Prof. Dr. **Abdullah Takim**, MA joined the Platform. Since 2016 he holds the chair for Classical and Contemporary Koran Exegesis (tafsīr) at the University of Vienna. He chaired the development of the newly installed curriculum of Islamic-theological Studies at the University of Vienna. Prof. Takim will be presented in the next issue of RaT-Newsletter.

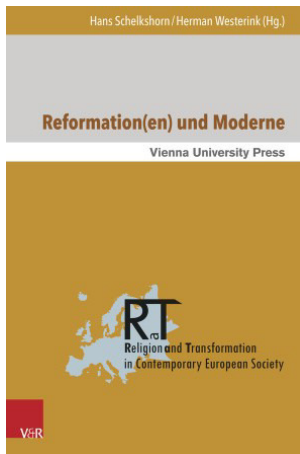




## 2. PUBLICATIONS

### INTERDISCIPLINARY OPEN ACCESS JOURNAL FOR RELIGION AND TRANSFORMATION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Heller, Birgit (Ed.): *Religion, Transformation and Gender. Vienna University Press bei V&R unipress, Göttingen 2017*



The fifth issue of the Interdisciplinary Journal for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society (J-RaT) centers on the topic of religion, transformation and sex/gender. The focal point is on religious and cultural transformation processes and their repercussions on gender roles, constructs and representations on the one hand, and on sex and/or gender transformations which are embedded in the context of specific religious traditions on the other. Transformation is understood here as change, alteration and reformatting. The multifaceted connections between religion, transformation and sex/gender are concretized in an abundance of material and symbolic phenomena and are examined starting from different subject-specific and methodical approaches. Additionally, within this book, a wide variety of religious traditions was considered.

With articles by:

➤ **Herta Nagl-Docekal**

Die Spannung zwischen Religion und Moderne am Denkort von „Geschlecht“. Ein philosophischer Klärungsversuch

➤ **Angelika Walser**

Die religiöse Identität von Frauen im Spannungsfeld von Zugehörigkeit, Autorität und Autonomie

➤ **Andrea Lehner-Hartmann**

Zur Transformation und einem transformativen Verständnis von religiösen Bildungsprozessen in einer pluralen Gesellschaft. Eine genderorientierte Analyse

➤ **Stefanie Knauss**

Let's Talk about Celibacy! How Western Christian Culture Affects the Construction of Sex, Body, and Gender in Popular and Scholarly Discourses

➤ **Anna-Katharina Höpflinger**

Schwarz, verhüllend, weiblich. Die Inszenierung von Trauer und der Wandel von Gendervorstellungen

➤ **Verena Maske**

IMAN-cipation – Identity Politics of young Muslim Women within the “Muslim Youth in Germany e.V. (MJD)” between Agency, Submission and Repression. An Analysis of the Transformation of Gender- Roles

➤ **Marianne Grohmann / Agnethe Siquans**

Literarische Transformationen sexueller Gewalt in der Hebräischen Bibel

➤ **Gerhard Langer**

Der geteilte Mensch. Einige Gedanken zu Schöpfung, Transformation und Geschlecht in der rabbinischen Tradition

➤ **Lukas Pokorny**

A Feminising Revolution: The Unification Movement and the 'Age of Women'

➤ **Birgit Heller**

Images of God/dess, Devotees and Trans-sex/gender in Hindu Traditions

## **FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF THE INTERDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL FOR RELIGION AND TRANSFORMATION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**

---

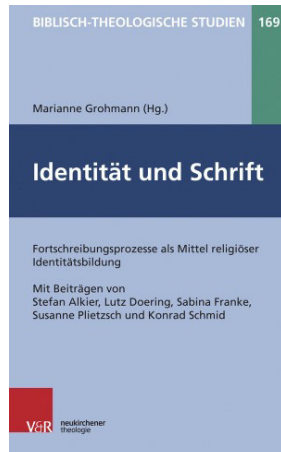
### **J-RaT No. 6 "Moralities of Warfare and Religion"**

Under the special editorship of Angela Kallhoff (University of Vienna) and Thomas Schulte-Umberg (RaT member, University of Vienna) the open access online Journal for Religion and Transformation will devote its spring issue 2018 to the topic of "Moralities of Warfare and Religion". The new issue includes contributions from two conferences on the topic of "Moralities of Warfare" held at the University of Vienna (2014, 2016) and from a call for papers. Research on religion in World War I has shown how religion played a major role in the endurance of combatants and non-combatants alike during the "seminal catastrophe" (George Kennan) of the 20th century. As can be learned in the recent past, e.g. with regard to parts of the Muslim World, the Ukraine and Russia or the United States, this role of religion in war doesn't belong to a bygone era. To understand and to explain the role of religion in war in our times one has to consider a wider historical perspective as well as developments of the 20th century. Their insights might prove to be useful for discussions of the theory of just war as well as peace ethics. The articles included in the sixth issue of the "Journal of Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society" debate those topics from various perspectives and disciplines (historiography, philosophy, theology, anglistics ...).

In addition, **J-RaT no. 7**, which will carry the title „**The Crisis of Representation**“, will be published in December 2018.

## RECENT MONOGRAPHS AND EDITED VOLUMES PUBLISHED BY RaT MEMBERS (SELECTION)

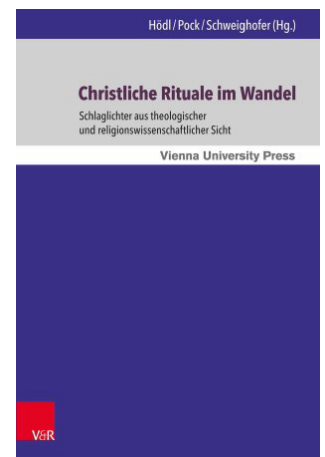
Grohmann, Marianne (Ed.): *Identität und Schrift. Fortschreibungsprozesse als Mittel religiöser Identitätsbildung (Biblisch-Theologische Studien 169)*, Göttingen 2017



The authors of the collection »Identity and Scripture. Tradition Processes as Ways of Forming Religious Identity« study the reciprocal effects between formation and tradition processes of ancient scriptures and the forming of identity. Representative examples - originating from different disciplines like Ancient Near Eastern Studies, Studies of the Old and the New Testament, Qumran Research and Jewish Studies - demonstrate how specific texts, on their way of becoming authoritative texts or Scripture, influence both the religious and the political-national identity of communities in different historical contexts.

Hans Gerald Hödl, Johann Pock, Teresa Schweighofer (Ed.): *Christliche Rituale im Wandel. Schlaglichter aus theologischer und religionswissenschaftlicher Sicht. Göttingen: Vienna University Press at the V&R unipress, 2017.*

Rituals are booming. But the churches have lost their monopoly on them. This edition identifies different forms of this ritual change and points out research areas and questions: the dynamic of rituals is examined based on the example of the "Celestial Church", an evangelical service and Catholic as well as Protestant wedding rituals. The contributions in the third part treat the development of new rituals and ritualistic elements. In this context, insights based on family constellations are analyzed with regards to ritual practices and "religiously hybrid festive culture". The edition closes with selected fundamental papers on "ritual experience" and the changes of the ritual and liturgical landscape.



**Hans Gerald Hödl, Lukas Pokorny (Ed.): *Religion in Austria 3. Praesens 2017.***



„Religion in Austria“ fills a lacuna in the study of religions in Austria, providing detailed expert accounts on varied aspects of Austrian religious history and adjoining subjects, past and present. Based on original scholarship, this book series takes a Religious Studies perspective on the vast and largely uncharted domain of religion in Austria.

„The third volume of Religion in Austria adds a more systematic dimension to the series. Along with the expanded review section, this definitely makes it the most significant and conclusive reference-tool for the study of present-day religions in Austria. Everyone working in this field should have access to this series.“

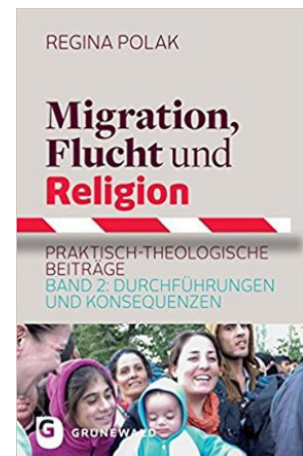
*Karsten Lehmann, Research Professor of Interreligiosity, Church University College of Teacher Education, Wien/Krems.*

**Regina Polak: *Migration, Flucht und Religion. Praktisch-Theologische Beiträge. Band 2: Durchführungen und Konsequenzen, Grünewald, Ostfildern.***

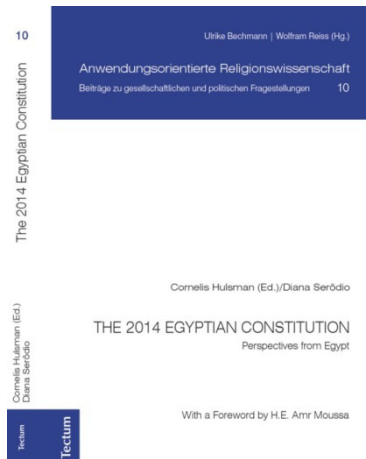
*The book launch was held on 5 October 2017.*

Migration and escape are considered as „signs of the times“ by the churches and theology. How can these “challenges of the century” be perceived from a Christian perspective? How can European citizens live together peacefully in a culturally and religiously plural society? What can be contributed by the churches within the migration societies of Europe?

Regina Polak pursues these questions from an interdisciplinary perspective. She gives empirical insights into migrant living environments and experiences and offers some innovative approaches towards biblical theologies of migration. Migration and escape are among the central topics of Christian faith and can lead the way to freedom for Europe.



*The last but one volume of the series „Anwendungsorientierte Religionswissenschaft“ (Wolfram Reiss / Ulrike Bechmann Ed.) was published on December 4th 2017: Diana Serôdio / Cornelis Hulsman (Ed.): The 2014 Egyptian Constitution. Perspectives from Egypt (Anwendungsorientierte Religionswissenschaft Band 10) Tectum-Verlag: Marburg 2017.*



After President Hosni Mubarak was toppled in 2011, discussions followed immediately regarding the revision of the Egyptian Constitution. Islamist political groups insisted that Parliamentary and Presidential elections should precede the formation of a new Constitution, aiming to use their momentum to gain the upper hand in the Constitutional Assembly. Non-Islamists believed that representatives from all layers of society must first formulate a new Constitution before elections should be held. Out of this struggle emerged the 2012 Constitution, a document deeply influenced by Islamist political ideas and goals. Dissatisfied with the proceedings, the non-Islamists walked out of the Constitutional Assembly before the Constitution was finalized. In attempts to reconcile the alienated non-Islamist factions, and heal a divided Egyptian society, the Egyptian Constitution of 2014 was created. All efforts were made to avoid a similar walk-out from Islamist factions. Various political actors were interviewed during, and shortly after the 2014 Constitutional formation process. This book is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the discussions and debates surrounding the formation of the 2014 Constitution. This book follows and complements the previous books in the series on recent religious and political developments in Egypt, in particular Vol. 3 The Sharia as the Main Source of Legislation? (2012), Vol. 8 Rise and Fall of the Muslim Brotherhood 2011–2013 (2016), Vol. 9 From Ruling to Opposition 2011–2013 (2017).

### **Eva Synek: *Das „Heilige und Große Konzil“ von Kreta (Kirche und Recht 29). Freistadt: Plöchl 2017***

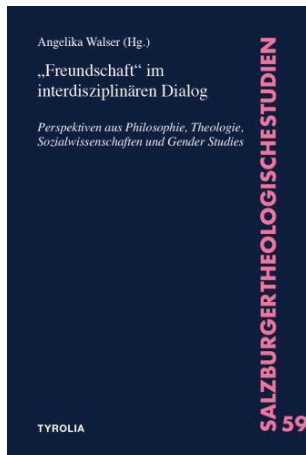
Eva Synek (Department for Philosophy of Law, University of Vienna) traced the complex historic path from the beginning of the 20th century to the announcing of a panorthodox synod in the year 2014 and the council held in Crete in June 2016.

Additionally to the historical survey, the specific schemes of the council are examined as well as its critique which was expressed in the pre-council phase. The nucleus of the book is constituted by the legal content of the passed documents of the council. Furthermore Eva Synek responds to the council participants as well as to aspects of the codes of the organization and the code of conduct. The controversial question, whether the council of 2016 is to be qualified as „panorthodox council“, is discussed in the concluding chapter of the book. The book further provides a first update on the second edition of the standard work entitled „Orthodoxes Kirchenrecht. Eine Einführung“ by Richard Potz and Eva Synek.





Angelika Walser (Ed.): „Freundschaft“ im interdisziplinären Dialog. *Perspektiven aus Philosophie, Theologie, Sozialwissenschaften und Gender Studies (Salzburger Theologische Studien)*, Tyrolia 2017.



Friendship is one of the most important types of social relations and a vital issue of our times. In a world that has become unclear and cold, friendship offers warmth and support. Despite this self-evident every-day experience, friendship has not yet been reflected upon extensively in Christian ethics. This interdisciplinary anthology aims to explore the relevance of friendship for the individual moral development as well as for the social cohesion of society. Starting from Aristotle's concept of friendship, the volume contains 16 articles by authors who contribute views on the topic from the perspectives of philosophy, theology, social sciences and gender studies (with an emphasis on the theological disciplines). The anthology reflects upon the plurality which is characteristic of

friendship as a type of relationship. Due to this plurality a lively debate within the volume takes place: Aristotle and Epicurus are contrasted with al-Ghazali, the Catholic marital doctrine is confronted with same-sex ethics of relationship, critical men's studies meets political science.

With contributions by Friedo Ricken, Patrick Schuchter, Martin Kellner, Marlis Gielen, Elżbieta Adamiak, Anton Bucher, Werner Wolbert, Andreas M. Weiß, Michael Rosenberger, Alexander Schmidl, Peter Siller, Martin Fischer, Alexandra Hartlieb, Angelika Walser, Elisabeth Hartlieb.

## MONOGRAPHS AND EDITED VOLUMES (FORTHCOMING, SELECTION)

Appel, Kurt: *Tempo e Dio a partire da Hegel e Schelling (biblioteca della teologia contemporanea 187/BTC)*, Brescia: Queriniana (January 2018).

This book is about a theory of history based on the philosophies of Leibniz, Kant, Heidegger, Schelling and Hegel. It sets up the main thesis that the predominant chronological understanding of time does not provide an adequate concept of history. Based on this assumption a theory of time is developed in which the past and the future are intertwined in such a way that the past is alterable and transparent to its inherent hope. Furthermore it is shown that the concept of time as it is presented in German Idealism can contribute to an adequate interpretation of the biblical theology of history, in which words like "God" are closely related to historical and social events in order to be interpreted.



## RECENT ARTICLES PUBLISHED BY RaT MEMBERS IN EDITED VOLUMES AND JOURNALS (SELECTION)

**Berghammer, Caroline; Zartler-Griessl, Ulrike; Krivanek, Desiree** / More than church taxes: Families shape disaffiliation of Austrian Roman Catholics. In: *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 2017.

**Danz, Christian** / Christianity and the encounter of world religions: Considerations to a contemporary theology of religions. In: *Correlatio*, No. Vol. 15, 2017, p. 9-26.

**Grohmann, Marianne** / Individualität und Selbstreflexion in den Klageliedern, in: Wagner, Andreas/van Oorschot, Jürgen (Ed.): *Individualität und Selbstreflexion in den Literaturen des Alten Testaments*, Leipzig 2017, 259–277

**Grohmann, Marianne** / Purity/Impurity: Identity Marker and Boundary Maintenance in Postexilic Discourse, in: Gillmayr-Bucher, Susanne/Häusl, Maria (Ed.): *Sedaqa and Torah in Postexilic Discourse* (Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 640), London/New York 2017, 103–121.

**Grohmann, Marianne** / Zur Bedeutung jüdischer Exegese der Hebräischen Bibel für christliche Theologie, in: *Evangelische Theologie* 77/2017, 114–131 Metapherntheorie und Altes Testament, in: *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 142/2017, 1153-1166

**Lehmann, Karsten** / On the complex relationship between the religious and the secular – proposing the notion of sedimentation (in: 'Religion and the Public Sphere' blog der London School of Economics, 2017 / LSE: <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/religionpublicsphere/2017/04/on-the-complex-relationship-between-the-religious-and-the-secular-proposing-the-notion-of-sedimentation/>).

**Lehmann, Karsten** / Vielfältige Ebenen religiöser Pluralität, - Zu den konzeptionellen Grundlagen der Debatten um 'interreligiöser Kompetenz -, in: Lindner, Doris / Stadnik, Elena (Ed.), *Professionalisierung durch Forschung*, Wien, 2017.

**Lohlker, Rüdiger** / Excluding the Other: Wahhabism, Salafism, Jihadism, and Political Islam. In: *Totalitarismus und Demokratie*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 12.2017.

**Mattes, Astrid** / Part of the problem or of the solution? The involvement of religious associations in immigrant integration policy. In: *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, Vol. 46, No. 1, 2017.

**Mattes, Astrid** / Who We Are Is What We Believe? Religion and Collective Identity in Austrian and German Immigrant Integration Policies. In: *Social Inclusion*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2017, p. 93–104.

**Mattes, Astrid; Stadlmair, Jeremias** / Challenges of democratic inclusion: Investigating the politics of difference. In: *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, Vol. 46, No. 1, 2017.

**Rosenberger, Sieglinde; Mattes, Astrid; Götsch, Katharina** / Restoring Routine by Debating Tolerance? Discursive Responses to Jihadist Terrorist Attacks. In: *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, 07.2017.

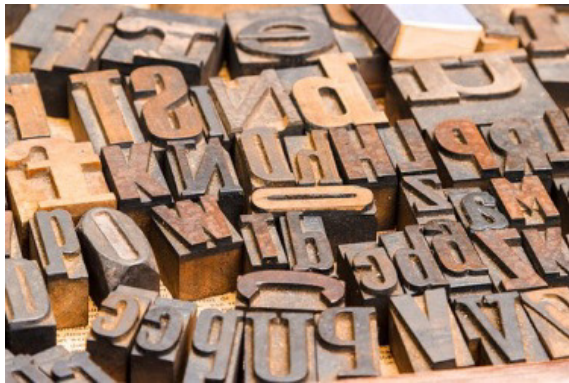
**Synek, Eva** / „Πρῶται ... τῶν διδασκάλων διδάσκαλοι“. Anmerkungen zur Rolle der Myrophoren im Diskurs pro und contra Frauenämter, in: Agnethe Siquans (Hrsg.), *Biblische Frauen in patristischer Rezeption* (Journal of Ancient Judaism Supplements 25,5), Göttingen 2017, 220-256.

**Synek, Eva**, Diakonat der Frau in der orthodoxen Tradition. Kirchenrechtliche Grundlagen, in: Pro Oriente Magazin 6 (2017) 5-6.

## 3. PREVIEW

### CONGRESSES, CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

#### Conference of the European Academy of Religion, Bologna, 5-8 March 2018



Back in the year 2016, the RaT-members Kurt Appel and Sieglinde Rosenberger have already participated at the founding Conference of the European Academy of Religion in Bologna, whereas Jakob Deibl took part at the so called Zero Conference in the year 2017. The European Academy of Religion (EuARe) is a research initiative launched under the high patronage of the European Parliament which offers an exchange platform to academies and scientific

societies, associations, research centres and institutions dealing with questions concerning religion. In March 2018 the first regular conference will take place with five RaT-Members participating (Kurt Appel, Marlene Deibl, Lisa Achathaler, Daniel Kuran and Jakob Deibl). Together with our cooperation partners from the Consortium sIMAGINE (hosted by the University of Humanistic Studies Utrecht, NL) we have submitted a proposal (by now accepted) entitled "The Future of the Grand European Narratives. Political, Theological and Philosophical Considerations". The aim is to investigate (a) the affective and intellectual potential of new religious narratives for a vision shared by Christianity, Islam and the secular world, (b) the challenge of nihilism which implies the end of every human narrative, and (c) religion and new ecological narratives and imaginaries.

#### Congress "Weakness of God" with John D. Caputo, 15-18 May 2018

*Organized by the Institute for Human Sciences Vienna (Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, IWM), supported by RaT*

The aim of the conference is to consider the diversity of „ends“ (from motives, telic purposes, and finalities, but also auto-telic meanings) of religion in the specific context of re-framing „community“ today; that is, of productively thinking through its manifest aporias. There will be contributions that deal with the intersections of religion and the institution of community as it might be developed from a variety of related theoretical backgrounds such as



phenomenology, hermeneutics, political theology, deconstruction, or cultural theory. Keynote speaker: John D. Caputo (Professor of Religion Emeritus at Syracuse University).

### Conference with sIMAGINE, 22-24 May 2018

The research platform RaT is part of the international Consortium SIMAGINE (hosted by the University of Humanistic Studies Utrecht, NL) directed by Laurens ten Kate and Hans Alma.

Members of the Consortium are: Amsterdam Centre for the Study of Cultural and Religious Diversity (ACCORD), VU University, Amsterdam; Centre for Religion, Conflict and the Public Domain (CRCPD), University of Groningen; Research Institute for Philosophy and Religious Studies (RIPRS), Utrecht University, NL; Centre Pieter Gillis, Department of Philosophy (CPG), University of Antwerp; Centre for Migration and Intercultural Studies, Department of Sociology



(CeMIS), University of Antwerp, Belgium; Department of French (DFC), University of Cambridge, UK; Centre for Media, Religion and Culture (CMRC), University of Colorado at Boulder; Department of Religious Studies (DRSS), University of California, St. Barbara, USA.

The delicate relationship between religion and secular modernity is an exemplary element of societies of the 21st century: it is marked by its social and cultural „super-diversity“ that is caused through globalization. The many encounters and confrontations between groups and individuals correspond with whatever they imagine (social imaginaries – sIMAGINE). They refer to shared implicit sets of assumptions, which often contain religious or moral claims of the particular part of society, one is part of: claims of values of a society and of how it should be organized. Social imaginaries do not refer explicitly to doctrines or beliefs, but the specific and contingent way of how societies present their considerations and ideals in the background. It is for this reason that social imaginaries represent „lived spaces“, in which people share but also contest the importance of their existence.

### International congress „LITERATUR UND RELIGION. Bilanz und Perspektiven eines Forschungsgebietes“ [Literature and religion. Results and perspectives of a research area], 26-28 February 2018



During the 1980s dominated the point of view, at least in the western world, that the „end of religion“ was immediately forthcoming. However, throughout the last couple of years – and not at least under the impression of worldwide religious-political conflicts – it became apparent that current environments entail an ongoing and multifaceted presence of religion. Therefore, humanistic and cultural studies had to revise some general notions of „modernity“ and

„secularization“ which lead to a rediscovery of religion respectively and forms of „the religious“



as a contemporary and controversial research theme. Likewise, literary studies have begun to address the multifaceted presence of religion in postsecular societies as a new challenge. In the process of reconditioning motivic references, the function and significance of religion for literature will be investigated.

### Workshop „Crisis of Representation II“, 16-18 May 2018

The year 2016 was one of what the noted economist and social theorist Nassim Taleb called “black swan” events in the realm of politics. As the British magazine *The Economist* noted on December 2, 2016, “a populist, nationalist wave is sweeping the West. It has to do with the economic crisis, globalisation, automation, immigration, stagnant wages, social media and a less deferential culture; albeit in drastically varying proportions in different countries. Each instance of this shift spurs on the next.” This nationalist wave, however, runs deeper than mere politics and cannot be so easily dismissed, as many progressive pundits are wont to proclaim, simply as the dark fruition of entrenched “racism” or “xenophobia, which prove to be more symptoms than causes. Such trends are the consequence of the rapidly fragmenting global



*Florian Nährer- Civitas Dei 20*

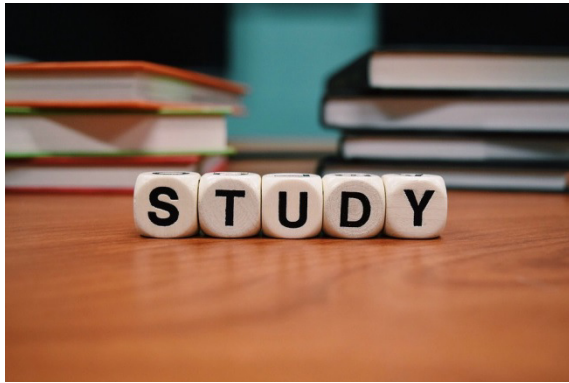
neoliberal order, stemming from what might be regarded (following the lead of Michel Foucault) a “crisis of representation.” The crisis is not only political and economic, but cultural, aesthetic, and religious as well. Thus a serious inquiry into this complex and multidimensional phenomenon requires an interdisciplinary approach. Since the preceding conference in June 2017 turned out to be a success with a lot of open questions that are yet to be discussed, the research platform RaT decided to initiate a workshop in continuance on the topic.

Participants include: Andreas Gelhard, Elisabeth Holzleithner, Thomas Schmidt, Michael Staudigl, Astrid Mattes, Gerald Posselt and Astrid Mattes. A publication on both events will follow in December 2018 (see forthcoming Journal J-RaT 7).

### Congress by Ian James and Martin Crowley „The Future of Hegel“, 25 April 2018

Between April 25th-26th 2018 Martin Crowley and Ian James (University of Cambridge) are going to host a congress on the topic of “The Future of Hegel”. Place: Office of the research platform RaT (2nd floor, Schenkenstraße 8-10, 1010 Vienna)

## 16th Annual Conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR), 17-21 June 2018, Bern



While scholars of migration studies are for example concerned with identity politics and processes of boundary drawing as well as minority representation and participation, religious studies rather focus on issues of a changing religious landscape, the effects of pluralization and the diaspora situation of religious communities. Here, young people set a course for the future development of religions in society through positioning and practicing.

Recent years produced a vast amount of research on religion and migration. Although often conducted with best intentions, such studies frequently reproduce categories of difference and symbolic boundaries. When focussing on the religion of "others", or on religion as a marker of otherness, scholarly literature often ignores the realities of contemporary societies such as their longstanding history of (religious) diversity.

Critical literature observes a racialization of religion in both politics and research. At the same time, religion continues to be a relevant means in young people's identity formation.

- The Contribution addresses the role of religion in politics of belonging by discussing intersectionality and the negotiation of ideas, ideals and identities among the religious youth.

The group centering on Astrid Mattes also encourages papers focussing on religions in mobile times, which discuss religious youth cultures and their confrontation with influence on/relation to established religious traditions and communities in migration societies.

- They are also interested in research on (migrant) religiosity in secular societies and religious engagement of young people as an expression of vital/revitalized religiosity and their interactions with secular environments in migration societies.

## Conference „Mensch-sein – Mensch-werden“ [Being human – becoming human] of the network for young academics in dogmatics and fundamental theology in Stuttgart, 21-23 March 2018

This year, the conference of the network for young academics in dogmatics and fundamental theology centers on the topic of „being-human“ – „becoming-human“: humankind is encountering unforeseen challenges, which do not only put her or his sense of the self in question, but also concerns her or his whole existence. What does it mean for a human to be „human“



in the 21st century and to encounter such enquiries? This background may display the necessity to focus on being human and incarnation (or becoming-human) from a systematic theological point of view and to consider its newly raising questions. Deriving from this necessity, young theologians try to confront themselves with these theological challenges and to dare to debate the precarious humanity among a christian standard. Contributions from members and affiliated persons from the research platform include Daniel Kuran, Marlene Deibl, Lisa Achathaler, Isabella Bruckner, Christoph Rogers and Britta Mühl.

## GUEST LECTURES

### Guest lecture by Angelika Berlejung „Gott als Gärtner“ [God as gardener], 2 March 2018



On Friday, March 2nd, 2018, at 10.15-11.45 a.m. Angelika Berlejung will hold a lecture on the topic of „Gott als Gärtner“ [God as gardener]. The lecture will take place at the Faculty of Protestant Theology, at the Institute for Old Testament Studies and Biblical Archaeology.

Schenkenstraße 8–10, Lecture hall 1, 5.OG

Scientific management: Marianne Grohmann

### Guest lecture by Abdullah Takim, „Ruach“, 3 March 2018

On March 3<sup>rd</sup> Abdullah Takim (chair for Classical and Contemporary Koran Exegesis at the University of Vienna) will hold a lecture on the concept of Ruach in Melk. The talk will take place in the course of the traditionally held PhD-seminar by Kurt Appel.



### Guest lecture by Ugo Perone, „Secularization“, 14 March 2018



Ugo Perone will speak on secularization which is implicitly connected to the necessity of newly thinking philosophy, culture, politics and religion.

Time: 16.45 pm, place: lecture halls of the department (Schenkenstraße 8-10, 1010 Wien).

**Guest lecture by Erwin Dirscherl „Inkarniertes Bewusstsein. Die Bedeutung der Leiblichkeit bei Emmanuel Levinas als Herausforderung für die Theologie“ [Incarnate Consiousness. The importance of corporality in Emmanuel Levinas as challenge for theology], 19-21 March 2018**

Erwin Dirscherl is going to present his latest results on theological anthropology and its humanitarian implications on Tuesday, March 20th 2018, between 4.30 and 8.00 p.m. Place: Office of the research platform RaT (2nd floor, Schenkenstraße 8-10, 1010 Vienna).



## 4. REVIEW

**TRIALOG „Hoffnungsloses Europa? Zukunftsperspektiven aus jüdischer, christlicher und muslimischer Sicht.“ [Hopeless Europe? Perspectives on the future form a Jewish, Christian and Muslim point of view], 7 September 2017**

Europe is facing enormous challenges, but makes an exhausted appearance and lacks perspectives. Has Europe lost all its hope for a better future? What could such a future look like? Are there any good reasons for a "gelehrte Hoffnung" (adept) hope (Ernst Bloch)?

In Judaism, Christianity and Islam hope takes in a crucial role. TRIALOG asks the question what the three religions can contribute to a worthwhile future for Europe in the current social and political situation. What could be hoped for and what are (good) reasons for hope from different religious perspectives? The participants in this discussion included the Catholic theologian Regina Polak, the rabbi Jonathan Magonet (London), the evangelical bishop Michael Bünker and Amena Shakir, head of the Institute for Islamic Religion at the Kirchlich Pädagogischen Hochschule.

**Workshop with Jonathan Magonet „The role of perspective in Biblical narrative: The Burning Bush (Exodus 3:1-15)“, 7 September 2017**

The story of Moses' encounter with God at the 'burning bush' in Exodus 3 marks a dramatic turning point in his personal history and ultimately for the destiny of the Children of Israel. Among the textual puzzles are for instance the changing names of God, as well as the drawn-out process which leads to the revelation of the Tetragrammaton. Within the workshop some Biblical literary conventions were examined that underly the narrative and their implications for traditional understandings of the text.

Rabbi Professor Jonathan Magonet is Emeritus Professor of Bible at Leo Baeck College, London where he was Principal 1985-2005. He is co-founder of the Annual International Jewish-Christian Bible Week (Haus Ohrbeck, Osnabrueck), which celebrates its 50th anniversary next year. He has been a pioneer within the Jewish-Christian-Muslim dialogue and is editor of the



journal European Judaism. He is a visiting research Professor at Seinan Gakuin University, Fukuoka, Japan.

*Coordination by the Department of practical theology in cooperation with RaT and the coordinating committee for the Christian-Jewish collaboration.*

### **Transdisciplinary conference „Leben und Lernen von und mit Flüchtlingen“ [Living and learning from and with refugees], hosted by the Department of practical theology in cooperation with the research platform RaT and the ERSTE-Stiftung, 19 -20 September 2017**

The transdisciplinary conference „Living and learning from and with refugees“ took place on September 19th and 20th in Vienna. In the well-attended Kardinal-König-Haus the question of positive narratives on migration was raised and new narratives and themes were elaborated from an interdisciplinary



*Speaker: Niraj Nathwani, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights*

perspective, with an important contribution on from the fields of theology and political sciences. On September 20th political representatives on EU-level presented the legal and historical background of the right of asylum, the strategies of migration and integration on the pan-European level and concrete experiences with political and humanitarian work with people on the run. Among them were Niraj Nathwani (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights), Antoine Savary (European Commission, DG Migration and Home Affairs) and Josef Weidenholzer (Member of the European Parliament, SPÖ).

### **Workshop „Prayer, Pop and Politics: researching post-migrant religious youth cultures“, 29-30 September 2017**

On September 29th and 30th, 2017, the workshop “Prayer, Pop and Politics: Researching post-migrant religious youth culture” was hosted by the University of Vienna. It was organized by Astrid Mattes and the research platform “Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society” and assembled researchers from various disciplines from Germany, Austria and Switzerland and thus bundled a broad spectrum of research questions, interests and perspectives with regard to empirical research on the role of religion in the life of young migrants. Three core topic areas included the issue of belonging (intersectionality, the negotiation of ideas, ideals and identities amongst young religious migrants), the topic of religion in mobile times (youth cultures among religious migrants in relation with established



*Ltr: Jana Wetzel (+Baby), Christine Hunner-Kreisel and Astrid Mattes*

religious traditions and communities), and the religiosity of migrants in the context of secular societies (youth cultures of migrants as an expression of religiosity in interaction with the secular environment). The lectures treated manifold religious and sociological aspects of the topic of the conference inquiring into questions such as: Which authorities and sources are used by young Muslim migrants (in Switzerland) for religious education and counselling? How do children and adolescents in mosque communities handle specific orders of affiliation with regard to experiences of

inequality? How can research be done with people who are affected by racist discourses? How does religious radicalization or deradicalization on the internet work amongst adolescents? Which (religious) identities are formed among young Hindus in Austria or Switzerland or among Sunnis and Alawites in Germany? Which role does pop culture play in the development and negotiation of religious identities and affiliations of young people; and which religious and political messages are transported by pop culture and how do adolescents incorporate these into their life style? Those and many other topics which are controversial in the context of the current social situation were discussed extensively and vividly at the workshop.

Results will be published in the book series Religion and Transformation in Contemporary European Society no. 18, entitled „Prayer, Pop and Politics: researching post-migrant religious youth cultures“ (forthcoming 2019).

### **RaT-Study day „Religion and Boundaries“, 2 October 2017**

On October 2nd, 2017, an internal study day on „Religion and Boundaries“ took place on the premises of the research platform RaT. Many longstanding and new RaT members and interested students participated in it. The goal of the study day was to bundle different project propositions from the diverse disciplines united in RaT in the topic „Religion and Boundaries“. Simultaneously the event offered the opportunity to present the request of the research platform for its renewal starting 2018 in front of the members and to resume the contours and results of eight years of RaT.



The title „Religion and Boundaries“ bundles the many relations between religion and boundaries, demarcations, transgressions and borderline experiences. This encompasses the boundaries inside religions, those between religions and those between religion and the secular. As the speaker of the platform, Kurt Appel, showed in his introduction, it is not only research in the context of its focal point „Religion and Migration“ that reveals the political

dimension of the topic „Religion and Boundaries“. Moreover, it also includes symbolic, linguistic, cultural and institutional boundaries.

The question concerning the relation between religion and boundaries demands further focussing on the one hand and the clarification of viable understandings of the concepts of religion and boundary on the other hand. The study day was the first session supposed to initiate a long-term development of the topic.

The possible focussing of „Religion and Boundaries“ on the concepts “representation” and “aesthetics” formed one recurrent theme of the discussions. This perspective builds on the international congress „The Crisis of Representation“ that was organized by RaT in June 2017. Religions represent pretense of sense, power, ethics, affiliation etc. The thesis that such representations always interfere with practices, liturgies, symbols, normative texts and more, enables one to understand religions as aesthetic programmes (in the largest sense of aisthesis).

The conception of project ideas on the topic „Religion and Boundaries“ could build on several project propositions. The spectrum of perspectives including approaches from political science, different forms of theology, philosophy, religious science and cultural science, allowed for the potential for common interests and the additional benefit of interdisciplinarity to emerge.

On the one hand this showed the necessity for different boundary concepts and discourses in order to be able to differentiate between material, political, topological, temporal, practical and symbolic boundaries. In which areas do demarcations turn into boundary problems that exclude people from concrete political rights? But where is this approach and the concept of “boundary making” in the context of the permanent renegotiation of demarcations appropriate?

On the other hand the ambivalence of this boundary concept which resides in its excluding function as well as its potential productivity as contact and transformation zone was the leading subject. This way the question emerged whether borderline experiences could not also be examined on various levels as processes of the genesis of new religious phenomena. Can borderline experiences between religions spur new processes of subjectification when they are mediated by literature for example? Which new forms of religious practices appear in the context of transgressions?

These and many other questions arose from the first common steps and reflections on the way to a common project which remains open to further ideas and which shall be worked on in the next sessions.

**Contribution by Hans Gerald Hödl at the international Nietzsche-Congress „Nietzsche und die Reformation“ [Nietzsche and the reformation], 14 October 2017**

In October 2017 Hans Gerald Hödl held a lecture entitled „Doppelte Prädestination und Ewige Wiederkehr. Eine Reflexion“ at the international Nietzsche-Congress „Nietzsche und die Reformation“ (12.-15. October in Naumburg).

**Book launch and diskussion „Von Abba bis Zorn Gottes: Irrtümer aufklären – das Judentum verstehen“ [From [A - abba] abba to [Z - Zorn] the wrath of God: clarifying misapprehensions - understanding Judaism], 24 October 2017**

*With Norbert Reck (editor), Willy Weisz (author, Jewish vice president of the KOOA), Markus Himmelbauer (author, former director of the KOOA), host: Regina Polak.*

In cooperation with the coordinating committee for Jewish-Christian collaboration, Biblia, the Kardinal König Foundation and the bookshop Herder.

The book: „Von Abba bis Zorn Gottes: Irrtümer aufklären – das Judentum verstehen.“ Published by Paul Petzel and Norbert Reck on behalf of the conversation circle of Jews and Christians at the central committee of German Catholics (Gesprächskreises von Juden und Christen beim Zentralkomitee der Deutschen Katholiken). Ostfildern (Patmos) 2017. With articles by Regina Polak, Martin Jäggli et al.

In the course of the 20th century the major Christian Churches have bethought themselves of Judaism. Still, the old sweeping notions persist in schools and church services until today: from the allegedly wrathful God in the Old Testament to the “Pharisees” – the proverbially narrow-minded functionaries of the law. In contrast, an international group of 34 Jewish and Christian scientists has undertaken this project to clear up certain errors in a competent and generally understandable way: 58 key words from A to Z with a lot of surprising insight about the Bible and the relation between Christians and Jews.

**International Congress: „sIMAGINE (Social Imaginaries between Secularity and Religion in a Globalizing World), 1-3 November 2017, Utrecht**

From the 1st to the 3rd of November 2017, the starting conference of sIMAGINE took place at the University of Humanistic Studies (Utrecht) at the University of Utrecht. The congress was marked by intense discussions on the topic of social imaginaries among the members of the Consortium (Kurt Appel und Jakob Deibl participating) during one and a half days of workshops. Besides, one day of the conference was also open to the public and was entitled “Religion, Community, Borders. Social Imaginaries and the Crisis of Neoliberal Democracy”. Keynote speaker Kurt Appel held a lecture on Religion and Public Space, followed by four responses. This conference was organized in collaboration with the platform “Metamorphoses of Christianity in Art, Literature and Philosophy”. J-RaT no. 8 “Religion, Social Imaginaries and Borders” (forthcoming in spring 2019) will accompany the conference. Special editors: Laurens ten Kate and Ernst van den Hemel.



## Workshop “What does it take for a Religion to be ‘Global’? Relativization, Authority and Repositioning”, 8 November 2017

On November 8th, the religious scholar Ugo Dessì held a workshop with RaT in the platform office. Ugo Dessì is adjunct professor at Leipzig University honorary research and associate at the Department of Religious Studies. Currently, he is Senior Research Fellow at the Department of Religious Studies in Vienna.

The well-attended lecture titled „What does it take for a Religion to be ‘Global’? Relativization, Authority and Repositioning” was followed by an animated discussion, both in English. Dr. Dessì drew special attention on new religious movements in Japan and their global contextualization as well as on more general issues of religious scholarship in a pluralized global context. Dr. Dessì especially referred to his



*Ugo Dessì*

recent major book „The Global Repositioning of Japanese Religions. An integrated approach. (Routledge 2017)” and to his extensive fieldwork in the region.

From 2 October to 14 November 2017 Ugo Dessì joined the platform-team as Visiting Researcher. He is adjunct professor the Institute for the Study of Religion, Leipzig University (Germany) and honorary research associate at the University of Cape Town (South Africa). He has published widely on Japanese religions, including *Ethics and Society in Contemporary Shin Buddhism* (LIT 2007), *The Social Dimension of Shin Buddhism* (Brill 2010), *Japanese Religions and Globalization* (Routledge 2013), and *The Global Repositioning of Japanese Religions: An Integrated Approach* (Routledge 2017). While at the Platform and at the Department of Religious Studies (Faculty of Catholic Theology, University of Vienna) he conducted research on the factors underlying religious adaptations to the global context in Japan and other cultural areas.

## Workshop „Zwischenraum: Psychoanalyse und Mystik bei Michel de Certeau“ [Interspace: between psychoanalysis and mysticism in Michel de Certeau] , 11 November 2017

On November 11th, 2017, the research platform RaT hosted a workshop on “Interspace: Psychoanalysis and Mysticism in Michel de Certeau” (Zwischenraum: Psychoanalyse und Mystik bei Michel de Certeau) in collaboration with Martin Eleven. The event was dedicated to Michel de Certeau, an author who has not been taken notice of to the same degree as other poststructuralist thinkers have in the German-speaking parts. Simultaneously, this was an attempt to go beyond a reception of Certeau’s work that focusses purely on its relevance for cultural sciences and neglects its theological contents. Instead, the idea was to widen the usual mode of reception through philosophical and theological contributions. Psychoanalysis and

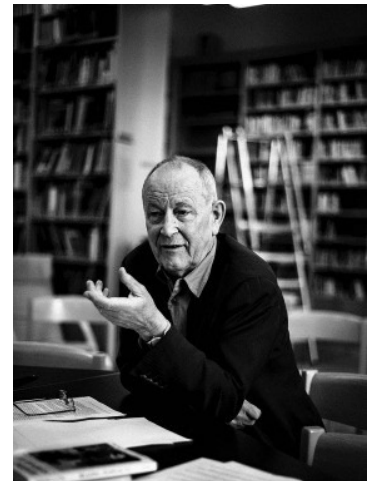
mysticism were central to this approach since their relatedness was not least reflected in Certeau's *Mystic Fable*.



*Martin Eleven*

There, psychoanalysis and mysticism were studied as spheres in which our fantasies of omnipotence collapse, where the question of the Other remains open and the „I“ is exposed as a distortion of the human. The workshop was inaugurated by Georg Gröller [Wiener Arbeitskreis für Psychoanalyse; Forschungsgruppe stuzzicadenti; Neue Wiener Gruppe (Lacan Schule)] who, by introducing Lacan – and especially Lacan's later reflections on mysticism –, presented the psychoanalytic theory that can be considered as the basis of Certeau's crossovers between psychoanalysis and mysticism. Subsequently, young researchers held presentations on various aspects of Certeau's work. They focussed on those points of contact of his thought relevant to philosophy, theology and politics.

The spectrum of its links to philosophy emerged from the many references present in Certeau's work itself and extended from his interpretation of Nicholas of Cusa (Julius Günther) up to overlaps with his contemporary Derrida (Daniel Kuran). The relevance of Certeau for the current theological discourse was not least pointed out by Isabella Bruckner's reflections of the „Body as the Site of Invocation“ (Der Leib als Ort der Anrufung). Thus not only Certeau's impact on Jewish and Christian theological categories was explored but also cross references to Islam through a contribution on Certeau and Ibn Arabi (Marlene Deibl). The political potential of mysticism resulting from a Lacanian reading was central to Natalie Eder's exploration of a possible dialogue between Certeau, Agamben and Roudinesco. The presentations were the result of an ongoing engagement with topics related to psychoanalysis and mysticism in the context of a reading circle headed by Martin Eleven for more than a year at the department of Fundamental Theology at the University of Vienna. The workshop was organized and moderated by Martin Eleven.



*Georg Gröller*

### **Workshop „...Can Polemics Innovate?‘ Change and Continuity in Jewish-Christian polemics from Late Antiquity to Modernity“, 14-15 November 2017**

Jewish-Christian controversy arose contemporaneous with the separation of the nascent Christian community from its Jewish background. From the moment of its birth, polemical discourse exhibited great diversity both in the method of argumentation as well as in style and form. Polemical „encounters,“ in the widest sense of the word, manifested themselves in variegated forms such as biblical interpretations, philosophical treatises, liturgy, sermons, stories, descriptions of real or imaginative disputations, chronicles, legal works, poetry, mystical works, and quite often they were written in separate treatises.



In addition, the polemical intention often expressed itself in non-verbal forms, e.g. in wall paintings or illustrations of manuscripts or books. In the long history of Jewish-Christian controversy, the actual forms and "norms" of polemical literature always arose from prevailing circumstances.

The workshop aimed at filling a historiographical gap and shedding new light on the phenomenon of change and continuity in the history of Jewish-Christian polemical encounters.

*Organization: Gerhard Langer in cooperation with Research Platform RaT, Institute of Jewish Studies (University of Vienna), Department of the History of Jewish People (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)*

### **Congress „Religiöse Erfahrung, säkulare Vernunft und Politik um 1900“ [Religious experience, secular reason and politics around 1900], 16-17 November 2017**

*Speaker: Karl Baier, Inigo Bocken, Marc de Kesel, Isabella Guanzini, Christopher Meiller, Stephan Popp, Markus Riedenauer, Hans Schelkshorn, Gerrit Steunebrink, Evert Van der Zweerde and Herman Westerink. Coordination: Hans Schelkshorn, Herman Westerink. Organization: RaT, Department of Christian Philosophy/University of Vienna, Titus-Brandsma-Institut/Nijmegen*

Between 1870 and 1930, different regions of the world experienced religious awakenings that engaged with secular reason in two forms, namely historicism and positivism (or evolutionism).

Around 1900, a broad spectrum of theological and philosophical approaches to religious experience and mysticism emerged, which was closely connected to ideological and



*Herman Westerink and Hans Schelkshorn*



political struggles. The conference exemplarily investigates selected paradigmatic approaches to religious experience, secular reason and politics.

### **Guest lecture by Thomas Oehl „Selbstbewusstsein und absoluter Geist“ [Self-Consciousness and absolute spirit], 22 November 2017**

On November 22nd, 2017, Thomas Oehl (from the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München) held a lecture on „Self Consciousness and Absolute Spirit“ at the department for Fundamental Theology. Together with Arthur Kok (Tilburg / Amsterdam) Thomas Oehl will publish the anthology „Objektiver und absoluter Geist nach Hegel. Kunst, Religion und Philosophie innerhalb und außerhalb von Gesellschaft und Geschichte“ at Brill in 2018 with the participation of Kurt Appel amongst others. Thomas Oehl presented passages of his own contribution to the anthology. The lecture commented on Hegel's understanding of Self Consciousness in opposition to Descartes and Kant and explained the importance of the Absolute Spirit in the context of which he discussed the relation between religion and philosophy. Oehl interpreted Self Consciousness neither as *res cogitans* (Descartes) nor as the



*Thomas Oehl*

highest principle (Kant) but as a matter of fact (Tatsache) according to which it is impossible to think oneself as not thinking. The nucleus of Oehl's interpretation of Hegel and his subsequent train of thought was the idea that Self Consciousness is to be understood as the prehension of this matter of fact in which the practical and the theoretical dimension concur. The lecture broke new and

unusual ground, especially with regards to the determination of the relation between philosophy and religion. Based on the hypothesis that in Hegel limited subjectivity is determined by a tendency to absolutize oneself Oehl did not only sketch a proof of God's existence emanating from the concept of Self Consciousness, but he also looked for the traces of a positive philosophy in Hegel. Referring to Hegel's late Göschel-Rezension (1829) the latter was spotted in the idea that the fall from grace or the tendency to absolutize particular to limited subjectivity is the underivable condition of the philosophical penetration of Self Consciousness.



## Congress and Workshop „Religion and Prison. Management of religious diversity in correctional services in Greece, Sweden and Austria“, 24-26 November 2017



*Ltr: Triantafyllos Tranos, Hans Raun Iversen and Wolfram Reiss*

From November 24th to 27th 2017, a workshop on the dealings with religious diversity in the penal system took place at the Faculty of Protestant Theology at the University of Vienna. Dr. Triantafyllos Tranos, who works as a teacher for aesthetic education in a prison close to Thessaloniki, reported on the situation in Greek prisons. Rev. Dr. Magnus Abrahamson, who

works as a Lutheran pastor in a prison in Gothenburg, described pastoral care in Swedish prisons.

The Austrian and German perspective was introduced by the scholar of religion Prof. Dr. Wolfram Reiss who, before his appointment as a professor at the University of Vienna, worked in a maximum security prison in Germany and published papers on interreligious aspects relevant to pastoral care in prisons.

The congress focused on challenges that arise through current paths of immigration within the three mentioned countries. The background is marked through country-specific historic and religious differences, as Greece for instance is mostly Orthodox, whereas Austria and Denmark are predominantly Catholic and Lutheran. The lectures centred on country-specific situations on the topic: integration and refugees in schools on the one hand and the management of religious diversity in the penal system on the other. Furthermore, problems concerning religious minorities in Denmark were discussed.

*Scientific management: Wolfram Reiss*

*With contributions by Karsten Lehmann / Viola Raheb (University of Vienna); Angeliki Ziaka / Triantafyllos Tranos (University of Thessaloniki) und Hans Raun Iversen / Lisbeth Rasmussen (University of Copenhagen)*

### Panel discussion „Religion and Prison“, 27 November 2017

Public panel discussion on „Religion and Prison“ with Triantafyllos Tranos (Greece), Rev. Magnus Abrahamson (Sweden), Wolfram Reiss (University of Vienna).

*Moderation by Jakob Deibl from the research platform „Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society“.*

## Panel discussion „Die Göttliche Ordnung?: Religion und Strukturelle Gewalt gegen Frauen“ [Divine arrangement?: Religion and structural violence against women], 27 November 2017

The international campaign „16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence“ emphasized the period from the International Day against Violence towards Women (November 25th) to the International Day of Human Rights (December 10th) in order to draw attention to everyone's right to lead a life free of violence. In the course of this campaign researchers working on the topics of religion and gender discussed the role of religion with regards to structural violence against women. How do religious beliefs, contents and practitioners contribute to the marginalization of gender? Based on excerpts taken from film projects connected to the topic the experts originating from the



*Martin Fischer, Astrid Mattes, Sabine Grenz and Irene Klissenbauer*

fields of theology and gender studies expressed their opinion on concrete questions and issues. The goal of the discussion round was to establish where the responsibility and the possibilities of religions and religious communities lie with regards to the opposition to violence against women.

*Moderated by Irene Klissenbauer and with the participation of:*

- *Sabine Grenz*, Gender Studies, University of Vienna
- *Gerhard Marschütz*, Catholic Theology, University of Vienna
- *Dudu Küçüköl*, Feminist und Activist
- *Martin Fischer*, Evangelical Theology, Kirchlich Pädagogische Hochschule Wien-Krems

*The panel discussion was hosted by the research platform „Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society“.*

## Guest lecture by Zahra Langhi „Religion and Violence“, 30 November 2017

Islam has played a prominent role in Libya's conflicts and upheavals, especially since the country was colonized by Italy in 1911. Al-Sanusiyya, a Sufi movement played a pivotal role in fighting Italian colonialism and in building the Libyan nation state after independence. After seizing power in 1969, Colonel Muammar Gadhafi worked hard to dismantle traditional religious institutions and destroy the possibility of any religious leadership to usurp his own. His efforts, however, only allowed extremism to creep into the vacuum he created. After decades of authoritarian rule, underlying structural

disparities and a variety of ethnic, tribal, resource-driven disputes, other conflicts are percolating to the surface amid these vast societal changes, complicating the process of rebuilding the country. The religious and ideological dynamics of Libya's turbulent transition are fueling debates about the relationship between religion and violence. How far Islamic tradition is to be blamed for violent extremism? How can we understand today's modern salafi Jihadist and takfiri movements in the context of postcolonialism and globalization?

Zahra' Langhi is a Co-founder and the CEO of the Libyan Women's Platform for Peace, a socio-political movement which aims at peace building, inclusivity and gender equality. Also she participated in the UN led peace process. She was also advisor to the Libyan National Dialogue. In her research she focusses on topics of peace building, women's leadership, Middle Eastern history, metaphysics, mysticism and female spirituality in comparative religions.

**Guest lecture by Beesan Sarrouh „Simple Twists of Faith. Accommodating Muslim Minorities in secular Societies – The Case of Quebec“, 4 December 2017**

Quebec offers an interesting perspective on the relationship between minority nationalism and the integration of immigrants. Immigration into the homeland of a national minority often reinforces its sense of cultural insecurity. Quebec has responded by exercising its substantial jurisdiction within the Canadian federation to develop a distinctive approach to immigrant integration, known as interculturalism. The presentation examines the controversies surrounding Quebec's approach. She argues that the content of the current debates, which increasingly focus on the accommodation of religious diversity, is driven primarily by the church-state settlement reached in the province in the middle of the 20th century. However, Quebecers' minority status does matter. It increases the frequency and intensity of conflict about diversity policy. In addition, it shapes attitudes towards the process for managing disputes.

Quebecers' believe such issues should be resolved in Quebec, and they resist the idea that pan-Canadian institutions should have a central role. The lecture is a cooperation between IPW and the research platform „Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society“.

**Workshop „Menschenrechte und Metaphysik. Zum 400. Todestag von Francisco Suárez.“ [Human rights and metaphysics. In view of the 400th anniversary of the death of Fransisco Suárez], 9 December 2017**



*Ltr: Rolf Darge, Philip Waldner and Friedrich Mühlöcker*

The topicality of the Spanish Jesuit Francisco Suárez (1548-1617) is established especially by two aspects of his enormous body of work which today's international research works on with particular interest: his philosophy of law in the time of Europe's early modern globalizing expansion and his sum of European scholasticism as metaphysics. The latter was representative for the doctrine taught at university, but *ex negativo* also became central to the modern criticism of metaphysics. The core topic of the workshop was whether a factual link could be established between the wisdom-oriented and knowledge-oriented disciplines, which Suárez usually treated as a theologian, and whether Suárez himself developed such a link under the possible heading of "human metaphysics".

*Organized by Cornelius Zehetner, moderation: Jakob Deibl.*

### **Guest lecture by Klaus von Stosch „Christentum und Islam“ [Christianity and Islam], 20 January 2018**



*Fltr: Ingeborg Gabriel, Kurt Appel, Klaus von Stosch and Regina Polak*

Klaus von Stosch held a research seminar in Melk on the topic of Islam and Christianity. In the framework of this seminar he presented a theological (historical-philosophical) interpretation of the relationship between these two religions, with a focus on Islam.

Von Stosch is currently one of the leading international experts of the theological dialogue between christianity and Islam. His corresponding

publications (with the latest one being: „Herausforderung Islam: christliche Annäherungen“) on the aesthetics of Islam have therefore found great reception. Von



Stosch was also leading in initiating the Centre for Comparative Theology and Cultural Sciences at the University of Paderborn.

**Serial lecture on the topic of „Liebe und Hass in Philosophie, Literatur und Religion“ [Love and hate in philosophy, literature and religion], winter term 2017**

*Scientific management: Violetta Waibel*

Love and hate were and still are highly topical. Our day and age is shaken by waves of terror and of hate against humanity. What is also shaken is the horizon of values in which the diversity of modernity might inscribe itself into. A lot of conventions, like for example gender relations, became dissolved. Mostly, this process generated benefits, but did not take place without causing disorientation. Safety networks within societies are perforated and their order became doubtful. In the face of these developments one starts exploring the effective force age-old as well as contemporary forms of thought on love and hate in philosophy, religion and literature. An understanding of the interdependent relationship between feeling and thinking allows to open up a space in which an understanding of the present might be made easier. It is also thought of as a process that helps to immunize against the emotional manipulation that surrounds us, to gain new orientation and – on that basis – to be capable of acting responsibly.

# 5. THIRD-PARTY FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS

## CURRENT PROJECTS

### **Social Imaginaries between Secularity and Religion in a Globalizing World (SIMAGINE)**

Within the framework of the international project „sIMAGINE – Social Imaginaries between Secularity and Religion in a Globalizing World“ (funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research NOW; 2016-2019) the cooperation of RaT and the project leaders Laurens ten Kate and Hans Alma (University of Humanistic Studies, Utrecht) was intensified. Kurt Appel (RaT speaker) and Jakob Deibl (RaT executive team) participated in the start-up conference “Religion, Community, Borders” (02.11.2017), at which Kurt Appel presented an opening paper. Moreover, a joint project at the European Academy of Religion (Bologna 2018) was accepted.

The project “sIMAGINE” installed an international consortium including RaT and 9 further international members. The central research question of the project is: What may the concept of social imaginaries contribute to recent cultural theories, religious studies and theories of globalization and in the face of an intercultural and highly diverse society that embodies a complex composition of secular and religious components? Based on this question the project engenders its research following theoretical and empirical lines and focuses, in the light of globalization, on social imaginaries in urban and virtual environments.

## COMPLETED PROJECTS

### **The Peace Pagoda in Vienna: A Survey of the Buddhist Order Nipponzan Myōhōji in Austria**

The project, that was sponsored by the Viennese Department of cultural affairs, was lead by Isabelle Prochaska-Meyer, implemented in cooperation with Lukas Pokorny and was successfully completed in the year 2017. The Nichiren-based Buddhist order Nipponzan Myōhōji was founded in 1917 by the Japanese monk Nichidatsu Fujii (1885–1985). The development of the Nipponzan Myōhōji and especially the „Peace Pagoda“ in Vienna are tightly correlated with the general history and the visibility of Buddhism in Austria since the early 1980s in particular. The Peace Pagoda represents a vitally important Buddhist institution in Austria. Likewise, Nipponzan Myōhōji's Peace Pagoda is an essential symbolic domestic landmark of the international peace movement and the growing acceptance of religious diversity at the time, as well as an important rallying point for interdenominational and interreligious dialogue. Through enhancing the visibility of the dynamic history and the activities of an internationally representative type of Nipponzan Myōhōji, the project provided valuable insights into the group's efforts for global peace at international scale.

## Magomed al-Shishani

### Wege aus der Extremismusfalle und Möglichkeiten der Prävention [Magomed al-Shishani – Ways out of the trap consituted by extremism and possibilities of prevention]

The project conducted by Rüdiger Lohlker was successfully completed in September 2017. Last year a cooperation with a young Chechen man was installed, who, on the one hand, is imprisoned because of criminal and Jihadist activities but who, on the other hand, began to criticize his former convictions and then developed an Islamic alternative against jihadist ideas. The project included the production of video-clips and a blog in co-production with the imprisoned man and was intensively supported by youth workers and scientifically supervised by the department for Islamic Studies at the University of Vienna. This ground breaking pilot project made it possible to initiate a process that allows for an inclusion of other actors within communities that are endangered by Jihadist ideas.

## 6. PRESS REVIEW

13.01.2018

Neue Züricher Zeitung: contribution by Jan-Heiner Tück entitled „Wie der Jesuit Teilhard de Chardin den Glauben mit der Wissenschaft vereinen wollte“

13.01.2018

Kurier: Richard Potz wrote a contribution with the title „Spaghettimonster: Da ist Rapid eher eine Religion“.

04.01.2018

article by Hans Schelkshorn entitled „Neue Rechte, Demokratie und Christentum“ in the media platform Uni:view Magazine from the University of Vienna.

29.12. 2017

Neue Züricher Zeitung: Jan-Heiner Tück wrote an article entitled: „Die Wissenschaft will über die Kirche triumphieren“.

10.12.2017

Interview with Elisabeth Holzleithner in the ORF series „Orientierung“ with the title „Ehe für alle“.

05.12.2017

Elisabeth Holzleithner was guest at the FM4 „Reality Check“ with a contribution entitled „Der Verfassungsgerichtshof hebt die gesetzliche Regelung auf, die gleichgeschlechtlichen Paaren den Zugang zur Ehe verwehrt: Interview zu diesem Beschluss“.

5.12. 2017

Neue Züricher Zeitung: Jan-Heiner Tück wrote a contribution with the title „Ich arbeite, bis die Dunkelheit kommt“.

27.11.2017

Ö1 series „Religion aktuell“ airs a series on the panel discussion on „Die Göttliche Ordnung?: Religion und Strukturelle Gewalt gegen Frauen“ in the framework of the international campaign „16 Tage gegen Gewalt an Frauen und Mädchen“ (25.11.-10.12.2017), initiated by the research platform RaT, under the scientific management of Astrid Mattes and Irene Klissenbauer.

16.10.2017

Neue Züricher Zeitung: article by Jan-Heiner Tück entitled „Das Sinnangebot des Christentums. Eine Antwort auf Slavoj Žižek“.

11.10.2017

Wiener Zeitung: guest commentary by Sieglinde Rosenberger entitled „Einsilbige Reaktionen. Der Umgang unserer Gesellschaft mit religiös motivierter Gewalt hat sich seit dem ‚Charlie Hebdo‘-Anschlag geändert“.

2.10.2017

ZIB13 or Religion.ORF.at respectively: Astrid Mattes and Richard Potz moderated a panel discussion on the topic of „Initiative Muslimischer Österreicher befragte Parteien“.

20.09.2017

within the Ö1 series „Praxis - Religion und Gesellschaft“ Rüdiger Lohlker talks on the topic of „Österreich und die Muslimbruderschaft. Muslimbruderschaft in Österreich“. - Moderation: Alexandra Mantler“.

28.09.2017

Standard.at: contribution by Irene Klissenbauer: „Keine Angst vor Pluralität“. 22.09.2017: Ö1 morning journal: Rüdiger Lohlker talks about „Deradikalisierung: Videos kommen an“.

21.09.2017

Kathpress: congress by Regina Polak and Andrea Lehner-Hartmann entitled „Flüchtlings- hilfe: Theologen planen Leitfaden für Ehrenamtliche“.



19.09.2017

Religion.ORF.at: Ingeborg Gabriel was guest in the series „Kreuz und Quer“ and talks on the topic of „Das Leben entrümpeln“.

14. 09. 2017

in Warsaw the „Human Dimension Implementation Meeting 2017“ of the OSZE took place. The statement by Ingeborg Gabriel, special representative of the OSZE, was aired via video.



**Forschungsplattform der Universität Wien**  
**“Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society”**

Plattform-Management:

Schenkenstraße 8-10, 2. OG, Raum 53, 1010 Wien

+43-1-4277-238-03

[www.religionandtransformation.at](http://www.religionandtransformation.at)

e-mail: [rat@univie.ac.at](mailto:rat@univie.ac.at)

[www.rat-blog.at](http://www.rat-blog.at)