LUISS

Università di Roma

EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION

Religion and (In)Equalities

European Academy of Religion
Ninth Annual Conference

#EuARe2026

EUROPEAN ACADEMY OF RELIGION
ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026

Rome, LUISS University

30 June – 3 July 2026

PROGRAMME BOOKLET

Panel composition, scheduling, room allocation, and individual paper information could still change.
Please consult the latest available online version of the programme for the most up-to-date information.

https://secure.onlinecongress.it/Olc/Client/Programme/Public/Home/EUARE2026/199720825699059700220207/en/Home

Welcome from the EuARe President

The European Academy of Religion reaches Rome!

From June 30 until July 3, over 1100 scholars from around the world take part in the European Academy of Religion. For almost a week, the wonderful campus of LUISS University becomes the home to junior and senior researchers, to publishers and journalists, and to many who just want to learn, share and get excited about the latest in the study of religion.
Preparations were intense, and now we are ready!

See you all at EuARe, see you at LUISS.

Herman Selderhuis
President of the European Academy of Religion

Welcome from the Local Organizers

Dear Participants in EuARe2026,

it is our great pleasure to welcome you to LUISS Università di Roma and to the Ninth Annual Conference of the European Academy of Religion (EuARe). With more than 1150 participants and hundreds of panels, EuARe continues to serve as a unique space for interdisciplinary exchange and dialogue on the role of religion in contemporary societies.

The theme of this year's conference, *Religions and (In)equalities*, invites us to reflect on the many ways in which religions interact with social, economic, political, legal, and cultural inequalities. Religious actors and institutions can contribute to the reproduction of inequalities, but they can also serve as sources of solidarity, social mobility, recognition, and resistance. Examining these dynamics requires perspectives that extend beyond the study of religion alone and engage with the broader structures that shape contemporary societies. For this reason, the theme resonates particularly well with the mission of LUISS, a university dedicated to the study of politics, economics, law, international affairs, and society. We are therefore especially pleased to host EuARe 2026.

Beyond the rich academic programme, we encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities for informal exchange throughout the conference. Some of the most valuable conversations at EuARe take place between panels, over coffee on the Viale Pola and Via Parenzo campuses, while visiting the photographic exhibitions and book exhibition area, or simply while enjoying the university's indoor and outdoor spaces.

We also warmly invite you to join the Welcome Reception on 30 June at LUISS, Viale Pola 12. Participants may furthermore wish to explore two remarkable cultural sites located close to the conference venues and away from the usual tourist itineraries: the Mausoleum of Santa Costanza and the Catacombs of Priscilla.

We hope that EuARe 2026 will provide not only a forum for presenting research, but also opportunities for new collaborations, future projects, and lasting professional friendships.

Kristina Stoeckl
Rosario Forlenza
Valentina Meliciani
Fiorella Kostoris
Pasquale Ferrara
EuARe 2026 Local Organising Committee

Opening Ceremony

Tuesday, 30 June 2026 from 11:00 to 12:00
The Opening Ceremony will take place in:
Aula Magna in Viale Pola 12, 00198, Roma (RM).

Speakers: Paolo Boccardelli (Rector, LUISS), Giovanni Orsina (Head of Department of Political Sciences, LUISS), Herman Selderhuis (President EuARe), Mons. Samuele Sangalli (Adj. Secr. Dicastery for Evangelization & LUISS), Mariangela Falà (President Fondazione Maitreya & Tavolo Interreligioso di Roma).

Keynote Lectures

All keynote lectures will take place in:
Aula Magna in Viale Pola 12, 00198, Roma (RM)

Tuesday, 30 June 2026 from 12:00 to 13:00
Yann Algan (HEC Paris)
"BUILDING TRUST ACROSS DIVIDES:
EMOTIONS, INEQUALITIES, AND POLICY VIEWS"
Chair: Stefano Manzocchi (Pro-Rector for Research, LUISS)

Wednesday, 1 July 2026 from 12:30 to 13:30
Winnifred F. Sullivan (Indiana University)
"MAKING A KING: THE POLITICAL THEOLOGY OF JOAN OF ARC"
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl (LUISS)
This keynote is generously sponsored by John Cabot University.

Thursday, 2 July 2026 from 12:30 to 13:30
Tamar Herzig (Tel Aviv University)
"RELIGION, SLAVERY, AND GENDER
IN MEDITERRANEAN EUROPE, 1500-1800"
Chair: Rosario Forlenza (LUISS)

Friday, 3 July 2026 from 12:30 to 13:30
Paolo Benanti (LUISS)
"AI AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES: CHALLENGES FOR INEQUALITIES"
Chair: Valentina Gentile (LUISS)

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List of panels in chronological order

WOMEN'S PEDAGOGIES IN THE CATHOLIC WORLD BETWEEN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A209

Contact: Federico Ruozzi
Chair: Francesca Cadeddu

Catholic women who devoted themselves to education played a crucial role in the cultural, social, and religious formation of generations of children, young people, and adults, making a decisive contribution to the construction of both formal and informal educational systems between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This contribution aims to explore the plurality of these experiences – religious women, consecrated laywomen, educators, pedagogues, school principals, and missionaries – highlighting both their agency and the institutional, theological, and gender constraints within which they operated.

Drawing on a historical and interdisciplinary approach that combines Church history, history of education, gender studies, and cultural studies, the open panel proposes to analyze how these women developed original pedagogical practices, often in critical dialogue with male educational models and with the transformations of modernity. Particular attention will be paid to the religious and civic networks in which they acted, to the educational languages they employed, and to the ways in which their work contributed to redefining the relationship between Catholicism, society, and education.

THE REBIRTH OF MONTESSORI THOUGHT BETWEEN PEDAGOGY, CATHOLICISM, AND CULTURAL RENEWAL: THE CENTRO NASCITA AND ELENA GIANINI BELOTTI IN THE 1960S

Roghi V.(Speaker), Università di Roma LUMSA ~ Rome ~ Italy

BARBIANA BEYOND BARBIANA: THE PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIENCE OF ADELE CORRADI

Ruozzi F.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia/Fscire ~ Reggio Emilia/Bologna ~ Italy

MADDALENA MORANO

Loparco G.(Speaker), Pontificia Facoltà di Scienze dell'Educazione Auxilium ~ Roma ~ Vatican City State (Holy See)

CATHOLIC SCOUTING, COEDUCATION, AND THE LEGACY OF A SCOUT PEDAGOGY FOR GIRLS (1974–1985)

Schirripa V.(Speaker), università LUMSA ~ Roma ~ Italy

ANTONIETTA GIACOMELLI: RELIGIOUS RENEWAL AND THE EDUCATION OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

Cadeddu F.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE SPIRITUAL TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN MARIA MONTESSORI: SOME ELEMENTS FOR REFLECTION

Gabusi D.L.(Speaker), University of Verona ~ Verona ~ Italy

RELIGION, RACE (BLACKS & LATINOS), INEQUALITY AND THE 2024 ELECTION

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Gaston Espinosa
Chair: Denis Lacorne

Religion, Race (Blacks & Latinos), Inequality and the 2024 Election
Panel Description
This panel explores the critical role of religion and race in shaping why Blacks and Latinos voted for billionaire Presidential candidate and Donald Trump at rates higher than expected, instead of voting for a woman of color – Presidential candidate Kamala Harris. It analyzes the reasons why this happened despite Trump's well-earned perception of being anti-minority, anti-immigrant, anti-woman and pro-big business.
Session Chair, Denis Lacorne (PhD Yale), CERI at Sciences Po, Paris, France
Denis Lacorne is a senior research fellow with CERI at Sciences Po. A commentator on American Politics in Europe, his books include Religion in America: A Political History.
Presenter, R. Drew Smith (PhD Yale), Hillman Professor of Urban Ministry, Pittsburgh Seminary
The 2024 Election, Counter-Culturalism & Black Religio-Political Fluidities.
This presentation examines African American voters' surprisingly strong support for Donald Trump in the 2024 elections, including from black conservative Christians who embrace restrictions on reproductive rights, gay rights, and immigrant expansions within the US; and from black sports and HipHop figures who resonate with Trump's iconoclasm and projections of strength. Dr. Smith's books include From Every Mountainside: Black Churches and the Broad Terrain of Civil Rights.
Presenter, Gastón Espinosa (PhD UC Santa Barbara), Arthur V. Stoughton Professor of Religious Studies, Claremont McKenna College Latino Religion, Politics, Inequality and the 2024 Election.
This presentation explores the influence of religion in shaping why Latinos who suffer from inequality & normally vote Democrat voted for Trump in record numbers, even though he was often perceived as anti-immigrant, anti-minority, and pro-big business. Dr. Espinosa's books include Religion, Race, Gender & U.S. Presidency (forthcoming).

LATINOS, RELIGION, INEQUALITY, AND THE 2024 ELECTION

Espinosa G.(Speaker), Claremont McKenna College ~ Claremont ~ United States of America

DEEP INCARNATION IN DIALOGUE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Paolo Gamberini
Chair: Paolo Gamberini

The panel aims to explore in depth the theme of Deep Incarnation, a Christological perspective developed in particular by Niels Henrik Gregersen and explored, with their own emphases, by theologians such as Elizabeth A. Johnson, Celia Deane-Drummond, and Denis Edwards. This theological trend interprets "incarnation" not only as the assumption of human nature by the Word, but as a radical involvement of the Son of God in the flesh of the world, in matter, in evolutionary history, and in the vulnerability of the entire cosmos. Such a vision has generated widespread debate because it forces us to rethink traditional theological and philosophical categories and to bring different disciplinary fields into dialogue. On the one hand, it recalls patristic reflection, especially where the Fathers speak of "sarx" as the universal place of communion and salvation, or when Neoplatonic-inspired theologians (Maximus the Confessor, John Scotus Eriugena, and Nicholas of Cusa) offer tools for understanding the relationship between the Logos and the deep structure of reality.

On the other hand, Deep Incarnation engages with contemporary sciences, in particular with Teilhard de Chardin's evolutionary and cosmic vision, which sees Christ as the principle of cohesion and convergence of the universe, and with recent theories of quantum physics (Carlo Rovelli and Federico Faggin) with the notion of quantum field and cosmic consciousness. In this intertwining of theology, philosophy, and science, the panel aims to show how Deep Incarnation opens new ways of understanding the Christian mystery in a world marked by interconnection, complexity, and ecological vulnerability.

DEEP INCARNATION AN RELATIVE MONISM

Gamberini P.(Speaker), Pontificia Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Meridionale ~ Naples ~ Italy

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE 2025 JUBILEE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A210

Contact: Roberto Cipriani
Chair: Veronica Roldan

The Jubilee of the year 2025 can be considered a “total social event”, in Marcel Mauss terms. The definition of “total social event” involves many methods of research, leading to explore and to analyse multiple aspects. The main works concern the quantitative study through questionnaires, the qualitative analysis trough focused interviews, the visual perspective using photos and videos, the digital research about the presence and the impact of new communication technologies, the survey on the role of nurses participating in the Jubilee together with ill and disabled people, the observant participation and other techniques to investigate the participation of prisoners and prison guards in the jubilee celebrations. Main results can be discussed.

THE DIGITAL JUBILEE

Sbaragli S.(Speaker), Partenope University of Naples ~ Naples ~ Italy

THE FAITH OF OTHERS: INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN THE JUBILEE HORIZON

Salerno R.M.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

VERTICAL AUTHORITY AND HORIZONTAL PRODUCTION: THE HOLY SEE'S COMMUNICATION DOCTRINE FROM INTER MIRIFICA TO THE JUBILEE OF DIGITAL MISSIONARIES AND CATHOLIC INFLUENCERS

Taverna V.(Speaker), University of Tuscia ~ Viterbo ~ Italy

GENDER, GENERATION AND CATHOLIC BELONGING: NEGOTIATING GENDER ROLES AND RELIGIOUS TENSIONS AT THE 2025 JUBILEE

Lippolis M.(Speaker), Tellez Elias Nemer P.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Rome ~ Italy

RELIGIONS AND INEQUALITIES: PLURIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES SOCIOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC APPROACHES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A101

Contact: Rossana M Salerno
Chair: Rossana M Salerno, Giulia Conti, Gaetano Sabato

Religious, cultural, and social inequalities are a structural dimension of contemporary societies, shaped by power relations, belonging, and recognition. Religions, cultures, and territories act as interconnected spheres where meanings, norms, and practices of inclusion and exclusion emerge. The panel adopts sociological and geographic perspectives to explore how religions both reproduce and transform inequalities. From a sociological perspective, religions operate as institutions and symbolic systems that shape norms, values, gender arrangements, and hierarchies. Through rituals, discourse, digital media, and sacred objects, they may reinforce subordination or open spaces for critique and emancipation. From a geographic point of view, inequalities are seen as spatially embedded. Sacred places, devotional geographies, pilgrimages, and urban boundaries show how religions influence access to resources, visibility, and belonging. Concepts such as liminality highlight thresholds—urban margins, shrines, ritual paths—where identities and hierarchies can be renegotiated. Integrating these viewpoints allows for a multidimensional understanding of how religions reshape visibility, recognition, and symbolic redistribution in contemporary societies.
Keywords: Religion, Space, Inequality, Symbols, Digitalization, Pluralism

RELIGIONS AND INEQUALITIES: A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Salerno R.M.(Speaker), Conti G.(Speaker), University of Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

RELIGIONS AND INEQUALITIES: A GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE

Sabato G.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM VIOLATIONS IN THE WORLD. INEQUALITIES.

Guerra Pratas M.H.(Speaker), SCUCP- Sociedade Científica Universidade Católica Portuguesa ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

SACRED GEOGRAPHIES IN VIDEO GAMES SET IN ITALY. VALORISATION, LIMINAL SPACE, AND REGIMES OF VISIBILITY

Conti G.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

THE EMPEROR'S LIGHT AND THE MARGIN'S SHADOW: POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN MEDIEVAL CHINESE CHRISTIANITY

Balmont A.(Speaker), The Chinese University of Hong Kong ~ Hong Kong ~ Hong Kong

EXHAUSTED SPEECH: THE LIMITS OF LANGUAGE AND REPRESENTATION IN THE FACE OF SUFFERING

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Marjolaine Legros-Hoffner
Chair: Ángel Francisco Méndez Montoya, Gregory Stark

Language is exhausted both in the sense of those forms of speech that are tired or worn out by over-use, as well as in the apophatic sense where representation cannot continue, it fails. Any theological or philosophical language regarding suffering reaches its limits when confronted with its concrete applicability. Among the limits of applicability are the challenges of representing different types of precarity, vulnerability, and inequality, while respecting the Other's affective agency. The Other stands before the theologian as other. What relational responsibilities might frame theologian's engagement with the suffering of others? Shaped by these responsibilities, what kind of language should theologians use, if any, in these discourses? The panel will explore how narratives, biblical dialogues, poetry, and other artistic media interrogate their own representational limitations around suffering. We invite theological and philosophical contributions that address the ethical and epistemic limitations of representation, drawing on the insights of trauma studies, critical and literary theory, and the arts.

ARTICULATIONS ON THE 'OTHER'S' SUFFERING: NEGATIVE RELATIONS THAT REORIENT THEOLOGICAL LANGUAGE

Legros--Hoffner M.(Speaker), Université de Fribourg / KU Leuven ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

WEAKSTRENGTHS AND STRONGWEAKNESSES — SUBVERTING THE RESILIENCE IMPERATIVE IN THE FACE OF "UNPRODUCTIVE" SUFFERING

Bischoff S.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Berlin ~ Germany

EXTRAVAGANT FAILURE: AIDS POETRY AND THE WORK OF MOURNING

Stark G.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

POETIC THEODICY IN THE POETRY OF RAÏSSA MARITAIN

Robertson A.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

SEMIOTICS OF A GRIEF 'HEARD': EXPLORING THE LIMITS OF SILENCE AND VOICE IN GRIEF TECH

Macis D.(Speaker), University of Turin - Bruno Kessler Foundation - DREST ~ Turin ~ Italy

SPEAKING AFTER SUFFERING: RETHINKING THEOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS WITH EMMANUEL FALQUE

Abraham R.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THEOLOGIES OF CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A1

Chair: Maeve Louise Heaney VDMF, Clare Monagle

This proposal offers three closed panels and one open one that reconsider relationships between authority, hierarchy and governance within contemporary theologies of presbyteral ordination in the Catholic Church as it functions in the world and offers a voice of a moral authority in its championing of human dignity. At the same time, the Catholic Church maintains a commitment to essentialising theologies of difference in relation to its understanding of baptismal dignity and ordained authority. Therefore, the Church has provided some of the most trenchant and far-ranging critiques of inequality across the globe, while also carrying the profound legacy of its past implication in colonial projects that generated the vastly unequal global present.

How should presbyteral priesthood in the Catholic Church be understood theologically in the light of this complex past and present? The Second Vatican Council reframed Catholic ecclesiology to focus on the shared reality of Baptism, insisting that all Catholics were equally called to holiness and to participate in the prophetic priesthood of Christ – an awareness would soon develop into the various, manifold ministries in which the people of God work out this call to follow Christ as members of his body. That same Council, however, did not offer an account of presbyteral ministry commensurate with this significant reframing. These panels seek to consider how Catholic theologians might offer generative theologies of the priesthood for the 21st century, taking the implications of Vatican II into the era of the Synodal Church. Each panel will consider a key issue from both an inside and outside perspective, considering how priesthood can be understood from within traditional sources of authority, and from outside of them.

(RE)NEGOTIATING THE PAST: INSIDE-OUT THE HISTORY OF CATHOLICISM

Monagle C.(Speaker), Faggioli M.(Speaker), Macquarie University ~ Sydney ~ Australia

(RE)NEGOTIATING TEXTS: INSIDE-OUT KEY CATHOLIC TEXTS

Heaney Vdmf M.L.(Chair), Fáinche R.(), Australian catholic University ~ Australia

(RE)NEGOTIATING MISSION: INSIDE-OUT AN UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION

Mellor A.(Speaker), St Stephen's Cathedral ~ Brisbane ~ Australia

RECOGNITIONAL ACCOMPANIMENT AND THE THEOLOGY OF PRIESTHOOD: A CONSTRUCTIVE RETRIEVAL OF MICHAEL BUCKLEY, SJ

Ryan G.(Speaker), Regis College, Toronto School of Theology, University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE - A NEW APPROACH EDUCATION AS A PATH TO PEACE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Elmar Kuhn
Chair: Elmar Kuhn
authorAMC: Elmar Kuhn
Speaker: Elmar Kuhn, Obiora Ike

This book consists of an English and a German part. All presentations have also been translated into German, but in case of doubt the English version applies. The PowerPoint slides for the presentations in which the speaker used this medium are shown between the two parts.
The contributions in this book originate largely from the two panels organized by the Research for Interfaith and Intercultural Harmony
(RIIFH.com) of „Christians in Need“ at the 8th annual conference of the European Academy of Religions (EuARe). RIFFH has set itself the goal of using the concrete experiences of the grassroots work of Christians in Need (cin.international) to provide suggestions for improving the success of academic dialog between religions. Academic work can only be of benefit to global society if it is also connected to the concrete living conditions of religious people.
A dialog in the ivory tower will not be effective.
Therefore, the two panels that RIIFH contributed to the success of the EuARe conference in Vienna from July 8-12, 2025 are a central contribution to the success of interreligious dialog.
The unsettled global society, driven by violence and the return of fundamentalism, is facing a paradigm shift. Organizations such as the UN and the OSCE are being put to the test. Dialogue and diplomacy are repeatedly silenced by violence.

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE - A NEW APPROACH EDUCATION AS A PATH TO PEACE

Kuhn E.(authorAMC), member ~ Vienna ~ Austria

SYNODALITY: CONTRASTING CASES, UNDERLYING CONFLICTS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A106

Contact: Massimo Faggioli
Chair: Bryan Froehle

The term “synodality” jumped onto the contemporary Catholic scene thanks to the use of the term by Pope Francis. As a concept regarding church governance, it has an ancient lineage, one inseparably tied to the exercise of ecclesiastical power. Who listens to whom, and how? What sorts of decisions can be made by whom? Most importantly, what justifies those decisions? Ecclesial policy quickly moves from the merely operational to the doctrinal and back again. Thus, “synodality” inevitably means the development of doctrine, an understanding to which John Henry Newman, proclaimed a doctor of the church on All Saints Day 2025, notably contributed. His legacy, and that of the Vincentian canon oft cited by Francis, is universally accepted within the Catholic Church. Understanding differs, however. The German and Italian synods illustrate this, as does the Latin American continental synod, the Australian Plenary Council, and, of course, the Synod of Bishops and global design behind the Synod on Synodality that culminated in the 2023 and 2024 Roman assemblies. Based on all these experiences, what can be said of synodality? How did the various processes and structures work, or not? What were the internal contradictions? How did the inevitable power struggles play out? What about long-term implications? Will there be any? Why or why not?

WHAT CONCERNS EVERYONE MUST BE DISCUSSED AND APPROVED BY EVERYONE.’ A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DOCUMENTS OF THE 2021-2024 SYNOD ON DECISION-MAKING

Noceti S.(Speaker), Facolta’ Teologica Italia Centrale ~ Firenze ~ Italy

DO WE NEED OMBUDSMAN IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH?

Roeske M.(Speaker), Polish Congress of Catholic Women and Men ~ Poznań ~ Poland

EXPLORING MIXEDNESS IN POSTCOLONIAL EUROPE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Nella van den Brandt
Chair: Marianne Moyaert

Over recent decades, the understanding and study of mixed couples, families, and unions in Europe has gained even more increasing attention, not only in the social sciences, but also in contemporary politics (Cerchiaro and Odasso 2021). Despite this growing interest, there remains a gap in comprehensive scholarship that addresses the nuanced experiences of mixedness and mixed relationships—those formed by individuals of differing racial, ethnic, or religious backgrounds—in a postcolonial European context (Collet 2017). This panel seeks to fill this gap by offering detailed accounts of how those in mixed unions navigate and reshape their relations, identities, and social expectations in contemporary Europe. Using “mixedness” as a multidimensional, contingent, context-dependent, relational, and historically (re)formed concept, this panel moves beyond traditional and binary understandings of “interracial” or “interfaith” couples, examining how “mixedness” is lived and experienced within postcolonial, and social frameworks, and how individuals in mixed relations occupy complex social positions based on different forms and grammars of difference (Collet and Santelli 2016). The panel addresses a range of themes, including the impact of history and colonial legacies on present-day experiences of mixedness, the role of antisemitism and islamophobia, and configurations of race, religion, secularity, ethnicity, and gender. It additionally brings forward the ways in which individuals in mixed relations navigate societal prejudices and norms, construct perceptions on and formations of mixedness, as well as strategies for dealing with differences. By bringing together empirical studies from the Netherlands and Belgium, and research from diverse disciplines such as anthropology, history, religious studies, and gender studies, this panel provides much-needed multifaceted perspectives and conversations on the challenges and opportunities faced by mixedness and mixed relationships.

MIXEDNESS, RELIGION, AND THE POLITICS OF INTIMATE LIFE IN POSTCOLONIAL EUROPE

Moyaert M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THE IMPACT OF THE 2024 MACCABI RIOTS IN AMSTERDAM ON MIXED JEWISH-NON-JEWISH COUPLES: ANTISEMITISM AND ITS INSTRUMENTALISATION

Schrijvers L.(Speaker), VU ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

THE WORK OF NAMING: ON CATEGORIZATIONS, METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES, AND CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM INTIMACIES

Aktas D.(Speaker), VU/KU Leuven ~ Amsterdam/Leuven ~ Netherlands

RELIGION, GENDER, RACE: MIXED MUSLIM COUPLES IN BELGIUM

Van Den Brandt N.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

ON A CHRISTIAN CATEGORY OF "FEMININE": SHAPING AND NORMING A SEX/GENDER PARADIGM

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A206a

Contact: Ivan Angileri
Chair: Arianna Rotondo

The historiography on Christianity has developed a solid tradition of studies on women. This approach has addressed issues such as women's roles in leadership, teaching, prophecy, and ritual, the formation of gender through theological and scriptural exegesis, and the ways female figures have been remembered, reinterpreted, or erased. Yet, as Joan W. Scott observed in 2010, many historians remain hesitant to engage fully with critical approaches to gender and sexuality, often treating "women" as a self-evident and homogeneous category rather than as a historically constructed one.

Moving beyond sexual and gender binarism as the dominant interpretative framework in historical studies, this panel approaches the "feminine" as a socio-cultural construct open to critical historical inquiry. It problematizes the category, examining its origins and strategic functions in religious knowledge production, ecclesiastical authority, and communal identities. Being defined as "women" is not a neutral act. It presupposes the elaboration of attributional and citational criteria concerning what constitutes a woman and what does "female" mean; criteria that are historically situated and subject to variation.

The panel asks how Christian traditions reshaped and resemanticized notions of femaleness and how these concepts were negotiated within broader cultural frameworks. Its aim is to foster an interdisciplinary, and critical discussion on what has been the role of Christianity in shaping a female gender/sex paradigm that in some ways is still ours. In doing so, it seeks to bridge women's studies, reconstructing women's roles in Christian contexts, and gender/sex studies. The feminine is thus understood not as a fixed or pre-discursive essence, but rather as a connotative, dialogically constructed one that interacts with other categories such as sanctity, martyrdom, and divinity as articulated by diverse Christian traditions across different temporal and spatial contexts.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF FEMININE THROUGH VIRGIN MARY'S PAIN: PROLEGOMENA TO A WORK.

Angileri I.(Speaker), Università La Sapienza ~ Roma ~ Italy

FROM PAGAN TRADITION TO CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: RENEGOTIATING THE FEMININE AMONG THE GOTHS

Freda Civico G.(Speaker), Università La Sapienza ~ Roma ~ Italy

ON A CHRISTIAN CATEGORY OF " SHAPING AND NORMING A SEX/GENDER PARADIGM PANEL DESCRIPTION:

Schimmenti A.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

AUTHORING A FEMININE NORM: THE HAGIOGRAPHICAL CONSTRUCTION OF WOMANHOOD IN THE VITA OF MARGARET OF CORTONA

Ispanovits K.A.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

WHEN GNOSIS TALKS TO A WOMAN: NOREA AND THE REVELATION

Sacchetti B.(Speaker), Università di Bari "Aldo Moro" ~ Bari ~ Italy

BUILDING PEACE AND EQUALITY: MULTI-FAITH THEOLOGIES AND PRACTICES CHALLENGING A VIOLENT, UNEQUAL WORLD

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A104

Contact: Pauline Pauline
Chair: Richard Davis

As Aristotle said, inequality can cause conflict. Conflict can also create inequalities. Socio-economic inequalities between and within states and nations provide a potentially volatile socio-political context where peace is threatened. Religions can also be treated unequally within legal jurisdictions, creating friction and tensions that threaten peace. This panel invites papers that explore the contribution of religious ideas and practices that can help to build peace in this unequal world. We are particularly interested in papers that face European and global realities seriously and offer religious perspectives that promote peace, justice, and equality. Possible subjects include, but are not limited to: theological perspectives on peace and inequality, faith-inspired nonviolent resistance and direct action, peace in worship (eg liturgy, prayers, songs, rituals, sacraments), the relationship between peace and justice, peace in the Hebrew scriptures, Quran, or Christian Bible or other sacred texts, Just war or just peace theory and its critics, war, peace, and the environment, coexistence in religiously pluralistic societies, religion, peace and intersectionality (eg race, gender, sexuality, class, age), forgiveness, repentance, reconciliation, Catholic Social Teaching on peace, faiths in conflict and interfaith peace initiatives.

METHODIST WORSHIP FOR UNDERSTANDING AND PROMOTING PEACE

Davis R.(Speaker), Wesley House, Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

YOUNG PEOPLE INTERFAITH ENCOUNTERS AND THE PRACTICE OF PEACE IN A BROKEN WORLD

Gabuyo S.(Speaker), World Methodist Council – Youth and Young Adult Committee ~ Milan ~ Italy

SACRED SOLIDARITY: CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM INTERFAITH PEACEBUILDING AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY IN URBAN WESTERN EUROPE

Shahnawaz S.(Speaker), Scholar ~ Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

PEACE THEOLOGIES FROM BELOW: GRASSROOTS INTERRELIGIOUS COLLABORATION AND THEOLOGIES OF PEACE IN NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA

Gladwin R.(Speaker), Palm Beach Atlantic University ~ West Palm Beach ~ United States of America

BUILDING PEACE AND RECONCILIATION THROUGH ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN EXPERIENCES OF BEREAVEMENT AND GRIEF: INSIGHTS FROM THE PARENTS CIRCLE-FAMILIES FORUM

Kollontai P.(Speaker), York St John University ~ York ~ United Kingdom

RELIGION, ALGORITHMS, AND INEQUALITIES OF VISIBILITY

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A107

Contact: Josselin Tricou
Chair: Josselin Tricou

This panel follows the seminar "Religious Influencers", organised within Work Package 4.2 (Axis 1) of the Religis project (https://www.misha.fr/recherche/religis/).

In the age of digital platforms, algorithms do not merely disseminate religious content; they produce hierarchies of visibility that redefine religious authority, legitimacy, and public recognition. This panel starts from the assumption that digital infrastructures operate as dispositifs of religious governmentality, generating forms of (in)equalities that are largely invisible yet structural.

By regulating access to attention, algorithms shape what can be perceived as “(il)legitimate” religion. They contribute to defining who is entitled to speak in the name of “good religion”—moderate, acceptable, and compatible with dominant norms of the digital public sphere—and, conversely, who comes to embody “bad religion”, selectively over-exposed as a figure of threat, radicalism, or irreducible otherness. Some minority voices are thus marginalised through invisibilisation, while others are strategically over-visibility as symbolic foils, objects of controversy, or targets of stigmatisation.

These dynamics generate not only inequalities of visibility, but also epistemic and political inequalities, by redefining the boundaries of legitimate religious speech and the frameworks within which religion becomes audible, tolerable, or condemnable.

The panel invites empirical and theoretical contributions analysing digital platforms as new sites of power, classification, and religious visibility. Adopting an interdisciplinary perspective, it examines the contemporary conditions under which religious authority is produced, circulated, and contested within the algorithmic economy of attention.

THEORIZING ABOUT RELIGIOUS INFLUENCERS IN AN AI ERA: WHAT HAPPENS TO DIGITAL CREATIVES AS SOURCES OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN THE SOCIAL-TECHNICAL WORLD OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Campbell H.(Speaker), Texas A&M University ~ College Station ~ United States of America

PRIESTS ONLINE – AN EXPLORATORY TYPOLOGY IN A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Giorgi A.(Speaker), University of Bergamo ~ Bergamo ~ Italy

PLATFORMED PROPHECY: PERFORMING CHARISMATIC AUTHORITY IN DIGITAL RELIGIOUS NETWORKS

Deysson J.(Speaker), Université de Strasbourg / Universität Heidelberg ~ Strasbourg ~ France

BEYOND THE ALTAR, BEYOND THE SCREEN. HOW SOCIAL MEDIA VISIBILITY SHAPES THE NARRATIVE OF PRIEST ABANDONMENT

Casaletto M.(Speaker), Paiani L.(Speaker), University of Padua ~ Padua ~ Italy

CONFRONTING THE “SHADOW OF EVIL”: VATICAN ETHICS IN AN ALGORITHMIC AGE

Barter J.(Speaker), University of Winnipeg ~ Winnipeg ~ Canada

EPISTEMIC INEQUALITIES IN INTERRELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Antje Roggenkamp
Chair: Senol Yagdi, Maike Maria Domsel, Antje Roggenkamp

Interreligious teaching and learning formats have become a highly differentiated and theoretically well-reflected component of religious education in pluralistic societies. Religious education (cooperation) models aim to enable students to engage with religious plurality in a reflective way, without leveling denominational or theological differences or displaying epistemic insensitivity.
These learning settings raise specific questions: Who is considered a legitimate knowledge actor in interreligious education, and what forms of knowledge are recognized? The panel takes these questions as its starting point and analyzes interreligious teaching and learning processes from the perspective of epistemic inequalities (Fricker 2007): Interreligious learning is understood as an enabling space in which processes of recognition, interpretation, and legitimation of knowledge, as well as aspects of vulnerability and respectful interaction, come into effect. Where possible, the panel draws on discourse-theoretical and postcolonial othering analyses, arguing that epistemic justice is not only a normative but also an epistemic virtue of interreligious learning.
The panel focuses, among other things, on the experiences and perceptions of students and teachers with epistemic attributions, othering dynamics, and competing claims to truth/significance. The panel combines systematic theological perspectives (including theology of religions, hermeneutics of difference, comparative theology) with empirical practice in religious education. In this way, the panel contributes to the current discussion on religion and (in)equalities and profiles interreligious education as a central locus of epistemic negotiation processes.
Literature:
Fricker, Miranda 2007. Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

INJUSTICE INQUIERIES

Roggenkamp A.(Speaker), University of Münster, Faculty of Protestant Theology ~ Münster ~ Germany

BETWEEN CLAIMS TO TRUTH AND OPENNESS TO DIALOGUE: EPISTEMIC POSITIONING OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHERS IN INTERRELIGIOUS LEARNING

Yagdi S.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

REDRESSING EPISTEMIC INEQUALITIES THROUGH COMPASSION: A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO INTERRELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Domsel M.M.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

THE "CORRECT" RELIGION FOR FINNS

Fiskaali V.(Speaker), University of Helsinki ~ Helsinki ~ Finland

EPISTEMIC TENSIONS WITHIN NON-CONFESSIONAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: COMPARATIVE REFLECTIONS

Lapis G.(Speaker), La Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

DECOLONIZING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sallandt U.(Speaker), Carl-von-Ossietzky-Universität Oldenburg ~ Oldenburg ~ Germany

FACING GLOBAL CHALLENGES - ENVIRONMENTAL AND PEACE EDUCATION IN INTERRELIGIOUS COOPERATION FOR TEACHER TRAINING

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Pola - AT14

Contact: Elisabeth Naurath
Chair: Elisabeth Naurath

Currently, there is talk of climate change and its consequences in terms of a global mega-crisis, which makes ecological transformation processes urgently necessary. However, as environmental awareness research shows, such ecological transformations are not possible without social changes, in order to ultimately lead to changes in attitudes and behavior. The starting point is, therefore, the interconnectedness of religion as a social system and its interaction with contextual ecological systems.
With the help of an alternative model of interreligious teacher training with a focus on environmental ethics, impulses can be given on a European horizon in a global context.

THE CHALLENGES OF ETHICAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE POST-TOTALITARIAN ERA: THE ALBANIAN CASE

Kruja G.(Speaker), Beder University College ~ Tirana ~ Albania

LOCAL AI AND INTERRELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY: A COMPLEMENTARY AND REPLICABLE PEDAGOGICAL AND COMMUNICATION APPROACH

Hernández Serret J.(Speaker), Universitat de Catalunya (UIC) ~ Barcelona ~ Spain

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING IN TIMES OF ECOLOGICAL CRISIS: COMPASSION AS A PEACE EDUCATION PRINCIPLE

Naurath E.(Speaker), Universität Augsburg ~ Augsburg ~ Germany

ECOLOGICAL ENTANGLEMENTS, LOCAL WISDOM, AND GLOBAL RELIGIOUS HISTORY. INDIGENOUS AND DECOLONIAL EPISTEMOLOGIES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Simon Wiesgickl
Chair: Simone Sinn, Simon Wiesgickl, Diana Lunkwitz

In recent years, global religious history has established itself as a thought-provoking paradigm for examining global entanglements and discourses within religious history. Known for considering the contributions of local communities in challenging Western academic discourse and knowledge systems, it aims at rewriting global discourses. However, its expansion into the fields of ecology and religion is still in its infancy.

New publications point to epistemic injustices and exclusions produced by inequalities inscribed in discourse. They tend to overcome concepts such as traditional ecological knowledge or essentializations that postulate an unquestioned closeness of Indigenous groups to nature. Instead, local concepts should be used to overcome dichotomies and inequalities and promote ideas that advance multi-perspective and planetary views, giving voice to a multitude of beings.

This panel will explore questions relating to the ontological turn, decolonial epistemologies, and indigenous knowledge systems with reference to ecological and economic issues. We welcome papers that explore the topic from a historical, systematic, or empirical perspective. We particularly welcome papers that bridge the gap between anthropological and social science theories and religious studies. We are interested in questions relating to different conceptions of ecology and economy, diverse cosmologies, and theories of the non-human beyond Western epistemes and approaches.

In this way, we address the issue of inequality in two ways: firstly, in the context of local and global ecological entanglements, and secondly, from a decolonial perspective that questions the role religions play in the production and overcoming of dichotomies surrounding “nature,” “culture,” “economy,” and “ecology.”

INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL WISDOM: RUPTURE OR ENTANGLEMENT IN GLOBAL RELIGIOUS HISTORY? LEARNING FROM INDONESIA

Sinn S.(Speaker), Universität Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

A SEA OF VOICES: CLIMATE CHANGE REALITIES AND ONTOLOGICAL IMAGINARIES ON THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

Draaisma L.(Speaker), University of Groningen ~ Groningen ~ Netherlands

LOCAL-PLANETARY ENTANGLEMENTS, ECONOMICS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY: METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN ECOLOGICAL GLOBAL RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Lunkwitz D.(Speaker), Postdoctoral Researcher. Religious Studies and Intercultural Theology. Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen-Nuremberg ~ Germany

EMBODYING INDIGENOUS IDENTITY: RECLAIMING VOICE THROUGH KATHA TRADITIONS

Vyas A.(Speaker), School of Liberal Studies, Pandit Deendayal Energy University ~ Gandhinagar ~ India

ECOLOGICAL ENTANGLEMENTS AND PLANETARY RELIGION. LEARNINGS FROM NORTH-EAST-INDIA

Wiesgickl S.(Speaker), Postdoctoral Researcher. Religious Studies and Intercultural Theology. FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg ~ Erlangen-Nuremberg ~ Germany

EXHIBITION - 30 YEARS, 30 CATHEDRALS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Parenzo - Aula Nocco

Contact: Giuseppe Tateo
Chair: Giuseppe Tateo

This multimodal exhibition documents the growth of Romanian Orthodox infrastructure since the fall of socialism, tracing three decades of cathedral construction. It combines ethnographic research, photography, and audiovisual media to illuminate the hectic church-building industry flourishing in postsocialist Romania as it represents a double movement: on the one hand, it exemplifies the renewed visibility of religious life after socialism, on the other hand, it stands for a troublesome employment of public money, the radical transformation of the urban built environment of cities and towns, and a powerful repositioning of the Church in the public arena.

Since 1990, the expansion of religious infrastructure in Romania has reached impressive numbers: the 18 state-recognised religious groups have erected over ten thousand places of worship, practically one per day. The Orthodox Church has built over 4.000, including 36 imposing cathedrals. The most prominent of them all is the new national cathedral, which today towers over the famous People's House built by Ceauşescu. Its main dome, with the mosaic of the Pantocrator, is meant to exemplify the victory of the rule of god over the godless socialist past.

Not just a critical analysis of the comeback of religion after decades of state atheism, this project also explores the transformation of contemporary Romanian Orthodox architecture, which increasingly favours monumental scale and grandeur, sometimes at the expense of a clogged urban fabric and natural environment. If other post-Soviet and post-socialist capitals like Moscow, Tbilisi, and Belgrade have also added new Orthodox cathedrals to their skyline, the pace of the Romanian church-building industry seems unprecedented: 30Y30C aims to document all 36 cathedrals built or under construction over the last 36 years, revealing an important cultural and political process shaping Romania’s identity in the 21st century.

FOREWORD

Giorda M.C.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Rome ~ Italy

PRESENTATION OF THE EXHIBITION

Tateo G.(Speaker), Università Roma Tre ~ Roma ~ Italy

CROSSING THE GAP BETWEEN FAITH AND FAITHLESSNESS: MODELS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND THEIR ANTHROPOLOGICAL PLAUSIBILITY

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Anthony Feneuil
Chair: Claire Placial

The notion that belief admits of degrees is widely held among philosophers and psychologists. Yet, this notion remains contested among philosophers of religion and theologians, despite recent scholarship framing faith as a credence: a variable intensity of belief that operates on a spectrum rather than as a binary switch. More broadly, the social sciences have long challenged the simplicity of "belief," occasionally questioning the utility of the category itself. This panel investigates these emerging perspectives. We will discuss various theories of belief in philosophy and the social sciences that challenge the classical notion of belief, assessing their fecundity and plausibility through the lens of literary analysis. Bringing together philosophers of religion and literary specialists, it will explore how narrative fiction model the complexity of religious psychology. By treating literary characters as case studies and examining contemporary writing practices that blur the boundaries between belief and unbelief (such as those of E. Carrère and J. Cercas, among others), this panel evaluates the anthropological plausibility of non-binary accounts of belief. It is also an attempt to explore the nexus between philosophy, theology and literature in religious epistemology.
Tha panel will be sponsored by the Research Center Écritures (University of Lorraine), the Institut Universitaire de France and the scientific Journal ThéoRèmes.

FAITH AS CREDENCE : WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Feneuil A.(Speaker), University of Lorraine ~ Metz ~ France

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE RELATIONS BETWEEN FAITH AND TRUST?

Gaultier B.(Speaker), University of Zürich ~ Zürich ~ Switzerland

THE IRRATIONALITY OF RELIGIOUS FICTIONALISM

Schmitt Y.(Speaker), Lycée de Marseille ~ Marseille ~ France

WHEN NON-BELIEVERS WRITE LITERATURE ABOUT FAITH – ABOUT EMMANUEL CARRÈRE'S LE ROYAUME (2014) AND JAVIER CERCAS'S EL LOCO DE DIOS EN EL FIN DEL MUNDO (2025)

Placial C.(Speaker), University of Lorraine ~ Metz ~ France

SECULAR MAYBE: ON NONCOMMITTALITY IN RELIGION

Costa P.(Speaker), Fondazione Bruno Kessler, Center for Religious Studies ~ Trento ~ Italy

DISTINGUISHING BELIEF-BASED AND BELIEF-LESS SPIRITUALITY IN PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Byerly T.R.(Speaker), University of Sheffield ~ Sheffield ~ United Kingdom

FAITH AS ATTITUDE: TOWARD A COMMENSURABILITY BETWEEN FAITH AND FAITHLESSNESS?

Gallepe A.(Speaker), Université de Genève / Université de Lyon ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

RELIGIOUS ROOTS OF TRANSHUMANISM AND COSMISM: METHODOLOGICALLY GROUNDED APPROACHES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A103

Contact: Ariën Voogt
Chair: Ariën Voogt

Recent years have witnessed growing scholarly and public attention to ideological movements influential in Silicon Valley and global technology circles, particularly regarding striking parallels between transhumanism, cosmism, and related ideologies with traditional religious themes. Observers frequently note that these movements—sometimes collectively designated by the acronym TESCREAL—function as quasi-religious systems within the predominantly secular culture of tech communities, appropriating narratives, symbols, and ideas from established religious traditions. Notable examples include apocalyptic and eschatological narratives in discourse surrounding AI and the so-called Singularity, as well as expectations of human immortality through bio-enhancement or mind-uploading.

What often remains absent from this discourse, however, are methodologically rigorous approaches to studying the religious dimensions of transhumanism and cosmism that move beyond superficial analogies. This panel addresses this lacuna by exploring theoretically and methodologically grounded frameworks for studying and reflecting on these movements' religious characteristics. We primarily consider historical studies of the influence of religion on the development of transhumanism and cosmism or other historical links between these traditions, with a focus on Christianity and Islam. We welcome other papers that broadly fit this direction, yet we also welcome empirical research documenting the presence and function of religious elements within contemporary transhumanist and cosmist discourse. Individual papers will present research that fits these approaches, followed by a general panel discussion on methodological issues, general implications and future research directions on the relationship between transhumanism, cosmism and religion.

TRANSHUMANISM AS A RELIGION OF THE FUTURE: EVOLUTION, TELEOLOGY, AND HUMAN DESTINY IN JULIAN HUXLEY

Dunér I.(Speaker), Lund University ~ Lund ~ Sweden

COSMIC DESTINY: RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF COSMISM IN GERMAN IDEALISM

Voogt A.(Speaker), Protestant Theological University ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

TRANSCENDING THE BODY? INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN ISLAMIC SCHOLASTIC THEOLOGY AND TRANSHUMANISM

Amber Y.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

CONSTRUCTING POSTERITY: IMMORTALITY AND THE SACRALIZATION OF THE COLLECTIVE IN RUSSIAN COSMISM

Baron G.B.(Speaker), DREST Unimore ~ Turin ~ Italy

WOMEN OF FAITH IN TIMES OF CRISIS: SURVIVAL, SOLIDARITY, AND EMPOWERMENT

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A108

Contact: Nadia Zasanska
Chair: Nadia Zasanska, Elmira Muratova

In times of uncertainty, faith becomes increasingly significant for those seeking support, compassion, and hope for the future. Recent studies on religious responses to crises have primarily focused on faith-based activism in the context of humanitarian efforts, peacebuilding initiatives, conflict management, and social services. However, the predominant emphasis on traditional religious institutions and authorities offers a top-down perspective on crisis responses, overlooking the experience of individual believers who rely on faith as a source of social support and emotional well-being.

This panel aims to broaden the scope of research beyond institutional frameworks, giving greater visibility to those whose agency remains underrepresented in academic discourse – women of faith. The term 'women of faith' refers to female believers or practitioners representing diverse religious traditions, beliefs, and spiritual practices. The panel explores how women of faith respond to the challenges posed by collective existential crises, such as military conflicts, wars, natural disasters, and epidemics.

We invite scholars from Religious Studies, Anthropology, Digital Religion, and Gender Studies to consider the following questions:

1) How do women of faith respond to the experience of a crisis, and how might these experiences reshape their religious identity, gender roles, sense of a community, or faith-based practice?

2) How do women of faith use digital and other spaces to foster support, solidarity, and resistance within religious communities and beyond in non-religious contexts?

3) In what ways do women of faith influence civic activism in crisis-affected societies?

CATHOLIC WOMEN: SURVIVAL AND SOLIDARITY IN THE NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS

Lyon E.(Speaker), The State University of New York at Fredonia ~ Fredonia, NY ~ United States of America

FROM FEAR TO OPENNESS: THE CHANGE IN THE RELIGIOSITY OF WORKING-CLASS WOMEN IN FRANCOIST SPAIN WITH THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

De Dios E. (Speaker), University of the Basque Country

“THE REBBE CALLS YOU”: WOMEN’S RELIGIOUS MOBILITY TO WARTIME UKRAINE

Marchenko A.(Speaker), Hebrew University of Jerusalem ~ Jerusalem ~ Israel

AFTER SEXUAL VIOLENCE: WOMEN’S INTERPRETIVE AUTHORITY AND COLLECTIVE REIMAGINING

Connolly H.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

DIGITAL SPACES OF HOPE: WOMEN’S FAITH-BASED RESPONSES TO WAR IN UKRAINE

Zasanska N.(Speaker), Interdisciplinary Center for European Studies, Europa-Universität Flensburg ~ Flensburg ~ Germany

RELIGION IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Asia Leofreddi
Chair: Asia Leofreddi, Kristina Stoeckl

Religion plays a significant role in a broad range of social movements, including many that are not explicitly faith-based. However, research on collective action has frequently either overlooked the role of religion or focused mainly on its associations with conservative or extremist politics, thereby neglecting its influence on other forms of activism. This panel seeks to address this gap by examining the role of religion in contemporary social movements that pursue liberal, progressive or egalitarian ends. We invite submissions of case studies from diverse geographical contexts, as well as theoretical insights from various disciplines. Our objective is to advance understanding of the intersections between religion, political, and protest, and to foster both theoretical and empirical discussions regarding the relationship between religion and social change.

The panel welcomes a variety of contributions, including but not limited to:

- Empirical case studies, based on qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods research, examining the role of religion within specific contemporary social movements.

- Comparative analyses, focusing on cross-national, regional, or transnational contexts and highlighting similarities and differences in the interaction between religion and collective action.

- Theoretical contributions, aimed at developing, refining, or critically engaging with existing conceptual frameworks on religion, politics, and social movements.

- Interdisciplinary approaches, drawing from sociology, political science, anthropology, religious studies, social movement studies, or related fields.

- Methodological reflections, addressing challenges, innovations, or ethical issues in the empirical study of religion in social movements.

- Work-in-progress or exploratory papers, provided they demonstrate clear theoretical relevance and/or empirical significance for the panel’s themes.

LIBERATION THEOLOGY WITHIN RELIGIOUS-BASED MIGRANT SOLIDARITY MOVEMENTS

Monsalvo Basaldua M.F.(Speaker), Danube University Krems ~ Krems ~ Austria

"VOICES OF DISSENT: EVANGELICAL NETWORKS AND THE TRANSNATIONAL CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM"

Bunnell A.(Speaker), UCL ~ London ~ United Kingdom

RELIGION IN SERBIA'S ANTI-AUTOCRATIC MOVEMENT

Leofreddi A.(Speaker), Luiss Guido Carli University ~ Rome ~ Italy

FAITH-BASED YOUTH WORK AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION: THE CASE OF FOCOLARE MOVEMENT

Gülerce H.(Speaker), Marmara University ~ İstanbul ~ Turkey

THE AMBIVALENT ROLE OF (MINORITY) RELIGION ON SOCIAL MOVEMENTS. THE CASE OF ORTHODOX JEWS IN FRANCE NOT MOBILIZING AGAINST MORALITY POLICIES

Strack F.(Speaker), University of Sherbrooke ~ Montréal ~ Canada

BETWEEN LEGITIMATION AND CRITIQUE: SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN THE ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS IN THE LIGHT OF EARLY TEXTS AND COMMUNAL PRACTICES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A2

Contact: Bozena Prochwicz-Studnicka
Chair: Anna Grzywa, Lukasz Byrski

This panel is devoted to examining social inequalities in the Abrahamic religions, with particular attention to the relationship between the religious legitimation of existing hierarchies and their contestation or problematization. In other words, it seeks to explore how Judaism, Christianity, and Islam justified social inequalities, in which contexts they relativized or symbolically suspended them, and when and why they became objects of critique.

We aim to address these questions through an analysis of both the foundational texts of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and other early sources within each tradition (such as rabbinic literature, patristic writings, or early Islamic texts) that developed, reinterpreted, or concretized religious – often socio-legal – norms in changing historical and social circumstances. We are also interested in how communal practices generated cohesion and identity while simultaneously demarcating boundaries by regulating access to material, institutional, symbolic, ritual, or social resources. “Communal practices” are understood broadly as institutional, ritual, and socio-legal forms of communal life – kehilla, ecclesia, and umma.

The panel is interdisciplinary: we invite scholars of religion, anthropologists of religion, social historians, biblical scholars, specialists in Islamic and Near Eastern studies, cultural studies scholars, and all others whose research focuses on Judaism, Christianity, or Islam.

JUSTICE WHERE WEALTH HAS NO POWER: THE AFTERLIFE AS MORAL EQUALIZER IN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN AND ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS

Byrski L.(Speaker), Jagiellonian University ~ Cracow ~ Poland

THE ANCIENT CATECHUMENATE AND SOCIAL EQUALITY: THE WAY OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION IN THE FACE OF DIVISIONS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

Grzywa A.(Speaker), Ignatianum University in Krakow ~ Cracow ~ Poland

THE STATUS OF NON-ARAB MUSLIMS IN THE EARLY CENTURIES OF ISLAM: CULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF (IN)EQUALITY

Prochwicz--Studnicka B.(Speaker), Ignatianum University in Cracow ~ Cracow ~ Poland

PARTNERSHIP IN LOVE AS THE BASIS FOR QUESTIONING PATRIARCHAL FAMILY RULE (IN THE BIBLICAL SONG OF SONGS)

Jasnos R.(Speaker), University Ignatianum in Cracow ~ Cracow ~ Poland

A WOMAN FINDING HER PLACE (GENESIS 12:10-20; 16:1-16; PROVERBS 31:10-31)

Mrozek A.(Speaker), Jagiellonian University in Cracow - retired ~ Cracow ~ Poland

RELIGION & DEMOCRACY: CONTEMPORARY RESPONSES TO AUTHORITARIANISM

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - AT12

Contact: Richard L Wood
Chair: Susan Abraham, Richard L Wood

This session will gather sociologists, political theologians, political scientists, historians, democratic theorists and social philosophers, and other scholars doing (or wishing to do) intellectual work that responds to the authoritarian turn in the contemporary world. First, four scholars from different disciplines and geographic areas will present brief papers regarding their analysis of the responses of specific 'public religions' to established or emerging authoritarian regimes. These brief presentations will be designed not as formal papers but as provocaciones (= 'provocations': a term sometimes used in Latin America for this style of presentation: grounded in and summarizing key findings of specialized intellectual work but intended to spur discussion rather than a systematic research presentation). Second, participants will engage in an extended discussion regarding the kinds of ongoing research projects required to advance the intellectual groundwork for contesting the authoritarian turn, both transdisciplinary and within specific disciplines. Third, participants will discuss next steps for establishing a distributed global intellectual network for clarifying and pursuing this agenda, with nodes or subnetworks in diverse geographical areas.

BEYOND MULTIPARTY POLITICS AND ELECTIONS: DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGES IN AFRICA

Ekassi J.E.B.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

BACKLASH: CATHOLIC POSTLIBERALISM. THEORETICAL SUPPORT FOR RIGHT-WING AUTHORITARIANISM IN THE USA

Hagedorn J.(Speaker), Theologische Fakultät Paderborn ~ Paderborn ~ Germany

THE CHRISTIAN 'RIGHT' IN AUSTRIA AND ITS CLAIMS

Rettenbacher S.(Speaker), Archdiocese of Linz ~ Linz ~ Austria

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE "OTHER" MONOTHEISM: CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AND ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES IN THE EARLY MODERN WORLD

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A206b

Contact: Valentina Bottanelli
Chair: Francesca Badini

While the history of Christian missions during the early modern expansion of empires has extensively documented encounters with indigenous, polytheistic, or non-Abrahamic traditions, the specific interactions with established Islamic communities remain an area ripe for deeper investigation. This panel explores how Catholic missionaries and Protestant pastors described, engaged with, and attempted to evangelize Muslim populations from the Middle East to the Far East. By moving beyond a Eurocentric Crusade narrative, this session examines the practical methods of encounter, ranging from theological polemics to the pragmatic challenges of daily coexistence.

A central focus of the panel will be the “translation” of faith—both linguistic and cultural. How did missionaries adapt Arabic and local Islamic lexicons to communicate Christian catechisms? To what extent did the presence of a pre-existing Abrahamic framework force a change in missionary strategy compared to encounters with non-monotheistic societies?

The panel invites scholars to examine three primary areas of missionary production:

1. Translation and Lexicography: How missionaries adapted Arabic and local lexicons (such as Malay) to explain Christian mysteries, often wrestling with pre-existing Islamic terminology for God, prophecy, and salvation.
2. Exegesis of the "Other": Christian explanations and "refutations" of Muslim texts, where the Qur'an was studied as both a hurdle and a tool for conversion.
3. Methodological Manuals: The study of missionary handbooks or specific extracts explicitly devoted to the methodus of interacting with and converting Muslim communities.

TRANSLATING TAWḤĪD: CONCEPTIONS OF DIVINE UNITY IN EARLY MODERN CATHOLIC MISSIONARY LITERATURE FROM THE LEVANT

Stella F.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Roma ~ Italy

HEURNIUS’S ADMONITION AND RUYLL’S ALLAH: THEORY VERSUS PRACTICE IN DUTCH VOC MISSIONS TO MUSLIM ASIA

Bottanelli V.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

JESUIT MISSIONS AROUND THE “MEDITERRANEAN INDIES” DURING THE 17TH CENTURY: SICILY, MALTA AND THE CYCLADES

D''Avenia F.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

THE ‘HARDWARE’ AND ‘SOFTWARE’ OF MIGRATION: POLICY, ETHICS, AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A203

Contact: Teresa Albano
Chair: Aleksandra Djuric Milovanovic

Current demographic trends in the Western Balkans, marked by population decline, urbanisation and sustained emigration, place migration at the centre of debates on inequality, social cohesion and sustainable development. In line with SDG 10 and target 10.7, which call for well-managed migration policies, this panel explores how migration can move from being perceived as a challenge to becoming a driver of inclusion and shared prosperity. While unregulated migration flows may strain local systems, migrants can play a vital role in revitalising local economies when supported by appropriate policies and services, the “hardware” of migration governance. Local authorities are uniquely positioned to translate national and regional frameworks into concrete action, fostering access to labour markets, housing and social services that reduce inequalities for both newcomers and host communities. Yet policies alone are not sufficient. Successful inclusion also depends on the “software”: the emotional, ethical and spiritual infrastructure that shapes attitudes, narratives and relationships. IN this regard, interreligious and intercultural dialogue is a powerful enabler of trust and mutual understanding, helping to bridge divides and address fears rooted in religious, ethnic and cultural differences. Faith communities, drawing on shared values of human dignity, hospitality and responsibility, can help transform polarisation into empathy and social cohesion. Building on two papers, Scriptural Reasoning on Migration by the Centre for Interreligious Dialogue in Rijeka and Migration in the Western Balkans: Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue for an Inclusive Region by the University of Belgrade, the panel calls for closer collaboration between religious leaders, policymakers and local authorities to align policies and values, hardware and software, in support of a more equal and resilient Western Balkans region

SCRIPTURAL REASONING ON MIGRATION

Obucina V.(Speaker), Centre for Interreligious Dialogue ~ Rijeka ~ Croatia

MIGRATION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS: INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE FOR AN INCLUSIVE REGION

Šantic D.(Speaker), University of Belgrade, Faculty of Geography, and Executive Board Member of the Western Balkans Migration Network ~ Belgrade ~ Serbia

CRISTIANI ORIENTALI E REPUBBLICA DELLE LETTERE (XVI-XVIII SEC.) / CHRÉTIENS ORIENTAUX ET RÉPUBLIQUE DES LETTRES (16E-18E S.) / ÖSTLICHE CHRISTEN UND DIE GELEHRTENREPUBLIK (16.-18. JH.) / A CURA DI M. GARZANITI, V. KONTOUMA, V. N. MAKRIDES, FIRENZE 2024

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Pola - A208

Contact: Marcello Garzaniti
Chair: Vassa Kontouma
authorAMC: Vasilios Makrides
Speaker: Vera Chentsova, Marcello Garzaniti

This volume, fruit of a Franco-Italian-German project, was developed during a series of seminars held at the Italian-German Centre for European Dialogue Villa Vigoni (2019-2022) and at the Fondation des Treilles (2023) with the participation of fifteen scholars. Thanks to a comparative and interdisciplinary approach, moving away from a strictly Western perspective and looking at the Christian East in its internal dynamics, the volume focuses on the extraordinary effort of different communities, often in contexts dominated by other religions or characterised by a plurality of confessions (Christian and non-Christian), to redefine their own tradition and linguistic identity, writing an important page in the history of the Republic of Letters. By studying biographical paths, languages of communication, and forms of worship and devotion dating back to different times and areas, and interpreting these micro-histories within a more complex puzzle, the various contributions illustrate a colourful panorama of cultural relations and exchanges, in which Eastern Christians played an active part, in a context in which the process of confessionalisation was consolidating. Their work reveals both an awareness of belonging to ancient traditions, which the West yearned to know and make its own, and a drive to modernise their own traditions, in dialogue with Western culture. These cultural relations and exchanges emerge in the formation of Eastern Christians in the West, as well as through mobility or simply long-distance relationships with exponents of the Republic of Letters. However, the effort to update and modernise was accompanied by a desire to rediscover the most authentic roots of their traditions, with unprecedented developments, even going so far as to reinvent and renew them.

CRISTIANI ORIENTALI E REPUBBLICA DELLE LETTERE (XVI-XVIII SEC.) / CHRÉTIENS ORIENTAUX ET RÉPUBLIQUE DES LETTRES (16E-18E S.) / ÖSTLICHE CHRISTEN UND DIE GELEHRTENREPUBLIK (16.-18. JH.) / A CURA DI M. GARZANITI, V. KONTOUMA, V. N. MAKRIDES, FIRENZE 2024

Makrides V.(authorAMC), Universität Erfurt ~ Erfurt ~ Germany

RELIGION AND POWER INEQUALITY. BOTTOM-UP PERSPECTIVES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - AT13

Contact: Annette Langner-Pitschmann
Chair: Annette Langner-Pitschmann, Christof Mandry

For years, the Catholic Church worldwide has been confronted with the fact that some of its officials have committed numerous cases of sexual violence against children, adolescents, and adults. The exposure of this scandal highlights not only persistent power asymmetries, but also the ways in which these asymmetries are intertwined with religious narratives, theological ideas, and institutional cultures that shape perceptions of authority and inequality.

The panel examines these structures from a bottom-up perspective, focusing on parishioners, victims and survivors, and those surrounding acts of abuse. It investigates the mechanisms that contribute to the constitution, stabilisation, and—when violence occurs—escalation of unequal power. How do believers come to attribute authority that is resistant to critique? Which narrative, symbolic, or organisational factors contribute to individuals being repeatedly exposed to massive abuse of power? What dynamics inhibit disclosure by bystanders or communities? And how do religious topoi, traditions, and interpretive frameworks reinforce or challenge such inequalities?

Organised by members of the research group Power and Power Abuse (Goethe University Frankfurt, founded 2025), the panel invites contributions from theology, social sciences, psychology, political philosophy, religious studies, and related fields. We explicitly welcome research that engages with comparable forms of religiously inflected inequality, violence, or power asymmetry in other Christian traditions, other religions, or secular institutions, including comparative or narrativity-focused approaches.

We welcome established as well as emerging scholars. Please send your abstract of no more than 300 words to langner-pitschmann@em.uni-frankfurt.de We are happy to answer any questions you might have before you submit.

THE ROLE OF THE LAW IN THE CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF ASYMMETRICAL POWER STRUCTURES IN CHURCH

Hahn J.(Speaker), Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität ~ Bonn ~ Germany

STRUGGLING FOR THE RIGHT LANGUAGE: SURVIVOR NARRATIVES, TRAUMA, AND POWER INEQUALITY IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mandry C.(Speaker), Goethe University ~ Frankfurt/Main ~ Germany

COPRODUCING RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY: BOTTOM-UP CONTESTATIONS, INSTITUTIONAL GATEKEEPING, AND THE MAKING OF “JEWISH THEOLOGY” IN POST-SHOAH GERMANY

Fehige Y.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

UNINTELLIGIBLE MINDBODIES: NEURONORMATIVITY, ADULTISM, AND THE EPISTEMIC DEATH OF SURVIVORS

Bischoff S.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Berlin ~ Germany

RADICAL ALTERITY AS A PATTERN OF THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT AND POWER INEQUALITY AS A REALITY IN RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

Langner--Pitschmann A.(Speaker), Goethe University ~ Frankfurt ~ Germany

PASTORAL AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH: IS IT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE?

Roeske M.(Speaker), Polish Congress of Catholic Women and Men ~ Poznań ~ Poland

RELIGION IN DIALOGUE. TRANSFORMATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND CHANCES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Noemi Call
Chair: Kurt Appel

In the contect of evolving forms of interdisciplinary research on religion and interreligious dialogue within shifting societal contexts, religions are increasingly involved in novel forms of encounters and alliance-building. These are forged, lived, and narrated in the public sphere – not only among religious traditions but also in encounters between religious and secular worlds. In this broader sense, “religion in dialogue” exceeds interreligious exchange and becomes an engagement with the secular, with other forms of knowledge, and with artistic and scientific practices.

Against the backdrop of social, political, and epistemic (in)equalities, such dialogical constellations reveal both asymmetries of power and possibilities for transformation. The interplay between religious and secular worlds involves cooperation as well as conflict: alliances may emerge from shared experiences of marginalization, unequal recognition, or pressures to justify religion’s place in contemporary societies. At the same time, religious traditions are internally diverse and marked by political, theological, and cultural divisions. New forms of dialogue therefore often do not take religion itself as the primary distinguishing feature but emerge around shared concerns and common struggles within religious–secular partnerships.

Dialogue, understood not as a formal procedure but as a transformative practice that involves religious as well as non-religious dialogue partners, takes place under multiple pressures in need of closer examination. Within this framework, the panel brings together contributions from Natural Sciences and Ecology; the Arts; Abrahamic Dynamics: Dialogue between Islam, Christianity and Judaism; Politics and Gender; Critical Perspectives on Religion. Together, these perspectives aim to offer a nuanced understanding of how dialogue shapes contemporary interactions between religious and secular worlds.

DIALOGUE AS A “WITNESS-NOTION” OF A CATASTROPHIC ERA

Polak R.(Speaker), Professor, Department of Practical Theology, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

ABOVE US ONLY SKY?

Kerschbaum F.(Speaker), Professor, Department of Astrophysics ~ Vienna ~ Austria

›RELIGION IN DIALOGUE‹: STRETCHING ITS BOUNDARIES

Telser A.(Speaker), Postdoc Assistant, Research Centre "Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society", University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE UNGIVEN AS DIALOGICAL HORIZON: A PERFORMATIVE MODE OF THE AESTHETIC AND THE RELIGIOUS?

Call N.(Speaker), PhD candidate, Research Centre "Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society", University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

DIALOGUE BETWEEN ART AND RELIGION IN THE AGE OF THEIR AUTONOMY

Deibl J.(Speaker), Associate Professor, Department of Systematic Theology and Ethics, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

ABRAHAMIC TRILATERAL INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: STRUGGLING BETWEEN NEOCOLONIALISM AND DECOLONIALISM

Brodeur P.(Speaker), Professor, Department of Religious Studies, University of Montreal ~ Montreal ~ Canada

ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION AND THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A204

Contact: Szilvia Köbel
Chair: C (Leon) van den Broeke, Szilvia Köbel

The overarching topic of the conference is Religion and (In)equalities. The panel focuses on the numerous international conventions (UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, European Convention on Human Rights, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1951 Refugee Convention) that declare the prohibition of discrimination, one aspect of which is the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of religious affiliation or religious (conscientious) beliefs.

Discrimination may occur in relation to the individual and collective aspects of religious freedom, as well as in a number of areas, such as labour and employment relations, education (e.g., religious education, establishment of educational institutions, operation of religious training programs, etc.), the legal status and state funding of religious communities (public tasks and religious activities), media coverage, and children's rights.

The question arises as to what impact discrimination has on social (In)equalities and what legal guarantees can be put in place to ensure equality and eliminate inequality. Further questions are where the necessity-proportionality test for restricting fundamental rights fits into the context of religious (In)equalities, and what the historical and current public law model of the relationship between the state and the church is (ideological neutrality, secularization, state-church model, separation model). It is important to examine the above questions through specific legal cases, as there are different solutions in different European countries. Therefore, special attention must be paid to the practice of the ECtHR, and in particular to the application of Articles 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion) and 14 (prohibition of discrimination) of the ECHR in specific legal cases. The panel presentations will seek to answer these questions.

CHANGES WITHIN THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGIOUS LEGAL EQUALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS

Köbel S.(Speaker), Head of Institute of Public Law, associate professor, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

FAITH, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION: THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN OVERCOMING INEQUALITY

Ormóshegyi Z.(Speaker), Senior Research Fellow, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

DISCRIMINATION THROUGH CONCORDATS? AN ANALYSIS OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS CASE LAW

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

ALGORITHMIC BIAS IN RELATION TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Einvág B.M.(Speaker), Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE POSSIBLE DISCRIMINATIVE NATURE OF REFUSAL OF TREATMENT AND CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION ON RELIGIOUS GROUNDS

Köbel D.(Speaker), Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE (UN)EASY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NON-DISCRIMINATION AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Van Den Broeke L.(Speaker), Full Professor Theology of Law and Church Law, Theologische Universiteit Utrecht, the Netherlands ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

EQUALITY AND THE LEGAL STATUS OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN MULTI-TIER CHURCH-STATE SYSTEMS: EUROPEAN AND SPANISH PERSPECTIVES

Martinez--Torron J.(Speaker), Palomino R.(Speaker), Valero--Estarellas M.J.(Speaker), Universidad Complutense ~ Madrid ~ Spain

The Legacy of Jewish Thought in Modern Philosophy: the case of Gottfried Leibniz, Samuel Aboab and Elia Benamozegh

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 16:30

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Benedetta Manfrinetti
Chair: Myriam Silvera, Carsten Wilke

Medieval and Modern Jewish philosophies display an extraordinary richness of authors, themes, and interactions with doctrines and concepts from other confessional contexts; it is therefore unsurprising that both Jewish and non-Jewish thinkers of the Modern Age engaged with this intellectual legacy. Such engagement could take multiple forms: from a straightforward "revival" to the further development and continuation of earlier conclusions; from a dialectic of conflict or dialogue to the explicit articulation of what had been contained, yet left unspoken, in previous elaborations; from an historical event to the reflection on deeper religious themes.
The proposed interventions on this panel are by prof. Carsten Wilke, concerning the joint reception of medieval and modern thought within a late seventeenth-century rabbinic context; by Prof. Federico Dal Bo, who will reflect on the way Jewish thinkers, and particularly Maimonides, were read by a leading Christian philosopher of the same period, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz; and Jacopo Paolo Quartirolo will propose a biographical interpretation of a theoretical idea that Benamozegh inherited from Vincenzo Gioberti.
The interventions will investigate the way these thinkers read and, sometimes, "crypto-cited", or interpreted Jewish philosophy in the Modern Age. Participants will consider how medieval sources, Jewish traditions or philosophical ideas entered new theoretical, political and historical contexts - including the need to safeguard the Jewish tradition, community interests in specific countries, touching even the matter of Jewish emancipation.

PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE, AND KABBALAH IN THE LIBRARY OF A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CHIEF RABBI OF VENICE

Wilke C.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

LEIBNIZ AS A READER OF MAIMONIDES: ESOTERICISM, HERMENEUTICS, AND THE UNITY OF METAPHYSICS AND SCIENCE

Dal Bo F.(Speaker), Università di Modena-Reggio Emilia ~ Modena-Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

THE THEORETICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ONE OF BENAMOZEGH'S IDEAS

Quartirolo J.P.(Speaker), Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Bologna ~ Italy

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY RESPONSIVE TO EARLY ISLAM

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 16:30

Pola - A102

Contact: Jason Welle
Chair: Ryann Elizabeth Craig

This open call panel explores how Christians in late antiquity and the early medieval period responded theologically to emergent Islam. Confirmed papers investigate the Christian use of distinctively Islamic theological and juridical categories and the methods that Christians used to engage the Qurʾān. This panel is open to scholars exploring Christian responses to early Islam in diverse geographical, cultural, and linguistic contexts. The panel can welcome a maximum of three additional papers.

IN MY OPINION, THIS ISN'T MY OPINION: CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIANS ON RAʾY AND BIDʿA

Welle J.(Speaker), Boston College ~ Chestnut Hill ~ United States of America

HOW CHRISTIANS MADE USE OF THE QURʾĀN: A CASE STUDY ON THE CRUCIFIXION

Craig R.E.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington DC ~ United States of America

RELIGION AND INEQUALITY: REFLECTIONS BASED ON THE INTERACTION BETWEEN POLITICAL POWER, HERMENEUTICS OF SACRED TEXTS, AND ESCHATOLOGY

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Debora Tonelli
Chair: Debora Tonelli

The geopolitical context increasingly includes the religious dimension among the decisive factors in political choices (D. Johnston - C. Sampson 1994; Cesari 2022) and the proliferation of organizations dedicated to interreligious dialogue within different traditions is further confirmation (Howard 2021; Driessen 2023; Phan-Tran 2024) of its importance, regardless of one's possible affiliation.
The conciliar document Nostra Aetate (28 October 1965) led the foundations for interreligious dialogue. For the first time, other faiths are being viewed not through the category of true/false, but with fraternity, seeking to discover what unites the different traditions and what elements might be used for dialogue and coexistence. The significance of this new path immediately reveals a political face: in fact, interreligious dialogue is a tool for freeing faith from political exploitation and to overcome the social-political inequality. The knowledge of religious traditions can therefore be a way to foster public discussion, facilitating inclusion and negotiation, unmasking the prejudices that can lead to social polarization, to overcome the social-political inequality and contributing to a social cohesion that transcends affiliations (Cesari 2022; Phan-Tran 2024).
At the intersection of geopolitics and interreligious dialogue, this panel explores the connection among the hermeneutics of sacred texts, political power, and eschatological visions. Specifically, it aims to highlight the questions that emerge from the interaction among the interpretation of sacred texts — which contributes to the construction of religious imaginaries — the horizon of meaning, including its ultimate destination, and political legitimacy. The goal is to acquire tools to address the complexity of this interaction, with a particular focus on inequality

In this panel, organized by Georgetown University Rome Office, scholars present their reflections from different disciplinary fields.

AN INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN GEOPOLITICAL POWER, HERMENEUTICS OF SACRED TEXTS, AND ESCHATOLOGY

Tonelli D.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Rome ~ Italy

INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE WITHIN THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF VATICAN II AND SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS ADDRESSING RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL CONCERNS

Borelli J.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington D. C. ~ United States of America

WISDOM AND APOCALYPTIC DISCOURSES IN INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS

Lefebure L.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington D. C. ~ United States of America

SACRED TEXTS, POLITICAL IMAGINARIES, AND THE GLOBAL STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS LEGITIMACY

Cesari J.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington D. C. ~ United States of America

GIAPPICHELLI–ROUTLEDGE EDITORIAL SERIES RELIGION, LAW AND ECONOMICS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SPACE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Alessandro Ferrari
Chair: Winnifred Sullivan
authorAMC: Alessandro Ferrari, Ilaria Valenzi, Chiara Giorda
Speaker: Alessandro Ferrari, Ilaria Valenzi, Chiara Giorda, Mohammed Jamal

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For the past five years, the REDESM Research Center (Religions, Rights and Economies in the Mediterranean Space) at the University of Insubria (www.redesm.org) has developed its own editorial series: the Giappichelli–Routledge series Religion, Law and Economics in the Mediterranean Space, which has begun to offer an insightful overview of the dynamics of religious freedom across the two shores of the Mediterranean. Economic and social transformations significantly affect core dimensions of this right: the role of freedom of conscience, relations among religious communities, the place of religious phenomena within constitutional frameworks, the status of women, questions of security, and, more broadly, the geopolitical position of the Mediterranean region within the international arena. This panel aims to take stock of these issues by presenting four volumes of the series, each of which seeks to build a bridge of analysis, research, and reflection between two worlds that are increasingly interconnected.
Particular attention will be devoted to three volumes that help provide a comprehensive picture of the main issues at stake: Freedom of Religion, Security and the Law (2023); Women, Agency and Religion: Social and Legal Issues in the Mediterranean Public Space (2024); Diversity, Fear and Religions: Cultural Accommodation in a Globalized World (2025); and Political, Social, Religious and Economic Challenges in the Middle East and North Africa from Covid-19 to Agenda 2030 (2025). The panel will present the findings of four research projects, offering an interdisciplinary, forward-looking, and comparative reflection that provides an up-to-date perspective on some of the most pressing topics in contemporary religious studies.

GIAPPICHELLI–ROUTLEDGE EDITORIAL SERIES RELIGION, LAW AND ECONOMICS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SPACE

Ferrari A.(authorAMC), Angelucci A.(authorAMC), Valenzi I.(authorAMC), Giorda C.(authorAMC), Jamal M.(Speaker), REDESM-University of Insubria

RELIGION AND (IN)EQUALITIES IN HINDUISM: FOUR CONTEXTS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Tracy Pintchman
Chair: William French

This session is tailored to fit this year's conference theme on religion and (in)equalities. Our four papers collectively address the two biggest inequality concerns in Hinduism: caste and sex. Historically, Hindu traditions have often been complicit in promoting discrimination against women and low-caste groups. But they have also often been wielded as a weapon of resistance against entrenched social hierarchies. The papers in this session examine the intersection between Hinduism and (in)equalities in four contexts. The first paper examines two of the novels written by a contemporary Hindu author, Koral Dasgupta. Dasgupta rewrites the stories of two mythic women, Tara and Ahalya, who appear in the Hindu epics primarily as virtuous wives. Dasgupta centers their stories in ways that override patriarchal prescriptions, rendering them complex figures with narrative voice, political consciousness, and moral agency. The second paper examines the lyrics of three Hindu poet saints--a Brahmin man, a woman, and a low-caste man–from Gujarat. The paper explores how bhakti, "devotion," not only functions on the individual level as a purely religious path, but also as a movement can be a path of resistance to entrenched social inequalities. The third paper examines the samādhi (gravesite) of the Gaudiya Vaishnava theologian Rupa Gosvamin at a temple in North India. As a counterpoint to the second paper, this paper shows how Hindu devotional traditions may not only challenge inequalities, but may simultaneously reproduce them. The final paper explores the intersections of religion and film in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, focusing on issues of religion and gender inequality in film narrative. This paper critically examines the ideological implications of Hindi films' patriarchal representations of women.

FROM OBEDIENCE TO RESISTANCE: REWRITING MYTHIC WOMEN'S STORIES IN KORAL DASGUPTA'S SATI SERIES

Pintchman T.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

HINDU TRADITIONS AND INEQUALITY: REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN IN HINDU TRADITIONS AND IN POPULAR HINDI FILMS

Dimitrova D.(Speaker), University of Montreal ~ Montreal ~ Canada

THE GLOBAL PONTIFICATE OF PIUS XII: SOFT DIPLOMACY, PUBLIC FIGURES, AND ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Pola - A105

Contact: Valentina Bottanelli
Chair: Claire Maligot

The opening of the Vatican archives for the pontificate of Pius XII (1939–1958) has inaugurated a "global turn" in the study of the modern Papacy. Moving beyond traditional debates surrounding the Second World War, this panel explores the Holy See's deployment of "soft diplomacy" as a tool to navigate a rapidly fragmenting international landscape. It seeks to re-evaluate the Holy See's agency as an international actor during the transition towards a bipolar world. This session aims to trace the Papacy's strategic responses to shifting global scenarios, ranging from the fragile equilibrium in East Asia and the onset of the Cold War in the USSR, to the complexities of the nascent State of Israel and political upheavals in South America.

The panel invites submissions exploring:
-The intersection between newly released archival materials and public sources (speeches, journals, etc.).
-The Holy See's engagement with peace conferences and international treaties.
-The long-term evolution and modernisation of Vatican diplomacy.
-Pius XII's personal agency and leadership in diplomatic strategy.

Proposals focusing on the USSR, the Korean War and India are particularly encouraged.

RADIO MESSAGES, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, AND POLITICAL DISTRUST: PIUS XII'S PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON RUSSIA

Solazzo C.(Speaker), DREST - University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

HALLOWING HOLLYWOOD: THE BURGEONING FILM DIPLOMACY OF POPE PIUS XII

Dawes N.(Speaker), University of Notre Dame ~ South Bend ~ United States of America

PACELLIAN BISHOPS? US BISHOPS TAKING PUBLIC STANCES ON INTERFAITH RELATIONS, 1943-1965

Maligot C.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

FROM PASTORAL SOLIDARITY TO CANONICAL RUPTURE: THE RHETORICAL DIPLOMACY OF PIUS XII TOWARD THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (1952–1958)

Bottanelli V.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS. INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGES AND INTERCONNECTIONS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST IN THE MODERN ERA

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Pola A208

Contact: Marcello Garzaniti
Chair: Vassa Kontouma, Vasilios Makrides

The Republic of Letters represented a complex network of intellectuals, scholars, and writers that formed in the West during the modern age. It was a space for dialogue, but also for controversy, characterised by strong personalities and intense personal ties, capable of going beyond traditional institutions or making use of newly established academies, transcending national borders and even overcoming confessional divisions, without forgetting them. This self-proclaimed intellectual community mainly included the Catholic and Reformed Protestant worlds in Western and Central Europe. The classical world played a prominent role in the Republic of Letters, encompassing not only the pagan tradition but also early Christianity, which helped create the very idea of classicism, now applicable to modern times as well. This era witnessed the development of the study of ancient sources and texts, which appears to be closely linked to the birth of modern philology and the knowledge of languages not only from the classical world, but also from the sacred scriptures. The development of classical philology was accompanied by biblical and patristic studies, with the birth of modern criticism. The Republic of Letters spread throughout the European continent and beyond, and new research has made it possible to conceive of its decentralised history, which did not focus on Latin culture and scholarship, but also on places, personalities, and texts from Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Middle East. Today, it is important to integrate the Western context of the Republic of Letters with the roles of diasporas from Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Middle East, which interacted with Western actors and cultural circles. This approach goes beyond the traditional frameworks of national historiography, shedding new light on the intellectual history of Europe as a whole, beyond linguistic, geographical, religious, and cultural segmentation.

THE BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN BIBLICAL PHILOLOGY IN THE EAST SLAVIC WORLD BETWEEN THE 15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES

Garzaniti M.(Speaker), University of Florence ~ Florence ~ Italy

THE GREEK ORTHODOX WORLD UNDER OTTOMAN RULE AND THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS: ASSESSING THEIR CONTACTS AND ENTANGLEMENTS

Kontouma V.(Speaker), Makrides V.(Speaker), École pratique des hautes études, PSL ~ Paris ~ France

THE MAKING OF A GRAND ORTHODOX THEOLOGIAN: GEORGIOS KORESSIOS (C. 1570–1659/60) BETWEEN LATE RENAISSANCE ITALY AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Negoita O.(Speaker), ICUB - Research Institute of the University of Bucharest ~ Bucharest ~ Romania

PUBLIC AND INFORMAL THEOLOGICAL DEBATES IN MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY EASTERN CHRISTIANITY

Olar O.(Speaker), Austrian Academy of Sciences | ORTHPOL ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE “ORIENTAL” CONFESSIONS OF FAITH OF THE MARQUIS DE NOINTEL IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY IN SAINT PETERSBURG

Chentsova V.(Speaker), EPHE / PSL ~ Paris ~ France

COPTIC PHILOLOGY AND THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS: ATHANASIUS KIRCHER, JOHANN MICHAEL WANSLEBEN, AND THE MAKING OF EARLY MODERN KNOWLEDGE OF CHRISTIAN EGYPT

Kouremenos N.(Speaker), Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN RUSSIAN GLOBAL STATECRAFT

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Pola - AT14

Contact: Peter Mandaville
Chair: Erin Wilson

Religion has re-emerged as a central element in contemporary geopolitical competition, serving not merely as a source of identity or values but as a strategic asset deployed by states seeking to expand influence and challenge liberal democratic norms. This panel examines the instrumentalization of religion in international relations, with particular focus on how the Russian Federation leverages religious actors, narratives, and networks as components of its soft and sharp power strategies within the framework of global culture wars.

The panel brings together three complementary perspectives to illuminate this phenomenon. The first paper establishes the broader context by mapping the contemporary landscape of religious geopolitics, analyzing how multiple state and non-state actors employ religion to advance political objectives, build transnational coalitions, and contest normative frameworks around issues including gender, sexuality, family, and secularism. The second paper focuses specifically on Moscow's strategic deployment of religion in its external relations. It examines how Russian state actors and religious institutions—particularly the Russian Orthodox Church—collaborate to project influence abroad, positioning Russia as a defender of "traditional values" against Western liberalism. This analysis explores the mechanisms, narratives, and diplomatic channels through which religious discourse is integrated into Russian foreign policy objectives. The third paper provides a critical regional case study of Russian religious influence operations in the Global South. Drawing on field research and policy analysis, it investigates how Russian actors cultivate relationships with religious leaders and institutions across regions such as Africa and Latin America, leveraging both Orthodox Christianity and inter-religious dialogue to advance geopolitical interests, challenge Western influence, and build networks of support for Moscow's global positioning.

THE NEW GEOPOLITICS OF RELIGION

Mandaville P.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington DC ~ United States of America

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AS MORAL NORM ENTREPRENEUR – TEN YEARS LATER: HOW HAS RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE INFLUENCED THE GLOBAL TRADITIONAL VALUES AGENDA OF THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE

Stoeckl K.(Speaker), LUISS ~ Rome ~ Italy

MODELLING "HARMONY": RUSSIA'S RELIGIOUS SOFT POWER IN THE "GLOBAL SOUTH"

Sibgatullina G.(Speaker), University of Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

INEQUALITIES AND REPARATIONS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Carlton Chase
Chair: Carlton Chase

The powerful often appropriate categories like “sacred” and “divine warrant” to justify acts of coercion, abuse, and appropriation, under the auspices of order, stability, and superiority. In due course, activists, victims, and good people of conscience have employed the same categories to disrupt such totalizing enterprises and escape oppressive conditions. In the wake of such histories, those who remain are left to wonder at the lingering brokenness and to speculate on how best to heal.
In times past, religious categories of sacrifice, redemption, and reconciliation have been used to frame spiritual and political recourse. In more recent times, the concept of reparations has been introduced into such considerations. Religious categories can be deeply ambiguous; they have been employed to liberate, but also to stall or postpone liberation and a righting of injustice and inequality. Reparations are often seen by victims of injustice and their advocates, as one way to publicly force accountability and atonement, and to symbolically and structurally move forward. Reparations call for dispossession and a rebalancing of the status quo, and thus are often received as a threat by those in power.
This panel focuses on reparations as a way to a more just society based on the common good, and invites would-be presenters to consider three things: (1) the varied ways that reparations have been considered, in different situations and contexts; (2) the possibility that the concept of reparations shares the same ambiguity as other religious categories aimed at healing, and thus may, in a similar inadvertent fashion, perpetrate unintended inequalities; and (3) ways for reparations to be better received by the larger society, and thus become a more effective tool for moving communities towards a just future. We invite paper proposals that engage the question of reparations from interdisciplinary, religious and non-religious, contextual perspectives.

THE CHURCH OF NORWAY AND THE SÁMI INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY: OPEN CHURCH, TRUTH-AND-RECONCILIATION, AND (IN)EQUALITIES

Matthaei L.K.(Speaker), University of Oslo ~ Oslo ~ Norway

RETHINKING REPARATION AFTER CLERICAL ABUSE

Da Silva Monteiro S.(Speaker), Universidade Portuguesa Católica (UCP) ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

CRITICISM OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS. APPROACHES FROM VARIOUS RELIGIONS RELATED DISCIPLINES.

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Pola - A102

Contact: Ilona Nord
Chair: Fabienne Greuter

The panel is dedicated to educational initiatives that focus on critical education on anti-Semitism in the context of digital teaching and learning scenarios. In doing so, we address the conference theme of social inequalities in relation to the digital dynamics of anti-Semitism. So far, we have two papers dedicated to this topic: One paper analyzes existing initiatives in app-applications in relation to mediaproductive competencies of students and scholars. The second paper examines how educational games can promote critical education on anti-Semitism in contemporary mediatized contexts. We are open to more papers focussing on other media-formats as ways of doing critical education on antisemitism. In terms of concept, the focus is on anti-Semitism with sensibility to also racism in the digital age. This includes for example analyzing underlying mechanisms of discrimination and racism through the use of algorithms, and possible pro-social action in the digital space with regard to anti-Semitism. Digitality permeates all areas of life and connects data from a wide variety of sources (cf. Häußling et al. 2017, p. 2). These processes generate new data that flows into social realities and culture, creating a self-reinforcing, never-ending cycle of communication (cf. ibid.). Petzke, Schmidt, and Staffa (2023, 176) state: "We are therefore essentially already in a post-digital or onlife (cf. Floridi 2015) age, in which our reality can no longer be clearly separated into analog/offline and digital/online, but is instead synthesized: we live in datafied environments. It is therefore not surprising that not only social realities as a whole, but also the racism [and anti-Semitism] that takes place within them, as well as criticism of racism [and anti-Semitism], are transforming and becoming powerful in connection with digitality."

STRUCTURAL EDUCATION CRITICAL OF ANTI-SEMITISM EXEMPLIFIED IN DIGITAL TEACHING AND LEARNING SCENARIOS

Nord I.(Speaker), Universität Würzburg ~ Würzburg ~ Germany

EDUCATIONAL GAMES AS WAYS OF TEACHING ABOUT ANTISEMITISM

Radde--Antweiler K.(Speaker), Universität Bremen ~ Bremen ~ Germany

Magnifica Humanitas and Human Fraternity: a inspiration for Interreligious Dialogue. Introducing the CORANICA exhibition

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Pola - Aula Magna

The Coranica Exhibition represents an important occasion for the encounter between textual tradition and contemporary research on interreligious dialogue. Through the valorisation of Ludovico Marracci's work Alcorani Textus Universus, distinguished by its philological and textual rigor, the exhibition offers a space for knowledge and exchange, fostering a deeper understanding of religious traditions and their mutual relationships. Building on this exhibition experience, the event titled "Magnifica Humanitas and Human Fraternity: an inspiration for Interreligious Dialogue" develops a broader reflection on the anthropological and theological foundations of human fraternity. The thematic pathway aims to highlight how the doctrinal roots of different religious traditions can contribute to the construction of a culture of fraternity, understood not merely as an ethical ideal, but as an operative principle of dialogue, coexistence, and mutual recognition. The contributions of the participating speakers will offer complementary perspectives from academic, ecclesial, and Islamic contexts, with the aim of highlighting the possibilities of convergence between religious traditions in promoting a shared vision of human dignity. In this sense, the transition "Magnifica Humanitas and Human Fraternity" becomes the guiding thread of an interdisciplinary reflection on the contemporary meaning of interreligious dialogue. The initiative thus takes shape as a laboratory of thought and exchange, where the memory of traditions and the interpretation of the present intertwine to generate new perspectives of mutual understanding and peace.

Magnifica Humanitas and Human Fraternity: a inspiration for Interreligious Dialogue.
Introducing the CORANICA exhibition

RELIGION, SOCIAL STRATIFICATION, AND INEQUALITY IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Pola - A206b

Chair: Osbert Isiorhovoja Uyovwieyovwe

This panel will explore the multifaceted ways in which religion both challenges and reproduces social inequalities in contemporary societies. Religion has historically been implicated in structures of power, privilege, and exclusion, yet it also functions as a space of resistance, solidarity, and social transformation. The panel invites contributions that critically examine how religious ideas, institutions, leadership structures, rituals, and community practices intersect with social stratification based on class, gender, race, ethnicity, caste, disability, age, and migration status. We welcome papers addressing theoretical, empirical, historical, and comparative perspectives. Possible themes include: religious legitimation of wealth and poverty; faith-based responses to instability, Christian genocide and social injustice; prosperity gospel and neoliberal economies; religion and welfare provision; religious NGOs and humanitarianism; the role of religious actors in promoting or resisting social mobility; intersections of religion with capitalism, labor, and informal economies; and how marginal religious groups experience inequality differently from dominant traditions. Special attention will be paid to voices from the Global South and minority communities, as well as to contributions that foreground decolonial, feminist, queer, or critical race approaches to the study of religion and inequality. The panel aims to foster interdisciplinary discussion among scholars of religion, sociology, anthropology, political science, education, and related fields. By examining how religion operates within unequal social orders, the panel seeks to illuminate both the reproduction of injustice and the possibilities for more equitable futures.

MINISTERS OF RELIGIONS: BETWEEN RELIGIOUS MODELS AND SECULAR PROTECTIONS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Pola - A103

Contact: Abdurrahman Gad Elrab
Chair: Giulia Mazzoni

The system for protecting religious practice within the Italian legal framework, while based on the principle of secularity and aimed at guaranteeing equal freedom for all confessions, continues to reflect, in numerous normative and practical aspects, the imprint of the religious model that historically shaped its construction.
A prime example is the figure of the minister of worship, developed by the state legislator based on the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church and subsequently extended to other confessions through legal instruments that do not always capture their specific characteristics.
This panel aims to critically analyze the notion of the minister of worship within the Italian legal system, highlighting the legal recognition challenges that emerge with particular intensity for more recently established religious communities. These communities, characterized by organizational models different from the Catholic one, by a distinct configuration of relationships between the faithful and religious leaders, and by forms of leadership that are not always institutionalized, struggle to fit into the traditional frameworks presupposed by state law. This results in evident issues of (in)equality, both in terms of the exercise of individual religious rights and in the broader relations between the State and religious confessions.
Building on an analysis of the legal system and the diverse religious and cultural realities it seeks to regulate, the panel will present a case study whose specifics significantly illustrate the practical implications of the issue of ministers of worship: penitentiary institutions.
The panel seeks to raise questions regarding the compatibility of the current legal framework with the principle of secularity, highlighting the need to rethink the category of minister of worship in a way that is more inclusive within an increasingly complex religious society.

ITALIAN LEGAL SYSTEM AND RENEWED CONFESSIONAL PARADIGM

Gad Elrab A.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Milano ~ Milano ~ Italy

MINISTERS OF RELIGION AND PRISON ADMINISTRATION: SEEKING A DELICATE BALANCE

Palazzo M.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca ~ Milano ~ Italy

CHRISTIAN LAW AND ISLAM (7TH-11TH CENTURY): THE NOMOS PROJECT

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Federico Alpi
Chair: Costanza Bianchi

In the crucial half-millennium between the death of the Prophet Muhammad and the First Crusade, an absolutely essential part in the origins of Christian-Muslim relations has been overlooked, namely how the normative regimes of Eastern Christians – including those of Byzantium, the Islamicate world and the space in between – grappled with the rise of Islam. Exploring this history has important implications for our understanding of the development of Christian-Muslim relations in the premodern period, the genesis of Eastern Christian legal regimes and the earlier precedents which Eastern Mediterranean states after the year 1100 might have drawn on in dealing with Islam. This is the focus of NOMOS, an ERC-awarded project, undertaken at the LMU university of Munich under the leadership of Prof. Zachary Chitwood. For the purposes of this project, the Eastern Christian regimes under scrutiny are those of the Byzantine empire, in Greek, and those of Armenian, Coptic, and Syrian Christians (in Armenian, Coptic, and Syrian respectively). By assembling a corpus of “Saracen law” provisions and utilizing cutting-edge, AI- supported technologies to create new editions of legal texts, NOMOS will examine how, within the realm of normative knowledge, the new religion was interpreted, circumscribed and defined and, moreover, how the encounter with Islam itself shaped long-term developments within Eastern Christian legal regimes. The aim of this panel is to present preliminary results of the project (which started in the last months of 2025). At the same time, the panel would welcome any attempt to go beyond the project itself, exploring for instance similar patterns of interaction or similar research approaches in the Christian West.

EMERGENCY COUNCILS? ISLAM-RELATED CANONS IN THREE EARLY MEDIEVAL ARMENIAN SYNODS

Alpi F.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose, Bologna; Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (from March 2026) ~ Bologna ~ Italy

DEALING WITH THE OTHER IN BYZANTINE LAW: HERETICS, JEWS, PAGANS AND MUSLIMS

Chitwood Z.(Speaker), LMU Munich ~ Munich ~ Germany

PRODUCING AND TRANSMITTING CANONICAL LITERATURE IN COPTIC EGYPT (7TH–11TH CENTURIES)

Bianchi C.(Speaker), LMU-Ludwig Maximilians Universität ~ München ~ Germany

REGULATING DEATH: FORMATION OF INHERITANCE LAWS IN SYRIAC LEGAL TRADITIONS

Jamali N.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian Universität, München ~ Munchen ~ Germany

RELIGION AS ART - ART AS RELIGION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A102

Contact: Barnabas Palfrey
Chair: Barnabas Palfrey

Today, religions are often aestheticized in ways that correlate strangely with the aestheticization of politics. Religion and politics, these oldest of all bedfellows, continue to invest in art as they assert themselves in the aesthetically appealing blend of virtual and analog social reality.
Religion and politics involve a vision of life (theoria) and a way of life shaped by it. Art has the power to offer appealing expressions of this ordered vision, translating “harsh reality” into forms that allow both the unspeakable and the outrageous find palpable reception. Religion and politics primarily serve as stabilizing factors; art throws necessary light on both their promises and their shortfalls. Therefore, religion and politics must never stray too far from this creative-critical fountainhead.
This is especially true of religion: even the simple word needs an adequate form to have a manifesting or pronouncing effect. At the same time, the experience of art can have a “revealing” character without presupposing “confessions.” Thus, the panel invites participants to explore the creative tension between religion and art (with or without a critical sideways glance at politics), and the promises and challenges they offer present and future societies. Possible areas of interest include:
• challenges that AI technologies pose to authentic religious experience;
• art and religion’s impact on national and international politics;
• the ways in which concepts like equality, justice, and community are impacted by the interactions between religion and art;
• how religious communities embrace new expressions of iconoclasm;
• how art can improve or deepen (religious) people’s perception of reality (aesthesis);
• and the ways non-religious persons often rely on art to help them contemplate questions once thought to be the exclusive domain of religion and political philosophies.

THE AESTHETICS OF THE CUT: CAN THE DESERT FATHERS AND MOTHERS FREE US FROM TIKTOK AND THE HALLOW APP?

Chase C.(Speaker), Manhattan University ~ Bronx, New York ~ United States of America

“REDEMPTION IN WOOL”: LAMB OF GOD MEETS SHAWN THE SHEEP

Telser A.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

MOTHER-SURVIVOR AT THE GATES OF DAWN: AN ICON IN CONTEMPORARY ART

Murauskaite E.E.(Speaker), VDA (Vilnius Academy of Arts) ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

FOSTERING JUSTICE, COMMUNITY AND PIETY: THE ETHICAL INTERVENTIONS OF US HALAL COMEDY

Thonnart M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

WHEN THEOLOGY BECOMES IMAGE: THE LAST JUDGMENT AT VORONEȚ MONASTERY AS PUBLIC VISUAL THEOLOGY

Mogos T.I.(Speaker), Doctoral School “Dumitru Stăniloae”, Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Bucharest ~ Bucharest ~ Romania

FORMS OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN ALEVI TRADITION: HISTORICAL TRAJECTORIES, CONTEMPORARY TRANSFORMATIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A206a

Contact: Riza Yildirim
Chair: Riza Yildirim

This panel explores the diverse and evolving forms of religious authority within the Alevi tradition from both historical and contemporary perspectives. Alevism has historically articulated multiple forms of authority through a plurality of figures, institutions, and practices, including hereditary lineages (ocak and dede), ritual specialists, saintly charisma, sacred genealogies, poetry and music, and mechanisms of communal recognition and consensus. These forms of authority have been continuously negotiated in relation to changing political, social, and religious contexts.

The panel brings together contributions that examine how religious authority forms and structures have been constructed, legitimized, contested, and transformed from the pre-modern period to the present. Papers address topics such as the historical role of ocak lineages and initiation systems; the role of charisma, spiritual bonds with saintly figures, genealogy, and moral authority in the formation and maintenance of Alevi socioreligious order; the impact of premodern (Safavid and Ottoman) and modern state formations on Alevi religious leadership; and the reconfiguration of authority in contemporary settings shaped by migration, urbanization, institutionalization, and transnational networks. Particular attention is paid to tensions between inherited and acquired authority, oral tradition and textualization, and local practice and standardized representations of Alevism.

By combining theological, historical, anthropological, sociological, and ethnomusicological approaches, the panel aims to contribute to broader discussions on religious authority beyond normative models centered on clerical institutions. It highlights Alevism as a compelling case for understanding how authority operates in non-hierarchical and community-based religious systems, and how such systems respond to modern challenges while drawing on traditions.

PRODUCING RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY: SAYYID FAMILIES, GENEALOGIES AND THE MAKING OF ALEVI RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

Erol U.(Speaker), Leibniz-Institut für Europäische Geschichte (IEG) ~ Mainz ~ Germany

ALEVI WOMEN IN TRANSNATIONAL SPACE: THE CHANCES AND CHALLENGES OF FEMALE RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP IN GERMANY

Birkalan--Gedik H.(Speaker), Goethe University ~ Frankfurt am Main ~ Germany

RECOGNITION AND RESISTANCE: ALEVIS AS RECLUTANT ACTORS IN THE TURKISH RELIGIOUS FIELD

Şen M. (Speaker), Middle East Technical University ~ Ankara ~ Türkiye

WAR IS THE FATHER OF ALL THINGS: AGENCY OF UKRAINIAN RELIGIOUS ACTORS IN DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY DURING WARTIME

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A204

Contact: Tetiana Kalenychenko
Chair: Tetiana Kalenychenko, Denys Brylov

War is a challenge to human norms and religious freedom. It does not only destroy the existing social order, but also provides opportunities. The Russian-Ukrainian war, while remaining an existential threat to Ukraine, has revealed the internal potential of many Ukrainian religious organizations and actors. The humanitarian activities of churches during the war largely compensated (substituted) the state's inability to protect the most affected social groups (IDPs, refugees, veterans, etc.). At the same time, the external religious diplomacy by Ukrainian faith-based leaders faced a lot of challenges, as well as achieved results. Still, humanitarian activity and diplomacy are two key parts of raising actor's agency.

The growing importance and influence of religious actors led to a change in the attitude of the state authorities and the model of church-state relations. However, the increase in the influence of churches has also led to an increase in attempts to instrumentalize it. As a result, Ukrainian churches found themselves in a situation where great opportunities have opened up for them, but the threats have also become much greater than ever before. This panel is devoted to analyzing these opportunities and challenges, as well as the likely paths of development for the Ukrainian religious actors and their networks of cooperation.

This panel is part of the POLISMOD (2026-31, PI Kristina Stoeckl) project launch. By examining how Ukrainian religious actors navigate expanded agency, humanitarian responsibility, and risks of political instrumentalization under conditions of war, this panel speaks directly to POLISMOD's core interest in the role of religious actors in sustaining—or undermining—democratic resilience under conditions of crisis.

PATRIOTISM AS A CRITERION OF RELIGIOUS ORTHODOXY: THE POLITICAL INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF UKRAINIAN CHURCHES

Brylov D.(Speaker), Dialogue in Action ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS AGENCY IN UKRAINE: FROM COMMUNITY-LEVEL ACTION TO NATIONAL INFLUENCE

Kalenychenko T.(Speaker), Dialogue in Action ~ Bucha ~ Ukraine

BECOMING A MINORITY. IMPACTS OF THE RUSSIAN WAR ON ORTHODOX THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL ETHICS

Elsner R.(Speaker), Muenster University ~ Muenster ~ Germany

MORE COOPERATION OR MORE CONTROL: EVOLUTION OF UKRAINE'S RELIGION-STATE DYNAMICS

Vovk D.(Speaker), Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law ~ New York ~ United States of America

RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA AND UKRAINIAN RELIGIOUS TELEGRAM

Fert A.(Speaker), Kyiv School of Economics ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

LIVED RELIGION AND AN ETHICS OF CARE IN WARTIME UKRAINE

Wanner C. (Speaker), Pennsylvania State University ~ USA

DISCERNING DIVINE PRESENCE: IN DIFFERENCE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Theo van Willigenburg
Chair: Theo van Willigenburg, Gijsbert van den Brink, Dion Forster

This panel will feature presentations on the fundamental disparity between the divine and the human. This includes the difference between Creator and creation, between the sacred and the profane, between earth and heaven, and more generally between transcendence and immanence.
The panel welcomes studies in systematic theology, philosophy of religion, history of ideas, historical theology, public theology, ethics, psychology, and practical theology, concerning questions like:
- metaphysics: how do contrast-properties like ‘holy’ compare to other non-natural properties like ‘beautiful’, ‘virtuous’ or ‘right’?
- secularization: which historical narratives may be told about the ‘disappearance’ in Western modernity of the transcendental/divine?
- creation: how to account of the sacredness of non-human nature (in countering ecological deterioration) without ignoring that God and creation are qualitatively different?
- hell and heaven: what theological import do these deeply different categories have?
- politics and religion: when does the merge of religion and politics lead to sacralization of ideas, symbols and/or persons and how to avoid idolatry?
- psychology: what makes an experience into a religious experience of the Divine?

BLURRING THE BOUNDARIES? ON CALLING PLANET EARTH SACRED

Van Den Brink G.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

THE HUMAN BEING AS CREATOR: A FORGOTTEN STRAND OF THE IMAGO DEI

Lambert V.A.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

DISCERNING DIVINE COMMITMENT: CONCURSUS AND THE COVENANT

Van Den Belt H.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn ~ Amsterdam and Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

DISCERNING GOD AMID SACRALISED POWER: CRITERIA FOR PUBLIC THEOLOGY

Forster D.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

“THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU”: THE DIVINE PRESENCE OF THE LORD’S TABLE AS PROPHETIC EMBRACE IN THE NETHERLANDS

Salcido J.R.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

BEAUTY IN THE ABSENCE OF GOD: THE THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS OF EBERHARD JÜNGEL

Howell C.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

GOD’S WAY OF ESSENCING: ON DIVINE PRESENCE BEYOND ONTOTHEOLOGY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES ON THE DIFFERENCE (AND RELATION) TO IMMANENCE

Prosdocimo M.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

SECULARIZATION AND THE CREATOR-CREATION DIVIDE: RATIONALIZATION VERSUS REFORM AS EXPLANATIONS OF MODERNITY'S TRANSFORMATION OF DIVINE PRESENCE

Borowski M.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

RELIGIONS AND INEQUALITIES: PLURIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES SOCIOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC APPROACHES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - A101

Contact: Rossana M Salerno
Chair: Rossana M Salerno, Giulia Conti, Gaetano Sabato

Religious, cultural, and social inequalities are a structural dimension of contemporary societies, shaped by power relations, belonging, and recognition. Religions, cultures, and territories act as interconnected spheres where meanings, norms, and practices of inclusion and exclusion emerge. The panel adopts sociological and geographic perspectives to explore how religions both reproduce and transform inequalities. From a sociological perspective, religions operate as institutions and symbolic systems that shape norms, values, gender arrangements, and hierarchies. Through rituals, discourse, digital media, and sacred objects, they may reinforce subordination or open spaces for critique and emancipation. From a geographic point of view, inequalities are seen as spatially embedded. Sacred places, devotional geographies, pilgrimages, and urban boundaries show how religions influence access to resources, visibility, and belonging. Concepts such as liminality highlight thresholds—urban margins, shrines, ritual paths—where identities and hierarchies can be renegotiated. Integrating these viewpoints allows for a multidimensional understanding of how religions reshape visibility, recognition, and symbolic redistribution in contemporary societies.
Keywords: Religion, Space, Inequality, Symbols, Digitalization, Pluralism

THE FAITH OF OTHERS: A PATH OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Salerno R.M.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Italy ~ Italy

SACRED GEOGRAPHIES IN VIDEO GAMES SET IN ITALY VALORISATION, LIMINAL SPACE, AND REGIMES OF VISIBILITY

Conti G.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

NARRATING THE PILGRIMAGE: THE CASE OF SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA FROM A GEOGRAPHICAL AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Sabato G. (Speaker), Università degli studi di Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN LATIN AMERICA

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A206b

Contact: Federico Aguirre
Chair: Federico Aguirre, Wilson Muñoz

This panel brings together researchers from different countries in the Americas and Europe to discuss studies of religion in Latin America, its origins, history, current situation, and challenges. Around the middle of the 20th century, the discussion on development models for Latin America will face a continent where secularisation had barely been noticed, and where religion is identified as a catalyst for the socio-cultural processes associated with late capitalist modernisation. An early expression of this discussion was the meetings of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM) and liberation theology, where for the first time in history the cultural specificity of the Latin American Church was problematised. From the 1990s onwards, the social sciences took centre stage in the discussion and, at present, we could say that there is a reconfiguration of the field of religious studies in Latin America, involving other disciplines from the humanities, arts and heritage studies. Another topic of interest is the study of the influence of Latin American religious traditions abroad, through the processes of globalisation and contemporary migration, as well as the presence and impact of other non-Christian religious traditions in the region. In light of all this, topics such as popular religion, religion and migration, Latin American theology, religious disaffiliation, evangelical pluralism and the current state of indigenous worldviews become relevant. Finally, the panel will also focus on the epistemological challenges of the study of religion in Latin America and the nature of the interdisciplinary dialogue it convenes.

MIGRATION AND CATHOLICISM: THE PERUVIAN COMMUNITY IN ROME, ITALY

Roldán V.(Speaker), Università Niccolò Cusano ~ Roma ~ Italy

THE APOPHATIC CHARACTER OF LATIN AMERICAN POPULAR RELIGION

Aguirre F.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

ART AS DEVOTION: TOWARD AN ANTI-CAPITALIST EPISTEMOLOGY IN SANTIAGO

Eikelboom L.(Speaker), Despain B.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

INTERGENERATIONAL RELIGIOUS TRANSMISSION AS PLAUSIBILITY PRODUCTION: THE CHILEAN CASE

Neckelmann M.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

A PHILOSOPHICAL JUSTIFICATION OF THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR AS A WAY OF THINKING ABOUT INEQUALITY FROM LATIN AMERICA

Becker M.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

LANDSCAPE IN MOTION. STUDIES ON SPACE AND RITUAL IN THE ANDES

Muñoz Henríquez W.(Speaker), Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona ~ Barcelona ~ Spain

INTERRELIGIOUS APPROACHES TO ECO-JUSTICE AND "WCC" PROPHETIC CALL: SHARED RESPONSES TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES AND INEQUALITIES.

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Louk Aourelien Andrianos
Chair: Louk Aourelien Andrianos, Nadja Furlan Štante, Tom Sverre Bredal-Tomren

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The God of justice and peace stands with the whole Creation, human and non-human, that are vulnerable and have suffered the injustices of human greed. In a time marked by common ecological challenges that affect all peoples and all religious traditions — Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Indigenous spiritualities—, we seek interreligious theological and ecumenical reflections on human responsibility toward the just community with the “neighbours” (Luke 10:25–37), human and non-human creation that are today being wiped up at risk through extinction, degradation, and pollution from human overexploitations.

The contemporary global crises are reflected in outrageous inequalities of access to natural resources and widespread lack of respect to existential rights for the overall Creation. The eco-justice crisis is the defining moral and spiritual challenge of our time. Climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation and widening economic inequalities demand not only technological or political responses but mainly theological, ethical and interreligious engagement. These crises call for shared responses grounded in dialogue, solidarity and collaborative action across traditions.

This open panel invites papers that explore how interreligious and ecumenical theologies can respond to the urgent need for eco-justice – justice that embraces the integrity of creation, the dignity of all beings and the flourishing of all communities.

We particularly welcome contributions that show religious pathways to solve universal eco-justice challenges and inequalities.

We, representatives from the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Ecological Theology and Environmental Ethics (ECOTHEE) and the European Christian Ecotheology Research Network (ECErN) invite theologians, activists, policymakers, and scientists, to contribute to this vital conversation at the intersection of faith, ecology, and justice.

REIMAGINING CHRISTIAN ECOTHEOLOGY THROUGH INDIGENOUS SPIRITUALITIES: POSTCOLONIAL ECOFEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

Furlan Štante N.(Speaker), Znanstveno raziskovalno središče Koper ~ Koper ~ Slovenia

THE ECUMENICAL DECADE OF CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTION (2025-2034) AND INTER-RELIGIOUS ADVOCACIES FOR ECO-JUSTICE AT THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (WCC)

Andrianos L.A.(Speaker), World Council of Churches ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

SÁMI TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AS AN IMPULSE FOR CHRISTIAN FAITH EDUCATION: A NORWE-GIAN CASE STUDY WITH GLOBAL RELEVANCE

Bredal--Tomren T.S.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

CULTIVATING AN INTERFAITH INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Durante C.(Speaker), Saint Peter's University ~ Jersey City, New Jersey ~ United States of America

“FROM BYZANTINE HYMNOGRAPHY TO GLOBAL ECO-JUSTICE: ORTHODOX LITURGICAL THEOLOGY AS PROPHETIC AND INTERRELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL WITNESS”

Levakos P.(Speaker), PhD researcher, Faculty of Theology, Athens / MA student, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies KU Leuven, Belgium. ~ Athens ~ Greece

THE ECUMENICAL DECADE OF CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTION (2025-2034) AND INTER-RELIGIOUS ADVOCACIES FOR ECO-JUSTICE AT THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (WCC)

Andrianos L.(Speaker), World Council of Churches ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

MOBILIZING FOR GLOBAL CLIMATE SECURITY: THE CASE OF THE UNITED STATES

French W.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

INTERDENOMINATIONAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVES IN AUSTRALIA

Bergmann N.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Brisbane ~ Australia

THE ECOTHEOLOGY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH: AN INTERRELIGIOUS INVITATION TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Cardoso Duarte J.(Speaker), Research Scientist ~ Coimbra ~ Portugal

THE GROANING OF CREATION: AN EASTERN CHRISTIAN MYSTICAL RESPONSE TO ANIMAL SUFFERING AND FACTORY FARMING

Sabada L.(Speaker), University of Saskatchewan, St. Thomas More College ~ Saskatoon, Saskatchewan ~ Canada

BLUE THEOLOGY

Locorotondo L.(Speaker), PUL ~ Roma ~ Italy

RULES, NORMS, AND DISCIPLINE IN MEDIEVAL RELIGION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Atria Larson
Chair: Eleonora Rava

This panel features papers that are part of a special issue intended for the _Quaderni di storia religiosa medievale_. The issue intends to expand scholars' understanding of the function, purpose, and importance of norms and discipline within the administration of ecclesiastical communities and hierarchies. It also aims to expand scholars' perspective on what is relevant to and included within the concepts of law and normativity in the Christian religion, pushing historians to ponder these concepts as inclusive of but expanded beyond the confines of monastic Rules on the side of religious orders and synodal statutes on the side of dioceses and parishes. The issue encourages studies of these important sources but asks contributors to think about the significance and application of them, particularly in relationship to specific dioceses, parishes, communal religious communities, anchoritic communities, or in specific regions, or within specific orders. The issue also asks scholars to explore mechanisms, rationales, and practices for maintaining order and disciplining erring members or subordinates that might not be expressed in formal written rules but leave evidence in other kinds of historical source material. In short, this panel investigates law and normativity in medieval religion.

LATE ANTIQUE AND EARLY MEDIEVAL CANONICAL COLLECTIONS AT THE CATHEDRAL LIBRARY OF VERONA

Tronca D.(Speaker), University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

MONASTIC CUSTOMARIES, WITH AND AGAINST THE RULE OF ST BENEDICT, 9TH-11TH CENTURIES

Cochelin I.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

BEYOND THE RULE: CONSTITUTIONS IN MEDIEVAL FEMALE MONASTICISM

Bianchini A.(Speaker), La Sapienza Università di Roma ~ Rome ~ Italy

FROM VISITATION TO COURT: NORMS, DISCIPLINE, AND LAW IN ITALIAN DIOCESES (TUSCANY, LATE 13TH–EARLY 14TH CENTURY)

Fossier A.(Speaker), Université de Bourgogne ~ Bourgogne ~ France

RESISTANCE TO ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY IN LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLAND AND FRANCE

Zamore G.(Speaker), Uppsala Universitet ~ Uppsala ~ Sweden

UGO PANZIERA: GUIDING THE YOUNG FRIARS IN CONSTANTINOPLE IN XIVTH CENTURY

Centini L.(Speaker), Charles University, Prague ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

RELIGIOUS FORMS OF LIFE. INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUES: EUROPE - CHINA - SOUTHEAST ASIA

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A13

Chair: Jure Zovko, Xinzhang Zhang, Hans-Peter Grosshans

If, following Wittgenstein, we define religions as different forms of life that are normative and obligatory for human practice, the question arises as to how dialogue between them is possible. The liberal form of life in the European Union is characterised by values such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.
The European liberal way of life requires that freedom of thought, conscience, and religion be protected and established as a forms of life. This also includes the right to change or reject one's religion, as well as the right to express beliefs publicly or privately through worship, teaching, practice, and observance.
In this connection, we will analyse the problems that arise in the EU and compare them with those in China and East Asia, consider the similarities and differences, and examine the possibilities for exchanging experiences. If one of the fundamental features of religion is the confrontation with one's own contingency, then, in this context, the question of dialogue among different religious forms of life arises.

INTERPRETING AND NEGOTIATING BASIC ETHICAL AND RELIGIOUS DISTINCTIONS IN INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS - THE EXAMPLE OF THE GOOD / EVIL DISTINCTION IN ITS UNIVERSAL RELEVANCE AND ITS CONTEXTUAL DIFFERENCES

Grosshans H.(Speaker), university Muenster ~ Muenster ~ Germany

RESILIENCE AND RESISTANCE IN CHRISTIAN FAITH IN MYANMAR

Layang S.J.(Speaker), Kachin Theological College & Seminary, Myitkyina ~ Myitkyina ~ Myanmar

How Do Chinese People Distinguish Between Delusion (迷) and Enlightenment (悟) in Spiritual Life?

Zhang X. (Speaker), Hangzhou City University ~ Hangzhou ~ China

The Human Being as Free: A Dialogue Between Meister Eckhart and Chan Buddhism

He T. (Speaker), Fudan University ~ Shanghai ~ China

Transcending the Flesh: A Comparative Analysis of Body Enhancement in Taoist Praxis and Western Mythology

Luo D. (Speaker), South China University of Technology ~ Guangzhou ~ China

A Preliminary Inquiry into the Social Significance of Contemporary Chinese Temple Fair Practices from the Perspective of Historical Materialism

Guo C. (Speaker), School of Marxism, Zhejiang University ~ Hangzhou ~ China

Heidegger, Daoist Thought, and Cross-Cultural Asymmetry

Tang B. (Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

Political and intercultural Analyses of Europe – China – Southeast Asia relations

Davis D. (Speaker), Troy University ~ Troy ~ USA

Anti-anti-Christianity and China

Di Blasi L. (Speaker), University of Bern ~ Bern ~ Switzerland

Reformation of Life: The Rosicrucian Project between Eschatology and Techno-Future

Di Blasi J. (Speaker), RefLab Zürich ~ Zürich ~ Switzerland

THE RENAISSANCE OF RELIGION IN POST-COMMUNIST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Zovko J.(Speaker), University of Zadarr ~ Zadar ~ Croatia

CATHOLICISM AND POLITICS IN THE IBERO-AMERICAN WORLD, 20TH CENTURY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Pola - A105

Contact: Stephan Ruderer
Chair: Marcos Fernández

The purpose of this panel is to bring together recent research findings on the relationship between Catholicism and politics in 20th-century Ibero-America, with the aim of highlighting conjunctures, agencies, and conflicts that allow for a historical understanding of the various dimensions of the link between Catholicism, the public sphere, and the State.

The Ibero-American continent offers a particularly fruitful context for analyzing the interplay between religion and politics, due to the role played by ultramontane Catholics in the first half of the century, the emergence of liberation theology that led many Catholics to participate in the revolutionary ferment of the 1960s and 1970s, and the proliferation of dictatorships, which placed the Catholic field at the crossroads of legitimizing regimes or opposing them. Likewise, the transitions to democracy saw national Catholic Churches assume a leading role, especially in disseminating the Catholic concept of reconciliation.

The panel seeks to foster dialogue among papers addressing these different stages in order to better understand the role of religion in the Ibero-American public sphere. Accordingly, the following axes of discussion are proposed:

1. Catholicism and Dictatorships
2. Processes of Reconciliation and Political Transitions from a Catholic Perspective
3. Catholic Agents and the Public Sphere: Circulation and Controversies
4. Catholic Intellectuals: Concepts and Contingencies

CONFESSIONALISING THE MEXICAN NATION. PUBLISHING PROJECTS IN SEARCH OF A CATHOLIC NATION IN THE MID-20TH CENTURY.

Ramírez Bonilla L.C.(Speaker), Universidad Iberoamericana ~ Mexico City ~ Mexico

THE UTOPIAN ENGINE OF HISTORY: GUSTAVO GUTIÉRREZ AND CHRISTIANS FOR SOCIALISM.

Fernández M.(Speaker), UAH ~ Santiago ~ Chile

WHY THE CHURCH? WHY HUMAN RIGHTS? THE CHILEAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN DIGNITY IN 1978

Del Villar Tagle M.S.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso ~ Valparaíso ~ Chile

NO PODEMOS CALLAR: CONFESSION AND PUBLIC SPHERE DURING THE DICTATORSHIP IN CHILE, 1975-1981

Bernales M.(Speaker), ITER-UAH ~ Santiago ~ Chile

RECONCILIATION AND DEMOCRACY: THE CATHOLIC CHURCHES OF CHILE AND ARGENTINA IN RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH COMMISSION REPORTS DURING POLITICAL TRANSITION

Ruderer S.(Speaker), Instituto de Historia, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

THE ROMAN EXILE OF JULIO JIMÉNEZ SJ (1958–1964): ANTI-COMMUNIST AND/OR ANTI-MARITAINIAN IMPULSES?

Álvarez C.(Speaker), ITER/Universidad Alberto Hurtado/ PUC-Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

RELIGION AND WORK-RELATED MIGRATION - RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND CRITICAL RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Pola - AT12

Contact: Moritz Broghammer
Chair: Christof Mandry

Work-related migration is one of the key fault lines in contemporary debates on religion and (in)equality. Across Europe, political and public discourses oscillate between the perceived economic necessity of labor migration and concerns about its social consequences. At the same time, work-related migration is a global phenomenon: migration routes connect European contexts with regions across the world, shaped by colonial histories, post–Cold War transformations, and current efforts to address labor shortages.

This panel examines work-related migration from two complementary perspectives: first, the role of religious actors as agents, institutions, and stakeholders in labor migration; second, the critical ethical, theological, and philosophical reflections on migration and work found within religious traditions.

Historically as well as today, religious actors play a significant role in labor migration. In the field of health care, for example, Christian missionary organizations were involved in providing medical services in destination countries, producing figures that have been both admired and critically debated, such as Mother Teresa or Albert Schweitzer. In contemporary Europe, religious organizations remain major public actors through their involvement in health care infrastructures, including hospitals and nursing homes. As such, they are directly implicated in strategies of recruiting migrant workers and must position themselves within broader political, ethical, and economic frameworks.

Beyond institutional involvement, religious traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam offer long-standing and ongoing reflections on migration, work, justice, and inequality. These traditions provide normative resources that engage questions of power, vulnerability, responsibility, and postcolonial entanglements, and that can critically inform current debates on work-related migration.

RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND TRANSNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY IN THE KOREAN LABOR MIGRATION TO WEST GERMANY

Jeong H.(Speaker), Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz ~ Mainz ~ Germany

HEALTH CARE RECRUITING IN GERMANY AND THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS

Quirin L.(Speaker), Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Sankt Georgen ~ Frankfurt am Main ~ Germany

JUST REGULATION OF THE GLOBAL MIGRATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND THE CATHOLIC-ETHICAL IDEA OF A “GLOBAL COMMON GOOD”

Broghammer M.(Speaker), Mandry C.(Speaker), Goethe-Universität Frankfurt ~ Frankfurt am Main ~ Germany

ARGUMENTS FOR (DE-)LEGITIMIZING THE RECRUITMENT OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS IN MEXICO FROM A SOCIOETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Uliczka L.(Speaker), Hagedorn J.(Speaker), Theologische Fakultät Paderborn ~ Paderborn ~ Germany

RELIGION, MIGRATION, AND (IN)EQUALITY IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE: 1892-2008

Segnon Koffi Victor N.(Speaker), University of Passau ~ Passau ~ Germany

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY ON THE FRONTIER OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A1

Contact: Accursio Graffeo
Chair: Kristina Eiviler, Accursio Graffeo, Beth Singler, Fabian Winiger, Katharina Yadav

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The panel engages reasonings on religion and spirituality on the frontier of emerging technologies investigating how religious and spiritual practices are evolving alongside the emergence of digital technologies. This panel asks: What values, biases, and social norms do these technologies encode? Are they used to promote equality, or to accentuate differences and deepen social, political and cultural differences? In what ways are emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence used to contribute to or challenge existing empirical and theoretical debates? Through concrete and diverse case studies, this panel examines how forms of spiritual life and expression are evolving across multiple cultural and religious contexts through their encounter with emerging technologies. From the integration of artificial intelligence tools by professional spiritual care providers in healthcare settings to the emergence of new, AI-related eschatological imaginaries, and the global rise of digital platforms within new religious movements, this panel explores the ways in which technology is simultaneously used to enable new forms of connection, ritual, tradition, and meaning-making, while also raising profound ethical questions. Drawing on interdisciplinary scholarship in the field of digital religion(s), the panellists will engage with theoretical and empirical debates from theology, religious studies, and anthropology. In exploring their research questions, the panellists foster constructive and critical dialogue with religious and spiritual communities, and deepen our understanding of how faith, spirituality, and technology co-evolve in a rapidly changing world. Ultimately, this panel invites participants to reflect on the potential role and responsibility of religion and spirituality in (re)shaping responsible and compassionate technological futures—futures that acknowledge both the possibilities and dangers of innovation in an increasingly connected yet divided world.

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS ROBOTS AS MORAL AGENTS IN CHRISTIANITY

Falletti E.(Speaker), Università Carlo Cattaneo-LIUC ~ Castellanza (VA) ~ Italy

GENERATIVE AI AS A DECONTEXTUALIZATION MACHINE. RACIAL, GENDER AND RELIGIOUS STEREOTYPES IN AN AI-LED CHURCH SERVICE

Valaskivi K.(Speaker), University of Helsinki ~ Helsinki ~ Finland

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF PASTORAL ROLES: A SURVEY OF SEMINARIANS AND PRIESTS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLAND

Królicka B.(Speaker), Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Institute of Sociology ~ Toruń ~ Poland

THE MOVING EVENT HORIZON OF AI NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND EMERGENT SPIRITUALITIES

Singler B.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s) - University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

NAVIGATING THE SACRED IN THE "THEATER OF THE ABSURD": AI SLOP, BRAINROT, AND NEW RELIGIOUS IMAGINARIES

Campbell H.(Speaker), Texas A&M University ~ College Station, Texas ~ United States of America

ALGORITHMIC COSMOLOGIES: CRUSTAFARIANISM AND THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL PROBLEM OF AI-GENERATED RELIGION

Giorda M.C.(Speaker), Hejazi S.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Roma ~ Italy

DIGITAL SELF-(RE)PRESENTATIONS OF THE HINDU SWAMINARAYAN MOVEMENT. AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF BAPS'S SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Yadav K.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s) - University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

BABA MILAN AND 'MEDIATED RITUALITY' AMONG THE BRAHMA KUMARIS OF INDIA: HYBRID RELIGIOSITY, SPATIAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Sinha P.(Speaker), Indian Institute of Technology Indore ~ Indore ~ India

THE SYNTHETIC SACRED: AI, DEVOTION, AND THE CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURES OF BELIEF

Vasudeva F.(Speaker), University of Helsinki ~ Helsinki ~ Finland

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN CLINICAL SPIRITUAL CARE: ETHICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES ON AN EMERGING MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

Winiger F.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s) - University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

ADOLESCENTS USE OF RELIGIOUS AND/OR SPIRITUAL DIGITAL MEDIA FOR INCREASE OF WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE RESOURCES

Talantopoulou O.(Speaker), University of Zurich ~ Zürich ~ Switzerland

SPIRITUALITY AND MATERIALITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE: ENCOUNTER WITH EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AMONG THE BUGKALOT (ILONGOT) OF NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

Yang S.(Speaker), Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica ~ Taipei ~ Taiwan

IS DEATH STILL THE GREAT LEVELLER? DEATH AND (DIGITAL) SURVIVING AT THE GATES OF THE (NARRATED) TECHNOLOGICAL WONDER

Sabatini R.(Speaker), Graffeo A.(Speaker), Center for Religious Studies - Bruno Kessler Foundation ~ Trento ~ Italy

MASK WITHOUT A WEARER: RITUAL PERSONHOOD IN AI COMPANION COMMUNITIES

Longo A.(Speaker), University of Modena Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

DIGITAL TIME AS RELIGIOUS TIME: CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGE OF DIGITAL WELL-BEING

Palumbo E.(Speaker), University of Padua ~ Padua ~ Italy

EQUALITY AND INEQUALITY IN CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: NORMATIVITY, INSTITUTIONS, AND HISTORICAL TENSIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A103

Contact: András Jancsó
Chair: Loránd Ujházi

This panel examines Catholic Social Teachingas a central normative framework for interpreting equality and inequality, with particular attention to its internal tensions, historical transformations, and institutional embeddedness. Catholic social thought is grounded in the principles of human dignity, solidarity, subsidiarity, and justice, yet it has always developed in close interaction with concrete social realities, power relations, and historically constituted hierarchies.

The panel explores how the normative moral reasoning of Catholic Social Teaching engages empirical social analysis. Contributions address the anthropological and moral foundations of equality, the relationship between freedom and hierarchy, the changing interpretations of poverty and structural injustice, and the transformation of war and peace ethics within CST. Special attention is given to the ways in which Catholic normative ideals encounter institutional practices, including education, ecclesial governance, legal regulation, and academic institutions.

The panel welcomes historical, legal, political-theoretical, and social-scientific approaches insofar as they place Catholic Social Teaching at the center of analysis and contribute to its critical and methodological reflection. Comparative and interreligious perspectives—especially dialogue with Jewish thought—are also included where they serve to clarify the specific character, possibilities, and limits of CST.

Overall, the panel aims to show how Catholic Social Teaching functions both as a critical resource for addressing social inequalities and as a historically situated discourse marked by unresolved tensions between normative ideals and social realities. In doing so, the panel contributes to the broader objectives of EuARe 2026.

FREEDOM AND INEQUALITY IN CATHOLIC SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT: THE CLASSICS

Nyirkos T.(Speaker), Ludovika University of Public Service ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE PRE-POLITICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE POLITICAL COMMUNITY IN THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF POPE BENEDICT XVI

Jancsó A.(Speaker), Mathias Corvinus Collegium, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Ludovika University of Public Service ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN PAPAL SOCIAL ENCYCLICALS

Darabos Á.(Speaker), Ludovika University of Public Service, Axioma Center ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

SYSTEMATIC EVIL AS A PROBLEM OF INEQUALITY IN THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

Nagypál S.(Speaker), Mathias Corvinus Collegium, Eötvös Loránd University ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

WAR, PEACE, AND INEQUALITY: REASSESSING CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING IN A POST–JUST WAR FRAMEWORK

Fenyves K.(Speaker), Mathias Corvinus Collegium, Pázmány Péter Catholic University ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

FREE EDUCATION VS. TUITION – CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING AND PIARIST SCHOOLS

Balla J.(Speaker), Ludovika University of Public Service ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE ROLE OF CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES IN PROMOTING SOCIAL EQUALITY

Ujházi L.(Speaker), Ludovika University of Public Service ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THEOLOGIES AND PRACTICES OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM. THE QUESTION OF (IN)EQUALITY THROUGH THE PRISM OF THE INDIVIDUAL VS. THE COLLECTIVE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A107

Contact: Kristina Stoeckl
Chair: Jose Casanova

The “Theologies and Practices of Religious Pluralism” project, coordinated by RESET Dialogue, set itself the task to study how religious and cultural pluralism at the local, national and global levels is challenging all religious traditions in their exclusivist “truth claims”. The aim of the project’s clusters was to analyze and compare how different religions respond to and come to terms with “the truth of the other.” Clusters inside the project dealt with Judaism, Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism and Orthodox Christianity. In this panel, the convenors of each cluster will draw on findings from their group to reflect on the question of how religious traditions practically deal with tensions that arise between the principle of individual equality and norms of community. The individual-vs.-collective binary informs many controversies inside religious traditions, and also impacts the relations between religious traditions. In response to the Annual Conference’s central theme “Religion and (in)equalities”, the speakers will address forms of inequality produced by religious traditions, mechanisms of mitigating inequality, and the limits and incompatibilities of theologies of equality and inequality, touching issues such as race, gender, wealth and freedom of expression.

IN-EQUALITY IN THE CATHOLIC TRADITION: TENSIONS WITHIN CATHOLIC MORAL UNIVERSALISM

Casanova J.(Speaker), Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University ~ Washington D.C. ~ United States of America

NEGOTIATING EQUALITY IN THE JEWISH TRADITION: BETWEEN COVENANT AND CONTEMPORARY PLURALISM

Cesari J.(Speaker), Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University ~ Washington D.C. ~ United States of America

PROTESTANT THEOLOGIES OF PLURALISM: NEGOTIATING (IN)EQUALITY BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COLLECTIVE

Passarelli A.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COMMUNITY IN ISLAMIC CONTEXTS: PAST AND PRESENT

Hashas M.(Speaker), Università di Roma Tor Vergata ~ Roma ~ Italy

ORTHODOX THEOLOGIES OF PLURALISM

Papanikolaou A. (Speaker), Fordham University

SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY 2026

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A2

Contact: Jacob Astudillo
Chair: Mark Elliott, Lluis Oviedo, Hans Burger, Tomas Bokedal, Leif Svensson, Michael Borowski

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For the complete call for papers, including detailed section descriptions, guiding questions, and context, please see: https://scriptureandtheology.org/panels/2026-rome/.
Without consulting the full text, proposals cannot be properly prepared.

The Scripture and Theology Forum invites proposals for its 2026 program at the European Academy of Religion in Rome. The full call outlines five sections:
1. Interactions Between Biblical Studies and Theology: Methodological exchanges, mutual dependencies, and best-practice models (see full call for specific questions and publication details).
2. A History of Scripture and Theology: Three parts on premodern integration, Enlightenment-era separation, and contemporary consequences/retrievals (including precise chronological and thematic scope in the full call).
3. Scripture and Theology – Open Call: Topics and methods are specified in the full call, including examples of acceptable proposals.
4. David Ford on the Gospel of John: Closed session, participation criteria and publication plans described only in the full call.
5. Scripture, Theology, and the Advent of AI: The full call lists required foci, sample themes, and expectations for short papers.

Submission requirements (abstract length, biographical note, deadlines, and word counts for potential publication) are given in detail in the full call.

We welcome contributions from various fields, countries and denominations, and look forward to meet you in Rome!

EXPLORING METHODOLOGICAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN BIBLICAL STUDIES AND SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: A PROJECT UPDATE AND PROLEGOMENA

Burger H.(Speaker), Borowski M.(Speaker), TUU ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

REFORMED COVENANT THEOLOGY, BIBLICAL STUDIES AND SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Burger H.(Speaker), Theological University Utrecht ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

FROM THE VIA ANTIQUA TO THE VIA MODERNA: SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY IN A TALE OF REVOLUTIONS

Villeneuve A.(Speaker), Sacred Heart Major Seminary ~ Detroit ~ United States of America

SCRIPTURE AS THE FORMAL PRINCIPLE AND GUIDE OF THEOLOGY: REDISCOVERING THE UNITY OF EXEGESIS AND DOCTRINE WITH PETRUS VAN MASTRICHT

Debord D.(Speaker), Freed-Hardeman University ~ Henderson ~ United States of America

BREVARD CHILDS AND WALTER BRUEGGEMANN: TWO HEIRS TO THE BARTHIAN LEGACY

Astudillo J.(Speaker), Umeå University ~ Umeå ~ Sweden

THE REJECTION OF MIRACLES IN MODERN BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP: AN ANALYSIS OF THE HUME-STRAUSS-TROELTSCH-EHRMAN TRAJECTORY

Svensson L.(Speaker), Umea University ~ Umea ~ Sweden

FROM LOCI THEOLOGICI TO THEOLOGIA DOGMATICA: SCRIPTURAL EXEGESIS AND THE DIFFERENTIATION OF THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES IN THE ERA OF PROTESTANT SCHOLASTICISM

Nüssel F.(Speaker), Heidelberg University ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

SCRIPTURE IN THE PROLEGOMENA OR IN PNEUMATOLOGY: REVISITING THE TESTIMONIUM SPIRITUS SANCTI

Van Den Belt H.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn ~ Amsterdam and Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

A TYPOLOGICAL READING OF MATTHEW 12,1-8

Miller V.(Speaker), Charles Sturt University ~ Canberra ~ Australia

STRENGTH WITHOUT PURPOSE: SAMSON, AFFECTIVE EXEGESIS, AND THE THEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF THE CRISIS OF MASCULINITY

Upton C.(Speaker), Toronto School of Theology ~ Toronto ~ Canada

(UN)EQUAL COMPARISONS: MOVING BEYOND SIMPLISTIC COMPARISONS AND WESTERN HEGEMONY IN COMPARATIVE LAW, RELIGION, AND THEOLOGY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Ryszard Bobrowicz
Chair: Judith Hahn

Comparative law and religion, which has been trending for the last few years, is a thoroughly interdisciplinary enterprise. It requires a careful integration of insights from comparative law, comparative religious studies, and comparative theology, combined with a wide range of methodological approaches, engaging with positivist, realist, critical, and hermeneutical perspectives. Studying law and religion within a single context is already a demanding task. Studying two or more contexts, whether crossing time, space, culture, or tradition, brings a whole different level of complexity.

This proposed panel aims to reflect on the theoretical, methodological, and practical implications of adopting a comparative approach to the study of law and religion, by focusing on how we can move beyond the hermeneutical narrowness. We are particularly interested in exploring how to develop nuanced and robust comparisons across time, space, cultures, and traditions, while also critically examining how to avoid superficial or misleading comparisons that do not withstand closer scrutiny. Thus, we especially encourage papers that address one or more of the following themes:

1. The historical and cultural entanglements and normativity inherent in the notion of “law,” including realist, critical, and hermeneutical takes on the topic;
1. The historical and cultural entanglements and normativity inherent in the notion of “religion,” including the perspectives of critical religion and (post)secular critique;
3. The (post-)colonial dimensions of both concepts and strategies for avoiding their pitfalls in comparative analysis;
4. Methodological frameworks for studying interactions between law and religion across time, space, cultures, and traditions;
5. Comparative case studies that include explicit theoretical and/or methodological reflection.

HOW TO COMPARE IN COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY

Von Stosch K.(Speaker), Bonn University ~ Bonn ~ Germany

MULTI-FAITH SPACES BEYOND WESTERN PARADIGMS. CHALLENGING THE TERTIUM COMPARATIONIS THEORY

Scala G.(Speaker), Università di Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

COMPARING COMPARATIVE METHODS. RELIGIOUS LAWS BETWEEN THEOLOGY AND JURISPRUDENCE

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

TEACHING RELIGION, REPRODUCING NORMS: RELIGIONIZATION AND THE POLITICS OF INTERFAITH PEDAGOGY

Moyaert M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

IN SEARCH FOR DEMOCRATIC RELIGION: HERMENEUTICAL CHALLENGES IN STATE EVALUATIONS OF FAITH COMMUNITIES

Lindkvist E.(Speaker), Lund University ~ Lund ~ Sweden

URBAN GOVERNANCE OF RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Giuseppe Giordan
Chair: Giuseppe Giordan

Urban societies worldwide are being reshaped by cultural and religious pluralization driven by migration and broader social change, prompting municipal governments, faith communities, and other stakeholders to play an increasingly active role in governing religious diversity. This urban governance involves a wide range of policy interventions and regulatory mechanisms. However, the relationship between interreligious dialogue and freedom of and from religion remains underexplored, particularly where dialogue functions not only as an object of governance or a mode of interreligious communication, but as a social practice that contributes to the establishment of norms for more equal and inclusive urban public spaces.
This panel brings together five contributions that discuss how the governance of religious diversity is grounded in various Italian cities, and how freedom of/from religion is socially constructed in urban societies. Marco Bontempi analyzes sacred art museums as dialogical spaces where religious identities are enacted through performative interaction. Olga Breskaya and Giuseppe Giordan explore the meanings of religious freedom as an outcome of the interaction among multiple social actors who continuously define and reshape it through interreligious dialogue. Maddalena Colombo and Giulia Mezzetti examine the management of interreligious dialogue in Brescia, emphasizing tensions between participation and neutrality in a highly diverse urban setting. Matteo Di Placido and Stefania Palmisano conceptualize the interreligious field as a semi-autonomous space structured by institutional logics, ideological projects, and struggles over resources. Marco Guglielmi and Stefano Sbalchiero show how religious freedom and interreligious dialogue are framed in the Italian press, highlighting the role of media narratives in shaping public understandings of religious freedom and interreligious dialogue.

LOCAL DISCOURSES ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: A CASE STUDY OF PADOVA

Breskaya O.(Speaker), Giordan G.(Speaker), University of Padova ~ Padova ~ Italy

ARTICULATING THE INTERRELIGIOUS FIELD: ISOMORPHISM, DIFFERENTIATION AND IDEOLOGY IN URBAN GOVERNANCE

Di Placido M.(Speaker), Palmisano S.(Speaker), University of Torino ~ Torino ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN THE ITALIAN PRESS: A TOPIC-DETECTION ANALYSIS (2010–2023)

Guglielmi M.(Speaker), University of Padova ~ Padova ~ Italy

The management of interreligious dialogue in Brescia: between participation and neutrality

Colombo M. (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore ~ Milano ~ Italia) , Mezzetti G. (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore ~ Milano ~ Italia)

MATERIAL REALITIES OF RACE, CLASS, GENDER AND RELIGION. QUESTIONING THE PRODUCTION OF INEQUALITY AND INJUSTICE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Pola - A108

Contact: Charlotte Jacobs
Chair: Sonja Thomaier, Dörte Mohme, Joerg Rieger, Charlotte Jacobs

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This panel explores the complex interplay between material realities and the production of inequality and injustice at the intersections of race, class, gender and religion. While scholarship on (in)equality has increasingly emphasized the multifaceted nature of social hierarchies, the role of material conditions – such as labour relations, economic resources, and lived environments – in shaping and transforming these hierarchies remains a pressing focus. An examination of material relations does not merely enumerate intersecting symptoms of systemic inequalities but seeks to explain their causes and functions in order to challenge them at their roots. As religion both reflects and shapes material realities through religious traditions, institutions, and communities, it can reinforce inequalities and injustices as well as offer resources for resistance, solidarity, and transformation.

We therefore invite scholars, activists, and practitioners from various backgrounds with varying academic focuses (biblical studies, ethics, religion and society, etc.) who seek to give renewed critical attention to the material dimensions of race, class, gender, and queer realities, with particular attention to religion. By foregrounding material realities, this panel invites a conversation on how inequalities are produced, naturalized, and finally dismantled across these interlocking domains. The panel continues a series from five previous EuARe annual conference panels on labour, economic justice, and queering liberation. It is open to anyone who wishes to join the critical conversation on the material production of inequality, exchange insights and strategies for resistance and transformation, and contribute to this ongoing work.

INEQUALITY IS TO CLASS LIKE PRIVILEGE IS TO POWER: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND RESISTANCE

Rieger J.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville, TN ~ United States of America

LEMONS, LEMONADE, AND WHAT WE LEARN ABOUT LABOUR RELATIONS

Jacobs C.(Speaker), University of Jena ~ Jena ~ Germany

BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW: LABOR, LIBERATION, AND THE EGALITARIAN STRAND OF BIBLICAL MONOTHEISM (EXODUS 5)

Kahl B.(Speaker), Union Theological Seminary ~ New York ~ United States of America

WHOSE BODY COUNTS? WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE, MORAL AUTHORITY AND CATHOLIC SEXUAL ETHICS

Perera S.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

CREATING GROUND: ANALYSIS OF BEYOND APOLOGETICS IN QUEER AND FEMINIST THEOLOGY

Jonescu P.(Speaker), University of Heidelberg ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

CHRISTIAN UNIVERSALISM, WHITENESS, AND THE MATERIAL ORDERING OF SPACE

Löschcke Centeno A.(Speaker), Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg ~ Oldenburg ~ Germany

DANCING WITH THE STONE BUTCHES: CLASS, GENDER, AND THE MATERIAL REALITIES OF QUEER THEOLOGIES

Thomaier S.(Speaker), University of Hildesheim ~ Hildesheim ~ Germany

ZUR JOSEONJOK-FRAGE: A POLITICAL-THEOLOGICAL ESSAY ON APORO-XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH KOREA

An T.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

HEAT STRESS ON CONSTRUCTION SITES, SOLIDARITY ON THE STREETS

Schünemann T.(Speaker), Hui M.(Speaker), University of Leipzig ~ Leipzig ~ Germany

ECONOMIES OF THE SPIRIT: MATERIAL PNEUMATOLOGY AND THE END OF HISTORY

Larner L.(Speaker), University of Roehampton ~ London ~ United Kingdom

WOMEN AND AGENCY IN LATE ANTIQUITY. FROM SEPTUAGINT TO CHRISTIANITY, AND BEYOND: THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND CASE STUDIES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Fabio Caruso
Chair: Laura Carnevale, Fabio Caruso

Agency can be considered as the ability of individuals or social groups to act intentionally, make choices and influence social reality, even within structural constraints such as norms, institutions, roles and inequalities.

Women's agency in Late Antiquity has become a key analytical category for reassessing social, religious, and cultural dynamics between the Hellenistic Jewish world and Early Christianity. Rather than equating agency with overt power or modern notions of autonomy, recent scholarship emphasizes context-sensitive forms of action, negotiation, and influence exercised by women.

Drawing on different types of sources, the panel is divided into two sections. The first one covers examples of women's agency and gendered authority in the Septuagint, and their reception in Late Antiquity.

The second one focuses on women's social and religious agency in Early Christianity, through the examination of diverse ritual, literary, social and historical settings.

In both cases theoretical approaches to women agency and case studies – ranging from biblical women and prophetic figures to prophetesses, ascetics, patrons, and anonymous actors – demonstrate how women could participate meaningfully in religious life, shape communal identities, and transmit traditions.

WOMEN AND EDUCATION IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY. A METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL APPROACH

Caruso F.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

AID, HELPER, OR HANDMAIDEN? TRACING THE SHIFTING ROLE OF EVE FROM GENESIS TO THE CHURCH FATHERS

Bellantuono A.(Speaker), Catholic University of Lille ~ Lille ~ France

A MOSAIC PORTRAIT OF JUDITH FROM THE VETUS LATINA FRAGMENTS

Bigoni L.(Speaker), University of Fribourg ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

WHEN VIRTUE BECOMES A NAME. ΘΕΟΣΈΒΕΙΑ AND WOMEN'S AGENCY IN GREEK INSCRIPITIONS

De Doncker E.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Louvain ~ Louvain ~ Belgium

PROSTITUTES, PROPHETS, PRIESTS: SOME CASES OF WOMAN POWER IN AND OUTSIDE THE EARLY CHURCH

Lupieri E.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

MARY OF CASSOBOLA: A WOMAN IN TWO EPISTLES OF THE PS.IGNATIAN CORPUS. AN EXEMPLARY CASE OF "GENDERED" AUTHORITATIVE MODEL.

Carnevale L.(Speaker), University Aldo Moro of Bari ~ Bari ~ Italy

BEYOND THE AVENTINE FEMALE AGENCY AND RELIGIOUS EMPOWERMENT OF JEROME'S FEMALE CORRESPONDENTS

Marolla G.(Speaker), Pegaso University ~ Naples ~ Italy

BETWEEN FAMILY AND STATE: BIBLICAL AND PATRISTIC MOTIFS IN JEAN BODIN

Dainese D.(Speaker), Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

SEXUAL AND POWER ABUSE CRISIS IN THE CHURCH: A SYSTEMIC, INTERDISCIPLINARY, AND HISTORICAL APPROACH

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Pola - A210

Contact: Carlos Alvarez
Chair: Silvia Mostaccio

Since 2018, understanding sexual and power abuse in the Church has increasingly recognized its systemic character (CIASE, 2019). Abuse is no longer seen as isolated, but as the result of complex, interrelated factors within specific cultural, geographical, ecclesial, political, and economic contexts. This requires critically examining theological, spiritual, institutional, and juridical structures that have historically produced and legitimized power asymmetries, normalizing domination and violence—particularly gendered, ethnic, and class-based—by clergy, religious, and lay actors.

This open panel seeks to bring together research from diverse disciplines and cultural contexts. Given the scale of the phenomenon, abuse must be studied through an interdisciplinary, comparative, and global lens, as it constitutes probably one of the most serious institutional crises faced by the Catholic Church since the Reformation. Historical research, in dialogue with theology, sociology, anthropology, canon law, and psychology, is crucial for addressing current questions and developing critical discernment to untangle multiple dimensions of this crisis. Such dialogue may also contribute to new analytical frameworks, narratives, and institutional dispositifs aimed at safeguarding practices, recognizing and accompanying survivors, and promoting healing in the ecclesial body.

Thematic Axes:

History of abuse in ecclesial contexts: archives, cases, narratives.

Theologies, spiritualities, and the production of power asymmetries.

Contributions from sociology, anthropology, and psychology.

Challenges of canon law: normativity, governance, and juridical practices.

THE DESIGNATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE DIOCESE OF SANTIAGO, CHILE, 19TH CENTURY

Rengifo F.(Speaker), Profesora asociada, Escuela de Gobierno, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez ~ Santiago ~ Chile

FROM DENIAL TO APOLOGY: SHIFTS IN PAPAL COMMUNICATION ON CLERICAL SEXUAL ABUSE

Sedláková R.(Speaker), University Palacký, Faculty of Theology ~ Olomouc ~ Czech Republic

THE BLIND SIDE OF AN INSTITUTION. A PATHWAY TOWARD RESTORATION

Iula E.(Speaker), PFTIM - San Luigi ~ Naples ~ Italy

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: RESTORATIVE PATHWAYS

Da Silva Monteiro S.(Speaker), Universidade Católica Portuguesa ~ Lisboa ~ Portugal

POWER GAMES. SACRALISATION AND SYMBOLIC DOMINATION OF THE CATHOLIC PRIEST (16TH-20TH CENTURIES)

Mostaccio S.(Speaker), UCLouvain ~ Louvain-la-Neuve ~ Belgium

EXPLORING PRIMAL VULNERABILITY: A CASE STUDY ON ABUSES DURING FOUNDATIONAL STAGES AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY CATEGORIZATION

Grez E.(Speaker), Universidad Finis Terrae ~ Santiago ~ Chile

« IL FAUT UTILISER LES FORCES COMME ELLES SE PRÉSENTENT POUR LE RÈGNE DE DIEU »: MANAGING COMPLAINTS AND REGULATING CRISES WITHIN THE MONASTIC FRATERNITIES OF JERUSALEM (1970S-2000S)

Dolbeau S.(Speaker), École française de Rome ~ Roma ~ Italy

"AGAINST HER WILL, YET WITH HER SUPPORT"? QUESTIONING LUCIE COUTAZ'S SILENCE WITHIN THE FRAME OF SEXUAL ABUSE PERPETRATED BY ABBÉ PIERRE.

Ferrer M.B.(Speaker), EHESS ~ Paris ~ France

CASUS TRISTISSIMUS. AN EXPLORATION OF DISMISSAL POLICY IN THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN CHILE (1943–1955)

Alvarez C.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

(UN)EQUALS IN THE STATE? MINORITY PROTESTANTS AND THEIR RECOGNITION BY POLITICAL REGIMES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Pola - A209

Contact: Laura Popa
Chair: Eugenio F Biagini

The recognition of religious minorities by political regimes does not always equate with true equality, even when formal status has been granted. History shows that it often comes with impositions, covert persecution, or the loss of certain privileges. This panel aims to explore such moments of recognition, showcasing contradictory experiences of Protestant religious minorities with state power in their local contexts. What strategies did religious minorities use to attain legal recognition from the state? How did different political ideologies, such as communism and liberalism, affect their experiences of attaining equality? What does State recognition signify for Protestant minorities historically? What did minority Protestants gain or lose from state recognition, and what hidden forms of inequality were masked by this formal acknowledgement? How did their spiritual practices change as a result?

Organised by the research group “Protestantism as a minority religion” (https://minorityprotestants.wordpress.com/), the panel aims to understand how religious minorities interact with the state in moments of recognition and to explore the equalities and inequalities that originate from this dynamic across specific contexts. Contemporary struggles faced by minority Christian groups, such as those in northern Nigeria under radical Islamist attacks, or in North Korea and China under communist regimes, demand a reassessment of those dynamics under states that recognise them formally but not in practice.

BETWEEN EMPIRE AND MAJORITY: PROTESTANT MISSIONS AND THE SEARCH FOR CULTURAL RECOGNITION IN IRELAND

Bénazech Wendling K.(Speaker), University of Lorraine ~ Nancy ~ France

THE POLITICS OF WALDENSIAN WOMEN SCHOOLTEACHERS AMID COVERT PERSECUTION OF PROTESTANTS IN ITALY, 1860–1915

Popa L.(Speaker), University of Cambridge

BLASPHEMY, THE LAW AND THE CONTROL OF PROTESTANT MINORITIES. PARADIGMS AND PERSPECTIVES OF OPPRESSION

Nash D.(Speaker), Jesus College, Oxford University ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT'S HARSH RESPONSE TO THE SECESSION OF 1834

De Jong K.(Speaker), Protestantse Theologische Universiteit (PThU) ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

RECOGNIZED BUT NOT EQUAL: PROTESTANT MINORITIES AND THE AMBIGUATES OF THE STATE RECOGNITION IN SOCIALIST YUGOSLAVIA

Djuric Milovanovic A.(Speaker), Institute for Balkan Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts ~ Belgrade ~ Serbia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITHOUT EQUALITY: PENTECOSTAL LEGALISATION IN LATE SOCIALIST CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Pácha M.(Speaker), Institute of Contemporary History of The Czech Academy of Sciences ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

‘IN FROM THE WILDERNESS’: AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES AND THE POST-COLONIAL STATE IN ZIMBABWE

Maxwell D.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

THE EUROPEAN UNION IN DIALOGUE WITH CHURCHES: AN ANALYSIS FOCUSING ON MINORITY PROTESTANTS

Creemers J.(Speaker), ETF Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

A MINORITY CHURCH IN A TRANSFORMING DEMOCRACY

Spini D.(Speaker), New york University in Florence ~ Florence ~ Italy

STATE AND CHURCH IN GEORGIA: MINORITY PROTESTANTS AND THE POLITICS OF CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION

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IRELAND AND THE PERSECUTION OF PROTESTANTS IN THE ITALO-IBERIAN WORLD IN THE 1950S

Biagini E.F.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND GLOBAL POLITICS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - AT14

Contact: Michael Driessen
Chair: Michael Driessen, Scott Appleby

Research on religion and global politics has grown significantly over the last decades. In a first wave of research, seminal works like the Fundamentalisms project (1991), The Revenge of God (1991) and Public Religions in the Modern World (1994) observed the "return of religion" to international affairs at the end of the Cold War and conceptualized its disruption of the paradigm of secular modernity. Throughout the early 2000s and 2010s, a second wave of scholarship expanded and problematized these debates, expressing cautious optimism about the contributions of religious ideas and actors to international goals in the post-9/11 policy environment while chronicling the complex dynamics of religious conflict. More recently a third wave of scholarship on religion and global politics has emerged. This new wave has responded to the evolution of the international environment, marked by liberal crisis and inter-state conflict. Attentive to post-colonial legacies and offering a sustained critique of power dynamics and the role of the state, these new studies have focused on the constructive and disruptive dimensions of religion in international politics. They have returned focus to local political dynamics, drawn on diverse religious histories, employed new research methodologies and considered the role of theological debates in their work. They have also aimed to be relevant to policymakers by addressing topics such as interreligious engagement, religious freedom efforts, the religious genealogies of human rights, transnational conservative networks, democratic backsliding, and the role of faith-based organizations in international development. This panel, sponsored by Notre Dame's Ansari Institute for Global Engagement with Religion and the Rome Summer Seminars on Religion and Global Politics, encourages emerging and established scholars to explore these new directions in the study of Religion and Global Politics.

ENTANGLED BLOCPOLITIK: NEW FORMS OF CIVILIZATIONAL BELONGING IN EUROPE

Botelho Moniz J.(Speaker), Lusófona University ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

WHAT IS COVENANTAL PLURALISM? DEFINITION, SCOPE, AND CHALLENGES

Lemasters R.(Speaker), University of Kansas ~ Lawrence ~ United States of America

ENVISIONING A PATH TO GLOBAL PEACE: A CROSS-CULTURAL FRAMEWORK BASED ON THE SPIRITUAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT OF EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY INDIA

Portilla Pelaez I.(Speaker), Kone Foundation, Tampere University ~ Tampere ~ Finland

ONE COUNTRY- DIFFERENT FORMS OF SECULARISM? REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN STATE-RELIGION RELATIONS: THE CASE OF GERMANY”

Franz M.(Speaker), TU Dortmund University ~ Dortmund ~ Germany

DO CATHOLICS PROTEST DIFFERENTLY? A QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF CATHOLIC DEMONSTRATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Day J.(Speaker), University of Notre Dame ~ Notre Dame ~ United States of America

CATHOLIC CARE PRACTICE AS SOCIAL (NON)MOVEMENT: ASYLUM GOVERNANCE IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Soehnge Cohen J.(Speaker), University of Notre Dame ~ Notre Dame ~ United States of America

BETWEEN ORDER AND OPPRESSION: NAVIGATING SECTARIAN STRIFE LAWS IN THE ARAB REGION

Hachem F.(Speaker), University of Amsterdam/Beirut Arab University ~ Beirut ~ Lebanon

NEGOTIATING RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY THROUGH FAMILY LAW: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS ELITES IN EGYPT, MOROCCO, TUNISIA, AND TURKEY

Ali M.G.(Speaker), Cairo University ~ Cairo ~ Egypt

TALES OF POSTSECULAR PERFORMANCE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - AT13

Contact: Christian Kern
Chair: Christian Kern

In conjunction with structural changes in public spheres, new forms of political debate are emerging, beyond traditional verbal formats. Performative practices—such as quasi-liturgical rituals, public choreographies, aesthetic interventions, sonic collages—are increasingly shaping political spheres. Alongside a politics of language, a politics of performance is gaining significance, in which power is negotiated through sublinguistic and affective practices. This shift is closely linked to the renewed presence of religious symbols and spiritual auras in public life. Even societies that understand themselves as secular are increasingly confronted with forms of postsecular political performativity.
Research on this phenomenon remains underdeveloped, with scientific debates largely focused on spoken discourse rather than artistic-aesthetic and performative dimensions and their dynamics of transcendence. The research network Postsecular Performances (DFG-funded, # 545972161) addresses this gap by investigating postsecular politico-performatives in public space, in a three-year research process. It examines how power relations are stabilized, transformed, disrupted through alterity-related performance, developing key elements of a grounded theory of postsecular performance. The network also reflects on religion-related academic work as a political-performative practice of own kind. It applies and discusses arts-based research as an approach to critically and creatively address the hierarchical asymmetries of academic work, discovering traces of a postsecular epistemologies.
This panel presents the network's aims, methods, and central findings. In its contributions, current examples of postsecular performances are discussed, in classic papers and arts-based presentations. Postsecular performances emerge as ambivalent spaces of imagination, capable of both enchanting and consolidating power relations while also generating disenchantment and transformative impulses.

POSTSECULARITY AS TRANS-IMMANENCE OF THE BODY?

Kern C.(Speaker), Faculty of Theology (cath.), Muenster ~ Muenster ~ Germany

DANCING BIBLICAL TEXTS – A PERFORMATIVE EXEGESIS

Hikota R.C.(Speaker), The Margaret Beaufort Institute, Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

PERFORMING THE POSTSECULAR: SITES OF POSTSECULARITY IN THE WORLD AND IN ART

Iswarya V.(Speaker), Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal ~ Manipal ~ India

SENSING THE POSTSECULAR LIMINAL SPACE – A PERFORMANCE LECTURE

Sojer T.(Speaker), Faculty of Theology, Erfurt ~ Erfurt ~ Germany

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS ACTORS WITH IN/EQUALITY (19TH-21ST C.)

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A18

Contact - Chair: Edurne Yániz Berrio
Chair: Natalia Núñez Bargueño, Marie Lucas

This jointly organised panel, co led by the Association Française d'Histoire Religieuse Contemporaine and the Asociación Española de Historia Religiosa Contemporánea, seeks to strengthen collaboration among European scholars of contemporary religious history and to consolidate a shared research space beyond national or denominational boundaries. It aims to bring together researchers from across Europe to examine the relationships between religion, politics, and society from the 19th to the 21st century, with particular attention to how religious institutions, practices, and discourses have shaped, confronted, or resisted forms of in/equality. Although the concept of equality emerged largely from Enlightenment and liberal political traditions, religious actors have long engaged with this notion, using it to promote reforms or to defend, reinforce, or question established authority and the status quo. The panel welcomes contributions on how religious actors have approached in/equalities related to social hierarchies (gender, class, race, religion), human rights, interreligious or ideological encounters, and devotional or liturgical practices. By bringing together historians working on diverse religious traditions and methods, it seeks to deepen historiographical reflection and strengthen European synergies among historians of contemporary religion.

PACIFIC ISLANDERS AND SPANISH MISSIONARIES UNDER JAPANESE RULE (1922-1945)

Watanabe C.(Speaker), Aoyama Gakuin University ~ Tokyo ~ Japan

IDEOLOGICAL CONVERSION OF THE SLOVENIAN STUDENT PRESS AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF YUGOSLAVIA DURING 1989

Kaninska M.(Speaker), Independent Scientific Researcher ~ Belgrade ~ Serbia

THE RICHELIEU CENTER DURING THE 1960S : A CHAPLAINCY FOR STUDENTS IN FRONT OF INEQUALITIES

Duport A.(Speaker), Académie de Toulouse ~ Toulouse ~ France

THE CALL TO PRAYER: POLICIES OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND CATHOLICS IN REBEL SPAIN DURING THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR (1936-1939)

Gonzalez Gonzalez A.(Speaker), Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha ~ Cuenca ~ Spain

VISITER ÉCÔNE (1970-1988) : NORMATIVITÉ ET GOUVERNEMENTALITÉ CATHOLIQUES FACE À LA QUESTION TRADITIONALISTE

Dolbeau S.(Speaker), École française de Rome ~ Roma ~ Italy

MUJERES EN LA HISTORIA DE LA DIÓCESIS DE BILBAO. UNA HISTORIA DE PARTICIPACIÓN, CORRESPONSABILIDAD Y DESIIGUALDAD

Barroso A.(Speaker), Director of Archivo Histórico Eclesiástico de Bizkaia ~ Bilbao ~ Spain

EXPLORING MARIE-DOMINIQUE CHENU'S WRITINGS ON WORK IN THE FRENCH SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE 1940S AND EARLY 1950S

Hugla C.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

YOU WIN SOME, YOU LOSE SOME: ON ADAPTIVE AND HYBRID (RE)USE OF RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Karen Lens
Chair: Samuel Goyvaerts, Karen Lens, Kate Jordan

Across Europe, profound religious and ritual transformations are reshaping the landscapes of worship and community life. Churches, monasteries, and other sacred sites are increasingly confronted with questions of continuity and change: some are adapted for new liturgical practices, others are shared between different communities and users, and many are repurposed for secular or hybrid functions. At the same time, repurposed and multi-use religious buildings raise questions about how people and communities inhabit and share sacred environments. Adaptive reuse is often celebrated as cultural resilience: saving buildings from vacancy and decay, while opening them to new forms of meaning. Yet each intervention also entails loss: of ritual coherence, of symbolic depth, of the intangible "spirit of place." How can we acknowledge both sides of this dynamic? How is 'loss' or absence spatially expressed? Is there such a thing as a neutral shared space, and how far can adaptation and reuse go before too much is surrendered?
This panel invites religious studies scholars, architects, sociologists, theologians, liturgists, and artists to reflect on these tensions. We welcome contributions that explore the delicate balance between preservation and transformation, heritage and innovation, memory and forgetting. Case studies may address contemporary design responses to shifting worship practices, including the rise of Pentecostalism and the emergence of quasi-Christian spaces blending wellness and alternative spiritualities. Papers can also investigate historical repurposing or sharing of religious spaces, demolished or memorial spaces, or rather focus on architectural styles and experiments with minimalism and emptiness, highlighting how spaces negotiate the move from the religious to the spiritual.
The conveners will also inquire into possibilities of academically publishing (a selection of) submitted papers.

RECIPROCAL SPACES: ON THE USE AND VALUE OF CHURCH BUILDINGS IN A POST-CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

Goyvaerts S.(Speaker), Tilburg University, School of Catholic Theology ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

EAT, PRAY, THRIVE: URBAN CHURCHES AS MULTI-PURPOSE SPACES IN CONTEMPORARY BRITAIN

Jordan K.(Speaker), University of Westminster ~ London ~ United Kingdom

THE PAROIKIA, OR PARISH SPACE, AS A HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY BLUEPRINT IN FLANDERS, BELGIUM

Lens K.(Speaker), Universiteit Hasselt ~ Hasselt ~ Belgium

THE PRESENCE AND THE ABSENCE OF THE SACRED SPACE IN THE THEORETICAL RESEARCH ON DISUSED CHURCHES FROM VATICAN II (1962-1965) TO THE FIRST VATICAN GUIDELINES IN 2018

Giniunaite R.(Speaker), Pontifical Gregorian University ~Rome ~ Italy / Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

THE “LONG GOODBYE” OF SACRED ARCHITECTURE IN POST-INDUSTRIAL NORTH AMERICA

Shepherd G.(Speaker), Doctoral Researcher ~ San Francisco ~ United States of America

FAR FROM STATIC: OPPORTUNITY AND LOSS IN THE HYBRID APPROACH TO ADAPTIVE REUSE OF URBAN MONASTERIES IN CONTEMPORARY ROME

Jacobs B.(Speaker), Sapienza Università di Roma ~ Rome ~ Italy

'DOCUMENTING LOSS AND RESTORATION IN LONDON'S POSTWAR CHURCHES: A PHOTOGRAPHER'S PERSPECTIVE'

East J.(Speaker), Other ~ London ~ United Kingdom

BEYOND THE CANON: COMMUNITY-FOCUSED ADAPTATION OF HISTORIC ANGLICAN CHURCHES IN POST-1945 ENGLAND

Steele M.(Speaker), Manchester School of Architecture ~ Manchester ~ United Kingdom

CRITICAL RE-READING OF INTRA MUROS CONVENTS: PUBLIC CALLS BETWEEN MEMORY AND TRANSFORMATION

Scandroglio Anelli M.(Speaker), Politecnico di Milano ~ milano ~ Italy

PHD RESEARCH IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Pola A208

Contact: Maximilian Kunte
Chair: Maria Chiara Giorda

In this panel, PhD candidates present and discuss their ongoing or recently completed research within the wide field of the study of religion. The aim of the session is to provide a scholarly forum in which emerging researchers can share their current research, receive constructive feedback, and engage in critical dialogue with peers and senior academics. Part 1 of the panel “Religious Identities and Multireligious Societies” (Maximilian Kunte, Caterina Pignotti, Salvatore Senatore, Ihsan Altintas, Liri Tourgeman, Manuela Iapaol; Chair: Maria Chiara Giorda) brings together doctoral researchers exploring how religious communities construct, negotiate, and express identity within increasingly diverse and plural societies. Part 2 “Contemporary Religious Challenges” (Claudia Varotti, Nancy Wu, Szilvi Watson, Natalia Wizimirska, Anna Raskova; Chair: Valeria Fabretti) presents doctoral research engaging with the complex and often contested role of religion in contemporary public life. Part 3 “Theology/Philosophy” (Lorenzo Marcantognini, Leonid Sevastyanov, Henrike Engelhardt, Andrea Avellino, Giustina Benedetta Baron, Matthias Heinecke; Chair: Kristina Stoeckl) gathers doctoral researchers working at the intersection of theology, philosophy, and intellectual history. By offering a platform for doctoral research, this panel seeks to highlight new directions in the study of religion and encourage international exchange among early-career researchers. The panel is organized jointly by the PhD in Politics in Luiss (Kristina Stoeckl and Maximilian Kunte) and the Italian National PhD in Peace Studies (Maria Chiara Giorda, Uni Roma Tre, and Carmelo Russo, Uni Sapienza).

EASTERN SLAVIC ORTHODOX IDENTITIES IN GERMANY

Kunte M.(Speaker), LUISS ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE SPATIAL DIMENSION OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: A CASE STUDY OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS IN TURIN

Pignotti C.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

GLOBAL ISLAM AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES. DISCOURSES AND THE CIRCULATION OF KNOWLEDGE AMONG MUSLIM COMMUNITIES IN SOUTHERN ITALY

Senatore S.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

ATTITUDES TOWARDS RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN HINDUISM AND ISLAM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MOVEMENT AND NUR MOVEMENT

Altintas I.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

BETWEEN HALAKHA AND EGALITARIANISM: ORTHODOX JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Tourgeman L.S.(Speaker), École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales ~ Paris ~ France

WHEN ENGAGEMENT IS (ALMOST) MARRIAGE: A PRELIMINARY ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE LAW OF MOSES ON BETROTHAL

Wu N.(Speaker), EDLE (University of Hamburg) ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL INEQUALITIES OF CHRISTIAN POSTGRADUATES AT UNIVERSITIES IN ENGLAND

Watson S.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

The Franciscan memory represented by the image of Saint Anthony in Slovak churches

Varotti C. (Speaker), Universidade Aberta

UNACKNOWLEDGED USE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN THE VATICAN DOCUMENTS ON HOMOSEXUALITY 1975-2005: PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS, THEORIES AND BELIEFS UNDERLYING OFFICIAL TEACHING OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Wizimirska N.(Speaker), University of Eastern Finland ~ Kuopio ~ Finland

CONTROVERSIES SURROUNDING THE FUNERAL OF JAROSLAV VRCHLICKÝ

Rašková A.(Speaker), Charles University, Faculty of Arts ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

SOVEREIGNTY AND RELIGION: BODIN IN THE ITALIAN POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS DEBATE

Marcantognini L.(Speaker), Drest-Italian Doctoral School of Religious Studies Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

THE OLD BELIEVER ANTICHRIST AS ILLEGITIMATE OCCUPYING POWER – AN INDUCTIVE AND ASSOCIATIVE ANALYSIS

Sevastyanov L.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

John Spencer’s Theocratia - a utopian account of monarchy in Restoration England?

Engelhardt H. (Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

THE CONTRIBUTION OF RATZINGER'S THEOLOGY TO THE FORMATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE: FROM THE DRAFTING OF THE CATECHISM TO THE MAGISTERIAL TEACHINGS

Avellino A.(Speaker), Universitá della Svizzera italiana ~ Lugano ~ Switzerland

A SEMIOTIC STUDY OF RUSSIAN COSMISM IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIA

Baron G.B.(Speaker), DREST UNIMORE; UNIVERSITY OF TARTU ~ TURIN-TARTU ~ Italy

RELIGION AND (IN)EQUALITIES IN ITALIAN LITERATURE: THEOLOGY, NARRATIVE AND IDENTITY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Lucia Battistel
Chair: Lucia Battistel, Rebecca Walker

Religious traditions, even if based on universalistic principles, are mostly governed by hierarchical normative networks, which inevitably imply inequalities – whether in terms of gender, religious affiliation, physical and social status. Similarly, written discourse, and thus its textual organisation, is also permeated by dynamics of selection and hierarchisation of meaning and, once produced, is in turn inserted into hierarchies of canon. However, both theological discourse and literary texts that hold and 'function' incorporate processes of self-reflection and critical negotiation, necessary for their historicity. Sometimes, it is literature itself that encourages and causes theological discourse to become dialectical, welcoming and reworking theological conceptual nuclei which, through intertextual practices, activate critical tensions within the text itself: in these cases, literary texts become places of religious meaning production, making visible forms of diversity and inequality that are often marginalised in doctrinal canons.

In line with this year's theme, the panel thus aims to investigate the relationship between religions, diversity and inequalities through an interdisciplinary approach combining critical literary studies and theological reflection. Particular attention will be paid, though not exclusively, to female religious experiences as spaces of negotiation between theological normativity and lived experience.

We invite papers on any aspect of Italian literature. Contributions that focus on one or more of these subtopics are particularly welcome:

- incorporation and literary reworking of theological concepts;
- representations of confessional diversity and religious asymmetries in literary texts;
- literary texts as mediation between normative theology and lived practices;
- literary criticism of theological hierarchies;
- female religious experiences and feminist theologies;
- literary reflections of embodied theology.

MATERIAL SPIRITUALITY AND THE LITERARY WORLDS OF CLAUDIA DURASTANTI

Walker R.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

A PATH TO AWARENESS, TO MEDIATION: ITALIAN WOMEN POETS AS MEDIATORS FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Battistel L.(Speaker), LUMSA ~ Rome ~ Italy

ADRIANA ZARRI AND "THE HUMBLE THINGS OF DAILY LIFE"

Parmeggiani F.(Speaker), Fordham University ~ New York, NY ~ United States of America

WOMEN AND FRIENDSHIPS MEDIATED BY THE DIVINE: VITTORIA COLONNA'S TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS AND PETRARCH'S TRIUMPH OF ETERNITY

Faggioli S.(Speaker), Villanova University ~ Philadelphia, Pennsylvania ~ United States of America

BETWEEN NEGATIVE THEOLOGY AND JUNGIAN PSYCHOLOGY: APOPHATICISM AND PSYCHIC POLYTHEISM IN GIORGIO MANGANELLI

Stefanese D.(Speaker), Università "Gabriele d'Annunzio di Chieti-Pescara ~ Pescara ~ Italy

RELIGION IN DIALOGUE. TRANSFORMATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND CHANCES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Noemi Call
Chair: Kurt Appel

In the contect of evolving forms of interdisciplinary research on religion and interreligious dialogue within shifting societal contexts, religions are increasingly involved in novel forms of encounters and alliance-building. These are forged, lived, and narrated in the public sphere – not only among religious traditions but also in encounters between religious and secular worlds. In this broader sense, “religion in dialogue” exceeds interreligious exchange and becomes an engagement with the secular, with other forms of knowledge, and with artistic and scientific practices.

Against the backdrop of social, political, and epistemic (in)equalities, such dialogical constellations reveal both asymmetries of power and possibilities for transformation. The interplay between religious and secular worlds involves cooperation as well as conflict: alliances may emerge from shared experiences of marginalization, unequal recognition, or pressures to justify religion’s place in contemporary societies. At the same time, religious traditions are internally diverse and marked by political, theological, and cultural divisions. New forms of dialogue therefore often do not take religion itself as the primary distinguishing feature but emerge around shared concerns and common struggles within religious–secular partnerships.

Dialogue, understood not as a formal procedure but as a transformative practice that involves religious as well as non-religious dialogue partners, takes place under multiple pressures in need of closer examination. Within this framework, the panel brings together contributions from Natural Sciences and Ecology; the Arts; Abrahamic Dynamics: Dialogue between Islam, Christianity and Judaism; Politics and Gender; Critical Perspectives on Religion. Together, these perspectives aim to offer a nuanced understanding of how dialogue shapes contemporary interactions between religious and secular worlds.

READING ACROSS SCRIPTURES: AL-BIQĀʿĪ'S (D. 885/1480) ENGAGEMENT WITH THE BIBLE IN QURʾANIC COMMENTARY

Kurt T.(Speaker), Associate Professor, Department of Islamic-Theological Studies, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

'ECUMENISM OF HATE'? INTERDENOMINATIONAL COLLABORATIONS IN TRADITIONALIST YOUTH WORK AND ADULT EDUCATION IN AUSTRIA

Limacher K.(Speaker), Mattes--Zippenfenig A.(Speaker), Programme Manager of the "Vienna Doctoral School of Theology and Research on Religion", University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

SECULAR AND SPIRITUAL FEMINISTS: BUILDING ALLIANCES ACROSS EPISTEMOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

Grenz S.(Speaker), Associate Professor, Department of Education, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

CRITIQUE AND DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY. THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE ABOUT THE POLITICAL

Kuran D.(Speaker), Postdoc Assistant, Department of Systematic Theology and Ethics, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

WRITING THROUGH CAESURA: HÖLDERLIN AND DELEUZE'S DIALOGUE AS A CRITIQUE OF RELIGION

Fiorletta M.(Speaker), PhD candidate, Research Centre "Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society", University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

ARS DEI AND THE WORD THROUGH WHOM ALL THINGS WERE MADE: CHRISTOLOGY AND CREATION IN THE AUGUSTINIAN TRADITION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A12

Contact: David Bennett
Chair: Oskari Juurikkala

Augustine of Hippo is frequently characterized—and often critiqued—as a thinker of dualisms: nature and grace, city of God and city of man, spirit and matter. However, such readings overlook the Christological center that holds these poles in a dynamic, sacramental tension. This panel explores the "Christological key" to the Augustinian doctrine of creation, arguing that for Augustine and his successors, the mystery of the Incarnate Word is inseparable from the ontological structure of the cosmos. As the Ars Patris (the Art of the Father), Christ is not merely an external redeemer but the very blueprint through whom all things were made and in whom all things consist. The panel invite patristic scholars, systematic theologians, and ethicists to explore the vitality of the Augustinian tradition in addressing contemporary questions. We invite contributions from historical exegesis as well as contemporary systematicians and ethicists to explore how an Augustinian "Christology of Creation" offers a robust framework for interdisciplinary dialogue today from a "thick" description of reality that is at once deeply scriptural, philosophically sophisticated, and ethically urgent for a world facing ecological and social fragmentation. Possible thematic contributions include: Historical & Exegetical: Reassessing the relationship between the Logos and the rationes seminales (seed-like principles) in Augustine's Genesis commentaries;Theological Aesthetics: Exploring the connections between natural beauty, the imagery of nature, and Christ; Science & Religion: How a Christocentric metaphysics provides a "grammar" for the natural sciences, moving beyond the conflict model to see creation as a structured expression of Divine Wisdom; Ethics & Ecology: Utilizing the Totus Christus (the Whole Christ) framework to develop a non-anthropocentric ecological ethic and a Christologically grounded natural law.

• Ethics & Ecology: Utilizing the Totus Christus (the Whole Christ) framework to develop a non-anthropocentric ecological ethic and a Christologically grounded natural law.

THE ARS PATRIS: REVISITING AUGUSTINIAN PNEUMATOLOGY AND RECENTRING CHRISTOLOGY IN RELATION TO AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Bennett D.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

"THE GARDEN AS SIGN: AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF CREATION, ARTISTIC MATERIALITY, AND THE LONGING FOR EDEN"

Yearwood A.(Speaker), Independent ~ Oxford, England ~ United States of America

THINKING ABOUT THE SEMIOTICS OF THEOPHANY WITH ST AUGUSTINE

Ritzema J.(Speaker), University of Oxford; Pharos Foundation. ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

AN AESTHETIC APPROACH TO ECO-THEOLOGY: AUGUSTINE AND THE BOOK OF NATURE

Biron L.(Speaker), Balliol College University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

SUSTAINABILITY AND JEWISH ETHICS: IN/EQUALITY, RESPONSIBILITY, AND INTERRELIGIOUS HORIZONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Hanoch Ben Pazi
Chair: Miriam Feldmann - Kaye, Yehudah Mirsky, Evner Dinur

Open panel with an innovative framework for addressing sustainability, responsibility, and justice through Jewish ethics and philosophy. Bringing together biblical interpretation, rabbinic literature, modern Jewish philosophy, phenomenology, ethics, and social critique, the panel demonstrates how Jewish sources generate distinctive perspectives on ecological crises while remaining in active conversation with wider religious and interreligious discourses.

The panel challenges anthropocentric and justice-centered assumptions shaping contemporary ethical thought. Close engagement with biblical texts destabilizes expectations that nature conforms to human moral categories, revealing realities governed by forces exceeding human knowledge and control. Philosophical readings of revelation and discovery redirect human agency away from mastery toward attentiveness, restraint, and responsibility.

Several contributions extend ethical reflection across expanding horizons of time and space. Jewish philosophical resources are applied to questions of technological ambition, outer space exploration, and collective power, emphasizing moral intention over scale. Sustainability requires ethical commitments questioning prevailing economic, cultural, and political assumptions. Economic culture and spatial organization are examined as moral systems through religious lenses rather than as neutral scientific frameworks. Jewish sources offer critiques of consumerism, perpetual growth, and inequality, alongside alternative models of shared responsibility and collective wellbeing. Gender-attentive readings foreground vulnerability, care, and embodied ethical labor under conditions of environmental precarity and persistent questions of in/equality. The panel welcomes participants from other religious traditions and values interreligious dialogue, contributing to EuARE's commitment to critical, cross-traditional reflection on religion and global challenges.

RELIGION, ECONOMICS AND THE CRISIS OF SUSTAINABILITY: NEW PERSPECTIVES FROM JEWISH RE/SOURCES

Benstein J.(Speaker), Heschel Sustainability Center, Bar Ilan University ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

THE JUBILEE AND DEBT REMITTANCES IN THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES: PAST AND RECENT HISTORY

Kostoris Padoa Schioppa F.(Speaker), Luiss University ~ rome ~ Italy

THE EQUAL RIGHTS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS: A CHALLENGE FOR RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR JEWISH THOUGHT

Dinur A.(Speaker), Sapir College ~ Sderot ~ Israel

"ERUV" IN JEWISH LOCAL COMMUNITIES – INCLUSIONARY PRACTICE OR EXCLUSIONARY COMMUNITIES?

Vardi S.(Speaker), Emek Yezreel Valley College ~ AFULA ~ Israel

CATHOLIC ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOURSE AND THE MOBILIZATION OF CATHOLIC-JEWISH SOLIDARITY

Dillon M.(Speaker), University of New Hampshire ~ Durham ~ United States of America

THE WEEPING WATERS OF CREATION: GENDERED ELEMENTS AND SUBJUGATED MATTER FROM MIDRASH TO BACHELARD

Verliebter R.(Speaker), Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden, University of Hamburg and Bar-Ilan University ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

JEWISH OUTER SPACE ETHICS: INDIVIDUAL MISSION AND COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Baharier B.(Speaker), Bar Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

GENDERED ETHICS OF DROUGHT: A LEVINASIAN READING OF TALMUDIC STORIES

Sinclair Y.(Speaker), Bar Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND HUMAN SOLIDARITY OVER TIME

Mirsky Y.(Speaker), Brandies University ~ BOSTON ~ United States of America

BEYOND JUSTICE: THE HUMAN PLACE IN NATURE IN THE DIVINE RESPONSE TO JOB

Ben Pazi H.(Speaker), Bar Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

SUSTAINABILITY IN CONTEMPORARY READINGS OF BIBLICAL TEXTS

Melloni A.(Speaker), Ben Pazi H.(Speaker), University of Bologna and Modena/Reggio Emilia ~ Bologna ~ Italy

DISCOVERY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND JEWISH ETHICS: HUSSERL, ARENDT, AND THE BURNING BUSH

Feldmann -- Kaye M.(Speaker), Bar Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM'S VATICAN ARCHIVES INITIATIVE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - A101

Contact: Emily Jeffres
Chair: Emily Jeffres

In March 2019, Pope Francis announced that access to the Vatican's archival materials for the pontificate of Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) would be granted in March 2020. Scholars conducting research in this massive new set of documents, comprising an estimated 16 million pages of material across multiple archives, have made major strides in the last five years. As part of these research efforts, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) has been sending a team of scholars and archivists to Vatican City to survey these new materials. Subject to permission by the archives, the USHMM has obtained digital scans of approximately 600,000 pages that are available at the USHMM for research purposes.

This panel consists of the USHMM's Vatican Archives Initiative team and external scholars engaged in research at the Vatican archives. Its goal is to describe the team's research and archival efforts and to share initial findings.

THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM'S VATICAN ARCHIVES INITIATIVE: AN OVERVIEW

Carter--Chand R.(Speaker), Levine Z.P.(Speaker), Steck A.(Speaker), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum ~ Washington, DC ~ United States of America

RESEARCH FINDINGS: A CASE STUDY OF EARLY EFFORTS TOWARD CHRISTIAN-JEWISH DIALOGUE

Brown--Fleming S.(Speaker), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum ~ Washington, DC ~ United States of America

GREEK CATHOLICS, THE HOLY SEE, AND THE HOLOCAUST: NEW FINDINGS IN THE POPE PIUS XII COLLECTIONS

Popa I.(Speaker), Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Manchester ~ Manchester ~ United Kingdom

HOW SILENCE WORKS: RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY, MORAL LANGUAGE, AND EPISCOPAL RESPONSES TO THE HOLOCAUST (1941–1943)

Stolarczyk--Bilardie M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

NEW GENERATIONS AND THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - A203

Contact: Peter De Mey
Chair: Jason Welle

The Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network invites papers for a session that explores ecclesial and theological responses to generational shifts in society. To what extent do the spiritual needs of younger generations shape the structure of the church, notions of Christian identity, and the explicit and implicit ecclesiologies shaping both common life and public witness in the church? What are possible visions of youth ministries in a future where young people are navigating increasingly complex matters? Possible paper topics might include, but are not limited to:

1. The intersection of masculinity studies with religious conversion and deconversion, particularly in view of the recent phenomenon of interest in Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions among young men
2. Eco-ecclesiology and other responses to climate disaster and apocalypticism
3. The church's engagement with content creators and online spiritual communities
4. Loci for theological research and education that are found beyond the limits of traditional settings such as seminaries and universities
5. The church's reception of post-denominational Christianity and/or multiple religious belongings
6. Unity and conflict in intergenerational and intercultural spaces

FOR A PEDAGOGY OF FAITH IN THE AGE OF CONTENT CREATORS

Avellino A.(Speaker), Sapienza universitá di Roma ~ Roma ~ Italy

TOWARDS INTERCULTURAL PASTORAL CARE IN EUROPE

Biemans W.(Speaker), Tilburg School of Catholic Theology ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

THEOLOGICAL CACOPHONY

Purina L.(Speaker), University of Latvia ~ Riga ~ Latvia

ALL ECCLESIOLOGY IS LOCAL? GLOCAL CATHOLICISM TODAY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 11:20 to 12:20

Pola - A206a

Contact: Massimo Faggioli
Chair: Massimo Faggioli

How do the particular churches—canonically understood as dioceses and their equivalent in the Eastern Churches—relate to the “one, holy, catholic, apostolic” ecclesial reality? This is not only a question from the Council of Nicaea 1700 years ago. It is a burning question today, all the more as other Christian traditions face schism, whether between the Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox churches, the Anglican Communion and GAFCON, or the now-disunited United Methodist Church. It is deeply connected as well to the rise of non-denominational Christians spurred on by new technologies, organizational possibilities, and political-ideological cleavages offering revolutionary new way of resourcing and communicating. The question here is about Global Catholicism, inevitably part and parcel of this larger context. What does Catholicism look like on the ground in its various instantiations? How does it hold together? What centripetal and centrifugal forces are at play in the vast network that is Global Catholicism? Is a common juridical authority, based ultimately on concepts derived from ancient Roman law, sufficient to hold together something that is no longer an imperial construct? What can we learn from stories of specific Catholic churches in specific places? What does an historically grounded geo-ecclesiological lens offer? What might that suggest for the third millennium of the Catholic Church, one characterized not by an overwhelming presence in a limited part of the world but by a moderate to significant presence all over the world? Can lessons regarding catholicity per se speak to politics and political questions at a time of fragmentation and global power vacuums rapidly being filled by players acting on naked self-interest? What about doctrine of war and of peace? If all politics is local, surely all ecclesiology is local as well.

MENDING THE FISHERMEN’S NET: NETWORK DYNAMICS FOR RELATING AND RECONCILING GLOBAL AND LOCAL CHURCHES

Thomas S.(Speaker), Palm Beach Atlantic University ~ Palm Beach ~ United States of America

K-POP TO K-TRUMP IN GLOBAL TO LOCAL RELIGIOUS RESPONSE TO KOREAN POLITICAL TURMOIL

Bretzke J.(Speaker), John Carroll University ~ Cleveland ~ United States of America

Holding the Center without a Center? Geo-Ecclesiology as Public Missiology in the Study of Global Catholicism

Froehle B. (Speaker)

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES UNDER PRESSURE. DOCUMENTING RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN RUSSIA 2022-2025

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 11:20 to 12:20

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Sergei Chapnin
Chair: Dmitry Uzlaner
authorAMC: Sergei Chapnin
Speaker: Andrey Kordochkin, Dmitry Uzlaner

This panel examines systematic religious persecution in the Russian Federation following the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, wherein state authorities instrumentalize both legal frameworks and ecclesiastical structures to suppress faith-based opposition to military aggression.

The persecution exhibits cross-confessional characteristics, affecting Orthodox, Baptist, Pentecostal, Catholic, Jewish, and Buddhist communities alike. Orthodox Christians confront uniquely severe dual mechanisms of repression: concurrent criminal prosecution by state authorities and canonical sanctions through ecclesiastical courts. This phenomenon represents a significant distortion of Orthodox canonical tradition, whereby church discipline is transformed from a means of preserving spiritual integrity into an instrument of political conformity.

Evidence reveals methodical escalation patterns: initial administrative warnings advance to "foreign agent" designations, succeeded by administrative penalties and culminating in criminal prosecutions carrying substantial custodial sentences. Digital surveillance infrastructure undergirds this system, while state authorities actively cultivate cultures of denunciation wherein parishioners report clergy for minimal liturgical deviations from prescribed texts.

Institutional silence constitutes a particularly significant dimension of this crisis. Russian religious hierarchies and most international ecumenical bodies have failed to offer public solidarity with persecuted believers. The Ecumenical Patriarchate remains a notable exception in providing canonical refuge. This ecclesiastical abandonment normalizes the subordination of religious conscience to state imperatives, with implications extending throughout post-Soviet space, including Belarus and Russian-occupied Ukrainian territories.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES UNDER PRESSURE. DOCUMENTING RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN RUSSIA 2022-2025

Chapnin S.(authorAMC), Orthodox Christian Studies Center, Fordham University ~ New York ~ United States of America

CONSTITUTIONAL INTOLERANCE. THE FASHIONING OF THE OTHER IN EUROPE'S CONSTITUTIONAL REPERTOIRES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 11:20 to 12:20

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Adelaide Madera
Chair: Adelaide Madera
authorAMC: Marietta van der Tol
Speaker: Massimo Faggioli, Rossella Bottoni, Luca Ozzano

The panel is aimed at discussing the book Constitutional Intolerance: The Fashioning of 'the Other' in Europe's Constitutional Repertoires (2025), by Mariëtta van der Tol. In her work, Marietta van der Tol challenges the assumption that intolerance is a flaw unique to illiberal regimes. She argues that vulnerability for minorities is actually inscribed in the structures of constitutional law itself, which defines certain groups as "the other" and regulates their public visibility.
By examining cases across the liberal-illiberal spectrum—specifically France, the Netherlands, Hungary, and Poland—van der Tol demonstrates how both legal and pseudo-constitutional frameworks are used to target religious, ethnic, and sexual groups. Her work reveals that these legal mechanisms often draw on historical practices of "toleration" to justify contemporary restrictions on minority representation

CONSTITUTIONAL INTOLERANCE. THE FASHIONING OF THE OTHER IN EUROPE'S CONSTITUTIONAL REPERTOIRES

Van Der Tol M.(authorAMC), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

INVISIBLE RELIGIOUS SPACES - INTERRELIGIOUS & TRANSREGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A204

Contact: Fani Gargova
Chair: Fani Gargova, Jaap Geraerts

Throughout history, minority and marginalized religious communities have frequently faced constraints on the visibility of their places of worship and the public performance of their rituals. Construction of such structures was often restricted or religious practice forbidden, compelling communities to operate covertly and limiting integration of their religious spaces into the built environment and public sphere. Some chose inward religious practice, whether from fear of persecution or spiritual conviction. Consequently, these “clandestine” or “hidden” minority religious spaces remain largely unrecognized, invisible, or destroyed. Financial constraints, situational demands, and the need for discretion further fostered ephemeral or temporary structures, including occasional use of buildings belonging to other religions.

Beyond historical factors contributing to their invisibility, scholarship has often overlooked the centrality of such religious spaces to their communities. This oversight can be attributed to several factors, including the paucity of sources and surviving sites, as well as a scholarly preference for spaces deemed noteworthy—historically or artistically.

This panel aims to address this historiographical gap by examining inconspicuous, clandestine, ephemeral, or temporary places of worship of minority and marginalized religious communities across Europe and the Mediterranean from the Middle Ages to the 20th century. While such spaces have been studied for particular religious communities, the objective is to foster dialogue from an interreligious historical perspective to identify common threads, underlying concepts, and contextual factors. Through this inclusive lens, the panel aims to understand the diverse strategies employed by minority and marginalized communities in navigating their specific cultural, political, and social environments.

HIDDEN, MOBILE, AND (UN)DOCUMENTED: ALEVI RELIGIOUS SPACES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Erol U.(Speaker), IEG ~ mainz ~ Germany

SUSTAINING AND ALEVIZING THE KARACAAHMET SHRINE IN ISTANBUL

Dinc G.(Speaker), Utrecht University ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

RELIGION IN TROUBLED SOCIETIES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A206a

Religion continue to be used as a tool of repression in many Global North Countries. Research has shown that conflict which has a religious undertone is hard to mitigate especially if the adherents exhibit extremist behaviours. As such, political parties, have seen the power of religion in consolidation undemocratic practice to an extent of using it to stay long in power. The foregoing questions the moral validity of religion in conflict or oppressive society. Thus, this panel seeks to interrogate the question of religion in suffering from many angles such as philosophy, sociological and educational among many other variables. Part of the debate is centered around how Eurocentric religions have been eternalised in African context to an extent that they contribute to suffering of people? How diminishing religion in the European context have such a great influence in Global South in relation to political oppression and silencing dissenting voices? Such question and many others are able to position this topic as novel in contributing to the current conversation about and on religion and its presence in Global South

COLONIAL MIMICRY, RELIGIOUS ABUSE, AND THE MORAL VALIDITY OF NEO PENTECOSTALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

Motuku K.P.(Speaker), University of South Africa ~ Pretoria ~ South Africa

ENLIGHTENMENT AND ITS CRITIQUE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Wael Abu-Uksa
Chair: Wael Abu-Uksa

This panel revisits the place of Enlightenment in the intellectual history of the Middle East from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Rather than treating Enlightenment as a singular, secular, and exclusively European phenomenon, the four papers collectively argue for a plural, dialogical, and multi-religious understanding of Enlightenment. By bringing together Jewish, Muslim, and Christian intellectual engagements with Enlightenment under Ottoman and post-Ottoman rule, the panel highlights the Middle East as an active site of knowledge production, critique, and epistemic negotiation.
At the core of the panel lies a shared concern with how intellectuals working within religious frameworks engaged with Enlightenment ideas. Across confessional boundaries, these figures confronted similar dilemmas: how to reconcile inherited forms of religious authority with emerging regimes of reason, science, and history; how to reform communal life without epistemic subordination; and how to articulate notions of progress that could preserve moral authority and social cohesion in a rapidly changing imperial and global order.

DEBATING ISLAMIC ENLIGHTENMENT

Hatina M.(Speaker), The Hebrew University of Jerusalem ~ Jerusalem ~ Israel

THE “GOLDEN MEAN” RECONSIDERED: JEWISH EPISTEMOLOGIES OF REFORM UNDER MUSLIM RULE

Karkason T.(Speaker), Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg ~ Halle-Wittenberg ~ Germany

CHRISTIAN AND ISLAMIC CRITIQUES OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ARABIC THOUGHT

Abu--Uksa W.(Speaker), The Hebrew University of Jerusalem ~ Jerusalem ~ Israel

RE-MEMBERING MEDUSA. A RADICAL AND INTERSECTIONAL REVISIONING OF CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUALITY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A203

Contact: Emiliano Russo
Chair: Laura Carnevale

This panel takes Re-membering Medusa as a critical lens through which to rethink contemporary spirituality from radical and intersectional perspectives. Its point of departure is the 2012 initiative Medusa's Head Has Been Restored, an international ritual performed by groups of contemporary Witches, which sought to reclaim Medusa from centuries of patriarchal demonization and epistemic violence, reframing the Gorgon as a figure of female power, rage, and resistance within Goddess and alternative spiritual milieus. Over the past decade, Medusa's meanings have further evolved. Increasingly, she has been mobilized not only as a feminist symbol but as an intersectional one, invoked to address embodied difference, marginalization, trauma, queerness, racialization, and disability in spiritual, mythic, and ritual contexts. Her figure thus serves as a powerful prototype for examining how other mythic, saintly, or archetypal personas are similarly reworked within contemporary spiritualities to contest gender essentialism, challenge binary cosmologies, and articulate more complex configurations of power and identity. Moving beyond polarized academic readings of alternative spirituality as either empowering and feminist or conservative and essentialist, this panel invites contributions that explore how gender, sexuality, race, and embodiment are negotiated within contemporary spiritual practices and discourses. Drawing on religious studies, intersectionality, gender studies, and critical myth studies, we focus on "re-membering" as both an act of remembrance and a practice of reassembling fragmented bodies, histories, and subjectivities. By centering Medusa as a dynamic and contested emblem, the panel highlights contemporary spirituality as a key site for the rearticulation of intersectional imaginaries, where myth, politics, and lived experience converge in ways that call for renewed scholarly attention.

SACRED MASCULINITY AND DIVINE FEMININE. THE CHALLENGE OF BEING A PRIEST OF THE GODDESS IN ITALY

Russo E.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

"RE-MEMBERING" MARY MAGDALENE. A RETROSPECTIVE READING OF HER-STORY IN NEOPAGAN DIGITAL SPIRITUALITIES

Stornaiuolo P.(Speaker), University of Bari "Aldo Moro" ~ Bari ~ Italy

FROM ALGOL TO ASTEROID MEDUSA: REINTERPRETING MYTHS AND ARCHETYPES IN CONTEMPORARY “WESTERN” ASTROLOGY

Liederman C.(Speaker), University of Fribourg ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

RE-MEMBERING LILITH: BETWEEN FEMINIST JUDAISM AND CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUALITIES

Padovani M.(Speaker), University of Rome La Sapienza ~ Rome ~ Italy

HOW LAW AND POLITICS SHAPE MIGRANT RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola- A101

Contact: Astrid Mattes
Chair: Burkhard Berkmann, Astrid Mattes

The intersection of law, politics, and religion has long shaped the religious landscape of Europe. Law is involved in two ways: the law by which a state regulates religion, and the internal law by which religious communities organize themselves. With regard to the first, it was historically developed in alignment with dominant churches, reflecting the cultural and political hegemony of established religious traditions. However, in the age of migration, these legal systems are increasingly confronted with the challenge of accommodating and embedding new and diverse religious communities. With regard to the second, the question is which legal structures a religious community provides for immigrant members and how they relate to the established communities.

The politicization of both religion and migration has further complicated efforts to address these challenges. Political debates surrounding migration often frame religion as a site of cultural conflict, which can hinder the development of well-thought-out legal solutions. The instrumentalization of religion in political discourse risks divisions and undermines the potential for constructive dialogue between religious migrant communities, host societies, and state institutions.

This panel brings together interdisciplinary perspectives from legal studies, political science, and theology to critically assess the impact of legal frameworks and religion politics on the state of migrant religious communities. We cover developments in contemporary Europe and include comparative global perspectives from different religious traditions. The panel seeks to explore pathways for fostering legal and social environments that are both inclusive and responsive to the realities of religious diversity. Thereby, the panel aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the interplay between law, politics, and religion in shaping the future of increasinlgy plural and mobile societies.

CATHOLIC MIGRATION TO GERMANY: CANON LAW STRUCTURES AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München ~ Munich ~ Germany

THE CANON–IHL COLLABORATIVE MODEL: PROTECTING RELIGIOUS MIGRANTS IN EUROPE THROUGH SOVEREIGN RELIGIOUS DIPLOMACY

Barilla F.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

“EVERYONE SHOULD BE FREE TO CHOOSE WHETHER OR NOT TO MIGRATE.“ (POPE FRANCIS) FORGOTTEN VICTIMS: BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF REFUGEE LAW AND NORMATIVE DEFICITS IN LAUDATO SI' AND INTERNATIONAL LAW IN THE CONTEXT OF ADVANCING CLIMATE CHANGE

Seidel P.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München ~ Munich ~ Germany

RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES AND STATE POLICIES: ETHICAL EXAMINATION OF THE AMBIVALENCES WITHIN MIGRATION DISCOURSES

Nwosu C.F.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München ~ Munich ~ Germany

ON THE DILEMMA OF STATE CREDIBILITY ASSESSMENT IN CONVERSION CASES

Kowatsch A.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

NATIONAL EMBRACE OR FEDERAL HANDSHAKE? LEGAL AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF HINDU RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN SWITZERLAND AND AUSTRIA

Limacher K.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

MULTIPLE PRESSURES: MIGRANT RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES BETWEEN POLITICAL EXPECTATIONS, LEGAL REQUIREMENTS, INTRA-COMMUNITY TENSIONS, AND CLAIMS FROM FORMER HOMELANDS

Mattes A.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Munich ~ Austria

INJUSTICE & SOCIAL TRANSFIGURATION IN THE ANTHROPOCENE: AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Nikolaos Asproulis
Chair: Nikolaos Asproulis

We are currently living in the Anthropocene, a time of polycrisis defined by humanity's collective self-conceit as a technologically advanced species that produces myriad environmental, social and economic injustices. As Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew says, "[t]he root cause…lies in our self-centeredness and in the mistaken order of values, which we inherit and accept without any critical evaluation…" This order of values is rooted in a neoliberal consumeristic vision of prosperity as abundance in which the vices of arrogance, greed, gluttony and indifference, rather than virtues, such as justice, prudence, or compassion, are actively promoted. This neoliberal socioeconomic system forces people worldwide to view both nature and our fellow human beings as bearing merely a utilitarian value to be exploited for pleasure or profit so, even people who engage in this system unwillingly or unknowingly are guilty of what Orthodox theologians call involuntary sin. Therefore, "What is asked of us is not greater technological skill but deeper repentance, metanoia, in the literal sense of the Greek word, which signifies fervent 'change of mind' and radical transformation of lifestyle" (Bartholomew 2009). Such a social transfiguration requires practicing a "communal asceticism" (Bartholomew 1997) that will entail cultivating nēpsis, a state of mindfulness, which can enable a recognition of how our pathological desires (pathoi) for material wealth or social status have been manipulated for profit by powerful elites who exacerbate inequalities and advance the value system at the heart of our polycrisis. Further, it requires a view of flourishing as relational rather than acquisitive and the development of socioeconomic practices rooted in a eucharistic disposition of gratitude for one another and nature so that,"the economy becomes a servant of humanity, not its master" (Bartholomew 1999)

ECOLOGICAL SIN & NATURAL LAW

Durante C.(Speaker), Associate Professor of Theology - Saint Peter's University ~ New York ~ United States of America

SIN: DIET, DEGRADATION, REPENTANCE

Nellist C.(Speaker), PanOrthodox Concern for Animals ~ London ~ United Kingdom

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Kostarelos F.(Speaker), Governors State University ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

DIGITAL HUMANITIES, RELIGION, AND THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE ACCESS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A102

Over the past several decades, the rise of digital humanities has reshaped the intellectual and technological landscape of the humanities. What began as a relatively specialized set of computational methods—often focused on text encoding and database construction—has developed into a broad interdisciplinary field encompassing digitization, data modeling, computational analysis, visualization, platform design, and public-facing scholarship. Within the study of religion, these developments have had especially significant implications. Religious texts and traditions are deeply rooted in material archives, linguistic complexity, and historically situated interpretive communities, and digital humanities approaches have transformed not only how these materials are studied but also who can access them.

Yet increased availability does not automatically produce meaningful access. Digital religious materials are mediated through technical infrastructures—interfaces, metadata, encoding standards, and platform design—that shape how texts can be discovered, interpreted, and compared. These design choices often reflect scholarly priorities that may remain opaque to non-specialists, creating new forms of gatekeeping even as older barriers fall.

This panel therefore asks what democratization means in the context of digital religious scholarship. Is it simply a matter of making materials freely available, or does it require deeper forms of participation and interpretive agency? How do digital tools redistribute authority among scholars, institutions, religious communities, and the public? And how might digital humanities projects be designed to promote equity, inclusivity, and sustainability rather than reproducing existing hierarchies in digital form?

PROJECT FOR DIGITAL PRESERVATION AND ANALYSIS OF SYRIAC ORTHODOX CHURCH REGISTERS AND INVENTORIES FROM MARDIN

Bcheiry I.(Speaker), Atla ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

ONLINE BIBLES AND DIGITAL READING PRACTICES: FROM EXCERPTS TO EXEGESIS

Pennarola C.(Speaker), Università di Napoli Federico II ~ Napoli ~ Italy

QUARRYING WATER FROM UNFAIR TEXTS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 18:20

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Marco Settembrini
Chair: Marco Settembrini, Donatella Scaiola, Daniele Pevarello

This panel welcomes contributions in the field of biblical reception research that engage with scriptural passages perceived as troubling or "unfair" by contemporary Western European readers. It seeks to explore how issues of inequality—pertaining to gender, ethnicity, social status, or family relations—have been received, reinterpreted, or redeemed across the centuries. Participants are invited to draw on insights from ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary exegetical traditions, tracing how challenging texts may yield fresh resources for reflection today. Contributions may also examine legal norms, social practices, and moral discourses—such as those governing gender, sexuality, family, and status— in order to illuminate shared assumptions, tensions, and divergences in ancient constructions of inequality. Bringing together Biblical Studies, Classics, and Ancient History within an interdisciplinary framework, the panel seeks to analyze how multiple and overlapping forms of inequality—based on gender, economy, class, ethnicity, legal status, and disability—were articulated, negotiated, and contested in ancient texts and institutions.

DEATH FOR GATHERING STICKS? REFLECTIONS ON NUMBERS 15:32-36

Settembrini M.(Speaker), Facoltà Teologica dell'Emilia-Romagna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

“DO YOU THINK I WAS SCARED BY THE BONES?”

De Panfilis D.(Speaker), Università Pontificia Salesiana ~ Roma ~ Italy

CAN A MISOGYNISTIC TEXT LIKE QOHELET 7:25–8:1 STILL MATTER TODAY?

Scaiola D.(Speaker), Associazione Biblica Italiana ~ Rome ~ Italy

GENDER INEQUALITIES IN THE ROMAN WORLD: ADULTERIUM AND STUPRUM

Mongardi M.(Speaker), Bologna University ~ Bologna ~ Italy

WHO MAY SPEAK FOR GOD? PROPHETIC AUTHORITY AND DISCURSIVE INEQUALITY IN ZECHARIAH 13:2–6

Pizarro I.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

RESET ON THE CHRIST: JEWISH HERITAGE AND CATHOLIC FAITH IN A HERMENEUTICAL FRAME TO REV 7:1-8

Malatacca R.G.(Speaker), Associazione Biblica Italiana (ABI) ~ Lucera ~ Italy

CATHOLIC WOMEN AND GENDER DYNAMICS IN EARLY 20TH CENTURY CHINA: AGENCY, SERVICE, AND REPRESENTATION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Pola - A206b

Contact: Valeria Stella Papis
Chair: Valentina Bottanelli, Raissa De Gruttola

The panel explores the role of Catholic women in changing ideas and practices of womanhood in China from the late Qing to the mid-twentieth century. At the turn of the century, Chinese women's lives were largely shaped by patriarchal family structures, Confucian norms, and social and legal inequalities, with marriage and domesticity as central expectations. At the same time, war, political upheaval, and reform movements intensified debates on women's education, morality, and social participation. Catholic missionary, as members of female religious congregations, operated within male-dominated church hierarchies, yet differed sharply from most Chinese women in being unmarried, institutionally supported, professionally trained, and mobile. Through schools, hospitals, orphanages, and charitable work, they exercised forms of authority and autonomy that challenged prevailing gender norms, while remaining embedded in unequal religious and transnational power relations.

The panel examines Catholic institutions as spaces where alternative models of womanhood were constructed and negotiated. These institutions both reproduced social and gender hierarchies and offered limited but significant opportunities for agency, including access to education, skills, public service, and life paths beyond marriage. Using perspectives from gender history and the study of religious feminization, the panel treats women's agency as relational and situational, shaped by everyday negotiations between missionary women and local Catholic women.

Comparative and connected approaches are welcome, including studies of Protestant missions, Buddhist nuns, indigenous religious initiatives, or transnational networks, contributing to broader debates on religion, gender, and inequality in modern China and East Asia.

THE EDUCATION OF CHINESE GIRLS IN CATHOLIC MISSIONS. THE CASE STUDY OF THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE'S JINGYI GIRLS SCHOOL IN KAIFENG

Papis V.S.(Speaker), Facoltà Teologica di Lugano, Università della Svizzera italiana ~ Lugano ~ Switzerland

NEGOTIATING MODERNITY: CATHOLIC ACTION AND THE REIMAGINING OF WOMANHOOD IN THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S QUARTERLY (1934)

Bottanelli V.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

FRANCISCAN SISTERS AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE EVANGELIZATION OF EARLY 20TH-CENTURY CHINA

De Gruttola R.(Speaker), Ca' Foscari University of Venice ~ Venice ~ Italy

PERFORMING THE SACRED: RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATIONS IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 18:20

Pola - A103

Contact: Virginia Lauria
Chair: Niccolò Brandodoro

Sacred performances in the Modern Age (1300-1600) show how religious practices contributed, in different and often ambivalent ways, to the construction and management of social (in)equalities. In Europe, sacred performances served both as a tool for mitigating marginalisation and as a device for producing and consolidating social roles and codes. The panel aims to analyze, but is not restricted to, confraternities' sacred representations; civic and liturgical spectacles promoted by urban and ecclesiastical authorities; penitential processions and charitable rituals; missionary and conversional performances; school and college theatre, notably within Jesuit educational contexts; courtly and dynastic religious ceremonies; and devotional practices structured around images, relics, and ritualised bodily performances. In these different settings, the performative dimension of the sacred operated as a means of mobilising communities, shaping identities and behaviors, fostering new theological approaches, and articulating social roles and hierarchies.
In this context, the performative dimension of the sacred played a dual role: on the one hand, it promoted practices of assistance, inclusion and cooperation, contributing to the mitigation of social marginalisation; on the other hand, it reproduced and consolidated hierarchical structures, social codes and prescriptive roles through the mediation of religious and educational institutions. The panel aims to bring together diverse perspectives and methodologies to understand how the performances of the sacred contributed, in complex and often ambivalent ways, to the removal and reproduction of (in)equalities in early modern Europe. The panel welcomes contributions from Christian studies, History, Literature, Philosophy, Art History, and Performing Arts.

PERFORMING THE SACRED: MATRIMONY OF ENSLAVED PEOPLE IN LISBON

Nunes J.(Speaker), Polytechnic of Viseu; CHSC - University of Coimbra ~ Viseu ~ Portugal

CIVIC AUTHORITY'S AND RELIGIOUS MINORITY'S REPRESENTATION IN EARLY MODERN ROME

Emiliani V.(Speaker), Scuola nazionale del patrimonio e delle attività culturali ~ Rome ~ Italy

PERFORMING PAPAL UNIVERSALISM: GIULIANO DATI'S CANTARI DELL'INDIA

Lauria V.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE PERFORMATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF SANCTITY: IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA IN THE SPANISH JESUIT THEATRE (SIXTEENTH–SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES)

Brandodoro N.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

PERFORMING THE SACRED THROUGH GEOMETRY: GUARINO GUARINI AND THE DIDACTIC REPRESENTATION OF DIVINE ORDER IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY RELIGIOUS CULTURE

De Camillis D.(Speaker), Università degli studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

PERFORMING NORMS AND NEGOTIATION IN ROMAN FEMALE CONSERVATORIES (18TH–19TH CENTURIES)

Pietroletti E.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Rome ~ Italy

SACRED PROTEST: RELIGION, POWER AND RESISTANCE IN AN ERA OF UPHEAVAL

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Matthew Ryan Robinson
Chair: Miriam Schneider
authorAMC: Henry Jansen, Paul Hedges, Kai Shmushko, Charles Young-Chul Ryu
Speaker: Henry Jansen, Paul Hedges, Kai Shmushko, Charles Young-Chul Ryu

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With this panel the European Society for Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies (ESITIS) proposes to revisit a critical conversation on the topic of Religion and Social Protest, taking the new book Sacred Protest (Brill 2026) as the catalyst for the discussion. Contributors to the volume will come into dialogue with one another on this panel, reconsidering their chapters in light of the dramatic upheavals in societies worldwide in only the past few years. In particular, contributing authors will aim to bring topics into the conversation that were not addressed in the book, including technology, neo-faschisms, apocalyptic motifs, religious minority vs. majority groups among other topics. As the book discusses, "religion and protest converge and diverge and in pursuit of various ends, making careful analysis of religion and protest necessary. Sacred Protest seeks to make a timely and constructive contribution to this critically important conversation." (Publisher's website) Panelists: Paul Hedges, Kai Shmushko, Charles Ryu, Henry Jansen.

SACRED PROTEST: RELIGION, POWER AND RESISTANCE IN AN ERA OF UPHEAVAL

Jansen H.(authorAMC), Hedges P.(authorAMC), Shmushko K.(authorAMC), Young--Chul Ryu C.(authorAMC), Independent scholar ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AS REPETITION: THE PERSPECTIVE OF (IN)EQUALITY, (IN)DIFFERENCE, (IN)COMMENSURABILITY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Rita Serpytyte
Chair: Rita Serpytyte, Danute Baceviciute

Panel description: In the contemporary conceptualization of religious experience, the structure of "secular religiosity" and a number of other definitions of (religious) experience raise questions about the boundaries and limits of religious experience, highlighting the (in)commensurability, identity/difference of other experiential structures, as well as their (in)equality in relation to religious experience. The structure of experience that universally accumulates the ambivalence of the relationship between religious experience and other, different, diverse experiences is, we believe, the structure of repetition. Although this structure appears in discourses that seem quite distant from religious experience, its roots are religious. Giorgio Agamben speaks of repetition as anakephalaíösis/ricapitolazione, appealing to the Greek tradition and the letters of the Apostle Paul. In Jacques Derrida's figure of hantise, at least three phantasmagorical levels can be distinguished: phantasm, phantom, and revenant (repetition). The dimension of spectrality is ontologically "flawed" dimension of "being-other," one of whose levels is namely repetition.
This panel therefore invites us to reflect on the limits of religious experience, based on the structure of repetition. This perspective may include not only a reconsideration of Agamben's messianism as a structure of repetition, Derrida's inquiry into the (non)spirituality of revenant's "being", Kearney's perspective of anatheism, which directly raises the question of secular religiosity, and the thinking of many other contemporary authors on the limits of religious experience.

REFLECTIONS ON THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE: POST-SECULAR PERSPECTIVE

Ramanauskaite--Vilde M.(Speaker), Vilnius university ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

MESSIANISM AND ESCHATOLOGY IN SUSAN TAUBES'S THOUGHT

Scollo F.(Speaker), Vilnius university – Barcelona Pompeu Fabra university ~ Vilnius/Barcelona ~ Lithuania

DIVINE BEAUTY: RECOLLECTION OR REPETITION?

Ivanauskas A.(Speaker), Vilnius University ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

REPETITION AS DECREATION: THE AMBIGUITY OF SELF-NEGATION IN SIMONE WEIL'S THOUGHT

Gelžinyte B.(Speaker), Vilnius university ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

SUBVERSIVE CITATIONS: ITERABILITY, PERFORMATIVITY, AND THE RUPTURE OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Bischoff S.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Berlin ~ Germany

THEOLOGY OF PEACE: THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - AT13

Contact: Ambrogio Bongiovanni
Chair: Ambrogio Bongiovanni, Paolo Trianni

The panel aims to gather interdisciplinary contributions to re-think the foundations of a theology of peace from an interreligious and intercultural perspective in an age of growing local and international conflicts. Areas of interest: the history of nonviolence and its main interpreters from various religious traditions and contexts; the theory and practice of peace studies that accompany nonviolence and social justice; the analysis of the theme of peace in the founding texts of various religious traditions, starting with Christianity; the theme of peace in international cooperation and interreligious dialogue; peace education and in-depth study of some documents of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church dealing with the theme of peace.

THE IMPERATIVE OF NONVIOLENCE THEOLOGY: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

Mokrani A.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Roma ~ Italy

NEW AND OLD APPROACHES IN THEOLOGICAL ETHICS TO QUESTIONS OF SECURITY POLICY AND JUST PEACE IN A TIME OF UPHEAVAL: THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN GERMANY AND ITS NEW PEACE MEMORANDUM OF 2025 (“WORLD IN DISORDER – JUST PEACE IN VIEW")

Peterson P.S.(Speaker), University of Tuebingen and Center for Military History and Social Sciences of the Bundeswehr / German Armed Forces ~ Tuebingen and Potsdam, Germany ~ Germany

FRATERNITY FOR WORLD PEACE: A MEANS TO ADDRESS INEQUALITIES IN CATHOLIC CHURCH DOCUMENTS?

Dini E.(Speaker), Gregorian Pontifical University - Université Catholique de Lyon ~ Rome ~ Italy

SYNODALITY AS RESONANCE: LISTENING, RECIPROCITY, AND THE THEOPOLITICAL HORIZON OF PEACE

Bountsebe Ekassi J.E.(Speaker), KU Leuven / Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

OVERCOMING AN ORIGINAL OPPOSITION TO BUILD A THEOLOGY OF PEACE
SUPERARE UN'OPPOSIZIONE ORIGINARIA PER COSTRUIRE UNA TEOLOGIA DELLA PACE

Zetea S.S.(Speaker), Universita Babes-Bolyai, Facolta di Teologia greco-cattolica ~ Cluj ~ Romania

THE HORIZON OF THE ORDO AMORIS FOR TODAY'S PATH TO PEACE

Marchionni S.(Speaker), Pontifical Gregorian University; Pontifical Athenaeum of Sant'Anselm ~ Rome ~ Italy

FAMILY, SEX, AND FAITH: THE BIOPOLITICS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Benedetto Matricini
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl
authorAMC: Pål Kolstø
Speaker: Dmitry Uzlaner, Bojidar Kolov, Irina Paert

As the communist regimes of Eastern Europe collapsed towards the close of the twentieth century, the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) reemerged as an influential actor in Russian society. In Family, Sex, and Faith: The Biopolitics of the Russian Orthodox Church, Pål Kolstø investigates the manifestations of the ROC's newfound influence and legitimacy and the purposes of its strategic action. Here, Kolstø makes the argument that the fulcrum of the ROC's intrusion of the private sphere and its negligence of socioeconomic issues lies in a detailed ethical program and advocacy for traditional family values. These cardinal points, however, cater to different audiences. The ethical program of traditional values speaks to broader Russian and international society, whereas the inculcation of traditional values targets a more restricted circle of hardcore adherents. The ethics of private life, moreover, serve as instruments of regimentation of individual sexuality and sexual relations. In his book, Kolstø points out that the moral teachings of the ROC involve what Foucault called "biopolitics": The management of life itself in the modern age as opposed to ancient right to take life and let live. At the heart of Foucault's concept of biopower lies the regulation of sexuality: This power is invested in the individual discipline of the body (anatomo-politics) and the control over populations and biological processes (biopolitics). As the bridge between the individual and populations, normative prescriptions on families becomes the object of the ROC's biopower. In this Author-Meets-Critics session, the author will discuss his book with Bojidar Kolov, author of "Ecclesiastical populism in contemporary Russia? 'The people' in the political discourse of the orthodox church" (2024) and with Kristina Stoeckl and Dmitry Uzlaner, authors of The Moralist International. Russia in the Global Culture Wars (2022).

FAMILY, SEX, AND FAITH: THE BIOPOLITICS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Paert I.(), University of Tartu ~ Tartu ~ Estonia

IN THE (ARCHIVAL) FOOTSTEPS OF PAUL GAUTHIER AND MYRIAM LACAZE. FROM POVERTY ISSUE TO LIBERATION THEOLOGY ?

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 17:10

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Claire Maligot
Chair: Claire MALIGOT, Silvana KANDEL LAMDAN

Paul Gauthier (1914-2002) was a key figure in the reflection on poverty at the time of Vatican II. This panel brings together scholars from various backgrounds who crossed paths with either Gauthier or his wife, Myriam Lacaze (1928-2017) in their research, in an attempt to retrace their steps based on archival records they left behind in their correspondence with others, in the international press, and in their books. The aim is to retrace, “from the outside” and without direct access to their personal papers, not only the unique biographical trajectory of this theologian, humanist, and activist—first a priest, then a layman, after marrying Lacaze, herself a former nun.

Their careers and activism spanned several continents, following the “hot spots” where activism and theology were shaping new reflections on poverty: Europe (France, Italy, Belgium), the Middle East (Israel-Palestine, Lebanon), Asia (India), and Latin America (Brazil). This panel aims to report on the evolution of Catholic thinking on poverty, based on three major milestones: 1. pushing further and beyond social doctrine on “worker issues” after the worker-priests experiment ended, from Europe to Israel-Palestine; 2. the conciliar commitment within the group Jesus, the Church, and the Poor and their critical repositioning in favor of solidarity with Palestinians; 3. the beginnings of liberation theology, when Gauthier and Lacaze left Jerusalem after 1967 for Lebanon, India, and then Brazil.

The panel proposes to retrace the stages of this journey of intellectual and humanitarian, theological and militant commitment within a changing Church; to analyse Gauthier's and Lacaze’s critical stance, sometimes visionary, sometimes following pre-existing lines of thought, and their legacy (and eventually limitations to it); all while highlighting the dialectical relationship between center and periphery; marginality and institutions; rupture, institutionalization, and reception; gender and power dynamics.

AFTER 1967: LEAVING JERUSALEM. PAUL GAUTHIER AND MYRIAM LACAZE AT THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF CHRISTIANS FOR PALESTINE

Maligot C.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

RELIGION AND GENDER IN EUROPEAN CONTEXTS: ENTANGLEMENTS, TENSIONS, CONTESTATIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Alberta Giorgi
Chair: Stefania Palmisano, Alberta Giorgi

This panel investigates how gendered norms and power relations are produced, negotiated and contested across religious, spiritual and post-secular contexts in contemporary Europe. While research on gender and religion has increasingly moved beyond binaries of oppression versus emancipation, divergent empirical sites continue to reveal tensions between institutional authority, personal agency and cultural expectations.

The contributions assemble multi-sited analyses, ranging from yoga cultures to Catholic women's organizations and Jewish feminist reform movements in Italy, to queer negotiations within Lithuanian Catholicism, and debates over the Istanbul Convention on Lithuanian mass media. Drawing on methodologies including discourse and content analysis, ethnography and qualitative interviewing, the papers collectively demonstrate how religious and spiritual formations both reproduce and unsettle dominant gender regimes.

Exclusionary mechanisms emerge through embodied norms and religious-doctrinal discursive boundary-work; yet actors also adopt agentic strategies (including feminist and queer approaches) to expand the meanings and understandings of religion, and reconfigure religious authority and norms. At the same time, struggles over gender unfold across religious institutions, media, civil society and everyday life, where religious actors remain key participants in broader cultural debates on sexuality, family and citizenship. In this perspective, the hybrid public and mass media discourse play an extremely relevant role in contributing to shaping the discursive opportunity structures in which individual actors and religious institutions operate. Hence, the panel offers a broad and encompassing overview of contemporary relationships between religion and gender.

GENDERED BODIES, NORMATIVE SELVES: REASSESSING THE "YOGA FOR EVERYBODY" TROPE

Di Placido M.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

RELIGIOSITY AND FEMINISM IN THREE ITALIAN CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Rolandi M.(Speaker), University of Milano ~ Milan ~ Italy

WOMEN RABBIS: ORIGINS OF EXCLUSION AND NEW FEMINIST MOVEMENT

Baldini F.(Speaker), La Sapienza University ~ Rome ~ Italy

RELIGION, GENDER, AND FAMILY IN LITHUANIAN MEDIA DEBATES (2011–2025) ON THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

Poce G.(Speaker), Vytautas Magnus University ~ Kaunas ~ Lithuania

‘I DO NOT WANT TO BE TOLERATED, I WANT TO BE ACCEPTED’: NEGOTIATING THE NEED FOR QUEER FRIENDLY CHURCH

Ališauskiene M.(Speaker), Vytautas Magnus University ~ Kaunas ~ Lithuania

THE 2025 LGBT PILGRIMAGE: A LENS ON THE NEGOTIATION OF GLOBAL CATHOLIC PASTORAL RESPONSES TO LOCAL LGBTQ CLAIMS

Tricou J.(Speaker), Université de Lausanne ~ Lausanne ~ Switzerland

THE (IM)POSSIBILITY OF DECOLONIAL PEDAGOGY IN THE ACADEMY: REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING RELIGION WITHIN DIVERSE CONTEXTS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - A107

Contact: Cherry Muslim
Chair: Francesco Cargnelutti

The panel foregrounds how epistemological hierarchies, rooted in colonial histories, racialised knowledge systems, gendered exclusions, and Eurocentric academic canons, continue to shape whose religions, spiritualities, and ways of knowing are recognised as legitimate within higher education. Bringing together African (focus on South Africa) and European perspectives, this panel examines how educators attempt to teach religion in ways that resist epistemic injustice while operating within institutions still structured by colonial and neoliberal logics.

We engage critically with questions of epistemological privilege: Who gets to define what counts as religion, spirituality, theory, and evidence? How are race, gender, and religious identity entangled in the production of academic authority? And how might pedagogies rooted in relationality, lived experience, spirituality, and plural ways of being disrupt dominant hierarchies of knowledge? Rather than offering a celebratory narrative of "decolonisation," the panel situates decolonial pedagogy as an ongoing, fragile, and contested practice, one that exposes both the possibilities and the limits of teaching religion within unequal worlds.

THE HUMAN, JOHN WESLEY AND THE AFRICAN: A DECOLONIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH WESLEY'S CONSTRUCTION OF 'MAN'.

Matthew L.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Durban ~ South Africa

D. ONLINE FACILITATION AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION WITHIN A DECOLONIAL FRAMEWORK: CLASSROOM DISCUSSION AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR METHODOLOGICAL LEARNING

Rovellini M.(Speaker), Oggiono ~ Lecco ~ Italy

B. RELIGION, INEQUALITY, AND DECOLONIAL PEDAGOGY: TEACHING ISLAM IN EUROPEAN–AFRICAN VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS

Muslim C.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Durban ~ South Africa

FACING THE PAST TO DECOLONIZE THE FUTURE: THE ERASURE OF ITALY'S COLONIAL PAST AND ITS PERSISTENCE IN ITALIAN FEMINIST MOVEMENTS. REFLECTIONS ON HOW TO TAKE ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMAGINE DIFFERENT SCENERIES.

Esposito E.(Speaker), Independent Researcher ~ Rome ~ Italy

STILL AWAITING THE TITLE

Sakuba X.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Pietermaritzburg ~ South Africa

CHRISTIANITY AND MIGRATION: A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF MIGRATION FOR OUR AGE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 17:10

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Jason Welle
Chair: Jason Welle
authorAMC: Peter Phan
Speaker: Gioachhino Campese, Debora Tonelli

This panel engages the pioneering monograph of Peter Phan, Christianity and Migration: A Christian Theology of Migration for Our Age (Oxford University Press, 2025), which Shows the intrinsic links between migration and Christianity, reflects on the connection between migration and eschatology, and presents a new theology of God framing God the Father as the Primordial Migrant, God the Son as the Paradigmatic Migrant, and God the Holy Spirit as the Personal Power of Migration. Discussants include experts on migration and on religion and violence.

CHRISTIANITY AND MIGRATION: A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF MIGRATION FOR OUR AGE

Phan P.(authorAMC), Georgetown University ~ Washington DC ~ United States of America

NARRATIVES BEYOND METAPHYSICS: POSSIBILITIES OF ORDER IN HERMENEUTICAL THEOLOGY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - A105

Contact: Charles Howell
Chair: Charles Howell

At the outset of God as the Mystery of the World, Eberhard Jüngel declares that “narrative has its own place and time” according to faith’s distinctive “structure of perception.” From this claim unfolds a hermeneutical vision in which theology begins not from metaphysical first principles but from the concrete, storied expressions through which God is encountered, confessed, and interpreted. Approaching theology from narrative in this way resists the dominance of totalizing metaphysical systems while opening new possibilities for theological order and critique.

This panel explores the role of narrative in hermeneutical theology as a mode of theological reasoning that operates beyond, against, or alongside classical metaphysical frameworks. Rather than treating narrative as merely illustrative, the panel investigates how narrative itself generates theological intelligibility, shaping accounts of truth, meaning, and normativity. In doing so, it examines how theology can remain critically ordered without recourse to comprehensive metaphysical architectures, and how narrative construals of faith negotiate plurality and difference within theological discourse.

The panel is conceived as an open forum and invites paper proposals from a wide range of theological, philosophical, and interdisciplinary perspectives. Papers may address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

• Narrative as a mode of theological rationality
• Theology beyond metaphysical first principles
• Narrative, history, and temporality in theological interpretation
• Language, metaphor, and storytelling in theology
• Theological order, plurality, and normativity without system
• Narrative, power, and difference in theological traditions

By bringing diverse voices and methods into dialogue, the panel aims to clarify the promise and limits of narrative as a post-metaphysical theological strategy and to foster constructive exchange across disciplinary and confessional boundaries.

THE WORD WITHIN GOD: BONAVENTURE AND THE ONTOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HERMENEUTICAL THEOLOGY

Howell C.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

NARRATIVE INDIVIDUALITY AND MUTUAL ENTANGLEMENT: AN APPRAISAL OF SELF-CONSTITUTION

Watson B.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

WHEN STORIES MAKE TRUTH RESONATE: THE ANALOGIA INCARNATIONIS AS A GRAMMAR

Busti P.(Speaker), Facultés Loyola Paris ~ Paris ~ France

NARRATIVE IDENTIFICATION AND THE MYSTERY OF GOD IN ROBERT JENSON'S THEOLOGY

Moe K.E.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

NARRATIVE AS A PERSONAL, PHRONETIC, AND AFFECTIVE THEOLOGICAL MODE OF RATIONALITY

Buck R.A.(Speaker), Mesa Global ~ Oxford, UK ~ United States of America

MYSTERY AND THE LIMITS OF NARRATIVE IN HERMENEUTICAL THEOLOGY

Jockel R.M.(Speaker), Justus-Liebig-University Giessen ~ Giessen ~ Germany

THERAPEUTIC LIMINAL SPACES AND THE DEMAND FOR DIGNITY: PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 17:10

Pola - A206b

Contact: Joseph Rivera
Chair: Joseph Rivera

The contemporary landscape of inequality, which is marked by polarization, alienation, and conflict, can be understood as a liminal space increasingly governed by a therapeutic logic. This panel introduces the concept of a therapeutic liminal space to examine how modern societies seek to reconcile or reintegrate inequality through frameworks of identity, recognition, and validation. Drawing on philosophy, theology, and social theory, the panel explores how demands for recognition function both as a source of dignity and as a catalyst for rivalry, resentment, and division.

Francis Fukuyama's Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment (2019) provides a key point of departure, framing recognition as a "master concept" that reveals both a fundamental anthropological capacity and a latent source of conflict. If recognition is itself a form of power, does it facilitate or hinder constructive dialogue in contexts of inequality, alienation, and political polarization? How might identity be reconfigured to sustain mutual recognition within therapeutic and dialogical settings, rather than reinforcing competitive or exclusionary dynamics?

The panel also examines the technological and institutional conditions under which certain identities and worldviews are rendered visible and validated, while others are marginalized or suppressed. Finally, it asks whether the pursuit of full equality reshapes the ethical burdens, obligations, and possibilities of dialogue under persistent conditions of inequality. The discussion engages thinkers including Hans Blumenberg, Michel Foucault, René Girard, Edmund Husserl, Jürgen Habermas, Søren Kierkegaard, Catherine Cornille, Francis Fukuyama, Charles Taylor, and Martin Heidegger.

BEYOND THE IDENTITY TRAP: VICTIM IDENTITY, RECOGNITION, AND OUR HIDDEN LIFE IN GOD

Robinette B.(Speaker), Boston College ~ Boston ~ United States of America

AT HOME IN CONTINGENCY: EXISTENTIAL THERAPY FOR GNOSTIC RESSENTIMENT

Rivera J.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

(IN)EQUAL HIERARCHIES OF BIBLICAL EXEGESIS: JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - AT12

Contact: Jonathan Hirschberger
Chair: Jonathan Hirschberger

Jewish Bible interpretation has been positively recognized but also marginalized in Christian exegesis since Late Antiquity, in the Renaissance Period and also in modern times. Simultaneously, there has been an ongoing debate in Jewish tradition about contact with and separation from Christianity when interpreting the Hebrew Bible. Furthered by the fact that both religions share the Hebrew Bible, Jewish and Christian perspectives on biblical interpretation have been interlinked with question of equality and hierarchy. This is especially true for Christian uses of Jewish exegesis for translations of Hebrew Bible texts. This panel will explore this topic by adressing two questions: (1) To what extend were Jewish interlocuters and traditional Jewish bible translations seen as equal sources to use for Christian exegesis? (2) In what form was Jewish exegesis produced in a context dominated by Christian hierarchies? By drawing from historical examples such as e.g. Johannes Reuchlin, Martin Luther and German Field Rabbi's Exegesis in World War I, the panel will seek to reconstruct how traditions form the respective other religion were seen as an (in)equal but necessary partners in own exegetical endeavors.

EARLY CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP AND ITS ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIAL HIERARCHY

Benhur S.(Speaker), Mahindra University ~ Hyderabad ~ India

THE TIQQUNÊ HA-SOFRIM AND PIETRO GALATINO'S TAXONOMY OF JEWISH HISTORY

Angileri I.(Speaker), University "La Sapienza" of Rome - EPHE PSL ~ Rome - Paris ~ Italy

TARGUMIM AND KIMCHIDES – TRADITIONS OF JEWISH TRANSLATIONS AND JEWISH GRAMMAR IN JOHANNES REUCHLIN (1455–1522)

Morgenstern M.(Speaker), Professor emeritus for Jewish Studies ~ Tübingen ~ Germany

HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS, LATIN ANNOTATIONS: THE STUDY OF DAWID QIMHI'S MIKHLOL AMONG CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS BETWEEN XV AND XVI CENTURY

Pepoli M.(Speaker), Università della Svizzera Italiana - Facoltà Teologica di Lugano ~ Lugano ~ Switzerland

MARTIN LUTHER'S INEQUAL USE OF JEWISH EXEGESIS FOR HIS TRANSLATION OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

Hirschberger J.(Speaker), Lecturer for Old and New Testament Studies ~ Augsburg ~ Germany

"PILGRIMS FROM THE BATTLEFIELD": GERMAN FIELD RABBIS' EXEGESIS IN WORLD WAR I

Wolfson G.(Speaker), PhD Candidate ~ Tübingen ~ Germany

TECHNOLOGIES OF THE SACRED: INEQUALITIES, INNOVATIONS, AND INTERRELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 17:10

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Matthew Ryan Robinson
Chair: Anne Hege Grung

The European Society for Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies (ESITIS) invites paper proposals (15-20 min presentations) exploring “technologies of the sacred” in past, present, and future contexts. We are interested in questions concerning the ways technology and the social produce one another as well as contributions that examine how technologies are used and challenged in various religious traditions and contexts in the mediation of tradition, meaning, practice, and authority.

Committed Papers:
+ "I am A and I": AI-induced mutations in religion and religion-induced perceptions of the future of technology" (Anne Kull; University of Tartu)
+ "Impacts of Artificial Intelligence on the Transformation of Teaching and Research in Theology and Religion" (Berg Traboulsi; Haigazian University)

Proposals are invited on topics such as (among others):
+ Historical case studies, e.g., related to pedagogy and devotional practice
+ Ritual, spirituality and technologies
+ Digital innovation and the evolution of religious belief and practice
+ The implications of empirical and natural-scientific turns in the study of religions for the religious self-understandings of religious persons and communities
+ Spiritual practices understood as technologies of the self / community

We particularly invite papers that address these or other topics on religion and technology in relation to the EuARe 2026 theme of "Religions and Inequalities". What potential for (in)equalities within or among religious persons and communities is created or confronted by technological change? How are emerging technologies used to democratise the presence and participation of religious communities in society, and in what ways might they exacerbate exclusion? This open panel aims to foster a rich interdisciplinary conversation about the evolving interplay between sacred traditions and technological innovation.

"I AM A AND I": AI-INDUCED MUTATIONS IN RELIGION AND RELIGION-INDUCED PERCEPTIONS OF THE FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY

Kull A.(Speaker), University of Tartu ~ Tartu ~ Estonia

IMPACTS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

Traboulsi B.(Speaker), Haigazian University ~ Beirut ~ Lebanon

CATHOLICISM AND GENDER ISSUES IN A TRANSNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Raffaella Perin
Chair: Raffaella Perin

The panel aims to explore, from a diachronic and transnational perspective, the role of the "feminine" in the history of Catholicism of the 20th century. Through the examination of various case studies, it seeks to analyze the models of femininity and masculinity constructed by Catholicism and reinterpreted by historical actors, the power relations between women and men, and the ways in which lay and religious women mobilized, as well as the causes and struggles that motivated their engagement. Ángela Pérez del Puerto will focus on the ideological crusade of American Catholicism during the 1940s and 1950s against immoral contents in popular reading and comic books. Raffaella Perin will deal with the history of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) – a lay women organization founded in Utica, New York in 1903 as a charitable, benevolent and patriotic sorority for Catholic ladies. The paper aims at sketch the uncovered history of CDA, and to devote particular attention to the period between the 1950s and 1970s. Juliette Masquelier's paper will compare the rural and upper-class Catholic masculinisties in France and Belgium between the 1930s and 1980s. Maria José Esteban will explore an alternative model of femininity that, while not free from tensions, enjoyed a certain degree of legitimacy within Catholic discourse during Francisco Franco's dictatorship. Carmen Mangion will examine the Catholic women religious (sisters and nuns) and HIV/AIDS ministries in Britain in the 1980s-2000s, whereas Raul Minguez Blasco will tackle the debate on the access of women to ordained ministries. The panel highlights the complexity and plurality of the articulations of the "feminine" and the "masculine" in twentieth-century Catholicism, showing how these categories were constantly negotiated, contested, and redefined in relation to political, social, and cultural contexts.

THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR DECENT LITERATURE: GENDER AND COMICS IN CATHOLIC CULTURAL CONTROL IN THE USA (1939-1950)

Perez Del Puerto A.(Speaker), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid ~ Madrid ~ Spain

THE CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAS (1950S-1970S)

Perin R.(Speaker), Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore ~ Milano ~ Italy

UPPER-CLASS AND RURAL CATHOLIC MASCULINITIES COPING WITH DECHRISTIANIZATION (BELGIUM–FRANCE 1930-1980)

Masquelier J.(Speaker), Université Libre de Bruxelles ~ Bruxelles ~ Belgium

“SINGLE BY VOCATION”: CELIBACY AND LAY APOSTOLATE DURING THE SECOND FRANCOIST PERIOD

Esteban Zuriaga M.J.(Speaker), Centro Universitario de la Defensa de Zaragoza ~ Zaragoza ~ Spain

QUIET WORK WITH VERY FAR-REACHING IMPLICATIONS: WOMEN RELIGIOUS AND HIV/AIDS MINISTRIES IN BRITAIN, 1980S–1990S

Mangion C.(Speaker), Birkbeck College ~ Londra ~ United Kingdom

WOMEN PRIESTS? THE QUESTION OF FEMALE ORDINATION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SPAIN

Minguez Blasco R.(Speaker), EHU University of the Basque Country ~ Leioa ~ Spain

INEQUALITY AS A 'CONTINUED HERITAGE' IN EASTERN EUROPE OR AN URGE TO CREATE A CORRECTIVE TO WESTERN IDEOLOGIES? APPROACHES WHEN DEALING WITH THE UNFINISHED PAST

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 18:20

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Abraham Kovacs
Chair: Corneliu Simut

The panel' goal is to reveal how East-Central European religous communities relate to the struggle for political and economic hegemony exposed by Russia, the USA and the EU for the past 30 years. People feel marginalised as third-class citizens in Europe. Although the West portrays itself reducing and quenching inequalities through commitments to equality but what is their 'Pax Romana' message at its core? It is common knowledge that from the Baltic states down to Bulgaria, the string of post-communist nations constitute a buffer zone for the world's two largest military powers, namely the USA and Russia. The formation and establishment of the EU, as well as its subsequent extension have raised several vital issues for those countries. The region experienced an extremely fast capitalist change from communism to open markets, which resembled what was often designated as the 'wild East', having thus little time to digest the ensuing freedom that was interrupted on occasion by the Balkan war and more recently by the war in Ukraine. Speakers will also seek to investigate how nations churches or political establishments responded to democracy, capitalism, and the imperialist endeavours. Questions will be pursued such as: is nationalist Christian identity a viable corrective to certain Westerm form of liberalism? The former Communist elites have been clinging to power for the past three decades; thus, is this still a valid issue in the region both in the churches and societies. It is believed that these issues are also inextricably connected to the reshaping of Communism into Nationalism by the very same group of elitist individuals/groups Poland, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia. Second, the economic exploitation of the Post-Soviet Countries and the wonders of free Market will be exposed. Third, it is posed that a critical stance against Russia and Western spiritual or political Powers perceived as imperialistic causing various forms of inequalities will be addressed.

MARGINALISED FEELINGS? A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON WESTERN EVANGELICALISM MANIFESTED IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA AFTER 1989

Simut C.(Speaker), Professor, Aurel Vlaicu University ~ Arad ~ Romania

GOOD NEWS OF FREE MARKET IDEOLOGY CONTESTED OR APPROVED? ECONOMIC INEQUALITY IMPACT ON SOCIETY AND RELIGION

Kovacs A.(Speaker), Professor, Debrecen Reformed University ~ Debrecen ~ Hungary

RECOVERING A NATION - THE FEELING OF MARGINALISATION AND RESTORATION IN THE CHRISTIAN CONSTITUTION OF HUNGARY.

Dolan S.(Speaker), Lecturer, St. Mary's University ~ London ~ United Kingdom

TRACING FOR DEFINITIONS OF RELIGION IN POLITICS. THE CASE OF THE HUNGARIAN LEGISLATION IN 1990 AND 2011

Hoppál B. (Speaker), Corvinus University ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

RELIGION IN TIMES OF POWER TRANSFORMATIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A204

Contact: Kseniia (Xenia) Murastova

The panel illuminates how religions and religious discourses evolved during times of transformations, with a specific context on illiberal political frameworks. Across diverse contexts—from Early Islamic to the late Soviet—the papers examine religion not as a static institution but as a dynamic field of negotiation, adaptation, and contestation. Our contributors analyze order-based networks and repertoires of action and representation in short- and long-term historical perspectives. Some look at specific regions within the longue durée framework—for example, the North Caucasus across Tsarist and Soviet state-building projects. Others interrogate short-term church–state bargains as they were shaped by shifts in religious politics and by the context of transregional and global reconfigurations—such as the case of Russian Orthodoxy producing discourses of exclusion in ecumenical and Cold War contexts. We explore intellectual exchange and engagement among different communities—including ethnic, gender, and others—with religious texts and traditions, as seen in studies of Qur'an translations and women's learning circles during 'perestroika,' or of religious debates in Early Islamic Greater Khurasan, where theology, law, and politics intersected amid changing regimes. What were the moral and "material" costs of institutional survival? How did interconnected yet distinct contexts and practices reshape religious authority? Taken together, the panel argues that periods of political transformation generate not only constraints on religious life but also new spaces for mediation, and the re-articulation of authority. By examining gendered practices, courtly debates, institutional compromises, the contributions reveal how the religious field becomes deeply interwoven with social and political transformations, offering a comparative perspective on religion's capacity for resilience and adaptation in times of upheaval.

COURTS OF DEBATE: RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE DURING POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION IN EARLY ISLAMIC GREATER KHURASAN

Ghasemi E.(Speaker), UniMore (DREST) ~ Palermo ~ Italy

"THE ONLY TRUE CHURCH": THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE AND GENEVA ECUMENICAL INITIATIVES (FROM CONFRONTATION TO RAPPROCHEMENT)

Murastova K.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE USURY DILEMMA - TRADE AND TRUST IN CREDIT AND USURY IN "IL NEGOTIANTE" BY GIO. DOMENICO PERI

Angelucci G.(Speaker), LUMSA ~ Roma ~ Italy

WHY THEOLOGY STILL MATTERS TODAY? THE PUBLIC WITNESS OF METR. JOHN ZIZIOULAS'S THEOLOGY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Nikolaos Asproulis
Chair: Nikos Kouremenos

Metropolitan John Zizioulas of Pergamon is widely recognized as one of the most significant Orthodox theologians of our time. His theological vision emphasizes personhood as the fundamental mode of existence for both God and humanity. He identifies the Eucharist as the setting where this personhood is momentarily realized and presents an eschatological perspective that shapes his entire hermeneutics and methodology. This coherent and systematic approach may prove relevant to the future of Orthodox theology, especially in light of various challenges, such as religious rigorism, ideological populism, and issues posed to anthropology and the environment by artificial intelligence and the climate crisis. Critics argue that history, as both a horizon and context, is somewhat diminished in his work; however, it remains a crucial backdrop against which Christianity has evolved and matured since its inception. In this regard, Zizioulas's thought engages in a continuous dialogue with the surrounding pre-modern, modern, and post-modern intellectual and social settings. What elements of his thought are relevant to our current scientific and ideological context? How does his eschatological outlook inform our responses to various forms of moral and social evil? What meaningful role can Hellenic philosophy play today in the context of a gradual de-ontologization of Christianity's character? Is the dialectic between nature and personhood still valuable? Are Zizioulas's theological contributions being taken seriously in the field of Ecumenical theology today? Drawing from his posthumous magnum opus, Remembering the Future, and the recently published English translation, Hellenism and Christianity: The Encounter of Two Worlds, a panel will critically reflect on aspects of Zizioulas's public witness in our contemporary, fragmented, and complex world. The focus will be on those aspects that are relevant to the Church in carrying out her mission in the future.

THE ECUMENICAL RELEVANCE OF ZIZIOULAS' ESCHATOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS: A CRITICAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT

De Mey P.(Speaker), Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven University ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

METROPOLITAN JOHN ZIZIOULAS' THEOLOGY AS THE AXIS OF THE DOCUMENT 'FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

Papanikolaou A.(Speaker), Fordham University, USA ~ New York ~ United States of America

A FUTURE-ORIENTED READING OF TRADITION ACCORDING TO METR. JOHN ZIZIOULAS

Kalaitzidis P.(Speaker), Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

METR. JOHN ZIZIOULAS' WORK AS A HOLISTIC CHRISTIAN "UNIFIED GRAND THEORY"

Vasiljevic B.M.(Speaker), Holy Cross, Boston College ~ Boston ~ United States of America

INEQUALITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A203

Contact: Emmett O'Regan
Chair: Severin Parzinger

This panel invites papers that examine inequality in the contemporary Catholic Church from a wide range of theological perspectives. While Catholic theology affirms the equal dignity of all persons, inequalities persist in how authority is exercised, how experiences are recognized as theologically meaningful, and how inclusion and marginalization are negotiated within ecclesial life.
The panel is anchored by contributions that approach inequality as a theological and hermeneutical problem rather than merely a sociological one. Existing papers engage questions such as the theological status of Christian experience in responding to social inequality; the interpretation of bodily difference, particularly intersex embodiment, within Catholic theological anthropology; and the role of Catholic media in shaping the reception of magisterial authority during the pontificate of Pope Francis.

We warmly welcome papers addressing other dimensions of inequality in the contemporary Catholic Church, including but not limited to: authority and dissent, poverty and economic injustice, gender and sexuality, race and colonial legacies, global Catholicism, synodality, media and power, participation in ecclesial structures, and the reception of doctrine in diverse contexts.
By fostering dialogue across methodologies and themes, the panel aims to contribute to constructive theological reflection on inequality, authority, and justice in the life of the Church today.

This panel is organized on behalf of the Young Curatorium of the European Society for Catholic Theology.

OUR BODIES ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL. ISSUES WITHIN CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS OF INTERSEX.

Schreurs B.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

INEQUALITY AND THE CATHOLIC MEDIA

O''Regan E.(Speaker), The Loyola Institute, Trinity College Dublin ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

“YOU HAVE THE POOR WITH YOU ALWAYS”: PERENNIAL INEQUALITIES IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Evina G.(Speaker), Pontifical Lateran University ~ Rome ~ Italy

CRITICAL EPISTEMOLOGY: TOWARDS AN ACCOUNTABLE SOTERIOLOGY

De Ridder J.(Speaker), Catholic University of Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THE EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN ECOTHEOLOGY RESEARCH NETWORK (ECERN) AND ECOTHEOLOGY IN THE WORLD RELIGIONS: TOWARDS MORE EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES"

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A106

Contact: Tom Sverre Bredal-Tomren
Chair: Tom Sverre Bredal-Tomren, Louk Aourelien Andrianos, Nikolaos Asproulis

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In 2025, the new established European Christian Ecotheology Research network (ECErN), in collaboration with the World Council of Churches (WCC), the VID university and other ecumenical institutions, have initiated the process of making Ecotheology as academic discipline in an international conference involving many theologians from all over the world. This panel on "Ecotheology in the World Religions" explores the capacities of ecotheology as an academic discipline and theological perspectives of diverse faiths to promote ethical frameworks and ecological responsibilites that intercept with global injustices.

As the world grapples with climate change, environmental degradation, and social inequality, ecotheology in all religious traditions have an important role to play in fostering more equitable and sustainable communities.

This panel will examine ecotheological principles in creation care, theology of justice, ecumenical collaboration and eco-spiritual practices across Christian traditions and Indigenous spiritualities. The panel aims at the capacity of ecotheology to inspire both personal and collective actions for just community.

Participants may investigate how each tradition’s sacred texts, rituals, and ethical teachings guide their followers to rethink human interaction with the earth, prioritize creation care, and advocate for vulnerables communities disproportionately affected by eco-injustices.

This open panel seeks to bridge religion and science, faith and action, offering concrete strategies for religious communities to lead in the transformation towards a more just and sustainable world. The discussions will offer insights into how ecotheology not only enhances ecological awareness but also promotes social justice, economic equity, and cultural healing in a rapidly changing world. The panel will highlight ecotheology as a catalyst discipline for building sustainable and spiritually enriched communities.

“TOWARD CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY JUSTICE: AN ECO-THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF HUMAN AND NON-HUMAN RIGHT INEQUALITY IN THE ERA OF ANTRHROPOCENE GREED”

Andrianos L.A.(Speaker), World Council of Churches ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

BRIDGING INEQUALITIES THROUGH NORTH–SOUTH COOPERATION IN ECOTHEOLOGY EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY FROM NORWAY

Bredal--Tomren T.S.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

ECO-DOGMATICS AS A NEW MODEL OF DOING ECOTHEOLOGY IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Asproulis N.(Speaker), The Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

PATHOLOGIES OF SPIRITUALITY: WHEN FAITH TURNS TOXIC

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A102

Contact: Ewelina Berdowicz
Chair: Ewelina Berdowicz

This panel invites contributions that critically examine the dark side of contemporary spirituality, focusing on situations in which religious commitment, spiritual practices, and charismatic authority become sources of harm rather than meaning or ethical guidance. Challenging idealized representations of spirituality, the panel addresses pathological dynamics emerging within religious groups and movements.

We explore phenomena such as spiritual abuse, toxic leadership, coercive control, moral manipulation, symbolic violence, and high-demand religious environments, with particular attention to how authority is constructed and legitimized through religious language, ritual practices, and moral narratives. The panel is especially interested in cognitive, discursive, and embodied mechanisms that sustain dependency, guilt, fear, or silence.

Contributions may address charismatic and entrepreneurial leadership, the economization of faith, narratives of disillusionment and exit, post-membership identity reconstruction, and processes of healing and resistance after leaving harmful religious contexts. The panel also foregrounds comparative and cross-cultural perspectives, alongside methodological reflections on researching sensitive topics, insider–outsider dynamics, and ethical challenges in the study of religious mediated suffering. Contributions are expected to be empirically grounded, theoretically informed, and interdisciplinary.

WHEN SALVATION BECOMES A TRAP: RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE, AUTHORITY, AND THE DYNAMICS OF SPIRITUAL HARM

Berdowicz E.(Speaker), Adam Mickiewicz University ~ Poznań ~ Poland

ALEVI THEOLOGY AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN THE DIASPORA: RELIGION, RECOGNITION, AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF INEQUALITY (CASE STUDIES FROM GERMANY AND AUSTRIA)

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 18:20

Parenzo - A15

Chair: Hüseyin Çiçek

This panel explores how Alevi communities from Turkey have redefined their religious identity and navigated structures of (in)equality in the diaspora contexts of Germany and Austria. Migration opened not only new socio-economic spaces but also initiated a process of religious and political self-empowerment, allowing Alevi actors to articulate their faith more freely within pluralist societies. The panel examines the multi-phased institutionalization of Alevism, from informal gatherings to formalized religious communities engaged in education, welfare, and political representation.

Special attention will be given to the ambivalent relationship of Alevi diasporas to both their country of origin and their host societies: While Turkish state institutions have continued to exert regulatory control over diasporic communities, Germany and Austria have provided new opportunities for institutional recognition. Nevertheless, Alevis still struggle against persistent external categorizations that frame them as a heterodox Islamic sect, undermining their claim to religious autonomy. Drawing on historical analogies and contemporary developments, the panel analyzes how second and third generation Alevi actors serve as key agents of transformation, negotiating visibility, recognition, and self-definition within diasporic and transnational fields.

LEARNING FROM, AND WITH, ALEVI SCHOLARS. THE DEPARTMENT OF ALEVI THEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WEINGARTEN, GERMANY.

Mooney H.(Speaker), PH-Weingarten ~ Weingarten ~ Germany

ALEVI IDENTITY AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN AUSTRIA: DIASPORIC RECOGNITION AND THE STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Çiçek H.(Speaker), PH-Weingarten and Universtity of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

SACRED FOOD, SOCIAL HIERARCHIES. RELIGION, DIET, AND (IN)EQUALITY ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A206b

Contact: Fernando Soler
Chair: Jiapsy Arias

Food is never just sustenance. It is a material practice through which religious communities establish, maintain, and contest social hierarchies. From ancient Christianity debates to colonial impositions of “Christian” diets, religious food practices have served as powerful instruments for both naturalizing inequality and imagining more egalitarian communities. This interdisciplinary panel examines how religions have shaped and been shaped by food-related forms of social differentiation across diverse historical and geographical contexts.

This panel examines the relationship between religious food practices and inequality across three key areas. First, it examines the early Christian communities’ use of food to negotiate social hierarchies, with ascetic diets creating spiritual distinctions. Second, it analyses modern theological views on gender and food, highlighting how dietary codes control and challenge gender inequalities. Third, it explores colonial Christianity’s use of food to establish ethnic hierarchies in the Americas, subordinating indigenous foodways and imposing European norms.

Throughout, the panel addresses critical questions: Who eats what, with whom, when, and how much? How do religious food practices simultaneously express ideals of equality (the “open table”) while creating exclusionary boundaries? How have subaltern communities resisted food-based hierarchies through syncretism and alternative commensality? What continuities exist between ancient medical-theological discourses on diet and modern intersections of religion, nutrition, and social justice?

By bringing together historical, theological, and anthropological perspectives, this panel demonstrates how the study of religious foodways illuminates broader patterns of how religions have variously reinforced and challenged specific forms of inequality: a question at the heart of understanding religion’s role in contemporary society.

INTERSECTING FOOD AND RELIGIONS: TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO CRITICAL FOOD STUDIES AND FOOD THEOLOGIES

Méndez--Montoya Á.(Speaker), Universidad Iberoamericana ~ Mexico City ~ Mexico

THE STRATIFIED BANQUET: GENDER, AGE, AND HIERARCHY AT CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA'S CHRISTIAN TABLE

Soler F.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

YOU WERE THE PRAISE OF FASTING: MEDIEVAL AND MODERN VISIONS OF THE EAST SLAVIC ASCETIC PRACTICE

Legkikh V.(Speaker), Sprachzentrum ~ Munich ~ Germany

WORK, BELIEFS, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE: GLOBAL INSIGHTS AND EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A20

Contact: José María Díaz-Dorronsoro
Chair: José María Díaz-Dorronsoro

This panel presents key findings from an international survey conducted by the research group Footprints: Young People. Expectations, Ideals and Beliefs, coordinated by the Pontifical University of Santa Croce (Rome). The study involved more than 9,000 young people from nine countries across four continents: the United States, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Kenya, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and the Philippines. Researchers from Albany Estate University, Universidad Panamericana, St Mary's University, Universidad de Navarra, Universidad Católica de Argentina, Pontificia Università Salesiana, CLE–Unicamp (Center for Logic, Epistemology and the History of Science), and the University of Asia and the Pacific collaborated in the project.

The survey explores young people's relationship with work, focusing on its social and civic dimensions, their preparation for the labor market through education, and the role played by religiosity, personal convictions, and values in shaping professional choices. Particular attention is given to young people's lived experiences, expectations for the future, and the everyday decisions that influence both their current lives and their projected career paths.

By combining a broad international perspective with sensitivity to cultural and social contexts, the research seeks to understand how young people make sense of work not only as economic activity, but also as a meaningful dimension of personal identity and social contribution. The panel will present the global results of the study, followed by focused analyses of the European countries involved, specifically the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain, highlighting convergences, contrasts, and emerging trends within the European context.

WORK, VALUES, AND SPIRITUALITY: EMERGING FINDINGS FROM A GLOBAL STUDY ON YOUTH, WORK AND RELIGION

Díaz--Dorronsoro J.M.(Speaker), Pontificia Università della Santa Croce ~ Rome ~ Italy

WORK, VALUES, AND UNCERTAINTY: YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Sanders K.(Speaker), St. Mary's University ~ London ~ United Kingdom

LIVES ON HOLD? WORK, EDUCATION, AND VALUES AMONG YOUNG ADULTS IN ITALY

Cordisco I.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Salesiana ~ Rome ~ Italy

ATTITUDES TOWARD WORK AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPAIN: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

Sádaba C.(Speaker), Universidad de Navarra ~ Pamplona ~ Spain

ENVISIONING SOCIAL MACHINES IN RELIGIOUS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A104

Contact: Lukas Brand
Chair: Lukas Brand, Steffi Fabricius, Dominik Winter, Martin Kutz

Humans encounter AI-based social companions both as equals—as simulacra or reflections of humans—and as qualitatively unequal—inferior to or even transcending humans in various aspects. Against this background, the panel aims to address the positive and negative, intended as well as unintended potentials of such social robots and AI-systems within religious learning environments (RLE) as a new socio-informatic setting. Two dimensions are of particular interest: (1) current research on the impact of social robots and AI on RLE, regarding social and educational in/equalities, and (2) robots and AI as subject matter for discussing (social and structural) in/equality from an ethical and relational point of view.

We invite proposals in the intersection of technology and religious learning that address questions such as:

– What (ontological, functional or relational) in/equalities between robots, teachers, and pupils affect RLE?
– Can AI and robotics enable inclusive access to religious knowledge?
– Does generative AI contain relevant biases (e.g. towards a certain religion, denomination or social group) that would lead particularly to discrimination within RLE?
– How should we shape the religious positioning of an AI-based system for RLE?
– How are AI tools received in religious education depending on the religious and cultural context of the specific RLE?
– How can digital RLE (or a “digital catechesis”) be conceptualized when the teacher is a machine?
– Does the material design of a machine influence the spiritual formation in an RLE, i.e. when it comes to topics such as immaterial values and transcendence?
– How can the in/equality within a triangle of human, deity, and technical artefact be addressed and how does AI’s imitation of humans’ or deities’ behaviour obscure or amplify the differences?
– How should conceptualisations of the human–machine in/equality such as New Materialism be addressed in RLE?

AI-ENABLED CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH BIBLICAL TEXTS IN PRIMARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: INCLUSIVE ACCESS, PROMPT LITERACY, AND METACOGNITIVE REFLECTION

Holm A.(Speaker), Erzdiözese München und Freising ~ München ~ Germany

USING AI IN UPPER SECONDARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. AN (UN)EQUAL TOOL FOR MORE (UN)EQUAL STUDENTS?

Winter D.(Speaker), Universität Erfurt ~ Erfurt ~ Germany

“Not Everything Said Online Is True.” Islamic Influencers from the Perspective of Muslim Students and Their Relevance for Religious Learning Environments

Yagdi S.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

NAVEL, TEACH ME TO PRAY! A SOCIAL ROBOT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. FIRST GLANCES AT A PROJECT IN GERMANY

Fabricius S.(Speaker), Kutz M.(Speaker), University of Siegen ~ Siegen ~ Germany

SoulMate: Human-centred design of companion technologies for navigating existential and religious concerns

Nord I. (Institut für Mensch-Computer-Medien ~ Universität Würzburg) , Wolf S. (Institut für Evangelische Theologie ~ Universität Würzburg Institut für Evangelische Theologie ~ Universität Würzburg)

INTERRELIGIOUS STUDIES AND INTERCULTURAL THEOLOGY: REFLECTIONS ON PAST TRAJECTORIES AND EMERGING HORIZONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Matthew Ryan Robinson
Chair: Anne Hege Grung

Hosted by the European Society for Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies (ESITIS), this panel aims to re-examine the terrain of interreligious and intercultural understanding in relation to academic and transdisciplinary (academic-civic) efforts. Over the past decades, in light of the complexities of living in pluralistic societies, interreligious dialogue and intercultural studies have evolved into a much broader and more diverse set of efforts toward mutual understanding and shared flourishing. Rapid changes — political realignments, environmental crises, digital transformations, and demographic shifts — have raised urgent questions for the relevance and future vitality of interreligious cooperation and peaceful, mutually respectful intercultural coexistence. What can IS and IcT offer to European societies now and in the future? What is needed and what is possible? How can the tasks be delineated and agendas set? What is the particular role of scholarship now and in the years ahead?

Papers and Speakers:
+ The Role of Interreligious Studies Under Conditions of Inequality and Religious Pluralism (Yaser Ellethy; President of ESITIS; Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
+ Sacred Spirituality: A New Old Approach to Religion, Ethics, and Human Flourishing (William F. Vendley; Senior Advisor for Religion at the Fetzer Institute and Secretary General Emeritus Religions for Peace)
+ Beyond (Dis-)Agreement as a Focus of Interreligious Encounter: Reframings of How We Imagine One Another (Marianne Moyaert)

By situating these themes within wider societal transformations, invited speakers will reflect on how Interreligious Studies can respond creatively to the complexities and injustices of the 21st century while envisioning intellectually and ethically robust futures for the discipline.

THE ROLE OF INTERRELIGIOUS STUDIES UNDER CONDITIONS OF INEQUALITY AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

Ellethy Y.(Speaker), Vrije Universteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

SACRED SPIRITUALITY: A NEW OLD APPROACH TO RELIGION, ETHICS, AND HUMAN FLOURISHING

Vendley W.F.(Speaker), Fetzer Institute ~ Kalamazoo ~ United States of America

BEYOND (DIS-)AGREEMENT AS A FOCUS OF INTERRELIGIOUS ENCOUNTER: REFRAMINGS OF HOW WE IMAGINE ONE ANOTHER

Moyaert M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

RELIGION AND WORLD POLITICS: CONNECTING THEORY WITH PRACTICE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 18:20

Pola - AT14

Contact: Michael Driessen
Chair: Scott Appleby
authorAMC: Erin Wilson
Speaker: Peter Mandaville, Kristina Stoeckl, Gregorio Bettiza

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This Author Meets Critics panel invites three established scholars of religion and global politics to engage with Erin Wilson's recently published book, Religion and World Politics: Connecting Theory with Practice (Routledge, 2023). Religion and World Politics aims to reframe the way scholars ask questions about the role of religion in world politics today. Designed for practitioners, policymakers, and newcomers to the topic of religion and global politics, the book emphasizes that religion is not something clear, identifiable, and definable, but is fluid and shifting. Consequently, we need analytical frameworks that help make sense of this ever-changing phenomenon. The book presents a critical, intersectional framework for analyzing religion and applies this to case studies of three core areas of international relations (IR) analysis: (1) conflict, violence, and security; (2) development and humanitarianism; and (3) human rights, law, and public life. These cases highlight how assumptions about what religion is and does affect policymakers, theorists, and activists. The book demonstrates the damage that has been done through policies and programs based on unquestioned assumptions and the possibilities and insights to be gained by incorporating the critical study of religion into research, policymaking, and practice.

RELIGION AND WORLD POLITICS: CONNECTING THEORY WITH PRACTICE

Wilson E.(authorAMC), University of Groningen ~ Groningen ~ Netherlands

CARE OF CREATION AS THEOLOGICAL AGENDA - RELIGIONS, CONFESSIONS, BELIEF SYSTEMS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Roland Cerny-Werner
Chair: Judith M Damian

Religious systems as normative-performative networks have and continue to be what we might term “moral agenda-setters”. The survival of humanity—however it may have been “created,” “formed,” or “originated”—was probably a cornerstone of such systems from early on, forming the basis of religious concepts and contributing to evaluating, combating, or even preserving social, political, and cultural (in)equalities. Concepts of creation and the care thereof have continually found their way into political and religious action, be it in ancient/late antique theological foundation processes or in medieval hegemonic discourses; in the proto-emancipatory debates of the Reformation or the human rights-related arguments of the 20th century; in theological, philosophical, or political debates among contemporaries or in discourses that span epochs. They can appear as Christian charity, Islamic hospitality, or Jewish justice. Exploring this central structure of faith-based, cultic thinking and action over the millennia and classifying it in the history of theology is one of the two main pillars of the proposed panel. The second pillar of the panel is dedicated to whether and how such theological concepts of the care for creation could constitute a moral compass of climate negotiations in the 20th and 21st. Key questions we are interested in exploring can include but are not limited to: What impetus and self-image do religions derive from their theological program for possible inter- or transnational engagement on the issue of climate change? What can religions agree upon across religious divides? What do they advocate for together? (How) does urgency arise? How and to whom is authority attributed on this issue, and does this result in calls for action or specific policy recommendations? Researchers from all academic disciplines are welcome to propose contributions and submit them to enable a trans- and interdisciplinary discussion.

MORAL IMPERATIVES AND INFORMAL MEANS: RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Mclarren K.(Speaker), Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

NOT EQUAL, YET NOT UNEQUAL. “CARE FOR CREATION” AS A THEOLOGOUMENON IN THE VATICAN’S PEACE POLICY AFTER THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA

Cerny--Werner R.(Speaker), University of Salzburg ~ Salzburg ~ Austria

TIKKUN OLAM – RESTORING EQUALITY IN CREATION: ECOLOGY AND JEWISH IDENTITY

Klein B.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

CO2 OF INEQUALITIES: THE ECONOMY OF FRANCESCO

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Serena Ionta
Chair: Luigino Bruni

Inequality is a complex, multi-dimensional issue, so it is more accurate to speak of “inequalities” in the plural. Treating it as a single problem often limits our ability to understand and address its many facets. Economic, social, legal, and gender inequalities overlap and reinforce one another, and religion has historically supported and challenged these hierarchies. This panel explores these dynamics through the lens of the Economy of Francesco (EoF), a movement born from Pope Francis’ invitation to young economists, entrepreneurs, and scholars to create a Pact for the Economy inspired by St Francis of Assisi. The Pact promotes an economy grounded in justice, peace, care, and human dignity. The EoF community works toward a fairer economy that combats poverty and exclusion, supports dignified work, aligns finance with real needs, values cultural and ecological diversity, and reduces inequalities in all their forms.
Within this framework, the panel examines key themes from the EoF debate, including spiritual capital, the World Fraternity Report, and critiques of aporophobia and meritocracy. Spiritual capital is presented as a crucial but often neglected influence on economic behavior and social relations. The World Fraternity Report seeks to measure relational factors like trust, cooperation, and inclusion that sustain inequalities. Finally, aporophobia and meritocratic narratives are analyzed as cultural forces that normalize exclusion and justify inequality by emphasizing individual responsibility while obscuring structural causes. By offering a fresh perspective on religion and inequality, the panel challenges dominant ideas about merit, growth, work, and value. Rather than viewing religion only as a source of inequality, it highlights ethical principles from religious traditions — particularly the EoF Pact — to imagine new economic relationships and institutions aimed at reducing exclusion, precarity, and systemic injustice.

SPIRITUAL CAPITAL AND THE HERITAGE OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Bruni L.(Speaker), Lumsa University ~ rome ~ Italy

INEQUALITIES AND SPIRITUAL CAPITAL: PROPOSING A "GOAL 0" FOR THE UN 2030 AGENDA

Rozzoni S.(Speaker), University of Bergamo ~ Bergamo ~ Italy

APOROPHOBIA, MERITOCRACY AND RELIGION

Rotondi V.(Speaker), SUPSI University ~ Manno ~ Italy

THEOLOGY IN THE CAPITALOCENE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Pola - A108

Contact: Joerg Rieger
Chair: Joerg Rieger
authorAMC: Joerg Rieger, Charlotte Jacobs
Speaker: Cornelia Hildebrandt, Michaela Quast-Neulinger, Tabea Schünemann, Luisa Sello

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This Author Meets Critique (AMC) session engages Joerg Rieger's book Theology in the Capitalocene—Theologie im Kapitalozän, which will be available in German adaptation in the Spring of 2026 (Charlotte Jacobs, trans., Theologische Interventionen, Kohlhammer Verlag). Several chapters of this book are adapted from the English original and revised for European contexts, with some new chapters added.

The book (English subtitle: Ecology, Identity, Class, and Solidarity) argues that the study of theology and religion needs to engage the signs of the times both critically and constructively, proposing that the neologism "Capitalocene" describes our geological age more appropriately than the more common notion of the "Anthropocene."

If we find ourselves in times when the flow of capital determines not only economics and politics but also religion and the future of the planet, theologians and scholars of religion may be able to contribute not only by deepening an understanding of the resulting problems but also by identifying potential solutions. As many people find it easier to envision the end of the world than the end of capitalism, theologians and scholars of religion face a formidable task.

This panel brings together scholars, intellectuals, and activists who have engaged earlier versions of Rieger's work. Their presentations will touch on the theme of this year's European Academy of Religion, "Religions and (Inequalities)," and include reflections on deeper causes, implications, and possible responses to the emergent problems of our time.

THEOLOGY IN THE CAPITALOCENE

Rieger J.(authorAMC), Jacobs C.(authorAMC), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

THE CULTURES OF CANON LAW: GLOBAL CATHOLICISM, GLOCAL LEGISLATION, AND THE LOCAL CHURCHES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Ryszard Bobrowicz
Chair: Ryszard Bobrowicz
authorAMC: Judith Hahn
Speaker: Bryan Froehle, Kim Mendoza

This book is the first study to consider findings from sociology, legal anthropology, ethnology, legal pluralism, comparative law and theology in order to gain a better understanding of the diverse cultures of global Catholicism and the cross-cultural challenges arising from Roman Catholic canon law within the local churches. The author, renowned for her work at the intersection of socio-legal studies and canon law, examines the latter as a distinctive example of a European religious legal system that cuts across the myriad legal cultures of the local churches. In light of findings on legal transfer and legal colonialism, and by examining canon law within the emerging field of social and cultural studies approaches to law, her book sheds light on how canon law is imposed upon and received by the local churches around the world. It analyses the challenges and problems arising from the law's transcultural claims within these churches. Based on these observations, the study discusses the critical stance of canon law within contemporary Catholicism and the current debates on a synodal reform of the church and its law.

The book adopts different perspectives: As a sociological study, it describes the contemporary Eurocentrism of global canon law and the conflicts arising from it. As a theological study, it presents ecclesiological reasons for challenging the hegemony of global legislation. As a study of canon law, it suggests ways in which legislation could permit greater diversity while maintaining the unity of the universal church. By analysing canon law as a specific example of a religious legal order with cross-cultural ambitions and global claims, the book also contributes to the study of transnational law in general by illustrating the typical problems that accompany transnational legal regimes in both secular legal systems and religious groups.

Full details available at: https://link.springer.com/book/9783032148117

THE CULTURES OF CANON LAW: GLOBAL CATHOLICISM, GLOCAL LEGISLATION, AND THE LOCAL CHURCHES

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ESOTERIC ISLAM AND THE POLITICAL IMAGINATION: REVISITING MYSTICISM, AUTHORITY, AND ACTIVISM

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Michele Petrone
Chair: Michele Petrone, Alessandro Cancian

This panel reconsiders the place of Islamic esoteric movements in shaping political authority, social agency, and intellectual history from the 14th century to the present. While Sufism and other esoteric traditions have long been acknowledged as key forces in the formation of Muslim spirituality, their political and social roles remain underexplored or framed through outdated paradigms. The enduring assumption that mystical movements are socially static and politically quietist—an idea consolidated in colonial scholarship and revived in the wake of Iran's 1979 revolution—has obscured the complex ways in which mystical networks have negotiated power, legitimacy, and reform across Muslim societies.
We invite contributions that rethink these assumptions by examining how esoteric actors have shaped, contested, or reimagined political life. Submissions may address, for example:
• How did Sufi lodges, saintly lineages, or esoteric brotherhoods intervene in struggles over sovereignty, taxation, or territorial control?
• In what ways did mystical idioms of sainthood, baraka, or cosmology inform political legitimacy or statecraft?
• How did esoteric networks respond to, appropriate, or resist modernizing reforms, colonial governance, or nationalist projects?
• What forms of activism—social, intellectual, or revolutionary—emerged from mystical circles, and how were they theorized by their participants?
• How did esoteric ideas circulate across Sunni–Shi'i, Arab–Persian–Turkic, or Muslim–non-Muslim boundaries, and what political imaginaries did these exchanges enable?
• How have modern states sought to regulate, co-opt, or suppress esoteric movements, and how have these movements adapted to new regimes of surveillance and authority?
• What methodological approaches allow us to rethink the binary between "quietist" and "activist" Islam in light of esoteric traditions' historical complexity?

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF SANCTITY: RECONSIDERING STATUS AND SPIRITUALITY IN SUFI ORDERS

Petrone M.(Speaker), LUISS ~ Rome ~ Italy

“YOU SHALL NOT BE A BURDEN TO SOCIETY”: WORK, DISCIPLINE, AND SOCIAL ETHICS IN MODERN SHIʿI SUFISM

Cancian A.(Speaker), Institute of Ismaili Studies ~ London ~ United Kingdom

MĀʾ AL-ʿAYNAYN AND THE FĀḌILIYYA NETWORK: SUFISM, AUTHORITY, AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE LATE 19TH–EARLY 20TH CENTURY SAHARAN MAGHREB

Patrizi L.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

SACRED SPACES UNDER THREAT: NEW APPROACHES TO DOCUMENTING AND UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WORSHIPPERS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Federico Ruozzi
Chair: Federico Ruozzi

Within religious traditions, violence in spaces of prayer may be interpreted as a paradigmatic form of moral and communal rupture, drawing on foundational narratives of fratricide when directed at worshippers and of sacrilege when targeting sacred space. From a scholarly perspective, however, contemporary efforts to study such violent attacks face a methodological paradox: despite their global persistence, they remain fragmented across existing datasets, undertheorized in violence studies, and unevenly documented. Scholars thus face a twofold challenge: documenting attacks that are inconsistently classified across sources, while also developing analytical frameworks capable of accounting for both shared patterns of violence and dynamics specific to the religious contexts where these events occurred.

This panel, built around the emerging research carried out by a group of historians in Bologna, Italy, on the documentation and analysis of attacks against worshippers in religious spaces, is conceived as an open forum for scholars investigating violence against worshippers and sacred sites across different religious traditions, regions, and methodological approaches. Contributions are welcomed from researchers studying the origins of this phenomenon or specific cases, developing documentation practices, analyzing patterns of attack, or examining institutional and community responses to such violence. The panel will include presentations drawing on Plorabunt, a newly developed global dataset documenting attacks on places of worship, alongside contributions based on archival research, historical and philological-exegetical analysis.

The panel addresses a central question: to what extent can the systematic study of violence against places of worship—grounded in improved documentation, cross-regional comparison, and scientific dialogue—both deepen scholarly understanding and respond to the urgent concerns of religious communities facing recurrent threats?

PLORABUNT: MAPPING VIOLENCE AGAINST WORSHIPPERS IN SACRED SPACES

El Ganadi A.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

BEYOND GENESIS: CAIN, FRATRICIDE, AND VIOLENCE IN EARLY JEWISH INTERPRETATION

Ibba G.(Speaker), Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Centrale / Istituto Superiore di Scienze Religiose della Toscana ~ Firenze ~ Italy

CAIN, ABEL, AND THE ORIGINS OF NON-CAPITAL PUNISHMENT: RABBINIC INTERPRETATIONS AND THE PARADIGM OF THE CITY OF REFUGE

Dal Bo F.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

RECONFIGURING FRATRICIDE: CAIN AND ABEL IN Q. 5:27–32

Badini F.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Palermo ~ Italy

THE VIOLENT CONTESTATION OF SPACE: A MASSACRE OF CHRISTIANS AT THE HANDS OF CHRISTIANS IN LATE ANTIQUE ROME

Proietti M.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

OPERATION BLUE STAR AS VIOLENCE AGAINST SACRED SPACE: TRAUMA, VIOLENCE, MARTYROLOGY, AND SIKH COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Shahnawaz S.(Speaker), Student ~ Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

TERRORISM AS DEVIATION FROM THE MIDDLE-WAY: RACHID GHANNOUCHI'S REACTION TO JIHADIST ATTACK IN TUNISIA

Cargnelutti F.(Speaker), Indipendent Researcher ~ Palermo ~ Italy

THE CONTESTED MEANING OF MEMORY MARKERS: CHURCHES, GENOCIDE, AND THE MAKING OF HERITAGE IN RWANDA

Cristofori S.(Speaker), FSCIRE/Link Campus University, Rome ~ Bologna/Rome ~ Italy

BEFORE RECOGNITION. HOW THE POLITICS OF RELIGION SHAPED THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Maria Birnbaum
Chair: Erin Wilson
authorAMC: Maria Birnbaum
Speaker: Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Iza Hussin, Ely Orrego-Torres

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Recognizing religion in global politics is neither neutral nor benign. This book reveals how recognition operates to reinforce hierarchies, reify religious difference, and deepen political divisions. It reframes religion as a historically contingent category of knowledge and governance. She shifts the question from whether religion should be recognized to how it becomes recognizable. Through the entangled imperial histories of British India and Mandate Palestine, the book traces how colonial and anti-colonial governmental logics shaped the politics of religious minorities, representation, and border-making-dynamics that continue to shape postcolonial states like Pakistan and Israel. Offering a timely critique of the epistemic assumptions underpinning global discourses on religion, sovereignty, and political order, Before Recognition challenges conventional understandings of religion in international relations.

BEFORE RECOGNITION. HOW THE POLITICS OF RELIGION SHAPED THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Birnbaum M.(authorAMC), University of Basel ~ Basel ~ Switzerland

CONVERSIONS AT THE MARGINS: ENSLAVED WOMEN AND RELIGIOUS POWER IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola A208

Contact: Benedetta Chizzolini
Chair: Massimo Carlo Giannini, Serena Di Nepi

This panel examines how enslaved women in early modern Europe and the Mediterranean navigated the pressures, constraints, and opportunities embedded in processes of religious conversion. By bringing together the work of Chizzolini, Abend, and Jaffe, it investigates conversion not as a unidirectional act of assimilation but as a dynamic field of negotiation shaped by overlapping systems of coercion, religious authority, and systems of power within households.

Chizzolini shows how the baptisms of enslaved Muslim and Jewish women in Medicean Tuscany functioned both as an instrument of grand ducal policy and as one of the few avenues through which captives could seek protection, mitigate mistreatment, or alter their symbolic status. Abend examines cases from seventeenth-century Spain in which enslaved women accused of renouncing God mobilized the jurisdiction of the Spanish Inquisition to challenge their masters' violence, revealing how the language of apostasy could be transformed into a tactical resource. Jaffe analyzes the complex trajectories of enslaved women in converso households in Italy, where informal judaizing and contested forms of religious practice exposed competing Christian and Jewish claims over their identities.

Together, the papers aim to demonstrate that conversion—Christian or Jewish, formal or informal, strategic or coerced—was a crucial arena in which enslaved women in early modern Europe confronted structures of domination while forging fragile yet meaningful forms of agency

FEMALE BAPTISMS AND POLITICAL POWER: THE CONVERSIONS OF ENSLAVED WOMEN IN MEDICEAN TUSCANY

Chizzolini B.(Speaker), Tel Aviv University- ERC FemSMed ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

ENSLAVED WOMEN: RENEGADES AND THEIR MASTERS, CONVERSION, ABUSE, AND AGENCY

Abend N.(Speaker), Tel Aviv University-ERC FemSMed ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

BETWEEN CONVERSION AND JUDAIZING: ENSLAVED FEMALE CONVERTS IN JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS IN EARLY MODERN ITALY

Jaffe E.(Speaker), Tel Aviv University- ERC FemSMed ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

FROM EXPLOITATION TO CONTEMPLATION: ETHICAL DISCERNMENT IN ECOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - AT14

Contact: Domenico Pirozzi
Chair: Domenico Pirozzi, Ambrogio Bongiovanni

Scientific inquiry provides indispensable explanations of natural phenomena. Yet, the resolution of controversial questions concerning the ecological responsibility and the sustainability of human practices inevitably involve ethical judgments exceeding the explanatory scope of the natural sciences. However, ethical discernment requires a broad epistemological horizon to integrate empirical knowledge, moral reasoning, and theological reflection, as well as an openness to the moral wisdom embedded in diverse religious and cultural traditions.

In this context, Laudato si' reimagines the Catholic theology through its proposal of an "integral ecology", an approach that integrates ecological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions, and its recognition of the Earth not merely as an object of use but as a subject of moral and religious significance. Creation is understood as gift and as sign, calling for an ethic grounded in responsibility and care. This vision can be fruitfully placed in dialogue with the ethical-moral sensitivities of other religious traditions, many of which concern the sacredness of nature and the virtues of humility, stewardship, and compassion toward all forms of life. This vision nonetheless requires further theoretical and methodological development, especially with reference to concrete ethical decision-making in contested environmental contexts.

This panel proposes to foster interdisciplinary and interreligious dialogue by integrating several approaches within contemporary environmental ethics, while also acknowledging the contributions of non-Christian religious traditions to the ethical imagination surrounding ecological responsibility. The panel aims to promote an ethically robust and practically discerning approach to environmental responsibility, to address the complexity of contemporary sustainability challenges by retrieving the contemplative and ethical dimensions of the human relationship with the created world.

FROM EXPLOITATION TO CONTEMPLATION: ETHICAL DISCERNMENT IN ECOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES

Whelan G.K.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana – Facoltà di Teologia - Direttore del Dipartimento di Teologia Fondamentale della Missione del Collegium Maximum ~ Roma ~ Italy

RELIGIONS AND ECOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY. TOWARDS NEW LEGAL INSTRUMENTS FOR THE PROTECTION AND SHARED GOVERNANCE OF ECOSYSTEMS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Balsamo F.(Speaker), University of Naples “Federico II”, Department of Law ~ Napoli ~ Italy

BEYOND MORAL WITNESS: INTERRELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT AND ETHICAL INFLUENCE IN CLIMATE GOVERNANCE AT COP30

Osnato S.(Speaker), Università di Pisa, Università degli Studi di Ferrara ~ Pisa ~ Italy

GREEN PROMISES AND HIDDEN COSTS: RETHINKING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Pirozzi D.(Speaker), University of Naples “Federico II”, Dep. of Chemical Engineering, Materials and Industrial Production (DICMaPI), Interdepartmental Center for Environment (CIRAM), Interdepartmental Center for Environment (CIRAM) ~ Napoli ~ Italy

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRAL ECOLOGY TEN YEARS AFTER THE ENCYCLICAL “LAUDATO SI': RESULTS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Tigano M.(Speaker), Università di Messina – Dipartimento di Giurisprudenza ~ Messina ~ Italy

GENESIS 1:28 CALLS FOR A SUSTAINABILITY AND ETHICAL RE-INTERPRETATION OF “DOMINION OVER CREATION"

Mendoza--Cano O.(Speaker), Universidad de Colima, México ~ Colima ~ Mexico

EXPERIENCED INEQUALITIES AND SENSITIVITY TO INEQUALITIES IN JEWISH HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Birgit Klein
Chair: Roland Cerny-Werner, Birgit Klein

Throughout history, Jews have often been victims of inequality perpetrated by members of other religions. Biblical tradition is marked by the memory of enslavement in Egypt and liberation, the Exodus. This has resulted in a call not to oppress others based on one's own experience. However, since Jews had lived under foreign rule since ancient times, they were denied equal participation in society for religious reasons until well into the second half of the 19th century, before once again becoming victims of extreme inequality and antisemitism in the 20th century with the oppression, persecution, and murder of more than six million Jews.
The panel contributions analyze, from both a historical and contemporary perspective, how Jews have been and continue to be victims of social and religious inequality and antisemitism. They also examine the extent to which their own experiences have led to increased sensitivity to inequalities, both within the Jewish community and towards non-Jews.

THE ENGAGEMENT OF JEWISH “SALONIÈRES” WITH RELIGIOUS TOPICS AND IDENTITY IN LIGHT OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL INEQUALITIES

Damian J.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

JOSEPH SÜSS OPPENHEIMER: HOW A JEW NAVIGATED — AND TRIED TO TRANSCEND — THE LIMITATIONS OF HIS SOCIETY

Lüllemann D.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF KEMPEN (KĘPNO) VS. THE GOVERNMENT OF PRUSSIA: A SYNAGOGUE’S ATTEMPT TO HIRE A FAMOUS CANTOR IN THE FACE OF INEQUALITY AND XENOPHOBIA

Katz D.(Speaker), University of Cologne ~ Cologne ~ Germany

FROM DEICIDE TO “CHILD-HUNTING”: THE DEICIDE THEOLOGOUMENON AS A FOUNDATIONAL FRAMEWORK—FROM SIMON OF TRENT TO QANON

Cerny--Werner R.(Speaker), University of Salzburg ~ Salzburg ~ Austria

JEWISH REACTIONS TO (ALLEGED) INEQUALITIES IN JEWISH LITURGY

Klein B.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

MESSIANIC JEWS AS BRIDGE OR PROJECTION? EVANGELICAL APPROPRIATIONS AND RELIGIOUS INEQUALITY

Hösel J.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

INTERACTIVE STORIES OF INEQUALITY, EXCLUSION, AND PERSECUTION: A SERIOUS GAME ABOUT THE ONGOING FIGHT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

Kathan M.(Speaker), University of Jewish Studies Heidelberg (HfJS) ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

BETWEEN GOLAH AND TFUTZAH: SHMUEL YOSEF AGNON, GERMANY AND THE METAMORPHOSIS OF EXILE

Paoloni G.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia (RE) ~ Italy

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION TODAY: TOPICS - METHODS - APPROACHES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Brandon Watson
Chair: Brandon Watson, Hans-Peter Grosshans

Contemporary approaches and contributions to the field of philosophy of religion can be presented. The issue of the overall EuARe conference "(In)equalities" can be addressed regarding its relevance in and for philosophical study of religion. Of particular interest are contributions which attempt to reconstruct and reorient philosophy of religion considering contemporarily relevant philosophical challenges. The panel also welcomes papers that propose new methodological approaches and studies in the field of philosophy of religion broadly construed. This panel is organized in cooperation with the European Society for Philosophy of Religion (ESPR).

RELIGION AND THE CHALLENGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS

Ozioko J.U.(Speaker), Pontifical Urbaniana University ~ Vatican City ~ Vatican City State (Holy See)

QUANTUM REALITY AS LIFE-GUIDING: A CRITIQUE OF THE EXISTENTIAL REALIST INTERPRETATIONS OF QUANTUM MECHANICS

Andrejc G.(Speaker), University of Groningen ~ Groningen ~ Netherlands

THE REALITY OF PRESENCE: INGOLF DALFERTH'S THEOLOGICAL REALISM

Myers B.(Speaker), Alphacrucis University College ~ Sydney ~ Australia

DIVERSIFYING PERSPECTIVES: THE RELIGIOUS-PHILOSOPHICAL DEPTHS OF MEANING

Watson B.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

DIVINE HIDDENNESS AND THE UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF THEISTIC BELIEF

Morales D.J.(Speaker), LCC International University ~ Klaipeda ~ Lithuania

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION FROM INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES: PRELIMINARY HYPOTHESES

De Caprio D.(Speaker), University of Strasbourg ~ Strasbourg ~ France

ON INJUSTICE AND INEQUALITY IN THE STUDY OF BUDDHISM

Stepien R.(Speaker), Austrian Academy of Sciences ~ Vienna ~ Austria

GENDER (IN)EQUALITIES IN RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS: THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS, NORMATIVE PRACTICES, AND CONTEMPORARY RECONFIGURATIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Pola - A210

Contact: Davide S Amore

Across religious traditions, gender has functioned as a central axis through which systems of authority, normativity, and social hierarchy have been articulated, contested, and transformed. Theologies, legal frameworks, ritual practices, and symbolic imaginaries have historically both legitimized gendered inequalities and, in certain contexts, provided resources for their critique and reconfiguration. This panel aims to explore how gender (in)equalities are constructed, maintained, and negotiated within diverse religious systems, examining both classical formulations and contemporary reinterpretations.

Bringing together comparative, historical, theological, and anthropological perspectives, the panel invites contributions that analyse gender as a site of tension between tradition and change. Attention will be given to how sacred texts, doctrinal discourses, jurisprudential traditions, and ritual practices shape gender roles, access to religious authority, and embodied religious experience. At the same time, the panel seeks to highlight internal debates, reformist movements, and feminist, womanist, and queer theologies that challenge inherited hierarchies and propose alternative hermeneutical and ethical frameworks.

By situating gender within broader discussions of power, embodiment, and social inequality, this panel aims to foster critical dialogue on the ways religions both reflect and actively participate in the production of gendered (in)equalities. Contributions may address one or more religious traditions or adopt a comparative or transdisciplinary approach, offering insights into how religious thought and practice continue to shape—and be reshaped by—contemporary struggles for gender justice.

Normative Practices, and Gendered Vulnerabilities: Examining the intersection of African and Islamic Religious Traditions as Axis of Inequality in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Societies

Kubai A.(Speaker), Uppsala University and Södertörn University College ~ Uppsala ~ Sweden

BETWEEN HALAKHA AND EGALITARIANISM: ORTHODOX JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Tourgeman L.S.(Speaker), École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales ~ Paris ~ France

GENDERED (IN)EQUALITIES IN A THREE-SELF CHURCH: WOMEN'S RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY, NORMATIVE PRACTICES, AND INSTITUTIONAL RECONFIGURATION IN RURAL CHINA

Shiliang F.(Speaker), Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonn ~ paris ~ France

THRESHOLDS OF DEVOTION: CONTESTED SACRED GEOGRAPHIES, FEMALE ACCESS, AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN PAKISTAN

Chaudhury A.(Speaker), UNIVERSITY OF YORK ~ HESLINGTON, YORK ~ United Kingdom

QUEERING REDEMPTIVE MASCULINITIES: REIMAGINING MASCULINITY IN AFRICAN PENTECOSTAL CONTEXTS

Van Der Walt C.(Speaker), Ngcobo S.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu Natal ~ Pietermarizburg ~ South Africa

PAGAN QUEERNESS. GENDER DYNAMICS AND POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY PAGANISM

D''Agostino E.(Speaker), SIMBDEA - Italian Society for Museum and Heritage Anthropology ~ Roma ~ Italy

THE FEMININE NUMINOUS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF INEQUALITY IN ANCIENT GREEK RELIGION

Zaffarana C.(Speaker), Independent Researcher, Italy ~ Oleggio ~ Italy

SACRED COMMITMENTS, STRUCTURED INEQUALITIES: A LAW & ECONOMICS ANALYSIS OF ENGAGEMENT IN MOSAIC LAW

Wu N.(Speaker), EDLE (University of Hamburg) ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

SPIRITUAL MOTHERHOOD AND SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, GENDER AND POWER

Flatebø T.(Speaker), MF - Norwegian School of Theology, Religion, and Society ~ Oslo ~ Norway

SEEKING BHIKKHUNĪ ORDINATION ACROSS BORDERS: ONE WOMAN'S PATH TO UPASAMPADĀ AMID TEXTUAL AUTHORITY AND CONTESTED PRACTICES.

Nenna M.V.(Speaker), Università di Roma La Sapienza ~ Roma ~ Italy

MENSTRUATION BETWEEN SACREDNESS AND POLLUTION: FROM BRAHMANICAL TRADITIONS TO THE DIGITAL REINTERPRETATION OF STIGMA

Giampietri V.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome / Antwerpen University ~ Rome ~ Italy

PRIESTHOOD WITHOUT AN ALTAR: BRIGANTESSE, RITUAL AUTHORITY, AND GENDER IN POST-UNIFICATION SOUTHERN ITALY (1861–1870)

Scianguetta R.(Speaker), SISR - Società Italiana di Storia delle Religioni ~ Montesano sulla Marcellana (SA) ~ Italy

GENDER DYNAMICS IN ISLAM: TEXT, TRADITION, AND CONTEMPORARY RECONFIGURATIONS

Amore D.S.(Speaker), I.C. "G. D'Annunzio"/SISR ~ Motta Sant'Anastasia, CT ~ Italy

DIMENSIONS OF RELIGIOUS BIO-EQUALITY: EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS IN RELIGIOUS CONTEXTS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A203

Contact: Janka Balázs
Chair: Janka Balázs, Ágnes Birtalan

This panel invites scholars to explore the notion of bio-egalitarianism among humans, animals, and plants, as well as non-anthropocentric ethical approaches to life, in the context of traditional and modern religiosity.The philosophical dynamic between humanity, nature, and the divine has been debated since Spinoza's formulation of Deus sive Natura. However, in contemporary scholarship, the academic exploration of religious environmentalism is often traced back to Lynn White's article in Nature, titled The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis (1967). White argues that ecological degradation was caused by the anthropocentric and instrumentalist evaluation of nature, attributed to Christian doctrine. While White's paper sparked decades of critique, the discourse generated by his essay highlighted the need to explore new moral frameworks in religion that could shift the relationship between humans and other species in a less anthropocentric direction. Today, religious environmental ethics is a recognized multidisciplinary field, represented by researchers such as Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Allen Grim, among others, engaging questions such as:How can religious traditions relate to contemporary ideas such as environmentalism or conservationism?; What historical and exemplary (textual or ritual) evidence indicates bio-egalitarian or non-anthropocentric narratives within religious traditions?;How do contemporary religious specialists, influential figures, and their communities respond to ecological crises and the ethics of non-human life?;How does religious practice adapt and transform in the light of new socio-environmental challenges, such as ecological degradation, consumerism, and capitalism? This panel welcomes scholars from all disciplines to contribute their findings and research relating to one or more of these themes.The philosophical dynamic between humanity, nature, and the divine has been debated since Spinoza's formulation of Deus sive Natura. However, in contemporary scholarship, the academic exploration of religious environmentalism is often traced back to Lynn White's article in Nature, titled The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis (1967). White argues that ecological degradation was caused by the anthropocentric and instrumentalist evaluation of nature, attributed to Christian doctrine. While White's paper sparked decades of critique, the discourse generated by his essay highlighted the need to explore new moral frameworks in religion that could shift the relationship between humans and other species in a less anthropocentric direction.Today, religious environmental ethics is a recognized multidisciplinary field, represented by researchers such as Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Allen Grim, among others, engaging questions such as: How can religious traditions relate to contemporary ideas such as environmentalism or conservationism? What historical and exemplary (textual or ritual) evidence indicates bio-egalitarian or non-anthropocentric narratives within religious traditions? How do contemporary religious specialists, influential figures, and their communities respond to ecological crises and the ethics of non-human life? How does religious practice adapt and transform in the light of new socio-environmental challenges, such as ecological degradation, consumerism, and capitalism?

REUNION BETWEEN NATURE AND SOCIETY A CASE STUDY BASED ON MONGOLIAN NARRATIVES ON ANIMAL-SHAPED SPOUSE

Birtalan Á.(Speaker), ELTE Institute of Mongolian and Inner Asian Studies ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

SPIRITUAL COUNSEL FROM THE CHORUS OF CREATION: RISHI SUFISM, WATER, AND MORE-THAN-HUMAN-EQUALITY IN EARLY MODERN KASHMIR

Dziedzic P.J.(Speaker), Harvard University ~ Cambridge, MA ~ United States of America

CULTURE, ECONOMY AND HUMAN DIGNITY: REFLECTIONS ON NON-ANTHROPOCENTRIC ETHICS

Strappati G.(Speaker), Instituto Superior de Musica Jose Hernandez de Buenos Aires ~ Lecturer of Course on Performing Arts Economics in International Relations at the Faculty of Economics G. Fua ~ Festival Pensiero Plurale

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF THE SELF AND THE ENVIRONMENT – REFLECTIONS ON THE TIANTAI THEORY OF THE BUDDHA-NATURE OF THE INSENTIENT

Pap M.(Speaker), ELTE Institute of Chinese Studies ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE BUDDHIST ‘REVERENCE FOR LIFE’: THE TEACHINGS OF HSING YUN IN LIGHT OF BIOCENTRIC ETHICS

Balázs J.(Speaker), ELTE Institute of Chinese Studies ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

CREATION AND ECOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION OF THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A103

Contact: Severin Parzinger
Chair: Emmet O'Regan

The increasingly urgent concern for our Common Home in the face of the threats and dramatic effects of climate change, the destruction of biodiversity, reckless exploitation and the struggle for increasingly scarce resources such as water, soil, air, etc. is driving current philosophical and theological debates. Christian faith must re-examine its relationship to creation in light of the crises and conditions of the Anthropocene. The social, cultural and political challenges posed by the experience of an increasing threat to creation are the starting point for fundamental theological and ethical reflections on the relationship between God, humanity and the world.

Any theological approach to creation is therefore always related to practice and has to do with transformation. In the perspective of an ecological theology, creation is the transforming creative impulse of God inherent in creation, which works in human actions and, in view of the responsibility incumbent on human beings as creatures and images of God, expects them to use their creativity to seek and pursue new paths that make a shared and good life on this one planet possible, bearing in mind the limits of growth and the finiteness of the Earth.

However, the development of a profound ecological and hermeneutical transformation in the service of life in abundance for all people and creatures will only succeed through global networking as well as interconfessional, intercultural, and interreligious engagement of theological reflection and faith practice. It concerns not only a liberating practice of sustainability, but also an eco-sensitive and decolonial reorientation of theology itself.

In this sense, the panel – hosted by the Young Curatorium of the European Society for Catholic Theology (ESCT) – seeks to discuss theological and interdisciplinary perspectives from Europe and beyond, that take on this task and seek new paths of Christian faith and theology in the spirit of an integral ecology.

FAITH AND JUSTICE FOR OUR COMMON HOME: AN ECO-THEOLOGICAL APPROACH

Cunningham C.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

REVISITING THEOLOGY OF CREATION IN CONVERSATION WITH LIBERATING THEOLOGIES AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Parzinger S.(Speaker), University of Osnabrück ~ Osnabrück ~ Germany

FROM ST FRANCIS TO POPE FRANCIS: SACRED STEWARDSHIP IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Strumble N.(Speaker), DCU - Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

APPROACHING CREATION WITH A KENOTIC MIND: PATRISTIC THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE WITH CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

Hrabal V.(Speaker), Titus Brandsma Institute ~ Nijmegen ~ Netherlands

SEPTUAGINT STUDIES - TOWARDS VOLUME II OF THE HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL LEXICON OF THE SEPTUAGINT (HTLS): OUTCOMES AND PERSPECTIVES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A1

Contact: Anna Mambelli
Chair: Laura Bigoni

The international project on the vocabulary of the Septuagint that is behind "The Historical and Theological Lexicon of the Septuagint" (ed. by Eberhard Bons and Daniela Scialabba, in collaboration with Anna Mambelli; 4 vols., Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020–) is close to the publication of the second volume of the lexicon, with lemmas from "delta" to "iota". This panel aims to bring together scholars that have been working on these lemmas to discuss research outcomes and selected examples of the impact of lexicographical analysis on Septuagint research, exploring both its context of origin and its early reception.
The issues explored by the panel include:
a) Septuagint lexicography and translation techniques;
b) Septuagint vocabulary in relation to the Greek world;
c) The contribution of the Septuagint to the history of the Greek language;
d) The impact of Septuagint vocabulary on Jewish and early Christian authors.

CONSTRUCTING, DESCRIBING, AND RE-SEMANTIZING ANCIENT SLAVERY IN THE SEPTUAGINT AND EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

Mambelli A.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia/FSCIRE, Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE IDEA OF HOPE IN THE SEPTUAGINT AND IN PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA

Bons E.(Speaker), University of Strasbourg/FSCIRE, Bologna ~ Strasbourg ~ France

HOW FAR IS ἜΠΙΣΤΉΜΗ A BIBLICAL LEXEME? TRACING THE ROOTS OF KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN THE SEPTUAGINT AND EARLY CHRISTIAN AUTHORS

Bigoni L.(Speaker), University of Fribourg ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

IS THE FOREIGN AN ENEMY? SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE LEMMA ἜΧΘΡΌΣ FROM CLASSICAL GREEK TO THE LXX

Carnevale L.(Speaker), University of Bari Aldo Moro ~ Bari ~ Italy

TO BE OR NOT TO BE COMPASSIONATE? CONSIDERATIONS ON THE USE OF THE ADJECTIVE ἜΛΕΉΜΩΝ IN THE SEPTUAGINT, JEWISH-HELLENISTIC LITERATURE AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

Scialabba D.(Speaker), Pontifical Biblical Institute of Rome - Fscire ~ Rome ~ Italy

THYMOS BETWEEN GREEK LITERATURE AND THE SEPTUAGINT: SEMANTIC AND THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Bellantuono A.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Lille ~ Lille ~ France

FATED OR REQUIRED? TRACING ΔΕΐ̔ FROM SOCIAL CUSTOMS TO ESCHATOLOGICAL FULFILLMENT IN THE SEPTUAGINT

Negri G.(Speaker), Nadini C.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata ~ Roma ~ Italy

AND THE VEIL WAS TORN: FOR AN ORTHODOX-PENTECOSTAL ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Henrique Mata de Vasconcelos
Chair: Brandon Gallaher, Henrique Mata de Vasconcelos

Two major Christian traditions are known for having the religious experience of the Holy Spirit as the core of their spirituality. Yet, they are not ecumenically engaged as the One Church of the Holy Trinity. Recently, however, it has been suggested by Stephen J. Land and Dony K. Donev that the centrality given to the experience of the Spirit in both St. Simeon the New Theologian's Orthodox tradition and in Pentecostalism are similar. Writings of other Byzantine fathers have also been seen as close to the Pentecostal experience. Not only that, but it has been asserted that, regarding its spirituality, Pentecostalism is more Orthodox and Eastern than Catholic and Western. This panel aims to take these claims into question by opening a space where Christians from both traditions can establish an ecumenical dialogue, charism, and theology, or theologies. From the beginning, two things are fundamental to the development of this ecumenical relationship: First, Christian unity only can be achieved through the process of accepting diversity and by means of, in Ramon Panikkar words, dialogical dialogue. Second, as Wojciech Gajewski notes, "the Pentecostal movement is an exceptionally diverse, multimillion-member, and highly dynamic phenomenon." Therefore, our primary aim is to build Christian Unity, respecting the diversity and uniqueness of each tradition. For this, we will include papers exploring the religious experience of God, ontology, pneumatology, mysticism, liturgy, worship, and sacramentality.

ORTHODOX-PENTECOSTAL ACADEMIC DIALOGUE

Woloschak G.(Speaker), IOTA/Northwestern University ~ Evanston ~ United States of America

"THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, 'COME'": THE EUCHARIST, THE SPIRIT AND THE RENEWAL OF ECUMENISM IN SERGII BULGAKOV

Gallaher B.(Speaker), University of Exeter ~ Exeter ~ United Kingdom

DIALOGUE FROM THE SPIRIT: SOME FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS FOR ORTHODOX-PENTECOSTAL ECUMENISM IN LATIN AMERICA

Quevedo Rodríguez A.M.(Speaker), Universidad Santo Tomás, Colombia/Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania ~ Bogotá ~ Colombia

TEARS, TONGUES, AND WITNESS: THE MISSIOLOGICAL CHARISMS OF ORTHODOXY AND PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIANITY IN THE 21ST-CENTURY

Yong A.(Speaker), Fuller Theological Seminary ~ Pasadena ~ United States of America

PALAMITE ONTOLOGY AND PENTECOSTAL-CHARISMATIC RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE: AN EXPERIENTIAL AND METAPHYSICAL THEOLOGY

Mata De Vasconcelos H.(Speaker), Faculdade Jesuíta de Filosofia e Teologia, Belo Horizonte/Œcumenicum, Angelicum, Roma ~ Belo Horizonte ~ Brazil

THE PENTECOSTALS AND THE ORTHODOX, SPIRITUAL SIBLINGS? AN OUTSIDERS REFLECTIONS

Stayne J.(Speaker), Œcumenicum, Angelicum, Roma/Durham University, England ~ Durham ~ United Kingdom

SYNODALITY, RENEWAL, AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THEIR MEANING AND IMPACT

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Jens Van Rompaey
Chair: Jens Van Rompaey, Federico Cinocca

During the pontificate of Pope Francis (°1936-2025; 2013-2025), synodality quickly emerged as a central theme and it prominently figures in his legacy. Now that his pontificate has ended, the real challenge lies in the further implementation of the 2021-2024 synod of bishops. This implementation deserves further attention because of the extent of the process and the number of important topics associated with it. As this process will take until at least 2028, it will be one of the most extensive reform processes since the Second Vatican Council.

Such a process of reform, of 'synodalization' of the Church, however, raises many questions. The Final Document, e.g., calls for a "culture of transparency, accountability and evaluation". However, what this exactly entails is unclear. Moreover, these concepts can be approached in different ways depending on the theological sub-discipline from which questions are raised. In this panel, we do not focus on one specific sub-discipline, however, we do place at the center the overarching question: how can we determine, measure, or assess the synodalization of the Church? By which criteria can we see whether the Church, locally, continentally, or universally, has become or is becoming more synodal, more transparent, accountable, and evaluative? Or, to approach the question of synodalization from another angle: which practices or habits need to be reformed or reconfigured to showcase the further synodalization of the Church?

This panel therefore invites submissions that (i) help to address the question of how to evaluate and understand the synodalization of the Church, (ii) attempt to either learn from concrete synodal practices in the Church or to evaluate the Church from a more systematic understanding synodality, and/or (iii) offer interdisciplinary or ecumenical approaches that contribute to an evaluation or further implementation of synodality in the Catholic Church.

LITURGY AS THE FIRST SCHOOL OF (IN)EQUALITY? A SYNODAL READING

Cinocca F.(Speaker), Emmanuel College ~ Boston ~ United States of America

QUO VADIS? THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE, THE RISKS OF SYNODALITY, AND THE LIMITS OF DISCERNMENT

Bobrowicz R.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

ROOTS OF RESISTANCE TO SYNODAL CONVERSION. FOR AN ECCLESIAL AUTHENTICITY

De Biasio G.(Speaker), Pontifical Theological Faculty of Southern Italy; I.S.S.R. “Ss. Apostoli Pietro e Paolo” ~ Napoli ~ Italy

"WHEN RENEWAL AND ADVANCEMENT STALL”: A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHICAL READING OF THE ASSESSMENT OF SYNODALIZATION IN/OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Van Rompaey J.(Speaker), UCLouvain ~ Louvain-la-Neuve ~ Belgium

DEMOCRACY NEEDS RELIGION AND RELIGION NEEDS DEMOCRACY: ARE CATHOLICS CONCERNED?

Costa P.(Speaker), Fondazione Bruno Kessler, Center for Religious Studies ~ Trento ~ Italy

SYNODAL DIVERSITY WITHIN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. CAN THE LATIN CHURCH LEARN FROM THE EASTERN CHURCHES?

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

NEW SPIRITUAL MOVEMENTS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ISSUES IN TAIWAN: FROM MOUNT ZION TO TAI JI MEN

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A105

Contact: Massimo Introvigne
Chair: Camelia Marin

This session explores the evolving landscape of new spiritual movements in Taiwan and the challenges they face in securing full protection of freedom of religion or belief. Through six case-based and theoretically informed papers, the panel traces how diverse movements—ranging from the New Testament Church's Mount Zion community to Tai Ji Men—have navigated state institutions, public perceptions, and shifting legal frameworks. The opening paper situates the Mount Zion saga within a comparative perspective, showing how early tensions between the New Testament Church and Taiwanese authorities foreshadowed later conflicts involving other minority spiritual groups. Subsequent contributions examine Tai Ji Men from multiple angles: the spiritual and emotional significance of the Miaoli sacred land; the use of taxation as a tool of indirect discrimination; the relationship between equality, trust, and freedom of belief; the cultural meaning of the master–disciple tradition; and the broader implications of the case for institutional integrity and sustainable governance. Together, these papers illuminate recurring patterns—misinterpretation of spiritual practices, administrative overreach, and the fragility of institutional trust—while highlighting the resilience of Taiwan's spiritual communities. By bringing historical, legal, cultural, and interdisciplinary perspectives into dialogue, the session offers a comprehensive assessment of how Taiwan's democratic system grapples with the rights of new spiritual movements and what these cases reveal about the future of religious liberty on the island.

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH: THE MOUNT ZION SAGA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Introvigne M.(Speaker), CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions) ~ Torino ~ Italy

TAI JI MEN'S SACRED LAND OF MIAOLI

Nemes M.(Speaker), Hungarian Academy of Arts Research Institute of Art Theory and Methodology ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

TAXES AS A TOOL OF RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION: THE CASE OF TAI JI MEN

Amore D.(Speaker), IC Gabriele D'Annunzio ~ Motta Sant'Anastasia ~ Italy

EQUALITY, FREEDOM OF BELIEF, AND THE TAI JI MEN CASE

Chuang Y.C.(Speaker), Tai Ji Men Qigong Academy ~ Taipei ~ Taiwan

CONSCIENCE, BELIEF PRACTICES, AND INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY: A SUSTAINABILITY ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE ON THE TAI JI MEN CASE

Lu M.C.(Speaker), National Chung Hsing University ~ Taichung ~ Taiwan

SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY 2026

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A2

For the complete call for papers, including detailed section descriptions, guiding questions, and context, please see: https://scriptureandtheology.org/panels/2026-rome/.
Without consulting the full text, proposals cannot be properly prepared.

The Scripture and Theology Forum invites proposals for its 2026 program at the European Academy of Religion in Rome. The full call outlines five sections:
1. Interactions Between Biblical Studies and Theology: Methodological exchanges, mutual dependencies, and best-practice models (see full call for specific questions and publication details).
2. A History of Scripture and Theology: Three parts on premodern integration, Enlightenment-era separation, and contemporary consequences/retrievals (including precise chronological and thematic scope in the full call).
3. Scripture and Theology – Open Call: Topics and methods are specified in the full call, including examples of acceptable proposals.
4. David Ford on the Gospel of John: Closed session, participation criteria and publication plans described only in the full call.
5. Scripture, Theology, and the Advent of AI: The full call lists required foci, sample themes, and expectations for short papers.

Submission requirements (abstract length, biographical note, deadlines, and word counts for potential publication) are given in detail in the full call.

We welcome contributions from various fields, countries and denominations, and look forward to meet you in Rome!

ART AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY: A BRIEF PANORAMA OF POSSIBILITIES, CHANCES, AND RISKS

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Italy

DEVELOPMENTS AND PROGRESS DEALING WITH THE FAITH-AND-REASON QUESTION

Oviedo L.(Speaker), Pontifical University Antonianum ~ Rome ~ Italy

SCRIPTURAL HERMENEUTICS IN THE ORTHODOX-CATHOLIC DIALOGUE ON PRIMACY AND SYNODALITY

Keramidas D.(Speaker), Pontifical University St Thomas Aquinas “Angelicum” in Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

BIBLICAL NARRATIVE AND METAPHYSICAL ICEBERGS: AN ARGUMENT FOR DIVINE IMPASSIBILITY VIA THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION

Moe K.E.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY: THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Elliott M.(Speaker), Highland Theological College ~ Inverness ~ United Kingdom

THE USE OF SCRIPTURE IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: WOLFHART PANNENBERG AND WAYNE GRUDEM AS CASE STUDIES

Innerdal G.(Speaker), NLA University College ~ Bergen ~ Norway

THE IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN

Turkiewicz G.(Speaker), Pontificial University of Saint Anthony ~ Rome ~ Italy

ESCAPING THE LINGUISTIC TRAP: DECONSTRUCTING THE 'HIGH/LOW' BINARY THROUGH JOHANNINE MESSIANISM.

Ebode Atangana W.M.(Speaker), Cardinal Bea Centre for Judaic Studies ~ Rome ~ Italy

“INCLINE YOUR EAR”: ATTENTION, WISDOM, AND MORAL FORMATION IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Coleman S.(Speaker), Westminster Theological Seminary ~ Philadelphia ~ United States of America

NOVEL AI-BASED APPROACHES TO BIBLICAL STUDIES

Drake L.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

DIVINE KNOWLEDGE AND ARTIFICIAL ‘OMNISCIENCE’

Van Den Belt H.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn ~ Amsterdam and Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

EQUALITIES AND INEQUALITIES IN CHRISTIAN BIOETHICS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Emily Beatrix Hammer
Chair: Emily Beatrix Hammer, Tabea Ott, Tizia Wendorff

Questions of equality and inequality have always been crucial to the moral life of communities, shaping how societies understand care, justice, and responsibility. Within the Christian tradition, theological and ethical reflection has profoundly influenced attitudes towards helping, healing, and defining the role of health care practitioners. From the early Church's ministry to the sick, to contemporary debates on global health and biotechnology, Christian values continue to inform and at time challenge prevailing assumptions in bioethics and medical ethics. The relationship between religion and bioethics therefore remains both endured and contested, and merits renewed discussion in light of this year's conference theme, Religions and (In)Equalities.

This panel seeks to explore how Christian bioethics can illuminate and respond to issues of equality and inequality in healthcare and medicine. How can theology contribute to and shape the discourse on distributive justice in a world of limited medical resources, and on structural inequalities that affect access to care and health outcomes? What forms of moral responsibility arise for healthcare professionals, religious institutions, and communities of faith? Finally, what role does spiritual care play within healthcare?

We invite contributions from dogmatic, ethical, historical, and exegetical perspectives that analyse how Christian bioethical thought engages questions of justice, equality, and inequality. Papers may address influential theological figures from the church fathers to contemporary theologians, or they may take a thematic approach to issues such as global health disparities, gender and disability, or the ethics of emerging biotechnologies. By bringing diverse perspectives together, the panel aims to clarify how Christian ethical resources can both expose and help redress inequalities in healthcare today.

(IN)EQUALITIES IN ASSISTED REPRODUCTION. REPRODUCTIVE TOURISM AS PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY?

Woehlke E.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München ~ Munich ~ Germany

GLOBAL HEALTH IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS: CREATION JUSTICE AS A THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIVE HORIZON

Chilian L.(Speaker), Universität Zürich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE: CONTEMPORARY DEBATES AND IMPLICATIONS

Arndt M.(Speaker), Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

VISIBILITY AS AN THEOLOGICAL-ETHICAL TOPOS FOR ADDRESSING BIOETHICAL QUESTIONS

Ott T.(Speaker), Universität Wien ~ Vienna ~ Austria

ALL IN THE MIND?: PERSONALITY DISORDERS AND THEIR THEOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

Baczyk--Bell C.(Speaker), Girton College ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

PRETTY PRIVILEGE. INEQUALITY IN AESTHETIC MEDICINE

Wendorff T.(Speaker), Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg ~ Freiburg ~ Germany

REVISITING PRINCIPLISM IN THE AGE OF BIG DATA: A CHRISTIAN ARGUMENT FOR CENTRING JUSTICE IN INFORMED CONSENT

Hammer E.B.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

A SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - AT13

Contact: Olga Breskaya
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl
authorAMC: Olga Breskaya, Giuseppe Giordan, James Richardson
Speaker: Milda Ališauskiene, Alberta Giorgi, Dmytro Vovk

This panel is dedicated to the discussion of the volume A Sociology of Religious Freedom by Olga Breskaya, Giuseppe Giordan, and James T. Richardson. The book offers a sociological analysis of freedom of and freedom from religion as a key concept for understanding the place of religious and spiritual identities, beliefs, and practices in the contemporary world. Moving beyond purely legal or normative approaches, the volume emphasizes the added value of sociology in explaining why and how religious freedom acquires multiple meanings in society. The authors show that religious freedom is not a fixed or self-evident principle, but rather a socially constructed and contested concept whose content varies across cultural, political, and historical contexts. The book addresses three major questions central to the development of a sociology of religious freedom. First, it asks how religious freedom can be defined as a multidimensional concept, taking into account its complex and often controversial nature. Second, it investigates the recurrent sociological conditions and dominant social perceptions that foster or hinder understandings of religious freedom in different political, legal, and socio-religious environments. Third, it explores the mechanisms through which religious freedom is socially implemented, examining how it becomes embedded in everyday practices, organizational routines, and institutional cultures, thus contributing to its recognition as a fundamental value within human rights frameworks. The volume suggests that any sociological definition of religious freedom must integrate historical, philosophical, legal, religious, and political dimensions specific to a given society. By uncovering the interplay between structural conditions and individual or group perceptions, sociology highlights the normative and value-laden character of religious freedom, as well as its broader societal functions.

A SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

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RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM THROUGH THE LENS OF NONVIOLENCE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Adnane Mokrani
Chair: Nicolás Paz, Luisa Sello, Adnane Mokrani

This panel explores the complex relationship between religious identity, nationalism, and state power within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, offering alternatives rooted in theologies and principles of nonviolence. It examines how nationalist ideologies have influenced these traditions, often through messianic and apocalyptic frameworks, and considers specific manifestations such as religious Zionism (Jewish and Christian), Sunni and Shia Islamism, and other forms of religious nationalism that have justified violence, territorial claims, and state identity.

The discussion investigates alternative theological and political interpretations that promote nonviolent resistance, just peace, and transformative engagement. It explores how understandings of land, divine promises, and sacred geography might be reinterpreted to reduce conflict and foster coexistence rather than displacement and discrimination. Additionally, it considers the potential of dialogue to disrupt cycles of violence and serve genuine peacebuilding, moving beyond superficial “faith-washing.”

Beyond religious frameworks, the panel includes Marxist and leftist critiques of nationalism and the nation-state, analyzing how concepts of universalism, emancipation, and international solidarity challenge both religious and secular nationalist ideologies, intersecting with broader commitments to peace. It emphasizes how individuals and communities worldwide can foster international solidarity and ethical responsibility through dialogue and cooperation, working toward nonviolent solutions to contemporary conflicts.

The panel is organized by the Interreligious Initiative for Nonviolence Theology (IINT) and Dialop (Dialogue between Socialists/Marxists and Christians).

IS THE MODERN NATIONAL STATE COMPATIBLE WITH RELIGION?

Mokrani A.(Speaker), Centre for Interreligious Studies / Pontifical Gregorian University ~ Rome ~ Italy

UNIVERSALISM, NONVIOLENCE AND THE ROLE OF THE PROPHETIC FOR DEEP TRANSFORMATION

Quast--Neulinger M.J.(Speaker), Universität Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

FROM DESACRALIZATION OF CONFLICTS TO SACRALIZATION OF PEACE. TOWARDS A NONVIOLENT COMPLEX APPROACH TO MEDIATE IN CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS

Paz N.(Speaker), Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca / Catholic Institute for Nonviolence ~ Salamanca ~ Spain

WHY A THEOLOGY OF NONVIOLENCE REQUIRES AN OPEN PATRIOTISM

Palaver W.(Speaker), Universität Innsbruck / OSCE ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

THE UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION OF CLASS STRUCTURES AS A SELF-CONSCIOUS ACTIVITY IN MARXISM AND SECULAR THINKING

Hildebrandt C.(Speaker), Pureza J.M.(Speaker), Rosa Luxemburg Foundation ~ Berlin ~ Germany

IMAGINING THE ENEMY: SCRIPTURAL RE-READINGS AFTER CATASTROPHE IN THE THREE ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - AT12

Contact: Lucia de Lorenzo
Chair: Francesca Badini, Laura Righi

This panel seeks to gather contributions exploring how the sacred scriptures have been employed in the tradition of the three Abrahamic religions, to construct the figure of the enemy in contexts marked by crisis, rupture, catastrophe, or collapse. The aim is to examine how exegetical and scripturally informed narratives in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam transform external or internal adversaries into meaningful agents within broader theological interpretations of history. Particular attention will be given to the link between enemy representation and divine punishment: crises are often reframed as consequences of communal transgression, with the enemy functioning as an instrument—willing or unwitting—of divine judgment, a dynamic that simultaneously explains catastrophe and admonishes the community toward repentance, reform, or renewed cohesion. Contributions may explore a wide range of historical phenomena and sources, such as: the reactivation of scriptural motifs after a military defeat or a political collapse in narrative and exegetical texts; the redefinition of adversaries during periods of sectarian conflict in theological textual controversies or in political discourses; the role of eschatological expectations and elaborations in shaping perceptions of threat; or the deployment of enemy imagery in response to migration, economic disruption, pandemics, or environmental crises through sermons, theological treatises and commentaries. The panel also encourages attention to the material and social dimensions of scriptural interpretation, including how textual transmission, communal leadership, performative settings, or institutional contexts shape the construction of the enemy in moments of upheaval.

CONCEPTUALISING THE ENEMY IN TIMES OF CRISIS: PROPHETIC MOTIFS AND THE ITALIAN WARS

Bontempo Scavo D.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE ENEMY CLOTHED IN PROPHECY: ANTICHRIST NARRATIVES IN REVOLUTIONARY MILITANCY

Abaddi I.(Speaker), Università di Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

AN ENEMY REFRAMED: PROVIDENCE AND IDENTITY IN GREGORY THE GREAT'S REPRESENTATION OF THE LOMBARDS

De Lorenzo L.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE DAJJĀL IN IFRĪQIYA: APOCALYPTIC ENEMY CONSTRUCTION DURING THE FATIMID STRUGGLE AGAINST ABŪ YAZĪD (940S)

Favaretto G.(Speaker), UniPA ~ Palermo ~ Italy

(RE)CLAIMING THE SCRIPTURE: THE USE OF THE BIBLE IN RUSSIAN WAR PROPAGANDA AND ANTI-WAR MOVEMENTS.

Elsner R.(Speaker), Muenster University ~ Muenster ~ Germany

FACING THE GREAT BABYLON: AN IMAGE FROM THE APOCALYPSE IN JOACHIM OF FIORE'S POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Saccenti R.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Bergamo ~ Bergamo ~ Italy

DIDACTICAL APPROACHES TO ENHANCE LEARNING INTO INCLUSION AND EQUALITY IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Monica van Dijk-Groeneboer
Chair: Monica van Dijk-Groeneboer, Andrzej Kielian, Juliëtte van Deursen Vreeburg

Enhancing inclusion and equality in todays' society is difficult. In our time of popularism and short text messages, reflection on what you say to another person is rare, as well as realising that other person is a human being too. Listening in a genuine dialogue, also when the other tells you what you rather not would like to hear, is very difficult. Even more, if their story sounds different or even 'strange' to you, as a consequence of another background, different race, gender, religion or spirituality. In this panel we exchange didactical approaches to work on inclusion and equality in the classroom. We allow scholars to enter the panel who also conduct research amongst teachers or pupils regarding didactic strategies to work on more inclusion in a safe classroom at for instance secondary schools or at university. Critical thinking is needed to owrk on the moral compass of pupils or students, and reflection to what other people's stories bring up inside you. In a real dialogue, both sender and receiver will develop their own compass further. Growing awareness in these processes is a focus on which we base some of our research. Equality between people with a different gender, race, religion is not easy to achieve, even in our highly developed country with high standards on democracy and equal human rights. Research will be presented how young people look towards these issues and what they value in life. This will present a diverse image, that also mirrors the intense situation in the multi-diverse classrooms. Moreover, the different backgrounds of the speakers and their perspectives will add more diversity into the equation in this panel, and therefore will help us to elaborate further on the very topic of the panel and conference.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WITHIN THE MONTESSORI METHOD

Kielian A.(Speaker), The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow ~ Krakow ~ Poland

LEARNING HOW TO DIALOGUE IN RE

Van Deursen--Vreeburg J.(Speaker), tilburg school of catholic theology ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

ARTICULATING THE CATHOLIC IDENTITY OF CATHOLIC SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SECULARISED AND PLURAL SOCIETIES: A RENEWED PERSPECTIVE INSPIRED BY POPE FRANCIS

Hagens Q.(Speaker), Tilburg University ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

D4D. DIALOGICAL FOR DIDACTICAL

Locorotondo L.(Speaker), PUL ~ Roma ~ Italy

ECCLESIAL INEQUALITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN A SYNODAL CHURCH

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - A209

Contact: Derrick Witherington
Chair: Derrick Witherington

The world is increasingly marked by many crises including political polarization, many forms of inequality, pending environmental catastrophe, war and violence, and the rise of militant and exclusive forms of nationalism. In such a context, the Church is called to be a prophetic voice of peace, reconciliation, and inclusion. The papacies of Pope Francis and Pope Leo have served as a call to openness and solidarity, embodying in both word and deed the prophetic vocation the Church is called to embody in our increasingly wounded world. The call to synodality initiated by Pope Francis and continued under Pope Leo has been an especially potent sign of the direction and posture the Church is called to take at this time, namely, one of humility, dialogical openness, and receptive listening, all in service of creating missionary disciples who are able to proclaim the Kingdom of God prophetically and effectively.

And yet, despite the Church's external commitment to its prophetic and synodal vocation, many ecclesial structures, positions, and mentalities remain seemingly closed to dialogue, growth, and critique (i.e. questions of sex and gender, womens' sacramental leadership, and addressing the causes of sexual abuse, to name a few of the most glaring instances). Moreover, the Church in some part of the world (i.e. Eastern Europe and parts of the United States) uncritically adopting far right political ideologies and the piecemeal and ideologically motivated implementation (or lack thereof) of synodality remain challenges to the Church in fully embracing its prophetic and synodal vocation. All of these realities witness to various "inequalities" within the Church which the Church must respond to faithfully, creatively, and critically. This panel will offer such responses, highlighting how tools within our theological tradition, creatively and critically employed, can enable the Church to better embody its prophetic and synodal vocation.

UNVEILING DISAGREEMENT IN A SYNODAL CHURCH

Flanagan B.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

"EXPERIENCE" IS WORTHLESS

Burbach N.(Speaker), London Jesuit Centre ~ London ~ United Kingdom

BETWEEN HOMONORMATIVITY AND QUEER LONGINGS FOR RENEWAL: LGBTQ+ CATHOLIC VISIONS OF THE ITALIAN CHURCH IN THE ERA OF SYNODALITY

Millesimi G.M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

FIDUCIA SUPPLICANS, WEAK MESSIANIC FORCE, AND THE RENEWAL OF SACRAMENTAL MARRIAGE

Rodewald N.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

FROM THE MARGINS OF POLARITY TO SYNODAL COMMUNION: R. GUARDINI ON POLARITY, UNITY, AND INTEGRATION

Witherington D.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

LESSONS FROM WALKING TOGETHER WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA: LISTENING AND ENCOUNTER AS KENOTIC STARTING POINTS ON THE PATH TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

Paparella J.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

QUEERING SYNODALITY: LISTENING, THE TRIUNE GOD, AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITHIN CHURCH

Diaz M.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF TENSION BETWEEN PERSONAL (PASTORAL) QUESTIONS AND ECCLESIAL (INSTITUTIONAL) ANSWERS IN A SYNODAL CHURCH

Van Rompaey J.(Speaker), UC Louvain ~ Louvain-La-Neuve ~ Belgium

ABOLITION & THEOLOGY: RETHINKING LIBERATION, VIOLENCE, AND (IN)JUSTICE ACROSS STATE POWER

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Lukas Johrendt
Chair: Dion Forster, Lukas Johrendt, Max Tretter

Our world is shaped by institutions that claim to secure order and justice but often inflict harm and exclude marginalized groups: courts, prisons, and policing frequently turn social vulnerability into punishment, while militaries reinforce global power asymmetries. Abolitionist movements respond with a radical imagination: they argue that systems built on coercion and punitive control should be dismantled and replaced by community-based, nonviolent, and more justice-oriented alternatives.

For theology and ethics, abolitionism poses a profound challenge. While the call to dismantle central institutions may seem destabilizing, its imaginations resonate with and traditions of liberation and reconciliation. This panel brings theological perspectives into conversation with contemporary abolitionism, directly addressing the EuARe 2026 theme Religion and (In)equalities. We explore the legitimacy of state force, the distribution of vulnerability, and the conditions for just coexistence.

From a theological standpoint, abolitionism raises questions such as: How do religious narratives of judgment and community engage the idea of a world without punitive control? Where do traditions resist or support abolitionist demands? And how do religious actors contribute to or critique these movements?

We invite interdisciplinary contributions, including:

• Prison abolitionism and theological critiques of punitive order;
• Police abolitionism and religious concepts of non-repressive security;
• Military abolitionism and the resources of peace ethics;
• Intersectional analyses linking abolitionism with racism and social inequality;
• Practical/pastoral initiatives of religious communities in abolitionist contexts.

The panel aims to identify normative resources for alternative social life and examine where theology remains implicated in justifying violence. By fostering this dialogue, we seek to advance research on the role of religion in contesting contemporary (in)equalities.

CRITIQUE OF CRIMINAL LAW FROM A THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF VULNERABILITY

Johrendt L.(Speaker), Helmut-Schmidt-Universität / Universität der Bundeswehr Hamburg ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

BEYOND REFORM? POLICE ABOLITION AND THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

FREEDOM AGAINST DESTINY: LUIGI PAREYSON'S PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICAL AUTHORITY

Mausolf J.(Speaker), Humboldt-Universität ~ Berlin ~ Germany

ABOLITION AND REPARATIONS: WHY YOU CANNOT HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER

Rieger J.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

ECCLESIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS: PROPHETIC IMAGINATIONS AND ECCLESIAL FUTURES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A108

Contact: Jason Welle
Chair: Cristina Lledo Gomez

The Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network invites proposals for an open call panel, "Prophetic Imaginations and Ecclesial Futures."

In his landmark text, The Prophetic Imagination, Walter Bruggemann writes, “The prophet engages in futuring fantasy. The prophet does not ask if the vision can be implemented… the imagination must come before the implementation. Our culture is competent to implement almost anything and to imagine almost nothing.” (40) This session aims to envision what church in a future may be or look like. What does it mean for the church to be prophetic or to have a prophetic imagination? What does this prophetic - or propheticist (Ignacio Ellacuría) - imagination look like in the future? How might church be like or look like in the future? What does it mean to “future fantasy” in the context of church? And what resources can a prophetic imagination bring to support or critique such a church?

Scholars are invited to engage this topic and these questions creatively and are not restricted to the questions covered in this CfP. Possible ideas that might be broached include theological questions such as how to think ecclesiologically about having a prophetic imagination, or what it means to be prophetic, or the relationship between imagination and implementation. Other questions can be raised on church and social issues such as how the prophetic imagination interfaces on artificial intelligence, transhumanism, technology-backed nationalism, ecojustice, migration, and other subjects. Further questions can also include intra-church or ecumenical matters such as how the church can prophetically re-envision, engage, or concretize synodality, diakonia, or church institutions and programs such as the New International Financial and Economic Architecture (NIFEA) initiative, and where they fit into the church in the future.

This panel is open to a maximum of four presentations.

WHEN 'THE CAESAR' IS IN JEOPARDY AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS DESERTED: WHICH ORTHODOX POLITICAL THEOLOGY FOR THE FUTURE?

Chivu S.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

PROPHETICALLY REIMAGINING SYNODALITY IN OCEANIA

Cornish S.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ North Sydney ~ Australia

FUTURE AS ANAMNESIS: PROPHETIC MEMORY, SYNODALITY, AND THE CHURCH BEYOND SACRED EMPIRE

Levakos P.(Speaker), PhD researcher, Faculty of Theology, Athens / MA student, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies KU Leuven, Belgium ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

“REIMAGINING SUBLIME COMMUNION AND INTEGRAL ECOLOGY FOR A CHURCH AND WORLD IN ECOLOGICAL, GEOPOLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND WORLD ORDER COLLAPSE: ENVISIONING AN ECCLESIAL FUTURE OF RELATIONAL, MUTUAL LOVE IN ALL CREATION.”

O''Beirne A.(Speaker), BBI - The Australian Institute of Theological Education ~ Sydney ~ Australia

BEYOND THE WALLS: PAUL TILLICH'S LATENT CHURCH AND ECCLESIAL RENEWAL

Magnussen C.(Speaker), Alphacrucis College ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

GEOMETRY, BEING, AND LANGUAGE: IBN AL-?ARAB? IN THE SUFI TRADITION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Nejra Salihbegovic
Chair: Nejra Salihbegovic
Speaker: Pieter Genee

Ibn al-ʿArabī (1165-1240), known as Muḥyī al-Dīn ("the Reviver of Religion") and revered as al-Shaykh al-Akbar ("the Greatest Master"), was one of the most influential Sufi mystics, philosophers, and poets in Islamic thought. Born in Murcia, al-Andalus, he is conventionally regarded as the expositor of "the oneness of being" (waḥdat al-wujūd). His rich corpus of over 300 works spans metaphysics, cosmology, ontology, Qurʾānic exegesis, poetry, philosophy, alchemy, and the science of letters. This panel explores Ibn al-ʿArabī's thought through three interlocking dimensions: geometry, being, and language, understood as integrated modes of divine self-disclosure and the human apprehension of this reality. Geometry functions as a contemplative architecture for mapping the relation between the One and the many, between emanation and return, through points, circles, and lines. Being is the fundamental ground his oeuvre seeks to witness. Language, in its lexical, semantic, scriptural, and embodied dimensions, is the medium of this articulation: letters and words, with hidden properties, meanings, and etymologies, function as living principles of the cosmos, reflecting its layered and dynamic structure. Individual contributions examine the semantic density of Ibn al-ʿArabī's terminology and his virtuosic engagement with the Arabic linguistic tradition, including in his early treatise ʿUqlat al-Mustawfiz. Another contribution places his thought, most prominently al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya, in a broader Iberian context, comparing his science of letters and geometric cosmology with parallel developments in Jewish Kabbalah. Together, these perspectives illuminate Ibn al-ʿArabī as a thinker for whom geometry, being, and language form a uniquely encyclopaedic, oceanic, and often enigmatic symbolic grammar. Through these novel interpretive approaches, the panel seeks to deepen our understanding of his thought and its enduring significance.

`UQLAT AL-MUSTAWFIZ: INTERTEXTUALITY, POLYSEMY AND SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE IN IBN ARABI

López Anguita G.(Speaker), Universidad de Sevilla ~ Seville ~ Spain

Metaphysical and Grammatical Aspects of the Letter Yā' as a Spiritual Reality in Ibn ʿArabī's Kitāb al-Huwa

González Costa A. (Speaker), Universidad de Málaga ~ Málaga ~ Spain

THE SCIENCE OF LETTERS IN IBERIAN SUFISM AND KABBALAH: IBN AL-ʿARABĪ AND THE ZOHAR

Salihbegovic N.(Speaker), Monash University ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

Barzakh

Genee P. (Filmmaker)

RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AND INEQUALITY IN EASTERN EUROPE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A107

Contact: István Keul
Chair: István Keul

Discussions and even definitions of the term «religious minorities» sometimes refer to the importance of achieving political or social equality as one of the main aims of numerically and politically non-dominant religious groups. Even though such definitions can be characterized as teleological and normative, their focus on the dynamics in and around such formations seems closely connected to the modern discourse on religious minorities, in which social and religious equality are given central importance. This panel invites paper proposals that inquire into the social processes leading to the emergence of various forms of inequality in and around Eastern European minority religions, as well as the strategies of these groups or their members to assert their status and gain recognition on an individual, institutional or state level.

HARMONY OR INEQUALITY? ALBANIA'S RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Reuter E.(Speaker), University of Graz ~ Graz ~ Austria

RELIGIOUS HIERARCHIES AND GENDER INEQUALITY IN EVANGELICAL ROMA COMMUNITIES IN BULGARIA

Slavkova M.(Speaker), Bulgarian Academy of Sciences ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

RECONSIDERING CULTURAL HERITAGE IN LITHUANIA: ON PAGAN NARRATIVES AND STRATEGIES

Pranskeviciute--Amoson R.(Speaker), Vilnius University ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

BETWEEN RELIGIOUS DIVERSIFICATION AND SOCIAL DISSENT: MINORITIZATION PROCESSES AND INEQUALITY AMONG ROMANIAN GERMANS

Keul I.(Speaker), University of Bergen ~ Bergen ~ Norway

(NEO)PAGANS AND (IN)EQUALITIES IN LATVIA AND ESTONIA

Stasulane A.(Speaker), Daugavpils University ~ Daugavpils ~ Latvia

THE (IM)MATERIALITY OF RELIGIOUS INEQUALITIES IN URBAN SPACES: PAST AND PRESENT

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - A204

Critic: Giuseppe Tateo, Valeria Fabretti, Sara Hejazi

The session transitions from the general theme of urban religious inequalities to a specific analysis of the Roman context through the volume "Superdiversa. Itinerari nella Roma plurale". Rome serves as a quintessential laboratory where established hierarchies and marginalities are made visible through worship architectures and everyday practices. The book maps the presence of communities and "adaptive spaces" that reveal different levels of legitimation and settlement for religious groups in the capital. During the book presentation, Valeria Fabretti (Bruno Kessler Foundation) and Giuseppe Tateo ("Roma Tre" University) will engage in a critical discussion with the authors Maria Chiara Giorda ("Roma Tre" University of Rome) and Silvia Omenetto ("Sapienza" University of Rome). The debate will explore how "superdiversity" challenges the definition of religious heritage and how minority places of worship negotiate visibility against symbolic marginalization. Time will be reserved for questions from the audience. The discussion is moderated by Sara Hejazi (Bruno Kessler Foundation).

SODRUS: CHURCH BUILDINGS PRESERVATION OR TRANSFORMATION: INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY ANALYSIS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Pierre Noel
Chair: Pierre Noel, Alessandro Ferrari

In almost every western country the preservation and the transformation of Church buildings and religious heritage become a major challenge. It involves a lot of interrelated issues: legal, historical, architectural, social and religious. It raises complex questions concerning property, social duties toward cultural heritage, feasibility of conservation or transformation, and so on. Indeed, in North America, in Europe and also in North Africa, we can notice a growing number of articles dealing with different aspects of it. There are also, here and there, seminars or workshops on the subject. Moreover, we can observe in many countries major project of transformation of religious building for new societal goals. There is a need for a more systematize collaboration. The goal of the panel is to have an international and an interdisciplinary view of what is at stake in transformation or preservation of church buildings and religious heritage.

THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF CHRISTIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP IN INDIGENOUS CANADA

Gélinas C.(Speaker), Université de Sherbrooke ~ Sherbrooke ~ Canada

THE “OPEN CHURCHES” NETWORK IN BELGIUM: TOWARDS A HYBRID GOVERNANCE OF LIVING RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Baraka Akilimali J.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Louvain ~ Louvain-la-neuve ~ Belgium

FROM ASSIGNEMENT TO WORSHIP TO SHARED USES OF CHURCHES IN FRANCE

Fornerod A.(Speaker), UMR 7354 DRES - Droits et religions (CNRS/Université de Strasbourg) ~ Strasbourg ~ France

RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS TRANSFORMATION AND PUBLIC FUNDING: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Noël P.(Speaker), Université de Sherbrooke ~ Sherbrooke ~ Canada

CIVIC REAPPROPRIATION OF CHURCHES AND MONASTERIES: GOALS, OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITS

Blantare M.(Speaker), Université de Sherbrooke ~ Sherbrooke ~ Canada

REUSING SACRED SPACE: COLLABORATION, COMPARISON AND FUTURE MODELS

Dimodugno D.(Speaker), University of Turin, Law Department ~ Turin ~ Italy

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL FACTORS IN THE INTER-SYSTEMIC GOVERNANCE OF ITALY'S RELIGIOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE

Tarabiono G.F.(Speaker), University of Insubria – University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

DIGITAL RELIGION IN AN (IN)EQUAL WORLD: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - A101

Contact: Victoria Dos Santos
Chair: Gorazd Andrejc, Giulia Evolvi

The development of new technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the growth of immersive virtual reality platforms, challenge traditional understandings of religious authorities, communities, identities, and practice (Campbell & Tsuria, 2021).
In this context, the ubiquity of digital media in contemporary society reveals a profound ambivalence: while it can foster inclusion and visibility for marginalized religious actors, it can simultaneously reproduce and intensify existing inequalities. On the one hand, religious people can use the Internet to advocate for equality (Peterson, 2022), form alternative spaces of activism and resistance (Echchaibi & Hoover, 2023), or create communities that they cannot find in physical venues (Dos Santos & Cruz, 2024). On the other hand, digital spaces can become spaces to spread hate against religious minorities (Topidi, 2024), support conservative leaders against equality (Righetti et al., 2025), challenge women's emancipation (Leidig, 2023), and amplify patriarchal or theocratic discourses by providing visibility and legitimacy to radicalized voices (Maf'ula, N. R. H. et al., 2025). Taken together, these dynamics highlight digital religion as a contested field in which processes of empowerment and exclusion unfold simultaneously.
Given the nuanced experiences that the Internet can bring to religious people regarding (in)equality, we welcome submissions about:

-Online religious-based activism
-Internet-based hate speech against religions
-Digital communities and the formation of alternative religious identities
-Politics and digital religion
-Materiality, embodiment, and resistance in the digital space
-Intersectional online religious identities around gender, sexuality, race, (dis)ability, ethnicity, nationality, and class.

We welcome papers with a theoretical focus as well as researchers focusing on empirical cases, analyzed both qualitatively or quantitatively.

VIRTUAL AVATARS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF IDENTITY AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICE IN IMMERSIVE MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS

Dos Santos V.(Speaker), Blanquerna Observatory on Media, Religion and Culture ~ Barcelona ~ Spain

PROCEDURAL WORLDS AND RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION: GAMING, IDENTITY, AND THE CONDITIONS OF BELIEF IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Vukic N.(Speaker), Trinity College Dublin ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

ROLEPLAYING THE PRIEST: REPRODUCING AUTHORITY AND INEQUALITIES IN A FILIPINO CATHOLIC GROUP ON ROBLOX

Ciocca D.(Speaker), University of Milan Bicocca ~ Milan ~ Italy

PLATFORM CAPITALISM AND DIGITAL SPIRITUALITY: THE HALLOW APP BETWEEN CONSERVATIVE CATHOLICISM AND SILICON VALLEY

Mayrink M.(Speaker), Universidade Federal Fluminense ~ Niterói ~ Brazil

THE DIGITAL DISSOLUTION OF BORDERS: ENGINEERING A NEW UNIVERSALISM AND THE METAPHYSICS OF INTERCONNECTIVITY

Colak M.(Speaker), Eurotürk ~ Aachen ~ Germany

LIVED RELIGION IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS: EVERYDAY SPIRITUALITY IN THE CZECHIA AND SLOVAKIA

Sedláková R.(Speaker), University Palacký, Faculty of Theology ~ Olomouc ~ Czech Republic

CHRISTIAN TO WHOM? CATHOLIC FEMINISM AND DIGITAL MEDIA IN ITALY

Evolvi G.(Chair), University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

GODFLUENCERS: THE DISAPPEARING MEDIUM AND THE MAKING OF DIGITAL RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

De La Vega G.(Speaker), Erasmus University Rotterdam ~ Rotterdam ~ Netherlands

WIDE AND WINDING ROADS. RENEWING THE CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Arnold Smeets
Chair: Karim Schelkens, Stephan van Erp

The recent promotion of Cardinal Newman as Doctor of the Church calls for Catholic theology to rethink its position in the Church, the academy, and society. In the past, Catholic thought has proven to widen the scope of culture, sociality and the sciences. Contemporary Catholic theology, however, is as varied and polarised as many other academic disciplines and political spheres, and consequently, the Catholic intellectual tradition seems as scattered and diversified as many other public domains.

What is the contribution a Catholic vision could make in analyses concerning contemporary challenges and questions? Which sources, principles, and styles of thought could it offer to present-day conversations and interventions on economics, politics, ecology, and technology?
Which articulation of Catholic theology offers constructive ideas or a vision to shape an intellectual tradition capable of addressing current challenges and inequalities? Or is there a need for a new paradigm?

This panel invites papers that examine how the concepts of ‘catholic’, understood in its dual sense as an articulation of the Catholic tradition and as a way of thinking wholeness, is experienced within diverse theologies, spiritualities, political formations and communities.

Presenters are invited to reflect on this in relation to current issues and/or to specific Catholic views on values as sustainability, resilience, social cohesion or in reference to the overarching theme of this conference: (in)equality. We also welcome papers that seek to reformulate the plausibility potentials of theology in conversation with society and the sciences or a need to develop a new paradigm or impulse for the Catholic intellectual (theological) tradition.

The panel is a collaboration of the Catholic Study Network (a network of and for Catholic University Leuven, Tilburg University and Radboud University), and the Toronto School of Theology.

CATHOLIC AFFECTIVE MATERIALITIES: AI, DOUBLING AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Napolitano V.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

THE CRISIS OF THEOLOGY: THE CHALLENGES FOR CATHOLIC THOUGHT

Van Erp S.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

AFTER POLARITY: UNITY AND MEDIATION IN THE THOUGHT OF MAURICE BLONDEL

Connelly W.(Speaker), Institut Catholique de Paris ~ Paris ~ France

BETWEEN RIVALRIES: FRIENDSHIP'S CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE CATHOLIC TRADITION

Attridge M.(Speaker), University of St. Michael's College ~ Toronto ~ Canada

CONSPIRACY THINKING AND DEMOCRACY: A POLITICO-THEORETICAL READING IN THE LIGHT OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Cavaliere M.(Speaker), University of Salerno ~ Salerno ~ Italy

RELIGION AND RIGHT-WING POPULISM: BETWEEN DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING AND AUTHORITARIANISM.

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Konstantinos Papastathis
Chair: Luca Ozzano

This panel explores the intersection of religion, right-wing populism, and democratic backsliding or authoritarianism. While much research has focused on the rise of populist radical right (PRR) parties and their religious dimensions, less attention has been paid to how religion is mobilized to support illiberal governance and undermine democratic norms. The panel invites comparative and empirical papers that analyze how religion understood as belief, authority, or civilizational identityis are used as a political tool in populist projects. Topics may include: the instrumentalization of religion in PRR discourse and governance; religious justifications for exclusionary or nationalist policies; alliances between religious institutions and populist regimes; the role of religion in gender politics, digital populism, and education; as well as resistance by religious or secular actors. Contributions should engage with concepts like civilizational populism, moral panic, and authoritarian populism, and assess the real-world policy outcomes in areas such as minority rights, immigration, and democratic resilience.

THE MORALIST INTERNATIONAL IN TIMES OF WAR: RUPTURES AND CONTINUITIES IN RUSSIA'S TRADITIONAL VALUES AGENDA

Stoeckl K.(Speaker), Uzlaner D.(Speaker), LUISS ~ Roma ~ Italy

SACRALIZING THE STATE: ETHNO-RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AS BAROMETERS OF AUTOCRATIC DRIFT

Madera A.(Speaker), University of Messina ~ Messina ~ Italy

COPY, PASTE, AND CHANGE. A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE POPULISM

Ozzano L.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Torino ~ Italy

RELIGION AND AUTHORITARIAN ATTITUDES IN TODAY’S BALKANS

Vekovic M.(Speaker), Zrinšcak S.(Speaker), University of Zagreb ~ Zagreb ~ Croatia

FROM DOOMSDAY TO RE-CREATION: A THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF APOCALYPTIC DYNAMICS IN RIGHT-WING POPULISM AND AFFECTIVE POLARIZATION

Salcido J.R.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

GENDERED AND RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING IN FAR-RIGHT POPULISM

Karagiannopoulou C.(Speaker), Panteion University ~ Athens ~ Greece

THE STRUGGLE FOR FAMILY VALUES – BETWEEN RIGHT WING POPULISM AND RELUCTANT LIBERALISM

Ben--Porat G.(Speaker), Ben-Gurion University ~ Negev ~ Israel

LEGITIMIZING AUTOCRATIC POLITICS WITH METAPHYSICS – RELIGION AND RADICAL RIGHT PARTIES IN A SECULARIZING EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Minkenberg M.(Speaker), European University Viadrina ~ Frankfurt (Oder) ~ Germany

RELIGION AS SYMBOLIC RESOURCE IN POPULIST RADICAL RIGHT NARRATIVES: A SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH

Papastathis K.(Speaker), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki ~ Thessaloniki ~ Greece

SACRALIZING POWER: RELIGION AND POPULIST RULE IN TURKEY, INDIA, AND HUNGARY

Tepe S.(Speaker), University of Illinois ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

MUSIQUES EN RÉSISTANCE: ARVO PÄRT ET VALENTIN SILVESTROV

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Kristina Stoeckl
Chair: Adalberto Mainardi
authorAMC: Constantin Sigov
Speaker: Adalberto Mainardi, Tazio Brunetta, Elizabeth Wilson, Irina Paert

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This panel is devoted to the presentation and discussion of Musiques en résistance: Arvo Pärt et Valentin Silvestrov by Constantin Sigov, a deeply moving and intellectually precise reflection on music, friendship, and historical rupture.
Through the intertwined lives and works of Arvo Pärt and Valentin Silvestrov, Sigov reconstructs three pivotal moments in contemporary European history: the Soviet period, marked by the clash between ideals of artistic freedom and political censorship; the years of Estonian and Ukrainian independence, during which both composers experienced a remarkable flourishing of their creative voices; and the tragic and heroic present shaped by Russia's war against Ukraine.
Written from the unique perspective of a close friend and intellectual companion of both composers, the book goes beyond a dual biography. It offers a meditation on music as a form of moral, spiritual, and political resistance, and on friendship as a space of fidelity in the face of historical violence.
The panel will explore the book's aesthetic, ethical, and political insights, addressing the role of music under conditions of repression, transition, and war, and reflecting on how lived experience and intellectual engagement illuminate the work of two major figures of contemporary music. This panel is part of the POLISMOD (2026-31, PI Kristina Stoeckl) project launch.

MUSIQUES EN RÉSISTANCE: ARVO PÄRT ET VALENTIN SILVESTROV

Sigov C.(authorAMC), Kyiv Mohila University ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

ENGAGING IN THE WORLD: SOCIAL JUSTICE AND RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS IN DIALOGUE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 19:30

Pola - A206a

Contact: Patricia Palazzo Tsai
Chair: Patricia Palazzo Tsai, Plinio Tsai, Marcelo da Silva Carneiro

Religious traditions have long been engaged in the pursuit of justice and in political decision-making since antiquity. Such worldly engagement is not unusual in traditions that developed in what are conventionally coined as “West” and “East”. From a non-Eurocentric perspective, since Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha, Buddhist traditions have articulated teachings and practices aimed at the reduction of suffering, interdependence, and the ethical transformation of individual and collective relations. Throughout their history, diverse Buddhist traditions have interpreted these principles across varying social contexts, offering conceptual and practical resources for reflecting on inequality, collective responsibility, and social justice. Similarly, traditions such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, African religions, and Indigenous cosmologies articulate normative visions of justice grounded in their ethical, ritual, and communal foundations. This panel proposes an interfaith and interdisciplinary dialogue on how religious and philosophical traditions respond, historically and in the present, to social, economic, and environmental injustices. In a global context marked by widening inequalities between the Global North and South, the rise of far-right ideologies, and new configurations of religious fundamentalism, the panel seeks to examine the contributions of various traditions towards lasting peace and conflict resolution.
The panel intends to discuss the possibilities in which social injustice can be tackled through an inter-relational and interfaith dialogue by different traditions, including their oral transmissions, texts, and practices, that are crucial for a critical dialogue, mutual learning, and transformative action – and thus, engaging in the world.

RECLAIMING DIGNITY IN A FRAGMENTED WORLD: UNIVERSAL RESPONSIBILITY AND AMOR MUNDI IN DIALOGUE

Palazzo Tsai P.(Speaker), Instituto Pramana ~ Valinhos ~ Brazil

INTER-RELATIONAL DIALOGUES OF LIBERATION: BUDDHISM AND LATIN AMERICAN THEOLOGY IN RESPONSE TO THE CRISES OF LATE NEOLIBERALISM

Tsai P.(Speaker), Universidade Metodista de Sao Paulo ~ São Bernardo do Campo ~ Brazil

THE VIOLENCE OF NONVIOLENCE: ANTI-CAPITALIST BUDDHISM AND THE LIMITS OF LIBERAL INTERFAITH DISCOURSE

Shields J.M.(Speaker), Bucknell University ~ Lewisburg, PA ~ United States of America

SEEKING HAPPINESS FOR OTHERS: THE PRINCIPLE OF FRIENDSHIP IN BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

Takahashi N.(Speaker), Universidade Metodista de São Paulo ~ São Bernardo do Campo ~ Brazil

“BEYOND CONFESSIONAL DIVIDES: ALFRED DELP AND INTERCONFESSIONAL COOPERATION IN NAZI GERMANY”

Evans E.(Speaker), Oakland University ~ Rochester Hills ~ United States of America

REVERENTIAL CARE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN HINDUISM AND JAINISM: A RITUALISTIC STUDY OF THE LIVING TRADITIONS

Dixit S.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

UMBANDA – A RELIGION OF ENCOUNTERS AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Carneiro M.D.S.(Speaker), Universidade Metodista de São Paulo ~ São Bernardo do Campo ~ Brazil

THE SUPERIMPOSED ENEMY: A BUDDHIST HERMENEUTICS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AS A THREAT TO INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM IN BOLSONARO'S NEOLIBERAL DISCOURSE

D''Ottaviano G.(Speaker), Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo ~ São Paulo ~ Brazil

CORANICA

Locorotondo L.(Speaker), PUL ~ IITALY ~ Italy

BETWEEN PROMISE AND POWER: A LAW & ECONOMICS ANALYSIS OF ENGAGEMENT UNDER MOSAIC LAW

Wu N.(Speaker), EDLE (University of Hamburg) ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

GESTURAL SIGNS IN MAHĀYĀNA AND CATHOLIC ART: ETHICAL AND AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS

Leão K.(Speaker), Universidade Metodista de São Paulo ~ Valinhos ~ Brazil

HEAVEN HAS A WALL. RELIGION, BORDERS, AND THE GLOBAL UNITED STATES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - Aula AT13

Contact: Ely Orrego Torres
Chair: Maria Birnbaum
authorAMC: Elizabeth Shakman Hurd
Speaker: Alessandro Ferrari, Yvonne Sherwood, Fadi Hachem, Iza Hussin

This proposed panel will convene an Author Meets Critique session on the recently published book Heaven Has a Wall: Religion, Borders, and the Global United States (University of Chicago Press, 2025) by Elizabeth Shakman Hurd. In this timely and provocative book, Hurd argues that borders function as sacred objects in American public life, sustained by what she calls a bipartisan “border religion.” Through concepts such as reverence for national security, a liturgy of immigration, and an eschatological foreign policy, Heaven Has a Wall reframes contemporary debates over US borders by revealing their religious dimensions. Borders, she argues, offer a window onto unexplored political and religious dimensions of the American national project.
The interdisciplinary panel will bring together scholars from religious studies, political theory, international relations, and migration studies to critically engage with Hurd’s core arguments. Interlocutors will examine how the book reshapes understandings of secularism, sovereignty, civil religion, and U.S. global power, as well as its implications for the study of religion beyond the focus on belief or institutions. The author will respond to the discussants’ commentaries, reflecting on the book’s interventions, its main stakes, and future directions for research on religion in national and international politics.

HEAVEN HAS A WALL. RELIGION, BORDERS, AND THE GLOBAL UNITED STATES

Shakman Hurd E.(authorAMC), Northwestern University ~ Evanston ~ United States of America

DAISAKU IKEDA AND SOKA GAKKAI: CIVIC ACTIVISM AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - A102

Contact: Massimo Introvigne
Chair: Massimo Introvigne

This panel brings together interdisciplinary studies that illuminate the global impact of Daisaku Ikeda and the Soka Gakkai movement across the fields of interreligious dialogue, civic activism, and peacebuilding. The first paper examines Ikeda's crucial role in Buddhist-Catholic relations, situating his decades of engagement with the Holy See within the trajectory opened by "Nostra Aetate" and reaffirmed at the Vatican's 2025 anniversary event, where Soka Gakkai participated. The second contribution analyzes the newly established Fondazione Be the Hope and the exhibition Cambio io, cambia il mondo, interpreting them as contemporary expressions of Ikeda-inspired civic engagement amid the current crisis of global climate activism. A third paper explores Ikeda's sustained dialogue with Muslim intellectuals such as Majid Tehranian and Nur Yalman, as well as recent Soka Gakkai initiatives in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, highlighting the evolution from interreligious encounter to cooperative cultural and academic projects. The final study investigates Buddhist peacebuilding at the Toda Peace Institute in Tokyo, drawing on qualitative fieldwork to show how Buddhist ethical frameworks are translated into policy-relevant discourses on peace, human security, and global governance. Together, these papers demonstrate how Ikeda's humanistic Buddhism continues to shape transnational networks of dialogue and civic action, offering a robust framework for reimagining the public role of religion in an era of global uncertainty.

DAISAKU IKEDA, INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, AND "NOSTRA AETATE"

Introvigne M.(Speaker), CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions) ~ Torino ~ Italy

THE BUDDHIST ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM OF THE BE THE HOPE FOUNDATION

Soryte R.(Speaker), FOB (European Federation for Freedom of Belief) ~ Torino ~ Italy

DAISAKU IKEDA AND ISLAM: FROM DIALOGUE TO COOPERATION

Corrao F.(Speaker), LUISS Guido Carli University ~ Rome ~ Italy

STUDYING BUDDHIST PEACEBUILDING AT THE TODA PEACE INSTITUTE OF TOKYO

Benna F.(Speaker), La Sapienza University ~ Rome ~ Italy

MIRCEA ELIADE AND HIS ITALIAN AND AMERICAN FRIENDS/ENEMIES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - A204

Contact: Wilhelm Danca
Chair: Wilhelm Danca

To commemorate 40 years since Mircea Eliade's passing, we are trying to find out how his work and thinking were received among Italian and American specialists. Some of his "disciples" have remained faithful to his intellectual horizon, even if they have followed other methods in studying religious phenomena, while others have distanced themselves from their master, not for methodological or theoretical reasons, but rather for political ones.
By redrawing the map of Mircea Eliade's reception in Italy and the United States, we seek to find out if there is a generation of Eliadists and what the stakes of their research are. We also want to find out what the effects of political criticism of Mircea Eliade's work are.
Specialists in Eliade's work from the United States, Italy, and Romania will present critical and less critical receptions of Mircea Eliade's work with reference to specialized literature from the United States and Italy.
The panel chair is an Eliade scholar with a thesis on Romanian and European philosophical influences in the development of the notion of the sacred in Mircea Eliade's work.

ELIADE'S ODYSSEY: CYCLOPES, LOTUS EATERS, AND HERDSMEN

Rennie B.(Speaker), Westminster College ~ New Wilmington ~ United States of America

ELIADE, TUCCI AND THE GROWTH OF IRANIAN STUDIES IN ITALY

Cereti C.G.(Speaker), University of California, Irvine School of Humanities ~ Roma ~ Italy

THE "LAST GREAT ROMANTIC IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS": MIRCEA ELIADE THROUGH THE EYES OF THE 'HETERODOX' ALDO NATALE TERRIN

Nanini R.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Hannover ~ Germany

PANTELIS KALAITZIDIS, ORTHODOXY AND MODERNITY: INTRODUCING A CONSTRUCTIVE ENCOUNTER, BRILL, 2026

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Nikolaos Asproulis
Chair: Hans Peter Grosshans
authorAMC: Pantelis Kalaitzidis
Speaker: José Casanova, Aristotle Papanikolaou, Kristina Stoeckl

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Did Orthodoxy come to a halt before modernity? Does Orthodox Christian theology function only in traditional contexts, borrowing schemes and forms of rural society, to which the liturgical and theological symbolisms, the rhetorical models of preaching, the structures of church administration, and its views on the relation between religion, politics, and secular society are closely linked?
Has Orthodoxy accepted the consequences of modernity, or does the Orthodox still feel a nostalgia for pre-modern forms of organization and structures of a glorified past, following in this way fundamentalism? Did even the movement called "Return to the Fathers", as it was understood, and despite its initially renewing character, function unwittingly as a barrier against modernity and its challenges? Modernity and post-modernity constitute, however, the broader historical, social, and cultural context within which the Church is called to accomplish its mission and to ceaselessly incarnate the Christian truth. In this book, Kalaitzidis argues that theology as a prophetic voice and expression of the self-understanding of the Church can only function in reference to the antinomy and the duality of the latter. Just as the Church is not of this world, so is theology aiming to express a charismatic experience and a transcendental reality, over and above words, concepts, or names. Just as the Church lives and goes forth in the world, so is theology seeking dialogue and communication with each historical present, following the language, the flesh, and the schemes of every given era, of each historic and cultural present. Theology is not exhausted by nor is it identified with History, but neither can it function in the absence of History, and more importantly, it cannot ignore the teachings of History. After all, the Revelation of God has always taken place inside the creation and History, not in some unhistoric, timeless, and unearthly universe.

PANTELIS KALAITZIDIS, ORTHODOXY AND MODERNITY: INTRODUCING A CONSTRUCTIVE ENCOUNTER, BRILL, 2026

OUR SHARED SACRED STORY: EXPLORING INTERRELIGIOUS NARRATIVES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES (ORBIS 2025)

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A102

Moderator: Matthew Ryan Robinson
Speaker: William F Vendley, Mohamed Elsanousi, Lea Mühlstein, Bruno Guiderdoni, Elena Dini

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Our Shared Sacred Story is a groundbreaking project that brings together teams of scholars and practitioners from diverse religious and spiritual traditions to collaboratively retell their traditions' sacred narratives in ways that speak to contemporary global challenges. Sponsored by the Fetzer Institute, this initiative has engaged contributors from Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Indigenous Spiritualities, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, and Interspirituality. Each tradition assembled a team of academics and practitioners, modeling the scholarly-practitioner dynamic that defines the field of Interreligious Studies. These teams worked together to reinterpret their foundational stories, articulating a larger, collective narrative that acknowledges difference while fostering shared wisdom and connection. The result was a groundbreaking volume that presents these sacred retellings alongside reflections on the challenges and opportunities of interreligious storytelling in a pluralistic world.

This 90-minute panel will feature four contributors to the Our Shared Sacred Story volume (Orbis, 2025) who authored sections of the volume. This panel offers a unique opportunity to engage with leading scholars who have reimagined sacred narratives for a pluralistic world, illuminating both the challenges and possibilities of interfaith storytelling in academic, pedagogical, and civic contexts. Each panelist will briefly present their contributions to the volume, discussing their tradition’s sacred story, how it has been reinterpreted within the project, the challenges they faced in articulating a shared narrative, and insights gained from engaging with diverse traditions in the project.

OUR SHARED SACRED STORY: EXPLORING INTERRELIGIOUS NARRATIVES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES (ORBIS 2025)

Vendley W.F.(authorAMC), Fetzer Institute ~ Kalamazoo ~ United States of America

CREATIVELY MOVING DAVID TRACY'S THEOLOGY FORWARD

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Andreas Telser
Chair: Andreas Telser

While David Tracy's (1939–2025) work is frequently considered serious, demanding, and capacious, this can hamper the creative reception of his theology and philosophy of religion. This panel strives to remedy this by uncovering the relevance of Tracy's theology today in its correlations with a wide range of current concerns.

A central approach to any reception of Tracy's work is understanding his theology as conversation. While this may seem mundane, conversations worthy of the name are rare, as they require certain attitudes on the part of its participants. One such attitude is ›playfulness‹ for genuine conversations are only possible if they are ›game-like‹ in the sense of being played by the questions that occur and by the texts, persons, rituals, situations, etc. that one is engaged with.

Whether you are a Tracy connoisseur or intrigued by his thought from a distance, the panel aims to provide opportunities to engage in a creative conversation between your own questions and aspects of Tracy's philosophical and theological texts:

• How can we do and understand theology in times that fluctuate between secularization and edifying religion that is politicized or privatized?

• How must such a theology be structured to prove itself critically, both intellectually and as a way of life, while using its rich sources for the transformation of society toward a ›justice to come‹?

• What form of discourse on ultimate reality, whatever name it may be given, is appropriate to do justice to the incomprehensibility of this reality and to avoid any kind of closure?

• How should suffering be dealt with so that its raw inexplicability is not ›sublated‹ or absorbed in the bosom of a God or ultimate reality, while yet disallowing this suffering from having the last word?

• In overly complex lives, how can we hold together and maintain a resistance that seeks justice and a connection to everything imbued with overwhelming beauty?

CLASSICS, FRAGMENTS AND HOLY SCRIPTURE

Palfrey B.(Speaker), St. Augustine's College of Theology ~ London ~ United Kingdom

DAVID TRACY'S (RADICAL, THEOLOGICAL) AESTHETICS OF "LETTING GO"

Chase C.(Speaker), Manhattan University ~ Bronx, New York ~ United States of America

TRACY'S HERITAGE TODAY: THE ROLE OF CREATIVITY IN MODERN THEOLOGY

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independent Researcher ~ Rome ~ Italy

TRAGEDY AND GRACE: TRACY'S RECOVERY OF THE TRAGIC AS AN INVITATION FOR THEOLOGY

Rader K.(Speaker), All Saints Episcopal Church, Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

POLITICS, SOCIETY AND RELIGION IN RUSSIA: TRANSFORMATIONS SINCE 2022

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo A2

Contact: Marianna Napolitano
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl, Marat Shterin, Marianna Napolitano

This panel examines transformations at the intersection of politics, society, and religion in Russia since 2022. Bringing together perspectives from sociology of religion, political science, and intellectual history, the contributions analyze the changing role of religion in legitimizing power, framing social crises, and reconfiguring public discourse under conditions of war and heightened authoritarianism. Several papers revisit the long-standing debate on post-Soviet religious revival, asking whether recent developments mark a qualitatively new “second stage” and how these dynamics should be assessed in relation to secularization theory. Others focus on the Russian Orthodox Church’s engagement with demographic decline, civilizational narratives, and palingenetic visions of national survival and rebirth, highlighting how bodies, reproduction, and morality have become central sites of political and religious mobilization. Taken together, the panel sheds light on religion’s evolving function as a key symbolic and institutional resource in Russia’s wartime society, while also addressing internal tensions, ambiguities, and limits within these processes. This panel is part of the POLISMOD (2026-31, PI Kristina Stoeckl) project launch.

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AND “THE DEMOGRAPHIC CRISIS”

Kolstø P.(Speaker), University of Oslo ~ Oslo ~ Norway

PALINGENETIC CIVILISATIONISM AND THE BODY POLITIC: ORTHODOXY, SURVIVAL AND REVIVAL IN RUSSIA SINCE 2022

Kolov B.(Speaker), University of Oslo ~ Oslo ~ Norway

THE HAGIOPOLITICS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH: CANONIZATION OF 'PATRIOTIC SAINTS' AND RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM

Shtyrkov S.(Speaker), Yerevan Center for International Education (YCIE) ~ Yerevan ~ Armenia

LAW AND RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA BASED ON THE PRACTICE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Arkhipov F.(Speaker), PhD candidate of the Italian National Doctoral Program in Religious Studies DREST, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, University of Insubria ~ Como ~ Italy

MECHANISMS OF FEAR AND CONTROL IN RUSSIAN RELIGIOUS LIFE: ORTHODOX CLERGY UNDER REPRESSION

Beilinson D.(Speaker), Rousselet K.(Speaker), Kordochkin A.(Speaker), OVD-Info ~ Moscow ~ Russian Federation

STRATEGIES OF WAR-NAMING AND MORAL MOBILIZATION IN ROC SERMONS SINCE 2022

Kress B.(Speaker), Mennecke O.(Speaker), University of Hildesheim ~ Hildesheim ~ Germany

FROM STALIN TO PUTIN: ORTHODOX EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF RUSSIAN PRAVOSLAVIE IN SERVICE OF STATE PROPAGANDA

Gabunia A.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THE SECOND STAGE OF THE ‘RELIGIOUS REVIVAL’ IN RUSSIA: HOW TO EVALUATE IT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE SECULARIZATION DEBATE

Uzlaner D.(Speaker), FU Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

HERESY, POLITICS, AND IDENTITY: CONTESTING PAPAL AUTHORITY UNDER JOHN XXII

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - AT12

Contact: Francesca Barresi
Chair: Francesca Barresi, Martina Maria Caragnano

This open panel aims to examine the relationship between Pope John XXII (1316–1334) and the diverse dissident groups that emerged before and during his pontificate. The late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries witnessed the proliferation of dissenting religious movements—such as, but not limited to, the Spiritual Franciscans—as well as lay communities including, for instance, beguines and beghards. These groups sought official recognition from the Avignon papacy or struggled to preserve their identity—at times denied, at times reshaped—and their institutional autonomy.

At the same time, several figures saw their positions formally condemned. A notable example is Meister Eckhart, whose propositions were censured in the bull In agro dominico (1329), illustrating John XXII's determination to define the boundaries of orthodoxy in the face of emerging theological currents. His pontificate was also marked by vigorous action against a broader spectrum of opponents. The conflicts with major Italian Ghibelline powers—such as the Visconti and the Della Scala—reveal how accusations of heresy, rebellion, and political disobedience could intersect, especially when ambitions in temporal matters challenged papal claims.

The panel seeks to shed light on the dynamics of encounter, negotiation, and conflict between these religious, lay, political, and intellectual actors and John XXII. It will explore how different communities and individuals positioned themselves in relation to papal authority, which strategies they adopted in moments of tension, and what political, social, theological, and ecclesiological consequences arose from such confrontations.

Proposals addressing these themes are welcome. Please submit an abstract of no more than 300 words by 13 March, 2026 to: francesca.barresi@unimore.it and martinamaria.caragnano@unimore.it

JOHN XXII'S FRANCISCAN ADVISORS: CO-OPERATION, CONFLICT AND THE MANAGEMENT OF DISSENT

Brunner M.(Speaker), Institute for Medieval Studies, University of Leeds ~ Leeds ~ United Kingdom

AUTHORITY IN PIECES: SELECTIVE QUOTATION AND THE CHARGE OF HERESY IN THE REIGN OF JOHN XXII

Cresswell R.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

DEBATING THE POPE: THE BEATIFIC VISION CONTROVERSY AND CAMBRIDGE, UL MS II 3.10

Cozzi L.(Speaker), DREST - Università della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli ~ Caserta ~ Italy

JOHN XXII AND UMBRIA: DISSIDENCE AND REPRESSIONE FROM THE DOCUMENTS OF THE STATE ARCHIVES OF PERUGIA (1318-1323).

Maiorca A.M.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Trieste ~ Trieste ~ Italy

NAMING THE “SCHISMATIC”: PAPAL AUTHORITY, EASTERN CHRISTIANITY, AND THE POLITICS OF ORTHODOXY UNDER JOHN XXII

Kouremenos N.(Speaker), Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

WOMEN'S MYSTICISM AS A LANGUAGE OF RELIGIOUS DISSENT IN THE AGE OF JOHN XXII

Barresi F.(Speaker), DREST, University of Verona ~ Verona ~ Italy

CONTESTING PAPAL AUTHORITY: BONAGRATIA OF BERGAMO’S LONG APPEAL OF 1332 AGAINST JOHN XXII

Caragnano M.M.(Speaker), DREST, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

JEWISH THEOLOGY AS A SCIENCE? PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AS DEMOCRATIC AGENTS IN SYSTEMS OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE - THE UNIVERSITY OF POTSDAM'S SCHOOL OF JEWISH THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Yiftach Fehige
Chair: Yiftach Fehige

Across Europe, confessional theology occupies a contested place within public universities. Historically grounded in Wissenschaft, it now operates within arrangements involving state authorities, religious communities, and public funding. This panel invites papers addressing the question: under what institutional, epistemic, and political conditions can Jewish theology plausibly function as a scientific discipline within democratic systems of public knowledge? Public universities shape epistemic legitimacy, transparency, accountability, and academic freedom through governance structures, appointment procedures, curricular authority, and funding within a system of public knowledge.In addition to three invited papers, the panel is open to solicit fresh perspectives. We welcome submissions engaging this question with particular attention to the institutionalization of Jewish theology at the University of Potsdam (2013) as an analytically illuminating case. The panel aims to include graduate students and early-career scholars, alongside established scholars.

(1) Conceptual foundations — whether "Jewish theology" is a coherent category, and how it relates to Jewish studies.

(2) Institutional and normative questions — whether "Jewish theology" is better situated within a public university or in rabbinical seminaries/independent institutes, and the trade-offs this entails for academic freedom, confessional integrity, professional formation, and public accountability.

(3) Comparative case studies — contrasting Potsdam with rabbinical seminaries and Jewish academic institutions elsewhere (in Europe and beyond).

(4) Analytically framed studies of Potsdam's crisis since 2022 — focusing on governance, legitimacy, integrity norms, and public trust, rather than adjudicating personal responsibility or institutional failures.

Submissions from STS, Jewish studies, philosophy, law, political theory, and history are welcome.

CAN JEWISH THEOLOGY BE A SCIENCE? A CRITIQUE OF GERMANY'S ANSWER

Fehige Y.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

THE LEGAL CONTEXT OF CONFESSIONAL THEOLOGIES IN GERMANY

Hahn J.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

THEOLOGY AT A NON-RELIGIOUS UNIVERSITY

Hafner J.(Speaker), Universität Potsdam ~ Potsdam ~ Germany

MEDIA PERSPECTIVE: A REFLECTION ON CONTEMPORARY PROGRESSIVE-RELIGIOUS ARGUMENTATION DISPUTES IN THE MEDIA

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - AT13

Contact: Terézia Roncáková
Chair: Terézia Roncáková

The religious element is an integral part of the current cultural and ethical public debates conducted on the conservative-liberal "front line". One of the spaces that most faithfully capture these discussions is the media. Their research is therefore particularly meaningful when observing various aspects of current conceptual and ideological disputes. Quantitative and qualitative media analyses can focus on texts, institutions, creators and audiences and can use, for example, methods of frame, argumentation, attribution, etc. theories. The findings can then be deepened in individual in-depth interviews and focus groups, or in questionnaire surveys on numerically rich samples. In our section, we welcome a variety of contributions based on media material and contributing to answering some current questions, e.g.:
- what are the current argumentative disputes between conservatives and liberals;
- how emotions are handled in these discussions;
- how language, especially expressive language, is handled;
- what are the psycho-social causes of conservative and liberal attitudes;
- what contributes to the deepening of polarization;
- what role religious faith plays in these disputes;
- what is the position of religious argumentation in the public space at present...

These questions (implicitly) include the issue of (in)equality, because equality is one of the basic starting points of contemporary progressivism, and conservatism (relying on the Christian religion) argues against its misunderstanding with harmful consequences for the (long-term/eternal) well-being of the individual.

WHO SWEARS JUICIER? LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIVENESS IN CONSERVATIVE AND LIBERAL MEDIA

Roncáková T.(Speaker), Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Faculty of Arts ~ Ružomberok ~ Slovakia

POLARIZATION SURROUNDING THE DOCUMENT FIDUCIA SUPPLICANS: HOW MEDIA FRAMING HAS TRANSFORMED PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHURCH'S POSITION ON EQUALITY AND BLESSINGS

Dorková B.(Speaker), Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Faculty of Arts ~ Ružomberok ~ Slovakia

PRESENTATION OF EUTHANASIA IN THE MEDIA

Bicianová P.(Speaker), Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Faculty of Arts ~ Ružomberok ~ Slovakia

THE POLARIZING INFLUENCE OF DISCUSSION GROUPS AS A CONSEQUENCE OF DEPERSONALIZING VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION AND THE LATEST MAGISTERIUM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AIMED AT RESTORING REAL INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Gavenda M.(Speaker), TV LUX ~ Bratislava ~ Slovakia

RELIGIOUS TIKTOK IN ITALY: GENDERED VISIBILITY, PLATFORM AUTHORITY, AND INEQUALITIES OF RECOGNITION

Conti G.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

IMAGE OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT IN MEDIA DISCOURSE BASED ON ARTICLES PUBLISHED ON PCH24.PL

Jarzebak W.(Speaker), Doctoral School in the Humanities at the Jagiellonian University ~ Cracow ~ Poland

THE DIALECTIC OF THE SACRED AND THE SYNTHETIC, IN POPULAR CULTURE

Afangide--Késmárki U.U.(Speaker), Pázmány Péter Catholic University - Doctoral School of Social Sciences ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

CROSSES ON MOUNTAINTOP: MEDIA AND POLITICAL POLARIZATION BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Rech G.(Speaker), Università Telematica Pegaso ~ Napoli ~ Italy

CHRISTIAN ATHEISM / ATHEISTIC CHRISTIANITY: GENEALOGIES, PARADOXES, AND CONTEMPORARY RECONFIGURATIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A108

Contact: Martin Weiss
Chair: Martin Weiss

Christian atheism designates a paradoxical constellation within the history of Western thought in which central Christian motifs - incarnation, kenosis, death, and resurrection - are reinterpreted without recourse to a transcendent, metaphysical God. The panel aims to explore the historical depth and philosophical transformations of this constellation. Its genealogy reaches back to early Christian sources: patristic reflections on divine kenosis (Phil 2), negative theology in authors such as Gregory of Nyssa and Pseudo-Dionysius, as well as radical interpretations of the Deus absconditus. Medieval and early modern developments—ranging from Meister Eckhart to Luther's theology of the cross—further destabilize classical theism by emphasizing divine self-withdrawal, suffering, and finitude. In modern philosophy, these motifs are systematically reworked. Hegel's speculative theology interprets the death of God as an immanent moment of absolute spirit, thereby inaugurating a post-transcendent reading of Christianity. The early Left Hegelians radicalize this move by translating theological contents into anthropological and political categories. Alexandre Kojève's existential reading of Hegel foregrounds finitude, negativity, and historical finality, while contemporary thinkers such as Slavoj Žižek explicitly articulate an "atheistic Christianity" centered on incarnation without divine remainder, emphasizing loss, abandonment, and the ethical consequences of God's death. The open panel invites contributions from philosophy, theology, religious studies, and related disciplines that investigate these trajectories, tensions, and reinterpretations. By situating contemporary debates within a long historical arc, the panel seeks to clarify whether Christian atheism represents a culmination of theological self-critique, a transformation of religious meaning, or a distinctive mode of post-metaphysical thought.

SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK'S CHRISTIAN ATHEISM

Weiss M.(Speaker), University of Klagenfurt, Department od Philosophy ~ Klagenfurt ~ Austria

"THE ABSENCE OF GOD RESEMBLES GOD" – BATAILLE'S ATHEOLOGY MEETS MUSIL'S LAY THEOLOGY

Boelderl A.(Speaker), University of Klagenfurt, Robert-Musil-Institut für Literaturforschung ~ Klagenfurt ~ Austria

KEIJI NISHITANI ON CHRISTIANITY AND ATHEISM – PERSPECTIVES FROM CHRISTIAN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Jockel M.(Speaker), Department of Theology, University of Giessen ~ Giessen ~ Germany

TOWARDS RELIGIOUS AND THEOLOGICAL LITERACY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola A208

Contact: Simon Polinder
Chair: Ulrich Nitschke

Following the religious turn in International Relations (IR), several people and organisations have argued for more religious literacy or even cross-cultural religious literacy. But it might be necessary to go a step further. Our current world of international politics is full of religious expressions, incidents, and religion is often instrumentalized and weaponized. On the other hand, on average, four in every five people across the globe hold to some sort of belief system and the religious turn came about because people realised religion matters.

Religious literacy helps us understand our religious world, by tapping into the religious drives and motivations of people and political systems. Yet approaching religion as one more sociological factor or as a personal preference often ignores the deeper transcendent assumptions being claimed. How to understand why President Putin of Russia sees himself as a katechon if one doesn't know what this means? What to do when religion is used as political leverage; when religious rhetoric enters conversations and negotiations? When is religion not really being religion?

Apart from the knowledge that helps us understand the world, we need ways of discerning how to navigate it. Perhaps we need to move towards "theological literacy", to help uncover deeper assumptions and reintroduce the transcendent into IR. In this panel we explore this concept in more detail and welcome practical examples and cases.

FAITH, RELIGION AND WORLDVIEW IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND FBO IN DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE PROCESS

Lange E.(Speaker), Researcher PIRON Global Development ~ Bonn ~ Germany

ON THE NECESSITY OF THEOLOGICAL LITERACY: LESSONS FROM COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN NIGERIA IN KENYA

Polinder S.(Speaker), Postdoctoral researcher at the Department History of International Relations at Utrecht University ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

Fieldwork in Orthodox Religious Communities in Times of Radicalization

Timofeeva Z. (Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

RELIGIOUS ILLITERACY AND EU RELIGIOUS DIPLOMACY: INTERPRETIVE LIMITS IN THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

Uxhi P.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia / "Giuseppe Alberigo" European School for Advanced Religious Studies ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA AND THE AMBIVALENCE OF THE SACRED IN POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Thomas S.(Speaker), Blackfriars Hall, Las Casas Institute for Social Justice, University of Oxford ~ Oxford, United Kingdom ~ United Kingdom

RELIGIOUS LITERACY IN HUMANITARIANISM: THE CASE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Intropido S.(Speaker), Analyst at AMIStaDeS Study Centre on Research, Analysis, and Training in International Affairs ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE HOLY SEE AND THE "BOARD OF PEACE" INITIATIVE: A CASE OF THEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL JUDGMENT IN INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

Bianchi E.(Speaker), Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore ~ Milan ~ Italy

FROM RELIGIOUS LITERACY TO THEOLOGICAL LITERACY: SEMANTICALLY WEAPONIZED RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

Tolstoj K.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

THEOLOGY AND MARGINALITY: EPISTEMOLOGY, IMAGINATION, AND THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Marcel Macelaru
Chair: Marcel Macelaru

This panel approaches marginality as a critical reimagining of Christian existence in light of a Christological horizon. Christianity has long occupied positions of cultural dominance and institutional power, often sustained through political proximity and participation in hegemonic arrangements. Against this background, the panel aims to articulate a Christian public theology that disrupts such alignments with power.

We hope to explore public theology from the margins, not as a theology emerging from socially marginalised groups, but as a mode of theological reflection shaped by non-conformity to dominant political and cultural orders, as well as to their symbolic logics. In this sense, marginality functions as a theological epistemology: a way of knowing and speaking that emerges when Christian identity is reoriented away from privilege and toward a cruciform logic marked by vulnerability and critique. Such an epistemological shift challenges dominant modes of public reasoning that rely on claims of neutrality, abstraction and institutional authority, and instead foregrounds how theological knowledge is conditioned by proximity to power.

Within this framework, the panel also addresses inequality as a structural and symbolic reality that public theology must interpret and contest. Inequality is sustained not only by economic and political systems, but also by moral narratives, cultural imaginaries and religious legitimations that normalise exclusion. Public theology shaped by a reimagined, Christologically grounded marginality seeks to expose these dynamics while articulating alternative visions of public life that resist sacralised power and hegemonic religion.

By bringing these perspectives into conversation, the panel contributes to debates on religion and inequalities by proposing marginality not as a sociological label, but as a critical theological stance through which Christian engagement with the public square may be ethically reconfigured.

CHRISTIAN EXISTENCE AS MARGINALITY: TOWARD A THEOLOGY APPROPRIATELY PUBLIC

Macelaru M.(Speaker), Aurel Vlaicu University ~ Arad ~ Romania

RETURNING TO MARGINALITY IN CONTEMPORARY EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY: A PROPOSAL FOR EFFECTIVE ACTION IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Simut C.(Speaker), Ars Theologica Research Centre ~ Arad ~ Romania

MAKING INJUSTICE AUDIBLE: HIP HOP AND THE WORK OF PUBLIC THEOLOGY

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

RETURNING TO MARGINALITY IN CONTEMPORARY EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY: A PROPOSAL FOR EFFECTIVE ACTION IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Simut C.C.(Speaker), Aurel Vlaicu University ~ Arad ~ Romania

BIBLICAL STORIES AS EXISTENTIAL MIRRORS OF MARGINALITY: A TRAJECTORY OF DIVINE CALLING AND HUMAN RESPONSE

Oprean D.-.G.(Speaker), Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania ~ Arad ~ Romania

A PNEUMATOLOGICAL EPISTEMOLOGY OF MARGINALITY: PENTECOST(AL) DECENTERING AND THE REIMAGINING OF PUBLIC THEOLOGY

Gheorghe--Luca C.(Speaker), Ars Theologica Research Center (Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad) ~ Arad ~ Romania

MARGINALITY, VULNERABILITY, AND THEOLOGICAL RECONFIGURATIONS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN BORDER

Rapisarda D.L.(Speaker), VID Specialised University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE MAJORITY RHETORIC. REALISING AN IDEAL OF RADICAL CHRISTENDOM VERSUS EXTREME LIBERALISM IN EUROPE?

Kovacs Prof Dr A.(Speaker), J. Selye University ~ Komarom ~ Slovakia

REMEDYING INEQUALITIES — OR ELSE? CATHOLIC ASSISTANCE TO FORMER ALLIES' ENEMIES AFTER WORLD WAR II

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Pola - A203

Contact: Francesco Zavatti
Chair: Gianfranco Armando

This panel examines post-WWII Catholic assistance to former Nazi collaborators excluded from Allied relief, war criminals seeking to evade or mitigate prosecution, and displaced fascists fleeing Europe for fear of repatriation. It brings together two complementary perspectives — one focused on the Vatican's institutional engagement with postwar justice, the other on the lived religious and political negotiations between displaced fascists and their Catholic assistants — in order to address the following question: To what extent did the Church's religious and political objectives overlap with its humanitarian activities and its critique of postwar justice? Drawing on recently released archival sources, the panel shows that these assistance efforts were deeply entangled with Christian reconciliation and forgiveness, re-Christianization, anti-communism and fears of Soviet communism's expansion, the Church's competition with other Christian churches, confessional tensions, ambiguous relationships between the Vatican Secretariat of State and former Axis elites, and the prioritization of institutional reputation over retribution. These findings call into question the very nature of the Vatican's critique of the war crimes trials as forms of "victor's justice" and of the discreet operations to assist fascists on the run, offering new perspectives on Christian charity at the crossroads of material assistance, politics, and religion. By shedding light on the so-called "Vatican ratlines" and on the Vatican's critique of the postwar trials, the papers in this panel explain the Vatican's investment of charitable, diplomatic, religious, and political resources as means toward a moral reconstruction of Europe that marginalized postwar justice and accountability. By doing so, this panel demonstrates the complex entanglements between Catholic responses to the Holocaust, Catholic humanitarianism, and the shaping of postwar justice.

THE VATICAN, NUREMBERG, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR POSTWAR JUSTICE: RETHINKING CATHOLIC RESPONSES TO THE HOLOCAUST

Steinacher G.J.(Speaker), University of Nebraska–Lincoln ~ Lincoln ~ United States of America

PATHS TOWARD REDEMPTION OR TOWARD ARGENTINA? CONVERSIONS TO CATHOLICISM AND RELIGIOUS DEVOTIONS AMONG DISPLACED ROMANIAN FASCISTS AFTER WWII

Zavatti F.(Speaker), Södertörn University ~ Stockholm ~ Sweden

ESCHATOLOGICAL UNITY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Jason Welle
Chair: Jason Welle
authorAMC: Piotr Zygulski
Speaker: Adnane Mokrani, Anna Canton

This panel engages the recent monograph of Piotr Zygulski, Eschatological Unity: Findings from a Catholic-Shiʿi Experience (Palgrave Macmillan, 2025), which explores the potential for eschatology to serve as a common ground for both Catholicism and Shīʿa Islam. The volume discusses the role of eschatological unity as a unifying theme in theological discourse, suggesting it as a key to examine aspects of unity within Catholic eschatology and the Shīʿī belief in the Imām Mahdī. Both discussants are scholars of Islamic studies and interfaith dialogue, including specific expertise in eschatology and mysticism.

ESCHATOLOGICAL UNITY

Zygulski P.(authorAMC), ISSRM S. Michele Arcangelo ~ Foggia ~ Italy

THE BLACK GODDESS ARCHETYPE AS AN EMPOWERING FORCE FOR OPPRESSED AND MINORITY GROUPS ACROSS CULTURES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A206b

Contact: Dorota Kaminska-Jones
Chair: Patrizia Granziera

Black goddesses in many cultures have historically emerged as figures venerated by groups excluded from mainstream society. In some of the earliest recorded traditions, for example, the Hindu goddess Kali was worshipped by thieves and social outcasts. Similar patterns can be observed across diverse cultures worldwide. In contemporary contexts, the rise of Santa Muerte has likewise been closely associated with marginalised populations, including socially suppressed groups and criminalised communities. Although cults devoted to such goddesses sometimes gain more institutional or socially accepted forms, the Black Goddess continues to function as an empowering symbolic figure for oppressed and disenfranchised groups.

In the modern era, cross-cultural exchanges have further expanded the reach of this archetype. Black goddesses such as Kali have been adopted in Western contexts, where they often serve new emancipatory functions. For instance, Kali has become an empowering archetype for older women confronting age-based discrimination. By invoking her as a figure of strength and transgressive power, these women assert claims to equality and social visibility within cultures dominated by ideals of youthfulness.

This panel seeks to examine the Black Goddess archetype across cultures, focusing on its role in promoting empowerment, equality, and recognition for oppressed and minority groups within different societies.

We invite scholars to contribute to this discourse by submitting original research papers or case studies addressing various dimensions of this intricate subject. We seek in-depth, scholarly papers from diverse theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary perspectives.

GODDESS KALI AS A SYMBOL OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE LATE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES IN VISUAL ART

Kaminska--Jones D.(Speaker), Nicolaus Copernicus University ~ Torún ~ Poland

THE UGLY GODDESS: REFLECTIONS ON IMAGES OF THE FEMININE FORCE IN ANCIENT MEXICO AND INDIA

Granziera P.(Speaker), Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos ~ Cuernavaca ~ Mexico

BETWEEN WITNESSING AND MARTYRDOM: SEMANTIC SHIFTS AND TRANSLATION ISSUES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Francesca Badini
Chair: Anna Mambelli, Laura Bigoni, Francesca Badini

This panel investigates the semantic transformations and translation strategies associated with the concepts of “witnessing” and “martyrdom” from a diachronic perspective. Starting from the foundational texts of the Biblical and Quranic traditions, the panel examines how specific semantic fields have been rendered, reinterpreted, and at times reshaped in translations and receptions across different historical moments. Particular attention is paid to translational choices as sites of negotiation between philology, theology, and historical contexts, revealing how acts of translation both reflect and produce doctrinal, cultural, and ideological shifts.
Spanning from antiquity to modern languages and cultures, the panel highlights processes of semantic slippage, expansion, and re-semanticisation within the lexicon of martyrdom. By foregrounding the interaction between textual tradition, audience, and purpose, it aims to show how translation does not merely transfer meanings, but actively participates in the construction, stabilization, and transformation of religious concepts over time, shaping the ways in which they are understood, mobilised, and reactivated in different religious and intellectual perspectives.

TESTIMONY AND MARTYRDOM: FROM THE SEPTUAGINT TO ITS TRANSLATIONS INTO MODERN LANGUAGES

Mambelli A.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia - FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

FROM WITNESSING TO DYING IN THE PATH OF GOD. THE QUR’AN IN ITALIAN TRANSLATIONS (1861 - 2000)

Badini F.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Palermo ~ Italy

WITNESS-LESS MARTYRDOM: FROM MARTYR TO 殉道 (XUNDAO)

Bottanelli V.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

RESHAPING THE CONCEPT OF TESTIMONY AND MARTYRDOM IN CHRISTIAN MEDIEVAL CENTRAL ASIA

Barbati C.(Speaker), University of Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

THE TERMS ŠAHĀDA AND ŠAHĪD IN SUFI VOCABULARY: SEMANTIC SHIFT AND NEW INTERPRETATIONS OF THE CONCEPTS OF “MARTYRDOM” AND 'MARTYR'

Budelli R.(Speaker), Fscire ~ Palermo ~ Italy

A MARTYRDOM IS BORN: SEMANTIC EXPANSION AND DECONTEXTUALISATION OF A WORD IN MODERN ITALIAN

Bigoni L.(Speaker), University of Fribourg ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

USE AND ABUSE OF THE WORD "MARTYR" IN RECENT DEBATES

Bons E.(Speaker), University of Strasbourg/FSCIRE Bologna ~ Endingen, Germany ~ France

MARTYRDOM BETWEEN RELIGION AND POLITICS: FROM THE MACCABEES TO THE CONTEMPORARY FAR RIGHT

Bellantuono A.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Lille ~ Lille ~ France

CONCEPTUALISING HIERARCHY IN AND THROUGH RELIGIONS - FROM PLATO TO MARSHALL SAHLINS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - AT14

Contact: Alessandro Testa
Chair: Alessandro Testa

For many scholars of religion, the conference's overarching topic "religions and (in)equalities" immediately evokes the idea of hierarchy, first because religious hierarchies – human, spiritual, or divine – are well known in history and anthropology, and second because the very word "hierarchy" is etymologically connected to the sphere of the sacred. And yet inequality and hierarchy are two very different things, although they are obviously semantically and conceptually connected: inequality is assessed quantitatively, whereas hierarchy is inherently qualitative. Indeed, the two ideas might even be considered opposites, for inequality evokes imbalance, whereas hierarchy evokes order.
This panel invites papers to address hierarchy in different religious traditions, theoretical approaches, and geographical and historical contexts, offering a comparative conceptual exploration of it as a key analytical concept in the study of religions, examining its transformations from classical to contemporary thought. The papers will investigate how hierarchy has been conceptualised, exalted, contested, and reconfigured religiously as well as through reflections on religion, sometimes in utterly original and creative ways.
The ideal temporal alpha and omega of the panel have been identified in Plato and Marshall Sahlins. In fact, Plato's reflection is perhaps the first in history to systematically tackle the (metaphysical) principle of ordered difference (although he did not use the Greek word "hierarchy"), providing an early and influential framework for thinking about hierarchy as a principle linking cosmology, ethics, and political organisation. Similarly, but very recently, after decades of reflection on human societies and cultural orders, Marshall Sahlins came to the conclusion, contrariwise to his disciple David Graeber, that hierarchy (or rather the principle and the mythopoetic imagination thereof) is in human societies inevitable, or rather inescapable.

HIERARCHY AND HEAVENLY POLITICS: THE ROLE OF THE DIVINE TRIAD IN RULING THE COSMOS IN MESOPOTAMIAN AND GREEK MYTHS

Corrente P.(Speaker), Università di Salerno ~ Salerno ~ Italy

THE CURSE OF HAM? INEQUALITY, DIVERSITY, HIERARCHY IN THE LIGHT OF THE NOBILITY'S INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLICAL STORY

Rygielska M.(Speaker), University of Katowice ~ Katowice ~ Poland

1 CORINTHIANS 11:2–16 AS EARLY EXAMPLE OF CREATION ORDER

Barleben M.(Speaker), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

"THE CHILDREN WHO WILL COME AFTER US". HIERARCHICAL ORGANIZATION AND DYNAMICS OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN NAG HAMMADI CODEX I

Mocellin D.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (DREST) ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

ENCHANTED HIERARCHIES: THE NEW SCIENCE OF MARSHALL SAHLINS

Della Subin A.(Speaker), Independent scholar ~ New York City ~ United States of America

HIER-ARCHY: DIVINE OR DIABOLICAL? REFLECTING ON HUMAN, META-HUMAN, AND METAPHYSICAL HIERARCHIES FROM PLATO TO SAHLINS

Testa A.(Speaker), Charles University ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

THE CHARISMA OF SPEECH: REINSTATING OR CHALLENGING HIERARCHY?

Tateo G.(Speaker), Università Roma Tre ~ Roma ~ Italy

REINTRODUCING HIERARCHY IN EGALITARIAN REGIMES: A HUMAN DIGNITY PERSPECTIVE

De Noüel E.(Speaker), Ecole pratique des Hautes Etudes ~ Paris ~ France

SIMONE WEIL AND POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - A107

Contact: Zoe Boyle
Chair: Zoe Boyle

In response to the increasingly demanding and knotty problems of our world, we require new strategies of analysis and ways of thinking. Taking up this challenge, political theology unmasks the frayed relationship between the secular and the religious at the cornerstone of liberal, technocratic (post)modernity. Many scholars invested in the insights of the vast field of political theology have often engaged heavily with Simone Weil (1909–1943); however, no connection between political theology and Simone Weil has yet been fully fleshed out. During her short lifetime, Weil's thought is infused by her witness and resistance to the totalitarianism welling up around her. Many recognize that her later turn to Christian mysticism is no less than a continuation of her explicitly political writings, such as those on Marx, labour, Hitlerism, French colonization, as well as Indian, Tibetan, and Ancient Greek thought. This panel is interested in how Weil's work through a theopolitical lens can shed new insights into our failing world and how this approach best fits with her own faithfulness to such a world.

THE EMPTY THRONE: SIMONE WEIL ON SOVEREIGNTY AND NEGATIVE POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Boyle Z.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Austria

GRACE, GRAVITY, AND ANARCHY IN THE WORKS OF SIMONE WEIL

Costello V.(Speaker), University of Illinois, Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

THE VIOLENCE OF THE GOOD? SIMONE WEIL AND THE RISK OF POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Sojer T. (Speaker), University of Erfurt ~ Erfurt ~ Germany

"DIEU DANS PLATON": MYSTICISM AND MEDIATION IN SIMONE WEIL'S PLATONISM

Schneider P.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

MYSTICISM, WORK AND THE AUTONOMY OF MAN. WEIL'S SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY OF NECESSITY IN THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL THEOLOGY.

Faber C.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE NEED FOR ROOTS: WHAT TRADITION DO WE NEED?

Robertson A.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

THE AGE OF SAINTS: POLITICAL MODERNITY AS A SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF SIMONE WEIL.

Rabah B.(Speaker), Universite de Reims (URCA) ~ Reims ~ France

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES AND THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE: AGENCY, POWER AND PURPOSES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Davide Dimodugno
Chair: Davide Dimodugno

The decline of Christianity as a socially hegemonic religion coincides with the emergence of “outgoing” Christians. This perspective invites Christian communities to be understood as open, relational and territorially embedded actors, actively involved in the production of urban space and places of encounter. Community is thus conceived not as a fixed identity, but as a dynamic and relational process shaped by shared practices, proximity and responsibility.
Moving beyond formal hierarchies, this inquiry explores dynamics of representation, power and legitimacy within Christian communities, examining how authority and agency are negotiated among clergy, laity and local groups. It considers how different organisational models – centralised or distributed – affect the capacity of communities to inhabit public space and engage contemporary urban cultures.
The notion of an “architecture of encounter” continues to inform many initiatives promoted by Catholic communities, fostering both the encounter with God and the encounter with others through practices of service and the generation of social, relational and spiritual goods. These initiatives may involve traditional ecclesiastical infrastructures, such as parishes reinterpreted beyond the idea of sacred enclosure, or extend into new spaces of social and urban engagement. They often include the reuse and re-signification of deconsecrated churches and ecclesiastical heritage, contributing to a reconfigured pastoral geography.
The call is open to contributions that investigate innovative ways in which Christian communities make and inhabit space, focusing on outcomes, methods and underlying theological, pastoral, legal, architectural and economic assumptions. It addresses regulatory frameworks, governance models and institutional conditions that enable community action in public space, as well as to the economic, patrimonial and heritage implications of these practices.

PARISHES 2.0: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES IN A CHANGING WORLD

Dimodugno D.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

SOCIAL REUSE OF ITALIAN ECCLESIASTICAL PROPERTIES: SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Giani F.(Speaker), Fondazione Humanitate ETS

CHURCH IN A SUITCASE: SPATIAL PRACTICES OF ORTHODOX COMMUNITIES OF DISPLACED UKRAINIANS IN GERMANY

Timofeeva Z.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

RE-ENCHANTING THE COMMONS THROUGH THE “BUNDLE OF RIGHTS”: CATHOLIC LAND CONCESSIONS AND THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Baraka Akilimali J.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Louvain, UCLOUVAIN ~ Louvain-la-Neuve ~ Belgium

CANON LAW AND PASTORAL SPACES. REORGANISING PARISHES AND CHURCH BUILDINGS

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

MARIA REDEMPTORIS MATER: THEOLOGY, VISUAL CULTURE, AND THE REPRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A103

Contact: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO
Chair: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO

This panel explores the figure of the Virgin Mary as a central intersection between theological reflection, devotional practice, and visual culture, spanning from the early Middle Ages to the early modern period. Anchored in historical mariological texts — patristic writings, medieval treatises, and early modern devotionals — it examines how core doctrines of Marian theology, including divine maternity, intercession, purity, and queenship, were translated into complex visual systems, iconographic formulas, and performative devices.

The analysis focuses on the interplay between textual authority, as exemplified in documents such as Redemptoris Mater, and artistic production, demonstrating how Mary's image functioned not merely as illustration but as a dynamic medium shaping perception, piety, and memory. Paintings, sculptures, and illuminated manuscripts are examined to reveal strategies by which the Virgin was depicted as a locus of protection, authority, and affective engagement.

By correlating doctrinal developments with visual expression, the panel reconstructs a nuanced Marian semiotics, highlighting the enduring impact of visual culture on the reception and transformation of Mariology across centuries.

"MARVELOUS VISIONS": MAPPING THE GEOGRAPHY OF EXTRAORDINARY MARIAN IMAGES IN DAUNIA

Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), UNIVERSITà DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA ~ REGGIO EMILIA ~ Italy

FRIAR J. B. HEPBURN'S VIRGA AUREA : ON A KABBALISTIC IMAGERY FOR MARY

Angileri I.(Speaker), University "La Sapienza" of Rome - EPHE PSL ~ Rome - Paris ~ Italy

DEACONS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. WOMEN AND MEN?

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Luc Forestier
Chair: Serena Noceti

In the Roman Catholic church, the Synodal path (2021-2024) has showed how gender questions are at stake in different aeras, especially in ecclesiology. Despite the great diversity of societies, cultures and political rights granted to women and men across different continents, the diocesan, national and continental syntheses, and finally the Final Document of 26 October 2024, adopted by Pope Francis, have shown the extent to which profound reforms must be undertaken to respect the equal dignity of all baptised faithful, regardless of their gender, age, social status, etc.
The old arguments, used by generations of theologians to justify the fact that only baptised men can be validly ordained as deacons, priests or bishops, have shown their limitations. Furthermore, the presence of women in positions of high responsibility in local churches and in the Roman Curia, as well as the growing involvement of women in biblical exegesis, church history, dogmatic theology, canon law, etc., are contributing to a shift in the balance.
This panel aims to study the more specific question of the diaconate from an ecumenical, interdisciplinary and international perspective. We welcome proposals for papers on the question of the diaconate in Christian churches, particularly on how women and men can respond to this vocation. This panel will also be an opportunity to study the epistemological questions, particularly in relation to history and the social sciences.

WOMEN DEACONS? REASONS FOR SAYING YES IN THE DOCUMENTS OF THE 2021-24 SYNOD

Noceti S.(Speaker), Istituto Superiore di Scienze Religiose della Toscana ~ Firenze ~ Italy

FROM SYNOD TO SYNOD

Quisinsky M.(Speaker), Institut für Katolische Theologie. Pädagogische Hochscule Karlsruhe ~ Karlsruhe ~ Germany

WOMEN AND MINISTRIES. AN AGE-OLD QUESTION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN FRANCE

Forestier L.(Speaker), Université catholique de Lille ~ Lille ~ France

MODERNITY IN PERSPECTIVE: AN ALTERNATIVE GENEALOGY OF THE MODERN SUBJECT

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 16:10 to 18:20

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Arianne Conty
Chair: Arianne Conty
authorAMC: Arianne Conty
Speaker: Norbert Hintersteiner, Kurt Mertel, Frédéric Lelong, Judith Crews

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The normative history of modernity begins with the Renaissance and the invention of linear perspective in order to emphasize the placing of man, instead of God, at the center of the world. The vanishing point of linear perspective gives the world to be seen from the perspective of the single right eye of a singular subject, and it is this perspective that inspired Descartes' optics and his isolated cogito as the prime example of modern subjectivity. This book will return to the invention of linear perspective in order to seek another interpretation of linear perspective that might give an alternative modernity to be seen. Using the work of Renaissance theologian and mystic Nicolas of Cusa, we will trace a different genealogy, one that provides a different vision of modernity that allows the world, and the painting, to return our gaze. In elucidating the critique of the Cartesian subject by 20th century philosophers Benjamin, Heidegger, Lacan, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Marion, we will ask how modernity could be re-conceived if philosophers were to take into account the geometric vision of Nicolas de Cusa, and how his alternative vision might enable us to escape narcissism and share our world with the absolute other.

MODERNITY IN PERSPECTIVE: AN ALTERNATIVE GENEALOGY OF THE MODERN SUBJECT

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WHOSE BIOETHICS? RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AND NON-RELIGIOUS TRANSLATIONS IN A PLURAL WORLD

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 16:10 to 18:20

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Tommaso Ropelato
Chair: Georgiana Diana Apostica, Lucia Galvagni, Tommaso Ropelato

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Addressing bioethical questions through the lens of religious traditions is both demanding and necessary. Even in contemporary secularised societies, religious imaginaries continue to shape how we understand life and death, illness and healing, vulnerability and care.
Yet when we speak of bioethical standards, whose standards are we invoking? The language of dignity, autonomy, or vulnerability embedded in the debate and reported in protocols and policies often presents itself as universal while reflecting particular Western and secular genealogies. This framing can obscure a more complex reality: bioethics as a field shaped by plural grammars of value, lived identities, and overlapping worlds of meaning. Rather than presupposing a fixed opposition between religious and secular ethics, the panel invites reflection on how diverse moral worlds intersect, challenge, and translate one another.
We aim to move beyond narratives of conflict or incompatibility by exploring how religious and faith traditions may function as substantive interlocutors in contemporary bioethical discourse. We welcome contributions that examine how religious and faith values and imaginaries are reconfigured within secular frameworks, how they inform practices of care, clinical decision-making, and policy debates, and how they might help articulate more equitable and imaginative bioethical futures.

Possible Topics and Approaches

- Comparative analyses of religious and non-religious approaches to autonomy, dignity, or vulnerability
- The translations and adaptations of religious values within non-religious bioethical or legal frameworks
- The role of ritual, embodiment, and suffering in shaping moral reasoning in healthcare
- Public theology and bioethics in democratic deliberation and policy design
- Empirical or ethnographic studies of how religious and moral imaginaries inform care practices

THE DISENCHANTMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT: RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AS EPISTEMIC RESOURCES

Ropelato T.(Speaker), University of Turin / Bruno Kessler Foundation - Center for Religious Studies ~ Trento ~ Italy

TRANSHUMANISM AND CATHOLICISM: RECONCILING TECHNOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT WITH RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

Balistreri M.(Speaker), DISTU, University of Tuscia ~ Viterbo ~ Italy

THE STATE OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION REGARDING END-OF-LIFE DECISIONS IN CERTAIN EUROPEAN STATES – A COMPARATIVE LEGAL ANALYSIS

Köbel D.(Speaker), Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

CATHOLIC BIOETHICS

Pegoraro R.(Speaker), PONTIFICIA ACCADEMIA PER LA VITA-CITTA' DEL VATICANO ~ ROMA ~ Italy

CARE AND JUSTICE IN GLOBAL HEALTH: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE GLOBAL FAITH-BASED HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

Galvagni L. (Speaker), Bruno Kessler Foundation ~ Trento ~ Italy

THE ITALIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PAUL WITHIN JUDAISM PERSPECTIVE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Giulio Mariotti
Chair: Giulio Mariotti, Gabriele Boccaccini

Over the last two decades, and with growing momentum in the past five years, the Paul within Judaism perspective has become a central paradigm in contemporary Pauline studies. By questioning traditional accounts of Paul's rupture with Judaism, it has profoundly reshaped discussions of law, evil, Gentiles inclusion, messianism, and eschatology. This panel, proposed by the Enoch Seminar, brings together Italian scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds to assess the historical scope, methodological implications, and recent developments of this approach within Italian scholarship.

The panel focuses on a series of influential works published from 2020 to the present—such as Le tre vie di salvezza di Paolo l'ebreo, Gli esercizi di Paolo di Tarso, Paolo di Tarso, un ebreo del suo tempo, Riattivare Paolo di Tarso, Paolo di Tarso nel pensiero ebraico, as well as the forthcoming Italian translation of Paul the Pagan's Apostle. These studies have played a significant role in consolidating, refining, and critically interrogating the Paul within Judaism paradigm in Italy.

The individual papers address a wide range of topics, including Paul and Jewish apocalyptic traditions, the interpretation of Romans in the context of the Roman Empire, the patristic reception of Paul, Catholic and Reformed theological debates, modern Jewish thought, and Jewish–Christian dialogue. Particular attention is given to issues of continuity, internal pluralism, and cultural negotiation within Second Temple Judaism, as well as to the theological and pedagogical implications of recent historical-critical research.

Taken together, the contributions highlight the originality and interdisciplinary character of Italian scholarship and its growing impact on the international debate surrounding Paul's Jewish identity and legacy.

PAUL AND THEOCRACY WITHIN THE ROMAN EMPIRE. A POSSIBLE NEW READING OF ROMANS 13

Marcone A.(Speaker), Lorenzini F.(Speaker), University of Roma Tre ~ Rome ~ Italy

PAUL IN THE WITHIN JUDAISM PERSPECTIVE AND JEWISH–CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

Gargiulo M.(Speaker), Pontificial Gregorian University ~ Rome ~ Italy

TEACHING AND PREACHING: INTEGRATING THE PAUL-WITHIN-JUDAISM PARADIGM IN CATHOLIC ITALIAN CONTEXTS

Zygulski P.(Speaker), Istituto Superiore di Scienze Religiose Metropolitano ~ Foggia ~ Italy

«QUOMODO POTEST LEGEM TENERE QUI LONGE EST A LEGIS AUCTORE?». LAW AND CIRCUMCISION IN AMBROSE OF MILAN'S EXEGESIS OF ROMANS 2:17-29 AND 3:1-2, IN LIGHT OF THE "PAUL WITHIN JUDAISM PERSPECTIVE"

D''Incà A.(Speaker), Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Settentrionale ~ Milano ~ Italy

THE PAUL WITHIN JUDAISM PERSPECTIVE IN REFORMED PAULINE STUDIES: DEFENDING THE "LUTHERAN PAUL"

Noffke E.(Speaker), Facoltà Valdese di Teologia ~ Rome ~ Italy

JEWISH PERSPECTIVES ON PAUL OF TARSUS: TWENTIETH-CENTURY JEWISH THOUGHT

Milani C.(Speaker), Catholic University of Sacred Heart ~ Milano ~ Italy

CHURCH HISTORY AND AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES: NEW APPROACHES AND STUDIES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A203

Contact: Federico Ruozzi
Chair: Raffaella Perin

In recent decades, audiovisual archives—films, television news, documentaries, radio recordings, and, more recently, born-digital materials (recent popes, for example, have social media accounts)—have become indispensable sources for the history of the Church. These materials not only document events, figures, and ecclesial practices, but also actively contribute to shaping the religious imaginary, forms of ecclesial communication, and the ways in which Catholicism has represented itself in the global public sphere.

This open panel seeks to host and present research that proposes a methodological rethinking of the relationship between Church history and media, critically interrogating the traditional categories of religious historiography in light of the visual and media cultures of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Through case studies ranging from the mediatization of major ecclesial events (councils, jubilees, conclaves, papal journeys) to film and television production, and including presentations of new digital libraries dedicated to collecting audiovisual sources concerning the Italian Church, the panel aims to be a space for reflection on how moving images have transformed both the ways of making, narrating, and transmitting Church history and the ways of studying it—placing new sources on the historian's workbench.

By adopting interdisciplinary approaches that weave together religious history, social and political history, media studies, and cinema and television studies, the panel seeks to bring together scholars that innovatively draw on audiovisual sources for the study of contemporary history. Audiovisual archives are not merely documentary repositories but historical actors that participate in the shaping of contemporary Catholic cultures.

MEDIA, RITUAL, AND POWER: A CENTURY OF JUBILEES IN THE AGE OF MASS COMMUNICATION

Viganò D.E.(Speaker), International Telematic University UNINETTUNO ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE MISSION ON FILM: THE CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE OF THE PONTIFICAL INSTITUTE FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS

Adreani D.(Speaker), Archivio Generale Pontificio Istituto Missioni Estere ~ Milano ~ Italy

MEDIATING THE CONCLAVE: RITUAL, POWER, AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Ruozzi F.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia/Fscire ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

LITURGY AND MEDIA: THE CONCILIAR REFORM FROM ITS INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TO THE CONTEMPORARY “MASS-MEDIA” PAPACY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Proietti M.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

REFORMING HOLLYWOOD: THE HOLY SEE AND THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF DECENCY DURING THE PONTIFICATE OF PIUS XII (1939-1958)

Montanari A.(Speaker), International Telematic University UNINETTUNO ~ Rome ~ Italy

NARRATIVES OF LIBERATION IN RELIGIONS: INTERSPACES AND RESONANCES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A104

Contact: Antje Roggenkamp
Chair: Simone Sinn, Antje Roggenkamp

In the face of crises and experiences of oppression, religious traditions have developed different narratives of liberation. Amidst the current changes and in view of global interconnections, these narratives are being expanded, adapted and transformed. Where different religious traditions coexist in specific places, the resonance and intersecting spaces of different religions lead to the acceptance, but also the rejection, of narratives of liberation. In doing so, narratives of liberation articulate a specific way of dealing with experiences of powerlessness, injustice and violence, thus opening up concrete perspectives on the understanding of justice, productive resistance and peace. Nevertheless, liberation narratives are not as politicisable as perhaps narratives of justice or peace: they encompass the relationship between the individual and the community and also draw attention to forms of violence; they address the field of responsibility towards the self, the collective, but also society and the global community.
Spaces between indicate that there are not only areas of differences and similarities between religions, but also hybrid border areas. Resonances draw attention to the fact that there are vibrations within and between individuals who deal with religion, but who also live religion. If one reads the approach in terms of practical theory, then resonances would be comparable to the affordances of things that produce spaces between. Resonances as vibrations also indicate that responsibilities and moods (can) change even in individuals who feel, live and deal with religion. Interstices and narratives thus help to answer the question of how a narrative, or more specifically a narrative of liberation, works.

INTERRELIGIOUS NARRATIVES OF FREEDOM IN DEALING WITH CONCEPTIONS OF GOD AS RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOD

Roggenkamp A.(Speaker), University of Münster, Faculty of Protestant Theology ~ Münster ~ Germany

LIBERATION NARRATIVES IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: ASSESSING THE ROLE OF THEOLOGY AND AGENCY

Sinn S. (Speaker), University of Münster, Faculty of Protestant Theology ~ Münster ~ Germany

SCRIPTURE & ORAL LAW IN THE THEOLOGY OF DAVID WEISS HALIVNI

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A108

Contact: Samuel Kessler
Chair: Benjamin Frogel

Scholarship in Jewish theology has long oriented itself in relation to the canon of modern Jewish thought which wrestled with the polarity between reason and revelation. However, since the middle of the twentieth century, another strain of Jewish theology has existed, one that challenges the philosophical assumptions of the more dominant paradigm. Rather than presupposing the absolute perfection of divine reality and the limits of its human reception, this subaltern theology investigates the character of the human response to divine word and revelation, finding within it a theological space—even necessity—for the human role in interpreting and shaping the face of the divine will.

This panel brings together four papers on the theology of David Weiss Halivni, a specifically insightful exponent of the essence and implications raised by this alternate strain in modern Jewish theology. Halivni does not ask how we live in the tension between reason and revelation, but rather, how do we construct a coherent vision of God's will when confronted by the "maculate" (i.e., seemingly imperfect) template of revealed scripture? As Halivni wrote, "Even the most conservative scholars concede that the literal surface of the scriptural Torah is such that adjunct nonscriptural traditions are required to enable actual observance." This panel seeks to expound both the core issues at play in Halivni's theology—the axial, perhaps even ontological relationship between Scripture and Oral Law—as well as is implications for a Jewish theology still in shadow to the reason-revelation dichotomy.

INTERPRETING A MACULATE TORAH: DAVID WEISS HALIVNI ON REASON AND REVELATION

Rashkover R.(Speaker), William & Mary ~ Williamsburg ~ United States of America

MACULATE COHERENCE: TRACING A THEOLOGY OF RESTORATIVE COMMENTARY BETWEEN EZRA AND THE MISHNAH IN THE WRITINGS OF DAVID WEISS HALIVNI

Kessler S.(Speaker), Virginia Commonwealth University ~ Richmond ~ United States of America

WHAT IS UNORTHODOX? A THEOLOGICAL COMPARISON BETWEEN HALIVNI AND S.R. HIRSCH

Kohler G.Y.(Speaker), Bar-Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

LIBERATION: THEOLOGICAL, BIBLICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Simon Hewitt
Chair: Tasia Scrutton

Christian discourse frequently declares itself in favour of equality and human liberation. Yet how authentic is this commitment? What theological, scriptural and psychological resources might be brought to its aid? This wide-ranging panel, which discusses not only theology as such, but also its biblical underwriting and its outworking in the psychology of political agents, seeks to address these, and other, questions.

The premise of the panel is that conversations between these three subject areas – theology, biblical studies, and psychology – will prove fruitful for resourcing a Christian commitment to liberation. Particularly novel is our inclusion of psychology in the conversation. This results from a conviction that the operation of ideology at the level of thoughts, desires, and emotions is important to understand as integral to an account of how theology can promote transformation. We are interested in both explicitly religiously-inflected psychological work and in work which draws out the theologico-political implications of 'secular' psychologies.

Theologically, we want to see how the major themes of Christian theology can be brought to bear on questions of liberation and equality, as well as how theology can interact with other disciplines to this end. Biblically, insights concerning the text and historical context of biblical writings, as well as ones about the reception history and contextual reading of those writings, well help to situate our questions within Christian communities understood as reading communities.

Submissions would be welcome on theology, biblical studies or psychology – as these subjects relate to liberation and equality. Alternatively, submissions dealing with the intersection of two or more of these subject areas would be particularly welcome.

'THY KINGDOM COME': DIVINE AND HUMAN ACTION IN CATHOLIC ECOTHEOLOGY RELATING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Scrutton A.(Speaker), University of Leeds ~ Leeds ~ United Kingdom

ALL THINGS IN COMMON: RECEPTION HISTORIES OF THE ACTS OF THE EARLIEST CHRISTIANS

Crossley J.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

NON-CONTRASTIVE THEOLOGY: BIBLE, LIBERATION THEOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Hewitt S.(Speaker), University of Leeds ~ Leeds ~ United Kingdom

RATIONAL SOULS AND INTELLIGENT MACHINES: THOMISTIC PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Clemens Cavallin
Chair: Oskari Juurikkala

The Thomistic tradition is currently experiencing a revival within philosophy and theology. However, recent developments within artificial intelligence raise questions about the nature of cognition, abstract thought, artifacts, the soul, and the notion of imago Dei that seem to challenge Thomistic conceptions and favor materialist stances.
For example, assuming that AI agents will eventually outperform human beings in most areas, would it still be intellectually viable to hold that artificial intelligence is merely a simulacrum of intelligence and that artificial agents lack true insight and understanding? Can the Thomistic view that abstract thought requires an immaterial medium (a rational soul) be sustained? Is the Aristotelian-Thomistic dichotomy between “natural substances” and “artifacts” able to account for the nature of potentially superintelligent AI-agents? How is the relationship between AI-agents and their human creators to be conceived, and to what extent will the AI-revolution force us to reconceive what it means to be created in the image of God?
These questions concern human uniqueness and have social consequences regarding agency, autonomy, and the future of work. Human dignity and equality need to be reestablished in relation to a social life that includes increasingly competent simulations of human rationality and creativity. The panel is dedicated to discussing whether the Thomistic tradition, broadly understood, offers valuable insights for Christian reflections on the ontological, anthropological, and social implications of AI, or whether Thomism is of limited use due to its Aristotelian background, especially as regards natural sciences and technology.

THE DIGNITY OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Cavallin C.(Speaker), NLA University College ~ Bergen ~ Norway

PHILOSOPHICAL TURING-TESTS AND THE IMMATERIALITY OF THE SOUL: WILL THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENERAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE UNDERMINE THOMISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY?

Wahlberg M.(Speaker), Umeå University ~ Umeå ~ Sweden

HUMAN PERSONS, LLMS, AND THE NATURE OF MENTAL REPRESENTATION

Wahlberg Å.(Speaker), Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Sankt Georgen ~ Frankfurt am Main ~ Germany

INTELLECT AND WILL IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: AN AUGUSTINIAN READING OF AQUINAS

Ek A.(Speaker), Uppsala university ~ Uppsala ~ Sweden

ARTIFICIAL CREATIVITY AND HUMAN DIGNITY: THOMISTIC REFLECTIONS ON AI MUSIC AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION

Strappati G.(Speaker), Instituto Superior de Musica Jose Hernandez de Buenos Aires ~ Lecturer of Course on Performing Arts Economics in International Relations at the Faculty of Economics G. Fua ~ Festival Pensiero Plurale

(IN)EQUALITY IN DOROTHEE SÖLLE'S THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A102

Contact: Julius Trugenberger
Chair: Konstantin Sacher

Dorothee Sölle was one of the most influential voices in 20th-century liberation theology. Known for her radical political theology, she fought for a world free from economic and military oppression. Her writings continue to inspire Christians around the globe to challenge structures of injustice and to envision a life rooted in solidarity, hope, and care for the victims of capitalist markets.

Sölle herself, however, came from a privileged European background and never denied how deeply she was shaped by the liberal and bourgeois education of her childhood. Her theological work is full of references to classic authorities of modern German theology and philosophy. Not least because of this, her texts convey a strong sense of normativity based on a fixed value system that might today introduce new forms of inequality. For instance, one may ask whether Sölle's appeal to emancipatory ideals creates new boundaries—between higher and lower educated milieus, or between more idealistic and progressive versus more materialistic and conformist ways of life.

The title of our panel points to this potential tension. How can traditional ("old-European") patterns of normativity coexist intellectually with a theology for marginalized communities—both in Sölle's work and more broadly? Is Sölle the right theologian today to integrate perspectives from groups who are not used to academic reflection into theology? Where do problematic biases appear in her theology? And how tolerant is her thought?

We invite contributions that engage with, but are not limited to, the following themes:

• The theological foundations of equality in Sölle's work
• Open and hidden patterns of inequality in her thought
• Sölle's critique of capitalism, patriarchy, and authoritarianism—its scope and authenticity
• Theory and practice of Political Theology (opportunities, ambiguities, and challenges today)
• Contemporary relevance of Sölle's feminist and liberation theology

IT IS THE OTHERS THAT DO THE WORK - DOROTHEE SÖLLE'S CRITICISM OF CAPITALISM IN THE LIGHT OF HELMUT SCHELSKYS SOCIOLOGY OF INTELLECTUALS

Trugenberger J.(Speaker), University of Cologne ~ Cologne ~ Germany

CRITICISM OF POWER AND POWER OF CRITIQUE IN DOROTHEE SÖLLE

Opalka K.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

On Earth as it is in Heaven: Dorothee Sölle and Theological Praxes of Justice

Jones C. (Indipendent scholar)

BEYOND INNOCENCE: THEOLOGY, VULNERANCE, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Judith Gruber
Chair: Ryszard Bobrowicz

Contributing to the conference theme “Religion and In/Equality,” this panel examines theology’s entanglement with structures of domination and inequality. Across diverse contexts, Christian theological imaginaries have too often claimed innocence in the face of harm by conceiving themselves as sources of salvation, reconciliation, or moral guidance while remaining implicated in practices of exclusion, violence, and hierarchical power. The panel takes as its starting point the recognition that theology is never innocent: it participates in shaping the conditions under which inequality is justified, sustained, and sometimes resisted.

Focusing on soteriological and ecclesial frameworks, the panel explores how doctrines of salvation, pastoral care, and ecclesial life both reflect and reproduce asymmetrical relations of power, even as the (cl)aim to be transformative. The concept of vulnerance - the active capacity to harm - serves as a central analytical lens through which to interrogate these theological dynamics. By confronting the vulnerance of theology itself, the panel seeks to uncover how Christian discourses of redemption and care can perpetuate inequality and how they might be reimagined in ways attentive to accountability and justice.

Drawing on insights from feminist, queer, political, and postcolonial theologies, the panel situates its critique within wider efforts to expose the complicity of Christian thought in sustaining systemic inequality, while seeking resources within the tradition for a more accountable and liberative theological practice. Together, the contributions uncover the manifold ways theology itself participates in inequality conceptually, institutionally, and pastorally, while opening spaces for critical and constructive reorientation. Moving beyond innocence requires acknowledging theology’s vulnerance and cultivating practices of thought and care grounded in equality, justice, and interconnectedness.

THE VULNERANCE OF INNOCENCE: A POLITICAL THEOLOGY OF COLONIAL DURESS

Gruber J.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

QUEER TABLES

Méndez--Montoya Á.(Speaker), Universidad Iberoamericana ~ Mexico City ~ Mexico

MIGRANT POLITICAL SPIRITUALITY, VULNERANCE, AND THE GENEALOGY OF ETHICS: RETHINKING THEOLOGICAL INNOCENCE THROUGH MIGRANT SUBJECTIVITIES

Villas Boas A.(Speaker), Universidade Católica Portuguesa ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

HERRSCHAFTSLEGITIMATION AND PHANTOMBESITZ: TOWARD A POSTCOLONIAL PRACTICAL-THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF INEQUALITY IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AND GENDER RELATIONS

Schurink A.(Speaker), University of Salzburg ~ Salzburg ~ Austria

JESUS FATIGUE: INCLUSIVITY AND THE LIMITS OF DECONSTRUCTION

Van Den Berg M.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

QUEERING THEOLOGY. TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPEKTIVEN UND PRAXIS QUEERENDER THEOLOGIEN (TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES OF QUEERING THEOLOGIES)

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A209

Contact: Charlotte Jacobs
Chair: Sonja Thomaier
authorAMC: Joerg Rieger, Charlotte Jacobs, Sonja Thomaier
Speaker: JJ Warren, Tris Genoske, Luke Larner

This Author Meets Critique (AMC) session introduces the anthology Queering Theology, edited by Charlotte Jacobs, Sonja Thomaier, and Jörg Rieger. The volume advances a distinctive approach to queer theological work by centering the concept of queering. “Queer” is understood here not only as an identity but also as a critical practice: queering. From this starting point, queer theology draws not only on queer theory but also on liberation theology and materialist social analysis in order to address the matters of (in)equalities and (in)justice. Queering theology thus becomes a practice of challenging and overcoming the perceived non-alternativeness of dominant ways of thinking, working, and living. It is not an end in itself, but a collective endeavour aimed at enabling a better life for all. In this perspective, queer and materialist approaches are inherently intertwined, and transformative queer theologies integrate them from the outset. The contributions in this volume follow these trajectories while also breaking new ground. By deepening queer theology’s liberationist commitments, the anthology reclaims queer theology as a mode of interrogating structures of power and imagining collective alternatives. It raises essential next questions for the field: How can queer theologies maintain their resistive edge? How can they unfold their transformative potential? And how might they become theologies of liberation for the 99%?
In this panel, respondents J.J. Warren, Tris Genoske and Luke Larner – each well-versed in the field – offer critical and constructive responses to the volume. Their perspectives will open into a broader conversation with the editors and the audience, creating an opportunity for scholars to engage with the book’s contributions to international queer theological discourse and to reflect on its relevance for reshaping theological practice today.

QUEERING THEOLOGY. TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPEKTIVEN UND PRAXIS QUEERENDER THEOLOGIEN (TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES OF QUEERING THEOLOGIES)

Rieger J.(authorAMC), Jacobs C.(authorAMC), Thomaier S.(authorAMC), University of Jena ~ Jena ~ Germany

RELIGION AND GLOBAL SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Benedetto Matricini
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl

This panel explores how contemporary Catholic thought and practice engage with challenges of global social justice in the twenty-first century. Drawing on sociological research, Catholic social ethics, and interreligious dialogue, the panel examines how Catholic actors interpret and operationalize commitments to human dignity, solidarity, peace, and the common good in contexts marked by migration, inequality, conflict, and cultural pluralism. By bringing together academic analysis and ecclesial experience, the panel offers a nuanced Catholic perspective on global social justice that is both theologically grounded and empirically informed.

SAMUELE SANGALLI: CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING AND THE GLOBAL HORIZON OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Sangalli S.(Speaker), Dicastery for Evangelization of the Holy See ~ Vatican City ~ Vatican City State (Holy See)

ANNA ALESSANDRA CIURLO: MIGRATION, GENDER, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN GLOBAL CATHOLICISM

Ciurlo A.A.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Rome ~ Italy

AMBROGIO BONGIOVANNI: INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AS A PATH TO PEACE AND JUSTICE

Bongiovanni A.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Rome ~ Italy

(NOT) TOTAL DEPRAVITY: REDEFINING REFORMED ANTHROPOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A101

Contact: Pieter Rouwendal
Chair: Pieter Rouwendal

The Reformed view of human nature is often summarized as “total depravity.” This is the T in the acronym TULIP, which is often presented as a concise representation of Reformed doctrine. However, TULIP was not used as such until the 20th century. Is it a correct summary of classical Reformed doctrine, or a later (mis)interpretation of it? This panel examines what the classical Reformed view of humanity was, what its sources were, how it relates to the view of humanity held by other Christian denominations, how it has developed, and what its consequences are for, for example, preaching, pastoral care, psychology, and education. It focuses on redefining Reformed anthropology for the present day, in relation to classical Reformed and Christian sources.

MEDIEVAL BACKGROUNDS OF (POST) TRIDENTINE ROMAN CATHOLIC AND REFORMED ANTHROPOLOGY

Goris H.(Speaker), Tilburg University, Tilburg School of Catholic Theology ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

450 YEARS UNABLE TO DO ANY GOOD: EXPOSITIONS OF HEIDELBERG CATECHISM QUESTION 8, 1563-2013

Rouwendal P.(Speaker), Theological University Apeldoorn ~ Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

REFORMED ANTHROPOLOGY AND PUBLIC THEOLOGY.

Den Hertog N.(Speaker), Theological University Apeldoorn ~ Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

TOWARDS A CRITICAL RE-EDITION OF CALVIN'S CORRESPONDENCE: THE "EPISTOLAE JOHN CALVIN" PROJECT AND BEYOND

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A206b

Contact: Gianmarco Braghi
Chair: Gianmarco Braghi

This panel introduces “Epistolae John Calvin”, an international project launched by the Stichting Calvin’s Reforming Correspondence (calvin-digital.nl) – in collaboration with with the Theologische Universiteit Utrecht, FSCIRE, the Huygens Instituut (KNAW), and Éditions Droz (Geneva) – to deliver a new critical edition of the surviving letters of John Calvin (1509-1564). Approximately 3,200 letters to and from Calvin are extant, in Latin and in French. The project’s core aim is to publish, annotate, and historically embed this corpus in hybrid form: as a sequence of printed volumes in the Ioannis Calvini Opera Omnia denuo recognita (Droz) – resuming and extending the editorial work that advanced with the publications by Cornelis Augustijn and Frans van Stam – as well as a digital environment designed to support further research. By revisiting the correspondence with contemporary critical standards and by integrating sources and findings that have emerged since the foundational nineteenth-century editorial enterprises (notably the Corpus Reformatorum), “Epistolae John Calvin” treats the reformer’s epistolary as a dense documentary interface shedding light on pastoral practice, political theology, ecclesiastical conflict, and transregional information flows (from Geneva to France, the Swiss Confederation, and beyond). This panel invites contributions from Calvin scholars, Reformation historians, and historians of sixteenth-century Christianity engaging with epistles as sources for social and intellectual history, and the role of communication networks in the learned “republic of letters” in the sixteenth century. It will also welcome digital humanities papers, tackling specific topics such as editorial challenges (variants, attribution, transmission), the methodological questions raised by hybrid editions, and the opportunities and risks of moving from monumental print editions to hybrid and data-rich critical infrastructures.

MARKERS OF THE EVOLUTION OF CALVIN'S ECCLESIOLOGY IN HIS STRASBOURG PERIOD (1538-1541)

Baretti M.(Speaker), DREST | FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE ROLE OF EPISTOLARY NETWORKS IN THE FIRST YEARS OF THE SPREAD OF THE GENEVAN REFORMATION IN FRANCE (C.1555-C.1562)

Braghi G.(Speaker), University of Palermo | FSCIRE ~ Palermo ~ Italy

MAPPING A REFORMED ‘REPUBLIC OF LETTERS’: CALVIN’S INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

Klok J.(Speaker), Theological University Utrecht ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

IMPROVISED READING: BIBLICAL EXEGESIS AND PASTORAL PRACTICE IN CALVIN’S LETTERS

Woo K.(Speaker), Pittsburgh Theological Seminary ~ Pittsburgh ~ United States of America

HEALING THE BODY, SAVING THE SOUL: MEDICINE, RELIGION, AND PRACTICES OF CARE BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND SPIRITUAL BELIEF PANEL DESCRIPTION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A103

Contact: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO
Chair: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO

This panel aims to explore the multifaceted intersections between the history of medicine and religion, highlighting how, across different periods and cultural contexts, the care of the body has been inextricably linked to the salvation of the soul. Far from constituting separate domains, medicine and religion have shared languages, practices, and interpretative models, jointly contributing to the construction of a holistic vision of the human being.

Contributions may examine the role of religious institutions in the transmission of medical knowledge, the therapeutic function of ritual and prayer, the sacralization of illness and healing, as well as the figures of healing saints and saintly physicians. Particular attention will be devoted to processes of legitimizing medical knowledge, the boundaries between empirical practice and miracle, and the symbolic and performative dimensions of healing practices.

The panel welcomes interdisciplinary approaches—historical, medical-historical, religious-historical, iconographic, and anthropological—and seeks to offer a nuanced reflection on the ways in which medicine and religion have cooperated—and at times conflicted—in responding to the human need for health, meaning, and redemption.

THE MATERIALITY OF HEALING: COSMAS AND DAMIAN AND THE VISUAL CULTURE OF MEDICAL PRACTICE

Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), UNIVERSITà DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA/ISACCL BUCAREST ~ REGGIO EMILIA ~ Italy

THE IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE IN THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Burzanovic D.(Speaker), Autonomous University of Barcelona ~ Barcelona ~ Spain

FROM CURE TO OBLATION: HEALING, CARE, AND SELF-DONATION IN LATE ANTIQUE EGYPT

Lee G.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

BETWEEN MEDICINE AND PRAYER: THE HEALING OF BODY AND SOUL IN NEMESIUS OF EMESA AND GREGORY OF NAREK

Apresyan A.(Speaker), Matenadaran-Mesrop Mashtots Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts ~ Yerevan ~ Armenia

CHRISTAN WORSHIP – A UNIVERSAL PHENOMENON WITH LOCAL MANIFESTATIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A204

Contact: Knut Alfsvåg
Chair: Terese Bue Kessel

It is an essential aspect of the Christian church that believers meet to worship. In this panel, we will investigate different aspects of Christian worship both as a universal phenomenon and as a phenomenon with local manifestations.

1) Christian worship understands God as really present in the midst of the worshippers. One of the papers investigate the understanding of what is here called liturgical realism in the context on contemporary systematic theology.

2) The understanding of the Eucharist defines the understanding of worship but has also created a lot of controversy. Two distinct voices in this context are Martin Luther and Jean Luc Marion. This paper investigates the theology of the Eucharist in Luther and Marion, aiming at finding common elements with ecumenical potential.

3) The sacrament of confession is also an important aspect of the liturgy. Originally a Roman-Catholic practice, variations of it has been adopted in traditions as different as Orthodoxy and Pietist Lutheranism. This papers investigates confessional practices in these three traditions, looking for similarities and differences.

4) Some African churches are growing very rapidly. One way of handling the scarcity of clergy this creates is volunteer ministry, and one of the contributions investigate how this is done within the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus.

5) The Women's World Day of Prayer (WDP) is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women. One of the papers investigate how liturgical material from the International Committee organizing WDP is adapted in a particular context.

6) Environmental advocacy may take liturgical practices into new areas. One paper investigates this phenomenon, arguing that it should not be understood as the instrumentalization of liturgy for political ends, but as a mode of action that renegotiates the boundaries between worship, witness, and ecological responsibility.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST AS A WORLD VIEW

Alfsvåg K.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

LITURGICAL REALISM

Skoglund N.(Speaker), Church of Norway ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

LITURGICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION IN CATHOLICISM, ORTHODOXY, AND THE CHURCH OF NORWAY

Petrov V.(Speaker), The Holy Irina Congregation - Orthodox Church ~ Klepp ~ Norway

PARTICIPATORY LITURGY: LAY AND CHILD INVOLVEMENT IN THE ETHIOPIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH MEKANE YESUS

Kessel T.B.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

THE WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER (WDP): ANALYSIS OF LITURGICAL ADAPTATIONS IN THE NORWEGIAN CONTEXT

Mestad K.M.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

LITURGY AS PROTEST: ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY AND RITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Lund A.J.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

THE CATHOLIC DIALOGUE SCHOOL: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE AND BACK

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Lieven Boeve
Chair: Ryan McAleer
authorAMC: Lieven Boeve
Speaker: Laurent Kružic, Geoffrey Legrand, Fáinche Ryan, Sean Whittle

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Based on the author's previous fundamental-theological work on 'a theology of interruption' and his practical experiences as head of Catholic education in Flanders (Belgium), Lieven Boeve explores how Catholic schools can reconfigure their identity in a context that is profoundly transformed by the processes of secularisation and pluralisation. After elaborating on the way in which the Catholic dialogue school project has taken concrete shape in Flanders, Boeve explains the theological, social, empirical and ecclesial background of the project. He also provides examples of mission texts, a variety of good practices, empirical data, and a strategy to implement an integral and coherent identity policy at school. He concludes the book by formulating a number of challenges, as well as some advice for the future of Catholic education in Europe. So doing, he argues that the project of the Catholic dialogue school offers a both contextually plausible and theological legitimate recontextualisation of the Catholic identity of schools in the current post-Christian and post-secular European context.

THE CATHOLIC DIALOGUE SCHOOL: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE AND BACK

Boeve L.(authorAMC), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

SYNODALITY AND INEQUALITIES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 18:20

Pola - Aula School of Journalism

Contact: Michele Dillon
Chair: Michele Dillon

Synodality - as ethos and practice – was a defining characteristic of Pope Francis's tenure, and the lay-centered synodal themes selected (family, youth, and synodality itself) amplified his stated commitment to a rebalancing of the church's priorities and a new openness to reflexive dialogue between doctrinal ideas and lived realities. Since ascending the papacy, Leo XIV has signaled his commitment to a synodal Church and the consistory of cardinals he convened in January 2026 reinforced this ethos as a central element of a Church that seeks to be relevant and in dialogue with a healthy secularism. In the spirit of interdisciplinarity and contextual theology outlined by Ad Theologiam Promovendam, this panel invites papers from the social sciences and theology and from within a diversity of macro and micro settings to address issues of synodality and inequality. Specifically, what new opportunities does synodality offer for the implementation of Vatican II's more egalitarian model of the Church as the People of God? And what structural and cultural challenges, whether located within the hierarchy's and/or the laity's lived practices, impede a truly synodal Church at this current moment?

SYNODALITY, INEQUALITY, AND LIVED CATHOLICISM

Baigent A.(Speaker), University of Durham ~ Durham, UK ~ United Kingdom

CAN AN INCLUSIVE THEOLOGY MITIGATE SEX AND GENDER INEQUALITIES IN CATHOLICISM?

Dillon M.(Speaker), University of New Hampshire ~ Durham, NH ~ United States of America

LISTENING AND AUTHORITY: EPISTEMIC INEQUALITY IN THE PRACTICE OF CATHOLIC SYNODALITY. AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS (2023–2024)

Oseka J.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

SYNODALITY, CO-RESPONSIBILITY, AND LIVED CATHOLICISM

Baigent A.(Speaker), Durham University ~ Durham ~ United Kingdom

COMMUNICATING INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A106

Contact: Lea Chilian
Chair: Lea Chilian

This panel explores how inductive theology reshapes the ways theology is taught, developed, and communicated across academic, ecclesial, and societal contexts.
Inductive theology has emerged as an approach within systematic theology, emphasizing knowledge that arises from engagement with empirical material, lived experience, and concrete practices. Inductive theology thus explores theologies "from below," bringing them into dialogue with academic theories. By taking concrete experiences, practices, and contexts as starting points, inductive approaches also offer resources for identifying, critically engaging, and potentially transforming social, epistemic, and religious inequalities that shape theological knowledge production and communication.
This shift has implications not only for theological research but also for how theology is taught, developed, and communicated across contexts. Organized by the International Network of Inductive Theologies (InIT), this panel invites papers addressing one of the following areas:
(1) Teaching inductive theology – exploring how students can integrate theologies from empirical material, lived experience, and concrete practices in systematic theological reasoning.
(2) Communicating inductive theology in society – discussing the relevance of inductively generated theological insights for public discourse and societal contexts, for example in applied ethics, healthcare, or ecological debates.
(3) Communicating between academia and church – reflecting on how academic inductive theological approaches may contribute to church context, and in particularly how the inductive approaches, starting from shared practices and experiences, can open new spaces for ecumenical dialogue across denominational traditions.
(4) Communicating across academic disciplines – asking how inductive theology can engage in dialogue with other academic disciplines.

COMMUNICATING CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY OF DIACONIA: BETWEEN ACADEMIC THEOLOGY AND THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS IN THE FIELD

Arndt M.(Speaker), Heidelberg University ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

TEACHING INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Graff--Kallevåg K.(Speaker), MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society ~ Oslo ~ Norway

AN INDUCTIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING DIGITAL THEOLOGY

Robinson M.R.(Speaker), Leuphana University ~ Lüneburg ~ Germany

THEOLOGY FROM THE MARGINS: HIP HOP AND THE HORIZONS OF INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

ENSLAVED WOMEN, CHARITY, AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSION: GENDERED INEQUALITIES IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A105

Contact: Joseph Jackson-Eade
Chair: Giovanni Tarantino

This panel examines how charitable and religious institutions shaped, exploited, and mediated the lives of enslaved women across the early modern Catholic Mediterranean. Mobilizing case studies from Florence, Livorno, and Lisbon, the papers argue that charitable institutions were ambivalent spaces, aimed to cater for the salvation of enslaved women while also reinforcing and reproducing gendered, racialised, and religious inequalities.

In sixteenth-century Florence, the Ospedale degli Innocenti relied on the reproductive and domestic labour of enslaved wetnurses while simultaneously receiving and baptising their abandoned children, revealing the racialised and religious logics that shaped the exploitation of enslaved women and the future of their offspring within Catholic institutions.

In the same years, in Lisbon, the experiences of Maghrebi washerwomen sentenced by the Inquisition to serve in the Royal Hospital highlight the convergence of punitive and charitable structures. Their skilled yet stigmatised labour made them indispensable to the daily functioning of the hospital, while their coerced service was framed as a moral rehabilitation into Catholic society.

The third paper explores the forced artisanal labour of enslaved Muslim women in Livorno who crafted components of their baptismal garments. The ceremony of baptism, materially staged by a charitable institution, relied both on the symbolic purity of Christian ritual and the economic utility of enslaved women's craftsmanship.

Together, the papers illuminate how charitable institutions managed poverty and welfare while controlling the bodies and labour of enslaved women, whose presence destabilised notions of domestic order and civic responsibility. They demonstrate that charitable practices and related religious rituals were entangled with quotidian labour regimes and the management of enslaved women's bodies, through processes that naturalised, prolonged, and legitimised gendered inequality.

MOTHERS AND BABIES: ENSLAVED WOMEN AND THEIR ABANDONED CHILDREN AT THE OSPEDALE DEGLI INNOCENTI IN FLORENCE

Ovadia E.(Speaker), ERC-advg FemSMed, Tel Aviv University ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

‘WASHING THEIR DIRTY LINEN IN PUBLIC?’: WASHERWOMEN AND CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY LISBON

Jackson--Eade J.(Speaker), ERC-advg FemSMed, Tel Aviv University ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

THE CHARITABLE FASHIONING OF SALVATION: THE BAPTISMAL DRESS OF ENSLAVED WOMEN IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY LIVORNO

Molina L.(Speaker), ERC-advg FemSMed, Tel Aviv University ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

EQUALIZED? REPRESSION, NORMALIZATION, AND RELIGIOUS INEQUALITIES IN THE SOVIET UNION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Viktoriia Serhiienko
Chair: Francesco Zavatti

With the overarching goal of understanding how the state repression of civil society and the establishment of inequalities become normalized, this panel brings together two papers that examine how the Soviet Union produced, normalized, and managed religious inequalities. Drawing on Soviet history and Vatican history, the panel analyzes how communist regimes constructed hierarchical religious orders by selectively repressing, tolerating, co-opting, or exploiting religious communities according to political goals. Focusing on the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, its repression, and its long-term marginalization in both political and epistemic terms, the contributions investigate the shifting combinations of repression, control, infiltration, and instrumentalization of religious life. Particular attention is given to the processes through which repression was not only imposed but also normalized and justified through bureaucratic classification, legal regulation, surveillance practices, diplomatic negotiations, and scholarly representation. By situating the repression and normalization of religious life in the Soviet Union within broader East–West dynamics, the panel highlights the role of international actors, including the Vatican, and of diplomacy and soft diplomacy in shaping both the practice and the interpretation of religious repression. In doing so, it illuminates how national politics and international relations interacted to produce enduring forms of structural inequality around established religions. Ultimately, the panel seeks to establish a cross-disciplinary conversation on how inequalities are produced, stabilized, and contested at the intersection of religion, power, and knowledge in modern Europe.

UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE VATICAN'S POLICY TOWARD EASTERN EUROPE: PAST AND PRESENT INEQUALITIES

Serhiienko V.(Speaker), German Historical Institute Warsaw ~ Warsaw ~ Poland

FACETS OF THE SELF IN EARLY MODERN CHINA: ESCAPE FROM AUTHORITARIAN AND MORALISTIC PREDICAMENTS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Pola - A210

Contact: Roccolorenzo Scianguetta
Chair: Roccolorenzo Scianguetta
authorAMC: Paolo Santangelo
Speaker: Maurizio Paolillo, Riccardo Pozzo

This Author Meets Critique panel engages with Paolo Santangelo's Facets of the Self in Early Modern China: Escape from Authoritarian and Moralistic Predicaments (Cambria Press, Amherst–New York, 2025). The book examines how Confucian moral discourse, religious thought, and political authority interacted in shaping — and contesting — moral hierarchies, social inequalities, and individual subordination from the late Ming to the early Qing.

Challenging the view of Confucianism as an exclusively communitarian and hierarchical tradition, Santangelo reconstructs a vibrant intellectual landscape in which thinkers reassessed key oppositions such as collective interest (gong 公) and private interest (si 私), governance by virtue (dezhi 德治) and governance by law (fazhi 法治), ritual conformity and moral conscience. Central to this reconfiguration is the rehabilitation of emotions (qing 情) and desires (yu 欲), traditionally distrusted, as morally meaningful forces capable of grounding a more autonomous yet socially embedded self.By foregrounding figures such as Li Zhi, Wang Yangming, Dai Zhen, Yuan Mei, and Huang Zongxi, the book shows how critiques of Confucian orthodoxy and moralistic paternalism exposed the use of religious-ethical norms to legitimize inequality and authoritarian control, while also providing resources for dignity, moral equality, and resistance. Religion thus emerges as an ambivalent force, simultaneously reinforcing and challenging unequal moral and political orders.

The panel aims to explores how Confucian ethical frameworks contributed to debates on (in)equality, authority, and moral governance, and how these debates resonate with contemporary discussions on religion's role in sustaining or contesting social and political inequalities.

With Paolo Santangelo present as author, the discussion will be led by Riccardo Pozzo (Università di Roma 2, Tor Vergata) and Maurizio Paolillo (Università di Napoli, L'Orientale).

FACETS OF THE SELF IN EARLY MODERN CHINA: ESCAPE FROM AUTHORITARIAN AND MORALISTIC PREDICAMENTS

Santangelo P.(authorAMC), Università di Roma, La Sapienza ~ Rome ~ Italy

DEBATING JESUS AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY: SEVENTEENTH- AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CRITICAL CURRENTS AND THEIR AFTERLIVES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Miriam Benfatto
Chair: Miriam Benfatto

This panel invites papers examining how Jesus and the origins of Christianity were conceptualized within Deism, the Enlightenment, and related seventeenth- and eighteenth-century intellectual currents, as well as the reactions and forms of reception these interpretations provoked. From early deist attempts to reconstruct Christianity as a religion of reason and natural morality to Enlightenment portrayals of Jesus as philosopher, reformer, or moral exemplar, the period witnessed a profound rethinking of both his figure and the early Christian tradition. The panel also welcomes contributions addressing the role of early modern skepticism and the Radical Enlightenment, whose more disruptive critiques challenged traditional views of revelation, miracles, scriptural authority, and the historical Jesus.

The panel seeks to map the circulation and typology of writings that addressed Jesus and early Christianity within these movements, as well as the written and institutional responses they provoked from Catholic authorities, such as condemnations by the Index of Forbidden Books or interventions of the Holy Office. By tracing both the intellectual transformation and the historical reception of these interpretations, the panel explores how early modern thought negotiated the boundaries between faith and reason, belief and critique, history and myth, thereby shaping modern understandings of religion in the age of reason. The panel also aims to investigate the modes of reception and the various forms of reaction these themes elicited over time, how they were received within subsequent historiography, when key shifts occurred, and what motivations underpinned them, as well as the different ways in which such writings or topics were contested, appropriated, or reframed.

HOBBESIAN CHRISTOLOGY: FROM LAWGIVER OF PEOPLES TO SHEPHERD OF SOULS

Schino A.(Speaker), Elukin J.(Speaker), University of Rome, La Sapienza ~ Rome ~ Italy

GENEALOGIES OF RELIGIOUS CRITIQUE: FROM ANTIQUITY TO ENLIGHTENMENT CHALLENGES TO JESUS

Elukin J.(Speaker), Trinity College ~ Hartford ~ United States of America

THEOLOGY ‘WITH’ AND NOT ‘ABOUT’: BRINGING INTERDISCIPLINARY WORK BETWEEN THEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY INTO DISCUSSION OF RELIGION AND INEQUALITY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A105

Contact: Susie Triffitt
Chair: Susie Triffitt

In this panel, through a diverse range of geographical and distinct religious ethnographies, the CAT Network will explore how our interlocutors navigate religious inequalities and equalities. The CAT (Cambridge Anthropology-Theology) Network was founded in 2022 as an online space to foster global collaboration between scholars of Anthropology and Theology, who share a research interest in contemporary religion, ritual, belief, and doctrine. Since our start, we have grown to a global community including over 350 academics in over 20 countries. At the heart of CAT is the belief that Anthropology and Theology work well together and are useful conversation and methodological partners in addressing central religious debates. By engaging with thorough fieldwork on the ground we have endeavoured to do theology ‘with’ our interlocutors experiencing inequality, and not just write ‘about’ them. The papers in this panel cover a diversity of topics from religious inequalities in UK state schools, to the use of European rap to process, reconcile and constructively challenge inequality, to the use of silence in Malaysia to create equality amongst Christians, to the productivity of hope amongst the homeless in Bradford, Yorkshire. Together we will not only grapple with religious (in)equalities but also how to balance two valuable disciplines, so that neither becomes merely the handmaiden to the other.

NAVIGATING FAITH UNDER SCRUTINY: BRITISH MUSLIM TEACHERS AND RELIGIOUS INEQUALITIES IN UK STATE SCHOOLS

Bham M.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

EXILIC INEQUALITIES: RELIGION, STREET CULTURE AND EXCLUSION

Bosscher F.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

WHAT IS NOT SACRED: MISSIONARY COLLECTIONS AND THE HIERARCHIES OF VALUE

Mulat Mekonnen Y.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

PHILANTHROPY AS MORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: THE PRODUCTIVE AMBIGUITY OF PROTESTANT NGO NETWORKS IN BRAZIL

Pinto Abreu C.(Speaker), Higher School of Economics ~ St Petersburg ~ Russian Federation

HOMELESS HOPES: LISTENING TO HOPE IN SPACES OF DESPAIR

Triffitt S.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

FROM TEXT TO TRENCHES: NAVIGATING ENVIRONMENTAL PEDAGOGY IN ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A204

Contact: Oumama Emad Hamasha
Chair: Oumama Emad Hamasha, Nouhad Awwad

This open panel examines the integration of environmental learning into Islamic religious studies in response to contemporary ecological crises and the inequalities they intensify. Climate change and environmental degradation disproportionately affect communities in the Global South and marginalised populations, raising urgent questions about environmental justice, access to knowledge, and the ethical responsibilities of religious institutions. Islamic higher education and religious leadership training thus emerge as influential yet under-examined sites for addressing environmental inequality through pedagogy, theology, and public engagement. Bringing together perspectives from theology, education, and applied religious practice, the panel explores how Islamic texts, traditions, and institutions are mobilised to cultivate environmental awareness and responsibility. It addresses the challenge of translating normative religious sources into contemporary environmental pedagogy, alongside the institutional constraints faced by universities and training program in diverse socio-political contexts. The panel features complementary studies tracing the movement from text to practice. Contributions include a case study of curriculum reform at the University of Jordan, examining efforts to integrate climate change, sustainability, and environmental ethics into Islamic higher education; analyses of climate education integration in Indonesian Islamic universities through faculty development; a study of imam training in Jordan focusing on jurisprudential frameworks and institutional links with the Ministry of Awqaf; and a textual analysis of modern Qurʾānic interpretation engaging concepts such as stewardship, reform, corruption, and justice. As an open panel, it invites further contributions across Islamic and comparative religious contexts, fostering critical dialogue on religion's role in confronting environmental inequality and shaping sustainable futures.

FROM ETHICAL TEXTS TO CLIMATE COMPETENCIES: INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENTAL PEDAGOGY INTO ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN

Hamasha O.E.(Speaker), Assistant Professor of Theology and Religion\Islamic Studies at the Department of Foundations of Religion, The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan ~ Amman ~ Jordan

FROM GREEN SYMBOLISM TO JURISTIC AUTHORITY: CLIMATE RESILIENCE, ISLAMIC LAW, AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN JORDAN

Awwad N.(Speaker), The Ummah for Earth's Campaigner and Global Outreach Coordinator at Greenpeace MENA ~ Beirut ~ Lebanon

FROM SIGNS TO RESPONSIBILITY: ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS AND SOCIAL REFORM IN MODERN QURʾĀNIC INTERPRETATION

Moussalli S.(Speaker), Nature Conservation Center-American University of Beirut\MA Student ~ Beirut ~ Lebanon

TEACHING THE PRAISING COSMOS: ENVIRONMENTAL PEDAGOGY, WATER ETHICS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL WORSHIP IN ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Dziedzic P.J.(Speaker), Harvard University ~ Cambridge, MA ~ United States of America

THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN ENHANCING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Hamasha O.(Speaker), The University of Jordan ~ Amman ~ Jordan

RELIGIOUS NATIONALISMS AND AUTHORITARIAN POLITICS TODAY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Philip Gorski
Chair: Genevieve Zubrzycki

Until recently, many scholars of nationalism regarded "religious nationalism" as an oxymoron. Nationalism, they argued, was a secular phenomenon. No longer. This panel examines three of the most consequential cases of contemporary religious nationalism: the United States, Israel and Russia.

THE EVOLUTION OF MAGA: FROM WHITE CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM TO WHITE CHRISTIAN

Gorski P.(Speaker), Dieckhoff A.(Speaker), Yale University ~ New Haven ~ United States of America

RELIGIOUS JEWISH NATIONALISM IN ISRAEL

Dieckhoff A.(Speaker), Sciences Po ~ Paris ~ France

PANEL TITLE: JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN (IN)EQUAL SOCIETIES - RECENT RESEARCH FINDINGS IN EUROPE AND BEYOND

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola A208

Contact: Márk Nemes
Chair: Massimo Introvigne

This session aims to disseminate recent research findings on Jehovah's Witnesses from the past decade. Early studies of this movement were mostly influenced by theological perspectives, often resulting in surface-level understandings. Before the new millennium, the Organization kept a distance from researchers, rarely allowing more than historical analysis. A noticeable shift began in the 1970s, during which researchers were permitted to investigate the "blood issue," lived apolitical experiences, everyday expressions of millenarian beliefs, and other sensitive issues. The late 1990s further expanded the accepted topics, including legal and FoRB-related topics, critical historical reviews, literary analysis, sociological and anthropological inquiries. This correlated with the gradual widening of the circle of invested scholars. Over the past two decades, the Organization's attitude shifted from mere tolerance to more active, initiative cooperation. These collaborations produced richer research materials and challenged former paradigms about Witnesses. US- and Western Europe-centric findings have been enriched by new inquiries: digital cultural output, media preferences, child-rearing, education, gender, and social empowerment; insider scholarship; literacy; and even ex-member and apostate narratives have been included in ongoing discussions on a global scale. Our panel seeks papers whose research was conducted in this progressive-cooperative environment. We seek contributions focusing on inductive research conducted in the past decade within the Witness community. The panel's focus aligns with current scholarly trends: papers that employ cross-cultural critical analysis, multidisciplinary methodologies, and enrich the scholarship by extending beyond the conventionally accepted borders of the cultural West are highly welcome.

EVALUATING RECENT FINDINGS OF THE 2022-2024 JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES RESEARCH PROJECT IN HUNGARY

Nemes M.(Speaker), CESNUR; HAA-RIATM ~ Torino; Budapest ~ Italy

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN POST-SOVIET ARMENIA

Tokmantcev A.(Speaker), Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Armenian Studies ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

STRONG IDENTITY, RELIGIOUS COPING, AND PROSOCIAL ATTITUDES OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN RESPONSE TO STRESSFUL EVENTS: FINDINGS FROM THE JW-RWA STUDY

Di Marzio R.(Speaker), The Center for Studies on Freedom of Religion, Belief and Conscience (LIREC) ~ Roma ~ Italy

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES' LIVED EXPERIENCE OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Bódi M.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

ESTABLISHING FACTS, NOT FEELINGS: CHALLENGES TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS IN LIGHT OF THE RECENT CASE LAW IN EUROPE

Peltonen O.M.(Speaker), EAJW ~ Frankfurt ~ Germany

THEOLOGIES AFTER: UNCOMFORTABLE QUESTIONS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - AT12

Chair: Katya Tolstoj

This panel starts from the diagnosis that dominant theological frameworks circulating within European academic and ecclesial contexts now operate in a post-imperial condition for which their inherited analytical and normative resources no longer suffice. In the aftermath of the Soviet collapse and amid renewed large-scale war in Europe, theological discourse continues to rely on categories shaped by the Cold War, moral universalism, and abstract invocations of peace. These categories fail to correspond to social realities marked by asymmetrical violence, ideological mobilization, and persistent inequalities of suffering, authority, and moral visibility. They also tend to evade the most difficult questions by stabilizing inherited vocabularies rather than exposing them to critical pressure. The panel therefore proceeds explicitly under the sign of theologies after: theology after empire, after state atheism, after the loss of peace as a self-evident ordering category, and after the presumed moral clarity of late twentieth-century paradigms.
The panel is organized around deliberately uncomfortable theological, theoretical, and methodological questions that contemporary theology and the humanities often neglect. How do religious actors operate when peace initiatives are structurally entangled with power, surveillance, and geopolitical asymmetry? How does martyrdom function once it ceases to be a closed chapter of memory and becomes an operative theological grammar ordering visibility, authority, and inequality in the present? How can theology articulate responsibility and guilt under conditions of ongoing war without collapsing into ideological mobilization or moral abstraction?

AFTER PEACE: SUFFERING, GUILT, RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE RETURN OF MARTYRDOM

Tolstoj K.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

EARLY MODERN CRITERIA FOR MARTYRDOM AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY REUSE

Van Veen M.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

FIELDWORK IN ORTHODOX RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN TIMES OF RADICALIZATION

Timofeeva Z.(Speaker), Muenster University ~ Muenster ~ Germany

WHOLES IN PARTS: CATHOLICITY AND MUSIC

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Philip McCosker
Chair: Philip McCosker

Recent explorations of catholicity (kath'holou: 'according to/towards the whole') emphasise its coordination of parts and whole, finites and infinite, particulars and universal. Whatever the 'whole' catholicity aspires to actually is, it is thought to include all creaturely particulars. As de Lubac insisted: 'nothing is excluded', or as Maritain put it 'catholicity…embraces everything that is real'. In this view of catholicity, finite particulars somehow relate to and express the whole.

Analogously, music seems to coordinate parts and whole, finite and infinite. Pieces of music point to wholes which are not reducible to the sum of their parts. Whether as absolute form or expressing meaning or emotion, music conjugates variety or difference with unity. As Stravinsky emphasised, music needs both difference and similarity: 'Contrast is an element of variety, but it divides our attention. Similarity is born of a striving for unity. The need to seek variety is perfectly legitimate, but we should not forget that the One precedes the Many. Moreover, the coexistence of the two is constantly necessary, and all the problems of art...revolve ineluctably about this question, with Parmenides on one side denying the possibility of the Many, and Heraclitus on the other denying the existence of the One.'

This coordination of endless variety and holistic unity gives music its immediacy and power, for von Balthasar. But he also thinks that the whole or unity which music expresses, or aspires to, is Godself, and this is linked to music's endless variety and asymptotic aspirations to that ultimate unity. That's why, for von Balthasar, music also has a tragic or incomplete nature: its repetitions are always pointing to more, to an ever-greater whole.

This panel seeks papers considering relations between catholicity and music. These could reflect on von Balthasar's 1925 essay 'The Development of the Musical Idea: Attempt at a Synthesis of Music', or other suitable resources.

THE DIVINE MUSICIAN: IRENAEUS ON UNITY, VARIETY, AND COSMIC ORDER IN CREATION

Andemicael A.(Speaker), Yale University ~ New Haven. CT ~ United States of America

CATHOLICITY BETWEEN MUSIC AND BIOGRAPHY: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A THEOLOGIAN

Heaney Vdmf M.L.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Brisbane ~ Australia

MUSICAL APOPHASIS

Mccosker P.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

"MEASURING" CATHOLICITY IN MUSIC: GREGORIAN CHANT'S IDIOM AS CRITERION FOR MODERN SACRED MUSIC IN LIGHT OF VATICAN II AND ANSERMET

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independ Researcher ~ Rome ~ Italy

OLIVIER MESSIAEN AND ARVO PÄRT: IDEALS OF UNIVERSAL CATHOLICISM

Sholl R.(Speaker), Royal Academy of Music and University of West London ~ London ~ United Kingdom

THEOLOGY AND MUSICAL SPACE: ARNOLD SCHOENBERG, COLIN GUNTON, AND JEREMY BEGBIE AND THE CONCEPTION OF UNITY

Stearns C.(Speaker), The Seattle School of Theology & Psychology ~ Seattle ~ United States of America

HOW INTEGRAL ECOLOGY AS A PARADIGM IS RESHAPING INDIVIDUALS' BEHAVIOURS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND SOCIETIES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Pola - A209

Contact: Andrea Sestino
Chair: Andrea Bizzozero, Andrea Sestino

The paradigm of Integral Ecology offers a comprehensive and relational perspective that may inspire the social sciences and enrich contemporary scientific debate. Rooted in a systemic understanding of life, it integrates environmental, social, economic, and spiritual dimensions, proposing an epistemology where interdependence becomes the foundation of knowledge and action. Beyond its theological origins, Integral Ecology provides conceptual tools to rethink organizations, innovation, and governance in light of ethical responsibility, mutual care, and the regeneration of human and natural systems. In an era marked by climatic, social, and epistemic crises, it offers a philosophical and methodological foundation for rethinking progress and innovation, serving as a unifying interpretive lens across business ethics, environmental philosophy, innovation management, and organizational behaviour.

Social sciences, organization and management studies increasingly recognize the need to move beyond extractive and profit-driven models toward regenerative and inclusive paradigms. Likewise, legal studies and innovation policy promote frameworks ensuring fairness, transparency, and participation in socio-technical transitions. Technological and open innovation processes are evolving from efficiency and control toward collaboration, care, and moral responsibility. Transformations driven by digitalization, artificial intelligence, and the green transition call for a reinterpretation of what it means to innovate responsibly. Integrating Integral Ecology into social and organizational sciences opens a path toward "ecological rationality", a way of thinking and acting grounded in interdependence and relational ethics.

By welcoming multidisciplinary contributions, this Panel explores how Integral Ecology may reshape individuals, organizations, and societies fostering new models of knowledge, dialogue, and practice.

ECOLOGICAL ENTREPRENEURIAL DISPLACEMENT IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Nasta L.(Speaker), 1. John Cabot University, Rome, Italy - 2. Luiss Guido Carli University, Rome, Italy ~ Rome ~ Italy

FROM VULNERABILITY TO CARE AND OPPORTUNITY. THE CASE STUDY OF OIKOS MEDITERRANEO

Zecca F.(Speaker), 1. Pontificia Università Antonianum, Rome, Italy; 2. Oikos Mediterraneo ETS Euro-mediterranean Center for Integral Ecology ~ Taranto ~ Italy

ECOLOGICAL RATIONALITY IN LAW. DEVELOPING A LEGAL FRAMEWORK INSPIRED BY LAUDATO SI'

Mounir M.(Speaker), 1. Researcher Affiliate in CERCCLE, Bordeaux University, France; 2. Affiliate Researcher in Law, DiTEIM Dept. of Human Centric Digital Transformation and Ethical innovation Management @CUIRIF ~ Paris ~ France

INTEGRAL ECOLOGY INSPIRING OPEN INNOVATION PRACTICES? TOWARD AN INTEGRATIVE FRAMEWORK

Sestino A.(Speaker), 1. Catholic University of Sacred Heart, Rome - 2. Luiss Guido Carli University, Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE EFFECTS OF DIGITALIZATION IN MENAS. IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGIC SECTORS FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND INTEGRAL ECOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

Sagona A.(Speaker), 1. Alumni Luiss Guido Carli University, Rome, Italy - 2. Adjunct Faculty, Pontifical University Antonianum, Rome, Italy ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE ROLE RELIGIOUS RULES CAN PLAY IN PROTECTING THE EVIRONMENT

Larcom S.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

INTEGRAL ECOLOGY AS A PARADIGMATIC FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY: INSIGHTS FROM A PILOT COURSE

Siaudvytiene E.(Speaker), LCC International University ~ Klaipeda ~ Lithuania

LANGUAGE, FEMININE LANGUAGE, AND POETIC LANGUAGE FROM AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE IN THE PRISM OF INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Demneri E.(Speaker), Gaudiano V.(Speaker), Istituto Universitario Sophia ~ Florence ~ Italy

CUSANUS TOMORROW: ONGOING RECEPTIONS OF NICHOLAS OF CUSA

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Adam Smith
Chair: Adam Smith

Extensive scholarly work on Nicholas of Cusa only began in earnest with the Cusanus renaissance of the nineteenth century. Originally centered in Tubingen, this work culminated with the Heidelberg edition of Cusa's Opera omnia initiated under Raymond Klibansky's editorial guidance in 1932. This project was only completed in 1982, long after Klibansky had moved to McGill University. Along with the publication of the important work Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance in 1927 by Klibanky's colleague Ernst Cassirer, this set the frame of reference for subsequent accounts of Cusa's reception in terms of a debate on the appropriateness of applying medieval or modern categories to Cusa. While Cusa's thought is perpetually innovative in anticipating both contemporary philosophical and theological debates, this innovation is tied directly to an intensive retrieval of ancient Greek philosophy. His influence on subsequent thought is both wide-ranging and extensive—ranging across German Idealism, neo-Kantianism and French phenomenology—but this influence is not always easy to track and quantify in precise terms.

In this panel, we propose to explore the problematic of 'reception' in Cusanus' philosophy. This panel will therefore address the question of reception in Nicholas of Cusa from three interrelated angles: (i) Cusa's own reception of ancient Greek philosophy, especially Plato and Aristotle in light of his Medieval/Renaissance context; (ii) the nineteenth century retrieval of Cusa and how this has shaped the subsequent assessments and re-assessments of Cusa's thought and debates surrounding its historical location; (iii) ongoing or possible applications of Cusa's work to novel philosophical works and contexts.

Re-thinking the concept of reception both in and for Nicholas of Cusa's work will aid us in moving past impasses in the scholarship, as well as underscore the growing significance of Cusa's work.

GOD BEYOND GROUND: THE RECEPTION OF NICHOLAS OF CUSA IN HEIDEGGER AND MARION

Smith A.(Speaker), McGill University ~ Montreal ~ Canada

EXPLORING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND ETHICS: CONSEQUENCES OF CUSA'S APPROACH TO BEING AND KNOWLEDGE FOR NATURAL LAW

De Souza A.(Speaker), McGill University ~ Montreal ~ Canada

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND COMBATTING INEQUALITY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Peter Admirand
Chair: Peter Admirand

Inequalities within religious institutions and societies are often paralleled or perpetuated through interfaith dialogues where certain groups, themes, priorities, or identities are marginalised, silenced, or under-represented. Think, for example, of the still marginal role of many women at the institutional levels of interfaith dialogues; the failure to include atheists; or the lack of ethnic and class diversity in many interfaith groups. Most glaringly, many interfaith dialogues are dominated by the most liberal representatives of faith and ideological systems, often skewing its focus, representation, aims, and effectiveness. Sometimes, these issues are unaddressed or not even seen as issues. But there are also brave and creative initiatives, trailblazers, public events, and texts that demand deeper inclusivity or seek to address these inequalities. Interfaith dialogues of life initiatives may also focus on working for greater equity, fairness, and justice through societal, cultural, legal, creative, and economic actions.
In this panel, organised by Dublin City University's Centre for Interreligious Dialogue, abstracts are invited on the following interrelated topics:

• Inequalities unaddressed or maintained through interfaith dialogues, including but not limited to: racial, economic, class, gender, social, and educational identities
• Examples of interfaith dialogue initiatives and trailblazers who address societal and other types of inequalities
• Sub topics can include (but is not limited to!) the following:

a. Women and Interfaith Dialogue
b. The Working Class and Interfaith Dialogue
c. Disability and Interfaith Dialogue
d. Race and Interfaith Dialogue
e. Interfaith Dialogue and Youth
f. Interfaith Dialogue and Traditional/Evangelical/Conservative Believers
g. Interfaith Dialogue and Atheists
h. Interfaith Dialgue and Indigenous Faiths

THE SOURCE OF OUR EXPECTATIONS: THE MEANING OF "DIALOGUE"

Tonelli D.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Rome ~ Italy

(IN)EQUALITY AND THE RELATIONAL CONDITIONS OF ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE

Mekeresi M.(Speaker), Pontifical Gregorian University ~ Rome ~ Italy

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND ECHO CHAMBERS

Admirand P.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

WOMEN AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Grung A.H.(Speaker), University of Oslo ~ Oslo ~ Norway

EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

Bargár P.(Speaker), Protestant Theological Faculty, Charles University ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ACTORS OF DIALOGUE: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE PERIPHERIES OF INSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUES

Dini E.(Speaker), Pontifical Gregorian University - Université Catholique de Lyon ~ Rome ~ Italy

AFRICANA AND INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION IN THE PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS

Lefebure L.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington ~ United States of America

ACCESS AND INCLUSION IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS FROM KENYA, NIGERIA AND SRI LANKA

Eder M.(Speaker), Centre for Society and Religion/ AGIAMONDO Germany ~ Colombo ~ Sri Lanka

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND MINORITY BELIEVERS. STATE-SPONSORED INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AS SOFT POWER IN FAVOR OF LAICITÉ (FRANCE- QUÉBEC)

Strack F.(Speaker), University of Sherbrooke ~ Montréal ~ Canada

6. DIALOGUES OF LIFE: INTERFAITH PRACTICE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN DUBLIN

Cristea A.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

BELIEF IN PLURALITY: DESIGNING A STUDY ON MULTIPLE RELIGIOUS BELONGING IN INTERFAITH CONTEXTS

Pulinx R.(Speaker), Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

“BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY AND FILL THE EARTH AND SUBDUE IT” (GEN 1,28). HUMAN-ANIMAL-INEQUALITY AND THE CONCEPT OF RESPONSIBILITY FROM AN INTERRELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Cornelia Mügge
Chair: Julia Enxing

The human mandate to rule over the earth within the Abrahamic religions has produced ambivalent and often highly problematic outcomes. In the Jewish and Christian creation narratives, this mandate has often been interpreted as an archetypal justification for human superiority and the exploitation of nature and animals. In Islam, the concept of ḫalīfa, which positions humans as God’s representatives, can similarly give rise to tension-laden interpretations. Such selective readings of sacred texts continue to shape contemporary human–nature and human–animal relationships in ways fundamentally marked by hierarchy and inequality.

Over the past few decades, the call to “subdue” has often been reinterpreted as “taking responsibility”, implying a more respectful approach in regards to the non-human (or: more-than-human) world. However, responsibility is also an ambigue concept and its interpretation can perpetuate the inequality between humans and animals in certain respects. For instance, responsibility is frequently invoked as an argument for human superiority.

This panel, hosted by the DFG network “Related in the face of God. The Human–Animal Relationship in Interreligious Perspective“, explores the addressed ambiguity. It features contributions that revisit, question, or reimagine the notions of dominion, ḫalīfa and responsibility in light of insights from human-animal studies, recent developments in animal ethics, and the growing impact of the Anthropocene discourse.

We will discuss questions such as: Are there religious resources for a responsible relationship with non-human animals? Does framing humans as “responsible” risk reinforcing hierarchies? Is it necessary to move away from these traditions, can they be creatively reinterpreted, or is it worthwhile to revisit overlooked texts? In how far does the idea of the human being as the image of God function as a potential source for repentance or rather as a pitfall for the exploitation of our common home?

BEYOND STEWARDSHIP: VULNERABILITY AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF HUMAN–ANIMAL RESPONSIBILITY IN CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC ETHICS

El Maaroufi A.(Speaker), Universität Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

RESPONSIBILITY AS SOLIDARITY. TOWARDS AN EQUALITY-ORIENTED UNDERSTANDING OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MULTI-SPECIES COMMUNITY

Mügge C.(Speaker), Universität Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

NATURE, ANIMALS, AND THE ETHICS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN JEWISH THOUGHT

Attia Y.(Speaker), Universität Paderborn ~ Paderborn ~ Germany

JEWS LEARNING FROM AND WITH OTHER ANIMALS: COMMENTARIES TO PEREK SHIRA OVER THE CENTURIES

Schorsch J.(Speaker), Universität Potsdam ~ Potsdam ~ Germany

BROKEN WEBS, WANING BEES: DESTABILIZING HUMAN-CENTRISM IN KELLER AND JASAREVIĆ

Mirsadri S.(Speaker), Université de Genève ~ Genève ~ Switzerland

'AN EYE FOR AN EYE'. RETHINKING THE BIBLICAL LAW OF MERCY WITH REGARD TO ANIMALS

Ruster T.(Speaker), Universität Dortmund ~ Dortmund ~ Germany

HIKMA 2.0? ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSHUMANISM, NEUROTECHNOLOGY, AND AI IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Hureyre Kam
Chair: Hureyre Kam, Morteza Hashemi

The rapid technological transformations driven by artificial intelligence (AI), neurotechnology, and transhumanist visions of the future are profoundly reshaping our understanding of personhood, soul, responsibility, and community. These developments challenge traditional Islamic theological frameworks while simultaneously opening up new avenues for rethinking human existence in light of divine creation and ethical responsibility. This panel brings together scholars from theology, ethics, and religious education to explore how Islamic thought can respond to these paradigm shifts. The papers address the intersections between technological enhancement of human body, tech-driven social and political transformations in Muslim communities, moral agency, and Islamic theology;probing questions such as: What does it mean to be human in an age of algorithmic autonomy? How can Islamic ethics engage with technologies of self-optimization and enhancement? What are the socio-political implications of digital age for the Muslim societies? And what role does religious education play in fostering digital and moral literacy in a world increasingly shaped by machines?
By integrating systematic-theological reflection with ethical, medical, and pedagogical perspectives, the panel aims to reposition Islamic theology as a vital voice in global debates on transhumanism and the Anthropocene. It seeks to highlight the potential of Islamic responsibility ethics and educational practice as resources for navigating a technologically saturated future and for shaping ethically grounded Muslim engagements with emerging technologies in Europe and beyond.

SUPERINTELLIGENCE + MUSLIM = SUPERMUSLIM? ON BUILDING A MUSLIM POSTHUMAN VOCABULARY

Kam H.(Speaker), University of Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

TRANSHUMANIST RE-READING OF ALI SHARIATI'S POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Hashemi M.(Speaker), university of Nottingham ~ Nottingham ~ United Kingdom

TRANSHUMANIST RE-READING OF ALI SHARIATI'S POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Hashemi M.(Speaker), University of Nottingham ~ Nottingham ~ United Kingdom

ENGAGING TRANSHUMANIST DEBATES IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Aysel A.(Speaker), University of Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

THEOLOGY AND ATTENTION: PRACTICES, ETHICS, AND TRANSFORMATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:00

Parenzo - A1

Contact: Tabea Ott
Chair: Tabea Ott, Ann-Sophie Markert, Madlen Geidel

Our present age is characterized by a constant competition for our attention — shaped, fragmented, and directed by digital technologies, media environments, and social structures. This panel approaches the question of attention from a theological and religious studies perspectives: What constitutes attention, and to what extent can it be guided, cultivated, or controlled? Which religious practices attract or cultivate attention? How do the attention logics of algorithms reshape religious practices and experiences? What practices of attention can be identified within religious traditions — such as compassion, empathy, and (neighborly) love — and how might they offer alternative models of perceiving and responding to the world? What are the negative dimensions of attention — for example, phenomena such as attention fatigue in health care or exposure — and how do they challenge theological or ethical reflection? Finally, what role does attention play in reinforcing or challenging global inequalities?

We welcome both theoretical contributions that examine attention on an abstract or analytical level and practical studies that address it in applied settings, for instance in spiritual counseling or pastoral care. We invite papers from all theological disciplines, ethics, religious studies, and related fields that investigate the relationship between religion and attention in a broad sense.

ETHICS OF ATTENTION

Ott T.(Speaker), Unversity of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

CHRISTIAN INFLUENCERS AND ATTENTION

Geidel M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität ~ Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Germany

BODY/PHYSICALITY AND BODY KNOWLEDGE AS A LOCUS OF INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY: BETWEEN PERCEPTION AND ATTENTION (WORK IN PROGRESS)

Sallandt U.(Speaker), Carl-von-Ossietzky-Universität Oldenburg ~ Oldenburg ~ Germany

ATTENTION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Markert A.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität ~ Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Germany

ATTENTION AS THE BEGINNING OF DEVOTION: CULTIVATING AWE THROUGH EMBODIED SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Van Emmerik M.(Speaker), Pembroke College, University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

SOFT POWER AND SACRED INEQUALITY: PATRONAGE, TRANSLATION, AND THE MAKING OF MARY MAGDALENE FROM EUROPE TO CHINA

Lin E.(Speaker), Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages ~ Kaohsiung ~ Taiwan

COUNTER-FORMING THE ALGORITHM: A MYSTICAL PEDAGOGY OF ATTENTION FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

Medyarto P.A.G.(Speaker), Regis College, Toronto School of Theology ~ Toronto ~ Canada

LOSS OF ATTENTION AS A LOSS OF THE ABILITY TO NARRATE

Sixta T.(Speaker), Charles University ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

LAW, RELIGION, AND ATTENTION: PROTECTING SPIRITUAL FOCUS IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS

Özgü R.(Speaker), University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

FROM FRANCIS TO LEO XIV: AN INTERREGNUM OR A REINVENTION OF THE PAPACY?

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A101

Contact: Massimo Faggioli
Chair: Bryan Froehle

Since the nineteenth century and the rise of nationalism, the papacy has played an outsized role both within the international system and the internal workings of the Catholic Church. This was only heightened by post-colonialism as the nation states of the world entered into the world created by the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia. Before 1900, a majority of Catholic bishops were named by some combination of local authority and historic custom within their territories. Today, the vast majority of Catholic bishops are named by Rome under the authority of the Pope. In spite of the decentralizing tendencies of episcopal collegiality as it emerged in the Second Vatican Council, the papacy under Paul VI, John Paul II, and Benedict XVI became only more centralized. The Francis papacy was an effort to undermine the Roman curial bureaucracy and nonetheless was marked by a kind of personal, charismatic leadership confronting the strongmen of the post-liberal world order, especially Donald Trump. After Francis, where does this leave the papacy today? What are the lasting contributions of Francis to the self-understanding of Roman authority by Catholics, lay and leaders alike, around the world and within the Curia itself? Is the Leo papacy a return to the past and the longed-for status quo ante of so many Catholic conservatives? Or is it the consolidation of long-overdue changes stemming from the Council that had been put aside before Francis? What is the emerging role of the papacy in addressing the quasi-religious and messianic features of today's post-liberal and illiberal regimes?

EMBRACING THE CRUCIFIED CHRIST AND THE CHURCH'S ABSENT CENTER: THE SHIFT FROM BENEDICT'S CHURCH OF GLORY TO LEO'S FOCUS ON THE MARGINS

Klug F.(Speaker), University of Marburg ~ Marburg ~ Germany

DONALD TRUMP LEARNED HIS CATECHISM WELL: NORMAN VINCENT PEALE, POSITIVE THINKING, AND THE GOSPEL OF WEALTH

Massa M.(Speaker), Boston College ~ Boston ~ United States of America

SOVEREIGN ENTITY AND MICROSTATE FOREIGN POLICY: THE HOLY SEE'S TREATIES AND INTERESTS IN ASIA

D'Angelo M. (Speaker), Loughborough University ~ London ~ United Kingdom

FROM A POPE OF SYNODALITY TO A SYNODAL POPE? JESUIT CHEMISTRY FOLLOWED BY AUGUSTINIAN CALCULUS

Paparella J.(Speaker), Pontifical John Paul II Theological Institute for Marriage and Family Sciences ~ Vatican City ~ Italy

FROM "FIELD HOSPITAL" TO "LEAVEN FOR A RECONCILED WORLD" : ECCLESIAL AND PAPAL THEOPOLITICAL RECONFIGURATION IN THE TRANSITION FROM FRANCIS TO LEO XIV

Bountsebe Ekassi J.E.(Speaker), KU Leuven / Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

DATASETS, WORKFLOWS, SOFTWARE AND AIS TO STUDY RELIGIONS: WHAT IS NEW AND WHAT IS AHEAD?

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Pola - A210

Contact: Francesca Cadeddu
Chair: Francesca Cadeddu

The Digital Turn in Religious Studies is a shift that is nurtured by the never ending duality that presents scholars as mere technology consumers or as actors in the production of technology that are able to face the challenge of complexity (ages, cultures, languages, type of sources, type of supports, semantics) that emerges from the scientific field.
The panel, promoted by RESILIENCE, the European research infrastructure for religious studies, is framed to be an open forum for all scholars who make use of advanced technologies in the study of religions. Local, national and international projects are welcome to present their research and development outputs and outcomes, to reflect on the role played by the research community in the current digital turn and to address one question: can the complexity of our field of study be a driver for technology developments that are applicable in other scientific and commercial domains?

UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF USERS, SUPPORTING THEIR UPSKILLING. CHALLENGES FOR RESILIENCE, THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE ON RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Cadeddu F.(Speaker), FSCIRE - Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

HORTUS: AN INTEGRATED AND MODERATED PLATFORM FOR THE DIGITAL TURN IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Demo R.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

INTRODUCING THE PLORABUNT DATASET

Ruozzi F.(Speaker), El Ganadi A.(Speaker), Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia/FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

SANCTUARIA: A DIGITAL ARCHIVE OF SANCTUARY FOUNDATION LEGENDS AND EX VOTOS

Papasidero M.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

SEEING MARY: MARIAN ICONOGRAPHY BETWEEN VISUAL CULTURE, RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND GAZE STUDIES

Ruozzi F.(Speaker), Papasidero M.(Speaker), Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

RE-READING PAPAL DOCUMENTS: REGESTA, DIPLOMATICS, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Righi L.(Speaker), Università degli studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia/FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

DELINEATING PROFILES OF CULTURAL IMBALANCES BETWEEN DIGITAL HUMANITIES, LIBRARIANSHIP, ISLAMIC STUDIES AND NON-LATIN SCRIPTS: REFLECTIONS FROM THE DIGITAL MAKTABA PROJECT

Vigliermo R.A.(Speaker), Mem s.r.l. ~ Bologna ~ Italy

JUDGING A BOOK BY ITS FRONTISPIECE: AN “LLM-AS-A-JUDGE” APPROACH FOR CONSTRAINED TOPIC IDENTIFICATION

El Ganadi A.(Speaker), FSCIRE _ Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

A WORKFLOW FOR DIGITIZING AND SHARING ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPTS

Ferrandino G.(Speaker), University of Naples "L'Orientale" ~ Naples ~ Italy

IXTHEO: RESEARCH TOOL AND RESEARCH ANALYSIS

Fassnacht M.(Speaker), University Library Tuebingen / Specialised Information Services ~ Tübingen ~ Germany

ARABIC TOPIC MODELING WITH LLMS: A PROMPTING-BASED APPROACH

Aftar S.(Speaker), Vigliermo R.A.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

ECUMENICAL FILOCALIA FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: WHAT TO SAVE WHEN THE WORLD ENDS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A102

Contact: Luca Ferracci
Chair: Luca Ferracci

This open panel invites papers on a concrete, ecumenically charged question: which works—texts, corpora, and "schools" of Christian thought and practice—should be preserved and transmitted to future generations of ecumenists, and by what criteria? The title invokes an end-of-the-world horizon in order to make a present difficulty harder to evade: the transmission of ecumenical theological knowledge is under strain, and the places and habits that once sustained it can no longer be taken for granted. Under threats of destruction, churches often struggle to speak and act together.

Part of the difficulty is institutional. Academic theology faces shrinking infrastructures, changing student publics, contested authority, and fragmented formation. At the same time, theology is increasingly displaced into a widened ecosystem—private educational institutes, think tanks, ecclesial initiatives, media platforms, and influencer-driven publics—often with different incentives and measures of credibility. In this setting, ecumenism is especially vulnerable: in many contexts, the generation now assuming leadership is less instinctively committed to ecumenism, less trained to read across confessions, and less formed by the "slow" virtues of dialogue.

This panel asks what it would mean to assemble an Ecumenical Filocalia for the twenty-first century: not a nostalgic canon, and not a default "Western classics" syllabus, but a deliberately ecumenical selection—Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Pentecostal and charismatic—with a global horizon beyond Europe and North America. We welcome proposals on cross-confessional classics with real reception; key texts and debates in modern ecumenical theology; authors and corpora from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and diasporas; documentary, historiographical, and biographical works shaping ecumenical memory; and monastic and ascetical literature (ancient and modern) as part of the ecumenical archive.

HISTORIES AND HISTORIOGRAPHIES OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Ferracci L.(Speaker), Fscire ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE AGE TO COME AS CALL AND JUDGMENT: THE ESCHATOLOGICAL OUTLOOK OF METR. JOHN ZIZIOULAS AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR THE FUTURE OF ECUMENISM

Asproulis N.(Speaker), Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

CHRISTOS YANNARAS: THE LIMITS OF AN ETHNOCENTRIC RECEPTION OF THE WEST

Keramidas D.(Speaker), Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas - Angelicum ~ Rome ~ Italy

TOWARD AN ECUMENICAL FILOCALIA FOR THE ANTHROPOCENE: REIMAGINING CHRISTIAN INTERIORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY BEYOND CONFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Surowiec P.R.(Speaker), The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin ~ Lublin ~ Poland

PREPARING FOR THE END OF THE WORLD: ECUMENICAL DISCOURSE IN 1930S FRANCE

Brown S.(Speaker), Assosiate member, Institut romand de systématique et d'éthique ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

UNITY AND DIFFERENTIATION. INQUIRING NON-DUALISM AS INTERDISCIPLINARY PARADIGM

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A2

Contact: Gabriele Giampieri
Chair: Gabriele Giampieri

The panel aims to investigate non-dualism as a cross-cutting paradigm between physics and metaphysics capable of fostering fruitful dialogue across disciplines and religions that are often perceived as distant. By rejecting ontological separations such as subject versus object or consciousness versus matter, non-dualism opens an immanent field of potentiality understood as a continuous process of self-manifestation. Phenomenal reality is not conceived as something external to this field but as its expression or modality, a dynamic play of internal self-differentiation unfolding through ongoing processes of contraction, folding, or topological inversion.

A first goal of the panel is to examine the presence of non-dual intuitions within metaphysical traditions that are usually considered far apart, and to open a dialogue among frameworks that view reality as a unitary process from which multiplicity emerges through immanent differentiation. Examples may range across religious traditions, highlighting how non-dual intuitions ground practices of comparison and interreligious dialogue, question hierarchical models of reality, and contribute to ethical and social frameworks aimed at reducing symbolic, epistemic, and social inequalities.

A second aim is to explore how these metaphysical systems may offer fruitful interpretive models for contemporary sciences. The panel encourages contributions that identify robust resonances with quantum mechanics, morphogenesis and autopoiesis, enactive approaches to cognition, theories of self-consciousness, semiotics, set theory, mereology, sound engineering, or biochemistry. Researchers working in religious, philosophical, linguistic, and scientific fields are invited to propose avenues of dialogue showing how a non-dual perspective can provide an interdisciplinary epistemological ground, a unified lens capable of illuminating complex phenomena by allowing multiplicity to be understood through unity.

DĀRĀ SHIKŌH AND THE USE OF NON-DUALISM IN RELIGIOUS COMPARISON

Colagrossi E.(Speaker), University of Genoa ~ Genoa ~ Italy

INTUITION, IMAGINATION, AND THE (IR)FIGURABILITY OF UNITY: MAIMONIDES BETWEEN PHYSICS, LANGUAGE, AND METAPHYSICS

Dal Bo F.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

THE VIRTUE OF DISCIPLINE. OPPENHEIMER AND THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ IN THE 1932 LETTER

Fanelli F.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Roma ~ Italy

FROM UNITY TO DIFFERENTIATION: BHARTṚHARI ON LANGUAGE AND REALITY

Ferrante M.(Speaker), Austrian Academy of Sciences ~ Wien ~ Austria

UNFOLDING MANIFESTATION: NON-DUALIST ARCHITECTURES FOR AN EPISTEMIC MEETING GROUND

Giampieri G.(Speaker), University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

QUANTUM PHYSICS AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION: EPISTEMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES FROM THE QUANTUM TURN

Giorda M.C.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Roma ~ Italy

THE LOST DUALITY IN THE TRANSITION FROM THE MICROSCOPIC TO THE MACROSCOPIC

Dell''Anna R.(Speaker), Bruno Kessler Foundation ~ Trento ~ Italy

THE LOST DUALITY FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE COLLECTIVE. A CASE STUDY IN THE RELIGIOUS DOMAIN

Hejazi S.(Speaker), Bruno Kessler Foundation ~ Trento ~ Italy

IS NEUROSCIENCE MAYA?: WHAT REMAINS OF THE STUDY OF THE BRAIN, MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE LIGHT OF ADVAITA VEDANTA?

Haikonen J.(Speaker), University of Tartu ~ Tartu ~ Estonia

FROM THE HIERARCHY OF PURUṢA TO THE AUTONOMY OF THE SELF: NON-DUAL PARADIGMS BETWEEN SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND THE DECONSTRUCTION OF AHAṂKĀRA

Mencarelli R.(Speaker), Historian of Religions (Independent Researcher) ~ Civita Castellana ~ Italy

ENTANGLED ENCOUNTERS: MATERIAL AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A206b

Contact: Susanna Trotta
Chair: Valeria Fabretti, Farah Hasan, Susanna Trotta

Since the turn of the millennium, migration to Europe has significantly increased. Individuals have come to this continent often fleeing conflict and political instability as well as seeking improved social and economic wellbeing. For migrants, engagement in religious practice is a key resource in the post-migration period. Religious activities and infrastructure offer practical and spiritual support, as well as being a source of social belonging for newly arriving migrants. These factors often help individuals navigate structural inequalities, for example, facilitating access to social services. Yet, they may also reproduce inequality, for example when religious authority is used to regulate behaviour within these groups and/or to foster prejudice and discrimination against other groups. At the same time, these dynamics unfold within European contexts shaped by varied secularisation trajectories, which influence how religious practices are perceived and negotiated in everyday life. This panel examines encounters between migrant religious communities and other religious and secular groups within these shifting contexts. Such encounters often involve material transformations: repurposed religious buildings, adapted ritual forms and new uses of public space, which might extend to the digital realm. They also generate embodied and sensorial experiences and modes of expression that engage sight, sound, touch, taste and smell. Analysing these encounters from perspectives that are intersectional/multidimensional can help gain significant insights into how changes in gender-, age-, and social-status-related dynamics happen in religious communities who experience migration processes. We invite papers exploring how, through these entanglements, religious traditions are reinterpreted and transformed and, in turn, contribute to shaping contemporary and future European societies.

ENTANGLEMENTS OF INTIMACY AND VISIBILITY: MUSLIM DATING APP ADS IN BERLIN'S PUBLIC SPHERE

Hasan F.(Speaker), Hebrew University ~ Jerusalem ~ Israel

SPACE-SHARING AND RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION: ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN THE ST. PAUL'S CONGREGATION AND THE ST. GEORGIS ERITREAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN BERLIN, GERMANY

Trotta S.(Speaker), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

KIRCHENKAFFEE AS A SPACE FOR INSPIRING ENCOUNTERS: INTERRELIGIOUS REFLECTIONS ON INTEGRATION IN EUROPE

Colak M.(Speaker), Eurotürk ~ Aachen ~ Germany

SUFFERING, THE CROSS, AND GOD'S SOLIDARITY: MOLTMANN'S CRUCIFIED GOD AND UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

Okafor A.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

PENTECOSTAL YOUTH BETWEEN RELIGION AND THE SECULAR: NEGOTIATING RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE IN STATE SCHOOLS IN BERLIN, GERMANY

Boche C.(Speaker), Humboldt University Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

WHO BELONGS? MIGRATION, RELIGION, AND MUSLIM POSITIONINGS IN MULTIRELIGIOUS SPACES

Bärtlein S.(Speaker), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

FROM ANANDPUR SAHIB TO ITALY: THE CELEBRATION OF HOLA MAHALLA IN THE SIKH DIASPORA

Musconi T.(Speaker), Università di Padova ~ Padova ~ Italy

RELIGION AND THE MAKING OF (IN)EQUALITIES IN AFRICA: POWER, KNOWLEDGE, GENDER, AND COLONIAL LEGACIES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Ilaria Macconi
Chair: Innocent Maganya, Xolani Sakuba

Religion plays a fundamental role in Africa, shaping social relations, moral orders, identities, and political authority. While it has often served as a powerful resource for empowerment and the pursuit of equality, it has also contributed significantly to the production, legitimation, and persistence of multiple forms of inequality. Adopting a multidisciplinary perspective, this panel examines the ambivalent role of religion – including Christianity, Islam and African religious traditions – as both a vehicle for emancipation and a mechanism of domination in African contexts, from the colonial period to the digital present.

Drawing on the collaborative experience of a well-established Euro-African network of scholars and on different empirical and theoretical case studies, the panel explores how religious institutions, discourses, and practices intersect with structures of race, gender, slavery, colonial violence, education, and epistemic authority. It seeks to foster dialogue among historians, scholars of religion, theologians, and practitioners working on Africa and the African diaspora.

The panel invites three additional contributions addressing different religious traditions, regions, and historical periods. It particularly welcomes papers that conceptualize religion in Africa as a site of contestation and resistance, as well as inequalities, and that adopt comparative, decolonial, or interdisciplinary approaches. The panel will be organized around four thematic sections: (1) religion and power dynamics (colonial legacies); (2) religion and gender dynamics; (3) religion, knowledge production and epistemic authority; and (4) religion and socio-cultural dynamics.

MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA AND SLAVERY IN SÉGOU (FRENCH SUDAN), LATE 19TH - EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Rovellini M.(Speaker), Independent researcher ~ Oggiorno, Lecco ~ Italy

FOREIGN CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AND THE NARRATIVES OF COLONIAL VIOLENCE IN THE PORTUGUESE EMPIRE IN AFRICA (1961-1975)

Lopes Pereira J.(Speaker), Centre for the History of Society and Culture (University of Coimbra, Portugal) and at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies of the KU Leuven (Belgium) ~ Coimbra and Leuven ~ Belgium

COLONIAL PAST, CHRISTIAN IDENTITIES, AND THE CHALLENGES OF RECONCILIATION IN SOUTH SUDAN

Umeokoli C.C.(Speaker), KU ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

FROM COLONIAL POWER TO 'INCULTURATION'. THE IDENTITY PROPOSAL OF CATHOLICISM IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Chiarolanza G.(Speaker), University of Rome Tor Vergata ~ Rome ~ Italy

WOMEN'S INVISIBILITY AND SUBORDINATION IN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY: THE CASE OF AFRICA

Mbabazi V.(Speaker), Department of Religion and Peace Studies, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Makerere University (Uganda) ~ Kampala ~ Uganda

WHO SPEAKS FOR ISLAM? MUSLIM WOMEN, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND RELIGIOUS INEQUALITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Muslim C.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Director of Islamic Studies Research Unit (ISRU) ~ Durban ~ South Africa

INTERPRETING AFRICAN RELIGION IN WESTERN SCHOLARSHIP: EPISTEMIC POWER, REPRESENTATION, AND INEQUALITY

Maganya I.(Speaker), Tangaza University (Director Institutional Advancement and Development) ~ Nairobi ~ Kenya

THE POLITICS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN COLONIAL AFRICA AND THE RISE OF INEQUALITIES

Mojo M.(Speaker), Arrupe Jesuit University ~ Harare ~ Zimbabwe

THE HUMAN, JOHN WESLEY AND THE AFRICAN: A DECOLONIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH WESLEY'S CONSTRUCTION OF 'MAN'

Matthew L.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Durban ~ South Africa

FROM BABEL TO JUBILEE: DECONSTRUCTING REFORMED APARTHEID HERMENEUTICS AND REIMAGINING PENTECOSTAL ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Motuku K.P.(Speaker), University of South Africa ~ Pretoria ~ South Africa

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN RELIGION SERVES AS A SOCIETY'S-QUALIFICATIONS-AUTHORITY: A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON RELIGION'S (OFTEN FORGOTTEN) CONTRIBUTION TO THE INVENTION OF INEQUALITY

Sakuba X.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Durban ~ South Africa

RELIGION A CONDUIT OR ACCOMPLICE IN PERPETUATING INEQUALITY, A PARADOX: A CASE STUDY OF SOME RITUAL CEREMONIES IN ZIMBABWE.

Zangairai F.(Speaker), Arrupe Jesuit University ~ Harare ~ Zimbabwe

BRIDGING THE INEQUALITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA AND EUROPE: A CASE STUDY OF THE VEREAD PROJECT.

Macconi I.(Speaker), Mojo M.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose Giovanni XXIII ~ Bologna and Palermo ~ Italy

SEEING AND BELIEVING: VISUAL CULTURE AND THEOLOGICAL ELABORATION IN CHRISTIAN AREA

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A103

Contact: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO
Chair: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO

It is well known that Basil of Caesarea (Homilia in Barlaam martyrem, PG 31, 488) and, later, Gregory
the Great (Epistula I ad Serenum Massiliensem Episcopum, PL 77, 1027) explicitly emphasized the
instructive function of religious images. Building upon the insights of these two Church Fathers,
this panel seeks to reconsider and discuss the educational potential of medieval visual production
within Christian culture. Drawing on the most recent historiographical developments, the
contribution examines images as privileged instruments for the transmission of theological
knowledge and salvation history, capable of communicating complex contents both to learned
audiences and to non-literate faithful. Particular attention is devoted to the emotional, liturgical,
and material dimensions of images—including their spatial setting, cultic use, and the employment
of precious materials—as well as to their inherently polysemous character. The panel adopts an
interdisciplinary approach that integrates Visual Studies, anthropology, and Gender Studies, while
also highlighting the role of Marian and female saints' imagery in shaping models of learning,
devotion, and the representation of femininity within medieval society.

IF LORENZO OF SIPONTO SPOKE FLORENTINE. THE VITAE LAURENTII AND THE GARGANO MICHAELIC TRADITION IN TUSCAN VISUAL CULTURE

Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), UNIVERSITà DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA/ISACCL BUCAREST ~ REGGIO EMILIA ~ Italy

AN EXAMINATION OF THE REPRESENTATION AND INTERACTION WITH IMAGES OF SAINT ANTHONY IN SLOVAK CHURCHES.

Varotti C.(Speaker), Universidade Aberta ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

IMAGES AS A THEOLOGICAL MEDIUM OF READING THE BIBLE: EXAMPLES FROM THE WRITINGS OF AUGUSTINE AND GREGORY THE GREAT

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independent scholar ~ Rome ~ Italy

KAIROS AND (IN)EQUALITY: RELIGIOUS TEMPORALITIES AND SOCIAL DIFFERENCE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A107

Contact: Magalena Lubanska
Chair: Magdalena Lubanska, Ewelina Drzewiecka

This panel examines religious temporalities, particularly the concept of kairos, and their role in shaping reflection and responses to the problem of social inequality. Our point of reference is the experience of kairos as a special time, a critical moment of reflection or change. Rather than approaching inequality solely as structural or juridical, it foregrounds temporal frameworks that shape how social difference may be experienced and interpreted. Contributions draw on perspectives from various academic disciplines, showing how temporal frameworks can reframe, bracket, or otherwise alter the experience of social hierarchies without necessarily overturning them. By attending to religious time as a critical lens, the panel highlights the interplay between temporality, agency, and social difference.

We consider kairos in both descriptive and prescriptive terms: descriptively, as a critical moment retrospectively identified as a turning point, and prescriptively, as a call to action oriented toward possible futures. We explore religious temporal framings that mobilize such kairotic moments in relation to inequality and exclusion, including their entanglement with eschatological, apologetic, and normative traditions, as well as with religious vocabularies that are articulated, silenced, or imposed.

Submissions that investigate religious temporalities as offering forms of agency under conditions of constraint are particularly welcome. Papers may explore historical, philosophical, or ethnographic cases, highlighting modes of inhabiting social roles without being fully defined by structural positions, and are encouraged to consider implications beyond explicitly theological contexts.

LIVING WITHIN HŌS MĒ: KAIROS AND THE EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Lubanska M.(Speaker), Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Warsaw ~ Warsaw ~ Poland

BETWEEN PENANCE AND DEATH: KAIROTIC TIME, SANCTION, AND SALVATION IN MEDIEVAL SLAVONIC RELIGIOUS NORMATIVITY

Naydenova D.(Speaker), Cyrillo-Methodian Research Centre at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

CHRISTIANIZATION AND THE KAIROTIC EXPERIENCE OF THE BULGARIAN INTELLECTUALS IN 20TH CENTURY

Drzewiecka E.(Speaker), Institute of Slavic Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences ~ Warsaw ~ Poland

THE POWER AND POWERLESSNESS OF BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVES ABOUT “TURNING POINTS” IN THE CONTEXT OF HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Karamelska T.(Speaker), New Bulgarian University, Bulgarian Akademy of Sciences ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

“I AM A PERFECTLY NORMAL PERSON WHO GOES TO CHURCH”: RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AND (AB)NORMALITY IN ORTHODOX BULGARIA

Petrova Z.(Speaker), Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

THE WAYS OF PERCEIVING TIME AND THE KAIROTIC EXPERIENCE BY THE RESIDENTS OF THE SOUTH MURANÓW NEIGHBOURHOOD, THE POST-GHETTO PLACE IN WARSAW, POLAND

Chomatowska--Szalamacha B.(Speaker), University of Warsaw ~ Warsaw ~ Poland

“THE MOON BECAME FULL BUT WE DID NOT”: THE ANXIETY OF MISSING THE VIRTUOUS MOMENT IN TEHRAN

Naghshband Z.(Speaker), Max Weber Center at Erfurt University ~ Erfurt ~ Germany

BETWEEN ASYMMETRIES AND EQUIVALENCES: COMPARATIVE VIEWS ON JESUIT HISTORIOGRAPHY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - AT14

Contact: Francesco Gusella
Chair: Sabina Pavone

Inequality lies at the very core of the postcolonial debate, that intellectual turn that deconstructed the myths of Western civilizing mandate by highlighting its implicit hierarchies of race, religion, and culture. This scholarly shift also affected Jesuit historiography, especially those apologetic versions that envisioned Jesuit agents as pioneering promoters of interreligious dialogue and cultural exchange.
Historians still struggle to reconcile these two aspects of the Jesuit missionary experience. On the one hand, the tension towards a genuine ecumenism and the complex search for a balance with the communities where missionary activity was carried out. On the other, the asymmetries of power that permeated the missions themselves. These asymmetries could see the Society in a position of strength as well as in the role of a “guest” carefully controlled by radically different authorities. Furthermore, we shall also consider the internal asymmetries within the Society itself between competing groups, as well as the complex relationship with political opposers, sponsors, the Holy See, and other religious orders engaged in the same areas.
Comparative analysis of these conditions is essential to assess how the various strategies for adaptation, negotiation and interaction with the local communities took shape. This panel brings together early-career scholars in the field of early modern and contemporary historiography of the Society of Jesus with a comparative focus on three areas of research: Southeast Europe, South Asia, and China. The parallel establishment of Jesuit missions across these diverse regions allows us to reflect on the inherent ambiguities of the Jesuit missionary experience with special attention to the search for equivalents across different cultural traditions, as well as the dialogical strategies implemented in local contexts.

A MISSIONARY LABORATORY IN THE “INDIES” OF SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE: THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN THE OTTOMAN BALKANS (SECOND HALF OF 16TH – FIRST HALF OF 17TH CENTURY)

Notarfonso S.(Speaker), University of Macerata ~ Macerata ~ Italy

BEYOND CULTURALIST APPROACHES TO JESUIT MISSIOLOGY IN EARLY MODERN SOUTH ASIA

Gusella F.(Speaker), University of Naples "L'Orientale" ~ Naples ~ Italy

BRIDGING ASYMMETRIES THROUGH DIALOGUE: FATHER ROBERT JACQUINOT DE BESANGE'S NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE IN WARTIME SHANGHAI (1927–1937)

Zhang Y.(Speaker), University of Rome "La Sapienza" ~ Rome ~ Italy

PERCEPTION AND UNDERSTANDING OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE- THEOLOGICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, ANTHROPOLOGICAL, AND ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Jonas Miklavcic
Chair: Bojan Žalec

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly encountered not only as a technical tool but as a conversational and social presence—one that people interpret, trust, resist, or rely on in shaping how they learn, decide, relate, and make meaning. This panel focuses on perception and interpretation: how individuals and communities experience AI's agency, limits, authority, and bias, and how these perceptions reshape epistemic security, moral responsibility, and everyday as well as institutional practices. It builds an interdisciplinary dialogue among theology and religious studies, philosophy, anthropology, ethics, psychology, and education. Within this horizon, the panel foregrounds religious and theological dimensions of AI's growing influence: its impact on spiritual practice and discernment, religious formation and catechesis, and contemporary imaginaries of transcendence, the divine, and human dignity. It also examines how interaction with AI reconfigures empathy and emotional attachment—especially when AI is experienced as advisor, companion, or substitute for human presence—and how such experiences may alter relationships, vulnerability, and accountability. Overall, the panel investigates how AI is perceived and narrated in ways that co-shape contemporary understandings of the human person, community, and God.

EDUCATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE "MIRROR" CHARACTER OF AI, TECHNO-MORAL VIRTUES, AND MORAL UPSKILLING AND DESKILLING

Žalec B.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

AI AND THE CLASSICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMAN BEING

Zichy M.(Speaker), University of Bonn, Faculty of Catholic Theology ~ Bonn ~ Germany

THE ETHICS OF CARE AS A FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Vodicar J.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION: HUMAN FORMATION IN THE AGE OF ALGORETICS

Kraner D.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

HUMAN–AI EMOTIONAL INTERACTION: EMPATHY, EMOTIONAL BONDS, AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Simonic B.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

TECHNOLOGY, RELATIONALITY, AND DIVINE ORIGIN: FROM SCRIPTURE TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Centa Strahovnik M.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

WHO SPEAKS OR WHAT SPEAKS? AI AS A CONVERSATIONAL PARTNER

Klun B.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

ACCELERATED AI AND DIGITALIZATION: CRITICAL ECOTHEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Furlan Štante N.(Speaker), The Science and Research Centre Koper, Institute for Philosophical and Religious Studies ~ Koper ~ Slovenia

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – BETWEEN THE EMPOWERMENT AND THE THREAT TO HUMAN AUTONOMY

Globokar R.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

PERCEPTIONS OF AI IN CLINICAL DECISION-MAKING: ANSWERABILITY AND DEFERENCE

Miklavcic J.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

INTEGRATING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INTO SPIRITUAL LIFE: OPPORTUNITIES, LIMITS, AND DISCERNMENT

Platovnjak I.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

FROM CLINICAL JUDGMENT TO ALGORITHMIC AUTHORITY: WHO HOLDS EPISTEMIC PRIMACY?

Štivic S.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS, BUT CHRISTIAN? RELIGIOUS AI AND THE POLITICS OF FRAMING

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

THE DIALOGICAL FORMATION OF PERSONAL (FAITH) IDENTITY IN THE AGE OF AI: BETWEEN CRISIS AND OPPORTUNITY

Mc Aleer R.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIRTUES IN THE DIGITAL AGE - EMPATHY, RELATIONSHIPS AND VIRTUAL REALITY

Valenta T.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

FROM EFFICIENCY TO COLLABORATION: RETHINKING HUMAN–AI INTERACTION IN EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Poljak Lukek S.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

AI, EPISTEMIC LABOR, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-DECENTERING

Sandsmark E.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

FACING THE SHOGGOTH. APOPHATIC LANGUAGE IN THE FACE OF THE OPACITY AND ALIENITY OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Lipinski T.(Speaker), PTH Sankt Georgen ~ Frankfurt ~ Germany

RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE AND EQUALITY: THE FUNDAMENTAL BLUEPRINT FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNEQUAL EQUALS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Rita Serpytyte
Chair: Rita Serpytyte, Naglis Kardelis

In the writings of Jan Gruzewski, a prominent 17th-century Polish-Lithuanian thinker, we find a synthesis of philosophical, theological and juridical ideas that were instrumental in shaping the intellectual landscape of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Republic of Two Nations. The focus on fairness and equality in Gruzewski's legacy invites us to address the problem of religion's relation to equality from a more general perspective.

The word religion is derived from the Latin verb religare, meaning "to join, connect, relate". Such understanding of religion defined the Christian view on the nature of man's religious attitude. According to this view, any authentic religious relationship is based on man's absolute trust in God: in the sense that any trust presupposes mutual respect and fairness, the religious relationship is that between equals, albeit fundamentally unequal equals, having in mind the absolute ontological distance between God and man. Man's love of God and trust in Him presupposes mutuality, reciprocity of such an attitude also on the part of God.

The appreciation of equality arises from the discerning of differences between those who are unequal in some particular sense. Therefore, striving for equality includes an effort to negotiate differences in order to find some common ground, that is, some level – or "equal" – ground which then becomes a mutually acknowledged basis for building, figuratively speaking, "superstructures" of unequal height on top of this level ground.

Thus the religious relationship between God and man as unequal equals becomes a blueprint for all non-trivial kinds of equality in various forms of human interaction. It is also at the core of logic and rational reasoning as such – and tied to the very possibility of any human dialogue.

ON THE EQUALITY OF ACQUIRED VIRTUES IN JAN GRUZEWSKI'S ULTIMA ET MAXIMA HOMINIS MUTATIO

Pabijutaite Z.(Speaker), Vilnius university ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AS AN ELEMENT OF THE PROCESS OF SOCIETAL MODERNIZATION

Gruzevskis B.(Speaker), Lithuanian Centre for Social Sciences-Vilnius university ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUIVALENCE: RELIGION AS THE COMMUNISATION OF SPIRIT BEYOND LAW IN HEGEL'S EARLY WRITINGS

Dumbliauskas P.(Speaker), Vilnius University ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

ACTIVATE THE SACRED THROUGH TEXTS: TRANSLATION AND VULGARIZATION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Benedetta Manfrinetti
Chair: Carsten Wilke

The purpose of this panel is to explore how sacred texts are activated through practices of translation, vernacularization, and narrative mediation across different religious and historical contexts. Rather than approaching translation as a merely linguistic operation, the contributions gathered here investigate how textual strategies, material arrangements, and audience-oriented choices enable sacred texts to become meaningful, efficacious, and experientially potent beyond their original linguistic settings. In doing so, the authors contribute to broader discussions on religious experience, textual authority, and the material and intellectual practices through which sacred texts are made present, intelligible, and effective within specific communities. Moving from the late medieval period to the present, and across Jewish, Christian, Islamic and other religious traditions, the panel aims to question the relationship between sacred language and vernacular expression, questioning the assumption that sacrality is intrinsically tied to a specific language and literary genre. It asks instead if the sacred may be mobilised through storytelling, compilation, layout, paratexts, and modes of address that shape readers' engagement with the text. Translation and vulgarization emerge not only as tools of access, but as practices that negotiate authority, legitimacy, and the boundaries between ritual use, personal devotion, and cognitive understanding. By foregrounding concrete textual artefacts, the panel investigates how different forms of textual mediation "activate" the sacred in distinct ways: through narrative immersion, pedagogical framing, hermeneutical guidance, or polemical positioning. Particular attention is paid to the intended audiences of these texts and to the ways in which linguistic choices reflect assumptions about who is entitled to interpret, internalise, or experience the sacred.

WOLF VON ZÜLNHART (CA. 1450-1519) ACTIVATING THE SACRED: NOT THE LANGUAGE BUT THE STORY COUNTS

Schuil K.J.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE SPANISH VULGARIZATIONS OF THE SIDDURIM: A SPIRITUAL INSTRUMENT OF SOCIAL COHESION

Manfrinetti B.(Speaker), DREST - Università di Modena-Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

THE GARDEN AND TORRENT OF "HEDONE": TRANSLATING PLEASURE FROM THE OLD GOSPEL

Piergiacomi E.(Speaker), Pegaso Telematic University ~ Naples ~ Italy

TRANSLATING THE UNKNOWN: A DIVINATORY TEXT IN EARLY MODERN KERALA

Pattery T.J.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE LIVING VOICES OF THE PALI SUTTAS: DEBORDERING SOUND AND MEANING IN A THAI BUDDHIST MONASTERY.

Nenna M.V.(Speaker), Università di Roma La Sapienza ~ Roma ~ Italy

FROM RECITATION TO COMPREHENSION: ACTIVATING THE QURʾĀN IN THE AHMADIYYA ITALIAN TRANSLATION (1986)

Badini F.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Palermo ~ Italy

INTERMEDIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDERED INEQUALITIES: AGENCY AND AUTHORITY IN RELIGIOUS CONTEXTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Martina Bär
Chair: Martina Bär

This panel examines how gendered inequalities are produced, stabilised, and contested through intermedial operations in religious and religion-inflected contexts, spanning early modern devotional literature and contemporary art. Rather than treating inequality as a secondary effect of belief or doctrine, both contributions conceptualise it as an outcome of historically specific discursive, performative, and medial configurations that distribute agency, authority, and visibility unevenly.

The first paper analyses early modern devotional literature as an intermedial site in which female agency is simultaneously enabled and restricted under conditions of male authorship and theological normativity. Drawing on a church-historical adaptation of Judith Butler's concept of performativity, it examines biblical figures such as Jael, Judith, and Lot's wife to show how agency becomes permissible only as a pious reiteration of divine order. Through the interweaving of biblical narration, exegesis, prayer, and poetic texts, female agency is rendered visible while remaining bound to humility, obedience, and gender-coded ideals.

The second paper develops a cross-temporal heuristic by analysing contemporary art as a multimodal environment in which religiously inflected gender norms continue to generate inequalities. Focusing on media operations such as repetition with difference, fragmentation, spatial re-coding, and ritualised inscription, it examines how gendered authority and addressability emerge across image, text, space, materiality, and institutional framing.

Together, the panel positions intermedial analysis as a key approach for studying religious inequalities, foregrounding how gendered asymmetries of agency and authority are produced and maintained through mediated operations across time.

INTERMEDIAL SPACES OF AGENCY IN EARLY MODERN DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE

Bauer B.(Speaker), University of Jena, Department for Church History ~ Jena ~ Germany

Early Modern Masculinities and their Divine Role Models

Hanhart T. (Speaker), University of Graz ~ Austria, University of Bern ~ Switzerland

POLITICAL MYSTICISM: DIALOGUE AND THE DIVINE IN DARK TIMES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A206a

Contact: Theo Poward
Chair: Ely Orrego-Torres

This panel seeks to bring together mystical theology and political theory to explore how a political mysticism can provide a much needed alternative vision of world politics. Mysticism can be understood as an aspect of theology and spirituality that focuses on devotional practices that attempt to enact some form of union with the divine. In this interpretation, mysticism can arguably be discerned across the world's theological traditions, with these variegated practices often inspiring quite un-traditional explorations of spirituality outside, and often against, any institutionalised faith.
Mysticism has influenced a full spectrum of political engagement—from anarchists who argue that union with the divine translates to opposition to worldly power structures to more institutional interpretations that emphasise the social cohesion brought about through ritualised devotion to the divine. This range of ethical and political applications lends mystical theology to various conversations currently underway in political theory, from post-anarchism to relational ontologies to pluriversality, leading it to emerge as a point of interest for thinkers ranging from Simone Weil to Jacques Derrida to Simon Critchley. This panel welcomes work that explores how to unite these conversations in a spectrum of critique and resistance that can speak both to rooted traditions and radical thinkers. To this end, the panel seeks to build a dialogue that can address pressing issues facing our planet, from the environmental crisis, to rising political violence, to narratives about the 'end of the world'. In each case mystical theology offers ways of thinking together across disciplines and traditions in ways that hold the potential for pathways forward.

POLITICAL MYSTICISM IN CREATIVE TENSION

Poward T.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ Edinburgh ~ United Kingdom

"THE BREAKING OF THE VESSELS"

Davis E.(Speaker), Northwestern University ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

MYSTICAL POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND THE PROBLEM OF HIERARCHY

Newheiser D.(Speaker), Florida State University ~ Tallahassee ~ United States of America

EXPERIENCING NIRVANA IN POLITICAL ACTIVISM: THE EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF AUROBINDO GHOSE IN EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY INDIA

Portilla I.(Speaker), Kone Foundation, Tampere University ~ Tampere ~ Finland

"EVERYTHING BEGINS IN MYSTICISM AND ENDS IN POLITICS": ADAM MICKIEWICZ AND CHARLES PÉGUY IN DIALOGUE ON THE DIVINE ENCOUNTER IN DARK TIMES

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independent Researcher ~ Rome ~ Italy

MYSTICISM AND ANARCHISM IN NIKOLAI BERDYAEV

Vitali Rosati F.(Speaker), Università degli studi di Torino ~ Turin ~ Italy

HÖLDERLIN AND THE QUESTION OF GOD: POETRY, PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A203

Contact: Marco Fiorletta
Chair: Isabella Bruckner, Helmut Jakob Deibl

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Hölderlin's thought has played a decisive role across a wide range of discourses and has been extensively received in philosophy, political theory, theology and, more recently, in ecological thought.
This panel starts with the assumption that in nearly every poem by Hölderlin it is possible to find a reference to the divine. These references can be seen as a form of direct engagement with the question of God. This engagement does not culminate in fixed or dogmatic definitions; rather, it remains productively open, preserving the openness of the question itself.
This panel seeks to explore contemporary ways of engaging with Hölderlin's poetry and philosophical fragments by starting from current questions and urgent problems. From this perspective, it aims to assess the ongoing relevance and productivity of Hölderlin's question of God for present-day debates.
What contributions can Hölderlin's poetry and philosophical drafts offer to contemporary discussions of the divine? How can his reflections help us rethink the relations between poetry and philosophy, religion and politics, humanity and nature today? Which resources can offer Hölderlin's question of God for us today?

Abstracts are welcome in the following areas:
- Hölderlin and the question of God
- Hölderlin's philosophy of religion
- Hölderlin's political theology
- Hölderlin and ecological debates
- Hölderlin and philosophy of history
- Hölderlin and Aesthetics

«DENN ES WALTET EIN GOTT IN UNS»: RHETORIC AND MEANING OF A MOTIF IN HÖLDERLIN'S "DER ABSCHIED"

Carvalho Pereira H.(Speaker), Brown University ~ Providence, RI ~ United States of America

THE QUESTION OF GOD IN HÖLDERLIN WITH SPECIAL REGARD TO "DICHTERBERUF"

Deibl H.J.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

CHRIST AND THE GODS: SACRED MEDIATION IN HÖLDERLIN

Myers B.(Speaker), Alphacrucis University College ~ Sydney ~ Australia

POETRY AS ACCESS TO THE DIVINE: THE POLITICAL POWER OF BEAUTY IN HÖLDERLIN'S THOUGHT AND LITERARY LEGACY

De Acutis G.(Speaker), Universität Wien ~ Wien ~ Austria

GOD AND NATURE IN HÖLDERLIN'S DIE TITANEN: AN ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Fiorletta M.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE DIVINE IN THE LANDSCAPE: HÖLDERLIN'S CONTEMPLATIVE ECOPOETICS

Conzo A.(Speaker), University of Salento ~ Lecce ~ Italy

DWELLING: HOME AND THE DIVINE IN HÖLDERLIN AND NOVALIS

Huisman M.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

PEACE THROUGH LAW OR PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH? RELIGIONS, POLITICS, AND FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Fabio Franceschi
Chair: Pierluigi Consorti, Antonello De Oto

In a global landscape increasingly characterized by profound inequalities, persistent conflicts and growing social and political polarisation, the Western world, which in the post-war period had built peace on the basis of rights and the rule of law in general, is now witnessing the return of the cult of war, often based on identities propagated as strategic resources. The global geopolitical framework we have known until now, based on the primacy of law, is increasingly being challenged and replaced by one based on the logic of force (military, political, economic, etc.). The proposed panel aims to examine the future of law in the era of identity-based force and, above all, how religions and the religious element in general fit into this new dynamic. Indeed, religions can have a strong impact both on the promotion of peace (the commitment of religious actors and leaders to stability and peacebuilding) and on the affirmation of a new cult of war (religious fundamentalism, support by religious institutions for ideologies promoted by the state or specific groups that sanctify military conflict, often merging religious dogma with nationalism, etc.). In this context, the role of interfaith dialogue in peacebuilding policies is also fundamental for addressing contemporary conflicts and inequalities.

RELIGIONS, VIOLENCE, AND THE (CONTROVERSIAL) RIGHT TO PEACE

Franceschi F.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

PEACEBUILDING IN PIXEL: LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN DIGITAL GAMING ECOSYSTEMS

Baldetti S.(Speaker), University of Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

SMART CITIES AND THE PURSUIT OF URBAN PEACE: THE RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

Tarantino D.(Speaker), University of Genoa ~ Genoa ~ Italy

THE BATTLE OF KARBALA IN CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT: THE ROLE OF SHIA LEGAL-RELIGIOUS DOCTRINE AND IRAN'S RESISTANCE NARRATIVE AGAINST THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL

Chafi Founna I.(Speaker), University of Girona ~ Girona ~ Spain

IMPARTIAL AND NEUTRAL, BUT NOT INDIFFERENT. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S FRATERNAL COMMITMENT TO PEACE IN THE AGE OF FORCE.

Lo Giacco M.L.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro ~ Bari ~ Italy

IDENTITY, RELIGION, PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE, AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS: THE CASE OF ALBANIA

Foglia S.(Speaker), Universita' di Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

GOVERNING RELIGION IN AN AGE OF SECURITY: LEGAL LIMITS AND DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGES IN EUROPE

Madera A.(Speaker), University of Messina ~ Messina ~ Italy

FRATERNITY BEYOND IDENTITY: RECLAIMING A VULNERABILITY BASED LEGAL GRAMMAR IN AN AGE OF CONFLICT

Bartolucci V.(Speaker), Università di Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

PRE-EMPTIVE AND PREVENTIVE WAR IN INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE THEOLOGY OF JUST PEACE: THE 2026 IRAN CRISIS

Tripp H.(Speaker), Institut for Canon Law and Law on Religions/Theological Faculty of University Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

VALUES-DRIVEN COLLABORATION

Dalla Villa C.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Teramo ~ Teramo ~ Italy

INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AS A VEHICLE FOR PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTUAL EXPANSION, A LINGUISTIC TOOL FOR COMMUNICATION, AND A CATALYST FOR SOCIO-CULTURAL FLEXIBILITY

Levi J.(Speaker), Florentine School of Advanced Studies in Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, FSD ~ Florence ~ Italy

MESSIANIC AFTERTHOUGHTS: THE LINGERING OF AN IDEA

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Pola - AT13

Contact: Giustina Benedetta Baron
Chair: Giustina Benedetta Baron, Marco Martino, Martina Perotta

Messianism originates from the Hebrew term māšīaḥ (מָשִׁיחַ), which translates as “the anointed one.” In its earliest context, the term referred to a specific ritual within the ancient Sinaitic tradition: the anointing of a king, a ceremony that signified divine selection and political legitimacy. Initially, māšīaḥ denoted a present ruler whose authority was established through ritual. Over time, the meaning of the term shifted, and the anointed king became a figure of future expectation, envisioned as a redeemer who would restore the Kingdom of Israel. This shift introduced prophetic and eschatological dimensions, connecting political authority to the promise of ultimate redemption. This panel begins from the observation that messianism is never solely temporal. While scholarship has often emphasized futurity, anticipation, and deferred redemption, messianic imagination is equally articulated through the sacralization of concrete geographies - holy lands, promised territories, imperial spaces, or revolutionary homelands - endowing them with theological and political meaning. Messianism thus operates not only as a structure of time but as a powerful mechanism of territorial sacralization, transforming land into the site of divine election, historical destiny, and maximalist political claims. By placing different perspectives in dialogue with broader religious and political traditions, this panel explores how messianic narratives contribute to the sacralization of land in Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and secular contexts, as well as in nationalist, revolutionary, and colonial imaginaries. From Zionist and post-Zionist debates to imperial and post-imperial visions of destiny in Russian culture, messianism continues to shape how territory is imagined as redemptive, inviolable, or absolute. The panel is explicitly comparative, without flattening traditions or detaching messianism from its historical genealogies.

THE BASILEUS AND THE ORACULA LEONIS: A LIMINAL FIGURE AND ESCHATOLOGICAL ACTOR AT THE END OF TIMES

Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), Martino M.(Speaker), DREST Unimore ~ Modena ~ Italy

PARADISE DENIED: HUMAN EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNISM'S TWILIGHT, 1989-1991

Martino M.(Speaker), Scuola Normale Superiore ~ Pisa ~ Italy

SHAS AND GUSH EMUNIM: DIVERGENT APPROACHES TO THE MODERN STATE AND RELIGION-NATIONALISM RELATIONS

Hazan M.(Speaker), UniMoRe - Università Ca' Foscari - Venezia ~ Venezia ~ Italy

"THE CITY UPON A HILL": LA SACRALIZZAZIONE DELLO SPAZIO POLITICO E IL DESTINO MANIFESTO DEGLI STATI UNITI, DAI PADRI FONDATORI A DONALD TRUMP

Paparcone D.(Speaker), Università della Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli" ~ Caserta ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS-ZIONISM AND ITS AFTERTHOUGHTS: TOWARD A THEORY OF CORRECTIVE MESSIANISM

Perotta M.(Speaker), University of Trento ~ Trento ~ Italy

HISTORY, META-HISTORY, UNHISTORY: MESSIANIC TIME IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY APOCALYPTIC THINKING IN GERMAN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Mahdevar S.(Speaker), Goethe University ~ Frankfurt ~ Germany

LAW AT THE TIME THAT REMAINS: MESSIANISM, REPUBLICANISM AND SOCIALISM ACCORDING TO MAHMUD MUHAMMAD TAHA

Pagani S.(Speaker), Università del Salento ~ Lecce ~ Italy

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN KINGSHIP AND THE IMAGINATION OF MESSIANIC TERRITORY

Annus A.(Speaker), University of Tartu ~ Tartu ~ Estonia

PEOPLE, LAND, AND COMMUNITY: MARTIN BUBER'S REIMAGINING HALEVI'S KUZARI

Scordari C.C.(Speaker), Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

TECHNOLOGICAL REDEMPTION: MESSIANIC AND APOCALYPTIC MOTIFS IN RUSSIAN COSMISM

Baron G.B.(Speaker), DREST Unimore; University of Tartu ~ Turin - Tartu ~ Italy

THE EVOLUTION OF MESSIANIC BEFORE- AND AFTERTHOUGHTS: THE CASES OF ITALIAN VOLUNTEERS IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS IN UKRAINE

La Bella M.(Speaker), LUISS, Tor Vergata ~ Rome ~ Italy

WAITING FOR THE MESSIAH: TRENDS OF CHRISTIAN PHILO-SEMITISM IN THE 17TH CENTURY

Giardini M.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Ferrara ~ Italy

QUEER(ING) LIVING SYSTEMS: AN INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A108

Contact: Ivy Helman
Chair: Sonja Thomaier

Throughout history, religions have played a complex role in the development of cultural values and systems (legal, ecological, and familial in particular). As this year's Conference theme demonstrates, religions have functioned to both advance and to undermine efforts for equity. This panel explores religious systems that have created and/or perpetuated harm by supporting/exacerbating inequalities and hierarchies. At the same time, it seeks to both queer such systems in order to construct more just, egalitarian ways of living and flourishing, as well as to name the queer qualities of some such systems, opening possibilities from within. We welcome diverse perspectives from various religious and spiritual traditions at the intersection of feminist and queer theories, systematic theologies, eco-theologies, and inter-religious dialogue.

PROPOSING AN ECOFEMINIST JUDAISM: DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM SYSTEMATICS AND QUEER THEORY

Helman I.(Speaker), Charles University ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

A (QUEER) SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Warren J.(Speaker), Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School ~ Rochester ~ United States of America

QUEER(ING) MATRIMONY? BLESSING POLYCULES AND NON-MONOGAMOUS PARTNERSHIPS AS A CHALLENGE FOR THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN GERMANY

Thomaier S.(Speaker), University of Hildesheim ~ Hildesheim ~ Germany

CHALLENGES AND CRISIS AMONG THE UKRAINIAN CHURCHES – AND WAYS FORWARD FOR GLOBAL ORTHODOXY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Kristina Stoeckl
Chair: Jose Casanova

The ongoing war in Ukraine has profoundly reshaped the religious landscape of Eastern Christianity, bringing long-standing ecclesial tensions into the open while generating new theological, institutional, and geopolitical challenges. The Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC), and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) have each been compelled to respond to questions of war and peace, national sovereignty, ecclesial authority, and transnational Orthodoxy. These responses have not only deepened internal crises but have also raised broader questions about the future of Orthodoxy as a global religious tradition.

This panel brings together representatives of Ukrainian churches alongside independent scholars and public intellectuals working on Ukrainian Christianity to engage in a rare, dialogical conversation across ecclesial, confessional, and analytical perspectives. Rather than focusing solely on conflict and fragmentation, the panel aims to explore pathways out of the current crisis: theological resources for reconciliation, institutional reforms, and models of inter-church engagement that could contribute to a renewed vision of Orthodox Christianity in Ukraine.

By situating the Ukrainian case within wider debates about global Orthodoxy, the panel seeks to move beyond diagnosis toward constructive reflection. The discussion will address not only the immediate Ukrainian context but also the implications for Orthodox Christianity worldwide, including its relationship to democracy, human rights, and interreligious coexistence. This panel is part of the POLISMOD (2026-31, PI Kristina Stoeckl) project launch.

THE THREE KYIVAN CHURCHES

Casanova J.(Speaker), Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs ~ Washington D.C. ~ United States of America

THE SITUATION OF THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Bureha V.(Speaker), Kyiv Theological Academy ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

THE SITUATION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF UKRAINE

Sigov C.(Speaker), Kyiv Mohila University ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

THE UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN RELATIONS WITH UKRAINIAN ORTHODOXY

Babynskyi A.(Speaker), Ukrainian Catholic University ~ Lviv ~ Ukraine

Orthodox Churches in Ukraine: Current Policy Developments, Challenges and Potential Solutions

Bogdan O. (Speaker), National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine

POST-DIGITAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: INSIGHTS FROM THE URPP «DIGITAL RELIGION(S)» EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Fabienne Greuter
Chair: Thomas Schlag

The interdisciplinary University Research Priority Program (URPP) «Digital Religion(s)» at the University of Zurich examines how digital transformations influence and reconfigure religious practices, forms of authority, and modes of community among individuals and institutions. Within different research areas - like digital pastoral care or emeriging technologies - four subprojects within an interdisciplinary cluster focus on «Religious Education within the Post-Digital Context».

A central concern of this cluster is how religious education can foster critical media reflection and thereby strengthen religious digital literacy as a key competency for navigating contemporary mediatized environments. Attention is also given to how issues of equality and inequality are reproduced, negotiated, or challenged within digital media practices. While the concept of literacy has a long intellectual history, it remains indispensable in light of accelerated developments in digitalization and artificial intelligence. Religious education is thus understood not merely as the transmission of technical digital skills but as fostering ethical, analytical, and critical capacities that enable adolescents to engage responsibly and reflectively with digital media and AI, including an awareness of power relations and ethical responsibilities in digitally mediated contexts.

The post-digital is approached as a critical analytical concept highlighting opportunities and challenges inherent in digital transformation processes. It raises questions about how young people encounter and manage these dynamics and how reflective, autonomous, and ethically grounded media practices can be supported in religious educational settings.

The proposed panel introduces the interdisciplinary framework of the URPP «Digital Religion(s)» and presents initial empirical and theoretical insights from two educational subprojects for scholarly discussion.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PRIORITY PROGRAM (URPP) «DIGITAL RELIGION(S)»

Schlag T.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s), University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

NAVIGATING SYNTHETIC REALITIES. RELIGION, GENERATIVE AI, AND DIGITAL VISUAL LITERACY

Trattner K.(Speaker), Department of Political Science, University of Salzburg ~Salzburg ~ Austria

LOVE OF NEIGHBOR, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – FOSTERING CRITICAL MEDIA REFLECTION THROUGH THEOLOGICAL NARRATIVES

Greuter F.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s), University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR: HISTORICAL ROOTS, RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS, AND IDENTITY-BASED CONFLICTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 10:10 to 19:30

Pola - AT14

Contact: Marianna Napolitano
Chair: Marianna Napolitano

This panel builds upon and expands the discussion initiated by the volume Religious and Identity-Based Roots of the War in Ukraine, published by Routledge in January 2026. The panel explores the Russo-Ukrainian War through its deep historical roots, religious dimensions, and identity-based conflicts, examining how religious narratives intersect with state power and identity formation in both post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine.

A crucial focus is the 2018-2019 recognition of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine's autocephaly by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, representing a fundamental rupture in Orthodox unity with profound geopolitical implications. The Moscow Patriarchate considered this act a direct challenge to its authority and to its historical and traditional relationship with Ukraine. Papers will examine the Russkyi Mir ideology and how this notion shapes Church-State relations and provides theological frameworks for political objectives, alongside the concept of political autocephalies and the relationship between ecclesiastical and political authority in both countries.

The panel will further discuss the role of religious minorities in the conflict and the state's regulation of religious pluralism in both Russia and Ukraine, examining Eastern Europe as a crossroads of Christian denominations and European conflicts. Public history represents a key analytical dimension: papers will investigate monumentalization, commemorative practices, and artistic production as means through which competing historical memories are constructed, with contemporary art serving as sites for collective trauma processing and contestation of official discourse.

The panel aims to trace the historical, religious, political, and cultural dynamics of the conflict, examining their evolution and transformations to illuminate how these historical trajectories inform contemporary hostilities.

ORTHODOX IDENTITY TRANSFORMATIONS AND THE PATH TO UKRAINIAN AUTOCEPHALY: FROM SOVIET COLLAPSE TO THE 2022 WAR

Napolitano M.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS AND PATHS TO PEACE IN EASTERN EUROPE. A LOOK AT THE PAST

Garzaniti M.(Speaker), University of Florence ~ Florence ~ Italy

POLITICAL AUTOCEPHALIES (1967–2022): ECCLESIOLOGY, STATE POWER, AND GEOPOLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY ORTHODOXY

Mainardi A.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

TRUTH BEFORE NATION: ORTHODOX DEADLOCKS IN THE UKRAINIAN WAR

Keramidas D.(Speaker), Pontifical University St. Thomas Aquinas “Angelicum" ~ Rome ~ Italy

ORTHODOXY AS BOND AND FAULT LINE IN RUSSO-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS (LATE 17TH–18TH CENTURIES)

Bovgyria A.(Speaker), Institute of History of Ukraine/University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ Ukraine

THE KREMLIN AND THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE IN XX CENTURY

Roccucci A.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE WAR AS A CLASH OF IDENTITY REGIMES: THE ROAD TO THE SECURITIZATION OF IDENTITY IN UKRAINE AND RUSSIA

Puleri M.(Speaker), Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

TOWARDS A RETURN OF THE AVANT-GARDE? SOME REMARKS ON RUSSIAN ART TODAY

Marchesini I.(Speaker), Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

DECONSTRUCTING THE “RUSSIAN WORLD”: COUNTER-NARRATIVES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF UKRAINE IN WARTIME DISCOURSE AND VISUAL CULTURE

Pidkuimukha L.(Speaker), National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

MEDICINE AND THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE: STEPS TOWARDS MORE EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL CARE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - A101

Contact: Lluis Oviedo
Chair: Miriam Leal

In recent times, medicine and theology have become very distant and alien fields. Even among those committed to dialogue between science and theology, the medical sciences and healthcare have remained outside their area of interest. The question arises as to whether this distance or disengagement is beneficial, or whether interaction and even synergy could be more beneficial. Assuming that modern medicine and healthcare have developed within a secularising model, an alternative approach could be to recognise that medicine without religion is less effective, and that theology ignoring the pursuit of health and better therapy might be missing some relevant issues. Recent research on religion and health, religious coping, and spiritual care suggests new ways to integrate the two social systems of medicine and religion more effectively. This awareness calls on theology to take on a responsible role in discerning and designing models of positive interaction and even intervention, for instance in the field of spiritual care. This panel brings together scholars who, from an interdisciplinary perspective, are exploring and applying ways to integrate medicine and healthcare with religion and theology, with particular attention to those efforts aimed to better develop interventions in the area of spiritual care.

WHY A GOOD THEOLOGY MATTERS FOR BETTER SPIRITUAL CARE

Oviedo L.(Speaker), Antonianum University ~ Roma ~ Italy

HEALTH AND SPIRITUAL CARE– EVIDENCE-BASED AND LIVED EXPERIENCE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

Leal M.(Speaker), Catholic University of Brasilia ~ Brasilia ~ Brazil

BETWEEN HEALING AND RECOGNITION: MEDICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND COMMUNICATIVE ASPECTS OF DEAFNESS IN THE AGE OF AI.

Bednarska M.(Speaker), University of Information Technology and Managment ~ Rzeszow ~ Poland

SPIRITUALITY IN PERINATAL PALLIATIVE CARE: SPIRITUALITY AS A THERAPEUTIC TOOL IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ANTICIPATORY GRIEF

Freire M.M.(Speaker), Brazilian Maternal and child Hospital ~ Brazilian ~ Brazil

FROM PATHOLOGY TO LIBERATION: REIMAGINING SPIRITUAL CARE BETWEEN MEDICINE AND THEOLOGY

Bischoff S.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Berlin ~ Germany

PROTESTANTISM AND (IN)EQUALITIES: THEOLOGICAL RESOURCES FOR JUSTICE AND MERCY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 18:20

Pola - A203

Contact: Davide Ibrahim
Chair: Davide Ibrahim

This open panel explores how Protestant traditions can offer theological resources to name, resist, and heal contemporary (in)equalities. The panel will invite critical and constructive engagement with key loci, such as creation and the imago Dei, sin and structural evil, justification and dignity, sanctification and social holiness, vocation and labor, the diaconate and mercy, the protection of the vulnerable, and eschatological hope as a horizon for public witness. The conversation will be intentionally hospitable to a range of Protestant perspectives. We welcome papers that retrieve historical Protestant figures, classical Protestant sources, engage global and minoritized Protestant voices, or test Protestant moral claims in concrete contexts such as migration, poverty, war, disability, education, and incarceration.

HERMAN BAVINCK ON SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

Harinck G.(Speaker), Theological University Utrecht ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

SOCIO-SYSTEMIC SIN AND THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ABRAHAM KUYPER, RENÉ PADILLA, AND TIM KELLER

Ibrahim D.(Speaker), Theological University Utrecht ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

SIN: THE GREAT EQUALIZER

Karr Iv P.R.(Speaker), Istituto di Cultura Evangelica e Documentazione ~ Rome ~ Italy

DISABILITY, DIGNITY, AND THE IMAGO DEI: AN EVANGELICAL REFLECTION ON THE PROMISE OF A RELATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Di Bartolomeo G.(Speaker), Istituto di cultura evangelica e documentazione (ICED) ~ Roma ~ Italy

CREATION CARE AND GLOBAL INEQUALITY: AN EVANGELICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

Piccirillo G. (Speaker), Istituto di Cultura Evangelica e Documentazione (ICED) ~ Roma ~ Italy

UNEQUAL SUFFERING AND DIVINE PROVIDENCE: ASSESSING RICHARD SWINBURNE'S THEODICY OF LOCATION-BASED EVIL

Meregaglia C.(Speaker), Facoltà di teologia di Lugano ~ Lugano ~ Italy

THE POLITICS OF KAIROS: A JOURNEY BETWEEN EXISTENTIALISM AND ESCHATOLOGY IN THE PHILOSOPY OF PAUL TILLICH

Fazio D.J.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Milano, Facoltà di Filosofia ~ Milan ~ Italy

RELIGION, MOBILITY, AND INEQUALITY: RETHINKING SOCIAL BOUNDARIES IN A CHANGING WORLD

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

POLA - A104

Contact: Daniela Tarantino
Chair: Lorenzo Sinisi

This panel, convened by Daniela Tarantino (University of Genoa), Director of the Interdepartmental Research Centre on Migratory Religious Phenomena and Territorial Transformations, explores how religion, migration, and space intersect in shaping contemporary inequalities. It examines the dual role of religion as both a resource for social cohesion and a source of exclusion, focusing on how faith-based actors, institutions, and communities negotiate visibility, recognition, and justice within contexts of mobility and structural inequality. Through interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives, the panel seeks to rethink religion's contribution to the redefinition of equality, belonging, and coexistence in an era marked by global migration and territorial transformation. The panel is organized into two complementary sections, reflecting both the historical-legal roots of religious inequality and the contemporary and future dynamics of faith, mobility, and justice.

CATHOLIC BISHOPS AND DIOCESES IN THE CRUSADER STATES OF MEDIEVAL GREECE (13TH-16TH CENTURIES): REDRAWING RELIGIOUS BOUNDARIES BETWEEN EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Barbagli A.(Speaker), University of Catanzaro ~ Catanzaro ~ Italy

THE ITALO-ALBANIAN COMMUNITIES IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES BETWEEN MIGRATION, RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND DEFENSE OF EQUALITY. HISTORICAL PATHS OF LAW AND RELIGION.

Maradei F.(Speaker), University of Catanzaro ~ Catanzaro ~ Italy

THE MINISTRY OF DEACONESSES IN THE CANONICAL TRADITION: FROM LATE ANTIQUITY TO THE MIDDLE AGES

Fiocca M.(Speaker), University of Rome La Sapienza ~ Rome ~ Italy

DEMOCRACY, LAW, AND SOCIETY IN THE ENCYCLICALS OF LEO XIII

Colonna D.(Speaker), University of Genoa ~ Genoa ~ Italy

CHRISTIANIZATION AND RELIGIOUS REPRESSION IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA BETWEEN THE MIDDLE AGES AD HUMANISM

Mazzei R.F.(Speaker), University of Catanzaro ~ Catanzaro ~ Italy

MINORITIES WITHIN MINORITIES: CHRISTIAN ADIVASI COMMUNITIES AND BOUNDARIES OF BELONGING

Colagrossi E.(Speaker), University of Genoa ~ Genoa ~ Italy

Eco-spirituality as an ethical and spiritual response to the global ecological crisis

Baghino A.(Speaker), University of Chile Alberto Hurtado ~ Santiago de Chile ~ Chile

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND (IN)EQUALITIES: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Mari van Emmerik
Chair: Oliver Wright

Artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping modern societies, yet this transformation generates profound inequalities. Social inequalities such as poverty, discrimination, and exclusion are being amplified and reconfigured through algorithmic systems that determine access to employment, housing, healthcare, and justice. Just as industrialisation created new class divisions while promising prosperity, AI now presents similar paradoxes—offering efficiency and innovation while simultaneously encoding bias, concentrating power, and deepening existing inequalities. While philosophy and sociology dominate AI ethics discourse, theology and religious traditions remain largely absent from these conversations. What is urgently needed is an articulation of the distinctive contribution religion and theology can make to addressing AI-generated inequalities.

This panel examines AI-generated inequalities—algorithmic bias, economic displacement, surveillance, and concentrated power—through the lens of religious and theological responses. Our speakers explore what theology and religious traditions can contribute to understanding and addressing these inequalities. Rather than focusing narrowly on religious inequalities, we ask how religion and theology can speak to the broader social inequalities that AI creates, offering distinctive ethical frameworks, prophetic critique, and visions of justice that secular AI ethics may lack. What resources do religious traditions offer for critiquing and transforming AI systems that perpetuate inequality? Can theological concepts of human dignity, the sacred, justice, and the common good inform more equitable AI development? Has religion's marginalisation in AI discourse deprived society of crucial moral resources? The panel will discuss these and similar questions.

DIGITAL COLONIALISM AND EMBODIED INTELLIGENCE: RETHINKING A(G)I THROUGH THE INCARNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Van Emmerik M.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

INSTRUMENTALITY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Wright O.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

AI, PERSONHOOD, AND THE LIMITS OF CO-INHERENCE: CHRISTIAN HUMANISM IN AN ALGORITHMIC AGE

Bennett D.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

THE AMBIVALENCE OF RELIGIOUS LLMS: OPPORTUNITIES, RISKS, AND REGULATION

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

A PNEUMATOLOGICAL EQUALITIES ADDRESSING AI INEQUALITIES

Buck R.A.(Speaker), Mesa Global ~ Oxford, UK ~ United States of America

ALGORITHMIC EXEGESIS AND THE PARADOX OF AUTHORITY: GENDER, SACRED TEXT, AND AI GOVERNANCE IN SURAH MARYAM (QUR'AN 19)

Rosli Asmara L.(Speaker), Nanyang Technological University Singapore ~ Singapore ~ Singapore

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN EUROPE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Alberta Giorgi
Chair: Effie Fokas, Alberta Giorgi

The panel introduces the recently published Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics in Europe, through the voices of its contributors and editors.
The handbook brings together and bridges different perspectives and disciplines in examination of intersections between politics and religion, including contributions from political science, religious studies, anthropology, legal studies – to name a few. A central aim is to ask what, exactly, is distinctively European about the entanglements between religion and politics under scrutiny.
The handbook is structured in three sections. The first section, Theoretical Underpinnings and Methodological Perspectives, aims at offering an overview of the main analytical frameworks that are adopted in contemporary analyses of religion and politics in Europe. Altogether, they suggest decentering and deconstructing the dominant narratives, while also questioning theoretical traditions; advocate for nuanced analyses over binary understandings, emphasizing hybridity, ambivalence, and contextual complexity; and explore the factors and the processes contributing to shape religiosity and the place of religions in contemporary societies. Section 2 is devoted to Actors, Policies, and Institutions. The chapters included in this section focus on religious and political actors in the European space and their interconnections, paying attention to religions beyond the institutional settings; on legal and political institutions and their impact on the intersections of politics and religion in Europe, paying attention to how religions contribute to shaping political and public institutions and how legal and political institutions contribute to shaping religions and religiosity; and, finally, on policies regulating religions or shaping the contexts in which religion and politics intersect. Section 3 is designed to introduce emerging themes and approaches by focusing on contemporary debates, ranging from religion and AI to the pandemic.

RELIGION AND HUMAN RIGHTS – EUROPEAN PUZZLES

Breskaya O.(Speaker), Giordan G.(Speaker), Zrinščak S.(Speaker), University of Padua ~ Padua ~ Italy

RELIGION, POLITICS, AND THE PANDEMIC

Conway B.(Speaker), Maynhoot University ~ Maynhoot ~ Ireland

RELIGION AND ENVIRONMENTALISM

Becci I.(), University of Lausanne ~ Lausanne ~ Switzerland

THE EU GUIDELINES ON THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF AND THE EU'S EXTERNAL ACTION

Annicchino P.(Speaker), Università di Foggia ~ Foggia ~ Italy

RELIGION AND PARTY POLITICS IN EUROPE

Ozzano L.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

CENTRIPETAL AND CENTRIFUGAL DYNAMICS OF RELIGION AND POLITICS AT THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Fokas E.(Speaker), American College of Greece ~ Athens ~ Greece

INTERSECTING GENDER, RELIGION, AND POLITICS IN EUROPE. AN OVERVIEW AND A RESEARCH AGENDA

Giorgi A.(Speaker), University of Bergamo ~ Bergamo ~ Italy

FREEDOM WITH RELIGIONS. RETHINKING CIVILITY THROUGH POLITICAL INCLUSIVISM IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Pola - A108

Contact: Valentina Gentile
Chair: Sebastiano Maffettone
authorAMC: Valentina Gentile
Speaker: Aakash Singh Rathore, Carla Bagnoli, Mohammed Hashas, Debora Spini

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The Author Meets the Critics panel, coordinated by the Ethos Observatory, is devoted to a discussion of Valentina Gentile's book Freedom With Religions. Rethinking Civility through Political Inclusivism in Liberal Democracies (Routledge, 2026). The book offers a re-reading of political liberalism aimed at addressing the deep forms of religious pluralism that characterise contemporary democracies, steering a middle course between orthodox defences and radical critiques of this project.

At the core of the argument lies the concept of political inclusivism, a normative framework that remains faithful to the principles of public reason while expanding their interpretation in light of the lived experiences of religious citizens. On this basis, the book introduces the notion of a culture of civility, understood as a socially embedded complement to the duty of civility and as a bridge between public justification and the ethical life of civil society. Through these conceptual innovations, the book advances a more inclusive vision of the ethos of liberal democracies.

The panel will be introduced and chaired by Sebastiano Maffettone (Ethos Luiss). The book will be discussed by Aakash Singh Rathore (Ashoka University & Jindal Global University), Mohammed Hashas (University of Rome Tor Vergata), Carla Bagnoli (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia & National Academy of the Lincei), Debora Spini (New York University in Florence), and Tom Bailey (John Cabot University, tbc). The author will respond to the discussants' comments.

FREEDOM WITH RELIGIONS. RETHINKING CIVILITY THROUGH POLITICAL INCLUSIVISM IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

Gentile V.(authorAMC), Luiss University ~ Rome ~ Italy

SECULARISM AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN ITALY. RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Maria Cristina Ivaldi
Chair: Maria d'Arienzo
authorAMC: Maria Cristina Ivaldi
Speaker: Rossella Bottoni, Alessandro Ferrari

This AMC session explores the legal and symbolic tensions at the heart of the Italian "positive secularism" (laicità), as analyzed in the monograph Secularism and Freedom of Religion in Italy. The volume provides a multi-layered investigation into how religious symbols shape the contemporary legal landscape, focusing primarily on their presence within public institutions and the resulting challenges to state neutrality.
The book's core inquiry aligns with the EuARe 2026 theme, "Religions and (In)equalities", by scrutinizing how the institutional management of religious symbols – from the historical "special significance" of Rome for Catholicism to the display of the crucifix in schools, courtrooms, and polling stations – impacts citizens' equality. Furthermore, the session will address the legal status of religious symbols worn by believers – such as the hijab, the Sikh kirpan, or the niqab – as well as other systemic "symbolic" issues. These include long-standing controversies over Muslim places of worship and the denial of cooperation agreements (intese) to non-confessional groups, such as the UAAR.
A significant portion of the discussion is devoted to the comparative dimension, contrasting the Italian "passive symbol" doctrine with French laïcité and other Western judicial approaches, including the seminal Lautsi saga. Led by the session Chair, the Author and two legal scholars will examine how these legal stalemates and the "living law" generate new forms of (in)equality, highlighting the ongoing absence of a general law on religious freedom and the wide margin of state discretion in managing religious diversity in the twenty-first century.

SECULARISM AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN ITALY. RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

Ivaldi M.C.(authorAMC), University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli ~ Caserta ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS CONSTRUCTIONS OF MORTALITY: INEQUALITY, NORMATIVITY, AND THE MEANING OF DEATH

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Roccolorenzo Scianguetta
Chair: Roccolorenzo Scianguetta

Death is a universal event, yet the ways in which it is imagined, interpreted, and governed are profoundly shaped by religious worldviews that define its meaning, its normative force, and its social visibility. Far from being a purely biological threshold, mortality becomes a conceptual and ritual field in which distinctions of status, gender, economic condition, and cultural belonging are negotiated, reinforced, or contested.

This panel invites contributions examining how religious traditions construct the phenomenology, ethics, and management of death—from philosophical and theological conceptions of mortality and human dignity, to ritual economies of commemoration, to normative frameworks regulating access to care, mourning, or recognition. Particular attention is given to the ways in which these constructions participate in the production, legitimation, or mitigation of social and legal inequalities.

Possible directions include: religious models of dignified dying and the moral value of the deceased; symbolic systems that encode or challenge hierarchical distinctions; ritual, ethical, or legal regimes that differentially allocate care, memory, or ritual privilege; and the interplay between religious conceptions of death and public policies concerning end-of-life issues or the management of the dead.

Bringing together perspectives from the history of religions, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and related fields, the panel aims to critically interrogate the complex nexus between mortality, religious normativity, and the dynamics of (in)equality.

LOVE IS STRONGER THAN DEATH

Danca W.(Speaker), University of Bucharest/Romanian Academy ~ Bucharest ~ Romania

KIERKEGAARD AND THE WANDERING JEW: DEATH AS FULFILMENT AND THE CURSE OF NOT BEING ABLE TO DIE

Tavilla I.(Speaker), C.E.R.I.S.K. Central European Research Institute Søren Kierkegaard ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

AGENCY, ASCETIC DEATH, AND LEGAL MISRECOGNITION: NOTES ABOUT THE (INAPPROPRIATE) COMPARISON BETWEEN SALLEKHANĀ AND SATĪ

Scianguetta R.(Speaker), SISR ~ Montesano sulla Marcellana (SA) ~ Italy

RESURRECTION AND LEGAL INEQUALITIES: THE DIVERSE ACCOUNTS OF JESUS' APPEARANCES FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Di Lenardo A.(Speaker), Ca' Foscari University of Venice, University of Udine, and University of Trieste ~ Venice, Udine, Trieste ~ Italy

'LIFE IN DEATH AND LIGHT IN DARKNESS': PRAYERS ON DEATH IN GREGORY OF NAREK'S PRAYER BOOK

Apresyan A.(Speaker), Matenadaran, Mashtots Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts ~ Yerevan ~ Armenia

SCIENTOLOGY AND DEATH AS PASSAGE: DOCTRINE, RITUAL PRACTICES, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SPIRITUAL IMMORTALITY

Brambani L. (Speaker), Chiesa Nazionale di Scientology d'Italia ~ Vimodrone-Roma ~ Italy

THINKING IN OPPOSITES: BEYOND POLARISATION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Philip McCosker
Chair: Philip McCosker

The ways we live and think in and about our world seem to be increasingly polarised into mutually exclusive oppositions. Our understanding of opposition and difference seems to have become crude and coarse: either/or trumps both/and. The zero-sum of inequality proliferates, displacing the differentiated unities of forms of equality.

This panel seeks to explore richer ways of conceiving opposition and difference, taking its impulse from a number of under-appreciated works including Romano Guardini's Der Gegensatz (1925) and Paul Roubiczek's Thinking in Opposites (1952), as well as Nicholas of Cusa's coincidentia oppositorum. What are the ways of thinking through opposition and difference we can (re)source from the humanities and social sciences: how can we imagine our way beyond simplistic polarisations?

We invite papers which consider ways of thinking about opposition (or difference) in fresh and variegated ways, from whatever discipline. While links to the thinking of Cusanus, Guardini, or Roubiczek are welcomed, they are not necessary. The papers may be historical and/or constructive.

This session is linked to the research project on ‘Theologies of Catholicity’ based at the Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne, and co-led with colleagues from KU Leuven and St Andrew’s University.

BEING MYSTERIOUS: THE IMAGO DEI AND THINKING IN OPPOSITES

Insole C.(Speaker), Durham University ~ Durham ~ United Kingdom

OPPOSITES VISUAL AND CONCEPTUAL

Eikelboom L.(Speaker), ACU ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

FAITH IN FITTING OPPOSITES: THE AESTHETIC NAVIGATION OF BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Despain B.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

PLAYFUL ORTHODOXIES IN HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

Ocker C.(Speaker), Graduate Theological Union ~ Berkeley ~ United States of America

TENSEGRITY AND POLAR OPPOSITION: EXTENDING ERICH PRZYWARA'S ANALOGIA ENTIS

Migliore S.(Speaker), Pontifical Lateran University ~ Vatican City ~ Vatican City State (Holy See)

LOOKING TO THEOLOGY FOR A PEDAGOGY OF OVERCOMING POLARISATION

Ryliskyte L.(Speaker), Boston College Theology Department ~ Chestnut Hill, MA ~ United States of America

COINCIDENCE AND CATHOLICITY: A COMPARISON OF NICHOLAS OF CUSA AND ROMANO GUARDINI

Van Erp S.(Speaker), KU Leuven / Australian Catholic University ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

AGAINST INEQUALITIES AND STRUCTURAL EXPLOITATION: CHRISTIAN AND MARXIST CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL AND ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A206b

Contact: Angelina Giannopoulou
Chair: José Manuel Pureza

Social inequalities are not merely dysfunctions of a particular economic model, but rather constitutive features of the exploitation inherent in capitalism. Within liberation theology, these dynamics of exploitation have been conceptualised as structural sins, pointing to structural forms of injustice that exceed individual moral failure. The Gospel itself can be read as a prophetic cry against inequality, exploitation, & social injustice, one that nevertheless derives its transformative force from the promise of eschatological salvation.
Marxism, on the other hand, has historically constituted a major intellectual and political project that identified exploitation as a defining feature of human history and argued that the abolition of inequalities presupposes the abolition of exploitative relations as such. The socialist utopia thus emerged as a horizon of collective hope, orienting struggles aimed at overturning the existing socio-economic order. Hope lies at the heart of every social utopia and every eschatology, functioning as a force against resignation. For the Christian–Marxist dialogue promoted by the Dialop Project, hope represents a privileged site of convergence and critical exchange. Starting from the distinct theological and philosophical articulations of hope within their respective traditions, Christian & Marxist interlocutors aim to develop a shared social and political orientation that can counter contemporary regimes of inequality and exploitation. This dialogue gains renewed relevance in light of Pope Francis's call for a Holy Year of Hope. Marxist participants in the dialogue, in turn, draw on Bloch's 'The Principle of Hope' –described by W. Benjamin as a "system of theoretical messianism"– a work that played a foundational role in the rehabilitation of social utopia.
This closed panel brings together Christian and Marxist scholars in dialogue to reflect on social and eschatological hope as a counterforce to inequality & structural exploitation.

CHRISTIAN HOPE AS THEOLOGICAL RESOURCE AND THE DIALOGUE WITH MARXISM

O''Byrne D.(Speaker), SOPHIA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE - ISTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO SOPHIA ~ Figline e Incisa Valdarno ~ Italy

GROUNDS FOR HOPE: A MARXIST ENGAGEMENT WITH CHRISTIAN THOUGHT ON PEACE AND THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

Baier W.(Speaker), Party of the European Left ~ Vienna ~ Austria

MESSIANIC HORIZONS OF MARXISM: ERNST BLOCH IN DIALOGUE WITH THE THEOLOGY OF HOPE

Giannopoulou A.(Speaker), Sophia University Institute - Istituto Universitario Sophia ~ Figline e Incisa Valdarno ~ Italy

THE STRUGGLE FOR A HUMAN ECONOMY: MAMADOU DIA, CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT, AND AFRICAN SOCIALISM

Stanley I.(Speaker), London School of Economics ~ London ~ United Kingdom

CHRISTIAN ESOTERICISM IN THE "LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY": CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLING FOR SURVIVAL

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A103

Contact: Giulio Dalla Grana
Chair: Luca Siniscalco

The "long nineteenth century" was marked by the flourishing, (re-)discovery, and invention of religious knowledge. The acceleration of global connections facilitated the diffusion of exotic doctrines and extra-European religions. Also, the new inequality between the emergent rational-positivistic mindset and traditional Christian theologies led to the latter's response through either integration with or resistance to the former. Furthermore, analogous to the massive fascination with the "East", the interest in the "occult", and instances of attraction to Paganism, Christianity saw the development of heterodox currents imbued with esoteric features.
Concerning institutional Christianity, the long nineteenth century exhibited two paradoxical aspects. On the one hand, Christianity faced emergent secularisation and anti-clerical sentiments. On the other hand, the same century led to the empowerment of ecclesiastical institutions due to their nature as competitors or allies of nation-states. In turn, the inequality of these developments played a fundamental role in spreading popular devotion and sparking interest in mystical religious manifestations.
Whereas past scholarship investigated several of these traditions, the question of establishment, transfer, and circulation remains understudied. By contextualizing this subject within political institutions or across state borders, this panel aims to investigate the social, intellectual, and political challenges faced by Christian esotericism between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries.

The panel focuses on three themes:
1. Authority: Technical development and scientific research involved in the affirmation or condemnation of Christian esoteric aspects.
2. Routinisation: The circulation of heterodox doctrines and religious experiences and the attempts to halt them.
3. Coexistence: Conflicts and interactions between positivistic science, institutional confessions, social groups, and Christian esotericism.

THE SURVIVAL OF AN ÉLITE: CHURCH AND STATE AGAINST TOWIANISM

Dalla Grana G.(Speaker), Södertörn University ~ Flemingsberg ~ Sweden

SHINCHEONJI, A KOREAN NEW RELIGION IN GLOBAL CONTEXT; EXPANSION, CONTROVERSY, AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola A208

Contact: Márk Nemes
Chair: Davide Amore

This session examines Shincheonji as a rapidly expanding Korean Christian new religious movement whose global trajectory has generated both interest and controversy. The first paper introduces Shincheonji's history, millenarian theology, and the dynamics behind its rapid growth, situating recent Korean scandals—COVID-19 accusations and alleged political interference—within broader patterns of anti-cult mobilization in South Korea and abroad. The second paper analyzes the Victoria, Australia, Inquiry on "cults," highlighting how apostate narratives, media framings, and institutional anxieties converged to construct Shincheonji as a campus threat despite limited empirical evidence. The third paper turns to Latin America, focusing on Argentina, and explores Shincheonji's Bible courses as flexible spaces of graded participation while tracing how transnational anti-cult rhetoric is locally reactivated and judicialized. Paper 4 presents Shincheonji's missions in Europe, with particular attention to Central Europe, examining both the movement's strategies of implantation and the forms of opposition it encounters—opposition shaped simultaneously by global anti-cult campaigns and region-specific concerns. The session concludes with response papers by European representatives of Shincheonji, who offer an emic perspective on their interactions with society, the media, governmental agencies, and scholars, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the movement's lived realities and public reception.

AN INTRODUCTION TO SHINCHEONJI: MILLENARIAN MOVEMENT OR "EVIL CULT"?

Introvigne M.(Speaker), CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions) ~ Torino ~ Italy

SHINCHEONJI AND THE VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA, INQUIRY ON "CULTS": APOSTATES, MORAL PANICS, AND CAMPUS FEARS

Soryte R.(Speaker), FOB (European Federation for Freedom of Belief) ~ Torino ~ Italy

SHINCHEONJI IN LATIN AMERICA: BIBLE COURSES, GRADIENTS OF COMMITMENT, AND ANTI-CULT RHETORIC

Vardé M.(Speaker), University of Buenos Aires ~ Buenos Aires ~ Argentina

(IN)EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ON THE RELIGIOUS MARKET – OVERVIEWING SHINCHEONJI'S EUROPEAN PRESENCE

Nemes M.(Speaker), CESNUR – Center for Studies on New Religions, Torino, Italy ~ Torino ~ Italy

SHINCHEONJI IN THE UK: MEDIA BIAS, "CULT" LABELS, AND THE REALITY OF A BIBLE-CENTERED COMMUNITY

Amicarelli A.(Speaker), European Federation for Freedom of Belief ~ London ~ United Kingdom

A POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN 21ST CENTURY EUROPE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Benedetto Matricini
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl
authorAMC: Kristina Stoeckl
Speaker: José Casanova, Gionathan Lo Mascolo, Sigrid Rettenbacher, Regina Elsner

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A Political Sociology of Religious Moderation in 21st-Century Europe is the title of a five-year research project (2026–2031) hosted at Luiss Guido Carli and funded by an FIS3 Advanced Grant of the Italian Science Foundation (PI: Kristina Stoeckl). The project addresses a major gap in current scholarship on religion and politics in Europe by shifting attention away from radicalization and reactionary Christian mobilization toward a largely overlooked group: religious moderates. This Author-Meets-Critic Panel discusses the role of religious moderates as actors ambiguously placed in between the presence of religion in public life and the rejection of its politicization with José Casanova, Gionathan Lo Mascolo, Sigrid Rettenbacher, Regina Elsner, and Richard Wood.

While existing research has extensively analyzed the role of conservative and far-right religious actors in contemporary “culture wars,” POLISMOD focuses on believers, clergy, and activists who reject the instrumentalization of Christianity for illiberal political ends, yet do not fully align with secular progressive positions on contested moral issues. Positioned between reactionary Christianity and secular liberalism, religious moderates face increasing pressure in polarized political and religious environments.

The panel introduces the project’s theoretical framework and mixed-methods comparative research design, spanning Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox contexts in Italy, Germany, Finland, and Romania. It invites discussion on how religious moderation is socially constructed and theologically legitimated as well as politically and institutionally enacted. This panel kick-starts the POLISMOD project for future debates on how religious moderation operates within and beyond the dynamics of contemporary culture wars in Europe.

A POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN 21ST CENTURY EUROPE

Stoeckl K.(authorAMC), Luiss University ~ Rome ~ Italy

SPORT AND RELIGION IN THE GLOBAL ARENA: NEUTRALITY, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, AND THE GOVERNANCE OF DIVERSITY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - A206

Contact: Maria Cristina Ivaldi
Chair: Maria d'Arienzo, Alessandro Ferrari

This panel explores the multifaceted interactions between sport and religion in the contemporary global arena, focusing on legal perspectives – particularly fundamental rights, equality, and non-discrimination – while embracing interdisciplinary approaches.
Traditionally, the principle of institutional neutrality towards religion, politics, and ideology has informed international sports law, including the Olympic legal framework, and has increasingly interacted with internationally recognized human rights standards. This principle, intended to safeguard inclusivity and equality, presents intricate challenges when religious identities and practices interact with sports governance and regulatory frameworks at both national and international levels.
Sport provides a unique setting for the expression and negotiation of religious identities, where beliefs may shape participation norms such as dress codes, dietary rules, days of rest, and gender roles. Historically, sport has also served as a tool for moral education, community-building, and religious communication, thereby frequently challenging strict interpretations of neutrality in contemporary pluralistic societies.
Contributions may address inter alia:
• religious approaches across different traditions (doctrines, sacred texts, and narratives);
• religious practices and accommodations (symbols, dress codes, dietary rules, and days of rest);
• religious identity and outreach through sport (encompassing belonging, proselytism, and faith-based competitions);
• normative tensions between religion and sport (equality, non-discrimination, hate speech on religious grounds, and the balancing of gender and sexuality claims).
By merging legal analysis and socio-cultural perspectives, the panel seeks to examine how neutrality in sports law interacts with religious diversity and identity claims, highlighting the tensions and accommodations emerging today.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IN SPORT: LEGAL ISSUES RELATING TO GENDER IDENTITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND RELIGION

Gagliardi C.(Speaker), University of Naples Federico II ~ Naples ~ Italy

ATHLETES' RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND THE SPORT SYSTEM. LEGAL ASPECTS OF A CHANGING IDENTITY

Rea F.S.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II" ~ Napoli ~ Italy

FROM RITUAL TO PERFORMANCE: ORTHODOXY AND THE FORMATION OF SPORTING ETHICS – BULGARIAN PERSPECTIVES

Dimitrova N.(Speaker), Bulgarian Academy of Sciences ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

SPORT AND RELIGION: BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL RULES AND NATIONAL ADAPTATIONS. A COMPARISON OF SOME CASES

Durisotto D.(Speaker), University of Cagliari ~ Cagliari ~ Italy

FOOTBALL, FAITH, AND NATIONAL FEDERATIONS: NAVIGATING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Ivaldi M.C.(Speaker), University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli ~ Caserta ~ Italy

SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH SPORT: THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUSLY INSPIRED THIRD SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

Balsamo F.(Speaker), University of Naples Federico II ~ Naples ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS AND OLYMPIC NEUTRALITY: THE “ATHLETES’ CROSS” AT MILANO-CORTINA 2026.

Osnato S.(Speaker), University of Pisa, University of Ferrara ~ Pisa, Ferrara ~ Italy

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON (IN)EQUALITIES: RACE, NATION, AND SECULARISM

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Donghyung Lee
Chair: Donghyung Lee, Taeha An

This panel offers global perspectives on how religious ideas intersect with forms of (in)equality across race, nation, and secularism. Recognizing that religious traditions can both reinforce social hierarchies and promote visions of equality, the panel draws on theology, religious studies, political theory, economics, and postcolonial theory to examine religion's ambivalent role in society. The papers present global case studies that address issues such as colonial legacies, sovereignty, economic cultures, and secularization. Collectively, they investigate how religious concepts and practices can challenge and reinforce inequality. The panel invites interdisciplinary dialogue on religion's capacity to confront or perpetuate inequalities in diverse cultural contexts. By integrating these issues and frameworks into the discussion, this panel underscores the relevance and intricacy of its inquiry. In a world marked by contested sovereignty, neoliberal disparities, migration upheavals, and secularism, questions regarding how religious ideas perpetuate inequality or foster resistance are more pertinent than ever. Cases from a global perspective exemplify these tensions within specific contexts—ranging from finance-dominated debt cultures and postcolonial nationalisms to religion-state relations and reimagined identities after slavery. The panel suggests that understanding religion's double-edged role necessitates moving beyond simplistic binaries. It calls for a nuanced, interdisciplinary engagement encompassing theology, political theory, economics, and ethics to discern how religious traditions can both inspire movements for equality and potentially reinforce injustice. Ultimately, the panel contributes to a comprehensive exploration of whether and how religion can be mobilized to confront rather than perpetuate the persistent inequalities of our era.

PERPETUAL PROGRESS AND CONSUMER DESIRE: GREGORY OF NYSSA'S DOCTRINE OF EPEKTASIS AND RESTLESS DESIRE IN CONSUMER CAPITALISM

Lee D.(Speaker), Yale University ~ New Haven ~ United States of America

MINJOK, STATE SOVEREIGNTY, AND CHRISTIAN ACTION: A KOREAN CHRISTIAN POLITICAL THEOLOGY AFTER THE 2024 MARTIAL LAW CRISIS

An T.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

DECHURCHED EVANGELICALS AND NEW MODES OF RELIGIOUS LIFE: A BRAZILIAN FORM OF SECULARIZATION?

De Vasconcelos H.M.(Speaker), Pontificia Università San Tommaso d'Aquino—Angelicum ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE RITUALIZATION OF THE NEW SOUTH: REGIONAL LIMINALITY AND REINCARNATION

Scholer P.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

FROM COLONIAL SOVEREIGNTY TO INTERNALIZED ADMIRATION FOR IMPERIAL MODERNITY: THE POLITICAL-THEOLOGICAL RUINS OF JAPANESE COLONIALISM IN KOREA AFTER LIBERATION

Cho H.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

DECRYPTING SECULARIZATION: COLONIAL POWER, RELIGION, AND INEQUALITY IN THE HISPANIC CARIBBEAN

Lebrón--Gómez N.(Speaker), Princeton Theological Seminary ~ Princeton, New Jersey ~ United States of America

EQUALITY WITHOUT SAMENESS: SAID NURSÎ'S MORAL AND LEGAL CRITIQUE OF INEQUALITY IN MUN??AR?T (DISPUTATIONS)

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A102

Contact: Hakan Gülerce
Chair: Ahmet Yildiz, Hakan Gülerce

This panel proposes a focused examination of Said Nursî's conception of equality as articulated in his early twentieth-century work Munāẓarāt (Disputations), situating it within broader debates on religion, freedom, social justice, and (in)equalities.

Written in the context of late Ottoman constitutionalism (Meşrutiyet), Munāẓarāt addresses long-standing and unresolved questions concerning equality before the law, political inclusion, minority rights, social hierarchy, economic disparity, individual liberty, religious authority, and social cohesion. Nursî advances a conception of equality that rejects both hierarchical domination and reductive egalitarianism. Equality, in this framework, does not entail sameness of belief, virtue, or social role, but rather rests on justice, dignity, freedom as non-domination, and moral responsibility.

Approaching Munāẓarāt as a normative and political text, this panel explores how a religious moral framework can simultaneously critique despotism, challenge structural inequalities, and sustain pluralism. By foregrounding Nursî's reflections on law, governance, and social morality, the panel contributes to EuARe 2026's theme of how religious traditions have both reinforced and contested modern forms of inequality.
The panel welcomes interdisciplinary contributions from religious studies, political theory, sociology, history, law, and ethics that ground their analyses in close readings of Munāẓarāt and examine its relevance for contemporary debates on constitutionalism, citizenship, minority rights, and equality. Papers comparing Nursi's Munāẓarāt with other works and thinkers are also welcome.

Suggested Topics for Papers (Not limited to):

- Equality before the law and respecting religious differences
- Religion, constitutionalism, and political inclusion
- Minority rights, dignity, and coexistence
- Despotism as a source of structural inequality
- Social class, poverty, and moral responsibility

“EQUALITY WITHOUT SAMENESS:” JUSTICE, DIGNITY, AND NON-DOMINATION IN SAID NURSÎ’S MUNĀẒARĀT

Yildiz A.(Speaker), Fatih Sultan Mehmet Foundation University ~ İstanbul ~ Turkey

A MUSLIM CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF EQUAL CITIZENSHIP: THE LEGACY OF OTTOMAN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE

Kurt H.(Speaker), Northeastern University ~ Boston ~ United States of America

EQUALITY AS MORAL RESPONSIBILITY: SAID NURSÎ ON INEQUALITY, ʿUBŪDIYYA, AND NON-DOMINATION IN MUNĀẒARĀT

Nayed A.A.(Speaker), Kalam Research and Media ~ Benghazi ~ Libya

NURSI ON FREEDOM, CONSTITUTIONALISM, EQUAL RIGHTS, AND ETHICS

Abu Sway M.(Speaker), Prof. Dr. Mustafa Abu Sway Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Al-Ghazali's Work at the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Al-Quds University ~ Jerusalem ~ Palestinian Territory, Occupied

METROPOLITAN GEORGES KHODR (1923–PRESENT) NEW

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A204

Metropolitan Georges Khodr stands as one of the most influential figures in modern Arabic Orthodox theology. His intellectual, pastoral, and public engagement has profoundly shaped theological reflection, political theology, and ecclesial life within the Antiochian sphere and beyond. This paper examines the significant role he played in shaping contemporary Arab Christian thought, with particular attention to the intersections of faith, culture, politics, and social responsibility. His influence extends beyond the Orthodox Church to the wider Arab intellectual milieu and ecumenical circles.

Special emphasis is placed on his long-standing commitment to the Palestinian cause and the defense of Palestinian rights. From the early 1950s through the second decade of the twenty-first century, his writings, speeches, and public interventions articulated a theology grounded in justice, human dignity, and solidarity with oppressed peoples. Through theological reflection, advocacy, and participation in regional and international forums, Metropolitan Khodr developed a Christian discourse that engaged political realities without reducing faith to ideology, while affirming the Church’s moral responsibility toward injustice.

The paper also explores how his thought shaped generations of students, clergy, and intellectuals who later became influential figures in theological, cultural, and political life. His legacy is not confined to written works but lives on through teaching, mentorship, dialogue, and sustained public engagement. By reflecting on his influence on our own intellectual formation, this study highlights the enduring relevance of his vision and situates Metropolitan Georges Khodr as a central reference in modern Arab Christian thought, offering valuable insights into theology, politics, and commitment to justice in a fragmented world.

SHIFTS IN 20TH/21ST-CENTURY CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: RETHINKING THE SUBJECTS OF THEOLOGY IN LIGHT OF INEQUALITIES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 18:20

Pola - A107

Contact: Isabella Bruckner
Chair: Nikita Semenikhin

As inequalities sharpen into focus in contemporary life, the “relevant subject” of theological discourse expands: not only the universal concept of “human being” in abstract terms, but concrete, embodied, socially situated humans (and increasingly nonhuman creation). In other words, 20th/21st-century theological attention shifts from the subject in general to subjects marked by corporeality, vulnerability, power and injustices. The panel traces a movement from fundamental theological premises to their concrete ecclesial and socio-political expressions in contemporary times, their epistemological and finally to their cosmo-ecological implications. These discursive movements highlight how theology reorients itself, adapting patristic insights to address modern asymmetries while preserving its core concerns.

The panel begins with an exploration of postlapsarian metaphysical inequality through the patristic symbol of the “garments of skin”, which provides the conceptual point of departure for the discussion as a whole. The panel then turns to contemporary theological “subjects” like institutional inequality by asking whether (and in what sense) there is a difference between laity and priesthood. From there it moves to gender inequality between men and women, before shifting to social inequality between rich and poor. The fifth contribution reflects the relation of mystic experience or contemplative knowledge and scientific knowledge in the theological discourse, whereas the sixth paper widens the scope beyond the human sphere by questioning species inequality, challenging anthropocentrism and reflecting on creation as a whole.

We are looking for two further contributions which are reflecting on the dimension of vulnerability and disability, or on the inequality of ratio and affectus in the theological discourse.

THE “GARMENTS OF SKIN” AND THE BIRTH OF INEQUALITY: GREGORY OF NYSSA ON THE POSTLAPSARIAN CONDITION

Semenikhin N.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

BRIDGING A SEPARATION, HONOURING A DISTINCTION: THE LEKTORENAMT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AUSTRIA BETWEEN BAPTISMAL PRIESTHOOD AND ORDAINED MINISTRY

Jöri J.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

GENDER AND DIGNITY: THE NEW EU GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGIES IN DIALOGUE WITH CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY

Reitano A.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

AND YET, THE PERIPHERIES AT THE CENTER. BETWEEN THE LEGACY OF FRANCIS AND THE INHERITANCE OF LEO XIV

Cofrancesco C.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

PRAISE OF THE EARTH. BIBLICAL ANTHROPOCENTRISM IN DISCUSSION

Bruckner I.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

COMPREHENSION BETWEEN EXPERIENCE AND SCIENCE

Dohna Schlobitten Y.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Rome ~ Italy

„DEAD MEN DON‘T RAPE“, OR: FEMALE RAGE AS CATALYST OF THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Tautz S.(Speaker), Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg ~ Würzburg ~ Germany

SYNODALITY WITHOUT ECUMENISM? RETHINKING THE SUBJECT OF CHRISTIAN UNITY UNDER CONDITIONS OF CONFESSIONAL INEQUALITY

Surowiec P.R.(Speaker), The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin ~ Lublin ~ Poland

DEVELOPMENT IN THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 16:10 to 18:20

Pola - A108

Contact: Anton ten Klooster
Chair: Arnold Smeets

The teaching of churches on the content of their beliefs (doctrine) and the moral behavior considered fitting for their members (ethics) has developed over time, and still develops. To some, this is a given, whereas to other the notion of 'change in teaching' is contentious. The purpose of this session is to unite scholars interested historical, apparent, or proposed developments in (sexual) ethics.

There are several angles from which the question of development can be studied. Historically, it could be argued that some teachings and practices do change. When they do, the question remains how a tradition accounts for it: what happened to the content of a fundamental category such as natural law, when the permissibility of slavery is challenged?

In Catholic theology, Newman's 'Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine' is foundational. More recently, Seewald's 'Theories of Doctrinal Development in the Catholic Church' reflects on how Newman and others have shaped views continuity and discontinuity. Might there be ecclesiological perspectives that allow for an idea of rupture or reversal without challenging the unity of a given faith tradition?

The question of development can touch upon neuralgic issues, specifically considering human sexuality. We invite speakers to explore fundamental questions such as human dignity, the function of penal law, or natural law. Does the emergence of 'human dignity' as a fundamental notion, take precedence over other concerns, such as the apparent necessity of retribution for capital crimes? Possible paper subjects include, but are not limited to: methods and dynamics of actual or possible change, the role of theology in development, the appropriation of new ideas such as human dignity, the use of traditional ethical categories for new topics such as gender issues, reflection on 'silent' reversals in pastoral practices, ecclesiological processes of discerning future developments etc.

PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES TO SEXUALITY

Iula E.(Speaker), Pontificia Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Meridionale ~ Napoli ~ Italy

OPEN QUESTIONS ON GENDER IN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

Ten Klooster A.(Speaker), Tilburg University ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

FROM DIVINE MARRIAGE TO MODERN SEXUAL ETHICS: COMPETING VISIONS OF LOVE, COVENANT, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

Villeneuve A.(Speaker), Sacred Heart Major Seminary ~ Detroit ~ United States of America

DEVELOPMENTS OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINE ON MARRIAGE

Lintner M.M.(Speaker), PTH Brixen ~ Bressanone ~ Italy

DISCERNING TO CONSERVE: UNDERSTANDING CONTINUITY'S LOCUS

Baczyk--Bell C.(Speaker), Girton College ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

MINORITY, INEQUALITY, AND THE POLITICS OF RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - AT12

Contact: Spyridoula Athanasopoulou-Kypriou
Chair: Ulrike Ernst-Auga, Spyridoula Athanasopoulou-Kypriou

This panel builds on the rich body of theological and interdisciplinary scholarship that has critically examined minority perspectives in relation to religion and inequality. It aims to further explore how such perspectives interrogate the production, legitimation, and contestation of social, legal, and gendered inequalities within religious and theological fields. Departing from dominant, “major” theological frameworks that often align with sovereignty, normativity, and institutional power, the panel foregrounds theological practices that emerge from marginal locations, including feminist, queer, postcolonial, decolonial, and other subaltern religious articulations.

Drawing on Bourdieu’s analysis of symbolic power as well as scholarship on religion, gender, biopolitics, performativity, and agency, the panel understands theology as a political, embodied, and knowledge-producing practice shaped by unequal regimes of visibility, recognition, and authority. At the same time, it remains attentive to emerging theoretical approaches that question fixed identity frameworks and explore “minor” modes of religious and theological articulation as critical, relational, and transformative practices.

We invite papers that examine how religious traditions, institutions, and discourses both reproduce and resist inequalities related to gender, sexuality, race, class, citizenship, embodiment, and religious diversity. Contributions may address: invisible or normalized inequalities within religious and theological fields; the effects of implicit or invisible religion in social, political, and legal contexts; the politics of theological recognition and exclusion; symbolic power within religious knowledge production; religion as a site of both symbolic violence and emancipatory imagination; and reconfigurations of equality beyond universalist, liberal, or identity-centered paradigms.

FROM MINORITY TO MINOR: GENEALOGY, POSTIDENTITY, AND BECOMING IN RELIGION

Ernst--Auga U.(Speaker), Humboldt-University of Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

INVISIBLE INEQUALITY: GENDER AND CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Athanasopoulou--Kypriou S.(Speaker), University of Crete ~ Rethymno ~ Greece

IMPLICIT RELIGION BEFORE THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Fokas E.(Speaker), American College of Greece, Deree London School of Economics Hellenic Observatory ~ Athens ~ Greece

DECOLONISING THE ICON: THE POLITICS OF ICON RECEPTION IN WESTERN EUROPE

Michalska A.F.(Speaker), Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan ~ Poznan ~ Poland

THE INVISIBILITY OF DEACONESSES AS GENDERED INEQUALITY: RECEPTION, RESISTANCE, AND THEOLOGICAL RECOGNITION IN CONTEMPORARY GREEK ORTHODOX DISCOURSE

Drosia A.(Speaker), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki ~ Thessaloniki ~ Greece

THE EMPEROR'S LIGHT AND THE MARGIN'S SHADOW: POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN MEDIEVAL CHINESE CHRISTIANITY

Balmont A.(Speaker), The Chinese University of Hong Kong ~ Hong Kong ~ Hong Kong

"FIRST-PERSON´S EXPERIENCE" FEMINIST, DISABILITY, QUEER AND TRANS HERMENEUTICS. PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS FOR THEOLOGIES

Wozna Urbanczak A.M.(Speaker), Bergische Universität Wuppertal ~ Wuppertal ~ Germany

NORMS AND NORMATIVITY AFTER VATICAN II: PROCESSES, SOURCES, MODELS, AND CENTERS OF NORMATIVE PRODUCTION AFTER THE COUNCIL

Friday 03 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Davide Gardini
Chair: Massimiliano Proietti

Within the framework of the historicization of the post–Vatican II period, research carried out so far has primarily highlighted the need for a change of perspective, reflecting and concretizing the broadening of outlook that the Council itself sought to promote.
Along this trajectory, this panel aims to engage directly with the dynamics of the implementation of the Council, focusing in particular on the issue of the normalization of Vatican II. The panel therefore aims to highlight this phase of normalization by investigating its different moments and key turning points, and by bringing to light the crucial issues that emerged during the conciliar implementation phase. The panel will thus address the topic from the analytical perspective of this process of normalization, focusing in particular on:
• Post-Vatican II norms: the production of normative documentation within local churches (dioceses and diocesan synods; Episcopal conferences); the drafting of the Codex Iuris Canonici and the Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium; the elaboration, promulgation, reception, and effects of decrees and documents issued by the Holy See from Paul VI to Francis, or by bodies established in the post-conciliar period (post-conciliar commissions, Curial dicasteries), which marked turning points in the post-conciliar era; the activity of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.
• Vatican II as a norm: conflicts surrounding the implementation of Vatican II; conciliar ecclesiology in relation to the reform of the Roman Curia and the development of the Synod of Bishops; the normative status of the conciliar corpus itself for subsequent theological reflection and for the practices of local churches.

THE LEX ECCLESIAE FUNDAMENTALIS AND THE PROBLEM OF THE CODEX AFTER THE VATICAN II

Gardini D.(Speaker), Sapienza Università di Roma - DREST ~ Roma-Bologna ~ Italy

PAUL VI AND THE CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH: DOCTRINAL POLICY AND NORMATIVE PRODUCTION AFTER VATICAN II

Sintoni A.(Speaker), DREST - Alta scuola Europea di scienze religiose G. Alberigo ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE STANDARDIZATION OF VATICAN II ECCLESIOLOGICAL LANGUAGE IN THE HOLY SEE'S MAGISTERIUM (2000-2025)

Corvo F.M.(Speaker), Alta scuola Europea di scienze religiose G. Alberigo ~ Bologna ~ Italy

A FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF THE CHURCH. ADOPTING ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS IMPULSES FROM THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

RECONFIGURING JUDICIAL AUTHORITY: THE DOCTRINE OF DELICTA CONTRA SEXTUM IN THE 2021 REFORM OF BOOK VI OF THE CODE OF CANON LAW

Profeta A.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

DEALING WITH EXPECTATIONS AFTER NOSTRA AETATE 4. EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES ELABORATING GUIDELINES ON RELATIONS TO JEWS (1965-1973)

Maligot C.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL CRITICISM

Friday 03 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A105

Contact: Stephen Bush
Chair: Stephen Bush

Theology speaks of a God who is just, and thus it must take justice as a matter of central concern. Modern conceptions of justice place great emphasis on equality, that is, that people will not be subordinated or dominated on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, nationality, class, etc. These reflections have put theology in conversation with social criticism, the attempt to understand unjust inequities, to mitigate them, and to propose new ways of living together. The papers on this panel discuss three specific engagements of theology with social criticism. The panel starts with Augustine, whom many have charged with being at the root of sexist features of church doctrine and practice. The first presentation engages William Connolly's The Augustinian Imperative, arguing that Augustine has resources for a more appreciative embrace of diversity than Connolly and many others think. The second presentation looks at the motif of martyrdom in nineteenth-century abolitionist movements, arguing that it played a powerful role in social criticism in that era and can do so today. The third paper looks at the postliberal theology of George Lindbeck and George Frei, addressing concerns that their perspective is inherently conservative by suggesting that their important insights about theology are not, in fact, incompatible with a more critical and progressive approach.

AUGUSTINE AND FEMINIST THEOLOGY

Stewart--Kroeker S.(Speaker), Princeton Theological Seminary ~ Princeton, NJ ~ United States of America

RELIGION, MARTYRDOM, AND ABOLITION: SOCIAL CRITICISM AND THE POLITICS OF EQUALITY

Dumler--Winckler E.(Speaker), St. Louis University ~ St. Louis, MO ~ United States of America

THE FUTURE OF POSTLIBERAL THEOLOGY

Bush S.(Speaker), Brown University ~ Providence, RI ~ United States of America

ARE “BRAINWASHING” THEORIES COMING BACK? RENEWED TRANS-NATIONAL ANTI-CULT ACTIVISM

Friday 03 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A106

Contact: Massimo Introvigne
Chair: Mark Nemes

This session brings together six interdisciplinary papers that examine the contemporary resurgence of anti-cult discourse and the revival of “brainwashing” narratives across diverse cultural, legal, and political contexts. The first paper maps this global revival, tracing how transnational anti-cult networks have fueled renewed anxieties in countries as varied as Australia, Argentina, Japan, the United Kingdom, and South Korea. The second paper analyzes the Victoria (Australia) Inquiry on “cults,” showing how the extension of “coercive control” to religious movements repackages discredited theories under a new legal vocabulary. A third contribution explores sacred eroticism and the mechanisms through which anti-cult rhetoric delegitimizes esoteric erotic spiritual practices, often enabling disproportionate state intervention. The fourth paper examines the French agency MIVILUDES, highlighting how its reliance on the legally codified notion of “psychological subjugation” exposes structural weaknesses in France’s anti-cult model. The fifth paper offers an emic and psychological analysis of POYRA (Path of YahRa), showing how media campaigns construct stigmatizing representations that threaten religious liberty in the Czech Republic. The final paper presents the testimony of a Church of Almighty God refugee, documenting both persecution in China and the transnational extension of repression into democratic countries. Collectively, the session demonstrates how anti-cult discourse continues to shape public policy, media narratives, and legal frameworks, with a bizarre return of “brainwashing” theories scholars discredited long ago, raising urgent questions about pluralism, state power, and the protection of freedom of belief in contemporary societies.

FROM AUSTRALIA TO SOUTH KOREA: A RENEWED ANTI-CULT ACTIVISM

Introvigne M.(Speaker), CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions) ~ Torino ~ Italy

THE VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA, INQUIRY ON “CULTS”: “BRAINWASHING” DISGUISED AS “COERCIVE CONTROL”

Soryte R.(Speaker), FOB (European Federation for Freedom of Belief) ~ Torino ~ Italy

SACRED EROTICISM, ANTI-CULTISM, AND THE REVIVAL OF "BRAINWASHING" NARRATIVES

Marin C.(Speaker), Soteria International ~ Copenaghen ~ Denmark

MIVILUDES UNDER SCRUTINY: INSTITUTIONAL FRAGILITY AND THE LIMITS OF FRANCE'S ANTI-CULT MODEL

Roux E.(Speaker), United Religions Initiative (URI) ~ San Francisco ~ United States of America

POYRA (PATH OF YAHRA), ANTI-CULT DISCOURSE, AND "BRAINWASHING" ACCUSATIONS

Tomanova K.(Speaker), Psychologist ~ Brno ~ Czech Republic

PERSECUTION, "BRAINWASHING" ACCUSATIONS, AND TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION: AN EMIC PERSPECTIVE FROM A CHURCH OF ALMIGHTY GOD REFUGEE

Li X.(Speaker), Observatory of Religious Liberty of Refugees (ORLIR) ~ Rome ~ Italy

COMMON GOOD AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN OPPOSITION?

Friday 03 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Benedetto Matricini
Chair: Ingeborg Gabriel, Kristina Stoeckl

The notion of the common good is back in public and academic discussion. Extensively used in classic political philosophy (Aristotle, Cicero) followed by the Catholic social traditions, Niklas Luhmann some time ago denounced it as “Old-European”. And indeed, the social philosophy of Enlightenment in its liberal as well as in its Marxist versions discarded the notion of the common good. At present, the term is back and has become a flagship for authors who want to return to a pre-modern political philosophy, like Patrick J. Deneen who pleads for a common good conservatism, to which he devotes a whole chapter in his book Regime Chance (2023). To overcome the shortcomings of liberal (political) philosophy, he as well as others propose a 180 degree turn away from individualism which they (falsely) associate with individual rights.
These positions are of increasing political importance since they are taken up and even radicalized by nationalist and nativist politics which are in ascent in the West and beyond, the more since they are linked to earlier versions of nationalism using the slogan Common good before individual good (Gemeinwohl geht vor Eigenwohl was a widespread slogan in Hitler Germany). Though abusus non tollit usum, and the principle of common good being much older than its twentieth century usage, the urgent question that remains is how the individual good (of which human rights are an important component) and the common good, e. g. the good of all, are interrelated and how they are to be balanced in the contemporary political order. This requires the acknowledgment of a weak spot of political liberalism, which regards the common good as the simple sum of individual goods without a value of its own.
The panel is to discuss this from historical, social ethical and sociological perspectives. How do various philosophical-normative and religious perspectives integrate the common good in social philosophical discourse?

“WHICH GOODS, WHOSE RIGHTS?”

Gorski P.(Speaker), Yale University ~ New Haven ~ United States of America

“CATHOLIC POST-LIBERALISM AND ANTI-LIBERALISM: CONVERSIONS AND REVERSIONS”

Faggioli M.(Speaker), Trinity College Dublin ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

FEARING THE ANTICHRIST: PETER THIEL, POLITICAL THEOLOGY, AND THE LIBERTARIAN CRITIQUE OF GLOBAL ORDER

Palaver W.(Speaker), University of Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

D.C. SCHINDLER'S « POLITICS OF THE REAL": A CRITICAL READING

Neulinger M.(Speaker), University of Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

"CAN THE COMMON GOOD BE UPDATED AND IF YES - HOW?"

Gabriel I.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THEOLOGY OF PRIESTHOOD: MISSION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Pola - A108

Chair: Maeve Louise Heany

This panel reconsider relationships between contemporary theologies of presbyteral ordination in the Catholic Church as it functions in the world and offers a voice of a moral authority in its championing of human dignity. At the same time, the Catholic Church maintains a commitment to essentialising theologies of difference in relation to its understanding of baptismal dignity and ordained authority. Therefore, the Church has provided some of the most trenchant and far-ranging critiques of inequality across the globe, while also carrying the profound legacy of its past implication in colonial projects that generated the vastly unequal global present.
How should presbyteral priesthood in the Catholic Church be understood theologically in the light of this complex past and present? The Second Vatican Council reframed Catholic ecclesiology to focus on the shared reality of Baptism, insisting that all Catholics were equally called to holiness and to participate in the prophetic priesthood of Christ – an awareness would soon develop into the various, manifold ministries in which the people of God work out this call to follow Christ as members of his body. That same Council, however, did not offer an account of presbyteral ministry commensurate with this significant reframing. These panels seek to consider how Catholic theologians might offer generative theologies of the priesthood for the 21st century, taking the implications of Vatican II into the era of the Synodal Church. Each panel will consider a key issue from both an inside and outside perspective, considering how priesthood can be understood from within traditional sources of authority, and from outside of them.

(RE)NEGOTIATING CULTURE: INSIDE-OUT ECCLESIAL CULTURES

Mackinlay S.(Speaker), Heany Vdmf M.L.(Speaker), Archdiocese of Brisbane ~ Brisbane ~ Australia

WOMEN'S PEDAGOGIES IN THE CATHOLIC WORLD BETWEEN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A209

Contact: Federico Ruozzi
Chair: Francesca Cadeddu

Catholic women who devoted themselves to education played a crucial role in the cultural, social, and religious formation of generations of children, young people, and adults, making a decisive contribution to the construction of both formal and informal educational systems between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This contribution aims to explore the plurality of these experiences – religious women, consecrated laywomen, educators, pedagogues, school principals, and missionaries – highlighting both their agency and the institutional, theological, and gender constraints within which they operated.

Drawing on a historical and interdisciplinary approach that combines Church history, history of education, gender studies, and cultural studies, the open panel proposes to analyze how these women developed original pedagogical practices, often in critical dialogue with male educational models and with the transformations of modernity. Particular attention will be paid to the religious and civic networks in which they acted, to the educational languages they employed, and to the ways in which their work contributed to redefining the relationship between Catholicism, society, and education.

THE REBIRTH OF MONTESSORI THOUGHT BETWEEN PEDAGOGY, CATHOLICISM, AND CULTURAL RENEWAL: THE CENTRO NASCITA AND ELENA GIANINI BELOTTI IN THE 1960S

Roghi V.(Speaker), Università di Roma LUMSA ~ Rome ~ Italy

BARBIANA BEYOND BARBIANA: THE PEDAGOGICAL EXPERIENCE OF ADELE CORRADI

Ruozzi F.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia/Fscire ~ Reggio Emilia/Bologna ~ Italy

MADDALENA MORANO

Loparco G.(Speaker), Pontificia Facoltà di Scienze dell'Educazione Auxilium ~ Roma ~ Vatican City State (Holy See)

CATHOLIC SCOUTING, COEDUCATION, AND THE LEGACY OF A SCOUT PEDAGOGY FOR GIRLS (1974–1985)

Schirripa V.(Speaker), università LUMSA ~ Roma ~ Italy

ANTONIETTA GIACOMELLI: RELIGIOUS RENEWAL AND THE EDUCATION OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

Cadeddu F.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE SPIRITUAL TRAINING OF TEACHERS IN MARIA MONTESSORI: SOME ELEMENTS FOR REFLECTION

Gabusi D.L.(Speaker), University of Verona ~ Verona ~ Italy

RELIGION, RACE (BLACKS & LATINOS), INEQUALITY AND THE 2024 ELECTION

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Gaston Espinosa
Chair: Denis Lacorne

Religion, Race (Blacks & Latinos), Inequality and the 2024 Election
Panel Description
This panel explores the critical role of religion and race in shaping why Blacks and Latinos voted for billionaire Presidential candidate and Donald Trump at rates higher than expected, instead of voting for a woman of color – Presidential candidate Kamala Harris. It analyzes the reasons why this happened despite Trump's well-earned perception of being anti-minority, anti-immigrant, anti-woman and pro-big business.
Session Chair, Denis Lacorne (PhD Yale), CERI at Sciences Po, Paris, France
Denis Lacorne is a senior research fellow with CERI at Sciences Po. A commentator on American Politics in Europe, his books include Religion in America: A Political History.
Presenter, R. Drew Smith (PhD Yale), Hillman Professor of Urban Ministry, Pittsburgh Seminary
The 2024 Election, Counter-Culturalism & Black Religio-Political Fluidities.
This presentation examines African American voters' surprisingly strong support for Donald Trump in the 2024 elections, including from black conservative Christians who embrace restrictions on reproductive rights, gay rights, and immigrant expansions within the US; and from black sports and HipHop figures who resonate with Trump's iconoclasm and projections of strength. Dr. Smith's books include From Every Mountainside: Black Churches and the Broad Terrain of Civil Rights.
Presenter, Gastón Espinosa (PhD UC Santa Barbara), Arthur V. Stoughton Professor of Religious Studies, Claremont McKenna College Latino Religion, Politics, Inequality and the 2024 Election.
This presentation explores the influence of religion in shaping why Latinos who suffer from inequality & normally vote Democrat voted for Trump in record numbers, even though he was often perceived as anti-immigrant, anti-minority, and pro-big business. Dr. Espinosa's books include Religion, Race, Gender & U.S. Presidency (forthcoming).

LATINOS, RELIGION, INEQUALITY, AND THE 2024 ELECTION

Espinosa G.(Speaker), Claremont McKenna College ~ Claremont ~ United States of America

DEEP INCARNATION IN DIALOGUE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Paolo Gamberini
Chair: Paolo Gamberini

The panel aims to explore in depth the theme of Deep Incarnation, a Christological perspective developed in particular by Niels Henrik Gregersen and explored, with their own emphases, by theologians such as Elizabeth A. Johnson, Celia Deane-Drummond, and Denis Edwards. This theological trend interprets "incarnation" not only as the assumption of human nature by the Word, but as a radical involvement of the Son of God in the flesh of the world, in matter, in evolutionary history, and in the vulnerability of the entire cosmos. Such a vision has generated widespread debate because it forces us to rethink traditional theological and philosophical categories and to bring different disciplinary fields into dialogue. On the one hand, it recalls patristic reflection, especially where the Fathers speak of "sarx" as the universal place of communion and salvation, or when Neoplatonic-inspired theologians (Maximus the Confessor, John Scotus Eriugena, and Nicholas of Cusa) offer tools for understanding the relationship between the Logos and the deep structure of reality.

On the other hand, Deep Incarnation engages with contemporary sciences, in particular with Teilhard de Chardin's evolutionary and cosmic vision, which sees Christ as the principle of cohesion and convergence of the universe, and with recent theories of quantum physics (Carlo Rovelli and Federico Faggin) with the notion of quantum field and cosmic consciousness. In this intertwining of theology, philosophy, and science, the panel aims to show how Deep Incarnation opens new ways of understanding the Christian mystery in a world marked by interconnection, complexity, and ecological vulnerability.

DEEP INCARNATION AN RELATIVE MONISM

Gamberini P.(Speaker), Pontificia Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Meridionale ~ Naples ~ Italy

SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE 2025 JUBILEE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A210

Contact: Roberto Cipriani
Chair: Veronica Roldan

The Jubilee of the year 2025 can be considered a “total social event”, in Marcel Mauss terms. The definition of “total social event” involves many methods of research, leading to explore and to analyse multiple aspects. The main works concern the quantitative study through questionnaires, the qualitative analysis trough focused interviews, the visual perspective using photos and videos, the digital research about the presence and the impact of new communication technologies, the survey on the role of nurses participating in the Jubilee together with ill and disabled people, the observant participation and other techniques to investigate the participation of prisoners and prison guards in the jubilee celebrations. Main results can be discussed.

THE DIGITAL JUBILEE

Sbaragli S.(Speaker), Partenope University of Naples ~ Naples ~ Italy

THE FAITH OF OTHERS: INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN THE JUBILEE HORIZON

Salerno R.M.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

VERTICAL AUTHORITY AND HORIZONTAL PRODUCTION: THE HOLY SEE'S COMMUNICATION DOCTRINE FROM INTER MIRIFICA TO THE JUBILEE OF DIGITAL MISSIONARIES AND CATHOLIC INFLUENCERS

Taverna V.(Speaker), University of Tuscia ~ Viterbo ~ Italy

GENDER, GENERATION AND CATHOLIC BELONGING: NEGOTIATING GENDER ROLES AND RELIGIOUS TENSIONS AT THE 2025 JUBILEE

Lippolis M.(Speaker), Tellez Elias Nemer P.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Rome ~ Italy

RELIGIONS AND INEQUALITIES: PLURIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES SOCIOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC APPROACHES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A101

Contact: Rossana M Salerno
Chair: Rossana M Salerno, Giulia Conti, Gaetano Sabato

Religious, cultural, and social inequalities are a structural dimension of contemporary societies, shaped by power relations, belonging, and recognition. Religions, cultures, and territories act as interconnected spheres where meanings, norms, and practices of inclusion and exclusion emerge. The panel adopts sociological and geographic perspectives to explore how religions both reproduce and transform inequalities. From a sociological perspective, religions operate as institutions and symbolic systems that shape norms, values, gender arrangements, and hierarchies. Through rituals, discourse, digital media, and sacred objects, they may reinforce subordination or open spaces for critique and emancipation. From a geographic point of view, inequalities are seen as spatially embedded. Sacred places, devotional geographies, pilgrimages, and urban boundaries show how religions influence access to resources, visibility, and belonging. Concepts such as liminality highlight thresholds—urban margins, shrines, ritual paths—where identities and hierarchies can be renegotiated. Integrating these viewpoints allows for a multidimensional understanding of how religions reshape visibility, recognition, and symbolic redistribution in contemporary societies.
Keywords: Religion, Space, Inequality, Symbols, Digitalization, Pluralism

RELIGIONS AND INEQUALITIES: A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Salerno R.M.(Speaker), Conti G.(Speaker), University of Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

RELIGIONS AND INEQUALITIES: A GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE

Sabato G.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM VIOLATIONS IN THE WORLD. INEQUALITIES.

Guerra Pratas M.H.(Speaker), SCUCP- Sociedade Científica Universidade Católica Portuguesa ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

SACRED GEOGRAPHIES IN VIDEO GAMES SET IN ITALY. VALORISATION, LIMINAL SPACE, AND REGIMES OF VISIBILITY

Conti G.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

THE EMPEROR'S LIGHT AND THE MARGIN'S SHADOW: POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN MEDIEVAL CHINESE CHRISTIANITY

Balmont A.(Speaker), The Chinese University of Hong Kong ~ Hong Kong ~ Hong Kong

EXHAUSTED SPEECH: THE LIMITS OF LANGUAGE AND REPRESENTATION IN THE FACE OF SUFFERING

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Marjolaine Legros-Hoffner
Chair: Ángel Francisco Méndez Montoya, Gregory Stark

Language is exhausted both in the sense of those forms of speech that are tired or worn out by over-use, as well as in the apophatic sense where representation cannot continue, it fails. Any theological or philosophical language regarding suffering reaches its limits when confronted with its concrete applicability. Among the limits of applicability are the challenges of representing different types of precarity, vulnerability, and inequality, while respecting the Other's affective agency. The Other stands before the theologian as other. What relational responsibilities might frame theologian's engagement with the suffering of others? Shaped by these responsibilities, what kind of language should theologians use, if any, in these discourses? The panel will explore how narratives, biblical dialogues, poetry, and other artistic media interrogate their own representational limitations around suffering. We invite theological and philosophical contributions that address the ethical and epistemic limitations of representation, drawing on the insights of trauma studies, critical and literary theory, and the arts.

ARTICULATIONS ON THE 'OTHER'S' SUFFERING: NEGATIVE RELATIONS THAT REORIENT THEOLOGICAL LANGUAGE

Legros--Hoffner M.(Speaker), Université de Fribourg / KU Leuven ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

WEAKSTRENGTHS AND STRONGWEAKNESSES — SUBVERTING THE RESILIENCE IMPERATIVE IN THE FACE OF "UNPRODUCTIVE" SUFFERING

Bischoff S.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Berlin ~ Germany

EXTRAVAGANT FAILURE: AIDS POETRY AND THE WORK OF MOURNING

Stark G.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

POETIC THEODICY IN THE POETRY OF RAÏSSA MARITAIN

Robertson A.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

SEMIOTICS OF A GRIEF 'HEARD': EXPLORING THE LIMITS OF SILENCE AND VOICE IN GRIEF TECH

Macis D.(Speaker), University of Turin - Bruno Kessler Foundation - DREST ~ Turin ~ Italy

SPEAKING AFTER SUFFERING: RETHINKING THEOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS WITH EMMANUEL FALQUE

Abraham R.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THEOLOGIES OF CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A1

Chair: Maeve Louise Heaney VDMF, Clare Monagle

This proposal offers three closed panels and one open one that reconsider relationships between authority, hierarchy and governance within contemporary theologies of presbyteral ordination in the Catholic Church as it functions in the world and offers a voice of a moral authority in its championing of human dignity. At the same time, the Catholic Church maintains a commitment to essentialising theologies of difference in relation to its understanding of baptismal dignity and ordained authority. Therefore, the Church has provided some of the most trenchant and far-ranging critiques of inequality across the globe, while also carrying the profound legacy of its past implication in colonial projects that generated the vastly unequal global present.

How should presbyteral priesthood in the Catholic Church be understood theologically in the light of this complex past and present? The Second Vatican Council reframed Catholic ecclesiology to focus on the shared reality of Baptism, insisting that all Catholics were equally called to holiness and to participate in the prophetic priesthood of Christ – an awareness would soon develop into the various, manifold ministries in which the people of God work out this call to follow Christ as members of his body. That same Council, however, did not offer an account of presbyteral ministry commensurate with this significant reframing. These panels seek to consider how Catholic theologians might offer generative theologies of the priesthood for the 21st century, taking the implications of Vatican II into the era of the Synodal Church. Each panel will consider a key issue from both an inside and outside perspective, considering how priesthood can be understood from within traditional sources of authority, and from outside of them.

(RE)NEGOTIATING THE PAST: INSIDE-OUT THE HISTORY OF CATHOLICISM

Monagle C.(Speaker), Faggioli M.(Speaker), Macquarie University ~ Sydney ~ Australia

(RE)NEGOTIATING TEXTS: INSIDE-OUT KEY CATHOLIC TEXTS

Heaney Vdmf M.L.(Chair), Fáinche R.(), Australian catholic University ~ Australia

(RE)NEGOTIATING MISSION: INSIDE-OUT AN UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION

Mellor A.(Speaker), St Stephen's Cathedral ~ Brisbane ~ Australia

RECOGNITIONAL ACCOMPANIMENT AND THE THEOLOGY OF PRIESTHOOD: A CONSTRUCTIVE RETRIEVAL OF MICHAEL BUCKLEY, SJ

Ryan G.(Speaker), Regis College, Toronto School of Theology, University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE - A NEW APPROACH EDUCATION AS A PATH TO PEACE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Elmar Kuhn
Chair: Elmar Kuhn
authorAMC: Elmar Kuhn
Speaker: Elmar Kuhn, Obiora Ike

This book consists of an English and a German part. All presentations have also been translated into German, but in case of doubt the English version applies. The PowerPoint slides for the presentations in which the speaker used this medium are shown between the two parts.
The contributions in this book originate largely from the two panels organized by the Research for Interfaith and Intercultural Harmony
(RIIFH.com) of „Christians in Need“ at the 8th annual conference of the European Academy of Religions (EuARe). RIFFH has set itself the goal of using the concrete experiences of the grassroots work of Christians in Need (cin.international) to provide suggestions for improving the success of academic dialog between religions. Academic work can only be of benefit to global society if it is also connected to the concrete living conditions of religious people.
A dialog in the ivory tower will not be effective.
Therefore, the two panels that RIIFH contributed to the success of the EuARe conference in Vienna from July 8-12, 2025 are a central contribution to the success of interreligious dialog.
The unsettled global society, driven by violence and the return of fundamentalism, is facing a paradigm shift. Organizations such as the UN and the OSCE are being put to the test. Dialogue and diplomacy are repeatedly silenced by violence.

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE - A NEW APPROACH EDUCATION AS A PATH TO PEACE

Kuhn E.(authorAMC), member ~ Vienna ~ Austria

SYNODALITY: CONTRASTING CASES, UNDERLYING CONFLICTS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A106

Contact: Massimo Faggioli
Chair: Bryan Froehle

The term “synodality” jumped onto the contemporary Catholic scene thanks to the use of the term by Pope Francis. As a concept regarding church governance, it has an ancient lineage, one inseparably tied to the exercise of ecclesiastical power. Who listens to whom, and how? What sorts of decisions can be made by whom? Most importantly, what justifies those decisions? Ecclesial policy quickly moves from the merely operational to the doctrinal and back again. Thus, “synodality” inevitably means the development of doctrine, an understanding to which John Henry Newman, proclaimed a doctor of the church on All Saints Day 2025, notably contributed. His legacy, and that of the Vincentian canon oft cited by Francis, is universally accepted within the Catholic Church. Understanding differs, however. The German and Italian synods illustrate this, as does the Latin American continental synod, the Australian Plenary Council, and, of course, the Synod of Bishops and global design behind the Synod on Synodality that culminated in the 2023 and 2024 Roman assemblies. Based on all these experiences, what can be said of synodality? How did the various processes and structures work, or not? What were the internal contradictions? How did the inevitable power struggles play out? What about long-term implications? Will there be any? Why or why not?

WHAT CONCERNS EVERYONE MUST BE DISCUSSED AND APPROVED BY EVERYONE.’ A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DOCUMENTS OF THE 2021-2024 SYNOD ON DECISION-MAKING

Noceti S.(Speaker), Facolta’ Teologica Italia Centrale ~ Firenze ~ Italy

DO WE NEED OMBUDSMAN IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH?

Roeske M.(Speaker), Polish Congress of Catholic Women and Men ~ Poznań ~ Poland

EXPLORING MIXEDNESS IN POSTCOLONIAL EUROPE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Nella van den Brandt
Chair: Marianne Moyaert

Over recent decades, the understanding and study of mixed couples, families, and unions in Europe has gained even more increasing attention, not only in the social sciences, but also in contemporary politics (Cerchiaro and Odasso 2021). Despite this growing interest, there remains a gap in comprehensive scholarship that addresses the nuanced experiences of mixedness and mixed relationships—those formed by individuals of differing racial, ethnic, or religious backgrounds—in a postcolonial European context (Collet 2017). This panel seeks to fill this gap by offering detailed accounts of how those in mixed unions navigate and reshape their relations, identities, and social expectations in contemporary Europe. Using “mixedness” as a multidimensional, contingent, context-dependent, relational, and historically (re)formed concept, this panel moves beyond traditional and binary understandings of “interracial” or “interfaith” couples, examining how “mixedness” is lived and experienced within postcolonial, and social frameworks, and how individuals in mixed relations occupy complex social positions based on different forms and grammars of difference (Collet and Santelli 2016). The panel addresses a range of themes, including the impact of history and colonial legacies on present-day experiences of mixedness, the role of antisemitism and islamophobia, and configurations of race, religion, secularity, ethnicity, and gender. It additionally brings forward the ways in which individuals in mixed relations navigate societal prejudices and norms, construct perceptions on and formations of mixedness, as well as strategies for dealing with differences. By bringing together empirical studies from the Netherlands and Belgium, and research from diverse disciplines such as anthropology, history, religious studies, and gender studies, this panel provides much-needed multifaceted perspectives and conversations on the challenges and opportunities faced by mixedness and mixed relationships.

MIXEDNESS, RELIGION, AND THE POLITICS OF INTIMATE LIFE IN POSTCOLONIAL EUROPE

Moyaert M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THE IMPACT OF THE 2024 MACCABI RIOTS IN AMSTERDAM ON MIXED JEWISH-NON-JEWISH COUPLES: ANTISEMITISM AND ITS INSTRUMENTALISATION

Schrijvers L.(Speaker), VU ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

THE WORK OF NAMING: ON CATEGORIZATIONS, METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES, AND CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM INTIMACIES

Aktas D.(Speaker), VU/KU Leuven ~ Amsterdam/Leuven ~ Netherlands

RELIGION, GENDER, RACE: MIXED MUSLIM COUPLES IN BELGIUM

Van Den Brandt N.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

ON A CHRISTIAN CATEGORY OF "FEMININE": SHAPING AND NORMING A SEX/GENDER PARADIGM

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A206a

Contact: Ivan Angileri
Chair: Arianna Rotondo

The historiography on Christianity has developed a solid tradition of studies on women. This approach has addressed issues such as women's roles in leadership, teaching, prophecy, and ritual, the formation of gender through theological and scriptural exegesis, and the ways female figures have been remembered, reinterpreted, or erased. Yet, as Joan W. Scott observed in 2010, many historians remain hesitant to engage fully with critical approaches to gender and sexuality, often treating "women" as a self-evident and homogeneous category rather than as a historically constructed one.

Moving beyond sexual and gender binarism as the dominant interpretative framework in historical studies, this panel approaches the "feminine" as a socio-cultural construct open to critical historical inquiry. It problematizes the category, examining its origins and strategic functions in religious knowledge production, ecclesiastical authority, and communal identities. Being defined as "women" is not a neutral act. It presupposes the elaboration of attributional and citational criteria concerning what constitutes a woman and what does "female" mean; criteria that are historically situated and subject to variation.

The panel asks how Christian traditions reshaped and resemanticized notions of femaleness and how these concepts were negotiated within broader cultural frameworks. Its aim is to foster an interdisciplinary, and critical discussion on what has been the role of Christianity in shaping a female gender/sex paradigm that in some ways is still ours. In doing so, it seeks to bridge women's studies, reconstructing women's roles in Christian contexts, and gender/sex studies. The feminine is thus understood not as a fixed or pre-discursive essence, but rather as a connotative, dialogically constructed one that interacts with other categories such as sanctity, martyrdom, and divinity as articulated by diverse Christian traditions across different temporal and spatial contexts.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF FEMININE THROUGH VIRGIN MARY'S PAIN: PROLEGOMENA TO A WORK.

Angileri I.(Speaker), Università La Sapienza ~ Roma ~ Italy

FROM PAGAN TRADITION TO CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: RENEGOTIATING THE FEMININE AMONG THE GOTHS

Freda Civico G.(Speaker), Università La Sapienza ~ Roma ~ Italy

ON A CHRISTIAN CATEGORY OF " SHAPING AND NORMING A SEX/GENDER PARADIGM PANEL DESCRIPTION:

Schimmenti A.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

AUTHORING A FEMININE NORM: THE HAGIOGRAPHICAL CONSTRUCTION OF WOMANHOOD IN THE VITA OF MARGARET OF CORTONA

Ispanovits K.A.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

WHEN GNOSIS TALKS TO A WOMAN: NOREA AND THE REVELATION

Sacchetti B.(Speaker), Università di Bari "Aldo Moro" ~ Bari ~ Italy

BUILDING PEACE AND EQUALITY: MULTI-FAITH THEOLOGIES AND PRACTICES CHALLENGING A VIOLENT, UNEQUAL WORLD

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A104

Contact: Pauline Pauline
Chair: Richard Davis

As Aristotle said, inequality can cause conflict. Conflict can also create inequalities. Socio-economic inequalities between and within states and nations provide a potentially volatile socio-political context where peace is threatened. Religions can also be treated unequally within legal jurisdictions, creating friction and tensions that threaten peace. This panel invites papers that explore the contribution of religious ideas and practices that can help to build peace in this unequal world. We are particularly interested in papers that face European and global realities seriously and offer religious perspectives that promote peace, justice, and equality. Possible subjects include, but are not limited to: theological perspectives on peace and inequality, faith-inspired nonviolent resistance and direct action, peace in worship (eg liturgy, prayers, songs, rituals, sacraments), the relationship between peace and justice, peace in the Hebrew scriptures, Quran, or Christian Bible or other sacred texts, Just war or just peace theory and its critics, war, peace, and the environment, coexistence in religiously pluralistic societies, religion, peace and intersectionality (eg race, gender, sexuality, class, age), forgiveness, repentance, reconciliation, Catholic Social Teaching on peace, faiths in conflict and interfaith peace initiatives.

METHODIST WORSHIP FOR UNDERSTANDING AND PROMOTING PEACE

Davis R.(Speaker), Wesley House, Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

YOUNG PEOPLE INTERFAITH ENCOUNTERS AND THE PRACTICE OF PEACE IN A BROKEN WORLD

Gabuyo S.(Speaker), World Methodist Council – Youth and Young Adult Committee ~ Milan ~ Italy

SACRED SOLIDARITY: CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM INTERFAITH PEACEBUILDING AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY IN URBAN WESTERN EUROPE

Shahnawaz S.(Speaker), Scholar ~ Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

PEACE THEOLOGIES FROM BELOW: GRASSROOTS INTERRELIGIOUS COLLABORATION AND THEOLOGIES OF PEACE IN NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA

Gladwin R.(Speaker), Palm Beach Atlantic University ~ West Palm Beach ~ United States of America

BUILDING PEACE AND RECONCILIATION THROUGH ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN EXPERIENCES OF BEREAVEMENT AND GRIEF: INSIGHTS FROM THE PARENTS CIRCLE-FAMILIES FORUM

Kollontai P.(Speaker), York St John University ~ York ~ United Kingdom

RELIGION, ALGORITHMS, AND INEQUALITIES OF VISIBILITY

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A107

Contact: Josselin Tricou
Chair: Josselin Tricou

This panel follows the seminar "Religious Influencers", organised within Work Package 4.2 (Axis 1) of the Religis project (https://www.misha.fr/recherche/religis/).

In the age of digital platforms, algorithms do not merely disseminate religious content; they produce hierarchies of visibility that redefine religious authority, legitimacy, and public recognition. This panel starts from the assumption that digital infrastructures operate as dispositifs of religious governmentality, generating forms of (in)equalities that are largely invisible yet structural.

By regulating access to attention, algorithms shape what can be perceived as “(il)legitimate” religion. They contribute to defining who is entitled to speak in the name of “good religion”—moderate, acceptable, and compatible with dominant norms of the digital public sphere—and, conversely, who comes to embody “bad religion”, selectively over-exposed as a figure of threat, radicalism, or irreducible otherness. Some minority voices are thus marginalised through invisibilisation, while others are strategically over-visibility as symbolic foils, objects of controversy, or targets of stigmatisation.

These dynamics generate not only inequalities of visibility, but also epistemic and political inequalities, by redefining the boundaries of legitimate religious speech and the frameworks within which religion becomes audible, tolerable, or condemnable.

The panel invites empirical and theoretical contributions analysing digital platforms as new sites of power, classification, and religious visibility. Adopting an interdisciplinary perspective, it examines the contemporary conditions under which religious authority is produced, circulated, and contested within the algorithmic economy of attention.

THEORIZING ABOUT RELIGIOUS INFLUENCERS IN AN AI ERA: WHAT HAPPENS TO DIGITAL CREATIVES AS SOURCES OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN THE SOCIAL-TECHNICAL WORLD OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Campbell H.(Speaker), Texas A&M University ~ College Station ~ United States of America

PRIESTS ONLINE – AN EXPLORATORY TYPOLOGY IN A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Giorgi A.(Speaker), University of Bergamo ~ Bergamo ~ Italy

PLATFORMED PROPHECY: PERFORMING CHARISMATIC AUTHORITY IN DIGITAL RELIGIOUS NETWORKS

Deysson J.(Speaker), Université de Strasbourg / Universität Heidelberg ~ Strasbourg ~ France

BEYOND THE ALTAR, BEYOND THE SCREEN. HOW SOCIAL MEDIA VISIBILITY SHAPES THE NARRATIVE OF PRIEST ABANDONMENT

Casaletto M.(Speaker), Paiani L.(Speaker), University of Padua ~ Padua ~ Italy

CONFRONTING THE “SHADOW OF EVIL”: VATICAN ETHICS IN AN ALGORITHMIC AGE

Barter J.(Speaker), University of Winnipeg ~ Winnipeg ~ Canada

EPISTEMIC INEQUALITIES IN INTERRELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Antje Roggenkamp
Chair: Senol Yagdi, Maike Maria Domsel, Antje Roggenkamp

Interreligious teaching and learning formats have become a highly differentiated and theoretically well-reflected component of religious education in pluralistic societies. Religious education (cooperation) models aim to enable students to engage with religious plurality in a reflective way, without leveling denominational or theological differences or displaying epistemic insensitivity.
These learning settings raise specific questions: Who is considered a legitimate knowledge actor in interreligious education, and what forms of knowledge are recognized? The panel takes these questions as its starting point and analyzes interreligious teaching and learning processes from the perspective of epistemic inequalities (Fricker 2007): Interreligious learning is understood as an enabling space in which processes of recognition, interpretation, and legitimation of knowledge, as well as aspects of vulnerability and respectful interaction, come into effect. Where possible, the panel draws on discourse-theoretical and postcolonial othering analyses, arguing that epistemic justice is not only a normative but also an epistemic virtue of interreligious learning.
The panel focuses, among other things, on the experiences and perceptions of students and teachers with epistemic attributions, othering dynamics, and competing claims to truth/significance. The panel combines systematic theological perspectives (including theology of religions, hermeneutics of difference, comparative theology) with empirical practice in religious education. In this way, the panel contributes to the current discussion on religion and (in)equalities and profiles interreligious education as a central locus of epistemic negotiation processes.
Literature:
Fricker, Miranda 2007. Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press.

INJUSTICE INQUIERIES

Roggenkamp A.(Speaker), University of Münster, Faculty of Protestant Theology ~ Münster ~ Germany

BETWEEN CLAIMS TO TRUTH AND OPENNESS TO DIALOGUE: EPISTEMIC POSITIONING OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHERS IN INTERRELIGIOUS LEARNING

Yagdi S.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

REDRESSING EPISTEMIC INEQUALITIES THROUGH COMPASSION: A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO INTERRELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Domsel M.M.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

THE "CORRECT" RELIGION FOR FINNS

Fiskaali V.(Speaker), University of Helsinki ~ Helsinki ~ Finland

EPISTEMIC TENSIONS WITHIN NON-CONFESSIONAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: COMPARATIVE REFLECTIONS

Lapis G.(Speaker), La Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

DECOLONIZING RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sallandt U.(Speaker), Carl-von-Ossietzky-Universität Oldenburg ~ Oldenburg ~ Germany

FACING GLOBAL CHALLENGES - ENVIRONMENTAL AND PEACE EDUCATION IN INTERRELIGIOUS COOPERATION FOR TEACHER TRAINING

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Pola - AT14

Contact: Elisabeth Naurath
Chair: Elisabeth Naurath

Currently, there is talk of climate change and its consequences in terms of a global mega-crisis, which makes ecological transformation processes urgently necessary. However, as environmental awareness research shows, such ecological transformations are not possible without social changes, in order to ultimately lead to changes in attitudes and behavior. The starting point is, therefore, the interconnectedness of religion as a social system and its interaction with contextual ecological systems.
With the help of an alternative model of interreligious teacher training with a focus on environmental ethics, impulses can be given on a European horizon in a global context.

THE CHALLENGES OF ETHICAL AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE POST-TOTALITARIAN ERA: THE ALBANIAN CASE

Kruja G.(Speaker), Beder University College ~ Tirana ~ Albania

LOCAL AI AND INTERRELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY: A COMPLEMENTARY AND REPLICABLE PEDAGOGICAL AND COMMUNICATION APPROACH

Hernández Serret J.(Speaker), Universitat de Catalunya (UIC) ~ Barcelona ~ Spain

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING IN TIMES OF ECOLOGICAL CRISIS: COMPASSION AS A PEACE EDUCATION PRINCIPLE

Naurath E.(Speaker), Universität Augsburg ~ Augsburg ~ Germany

ECOLOGICAL ENTANGLEMENTS, LOCAL WISDOM, AND GLOBAL RELIGIOUS HISTORY. INDIGENOUS AND DECOLONIAL EPISTEMOLOGIES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Simon Wiesgickl
Chair: Simone Sinn, Simon Wiesgickl, Diana Lunkwitz

In recent years, global religious history has established itself as a thought-provoking paradigm for examining global entanglements and discourses within religious history. Known for considering the contributions of local communities in challenging Western academic discourse and knowledge systems, it aims at rewriting global discourses. However, its expansion into the fields of ecology and religion is still in its infancy.

New publications point to epistemic injustices and exclusions produced by inequalities inscribed in discourse. They tend to overcome concepts such as traditional ecological knowledge or essentializations that postulate an unquestioned closeness of Indigenous groups to nature. Instead, local concepts should be used to overcome dichotomies and inequalities and promote ideas that advance multi-perspective and planetary views, giving voice to a multitude of beings.

This panel will explore questions relating to the ontological turn, decolonial epistemologies, and indigenous knowledge systems with reference to ecological and economic issues. We welcome papers that explore the topic from a historical, systematic, or empirical perspective. We particularly welcome papers that bridge the gap between anthropological and social science theories and religious studies. We are interested in questions relating to different conceptions of ecology and economy, diverse cosmologies, and theories of the non-human beyond Western epistemes and approaches.

In this way, we address the issue of inequality in two ways: firstly, in the context of local and global ecological entanglements, and secondly, from a decolonial perspective that questions the role religions play in the production and overcoming of dichotomies surrounding “nature,” “culture,” “economy,” and “ecology.”

INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL WISDOM: RUPTURE OR ENTANGLEMENT IN GLOBAL RELIGIOUS HISTORY? LEARNING FROM INDONESIA

Sinn S.(Speaker), Universität Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

A SEA OF VOICES: CLIMATE CHANGE REALITIES AND ONTOLOGICAL IMAGINARIES ON THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

Draaisma L.(Speaker), University of Groningen ~ Groningen ~ Netherlands

LOCAL-PLANETARY ENTANGLEMENTS, ECONOMICS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY: METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN ECOLOGICAL GLOBAL RELIGIOUS HISTORY

Lunkwitz D.(Speaker), Postdoctoral Researcher. Religious Studies and Intercultural Theology. Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen-Nuremberg ~ Germany

EMBODYING INDIGENOUS IDENTITY: RECLAIMING VOICE THROUGH KATHA TRADITIONS

Vyas A.(Speaker), School of Liberal Studies, Pandit Deendayal Energy University ~ Gandhinagar ~ India

ECOLOGICAL ENTANGLEMENTS AND PLANETARY RELIGION. LEARNINGS FROM NORTH-EAST-INDIA

Wiesgickl S.(Speaker), Postdoctoral Researcher. Religious Studies and Intercultural Theology. FAU Erlangen-Nuremberg ~ Erlangen-Nuremberg ~ Germany

EXHIBITION - 30 YEARS, 30 CATHEDRALS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Parenzo - Aula Nocco

Contact: Giuseppe Tateo
Chair: Giuseppe Tateo

This multimodal exhibition documents the growth of Romanian Orthodox infrastructure since the fall of socialism, tracing three decades of cathedral construction. It combines ethnographic research, photography, and audiovisual media to illuminate the hectic church-building industry flourishing in postsocialist Romania as it represents a double movement: on the one hand, it exemplifies the renewed visibility of religious life after socialism, on the other hand, it stands for a troublesome employment of public money, the radical transformation of the urban built environment of cities and towns, and a powerful repositioning of the Church in the public arena.

Since 1990, the expansion of religious infrastructure in Romania has reached impressive numbers: the 18 state-recognised religious groups have erected over ten thousand places of worship, practically one per day. The Orthodox Church has built over 4.000, including 36 imposing cathedrals. The most prominent of them all is the new national cathedral, which today towers over the famous People's House built by Ceauşescu. Its main dome, with the mosaic of the Pantocrator, is meant to exemplify the victory of the rule of god over the godless socialist past.

Not just a critical analysis of the comeback of religion after decades of state atheism, this project also explores the transformation of contemporary Romanian Orthodox architecture, which increasingly favours monumental scale and grandeur, sometimes at the expense of a clogged urban fabric and natural environment. If other post-Soviet and post-socialist capitals like Moscow, Tbilisi, and Belgrade have also added new Orthodox cathedrals to their skyline, the pace of the Romanian church-building industry seems unprecedented: 30Y30C aims to document all 36 cathedrals built or under construction over the last 36 years, revealing an important cultural and political process shaping Romania’s identity in the 21st century.

FOREWORD

Giorda M.C.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Rome ~ Italy

PRESENTATION OF THE EXHIBITION

Tateo G.(Speaker), Università Roma Tre ~ Roma ~ Italy

CROSSING THE GAP BETWEEN FAITH AND FAITHLESSNESS: MODELS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND THEIR ANTHROPOLOGICAL PLAUSIBILITY

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Anthony Feneuil
Chair: Claire Placial

The notion that belief admits of degrees is widely held among philosophers and psychologists. Yet, this notion remains contested among philosophers of religion and theologians, despite recent scholarship framing faith as a credence: a variable intensity of belief that operates on a spectrum rather than as a binary switch. More broadly, the social sciences have long challenged the simplicity of "belief," occasionally questioning the utility of the category itself. This panel investigates these emerging perspectives. We will discuss various theories of belief in philosophy and the social sciences that challenge the classical notion of belief, assessing their fecundity and plausibility through the lens of literary analysis. Bringing together philosophers of religion and literary specialists, it will explore how narrative fiction model the complexity of religious psychology. By treating literary characters as case studies and examining contemporary writing practices that blur the boundaries between belief and unbelief (such as those of E. Carrère and J. Cercas, among others), this panel evaluates the anthropological plausibility of non-binary accounts of belief. It is also an attempt to explore the nexus between philosophy, theology and literature in religious epistemology.
Tha panel will be sponsored by the Research Center Écritures (University of Lorraine), the Institut Universitaire de France and the scientific Journal ThéoRèmes.

FAITH AS CREDENCE : WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Feneuil A.(Speaker), University of Lorraine ~ Metz ~ France

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE RELATIONS BETWEEN FAITH AND TRUST?

Gaultier B.(Speaker), University of Zürich ~ Zürich ~ Switzerland

THE IRRATIONALITY OF RELIGIOUS FICTIONALISM

Schmitt Y.(Speaker), Lycée de Marseille ~ Marseille ~ France

WHEN NON-BELIEVERS WRITE LITERATURE ABOUT FAITH – ABOUT EMMANUEL CARRÈRE'S LE ROYAUME (2014) AND JAVIER CERCAS'S EL LOCO DE DIOS EN EL FIN DEL MUNDO (2025)

Placial C.(Speaker), University of Lorraine ~ Metz ~ France

SECULAR MAYBE: ON NONCOMMITTALITY IN RELIGION

Costa P.(Speaker), Fondazione Bruno Kessler, Center for Religious Studies ~ Trento ~ Italy

DISTINGUISHING BELIEF-BASED AND BELIEF-LESS SPIRITUALITY IN PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Byerly T.R.(Speaker), University of Sheffield ~ Sheffield ~ United Kingdom

FAITH AS ATTITUDE: TOWARD A COMMENSURABILITY BETWEEN FAITH AND FAITHLESSNESS?

Gallepe A.(Speaker), Université de Genève / Université de Lyon ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

RELIGIOUS ROOTS OF TRANSHUMANISM AND COSMISM: METHODOLOGICALLY GROUNDED APPROACHES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A103

Contact: Ariën Voogt
Chair: Ariën Voogt

Recent years have witnessed growing scholarly and public attention to ideological movements influential in Silicon Valley and global technology circles, particularly regarding striking parallels between transhumanism, cosmism, and related ideologies with traditional religious themes. Observers frequently note that these movements—sometimes collectively designated by the acronym TESCREAL—function as quasi-religious systems within the predominantly secular culture of tech communities, appropriating narratives, symbols, and ideas from established religious traditions. Notable examples include apocalyptic and eschatological narratives in discourse surrounding AI and the so-called Singularity, as well as expectations of human immortality through bio-enhancement or mind-uploading.

What often remains absent from this discourse, however, are methodologically rigorous approaches to studying the religious dimensions of transhumanism and cosmism that move beyond superficial analogies. This panel addresses this lacuna by exploring theoretically and methodologically grounded frameworks for studying and reflecting on these movements' religious characteristics. We primarily consider historical studies of the influence of religion on the development of transhumanism and cosmism or other historical links between these traditions, with a focus on Christianity and Islam. We welcome other papers that broadly fit this direction, yet we also welcome empirical research documenting the presence and function of religious elements within contemporary transhumanist and cosmist discourse. Individual papers will present research that fits these approaches, followed by a general panel discussion on methodological issues, general implications and future research directions on the relationship between transhumanism, cosmism and religion.

TRANSHUMANISM AS A RELIGION OF THE FUTURE: EVOLUTION, TELEOLOGY, AND HUMAN DESTINY IN JULIAN HUXLEY

Dunér I.(Speaker), Lund University ~ Lund ~ Sweden

COSMIC DESTINY: RELIGIOUS AND PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF COSMISM IN GERMAN IDEALISM

Voogt A.(Speaker), Protestant Theological University ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

TRANSCENDING THE BODY? INTERSECTIONS BETWEEN ISLAMIC SCHOLASTIC THEOLOGY AND TRANSHUMANISM

Amber Y.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

CONSTRUCTING POSTERITY: IMMORTALITY AND THE SACRALIZATION OF THE COLLECTIVE IN RUSSIAN COSMISM

Baron G.B.(Speaker), DREST Unimore ~ Turin ~ Italy

WOMEN OF FAITH IN TIMES OF CRISIS: SURVIVAL, SOLIDARITY, AND EMPOWERMENT

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A108

Contact: Nadia Zasanska
Chair: Nadia Zasanska, Elmira Muratova

In times of uncertainty, faith becomes increasingly significant for those seeking support, compassion, and hope for the future. Recent studies on religious responses to crises have primarily focused on faith-based activism in the context of humanitarian efforts, peacebuilding initiatives, conflict management, and social services. However, the predominant emphasis on traditional religious institutions and authorities offers a top-down perspective on crisis responses, overlooking the experience of individual believers who rely on faith as a source of social support and emotional well-being.

This panel aims to broaden the scope of research beyond institutional frameworks, giving greater visibility to those whose agency remains underrepresented in academic discourse – women of faith. The term 'women of faith' refers to female believers or practitioners representing diverse religious traditions, beliefs, and spiritual practices. The panel explores how women of faith respond to the challenges posed by collective existential crises, such as military conflicts, wars, natural disasters, and epidemics.

We invite scholars from Religious Studies, Anthropology, Digital Religion, and Gender Studies to consider the following questions:

1) How do women of faith respond to the experience of a crisis, and how might these experiences reshape their religious identity, gender roles, sense of a community, or faith-based practice?

2) How do women of faith use digital and other spaces to foster support, solidarity, and resistance within religious communities and beyond in non-religious contexts?

3) In what ways do women of faith influence civic activism in crisis-affected societies?

CATHOLIC WOMEN: SURVIVAL AND SOLIDARITY IN THE NAZI CONCENTRATION CAMPS

Lyon E.(Speaker), The State University of New York at Fredonia ~ Fredonia, NY ~ United States of America

FROM FEAR TO OPENNESS: THE CHANGE IN THE RELIGIOSITY OF WORKING-CLASS WOMEN IN FRANCOIST SPAIN WITH THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

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“THE REBBE CALLS YOU”: WOMEN’S RELIGIOUS MOBILITY TO WARTIME UKRAINE

Marchenko A.(Speaker), Hebrew University of Jerusalem ~ Jerusalem ~ Israel

AFTER SEXUAL VIOLENCE: WOMEN’S INTERPRETIVE AUTHORITY AND COLLECTIVE REIMAGINING

Connolly H.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

DIGITAL SPACES OF HOPE: WOMEN’S FAITH-BASED RESPONSES TO WAR IN UKRAINE

Zasanska N.(Speaker), Interdisciplinary Center for European Studies, Europa-Universität Flensburg ~ Flensburg ~ Germany

RELIGION IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Asia Leofreddi
Chair: Asia Leofreddi, Kristina Stoeckl

Religion plays a significant role in a broad range of social movements, including many that are not explicitly faith-based. However, research on collective action has frequently either overlooked the role of religion or focused mainly on its associations with conservative or extremist politics, thereby neglecting its influence on other forms of activism. This panel seeks to address this gap by examining the role of religion in contemporary social movements that pursue liberal, progressive or egalitarian ends. We invite submissions of case studies from diverse geographical contexts, as well as theoretical insights from various disciplines. Our objective is to advance understanding of the intersections between religion, political, and protest, and to foster both theoretical and empirical discussions regarding the relationship between religion and social change.

The panel welcomes a variety of contributions, including but not limited to:

- Empirical case studies, based on qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods research, examining the role of religion within specific contemporary social movements.

- Comparative analyses, focusing on cross-national, regional, or transnational contexts and highlighting similarities and differences in the interaction between religion and collective action.

- Theoretical contributions, aimed at developing, refining, or critically engaging with existing conceptual frameworks on religion, politics, and social movements.

- Interdisciplinary approaches, drawing from sociology, political science, anthropology, religious studies, social movement studies, or related fields.

- Methodological reflections, addressing challenges, innovations, or ethical issues in the empirical study of religion in social movements.

- Work-in-progress or exploratory papers, provided they demonstrate clear theoretical relevance and/or empirical significance for the panel’s themes.

LIBERATION THEOLOGY WITHIN RELIGIOUS-BASED MIGRANT SOLIDARITY MOVEMENTS

Monsalvo Basaldua M.F.(Speaker), Danube University Krems ~ Krems ~ Austria

"VOICES OF DISSENT: EVANGELICAL NETWORKS AND THE TRANSNATIONAL CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM"

Bunnell A.(Speaker), UCL ~ London ~ United Kingdom

RELIGION IN SERBIA'S ANTI-AUTOCRATIC MOVEMENT

Leofreddi A.(Speaker), Luiss Guido Carli University ~ Rome ~ Italy

FAITH-BASED YOUTH WORK AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION: THE CASE OF FOCOLARE MOVEMENT

Gülerce H.(Speaker), Marmara University ~ İstanbul ~ Turkey

THE AMBIVALENT ROLE OF (MINORITY) RELIGION ON SOCIAL MOVEMENTS. THE CASE OF ORTHODOX JEWS IN FRANCE NOT MOBILIZING AGAINST MORALITY POLICIES

Strack F.(Speaker), University of Sherbrooke ~ Montréal ~ Canada

BETWEEN LEGITIMATION AND CRITIQUE: SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN THE ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS IN THE LIGHT OF EARLY TEXTS AND COMMUNAL PRACTICES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A2

Contact: Bozena Prochwicz-Studnicka
Chair: Anna Grzywa, Lukasz Byrski

This panel is devoted to examining social inequalities in the Abrahamic religions, with particular attention to the relationship between the religious legitimation of existing hierarchies and their contestation or problematization. In other words, it seeks to explore how Judaism, Christianity, and Islam justified social inequalities, in which contexts they relativized or symbolically suspended them, and when and why they became objects of critique.

We aim to address these questions through an analysis of both the foundational texts of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, and other early sources within each tradition (such as rabbinic literature, patristic writings, or early Islamic texts) that developed, reinterpreted, or concretized religious – often socio-legal – norms in changing historical and social circumstances. We are also interested in how communal practices generated cohesion and identity while simultaneously demarcating boundaries by regulating access to material, institutional, symbolic, ritual, or social resources. “Communal practices” are understood broadly as institutional, ritual, and socio-legal forms of communal life – kehilla, ecclesia, and umma.

The panel is interdisciplinary: we invite scholars of religion, anthropologists of religion, social historians, biblical scholars, specialists in Islamic and Near Eastern studies, cultural studies scholars, and all others whose research focuses on Judaism, Christianity, or Islam.

JUSTICE WHERE WEALTH HAS NO POWER: THE AFTERLIFE AS MORAL EQUALIZER IN ANCIENT EGYPTIAN AND ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS

Byrski L.(Speaker), Jagiellonian University ~ Cracow ~ Poland

THE ANCIENT CATECHUMENATE AND SOCIAL EQUALITY: THE WAY OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION IN THE FACE OF DIVISIONS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

Grzywa A.(Speaker), Ignatianum University in Krakow ~ Cracow ~ Poland

THE STATUS OF NON-ARAB MUSLIMS IN THE EARLY CENTURIES OF ISLAM: CULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF (IN)EQUALITY

Prochwicz--Studnicka B.(Speaker), Ignatianum University in Cracow ~ Cracow ~ Poland

PARTNERSHIP IN LOVE AS THE BASIS FOR QUESTIONING PATRIARCHAL FAMILY RULE (IN THE BIBLICAL SONG OF SONGS)

Jasnos R.(Speaker), University Ignatianum in Cracow ~ Cracow ~ Poland

A WOMAN FINDING HER PLACE (GENESIS 12:10-20; 16:1-16; PROVERBS 31:10-31)

Mrozek A.(Speaker), Jagiellonian University in Cracow - retired ~ Cracow ~ Poland

RELIGION & DEMOCRACY: CONTEMPORARY RESPONSES TO AUTHORITARIANISM

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - AT12

Contact: Richard L Wood
Chair: Susan Abraham, Richard L Wood

This session will gather sociologists, political theologians, political scientists, historians, democratic theorists and social philosophers, and other scholars doing (or wishing to do) intellectual work that responds to the authoritarian turn in the contemporary world. First, four scholars from different disciplines and geographic areas will present brief papers regarding their analysis of the responses of specific 'public religions' to established or emerging authoritarian regimes. These brief presentations will be designed not as formal papers but as provocaciones (= 'provocations': a term sometimes used in Latin America for this style of presentation: grounded in and summarizing key findings of specialized intellectual work but intended to spur discussion rather than a systematic research presentation). Second, participants will engage in an extended discussion regarding the kinds of ongoing research projects required to advance the intellectual groundwork for contesting the authoritarian turn, both transdisciplinary and within specific disciplines. Third, participants will discuss next steps for establishing a distributed global intellectual network for clarifying and pursuing this agenda, with nodes or subnetworks in diverse geographical areas.

BEYOND MULTIPARTY POLITICS AND ELECTIONS: DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGES IN AFRICA

Ekassi J.E.B.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

BACKLASH: CATHOLIC POSTLIBERALISM. THEORETICAL SUPPORT FOR RIGHT-WING AUTHORITARIANISM IN THE USA

Hagedorn J.(Speaker), Theologische Fakultät Paderborn ~ Paderborn ~ Germany

THE CHRISTIAN 'RIGHT' IN AUSTRIA AND ITS CLAIMS

Rettenbacher S.(Speaker), Archdiocese of Linz ~ Linz ~ Austria

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE "OTHER" MONOTHEISM: CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AND ISLAMIC COMMUNITIES IN THE EARLY MODERN WORLD

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A206b

Contact: Valentina Bottanelli
Chair: Francesca Badini

While the history of Christian missions during the early modern expansion of empires has extensively documented encounters with indigenous, polytheistic, or non-Abrahamic traditions, the specific interactions with established Islamic communities remain an area ripe for deeper investigation. This panel explores how Catholic missionaries and Protestant pastors described, engaged with, and attempted to evangelize Muslim populations from the Middle East to the Far East. By moving beyond a Eurocentric Crusade narrative, this session examines the practical methods of encounter, ranging from theological polemics to the pragmatic challenges of daily coexistence.

A central focus of the panel will be the “translation” of faith—both linguistic and cultural. How did missionaries adapt Arabic and local Islamic lexicons to communicate Christian catechisms? To what extent did the presence of a pre-existing Abrahamic framework force a change in missionary strategy compared to encounters with non-monotheistic societies?

The panel invites scholars to examine three primary areas of missionary production:

1. Translation and Lexicography: How missionaries adapted Arabic and local lexicons (such as Malay) to explain Christian mysteries, often wrestling with pre-existing Islamic terminology for God, prophecy, and salvation.
2. Exegesis of the "Other": Christian explanations and "refutations" of Muslim texts, where the Qur'an was studied as both a hurdle and a tool for conversion.
3. Methodological Manuals: The study of missionary handbooks or specific extracts explicitly devoted to the methodus of interacting with and converting Muslim communities.

TRANSLATING TAWḤĪD: CONCEPTIONS OF DIVINE UNITY IN EARLY MODERN CATHOLIC MISSIONARY LITERATURE FROM THE LEVANT

Stella F.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Roma ~ Italy

HEURNIUS’S ADMONITION AND RUYLL’S ALLAH: THEORY VERSUS PRACTICE IN DUTCH VOC MISSIONS TO MUSLIM ASIA

Bottanelli V.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

JESUIT MISSIONS AROUND THE “MEDITERRANEAN INDIES” DURING THE 17TH CENTURY: SICILY, MALTA AND THE CYCLADES

D''Avenia F.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

THE ‘HARDWARE’ AND ‘SOFTWARE’ OF MIGRATION: POLICY, ETHICS, AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 16:30

Pola - A203

Contact: Teresa Albano
Chair: Aleksandra Djuric Milovanovic

Current demographic trends in the Western Balkans, marked by population decline, urbanisation and sustained emigration, place migration at the centre of debates on inequality, social cohesion and sustainable development. In line with SDG 10 and target 10.7, which call for well-managed migration policies, this panel explores how migration can move from being perceived as a challenge to becoming a driver of inclusion and shared prosperity. While unregulated migration flows may strain local systems, migrants can play a vital role in revitalising local economies when supported by appropriate policies and services, the “hardware” of migration governance. Local authorities are uniquely positioned to translate national and regional frameworks into concrete action, fostering access to labour markets, housing and social services that reduce inequalities for both newcomers and host communities. Yet policies alone are not sufficient. Successful inclusion also depends on the “software”: the emotional, ethical and spiritual infrastructure that shapes attitudes, narratives and relationships. IN this regard, interreligious and intercultural dialogue is a powerful enabler of trust and mutual understanding, helping to bridge divides and address fears rooted in religious, ethnic and cultural differences. Faith communities, drawing on shared values of human dignity, hospitality and responsibility, can help transform polarisation into empathy and social cohesion. Building on two papers, Scriptural Reasoning on Migration by the Centre for Interreligious Dialogue in Rijeka and Migration in the Western Balkans: Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue for an Inclusive Region by the University of Belgrade, the panel calls for closer collaboration between religious leaders, policymakers and local authorities to align policies and values, hardware and software, in support of a more equal and resilient Western Balkans region

SCRIPTURAL REASONING ON MIGRATION

Obucina V.(Speaker), Centre for Interreligious Dialogue ~ Rijeka ~ Croatia

MIGRATION IN THE WESTERN BALKANS: INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE FOR AN INCLUSIVE REGION

Šantic D.(Speaker), University of Belgrade, Faculty of Geography, and Executive Board Member of the Western Balkans Migration Network ~ Belgrade ~ Serbia

CRISTIANI ORIENTALI E REPUBBLICA DELLE LETTERE (XVI-XVIII SEC.) / CHRÉTIENS ORIENTAUX ET RÉPUBLIQUE DES LETTRES (16E-18E S.) / ÖSTLICHE CHRISTEN UND DIE GELEHRTENREPUBLIK (16.-18. JH.) / A CURA DI M. GARZANITI, V. KONTOUMA, V. N. MAKRIDES, FIRENZE 2024

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 15:30

Pola - A208

Contact: Marcello Garzaniti
Chair: Vassa Kontouma
authorAMC: Vasilios Makrides
Speaker: Vera Chentsova, Marcello Garzaniti

This volume, fruit of a Franco-Italian-German project, was developed during a series of seminars held at the Italian-German Centre for European Dialogue Villa Vigoni (2019-2022) and at the Fondation des Treilles (2023) with the participation of fifteen scholars. Thanks to a comparative and interdisciplinary approach, moving away from a strictly Western perspective and looking at the Christian East in its internal dynamics, the volume focuses on the extraordinary effort of different communities, often in contexts dominated by other religions or characterised by a plurality of confessions (Christian and non-Christian), to redefine their own tradition and linguistic identity, writing an important page in the history of the Republic of Letters. By studying biographical paths, languages of communication, and forms of worship and devotion dating back to different times and areas, and interpreting these micro-histories within a more complex puzzle, the various contributions illustrate a colourful panorama of cultural relations and exchanges, in which Eastern Christians played an active part, in a context in which the process of confessionalisation was consolidating. Their work reveals both an awareness of belonging to ancient traditions, which the West yearned to know and make its own, and a drive to modernise their own traditions, in dialogue with Western culture. These cultural relations and exchanges emerge in the formation of Eastern Christians in the West, as well as through mobility or simply long-distance relationships with exponents of the Republic of Letters. However, the effort to update and modernise was accompanied by a desire to rediscover the most authentic roots of their traditions, with unprecedented developments, even going so far as to reinvent and renew them.

CRISTIANI ORIENTALI E REPUBBLICA DELLE LETTERE (XVI-XVIII SEC.) / CHRÉTIENS ORIENTAUX ET RÉPUBLIQUE DES LETTRES (16E-18E S.) / ÖSTLICHE CHRISTEN UND DIE GELEHRTENREPUBLIK (16.-18. JH.) / A CURA DI M. GARZANITI, V. KONTOUMA, V. N. MAKRIDES, FIRENZE 2024

Makrides V.(authorAMC), Universität Erfurt ~ Erfurt ~ Germany

RELIGION AND POWER INEQUALITY. BOTTOM-UP PERSPECTIVES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - AT13

Contact: Annette Langner-Pitschmann
Chair: Annette Langner-Pitschmann, Christof Mandry

For years, the Catholic Church worldwide has been confronted with the fact that some of its officials have committed numerous cases of sexual violence against children, adolescents, and adults. The exposure of this scandal highlights not only persistent power asymmetries, but also the ways in which these asymmetries are intertwined with religious narratives, theological ideas, and institutional cultures that shape perceptions of authority and inequality.
The panel examines these structures from a bottom-up perspective, focusing on parishioners, victims and survivors, and those surrounding acts of abuse. It investigates the mechanisms that contribute to the constitution, stabilisation, and—when violence occurs—escalation of unequal power. How do believers come to attribute authority that is resistant to critique? Which narrative, symbolic, or organisational factors contribute to individuals being repeatedly exposed to massive abuse of power? What dynamics inhibit disclosure by bystanders or communities? And how do religious topoi, traditions, and interpretive frameworks reinforce or challenge such inequalities?
Organised by members of the research group Power and Power Abuse (Goethe University Frankfurt, founded 2025), the panel invites contributions from theology, social sciences, psychology, political philosophy, religious studies, and related fields. We explicitly welcome research that engages with comparable forms of religiously inflected inequality, violence, or power asymmetry in other Christian traditions, other religions, or secular institutions, including comparative or narrativity-focused approaches.
We welcome established as well as emerging scholars. Please send your abstract of no more than 300 words to langner-pitschmann@em.uni-frankfurt.de We are happy to answer any questions you might have before you submit.

THE ROLE OF THE LAW IN THE CREATION AND MAINTENANCE OF ASYMMETRICAL POWER STRUCTURES IN CHURCH

Hahn J.(Speaker), Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität ~ Bonn ~ Germany

STRUGGLING FOR THE RIGHT LANGUAGE: SURVIVOR NARRATIVES, TRAUMA, AND POWER INEQUALITY IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mandry C.(Speaker), Goethe University ~ Frankfurt/Main ~ Germany

COPRODUCING RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY: BOTTOM-UP CONTESTATIONS, INSTITUTIONAL GATEKEEPING, AND THE MAKING OF “JEWISH THEOLOGY” IN POST-SHOAH GERMANY

Fehige Y.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

UNINTELLIGIBLE MINDBODIES: NEURONORMATIVITY, ADULTISM, AND THE EPISTEMIC DEATH OF SURVIVORS

Bischoff S.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Berlin ~ Germany

RADICAL ALTERITY AS A PATTERN OF THEOLOGICAL THOUGHT AND POWER INEQUALITY AS A REALITY IN RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

Langner--Pitschmann A.(Speaker), Goethe University ~ Frankfurt ~ Germany

PASTORAL AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH: IS IT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PEOPLE?

Roeske M.(Speaker), Polish Congress of Catholic Women and Men ~ Poznań ~ Poland

RELIGION IN DIALOGUE. TRANSFORMATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND CHANCES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Noemi Call
Chair: Kurt Appel

In the contect of evolving forms of interdisciplinary research on religion and interreligious dialogue within shifting societal contexts, religions are increasingly involved in novel forms of encounters and alliance-building. These are forged, lived, and narrated in the public sphere – not only among religious traditions but also in encounters between religious and secular worlds. In this broader sense, “religion in dialogue” exceeds interreligious exchange and becomes an engagement with the secular, with other forms of knowledge, and with artistic and scientific practices.

Against the backdrop of social, political, and epistemic (in)equalities, such dialogical constellations reveal both asymmetries of power and possibilities for transformation. The interplay between religious and secular worlds involves cooperation as well as conflict: alliances may emerge from shared experiences of marginalization, unequal recognition, or pressures to justify religion’s place in contemporary societies. At the same time, religious traditions are internally diverse and marked by political, theological, and cultural divisions. New forms of dialogue therefore often do not take religion itself as the primary distinguishing feature but emerge around shared concerns and common struggles within religious–secular partnerships.

Dialogue, understood not as a formal procedure but as a transformative practice that involves religious as well as non-religious dialogue partners, takes place under multiple pressures in need of closer examination. Within this framework, the panel brings together contributions from Natural Sciences and Ecology; the Arts; Abrahamic Dynamics: Dialogue between Islam, Christianity and Judaism; Politics and Gender; Critical Perspectives on Religion. Together, these perspectives aim to offer a nuanced understanding of how dialogue shapes contemporary interactions between religious and secular worlds.

DIALOGUE AS A “WITNESS-NOTION” OF A CATASTROPHIC ERA

Polak R.(Speaker), Professor, Department of Practical Theology, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

ABOVE US ONLY SKY?

Kerschbaum F.(Speaker), Professor, Department of Astrophysics ~ Vienna ~ Austria

›RELIGION IN DIALOGUE‹: STRETCHING ITS BOUNDARIES

Telser A.(Speaker), Postdoc Assistant, Research Centre "Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society", University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE UNGIVEN AS DIALOGICAL HORIZON: A PERFORMATIVE MODE OF THE AESTHETIC AND THE RELIGIOUS?

Call N.(Speaker), PhD candidate, Research Centre "Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society", University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

DIALOGUE BETWEEN ART AND RELIGION IN THE AGE OF THEIR AUTONOMY

Deibl J.(Speaker), Associate Professor, Department of Systematic Theology and Ethics, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

ABRAHAMIC TRILATERAL INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: STRUGGLING BETWEEN NEOCOLONIALISM AND DECOLONIALISM

Brodeur P.(Speaker), Professor, Department of Religious Studies, University of Montreal ~ Montreal ~ Canada

ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROHIBITION OF DISCRIMINATION AND THE RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 14:30 to 17:30

Pola - A204

Contact: Szilvia Köbel
Chair: C (Leon) van den Broeke, Szilvia Köbel

The overarching topic of the conference is Religion and (In)equalities. The panel focuses on the numerous international conventions (UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, European Convention on Human Rights, Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1951 Refugee Convention) that declare the prohibition of discrimination, one aspect of which is the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of religious affiliation or religious (conscientious) beliefs.

Discrimination may occur in relation to the individual and collective aspects of religious freedom, as well as in a number of areas, such as labour and employment relations, education (e.g., religious education, establishment of educational institutions, operation of religious training programs, etc.), the legal status and state funding of religious communities (public tasks and religious activities), media coverage, and children's rights.

The question arises as to what impact discrimination has on social (In)equalities and what legal guarantees can be put in place to ensure equality and eliminate inequality. Further questions are where the necessity-proportionality test for restricting fundamental rights fits into the context of religious (In)equalities, and what the historical and current public law model of the relationship between the state and the church is (ideological neutrality, secularization, state-church model, separation model). It is important to examine the above questions through specific legal cases, as there are different solutions in different European countries. Therefore, special attention must be paid to the practice of the ECtHR, and in particular to the application of Articles 9 (freedom of thought, conscience and religion) and 14 (prohibition of discrimination) of the ECHR in specific legal cases. The panel presentations will seek to answer these questions.

CHANGES WITHIN THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF RELIGIOUS LEGAL EQUALITY IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CONVENTIONS

Köbel S.(Speaker), Head of Institute of Public Law, associate professor, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

FAITH, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION: THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN OVERCOMING INEQUALITY

Ormóshegyi Z.(Speaker), Senior Research Fellow, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

DISCRIMINATION THROUGH CONCORDATS? AN ANALYSIS OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS CASE LAW

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

ALGORITHMIC BIAS IN RELATION TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Einvág B.M.(Speaker), Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE POSSIBLE DISCRIMINATIVE NATURE OF REFUSAL OF TREATMENT AND CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION ON RELIGIOUS GROUNDS

Köbel D.(Speaker), Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE (UN)EASY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NON-DISCRIMINATION AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Van Den Broeke L.(Speaker), Full Professor Theology of Law and Church Law, Theologische Universiteit Utrecht, the Netherlands ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

EQUALITY AND THE LEGAL STATUS OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN MULTI-TIER CHURCH-STATE SYSTEMS: EUROPEAN AND SPANISH PERSPECTIVES

Martinez--Torron J.(Speaker), Palomino R.(Speaker), Valero--Estarellas M.J.(Speaker), Universidad Complutense ~ Madrid ~ Spain

The Legacy of Jewish Thought in Modern Philosophy: the case of Gottfried Leibniz, Samuel Aboab and Elia Benamozegh

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 16:30

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Benedetta Manfrinetti
Chair: Myriam Silvera, Carsten Wilke

Medieval and Modern Jewish philosophies display an extraordinary richness of authors, themes, and interactions with doctrines and concepts from other confessional contexts; it is therefore unsurprising that both Jewish and non-Jewish thinkers of the Modern Age engaged with this intellectual legacy. Such engagement could take multiple forms: from a straightforward "revival" to the further development and continuation of earlier conclusions; from a dialectic of conflict or dialogue to the explicit articulation of what had been contained, yet left unspoken, in previous elaborations; from an historical event to the reflection on deeper religious themes.
The proposed interventions on this panel are by prof. Carsten Wilke, concerning the joint reception of medieval and modern thought within a late seventeenth-century rabbinic context; by Prof. Federico Dal Bo, who will reflect on the way Jewish thinkers, and particularly Maimonides, were read by a leading Christian philosopher of the same period, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz; and Jacopo Paolo Quartirolo will propose a biographical interpretation of a theoretical idea that Benamozegh inherited from Vincenzo Gioberti.
The interventions will investigate the way these thinkers read and, sometimes, "crypto-cited", or interpreted Jewish philosophy in the Modern Age. Participants will consider how medieval sources, Jewish traditions or philosophical ideas entered new theoretical, political and historical contexts - including the need to safeguard the Jewish tradition, community interests in specific countries, touching even the matter of Jewish emancipation.

PHILOSOPHY, SCIENCE, AND KABBALAH IN THE LIBRARY OF A SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY CHIEF RABBI OF VENICE

Wilke C.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

LEIBNIZ AS A READER OF MAIMONIDES: ESOTERICISM, HERMENEUTICS, AND THE UNITY OF METAPHYSICS AND SCIENCE

Dal Bo F.(Speaker), Università di Modena-Reggio Emilia ~ Modena-Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

THE THEORETICAL AND BIOGRAPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ONE OF BENAMOZEGH'S IDEAS

Quartirolo J.P.(Speaker), Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Bologna ~ Italy

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY RESPONSIVE TO EARLY ISLAM

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 16:30

Pola - A102

Contact: Jason Welle
Chair: Ryann Elizabeth Craig

This open call panel explores how Christians in late antiquity and the early medieval period responded theologically to emergent Islam. Confirmed papers investigate the Christian use of distinctively Islamic theological and juridical categories and the methods that Christians used to engage the Qurʾān. This panel is open to scholars exploring Christian responses to early Islam in diverse geographical, cultural, and linguistic contexts. The panel can welcome a maximum of three additional papers.

IN MY OPINION, THIS ISN'T MY OPINION: CHRISTIAN THEOLOGIANS ON RAʾY AND BIDʿA

Welle J.(Speaker), Boston College ~ Chestnut Hill ~ United States of America

HOW CHRISTIANS MADE USE OF THE QURʾĀN: A CASE STUDY ON THE CRUCIFIXION

Craig R.E.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington DC ~ United States of America

RELIGION AND INEQUALITY: REFLECTIONS BASED ON THE INTERACTION BETWEEN POLITICAL POWER, HERMENEUTICS OF SACRED TEXTS, AND ESCHATOLOGY

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Debora Tonelli
Chair: Debora Tonelli

The geopolitical context increasingly includes the religious dimension among the decisive factors in political choices (D. Johnston - C. Sampson 1994; Cesari 2022) and the proliferation of organizations dedicated to interreligious dialogue within different traditions is further confirmation (Howard 2021; Driessen 2023; Phan-Tran 2024) of its importance, regardless of one's possible affiliation.
The conciliar document Nostra Aetate (28 October 1965) led the foundations for interreligious dialogue. For the first time, other faiths are being viewed not through the category of true/false, but with fraternity, seeking to discover what unites the different traditions and what elements might be used for dialogue and coexistence. The significance of this new path immediately reveals a political face: in fact, interreligious dialogue is a tool for freeing faith from political exploitation and to overcome the social-political inequality. The knowledge of religious traditions can therefore be a way to foster public discussion, facilitating inclusion and negotiation, unmasking the prejudices that can lead to social polarization, to overcome the social-political inequality and contributing to a social cohesion that transcends affiliations (Cesari 2022; Phan-Tran 2024).
At the intersection of geopolitics and interreligious dialogue, this panel explores the connection among the hermeneutics of sacred texts, political power, and eschatological visions. Specifically, it aims to highlight the questions that emerge from the interaction among the interpretation of sacred texts — which contributes to the construction of religious imaginaries — the horizon of meaning, including its ultimate destination, and political legitimacy. The goal is to acquire tools to address the complexity of this interaction, with a particular focus on inequality

In this panel, organized by Georgetown University Rome Office, scholars present their reflections from different disciplinary fields.

AN INTRODUCTORY OVERVIEW OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN GEOPOLITICAL POWER, HERMENEUTICS OF SACRED TEXTS, AND ESCHATOLOGY

Tonelli D.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Rome ~ Italy

INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE WITHIN THE POLITICAL CONTEXT OF VATICAN II AND SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS ADDRESSING RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL CONCERNS

Borelli J.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington D. C. ~ United States of America

WISDOM AND APOCALYPTIC DISCOURSES IN INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS

Lefebure L.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington D. C. ~ United States of America

SACRED TEXTS, POLITICAL IMAGINARIES, AND THE GLOBAL STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS LEGITIMACY

Cesari J.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington D. C. ~ United States of America

GIAPPICHELLI–ROUTLEDGE EDITORIAL SERIES RELIGION, LAW AND ECONOMICS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SPACE

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Alessandro Ferrari
Chair: Winnifred Sullivan
authorAMC: Alessandro Ferrari, Ilaria Valenzi, Chiara Giorda
Speaker: Alessandro Ferrari, Ilaria Valenzi, Chiara Giorda, Mohammed Jamal

For the past five years, the REDESM Research Center (Religions, Rights and Economies in the Mediterranean Space) at the University of Insubria (www.redesm.org) has developed its own editorial series: the Giappichelli–Routledge series Religion, Law and Economics in the Mediterranean Space, which has begun to offer an insightful overview of the dynamics of religious freedom across the two shores of the Mediterranean. Economic and social transformations significantly affect core dimensions of this right: the role of freedom of conscience, relations among religious communities, the place of religious phenomena within constitutional frameworks, the status of women, questions of security, and, more broadly, the geopolitical position of the Mediterranean region within the international arena. This panel aims to take stock of these issues by presenting four volumes of the series, each of which seeks to build a bridge of analysis, research, and reflection between two worlds that are increasingly interconnected.
Particular attention will be devoted to three volumes that help provide a comprehensive picture of the main issues at stake: Freedom of Religion, Security and the Law (2023); Women, Agency and Religion: Social and Legal Issues in the Mediterranean Public Space (2024); Diversity, Fear and Religions: Cultural Accommodation in a Globalized World (2025); and Political, Social, Religious and Economic Challenges in the Middle East and North Africa from Covid-19 to Agenda 2030 (2025). The panel will present the findings of four research projects, offering an interdisciplinary, forward-looking, and comparative reflection that provides an up-to-date perspective on some of the most pressing topics in contemporary religious studies.

GIAPPICHELLI–ROUTLEDGE EDITORIAL SERIES RELIGION, LAW AND ECONOMICS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SPACE

Ferrari A.(authorAMC), Angelucci A.(authorAMC), Valenzi I.(authorAMC), Giorda C.(authorAMC), Jamal M.(Speaker), REDESM-University of Insubria

RELIGION AND (IN)EQUALITIES IN HINDUISM: FOUR CONTEXTS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Tracy Pintchman
Chair: William French

This session is tailored to fit this year's conference theme on religion and (in)equalities. Our four papers collectively address the two biggest inequality concerns in Hinduism: caste and sex. Historically, Hindu traditions have often been complicit in promoting discrimination against women and low-caste groups. But they have also often been wielded as a weapon of resistance against entrenched social hierarchies. The papers in this session examine the intersection between Hinduism and (in)equalities in four contexts. The first paper examines two of the novels written by a contemporary Hindu author, Koral Dasgupta. Dasgupta rewrites the stories of two mythic women, Tara and Ahalya, who appear in the Hindu epics primarily as virtuous wives. Dasgupta centers their stories in ways that override patriarchal prescriptions, rendering them complex figures with narrative voice, political consciousness, and moral agency. The second paper examines the lyrics of three Hindu poet saints--a Brahmin man, a woman, and a low-caste man–from Gujarat. The paper explores how bhakti, "devotion," not only functions on the individual level as a purely religious path, but also as a movement can be a path of resistance to entrenched social inequalities. The third paper examines the samādhi (gravesite) of the Gaudiya Vaishnava theologian Rupa Gosvamin at a temple in North India. As a counterpoint to the second paper, this paper shows how Hindu devotional traditions may not only challenge inequalities, but may simultaneously reproduce them. The final paper explores the intersections of religion and film in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, focusing on issues of religion and gender inequality in film narrative. This paper critically examines the ideological implications of Hindi films' patriarchal representations of women.

FROM OBEDIENCE TO RESISTANCE: REWRITING MYTHIC WOMEN'S STORIES IN KORAL DASGUPTA'S SATI SERIES

Pintchman T.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

HINDU TRADITIONS AND INEQUALITY: REPRESENTATIONS OF WOMEN IN HINDU TRADITIONS AND IN POPULAR HINDI FILMS

Dimitrova D.(Speaker), University of Montreal ~ Montreal ~ Canada

THE GLOBAL PONTIFICATE OF PIUS XII: SOFT DIPLOMACY, PUBLIC FIGURES, AND ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Pola - A105

Contact: Valentina Bottanelli
Chair: Claire Maligot

The opening of the Vatican archives for the pontificate of Pius XII (1939–1958) has inaugurated a "global turn" in the study of the modern Papacy. Moving beyond traditional debates surrounding the Second World War, this panel explores the Holy See's deployment of "soft diplomacy" as a tool to navigate a rapidly fragmenting international landscape. It seeks to re-evaluate the Holy See's agency as an international actor during the transition towards a bipolar world. This session aims to trace the Papacy's strategic responses to shifting global scenarios, ranging from the fragile equilibrium in East Asia and the onset of the Cold War in the USSR, to the complexities of the nascent State of Israel and political upheavals in South America.

The panel invites submissions exploring:
-The intersection between newly released archival materials and public sources (speeches, journals, etc.).
-The Holy See's engagement with peace conferences and international treaties.
-The long-term evolution and modernisation of Vatican diplomacy.
-Pius XII's personal agency and leadership in diplomatic strategy.

Proposals focusing on the USSR, the Korean War and India are particularly encouraged.

RADIO MESSAGES, RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, AND POLITICAL DISTRUST: PIUS XII'S PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON RUSSIA

Solazzo C.(Speaker), DREST - University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

HALLOWING HOLLYWOOD: THE BURGEONING FILM DIPLOMACY OF POPE PIUS XII

Dawes N.(Speaker), University of Notre Dame ~ South Bend ~ United States of America

PACELLIAN BISHOPS? US BISHOPS TAKING PUBLIC STANCES ON INTERFAITH RELATIONS, 1943-1965

Maligot C.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

FROM PASTORAL SOLIDARITY TO CANONICAL RUPTURE: THE RHETORICAL DIPLOMACY OF PIUS XII TOWARD THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (1952–1958)

Bottanelli V.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE EASTERN SIDE OF THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS. INTELLECTUAL EXCHANGES AND INTERCONNECTIONS IN RELATIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST IN THE MODERN ERA

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Pola A208

Contact: Marcello Garzaniti
Chair: Vassa Kontouma, Vasilios Makrides

The Republic of Letters represented a complex network of intellectuals, scholars, and writers that formed in the West during the modern age. It was a space for dialogue, but also for controversy, characterised by strong personalities and intense personal ties, capable of going beyond traditional institutions or making use of newly established academies, transcending national borders and even overcoming confessional divisions, without forgetting them. This self-proclaimed intellectual community mainly included the Catholic and Reformed Protestant worlds in Western and Central Europe. The classical world played a prominent role in the Republic of Letters, encompassing not only the pagan tradition but also early Christianity, which helped create the very idea of classicism, now applicable to modern times as well. This era witnessed the development of the study of ancient sources and texts, which appears to be closely linked to the birth of modern philology and the knowledge of languages not only from the classical world, but also from the sacred scriptures. The development of classical philology was accompanied by biblical and patristic studies, with the birth of modern criticism. The Republic of Letters spread throughout the European continent and beyond, and new research has made it possible to conceive of its decentralised history, which did not focus on Latin culture and scholarship, but also on places, personalities, and texts from Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Middle East. Today, it is important to integrate the Western context of the Republic of Letters with the roles of diasporas from Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the Middle East, which interacted with Western actors and cultural circles. This approach goes beyond the traditional frameworks of national historiography, shedding new light on the intellectual history of Europe as a whole, beyond linguistic, geographical, religious, and cultural segmentation.

THE BIRTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN BIBLICAL PHILOLOGY IN THE EAST SLAVIC WORLD BETWEEN THE 15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES

Garzaniti M.(Speaker), University of Florence ~ Florence ~ Italy

THE GREEK ORTHODOX WORLD UNDER OTTOMAN RULE AND THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS: ASSESSING THEIR CONTACTS AND ENTANGLEMENTS

Kontouma V.(Speaker), Makrides V.(Speaker), École pratique des hautes études, PSL ~ Paris ~ France

THE MAKING OF A GRAND ORTHODOX THEOLOGIAN: GEORGIOS KORESSIOS (C. 1570–1659/60) BETWEEN LATE RENAISSANCE ITALY AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Negoita O.(Speaker), ICUB - Research Institute of the University of Bucharest ~ Bucharest ~ Romania

PUBLIC AND INFORMAL THEOLOGICAL DEBATES IN MID-SEVENTEENTH CENTURY EASTERN CHRISTIANITY

Olar O.(Speaker), Austrian Academy of Sciences | ORTHPOL ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE “ORIENTAL” CONFESSIONS OF FAITH OF THE MARQUIS DE NOINTEL IN THE NATIONAL LIBRARY IN SAINT PETERSBURG

Chentsova V.(Speaker), EPHE / PSL ~ Paris ~ France

COPTIC PHILOLOGY AND THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS: ATHANASIUS KIRCHER, JOHANN MICHAEL WANSLEBEN, AND THE MAKING OF EARLY MODERN KNOWLEDGE OF CHRISTIAN EGYPT

Kouremenos N.(Speaker), Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN RUSSIAN GLOBAL STATECRAFT

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 15:30 to 17:30

Pola - AT14

Contact: Peter Mandaville
Chair: Erin Wilson

Religion has re-emerged as a central element in contemporary geopolitical competition, serving not merely as a source of identity or values but as a strategic asset deployed by states seeking to expand influence and challenge liberal democratic norms. This panel examines the instrumentalization of religion in international relations, with particular focus on how the Russian Federation leverages religious actors, narratives, and networks as components of its soft and sharp power strategies within the framework of global culture wars.

The panel brings together three complementary perspectives to illuminate this phenomenon. The first paper establishes the broader context by mapping the contemporary landscape of religious geopolitics, analyzing how multiple state and non-state actors employ religion to advance political objectives, build transnational coalitions, and contest normative frameworks around issues including gender, sexuality, family, and secularism. The second paper focuses specifically on Moscow's strategic deployment of religion in its external relations. It examines how Russian state actors and religious institutions—particularly the Russian Orthodox Church—collaborate to project influence abroad, positioning Russia as a defender of "traditional values" against Western liberalism. This analysis explores the mechanisms, narratives, and diplomatic channels through which religious discourse is integrated into Russian foreign policy objectives. The third paper provides a critical regional case study of Russian religious influence operations in the Global South. Drawing on field research and policy analysis, it investigates how Russian actors cultivate relationships with religious leaders and institutions across regions such as Africa and Latin America, leveraging both Orthodox Christianity and inter-religious dialogue to advance geopolitical interests, challenge Western influence, and build networks of support for Moscow's global positioning.

THE NEW GEOPOLITICS OF RELIGION

Mandaville P.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington DC ~ United States of America

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AS MORAL NORM ENTREPRENEUR – TEN YEARS LATER: HOW HAS RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE INFLUENCED THE GLOBAL TRADITIONAL VALUES AGENDA OF THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE

Stoeckl K.(Speaker), LUISS ~ Rome ~ Italy

MODELLING "HARMONY": RUSSIA'S RELIGIOUS SOFT POWER IN THE "GLOBAL SOUTH"

Sibgatullina G.(Speaker), University of Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

INEQUALITIES AND REPARATIONS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Carlton Chase
Chair: Carlton Chase

The powerful often appropriate categories like “sacred” and “divine warrant” to justify acts of coercion, abuse, and appropriation, under the auspices of order, stability, and superiority. In due course, activists, victims, and good people of conscience have employed the same categories to disrupt such totalizing enterprises and escape oppressive conditions. In the wake of such histories, those who remain are left to wonder at the lingering brokenness and to speculate on how best to heal.
In times past, religious categories of sacrifice, redemption, and reconciliation have been used to frame spiritual and political recourse. In more recent times, the concept of reparations has been introduced into such considerations. Religious categories can be deeply ambiguous; they have been employed to liberate, but also to stall or postpone liberation and a righting of injustice and inequality. Reparations are often seen by victims of injustice and their advocates, as one way to publicly force accountability and atonement, and to symbolically and structurally move forward. Reparations call for dispossession and a rebalancing of the status quo, and thus are often received as a threat by those in power.
This panel focuses on reparations as a way to a more just society based on the common good, and invites would-be presenters to consider three things: (1) the varied ways that reparations have been considered, in different situations and contexts; (2) the possibility that the concept of reparations shares the same ambiguity as other religious categories aimed at healing, and thus may, in a similar inadvertent fashion, perpetrate unintended inequalities; and (3) ways for reparations to be better received by the larger society, and thus become a more effective tool for moving communities towards a just future. We invite paper proposals that engage the question of reparations from interdisciplinary, religious and non-religious, contextual perspectives.

THE CHURCH OF NORWAY AND THE SÁMI INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY: OPEN CHURCH, TRUTH-AND-RECONCILIATION, AND (IN)EQUALITIES

Matthaei L.K.(Speaker), University of Oslo ~ Oslo ~ Norway

RETHINKING REPARATION AFTER CLERICAL ABUSE

Da Silva Monteiro S.(Speaker), Universidade Portuguesa Católica (UCP) ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

CRITICISM OF ANTI-SEMITISM IN DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL CONTEXTS. APPROACHES FROM VARIOUS RELIGIONS RELATED DISCIPLINES.

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Pola - A102

Contact: Ilona Nord
Chair: Fabienne Greuter

The panel is dedicated to educational initiatives that focus on critical education on anti-Semitism in the context of digital teaching and learning scenarios. In doing so, we address the conference theme of social inequalities in relation to the digital dynamics of anti-Semitism. So far, we have two papers dedicated to this topic: One paper analyzes existing initiatives in app-applications in relation to mediaproductive competencies of students and scholars. The second paper examines how educational games can promote critical education on anti-Semitism in contemporary mediatized contexts. We are open to more papers focussing on other media-formats as ways of doing critical education on antisemitism. In terms of concept, the focus is on anti-Semitism with sensibility to also racism in the digital age. This includes for example analyzing underlying mechanisms of discrimination and racism through the use of algorithms, and possible pro-social action in the digital space with regard to anti-Semitism. Digitality permeates all areas of life and connects data from a wide variety of sources (cf. Häußling et al. 2017, p. 2). These processes generate new data that flows into social realities and culture, creating a self-reinforcing, never-ending cycle of communication (cf. ibid.). Petzke, Schmidt, and Staffa (2023, 176) state: "We are therefore essentially already in a post-digital or onlife (cf. Floridi 2015) age, in which our reality can no longer be clearly separated into analog/offline and digital/online, but is instead synthesized: we live in datafied environments. It is therefore not surprising that not only social realities as a whole, but also the racism [and anti-Semitism] that takes place within them, as well as criticism of racism [and anti-Semitism], are transforming and becoming powerful in connection with digitality."

STRUCTURAL EDUCATION CRITICAL OF ANTI-SEMITISM EXEMPLIFIED IN DIGITAL TEACHING AND LEARNING SCENARIOS

Nord I.(Speaker), Universität Würzburg ~ Würzburg ~ Germany

EDUCATIONAL GAMES AS WAYS OF TEACHING ABOUT ANTISEMITISM

Radde--Antweiler K.(Speaker), Universität Bremen ~ Bremen ~ Germany

Magnifica Humanitas and Human Fraternity: a inspiration for Interreligious Dialogue. Introducing the CORANICA exhibition

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Pola - Aula Magna

The Coranica Exhibition represents an important occasion for the encounter between textual tradition and contemporary research on interreligious dialogue. Through the valorisation of Ludovico Marracci's work Alcorani Textus Universus, distinguished by its philological and textual rigor, the exhibition offers a space for knowledge and exchange, fostering a deeper understanding of religious traditions and their mutual relationships. Building on this exhibition experience, the event titled "Magnifica Humanitas and Human Fraternity: an inspiration for Interreligious Dialogue" develops a broader reflection on the anthropological and theological foundations of human fraternity. The thematic pathway aims to highlight how the doctrinal roots of different religious traditions can contribute to the construction of a culture of fraternity, understood not merely as an ethical ideal, but as an operative principle of dialogue, coexistence, and mutual recognition. The contributions of the participating speakers will offer complementary perspectives from academic, ecclesial, and Islamic contexts, with the aim of highlighting the possibilities of convergence between religious traditions in promoting a shared vision of human dignity. In this sense, the transition "Magnifica Humanitas and Human Fraternity" becomes the guiding thread of an interdisciplinary reflection on the contemporary meaning of interreligious dialogue. The initiative thus takes shape as a laboratory of thought and exchange, where the memory of traditions and the interpretation of the present intertwine to generate new perspectives of mutual understanding and peace.

Magnifica Humanitas and Human Fraternity: a inspiration for Interreligious Dialogue.
Introducing the CORANICA exhibition

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RELIGION, SOCIAL STRATIFICATION, AND INEQUALITY IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETIES

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Pola - A206b

Chair: Osbert Isiorhovoja Uyovwieyovwe

This panel will explore the multifaceted ways in which religion both challenges and reproduces social inequalities in contemporary societies. Religion has historically been implicated in structures of power, privilege, and exclusion, yet it also functions as a space of resistance, solidarity, and social transformation. The panel invites contributions that critically examine how religious ideas, institutions, leadership structures, rituals, and community practices intersect with social stratification based on class, gender, race, ethnicity, caste, disability, age, and migration status. We welcome papers addressing theoretical, empirical, historical, and comparative perspectives. Possible themes include: religious legitimation of wealth and poverty; faith-based responses to instability, Christian genocide and social injustice; prosperity gospel and neoliberal economies; religion and welfare provision; religious NGOs and humanitarianism; the role of religious actors in promoting or resisting social mobility; intersections of religion with capitalism, labor, and informal economies; and how marginal religious groups experience inequality differently from dominant traditions. Special attention will be paid to voices from the Global South and minority communities, as well as to contributions that foreground decolonial, feminist, queer, or critical race approaches to the study of religion and inequality. The panel aims to foster interdisciplinary discussion among scholars of religion, sociology, anthropology, political science, education, and related fields. By examining how religion operates within unequal social orders, the panel seeks to illuminate both the reproduction of injustice and the possibilities for more equitable futures.

MINISTERS OF RELIGIONS: BETWEEN RELIGIOUS MODELS AND SECULAR PROTECTIONS

Tuesday 30 June 2026 from 16:30 to 17:30

Pola - A103

Contact: Abdurrahman Gad Elrab
Chair: Giulia Mazzoni

The system for protecting religious practice within the Italian legal framework, while based on the principle of secularity and aimed at guaranteeing equal freedom for all confessions, continues to reflect, in numerous normative and practical aspects, the imprint of the religious model that historically shaped its construction.
A prime example is the figure of the minister of worship, developed by the state legislator based on the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church and subsequently extended to other confessions through legal instruments that do not always capture their specific characteristics.
This panel aims to critically analyze the notion of the minister of worship within the Italian legal system, highlighting the legal recognition challenges that emerge with particular intensity for more recently established religious communities. These communities, characterized by organizational models different from the Catholic one, by a distinct configuration of relationships between the faithful and religious leaders, and by forms of leadership that are not always institutionalized, struggle to fit into the traditional frameworks presupposed by state law. This results in evident issues of (in)equality, both in terms of the exercise of individual religious rights and in the broader relations between the State and religious confessions.
Building on an analysis of the legal system and the diverse religious and cultural realities it seeks to regulate, the panel will present a case study whose specifics significantly illustrate the practical implications of the issue of ministers of worship: penitentiary institutions.
The panel seeks to raise questions regarding the compatibility of the current legal framework with the principle of secularity, highlighting the need to rethink the category of minister of worship in a way that is more inclusive within an increasingly complex religious society.

ITALIAN LEGAL SYSTEM AND RENEWED CONFESSIONAL PARADIGM

Gad Elrab A.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Milano ~ Milano ~ Italy

MINISTERS OF RELIGION AND PRISON ADMINISTRATION: SEEKING A DELICATE BALANCE

Palazzo M.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca ~ Milano ~ Italy

CHRISTIAN LAW AND ISLAM (7TH-11TH CENTURY): THE NOMOS PROJECT

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Federico Alpi
Chair: Costanza Bianchi

In the crucial half-millennium between the death of the Prophet Muhammad and the First Crusade, an absolutely essential part in the origins of Christian-Muslim relations has been overlooked, namely how the normative regimes of Eastern Christians – including those of Byzantium, the Islamicate world and the space in between – grappled with the rise of Islam. Exploring this history has important implications for our understanding of the development of Christian-Muslim relations in the premodern period, the genesis of Eastern Christian legal regimes and the earlier precedents which Eastern Mediterranean states after the year 1100 might have drawn on in dealing with Islam. This is the focus of NOMOS, an ERC-awarded project, undertaken at the LMU university of Munich under the leadership of Prof. Zachary Chitwood. For the purposes of this project, the Eastern Christian regimes under scrutiny are those of the Byzantine empire, in Greek, and those of Armenian, Coptic, and Syrian Christians (in Armenian, Coptic, and Syrian respectively). By assembling a corpus of “Saracen law” provisions and utilizing cutting-edge, AI- supported technologies to create new editions of legal texts, NOMOS will examine how, within the realm of normative knowledge, the new religion was interpreted, circumscribed and defined and, moreover, how the encounter with Islam itself shaped long-term developments within Eastern Christian legal regimes. The aim of this panel is to present preliminary results of the project (which started in the last months of 2025). At the same time, the panel would welcome any attempt to go beyond the project itself, exploring for instance similar patterns of interaction or similar research approaches in the Christian West.

EMERGENCY COUNCILS? ISLAM-RELATED CANONS IN THREE EARLY MEDIEVAL ARMENIAN SYNODS

Alpi F.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose, Bologna; Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (from March 2026) ~ Bologna ~ Italy

DEALING WITH THE OTHER IN BYZANTINE LAW: HERETICS, JEWS, PAGANS AND MUSLIMS

Chitwood Z.(Speaker), LMU Munich ~ Munich ~ Germany

PRODUCING AND TRANSMITTING CANONICAL LITERATURE IN COPTIC EGYPT (7TH–11TH CENTURIES)

Bianchi C.(Speaker), LMU-Ludwig Maximilians Universität ~ München ~ Germany

REGULATING DEATH: FORMATION OF INHERITANCE LAWS IN SYRIAC LEGAL TRADITIONS

Jamali N.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian Universität, München ~ Munchen ~ Germany

RELIGION AS ART - ART AS RELIGION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A102

Contact: Barnabas Palfrey
Chair: Barnabas Palfrey

Today, religions are often aestheticized in ways that correlate strangely with the aestheticization of politics. Religion and politics, these oldest of all bedfellows, continue to invest in art as they assert themselves in the aesthetically appealing blend of virtual and analog social reality.
Religion and politics involve a vision of life (theoria) and a way of life shaped by it. Art has the power to offer appealing expressions of this ordered vision, translating “harsh reality” into forms that allow both the unspeakable and the outrageous find palpable reception. Religion and politics primarily serve as stabilizing factors; art throws necessary light on both their promises and their shortfalls. Therefore, religion and politics must never stray too far from this creative-critical fountainhead.
This is especially true of religion: even the simple word needs an adequate form to have a manifesting or pronouncing effect. At the same time, the experience of art can have a “revealing” character without presupposing “confessions.” Thus, the panel invites participants to explore the creative tension between religion and art (with or without a critical sideways glance at politics), and the promises and challenges they offer present and future societies. Possible areas of interest include:
• challenges that AI technologies pose to authentic religious experience;
• art and religion’s impact on national and international politics;
• the ways in which concepts like equality, justice, and community are impacted by the interactions between religion and art;
• how religious communities embrace new expressions of iconoclasm;
• how art can improve or deepen (religious) people’s perception of reality (aesthesis);
• and the ways non-religious persons often rely on art to help them contemplate questions once thought to be the exclusive domain of religion and political philosophies.

THE AESTHETICS OF THE CUT: CAN THE DESERT FATHERS AND MOTHERS FREE US FROM TIKTOK AND THE HALLOW APP?

Chase C.(Speaker), Manhattan University ~ Bronx, New York ~ United States of America

“REDEMPTION IN WOOL”: LAMB OF GOD MEETS SHAWN THE SHEEP

Telser A.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

MOTHER-SURVIVOR AT THE GATES OF DAWN: AN ICON IN CONTEMPORARY ART

Murauskaite E.E.(Speaker), VDA (Vilnius Academy of Arts) ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

FOSTERING JUSTICE, COMMUNITY AND PIETY: THE ETHICAL INTERVENTIONS OF US HALAL COMEDY

Thonnart M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

WHEN THEOLOGY BECOMES IMAGE: THE LAST JUDGMENT AT VORONEȚ MONASTERY AS PUBLIC VISUAL THEOLOGY

Mogos T.I.(Speaker), Doctoral School “Dumitru Stăniloae”, Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Bucharest ~ Bucharest ~ Romania

FORMS OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN ALEVI TRADITION: HISTORICAL TRAJECTORIES, CONTEMPORARY TRANSFORMATIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A206a

Contact: Riza Yildirim
Chair: Riza Yildirim

This panel explores the diverse and evolving forms of religious authority within the Alevi tradition from both historical and contemporary perspectives. Alevism has historically articulated multiple forms of authority through a plurality of figures, institutions, and practices, including hereditary lineages (ocak and dede), ritual specialists, saintly charisma, sacred genealogies, poetry and music, and mechanisms of communal recognition and consensus. These forms of authority have been continuously negotiated in relation to changing political, social, and religious contexts.

The panel brings together contributions that examine how religious authority forms and structures have been constructed, legitimized, contested, and transformed from the pre-modern period to the present. Papers address topics such as the historical role of ocak lineages and initiation systems; the role of charisma, spiritual bonds with saintly figures, genealogy, and moral authority in the formation and maintenance of Alevi socioreligious order; the impact of premodern (Safavid and Ottoman) and modern state formations on Alevi religious leadership; and the reconfiguration of authority in contemporary settings shaped by migration, urbanization, institutionalization, and transnational networks. Particular attention is paid to tensions between inherited and acquired authority, oral tradition and textualization, and local practice and standardized representations of Alevism.

By combining theological, historical, anthropological, sociological, and ethnomusicological approaches, the panel aims to contribute to broader discussions on religious authority beyond normative models centered on clerical institutions. It highlights Alevism as a compelling case for understanding how authority operates in non-hierarchical and community-based religious systems, and how such systems respond to modern challenges while drawing on traditions.

PRODUCING RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY: SAYYID FAMILIES, GENEALOGIES AND THE MAKING OF ALEVI RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP

Erol U.(Speaker), Leibniz-Institut für Europäische Geschichte (IEG) ~ Mainz ~ Germany

ALEVI WOMEN IN TRANSNATIONAL SPACE: THE CHANCES AND CHALLENGES OF FEMALE RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP IN GERMANY

Birkalan--Gedik H.(Speaker), Goethe University ~ Frankfurt am Main ~ Germany

RECOGNITION AND RESISTANCE: ALEVIS AS RECLUTANT ACTORS IN THE TURKISH RELIGIOUS FIELD

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WAR IS THE FATHER OF ALL THINGS: AGENCY OF UKRAINIAN RELIGIOUS ACTORS IN DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY DURING WARTIME

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A204

Contact: Tetiana Kalenychenko
Chair: Tetiana Kalenychenko, Denys Brylov

War is a challenge to human norms and religious freedom. It does not only destroy the existing social order, but also provides opportunities. The Russian-Ukrainian war, while remaining an existential threat to Ukraine, has revealed the internal potential of many Ukrainian religious organizations and actors. The humanitarian activities of churches during the war largely compensated (substituted) the state's inability to protect the most affected social groups (IDPs, refugees, veterans, etc.). At the same time, the external religious diplomacy by Ukrainian faith-based leaders faced a lot of challenges, as well as achieved results. Still, humanitarian activity and diplomacy are two key parts of raising actor's agency.

The growing importance and influence of religious actors led to a change in the attitude of the state authorities and the model of church-state relations. However, the increase in the influence of churches has also led to an increase in attempts to instrumentalize it. As a result, Ukrainian churches found themselves in a situation where great opportunities have opened up for them, but the threats have also become much greater than ever before. This panel is devoted to analyzing these opportunities and challenges, as well as the likely paths of development for the Ukrainian religious actors and their networks of cooperation.

This panel is part of the POLISMOD (2026-31, PI Kristina Stoeckl) project launch. By examining how Ukrainian religious actors navigate expanded agency, humanitarian responsibility, and risks of political instrumentalization under conditions of war, this panel speaks directly to POLISMOD's core interest in the role of religious actors in sustaining—or undermining—democratic resilience under conditions of crisis.

PATRIOTISM AS A CRITERION OF RELIGIOUS ORTHODOXY: THE POLITICAL INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF UKRAINIAN CHURCHES

Brylov D.(Speaker), Dialogue in Action ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

STRENGTHENING RELIGIOUS AGENCY IN UKRAINE: FROM COMMUNITY-LEVEL ACTION TO NATIONAL INFLUENCE

Kalenychenko T.(Speaker), Dialogue in Action ~ Bucha ~ Ukraine

BECOMING A MINORITY. IMPACTS OF THE RUSSIAN WAR ON ORTHODOX THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL ETHICS

Elsner R.(Speaker), Muenster University ~ Muenster ~ Germany

MORE COOPERATION OR MORE CONTROL: EVOLUTION OF UKRAINE'S RELIGION-STATE DYNAMICS

Vovk D.(Speaker), Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law ~ New York ~ United States of America

RUSSIAN PROPAGANDA AND UKRAINIAN RELIGIOUS TELEGRAM

Fert A.(Speaker), Kyiv School of Economics ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

LIVED RELIGION AND AN ETHICS OF CARE IN WARTIME UKRAINE

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DISCERNING DIVINE PRESENCE: IN DIFFERENCE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Theo van Willigenburg
Chair: Theo van Willigenburg, Gijsbert van den Brink, Dion Forster

This panel will feature presentations on the fundamental disparity between the divine and the human. This includes the difference between Creator and creation, between the sacred and the profane, between earth and heaven, and more generally between transcendence and immanence.
The panel welcomes studies in systematic theology, philosophy of religion, history of ideas, historical theology, public theology, ethics, psychology, and practical theology, concerning questions like:
- metaphysics: how do contrast-properties like ‘holy’ compare to other non-natural properties like ‘beautiful’, ‘virtuous’ or ‘right’?
- secularization: which historical narratives may be told about the ‘disappearance’ in Western modernity of the transcendental/divine?
- creation: how to account of the sacredness of non-human nature (in countering ecological deterioration) without ignoring that God and creation are qualitatively different?
- hell and heaven: what theological import do these deeply different categories have?
- politics and religion: when does the merge of religion and politics lead to sacralization of ideas, symbols and/or persons and how to avoid idolatry?
- psychology: what makes an experience into a religious experience of the Divine?

BLURRING THE BOUNDARIES? ON CALLING PLANET EARTH SACRED

Van Den Brink G.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

THE HUMAN BEING AS CREATOR: A FORGOTTEN STRAND OF THE IMAGO DEI

Lambert V.A.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

DISCERNING DIVINE COMMITMENT: CONCURSUS AND THE COVENANT

Van Den Belt H.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn ~ Amsterdam and Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

DISCERNING GOD AMID SACRALISED POWER: CRITERIA FOR PUBLIC THEOLOGY

Forster D.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

“THIS IS MY BODY WHICH IS GIVEN FOR YOU”: THE DIVINE PRESENCE OF THE LORD’S TABLE AS PROPHETIC EMBRACE IN THE NETHERLANDS

Salcido J.R.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

BEAUTY IN THE ABSENCE OF GOD: THE THEOLOGICAL AESTHETICS OF EBERHARD JÜNGEL

Howell C.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

GOD’S WAY OF ESSENCING: ON DIVINE PRESENCE BEYOND ONTOTHEOLOGY AND ITS CONSEQUENCES ON THE DIFFERENCE (AND RELATION) TO IMMANENCE

Prosdocimo M.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

SECULARIZATION AND THE CREATOR-CREATION DIVIDE: RATIONALIZATION VERSUS REFORM AS EXPLANATIONS OF MODERNITY'S TRANSFORMATION OF DIVINE PRESENCE

Borowski M.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

RELIGIONS AND INEQUALITIES: PLURIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES SOCIOLOGICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC APPROACHES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - A101

Contact: Rossana M Salerno
Chair: Rossana M Salerno, Giulia Conti, Gaetano Sabato

Religious, cultural, and social inequalities are a structural dimension of contemporary societies, shaped by power relations, belonging, and recognition. Religions, cultures, and territories act as interconnected spheres where meanings, norms, and practices of inclusion and exclusion emerge. The panel adopts sociological and geographic perspectives to explore how religions both reproduce and transform inequalities. From a sociological perspective, religions operate as institutions and symbolic systems that shape norms, values, gender arrangements, and hierarchies. Through rituals, discourse, digital media, and sacred objects, they may reinforce subordination or open spaces for critique and emancipation. From a geographic point of view, inequalities are seen as spatially embedded. Sacred places, devotional geographies, pilgrimages, and urban boundaries show how religions influence access to resources, visibility, and belonging. Concepts such as liminality highlight thresholds—urban margins, shrines, ritual paths—where identities and hierarchies can be renegotiated. Integrating these viewpoints allows for a multidimensional understanding of how religions reshape visibility, recognition, and symbolic redistribution in contemporary societies.
Keywords: Religion, Space, Inequality, Symbols, Digitalization, Pluralism

THE FAITH OF OTHERS: A PATH OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Salerno R.M.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Italy ~ Italy

SACRED GEOGRAPHIES IN VIDEO GAMES SET IN ITALY VALORISATION, LIMINAL SPACE, AND REGIMES OF VISIBILITY

Conti G.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

NARRATING THE PILGRIMAGE: THE CASE OF SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA FROM A GEOGRAPHICAL AND CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

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RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN LATIN AMERICA

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A206b

Contact: Federico Aguirre
Chair: Federico Aguirre, Wilson Muñoz

This panel brings together researchers from different countries in the Americas and Europe to discuss studies of religion in Latin America, its origins, history, current situation, and challenges. Around the middle of the 20th century, the discussion on development models for Latin America will face a continent where secularisation had barely been noticed, and where religion is identified as a catalyst for the socio-cultural processes associated with late capitalist modernisation. An early expression of this discussion was the meetings of the Latin American Episcopal Council (CELAM) and liberation theology, where for the first time in history the cultural specificity of the Latin American Church was problematised. From the 1990s onwards, the social sciences took centre stage in the discussion and, at present, we could say that there is a reconfiguration of the field of religious studies in Latin America, involving other disciplines from the humanities, arts and heritage studies. Another topic of interest is the study of the influence of Latin American religious traditions abroad, through the processes of globalisation and contemporary migration, as well as the presence and impact of other non-Christian religious traditions in the region. In light of all this, topics such as popular religion, religion and migration, Latin American theology, religious disaffiliation, evangelical pluralism and the current state of indigenous worldviews become relevant. Finally, the panel will also focus on the epistemological challenges of the study of religion in Latin America and the nature of the interdisciplinary dialogue it convenes.

MIGRATION AND CATHOLICISM: THE PERUVIAN COMMUNITY IN ROME, ITALY

Roldán V.(Speaker), Università Niccolò Cusano ~ Roma ~ Italy

THE APOPHATIC CHARACTER OF LATIN AMERICAN POPULAR RELIGION

Aguirre F.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

ART AS DEVOTION: TOWARD AN ANTI-CAPITALIST EPISTEMOLOGY IN SANTIAGO

Eikelboom L.(Speaker), Despain B.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

INTERGENERATIONAL RELIGIOUS TRANSMISSION AS PLAUSIBILITY PRODUCTION: THE CHILEAN CASE

Neckelmann M.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

A PHILOSOPHICAL JUSTIFICATION OF THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR AS A WAY OF THINKING ABOUT INEQUALITY FROM LATIN AMERICA

Becker M.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

LANDSCAPE IN MOTION. STUDIES ON SPACE AND RITUAL IN THE ANDES

Muñoz Henríquez W.(Speaker), Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona ~ Barcelona ~ Spain

INTERRELIGIOUS APPROACHES TO ECO-JUSTICE AND "WCC" PROPHETIC CALL: SHARED RESPONSES TO ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES AND INEQUALITIES.

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Louk Aourelien Andrianos
Chair: Louk Aourelien Andrianos, Nadja Furlan Štante, Tom Sverre Bredal-Tomren

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The God of justice and peace stands with the whole Creation, human and non-human, that are vulnerable and have suffered the injustices of human greed. In a time marked by common ecological challenges that affect all peoples and all religious traditions — Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Indigenous spiritualities—, we seek interreligious theological and ecumenical reflections on human responsibility toward the just community with the “neighbours” (Luke 10:25–37), human and non-human creation that are today being wiped up at risk through extinction, degradation, and pollution from human overexploitations.

The contemporary global crises are reflected in outrageous inequalities of access to natural resources and widespread lack of respect to existential rights for the overall Creation. The eco-justice crisis is the defining moral and spiritual challenge of our time. Climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation and widening economic inequalities demand not only technological or political responses but mainly theological, ethical and interreligious engagement. These crises call for shared responses grounded in dialogue, solidarity and collaborative action across traditions.

This open panel invites papers that explore how interreligious and ecumenical theologies can respond to the urgent need for eco-justice – justice that embraces the integrity of creation, the dignity of all beings and the flourishing of all communities.

We particularly welcome contributions that show religious pathways to solve universal eco-justice challenges and inequalities.

We, representatives from the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Ecological Theology and Environmental Ethics (ECOTHEE) and the European Christian Ecotheology Research Network (ECErN) invite theologians, activists, policymakers, and scientists, to contribute to this vital conversation at the intersection of faith, ecology, and justice.

REIMAGINING CHRISTIAN ECOTHEOLOGY THROUGH INDIGENOUS SPIRITUALITIES: POSTCOLONIAL ECOFEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

Furlan Štante N.(Speaker), Znanstveno raziskovalno središče Koper ~ Koper ~ Slovenia

THE ECUMENICAL DECADE OF CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTION (2025-2034) AND INTER-RELIGIOUS ADVOCACIES FOR ECO-JUSTICE AT THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (WCC)

Andrianos L.A.(Speaker), World Council of Churches ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

SÁMI TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE AS AN IMPULSE FOR CHRISTIAN FAITH EDUCATION: A NORWE-GIAN CASE STUDY WITH GLOBAL RELEVANCE

Bredal--Tomren T.S.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

CULTIVATING AN INTERFAITH INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Durante C.(Speaker), Saint Peter's University ~ Jersey City, New Jersey ~ United States of America

“FROM BYZANTINE HYMNOGRAPHY TO GLOBAL ECO-JUSTICE: ORTHODOX LITURGICAL THEOLOGY AS PROPHETIC AND INTERRELIGIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL WITNESS”

Levakos P.(Speaker), PhD researcher, Faculty of Theology, Athens / MA student, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies KU Leuven, Belgium. ~ Athens ~ Greece

THE ECUMENICAL DECADE OF CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTION (2025-2034) AND INTER-RELIGIOUS ADVOCACIES FOR ECO-JUSTICE AT THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES (WCC)

Andrianos L.(Speaker), World Council of Churches ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

MOBILIZING FOR GLOBAL CLIMATE SECURITY: THE CASE OF THE UNITED STATES

French W.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

INTERDENOMINATIONAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVES IN AUSTRALIA

Bergmann N.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Brisbane ~ Australia

THE ECOTHEOLOGY OF JESUS OF NAZARETH: AN INTERRELIGIOUS INVITATION TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Cardoso Duarte J.(Speaker), Research Scientist ~ Coimbra ~ Portugal

THE GROANING OF CREATION: AN EASTERN CHRISTIAN MYSTICAL RESPONSE TO ANIMAL SUFFERING AND FACTORY FARMING

Sabada L.(Speaker), University of Saskatchewan, St. Thomas More College ~ Saskatoon, Saskatchewan ~ Canada

BLUE THEOLOGY

Locorotondo L.(Speaker), PUL ~ Roma ~ Italy

RULES, NORMS, AND DISCIPLINE IN MEDIEVAL RELIGION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Atria Larson
Chair: Eleonora Rava

This panel features papers that are part of a special issue intended for the _Quaderni di storia religiosa medievale_. The issue intends to expand scholars' understanding of the function, purpose, and importance of norms and discipline within the administration of ecclesiastical communities and hierarchies. It also aims to expand scholars' perspective on what is relevant to and included within the concepts of law and normativity in the Christian religion, pushing historians to ponder these concepts as inclusive of but expanded beyond the confines of monastic Rules on the side of religious orders and synodal statutes on the side of dioceses and parishes. The issue encourages studies of these important sources but asks contributors to think about the significance and application of them, particularly in relationship to specific dioceses, parishes, communal religious communities, anchoritic communities, or in specific regions, or within specific orders. The issue also asks scholars to explore mechanisms, rationales, and practices for maintaining order and disciplining erring members or subordinates that might not be expressed in formal written rules but leave evidence in other kinds of historical source material. In short, this panel investigates law and normativity in medieval religion.

LATE ANTIQUE AND EARLY MEDIEVAL CANONICAL COLLECTIONS AT THE CATHEDRAL LIBRARY OF VERONA

Tronca D.(Speaker), University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

MONASTIC CUSTOMARIES, WITH AND AGAINST THE RULE OF ST BENEDICT, 9TH-11TH CENTURIES

Cochelin I.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

BEYOND THE RULE: CONSTITUTIONS IN MEDIEVAL FEMALE MONASTICISM

Bianchini A.(Speaker), La Sapienza Università di Roma ~ Rome ~ Italy

FROM VISITATION TO COURT: NORMS, DISCIPLINE, AND LAW IN ITALIAN DIOCESES (TUSCANY, LATE 13TH–EARLY 14TH CENTURY)

Fossier A.(Speaker), Université de Bourgogne ~ Bourgogne ~ France

RESISTANCE TO ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY IN LATE MEDIEVAL ENGLAND AND FRANCE

Zamore G.(Speaker), Uppsala Universitet ~ Uppsala ~ Sweden

UGO PANZIERA: GUIDING THE YOUNG FRIARS IN CONSTANTINOPLE IN XIVTH CENTURY

Centini L.(Speaker), Charles University, Prague ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

RELIGIOUS FORMS OF LIFE. INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUES: EUROPE - CHINA - SOUTHEAST ASIA

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A13

Chair: Jure Zovko, Xinzhang Zhang, Hans-Peter Grosshans

If, following Wittgenstein, we define religions as different forms of life that are normative and obligatory for human practice, the question arises as to how dialogue between them is possible. The liberal form of life in the European Union is characterised by values such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities.
The European liberal way of life requires that freedom of thought, conscience, and religion be protected and established as a forms of life. This also includes the right to change or reject one's religion, as well as the right to express beliefs publicly or privately through worship, teaching, practice, and observance.
In this connection, we will analyse the problems that arise in the EU and compare them with those in China and East Asia, consider the similarities and differences, and examine the possibilities for exchanging experiences. If one of the fundamental features of religion is the confrontation with one's own contingency, then, in this context, the question of dialogue among different religious forms of life arises.

INTERPRETING AND NEGOTIATING BASIC ETHICAL AND RELIGIOUS DISTINCTIONS IN INTERRELIGIOUS AND INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS - THE EXAMPLE OF THE GOOD / EVIL DISTINCTION IN ITS UNIVERSAL RELEVANCE AND ITS CONTEXTUAL DIFFERENCES

Grosshans H.(Speaker), university Muenster ~ Muenster ~ Germany

RESILIENCE AND RESISTANCE IN CHRISTIAN FAITH IN MYANMAR

Layang S.J.(Speaker), Kachin Theological College & Seminary, Myitkyina ~ Myitkyina ~ Myanmar

How Do Chinese People Distinguish Between Delusion (迷) and Enlightenment (悟) in Spiritual Life?

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The Human Being as Free: A Dialogue Between Meister Eckhart and Chan Buddhism

,

Transcending the Flesh: A Comparative Analysis of Body Enhancement in Taoist Praxis and Western Mythology

,

A Preliminary Inquiry into the Social Significance of Contemporary Chinese Temple Fair Practices from the Perspective of Historical Materialism

,

Heidegger, Daoist Thought, and Cross-Cultural Asymmetry

,

Political and intercultural Analyses of Europe – China – Southeast Asia relations

,

Anti-anti-Christianity and China

,

Reformation of Life: The Rosicrucian Project between Eschatology and Techno-Future

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THE RENAISSANCE OF RELIGION IN POST-COMMUNIST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Zovko J.(Speaker), University of Zadarr ~ Zadar ~ Croatia

CATHOLICISM AND POLITICS IN THE IBERO-AMERICAN WORLD, 20TH CENTURY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Pola - A105

Contact: Stephan Ruderer
Chair: Marcos Fernández

The purpose of this panel is to bring together recent research findings on the relationship between Catholicism and politics in 20th-century Ibero-America, with the aim of highlighting conjunctures, agencies, and conflicts that allow for a historical understanding of the various dimensions of the link between Catholicism, the public sphere, and the State.
The Ibero-American continent offers a particularly fruitful context for analyzing the interplay between religion and politics, due to the role played by ultramontane Catholics in the first half of the century, the emergence of liberation theology that led many Catholics to participate in the revolutionary ferment of the 1960s and 1970s, and the proliferation of dictatorships, which placed the Catholic field at the crossroads of legitimizing regimes or opposing them. Likewise, the transitions to democracy saw national Catholic Churches assume a leading role, especially in disseminating the Catholic concept of reconciliation.
The panel seeks to foster dialogue among papers addressing these different stages in order to better understand the role of religion in the Ibero-American public sphere. Accordingly, the following axes of discussion are proposed:
1. Catholicism and Dictatorships
2. Processes of Reconciliation and Political Transitions from a Catholic Perspective
3. Catholic Agents and the Public Sphere: Circulation and Controversies
4. Catholic Intellectuals: Concepts and Contingencies

CONFESSIONALISING THE MEXICAN NATION. PUBLISHING PROJECTS IN SEARCH OF A CATHOLIC NATION IN THE MID-20TH CENTURY.

Ramírez Bonilla L.C.(Speaker), Universidad Iberoamericana ~ Mexico City ~ Mexico

THE UTOPIAN ENGINE OF HISTORY: GUSTAVO GUTIÉRREZ AND CHRISTIANS FOR SOCIALISM.

Fernández M.(Speaker), UAH ~ Santiago ~ Chile

WHY THE CHURCH? WHY HUMAN RIGHTS? THE CHILEAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN DIGNITY IN 1978

Del Villar Tagle M.S.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso ~ Valparaíso ~ Chile

NO PODEMOS CALLAR: CONFESSION AND PUBLIC SPHERE DURING THE DICTATORSHIP IN CHILE, 1975-1981

Bernales M.(Speaker), ITER-UAH ~ Santiago ~ Chile

RECONCILIATION AND DEMOCRACY: THE CATHOLIC CHURCHES OF CHILE AND ARGENTINA IN RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH COMMISSION REPORTS DURING POLITICAL TRANSITION

Ruderer S.(Speaker), Instituto de Historia, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

THE ROMAN EXILE OF JULIO JIMÉNEZ SJ (1958–1964): ANTI-COMMUNIST AND/OR ANTI-MARITAINIAN IMPULSES?

Álvarez C.(Speaker), ITER/Universidad Alberto Hurtado/ PUC-Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

RELIGION AND WORK-RELATED MIGRATION - RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND CRITICAL RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Pola - AT12

Contact: Moritz Broghammer
Chair: Christof Mandry

Work-related migration is one of the key fault lines in contemporary debates on religion and (in)equality. Across Europe, political and public discourses oscillate between the perceived economic necessity of labor migration and concerns about its social consequences. At the same time, work-related migration is a global phenomenon: migration routes connect European contexts with regions across the world, shaped by colonial histories, post–Cold War transformations, and current efforts to address labor shortages.

This panel examines work-related migration from two complementary perspectives: first, the role of religious actors as agents, institutions, and stakeholders in labor migration; second, the critical ethical, theological, and philosophical reflections on migration and work found within religious traditions.

Historically as well as today, religious actors play a significant role in labor migration. In the field of health care, for example, Christian missionary organizations were involved in providing medical services in destination countries, producing figures that have been both admired and critically debated, such as Mother Teresa or Albert Schweitzer. In contemporary Europe, religious organizations remain major public actors through their involvement in health care infrastructures, including hospitals and nursing homes. As such, they are directly implicated in strategies of recruiting migrant workers and must position themselves within broader political, ethical, and economic frameworks.

Beyond institutional involvement, religious traditions such as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam offer long-standing and ongoing reflections on migration, work, justice, and inequality. These traditions provide normative resources that engage questions of power, vulnerability, responsibility, and postcolonial entanglements, and that can critically inform current debates on work-related migration.

RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND TRANSNATIONAL DEMOCRATIC SOLIDARITY IN THE KOREAN LABOR MIGRATION TO WEST GERMANY

Jeong H.(Speaker), Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz ~ Mainz ~ Germany

HEALTH CARE RECRUITING IN GERMANY AND THE ROLE OF CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS

Quirin L.(Speaker), Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Sankt Georgen ~ Frankfurt am Main ~ Germany

JUST REGULATION OF THE GLOBAL MIGRATION OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS AND THE CATHOLIC-ETHICAL IDEA OF A “GLOBAL COMMON GOOD”

Broghammer M.(Speaker), Mandry C.(Speaker), Goethe-Universität Frankfurt ~ Frankfurt am Main ~ Germany

ARGUMENTS FOR (DE-)LEGITIMIZING THE RECRUITMENT OF HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS IN MEXICO FROM A SOCIOETHICAL PERSPECTIVE

Uliczka L.(Speaker), Hagedorn J.(Speaker), Theologische Fakultät Paderborn ~ Paderborn ~ Germany

RELIGION, MIGRATION, AND (IN)EQUALITY IN CÔTE D'IVOIRE: 1892-2008

Segnon Koffi Victor N.(Speaker), University of Passau ~ Passau ~ Germany

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY ON THE FRONTIER OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A1

Contact: Accursio Graffeo
Chair: Kristina Eiviler, Accursio Graffeo, Beth Singler, Fabian Winiger, Katharina Yadav

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The panel engages reasonings on religion and spirituality on the frontier of emerging technologies investigating how religious and spiritual practices are evolving alongside the emergence of digital technologies. This panel asks: What values, biases, and social norms do these technologies encode? Are they used to promote equality, or to accentuate differences and deepen social, political and cultural differences? In what ways are emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence used to contribute to or challenge existing empirical and theoretical debates? Through concrete and diverse case studies, this panel examines how forms of spiritual life and expression are evolving across multiple cultural and religious contexts through their encounter with emerging technologies. From the integration of artificial intelligence tools by professional spiritual care providers in healthcare settings to the emergence of new, AI-related eschatological imaginaries, and the global rise of digital platforms within new religious movements, this panel explores the ways in which technology is simultaneously used to enable new forms of connection, ritual, tradition, and meaning-making, while also raising profound ethical questions. Drawing on interdisciplinary scholarship in the field of digital religion(s), the panellists will engage with theoretical and empirical debates from theology, religious studies, and anthropology. In exploring their research questions, the panellists foster constructive and critical dialogue with religious and spiritual communities, and deepen our understanding of how faith, spirituality, and technology co-evolve in a rapidly changing world. Ultimately, this panel invites participants to reflect on the potential role and responsibility of religion and spirituality in (re)shaping responsible and compassionate technological futures—futures that acknowledge both the possibilities and dangers of innovation in an increasingly connected yet divided world.

THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS ROBOTS AS MORAL AGENTS IN CHRISTIANITY

Falletti E.(Speaker), Università Carlo Cattaneo-LIUC ~ Castellanza (VA) ~ Italy

GENERATIVE AI AS A DECONTEXTUALIZATION MACHINE. RACIAL, GENDER AND RELIGIOUS STEREOTYPES IN AN AI-LED CHURCH SERVICE

Valaskivi K.(Speaker), University of Helsinki ~ Helsinki ~ Finland

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF PASTORAL ROLES: A SURVEY OF SEMINARIANS AND PRIESTS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN POLAND

Królicka B.(Speaker), Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Institute of Sociology ~ Toruń ~ Poland

THE MOVING EVENT HORIZON OF AI NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND EMERGENT SPIRITUALITIES

Singler B.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s) - University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

NAVIGATING THE SACRED IN THE "THEATER OF THE ABSURD": AI SLOP, BRAINROT, AND NEW RELIGIOUS IMAGINARIES

Campbell H.(Speaker), Texas A&M University ~ College Station, Texas ~ United States of America

ALGORITHMIC COSMOLOGIES: CRUSTAFARIANISM AND THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL PROBLEM OF AI-GENERATED RELIGION

Giorda M.C.(Speaker), Hejazi S.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Roma ~ Italy

DIGITAL SELF-(RE)PRESENTATIONS OF THE HINDU SWAMINARAYAN MOVEMENT. AN IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OF BAPS'S SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Yadav K.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s) - University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

BABA MILAN AND 'MEDIATED RITUALITY' AMONG THE BRAHMA KUMARIS OF INDIA: HYBRID RELIGIOSITY, SPATIAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DIGITAL MEDIA

Sinha P.(Speaker), Indian Institute of Technology Indore ~ Indore ~ India

THE SYNTHETIC SACRED: AI, DEVOTION, AND THE CULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURES OF BELIEF

Vasudeva F.(Speaker), University of Helsinki ~ Helsinki ~ Finland

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN CLINICAL SPIRITUAL CARE: ETHICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND PRACTICAL PERSPECTIVES ON AN EMERGING MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

Winiger F.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s) - University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

ADOLESCENTS USE OF RELIGIOUS AND/OR SPIRITUAL DIGITAL MEDIA FOR INCREASE OF WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE RESOURCES

Talantopoulou O.(Speaker), University of Zurich ~ Zürich ~ Switzerland

SPIRITUALITY AND MATERIALITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE: ENCOUNTER WITH EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AMONG THE BUGKALOT (ILONGOT) OF NORTHERN PHILIPPINES

Yang S.(Speaker), Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica ~ Taipei ~ Taiwan

IS DEATH STILL THE GREAT LEVELLER? DEATH AND (DIGITAL) SURVIVING AT THE GATES OF THE (NARRATED) TECHNOLOGICAL WONDER

Sabatini R.(Speaker), Graffeo A.(Speaker), Center for Religious Studies - Bruno Kessler Foundation ~ Trento ~ Italy

MASK WITHOUT A WEARER: RITUAL PERSONHOOD IN AI COMPANION COMMUNITIES

Longo A.(Speaker), University of Modena Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

DIGITAL TIME AS RELIGIOUS TIME: CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGE OF DIGITAL WELL-BEING

Palumbo E.(Speaker), University of Padua ~ Padua ~ Italy

EQUALITY AND INEQUALITY IN CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING: NORMATIVITY, INSTITUTIONS, AND HISTORICAL TENSIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A103

Contact: András Jancsó
Chair: Loránd Ujházi

This panel examines Catholic Social Teachingas a central normative framework for interpreting equality and inequality, with particular attention to its internal tensions, historical transformations, and institutional embeddedness. Catholic social thought is grounded in the principles of human dignity, solidarity, subsidiarity, and justice, yet it has always developed in close interaction with concrete social realities, power relations, and historically constituted hierarchies.

The panel explores how the normative moral reasoning of Catholic Social Teaching engages empirical social analysis. Contributions address the anthropological and moral foundations of equality, the relationship between freedom and hierarchy, the changing interpretations of poverty and structural injustice, and the transformation of war and peace ethics within CST. Special attention is given to the ways in which Catholic normative ideals encounter institutional practices, including education, ecclesial governance, legal regulation, and academic institutions.

The panel welcomes historical, legal, political-theoretical, and social-scientific approaches insofar as they place Catholic Social Teaching at the center of analysis and contribute to its critical and methodological reflection. Comparative and interreligious perspectives—especially dialogue with Jewish thought—are also included where they serve to clarify the specific character, possibilities, and limits of CST.

Overall, the panel aims to show how Catholic Social Teaching functions both as a critical resource for addressing social inequalities and as a historically situated discourse marked by unresolved tensions between normative ideals and social realities. In doing so, the panel contributes to the broader objectives of EuARe 2026.

FREEDOM AND INEQUALITY IN CATHOLIC SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT: THE CLASSICS

Nyirkos T.(Speaker), Ludovika University of Public Service ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE PRE-POLITICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE POLITICAL COMMUNITY IN THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF POPE BENEDICT XVI

Jancsó A.(Speaker), Mathias Corvinus Collegium, Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Ludovika University of Public Service ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY IN PAPAL SOCIAL ENCYCLICALS

Darabos Á.(Speaker), Ludovika University of Public Service, Axioma Center ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

SYSTEMATIC EVIL AS A PROBLEM OF INEQUALITY IN THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

Nagypál S.(Speaker), Mathias Corvinus Collegium, Eötvös Loránd University ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

WAR, PEACE, AND INEQUALITY: REASSESSING CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING IN A POST–JUST WAR FRAMEWORK

Fenyves K.(Speaker), Mathias Corvinus Collegium, Pázmány Péter Catholic University ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

FREE EDUCATION VS. TUITION – CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING AND PIARIST SCHOOLS

Balla J.(Speaker), Ludovika University of Public Service ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE ROLE OF CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES IN PROMOTING SOCIAL EQUALITY

Ujházi L.(Speaker), Ludovika University of Public Service ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THEOLOGIES AND PRACTICES OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM. THE QUESTION OF (IN)EQUALITY THROUGH THE PRISM OF THE INDIVIDUAL VS. THE COLLECTIVE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A107

Contact: Kristina Stoeckl
Chair: Jose Casanova

The “Theologies and Practices of Religious Pluralism” project, coordinated by RESET Dialogue, set itself the task to study how religious and cultural pluralism at the local, national and global levels is challenging all religious traditions in their exclusivist “truth claims”. The aim of the project’s clusters was to analyze and compare how different religions respond to and come to terms with “the truth of the other.” Clusters inside the project dealt with Judaism, Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism and Orthodox Christianity. In this panel, the convenors of each cluster will draw on findings from their group to reflect on the question of how religious traditions practically deal with tensions that arise between the principle of individual equality and norms of community. The individual-vs.-collective binary informs many controversies inside religious traditions, and also impacts the relations between religious traditions. In response to the Annual Conference’s central theme “Religion and (in)equalities”, the speakers will address forms of inequality produced by religious traditions, mechanisms of mitigating inequality, and the limits and incompatibilities of theologies of equality and inequality, touching issues such as race, gender, wealth and freedom of expression.

IN-EQUALITY IN THE CATHOLIC TRADITION: TENSIONS WITHIN CATHOLIC MORAL UNIVERSALISM

Casanova J.(Speaker), Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University ~ Washington D.C. ~ United States of America

NEGOTIATING EQUALITY IN THE JEWISH TRADITION: BETWEEN COVENANT AND CONTEMPORARY PLURALISM

Cesari J.(Speaker), Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University ~ Washington D.C. ~ United States of America

PROTESTANT THEOLOGIES OF PLURALISM: NEGOTIATING (IN)EQUALITY BETWEEN THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COLLECTIVE

Passarelli A.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE COMMUNITY IN ISLAMIC CONTEXTS: PAST AND PRESENT

Hashas M.(Speaker), Università di Roma Tor Vergata ~ Roma ~ Italy

ORTHODOX THEOLOGIES OF PLURALISM

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SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY 2026

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A2

Contact: Jacob Astudillo
Chair: Mark Elliott, Lluis Oviedo, Hans Burger, Tomas Bokedal, Leif Svensson, Michael Borowski

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For the complete call for papers, including detailed section descriptions, guiding questions, and context, please see: https://scriptureandtheology.org/panels/2026-rome/.
Without consulting the full text, proposals cannot be properly prepared.

The Scripture and Theology Forum invites proposals for its 2026 program at the European Academy of Religion in Rome. The full call outlines five sections:
1. Interactions Between Biblical Studies and Theology: Methodological exchanges, mutual dependencies, and best-practice models (see full call for specific questions and publication details).
2. A History of Scripture and Theology: Three parts on premodern integration, Enlightenment-era separation, and contemporary consequences/retrievals (including precise chronological and thematic scope in the full call).
3. Scripture and Theology – Open Call: Topics and methods are specified in the full call, including examples of acceptable proposals.
4. David Ford on the Gospel of John: Closed session, participation criteria and publication plans described only in the full call.
5. Scripture, Theology, and the Advent of AI: The full call lists required foci, sample themes, and expectations for short papers.

Submission requirements (abstract length, biographical note, deadlines, and word counts for potential publication) are given in detail in the full call.

We welcome contributions from various fields, countries and denominations, and look forward to meet you in Rome!

EXPLORING METHODOLOGICAL INTERACTIONS BETWEEN BIBLICAL STUDIES AND SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: A PROJECT UPDATE AND PROLEGOMENA

Burger H.(Speaker), Borowski M.(Speaker), TUU ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

REFORMED COVENANT THEOLOGY, BIBLICAL STUDIES AND SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Burger H.(Speaker), Theological University Utrecht ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

FROM THE VIA ANTIQUA TO THE VIA MODERNA: SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY IN A TALE OF REVOLUTIONS

Villeneuve A.(Speaker), Sacred Heart Major Seminary ~ Detroit ~ United States of America

SCRIPTURE AS THE FORMAL PRINCIPLE AND GUIDE OF THEOLOGY: REDISCOVERING THE UNITY OF EXEGESIS AND DOCTRINE WITH PETRUS VAN MASTRICHT

Debord D.(Speaker), Freed-Hardeman University ~ Henderson ~ United States of America

BREVARD CHILDS AND WALTER BRUEGGEMANN: TWO HEIRS TO THE BARTHIAN LEGACY

Astudillo J.(Speaker), Umeå University ~ Umeå ~ Sweden

THE REJECTION OF MIRACLES IN MODERN BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP: AN ANALYSIS OF THE HUME-STRAUSS-TROELTSCH-EHRMAN TRAJECTORY

Svensson L.(Speaker), Umea University ~ Umea ~ Sweden

FROM LOCI THEOLOGICI TO THEOLOGIA DOGMATICA: SCRIPTURAL EXEGESIS AND THE DIFFERENTIATION OF THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES IN THE ERA OF PROTESTANT SCHOLASTICISM

Nüssel F.(Speaker), Heidelberg University ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

SCRIPTURE IN THE PROLEGOMENA OR IN PNEUMATOLOGY: REVISITING THE TESTIMONIUM SPIRITUS SANCTI

Van Den Belt H.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn ~ Amsterdam and Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

A TYPOLOGICAL READING OF MATTHEW 12,1-8

Miller V.(Speaker), Charles Sturt University ~ Canberra ~ Australia

STRENGTH WITHOUT PURPOSE: SAMSON, AFFECTIVE EXEGESIS, AND THE THEOLOGICAL ROOTS OF THE CRISIS OF MASCULINITY

Upton C.(Speaker), Toronto School of Theology ~ Toronto ~ Canada

(UN)EQUAL COMPARISONS: MOVING BEYOND SIMPLISTIC COMPARISONS AND WESTERN HEGEMONY IN COMPARATIVE LAW, RELIGION, AND THEOLOGY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Ryszard Bobrowicz
Chair: Judith Hahn

Comparative law and religion, which has been trending for the last few years, is a thoroughly interdisciplinary enterprise. It requires a careful integration of insights from comparative law, comparative religious studies, and comparative theology, combined with a wide range of methodological approaches, engaging with positivist, realist, critical, and hermeneutical perspectives. Studying law and religion within a single context is already a demanding task. Studying two or more contexts, whether crossing time, space, culture, or tradition, brings a whole different level of complexity.

This proposed panel aims to reflect on the theoretical, methodological, and practical implications of adopting a comparative approach to the study of law and religion, by focusing on how we can move beyond the hermeneutical narrowness. We are particularly interested in exploring how to develop nuanced and robust comparisons across time, space, cultures, and traditions, while also critically examining how to avoid superficial or misleading comparisons that do not withstand closer scrutiny. Thus, we especially encourage papers that address one or more of the following themes:

1. The historical and cultural entanglements and normativity inherent in the notion of “law,” including realist, critical, and hermeneutical takes on the topic;
1. The historical and cultural entanglements and normativity inherent in the notion of “religion,” including the perspectives of critical religion and (post)secular critique;
3. The (post-)colonial dimensions of both concepts and strategies for avoiding their pitfalls in comparative analysis;
4. Methodological frameworks for studying interactions between law and religion across time, space, cultures, and traditions;
5. Comparative case studies that include explicit theoretical and/or methodological reflection.

HOW TO COMPARE IN COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY

Von Stosch K.(Speaker), Bonn University ~ Bonn ~ Germany

MULTI-FAITH SPACES BEYOND WESTERN PARADIGMS. CHALLENGING THE TERTIUM COMPARATIONIS THEORY

Scala G.(Speaker), Università di Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

COMPARING COMPARATIVE METHODS. RELIGIOUS LAWS BETWEEN THEOLOGY AND JURISPRUDENCE

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

TEACHING RELIGION, REPRODUCING NORMS: RELIGIONIZATION AND THE POLITICS OF INTERFAITH PEDAGOGY

Moyaert M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

IN SEARCH FOR DEMOCRATIC RELIGION: HERMENEUTICAL CHALLENGES IN STATE EVALUATIONS OF FAITH COMMUNITIES

Lindkvist E.(Speaker), Lund University ~ Lund ~ Sweden

URBAN GOVERNANCE OF RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Giuseppe Giordan
Chair: Giuseppe Giordan

Urban societies worldwide are being reshaped by cultural and religious pluralization driven by migration and broader social change, prompting municipal governments, faith communities, and other stakeholders to play an increasingly active role in governing religious diversity. This urban governance involves a wide range of policy interventions and regulatory mechanisms. However, the relationship between interreligious dialogue and freedom of and from religion remains underexplored, particularly where dialogue functions not only as an object of governance or a mode of interreligious communication, but as a social practice that contributes to the establishment of norms for more equal and inclusive urban public spaces.
This panel brings together five contributions that discuss how the governance of religious diversity is grounded in various Italian cities, and how freedom of/from religion is socially constructed in urban societies. Marco Bontempi analyzes sacred art museums as dialogical spaces where religious identities are enacted through performative interaction. Olga Breskaya and Giuseppe Giordan explore the meanings of religious freedom as an outcome of the interaction among multiple social actors who continuously define and reshape it through interreligious dialogue. Maddalena Colombo and Giulia Mezzetti examine the management of interreligious dialogue in Brescia, emphasizing tensions between participation and neutrality in a highly diverse urban setting. Matteo Di Placido and Stefania Palmisano conceptualize the interreligious field as a semi-autonomous space structured by institutional logics, ideological projects, and struggles over resources. Marco Guglielmi and Stefano Sbalchiero show how religious freedom and interreligious dialogue are framed in the Italian press, highlighting the role of media narratives in shaping public understandings of religious freedom and interreligious dialogue.

LOCAL DISCOURSES ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: A CASE STUDY OF PADOVA

Breskaya O.(Speaker), Giordan G.(Speaker), University of Padova ~ Padova ~ Italy

ARTICULATING THE INTERRELIGIOUS FIELD: ISOMORPHISM, DIFFERENTIATION AND IDEOLOGY IN URBAN GOVERNANCE

Di Placido M.(Speaker), Palmisano S.(Speaker), University of Torino ~ Torino ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN THE ITALIAN PRESS: A TOPIC-DETECTION ANALYSIS (2010–2023)

Guglielmi M.(Speaker), University of Padova ~ Padova ~ Italy

The management of interreligious dialogue in Brescia: between participation and neutrality

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MATERIAL REALITIES OF RACE, CLASS, GENDER AND RELIGION. QUESTIONING THE PRODUCTION OF INEQUALITY AND INJUSTICE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Pola - A108

Contact: Charlotte Jacobs
Chair: Sonja Thomaier, Dörte Mohme, Joerg Rieger, Charlotte Jacobs

This panel explores the complex interplay between material realities and the production of inequality and injustice at the intersections of race, class, gender and religion. While scholarship on (in)equality has increasingly emphasized the multifaceted nature of social hierarchies, the role of material conditions – such as labour relations, economic resources, and lived environments – in shaping and transforming these hierarchies remains a pressing focus. An examination of material relations does not merely enumerate intersecting symptoms of systemic inequalities but seeks to explain their causes and functions in order to challenge them at their roots. As religion both reflects and shapes material realities through religious traditions, institutions, and communities, it can reinforce inequalities and injustices as well as offer resources for resistance, solidarity, and transformation.

We therefore invite scholars, activists, and practitioners from various backgrounds with varying academic focuses (biblical studies, ethics, religion and society, etc.) who seek to give renewed critical attention to the material dimensions of race, class, gender, and queer realities, with particular attention to religion. By foregrounding material realities, this panel invites a conversation on how inequalities are produced, naturalized, and finally dismantled across these interlocking domains. The panel continues a series from five previous EuARe annual conference panels on labour, economic justice, and queering liberation. It is open to anyone who wishes to join the critical conversation on the material production of inequality, exchange insights and strategies for resistance and transformation, and contribute to this ongoing work.

INEQUALITY IS TO CLASS LIKE PRIVILEGE IS TO POWER: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND RESISTANCE

Rieger J.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville, TN ~ United States of America

LEMONS, LEMONADE, AND WHAT WE LEARN ABOUT LABOUR RELATIONS

Jacobs C.(Speaker), University of Jena ~ Jena ~ Germany

BRICKS WITHOUT STRAW: LABOR, LIBERATION, AND THE EGALITARIAN STRAND OF BIBLICAL MONOTHEISM (EXODUS 5)

Kahl B.(Speaker), Union Theological Seminary ~ New York ~ United States of America

WHOSE BODY COUNTS? WOMEN'S EXPERIENCE, MORAL AUTHORITY AND CATHOLIC SEXUAL ETHICS

Perera S.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

CREATING GROUND: ANALYSIS OF BEYOND APOLOGETICS IN QUEER AND FEMINIST THEOLOGY

Jonescu P.(Speaker), University of Heidelberg ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

CHRISTIAN UNIVERSALISM, WHITENESS, AND THE MATERIAL ORDERING OF SPACE

Löschcke Centeno A.(Speaker), Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg ~ Oldenburg ~ Germany

DANCING WITH THE STONE BUTCHES: CLASS, GENDER, AND THE MATERIAL REALITIES OF QUEER THEOLOGIES

Thomaier S.(Speaker), University of Hildesheim ~ Hildesheim ~ Germany

ZUR JOSEONJOK-FRAGE: A POLITICAL-THEOLOGICAL ESSAY ON APORO-XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH KOREA

An T.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

HEAT STRESS ON CONSTRUCTION SITES, SOLIDARITY ON THE STREETS

Schünemann T.(Speaker), Hui M.(Speaker), University of Leipzig ~ Leipzig ~ Germany

ECONOMIES OF THE SPIRIT: MATERIAL PNEUMATOLOGY AND THE END OF HISTORY

Larner L.(Speaker), University of Roehampton ~ London ~ United Kingdom

WOMEN AND AGENCY IN LATE ANTIQUITY. FROM SEPTUAGINT TO CHRISTIANITY, AND BEYOND: THEORETICAL APPROACHES AND CASE STUDIES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Fabio Caruso
Chair: Laura Carnevale, Fabio Caruso

Agency can be considered as the ability of individuals or social groups to act intentionally, make choices and influence social reality, even within structural constraints such as norms, institutions, roles and inequalities.

Women's agency in Late Antiquity has become a key analytical category for reassessing social, religious, and cultural dynamics between the Hellenistic Jewish world and Early Christianity. Rather than equating agency with overt power or modern notions of autonomy, recent scholarship emphasizes context-sensitive forms of action, negotiation, and influence exercised by women.

Drawing on different types of sources, the panel is divided into two sections. The first one covers examples of women's agency and gendered authority in the Septuagint, and their reception in Late Antiquity.

The second one focuses on women's social and religious agency in Early Christianity, through the examination of diverse ritual, literary, social and historical settings.

In both cases theoretical approaches to women agency and case studies – ranging from biblical women and prophetic figures to prophetesses, ascetics, patrons, and anonymous actors – demonstrate how women could participate meaningfully in religious life, shape communal identities, and transmit traditions.

WOMEN AND EDUCATION IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY. A METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL APPROACH

Caruso F.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

AID, HELPER, OR HANDMAIDEN? TRACING THE SHIFTING ROLE OF EVE FROM GENESIS TO THE CHURCH FATHERS

Bellantuono A.(Speaker), Catholic University of Lille ~ Lille ~ France

A MOSAIC PORTRAIT OF JUDITH FROM THE VETUS LATINA FRAGMENTS

Bigoni L.(Speaker), University of Fribourg ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

WHEN VIRTUE BECOMES A NAME. ΘΕΟΣΈΒΕΙΑ AND WOMEN'S AGENCY IN GREEK INSCRIPITIONS

De Doncker E.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Louvain ~ Louvain ~ Belgium

PROSTITUTES, PROPHETS, PRIESTS: SOME CASES OF WOMAN POWER IN AND OUTSIDE THE EARLY CHURCH

Lupieri E.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

MARY OF CASSOBOLA: A WOMAN IN TWO EPISTLES OF THE PS.IGNATIAN CORPUS. AN EXEMPLARY CASE OF "GENDERED" AUTHORITATIVE MODEL.

Carnevale L.(Speaker), University Aldo Moro of Bari ~ Bari ~ Italy

BEYOND THE AVENTINE FEMALE AGENCY AND RELIGIOUS EMPOWERMENT OF JEROME'S FEMALE CORRESPONDENTS

Marolla G.(Speaker), Pegaso University ~ Naples ~ Italy

BETWEEN FAMILY AND STATE: BIBLICAL AND PATRISTIC MOTIFS IN JEAN BODIN

Dainese D.(Speaker), Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

SEXUAL AND POWER ABUSE CRISIS IN THE CHURCH: A SYSTEMIC, INTERDISCIPLINARY, AND HISTORICAL APPROACH

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Pola - A210

Contact: Carlos Alvarez
Chair: Silvia Mostaccio

Since 2018, understanding sexual and power abuse in the Church has increasingly recognized its systemic character (CIASE, 2019). Abuse is no longer seen as isolated, but as the result of complex, interrelated factors within specific cultural, geographical, ecclesial, political, and economic contexts. This requires critically examining theological, spiritual, institutional, and juridical structures that have historically produced and legitimized power asymmetries, normalizing domination and violence—particularly gendered, ethnic, and class-based—by clergy, religious, and lay actors.

This open panel seeks to bring together research from diverse disciplines and cultural contexts. Given the scale of the phenomenon, abuse must be studied through an interdisciplinary, comparative, and global lens, as it constitutes probably one of the most serious institutional crises faced by the Catholic Church since the Reformation. Historical research, in dialogue with theology, sociology, anthropology, canon law, and psychology, is crucial for addressing current questions and developing critical discernment to untangle multiple dimensions of this crisis. Such dialogue may also contribute to new analytical frameworks, narratives, and institutional dispositifs aimed at safeguarding practices, recognizing and accompanying survivors, and promoting healing in the ecclesial body.

Thematic Axes:

History of abuse in ecclesial contexts: archives, cases, narratives.

Theologies, spiritualities, and the production of power asymmetries.

Contributions from sociology, anthropology, and psychology.

Challenges of canon law: normativity, governance, and juridical practices.

THE DESIGNATION OF SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE DIOCESE OF SANTIAGO, CHILE, 19TH CENTURY

Rengifo F.(Speaker), Profesora asociada, Escuela de Gobierno, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez ~ Santiago ~ Chile

FROM DENIAL TO APOLOGY: SHIFTS IN PAPAL COMMUNICATION ON CLERICAL SEXUAL ABUSE

Sedláková R.(Speaker), University Palacký, Faculty of Theology ~ Olomouc ~ Czech Republic

THE BLIND SIDE OF AN INSTITUTION. A PATHWAY TOWARD RESTORATION

Iula E.(Speaker), PFTIM - San Luigi ~ Naples ~ Italy

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: RESTORATIVE PATHWAYS

Da Silva Monteiro S.(Speaker), Universidade Católica Portuguesa ~ Lisboa ~ Portugal

POWER GAMES. SACRALISATION AND SYMBOLIC DOMINATION OF THE CATHOLIC PRIEST (16TH-20TH CENTURIES)

Mostaccio S.(Speaker), UCLouvain ~ Louvain-la-Neuve ~ Belgium

EXPLORING PRIMAL VULNERABILITY: A CASE STUDY ON ABUSES DURING FOUNDATIONAL STAGES AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY CATEGORIZATION

Grez E.(Speaker), Universidad Finis Terrae ~ Santiago ~ Chile

« IL FAUT UTILISER LES FORCES COMME ELLES SE PRÉSENTENT POUR LE RÈGNE DE DIEU »: MANAGING COMPLAINTS AND REGULATING CRISES WITHIN THE MONASTIC FRATERNITIES OF JERUSALEM (1970S-2000S)

Dolbeau S.(Speaker), École française de Rome ~ Roma ~ Italy

"AGAINST HER WILL, YET WITH HER SUPPORT"? QUESTIONING LUCIE COUTAZ'S SILENCE WITHIN THE FRAME OF SEXUAL ABUSE PERPETRATED BY ABBÉ PIERRE.

Ferrer M.B.(Speaker), EHESS ~ Paris ~ France

CASUS TRISTISSIMUS. AN EXPLORATION OF DISMISSAL POLICY IN THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN CHILE (1943–1955)

Alvarez C.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

(UN)EQUALS IN THE STATE? MINORITY PROTESTANTS AND THEIR RECOGNITION BY POLITICAL REGIMES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Pola - A209

Contact: Laura Popa
Chair: Eugenio F Biagini

The recognition of religious minorities by political regimes does not always equate with true equality, even when formal status has been granted. History shows that it often comes with impositions, covert persecution, or the loss of certain privileges. This panel aims to explore such moments of recognition, showcasing contradictory experiences of Protestant religious minorities with state power in their local contexts. What strategies did religious minorities use to attain legal recognition from the state? How did different political ideologies, such as communism and liberalism, affect their experiences of attaining equality? What does State recognition signify for Protestant minorities historically? What did minority Protestants gain or lose from state recognition, and what hidden forms of inequality were masked by this formal acknowledgement? How did their spiritual practices change as a result?

Organised by the research group “Protestantism as a minority religion” (https://minorityprotestants.wordpress.com/), the panel aims to understand how religious minorities interact with the state in moments of recognition and to explore the equalities and inequalities that originate from this dynamic across specific contexts. Contemporary struggles faced by minority Christian groups, such as those in northern Nigeria under radical Islamist attacks, or in North Korea and China under communist regimes, demand a reassessment of those dynamics under states that recognise them formally but not in practice.

BETWEEN EMPIRE AND MAJORITY: PROTESTANT MISSIONS AND THE SEARCH FOR CULTURAL RECOGNITION IN IRELAND

Bénazech Wendling K.(Speaker), University of Lorraine ~ Nancy ~ France

THE POLITICS OF WALDENSIAN WOMEN SCHOOLTEACHERS AMID COVERT PERSECUTION OF PROTESTANTS IN ITALY, 1860–1915

Popa L.(Speaker), University of Cambridge

BLASPHEMY, THE LAW AND THE CONTROL OF PROTESTANT MINORITIES. PARADIGMS AND PERSPECTIVES OF OPPRESSION

Nash D.(Speaker), Jesus College, Oxford University ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT'S HARSH RESPONSE TO THE SECESSION OF 1834

De Jong K.(Speaker), Protestantse Theologische Universiteit (PThU) ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

RECOGNIZED BUT NOT EQUAL: PROTESTANT MINORITIES AND THE AMBIGUATES OF THE STATE RECOGNITION IN SOCIALIST YUGOSLAVIA

Djuric Milovanovic A.(Speaker), Institute for Balkan Studies, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts ~ Belgrade ~ Serbia

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WITHOUT EQUALITY: PENTECOSTAL LEGALISATION IN LATE SOCIALIST CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Pácha M.(Speaker), Institute of Contemporary History of The Czech Academy of Sciences ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

‘IN FROM THE WILDERNESS’: AFRICAN INDEPENDENT CHURCHES AND THE POST-COLONIAL STATE IN ZIMBABWE

Maxwell D.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

THE EUROPEAN UNION IN DIALOGUE WITH CHURCHES: AN ANALYSIS FOCUSING ON MINORITY PROTESTANTS

Creemers J.(Speaker), ETF Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

A MINORITY CHURCH IN A TRANSFORMING DEMOCRACY

Spini D.(Speaker), New york University in Florence ~ Florence ~ Italy

STATE AND CHURCH IN GEORGIA: MINORITY PROTESTANTS AND THE POLITICS OF CONSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION

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IRELAND AND THE PERSECUTION OF PROTESTANTS IN THE ITALO-IBERIAN WORLD IN THE 1950S

Biagini E.F.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION AND GLOBAL POLITICS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - AT14

Contact: Michael Driessen
Chair: Michael Driessen, Scott Appleby

Research on religion and global politics has grown significantly over the last decades. In a first wave of research, seminal works like the Fundamentalisms project (1991), The Revenge of God (1991) and Public Religions in the Modern World (1994) observed the "return of religion" to international affairs at the end of the Cold War and conceptualized its disruption of the paradigm of secular modernity. Throughout the early 2000s and 2010s, a second wave of scholarship expanded and problematized these debates, expressing cautious optimism about the contributions of religious ideas and actors to international goals in the post-9/11 policy environment while chronicling the complex dynamics of religious conflict. More recently a third wave of scholarship on religion and global politics has emerged. This new wave has responded to the evolution of the international environment, marked by liberal crisis and inter-state conflict. Attentive to post-colonial legacies and offering a sustained critique of power dynamics and the role of the state, these new studies have focused on the constructive and disruptive dimensions of religion in international politics. They have returned focus to local political dynamics, drawn on diverse religious histories, employed new research methodologies and considered the role of theological debates in their work. They have also aimed to be relevant to policymakers by addressing topics such as interreligious engagement, religious freedom efforts, the religious genealogies of human rights, transnational conservative networks, democratic backsliding, and the role of faith-based organizations in international development. This panel, sponsored by Notre Dame's Ansari Institute for Global Engagement with Religion and the Rome Summer Seminars on Religion and Global Politics, encourages emerging and established scholars to explore these new directions in the study of Religion and Global Politics.

ENTANGLED BLOCPOLITIK: NEW FORMS OF CIVILIZATIONAL BELONGING IN EUROPE

Botelho Moniz J.(Speaker), Lusófona University ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

WHAT IS COVENANTAL PLURALISM? DEFINITION, SCOPE, AND CHALLENGES

Lemasters R.(Speaker), University of Kansas ~ Lawrence ~ United States of America

ENVISIONING A PATH TO GLOBAL PEACE: A CROSS-CULTURAL FRAMEWORK BASED ON THE SPIRITUAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT OF EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY INDIA

Portilla Pelaez I.(Speaker), Kone Foundation, Tampere University ~ Tampere ~ Finland

ONE COUNTRY- DIFFERENT FORMS OF SECULARISM? REGIONAL VARIATIONS IN STATE-RELIGION RELATIONS: THE CASE OF GERMANY”

Franz M.(Speaker), TU Dortmund University ~ Dortmund ~ Germany

DO CATHOLICS PROTEST DIFFERENTLY? A QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF CATHOLIC DEMONSTRATIONS AROUND THE WORLD

Day J.(Speaker), University of Notre Dame ~ Notre Dame ~ United States of America

CATHOLIC CARE PRACTICE AS SOCIAL (NON)MOVEMENT: ASYLUM GOVERNANCE IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Soehnge Cohen J.(Speaker), University of Notre Dame ~ Notre Dame ~ United States of America

BETWEEN ORDER AND OPPRESSION: NAVIGATING SECTARIAN STRIFE LAWS IN THE ARAB REGION

Hachem F.(Speaker), University of Amsterdam/Beirut Arab University ~ Beirut ~ Lebanon

NEGOTIATING RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY THROUGH FAMILY LAW: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS ELITES IN EGYPT, MOROCCO, TUNISIA, AND TURKEY

Ali M.G.(Speaker), Cairo University ~ Cairo ~ Egypt

TALES OF POSTSECULAR PERFORMANCE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - AT13

Contact: Christian Kern
Chair: Christian Kern

In conjunction with structural changes in public spheres, new forms of political debate are emerging, beyond traditional verbal formats. Performative practices—such as quasi-liturgical rituals, public choreographies, aesthetic interventions, sonic collages—are increasingly shaping political spheres. Alongside a politics of language, a politics of performance is gaining significance, in which power is negotiated through sublinguistic and affective practices. This shift is closely linked to the renewed presence of religious symbols and spiritual auras in public life. Even societies that understand themselves as secular are increasingly confronted with forms of postsecular political performativity.
Research on this phenomenon remains underdeveloped, with scientific debates largely focused on spoken discourse rather than artistic-aesthetic and performative dimensions and their dynamics of transcendence. The research network Postsecular Performances (DFG-funded, # 545972161) addresses this gap by investigating postsecular politico-performatives in public space, in a three-year research process. It examines how power relations are stabilized, transformed, disrupted through alterity-related performance, developing key elements of a grounded theory of postsecular performance. The network also reflects on religion-related academic work as a political-performative practice of own kind. It applies and discusses arts-based research as an approach to critically and creatively address the hierarchical asymmetries of academic work, discovering traces of a postsecular epistemologies.
This panel presents the network's aims, methods, and central findings. In its contributions, current examples of postsecular performances are discussed, in classic papers and arts-based presentations. Postsecular performances emerge as ambivalent spaces of imagination, capable of both enchanting and consolidating power relations while also generating disenchantment and transformative impulses.

POSTSECULARITY AS TRANS-IMMANENCE OF THE BODY?

Kern C.(Speaker), Faculty of Theology (cath.), Muenster ~ Muenster ~ Germany

DANCING BIBLICAL TEXTS – A PERFORMATIVE EXEGESIS

Hikota R.C.(Speaker), The Margaret Beaufort Institute, Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

PERFORMING THE POSTSECULAR: SITES OF POSTSECULARITY IN THE WORLD AND IN ART

Iswarya V.(Speaker), Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal ~ Manipal ~ India

SENSING THE POSTSECULAR LIMINAL SPACE – A PERFORMANCE LECTURE

Sojer T.(Speaker), Faculty of Theology, Erfurt ~ Erfurt ~ Germany

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE ENGAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS ACTORS WITH IN/EQUALITY (19TH-21ST C.)

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A18

Contact - Chair: Edurne Yániz Berrio
Chair: Natalia Núñez Bargueño, Marie Lucas

This jointly organised panel, co led by the Association Française d'Histoire Religieuse Contemporaine and the Asociación Española de Historia Religiosa Contemporánea, seeks to strengthen collaboration among European scholars of contemporary religious history and to consolidate a shared research space beyond national or denominational boundaries. It aims to bring together researchers from across Europe to examine the relationships between religion, politics, and society from the 19th to the 21st century, with particular attention to how religious institutions, practices, and discourses have shaped, confronted, or resisted forms of in/equality. Although the concept of equality emerged largely from Enlightenment and liberal political traditions, religious actors have long engaged with this notion, using it to promote reforms or to defend, reinforce, or question established authority and the status quo. The panel welcomes contributions on how religious actors have approached in/equalities related to social hierarchies (gender, class, race, religion), human rights, interreligious or ideological encounters, and devotional or liturgical practices. By bringing together historians working on diverse religious traditions and methods, it seeks to deepen historiographical reflection and strengthen European synergies among historians of contemporary religion.

PACIFIC ISLANDERS AND SPANISH MISSIONARIES UNDER JAPANESE RULE (1922-1945)

Watanabe C.(Speaker), Aoyama Gakuin University ~ Tokyo ~ Japan

IDEOLOGICAL CONVERSION OF THE SLOVENIAN STUDENT PRESS AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF YUGOSLAVIA DURING 1989

Kaninska M.(Speaker), Independent Scientific Researcher ~ Belgrade ~ Serbia

THE RICHELIEU CENTER DURING THE 1960S : A CHAPLAINCY FOR STUDENTS IN FRONT OF INEQUALITIES

Duport A.(Speaker), Académie de Toulouse ~ Toulouse ~ France

THE CALL TO PRAYER: POLICIES OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN MUSLIMS AND CATHOLICS IN REBEL SPAIN DURING THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR (1936-1939)

Gonzalez Gonzalez A.(Speaker), Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha ~ Cuenca ~ Spain

VISITER ÉCÔNE (1970-1988) : NORMATIVITÉ ET GOUVERNEMENTALITÉ CATHOLIQUES FACE À LA QUESTION TRADITIONALISTE

Dolbeau S.(Speaker), École française de Rome ~ Roma ~ Italy

MUJERES EN LA HISTORIA DE LA DIÓCESIS DE BILBAO. UNA HISTORIA DE PARTICIPACIÓN, CORRESPONSABILIDAD Y DESIIGUALDAD

Barroso A.(Speaker), Director of Archivo Histórico Eclesiástico de Bizkaia ~ Bilbao ~ Spain

EXPLORING MARIE-DOMINIQUE CHENU'S WRITINGS ON WORK IN THE FRENCH SOCIO-HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE 1940S AND EARLY 1950S

Hugla C.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

YOU WIN SOME, YOU LOSE SOME: ON ADAPTIVE AND HYBRID (RE)USE OF RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Karen Lens
Chair: Samuel Goyvaerts, Karen Lens, Kate Jordan

Across Europe, profound religious and ritual transformations are reshaping the landscapes of worship and community life. Churches, monasteries, and other sacred sites are increasingly confronted with questions of continuity and change: some are adapted for new liturgical practices, others are shared between different communities and users, and many are repurposed for secular or hybrid functions. At the same time, repurposed and multi-use religious buildings raise questions about how people and communities inhabit and share sacred environments. Adaptive reuse is often celebrated as cultural resilience: saving buildings from vacancy and decay, while opening them to new forms of meaning. Yet each intervention also entails loss: of ritual coherence, of symbolic depth, of the intangible "spirit of place." How can we acknowledge both sides of this dynamic? How is 'loss' or absence spatially expressed? Is there such a thing as a neutral shared space, and how far can adaptation and reuse go before too much is surrendered?
This panel invites religious studies scholars, architects, sociologists, theologians, liturgists, and artists to reflect on these tensions. We welcome contributions that explore the delicate balance between preservation and transformation, heritage and innovation, memory and forgetting. Case studies may address contemporary design responses to shifting worship practices, including the rise of Pentecostalism and the emergence of quasi-Christian spaces blending wellness and alternative spiritualities. Papers can also investigate historical repurposing or sharing of religious spaces, demolished or memorial spaces, or rather focus on architectural styles and experiments with minimalism and emptiness, highlighting how spaces negotiate the move from the religious to the spiritual.
The conveners will also inquire into possibilities of academically publishing (a selection of) submitted papers.

RECIPROCAL SPACES: ON THE USE AND VALUE OF CHURCH BUILDINGS IN A POST-CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

Goyvaerts S.(Speaker), Tilburg University, School of Catholic Theology ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

EAT, PRAY, THRIVE: URBAN CHURCHES AS MULTI-PURPOSE SPACES IN CONTEMPORARY BRITAIN

Jordan K.(Speaker), University of Westminster ~ London ~ United Kingdom

THE PAROIKIA, OR PARISH SPACE, AS A HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY BLUEPRINT IN FLANDERS, BELGIUM

Lens K.(Speaker), Universiteit Hasselt ~ Hasselt ~ Belgium

THE PRESENCE AND THE ABSENCE OF THE SACRED SPACE IN THE THEORETICAL RESEARCH ON DISUSED CHURCHES FROM VATICAN II (1962-1965) TO THE FIRST VATICAN GUIDELINES IN 2018

Giniunaite R.(Speaker), Pontifical Gregorian University ~Rome ~ Italy / Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

THE “LONG GOODBYE” OF SACRED ARCHITECTURE IN POST-INDUSTRIAL NORTH AMERICA

Shepherd G.(Speaker), Doctoral Researcher ~ San Francisco ~ United States of America

FAR FROM STATIC: OPPORTUNITY AND LOSS IN THE HYBRID APPROACH TO ADAPTIVE REUSE OF URBAN MONASTERIES IN CONTEMPORARY ROME

Jacobs B.(Speaker), Sapienza Università di Roma ~ Rome ~ Italy

'DOCUMENTING LOSS AND RESTORATION IN LONDON'S POSTWAR CHURCHES: A PHOTOGRAPHER'S PERSPECTIVE'

East J.(Speaker), Other ~ London ~ United Kingdom

BEYOND THE CANON: COMMUNITY-FOCUSED ADAPTATION OF HISTORIC ANGLICAN CHURCHES IN POST-1945 ENGLAND

Steele M.(Speaker), Manchester School of Architecture ~ Manchester ~ United Kingdom

CRITICAL RE-READING OF INTRA MUROS CONVENTS: PUBLIC CALLS BETWEEN MEMORY AND TRANSFORMATION

Scandroglio Anelli M.(Speaker), Politecnico di Milano ~ milano ~ Italy

PHD RESEARCH IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Pola A208

Contact: Maximilian Kunte
Chair: Maria Chiara Giorda

In this panel, PhD candidates present and discuss their ongoing or recently completed research within the wide field of the study of religion. The aim of the session is to provide a scholarly forum in which emerging researchers can share their current research, receive constructive feedback, and engage in critical dialogue with peers and senior academics. Part 1 of the panel “Religious Identities and Multireligious Societies” (Maximilian Kunte, Caterina Pignotti, Salvatore Senatore, Ihsan Altintas, Liri Tourgeman, Manuela Iapaol; Chair: Maria Chiara Giorda) brings together doctoral researchers exploring how religious communities construct, negotiate, and express identity within increasingly diverse and plural societies. Part 2 “Contemporary Religious Challenges” (Claudia Varotti, Nancy Wu, Szilvi Watson, Natalia Wizimirska, Anna Raskova; Chair: Valeria Fabretti) presents doctoral research engaging with the complex and often contested role of religion in contemporary public life. Part 3 “Theology/Philosophy” (Lorenzo Marcantognini, Leonid Sevastyanov, Henrike Engelhardt, Andrea Avellino, Giustina Benedetta Baron, Matthias Heinecke; Chair: Kristina Stoeckl) gathers doctoral researchers working at the intersection of theology, philosophy, and intellectual history. By offering a platform for doctoral research, this panel seeks to highlight new directions in the study of religion and encourage international exchange among early-career researchers. The panel is organized jointly by the PhD in Politics in Luiss (Kristina Stoeckl and Maximilian Kunte) and the Italian National PhD in Peace Studies (Maria Chiara Giorda, Uni Roma Tre, and Carmelo Russo, Uni Sapienza).

EASTERN SLAVIC ORTHODOX IDENTITIES IN GERMANY

Kunte M.(Speaker), LUISS ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE SPATIAL DIMENSION OF INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: A CASE STUDY OF THE ROMANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS IN TURIN

Pignotti C.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

GLOBAL ISLAM AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES. DISCOURSES AND THE CIRCULATION OF KNOWLEDGE AMONG MUSLIM COMMUNITIES IN SOUTHERN ITALY

Senatore S.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

ATTITUDES TOWARDS RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN HINDUISM AND ISLAM: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE RAMAKRISHNA MOVEMENT AND NUR MOVEMENT

Altintas I.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

BETWEEN HALAKHA AND EGALITARIANISM: ORTHODOX JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Tourgeman L.S.(Speaker), École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales ~ Paris ~ France

WHEN ENGAGEMENT IS (ALMOST) MARRIAGE: A PRELIMINARY ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE LAW OF MOSES ON BETROTHAL

Wu N.(Speaker), EDLE (University of Hamburg) ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL INEQUALITIES OF CHRISTIAN POSTGRADUATES AT UNIVERSITIES IN ENGLAND

Watson S.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

The Franciscan memory represented by the image of Saint Anthony in Slovak churches

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UNACKNOWLEDGED USE OF PSYCHOLOGY IN THE VATICAN DOCUMENTS ON HOMOSEXUALITY 1975-2005: PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS, THEORIES AND BELIEFS UNDERLYING OFFICIAL TEACHING OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Wizimirska N.(Speaker), University of Eastern Finland ~ Kuopio ~ Finland

CONTROVERSIES SURROUNDING THE FUNERAL OF JAROSLAV VRCHLICKÝ

Rašková A.(Speaker), Charles University, Faculty of Arts ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

SOVEREIGNTY AND RELIGION: BODIN IN THE ITALIAN POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS DEBATE

Marcantognini L.(Speaker), Drest-Italian Doctoral School of Religious Studies Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

THE OLD BELIEVER ANTICHRIST AS ILLEGITIMATE OCCUPYING POWER – AN INDUCTIVE AND ASSOCIATIVE ANALYSIS

Sevastyanov L.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

John Spencer’s Theocratia - a utopian account of monarchy in Restoration England?

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF RATZINGER'S THEOLOGY TO THE FORMATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE: FROM THE DRAFTING OF THE CATECHISM TO THE MAGISTERIAL TEACHINGS

Avellino A.(Speaker), Universitá della Svizzera italiana ~ Lugano ~ Switzerland

A SEMIOTIC STUDY OF RUSSIAN COSMISM IN POST-SOVIET RUSSIA

Baron G.B.(Speaker), DREST UNIMORE; UNIVERSITY OF TARTU ~ TURIN-TARTU ~ Italy

RELIGION AND (IN)EQUALITIES IN ITALIAN LITERATURE: THEOLOGY, NARRATIVE AND IDENTITY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Lucia Battistel
Chair: Lucia Battistel, Rebecca Walker

Religious traditions, even if based on universalistic principles, are mostly governed by hierarchical normative networks, which inevitably imply inequalities – whether in terms of gender, religious affiliation, physical and social status. Similarly, written discourse, and thus its textual organisation, is also permeated by dynamics of selection and hierarchisation of meaning and, once produced, is in turn inserted into hierarchies of canon. However, both theological discourse and literary texts that hold and 'function' incorporate processes of self-reflection and critical negotiation, necessary for their historicity. Sometimes, it is literature itself that encourages and causes theological discourse to become dialectical, welcoming and reworking theological conceptual nuclei which, through intertextual practices, activate critical tensions within the text itself: in these cases, literary texts become places of religious meaning production, making visible forms of diversity and inequality that are often marginalised in doctrinal canons.

In line with this year's theme, the panel thus aims to investigate the relationship between religions, diversity and inequalities through an interdisciplinary approach combining critical literary studies and theological reflection. Particular attention will be paid, though not exclusively, to female religious experiences as spaces of negotiation between theological normativity and lived experience.

We invite papers on any aspect of Italian literature. Contributions that focus on one or more of these subtopics are particularly welcome:

- incorporation and literary reworking of theological concepts;
- representations of confessional diversity and religious asymmetries in literary texts;
- literary texts as mediation between normative theology and lived practices;
- literary criticism of theological hierarchies;
- female religious experiences and feminist theologies;
- literary reflections of embodied theology.

MATERIAL SPIRITUALITY AND THE LITERARY WORLDS OF CLAUDIA DURASTANTI

Walker R.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

A PATH TO AWARENESS, TO MEDIATION: ITALIAN WOMEN POETS AS MEDIATORS FOR INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Battistel L.(Speaker), LUMSA ~ Rome ~ Italy

ADRIANA ZARRI AND "THE HUMBLE THINGS OF DAILY LIFE"

Parmeggiani F.(Speaker), Fordham University ~ New York, NY ~ United States of America

WOMEN AND FRIENDSHIPS MEDIATED BY THE DIVINE: VITTORIA COLONNA’S TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS AND PETRARCH’S TRIUMPH OF ETERNITY

Faggioli S.(Speaker), Villanova University ~ Philadelphia, Pennsylvania ~ United States of America

BETWEEN NEGATIVE THEOLOGY AND JUNGIAN PSYCHOLOGY: APOPHATICISM AND PSYCHIC POLYTHEISM IN GIORGIO MANGANELLI

Stefanese D.(Speaker), Università "Gabriele d'Annunzio di Chieti-Pescara ~ Pescara ~ Italy

RELIGION IN DIALOGUE. TRANSFORMATIONS, CHALLENGES, AND CHANCES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Noemi Call
Chair: Kurt Appel

In the contect of evolving forms of interdisciplinary research on religion and interreligious dialogue within shifting societal contexts, religions are increasingly involved in novel forms of encounters and alliance-building. These are forged, lived, and narrated in the public sphere – not only among religious traditions but also in encounters between religious and secular worlds. In this broader sense, “religion in dialogue” exceeds interreligious exchange and becomes an engagement with the secular, with other forms of knowledge, and with artistic and scientific practices.

Against the backdrop of social, political, and epistemic (in)equalities, such dialogical constellations reveal both asymmetries of power and possibilities for transformation. The interplay between religious and secular worlds involves cooperation as well as conflict: alliances may emerge from shared experiences of marginalization, unequal recognition, or pressures to justify religion’s place in contemporary societies. At the same time, religious traditions are internally diverse and marked by political, theological, and cultural divisions. New forms of dialogue therefore often do not take religion itself as the primary distinguishing feature but emerge around shared concerns and common struggles within religious–secular partnerships.

Dialogue, understood not as a formal procedure but as a transformative practice that involves religious as well as non-religious dialogue partners, takes place under multiple pressures in need of closer examination. Within this framework, the panel brings together contributions from Natural Sciences and Ecology; the Arts; Abrahamic Dynamics: Dialogue between Islam, Christianity and Judaism; Politics and Gender; Critical Perspectives on Religion. Together, these perspectives aim to offer a nuanced understanding of how dialogue shapes contemporary interactions between religious and secular worlds.

READING ACROSS SCRIPTURES: AL-BIQĀʿĪ'S (D. 885/1480) ENGAGEMENT WITH THE BIBLE IN QURʾANIC COMMENTARY

Kurt T.(Speaker), Associate Professor, Department of Islamic-Theological Studies, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

'ECUMENISM OF HATE'? INTERDENOMINATIONAL COLLABORATIONS IN TRADITIONALIST YOUTH WORK AND ADULT EDUCATION IN AUSTRIA

Limacher K.(Speaker), Mattes--Zippenfenig A.(Speaker), Programme Manager of the "Vienna Doctoral School of Theology and Research on Religion", University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

SECULAR AND SPIRITUAL FEMINISTS: BUILDING ALLIANCES ACROSS EPISTEMOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES

Grenz S.(Speaker), Associate Professor, Department of Education, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

CRITIQUE AND DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY. THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE ABOUT THE POLITICAL

Kuran D.(Speaker), Postdoc Assistant, Department of Systematic Theology and Ethics, University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

WRITING THROUGH CAESURA: HÖLDERLIN AND DELEUZE'S DIALOGUE AS A CRITIQUE OF RELIGION

Fiorletta M.(Speaker), PhD candidate, Research Centre "Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society", University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

ARS DEI AND THE WORD THROUGH WHOM ALL THINGS WERE MADE: CHRISTOLOGY AND CREATION IN THE AUGUSTINIAN TRADITION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A12

Contact: David Bennett
Chair: Oskari Juurikkala

Augustine of Hippo is frequently characterized—and often critiqued—as a thinker of dualisms: nature and grace, city of God and city of man, spirit and matter. However, such readings overlook the Christological center that holds these poles in a dynamic, sacramental tension. This panel explores the "Christological key" to the Augustinian doctrine of creation, arguing that for Augustine and his successors, the mystery of the Incarnate Word is inseparable from the ontological structure of the cosmos. As the Ars Patris (the Art of the Father), Christ is not merely an external redeemer but the very blueprint through whom all things were made and in whom all things consist. The panel invite patristic scholars, systematic theologians, and ethicists to explore the vitality of the Augustinian tradition in addressing contemporary questions. We invite contributions from historical exegesis as well as contemporary systematicians and ethicists to explore how an Augustinian "Christology of Creation" offers a robust framework for interdisciplinary dialogue today from a "thick" description of reality that is at once deeply scriptural, philosophically sophisticated, and ethically urgent for a world facing ecological and social fragmentation. Possible thematic contributions include: Historical & Exegetical: Reassessing the relationship between the Logos and the rationes seminales (seed-like principles) in Augustine's Genesis commentaries;Theological Aesthetics: Exploring the connections between natural beauty, the imagery of nature, and Christ; Science & Religion: How a Christocentric metaphysics provides a "grammar" for the natural sciences, moving beyond the conflict model to see creation as a structured expression of Divine Wisdom; Ethics & Ecology: Utilizing the Totus Christus (the Whole Christ) framework to develop a non-anthropocentric ecological ethic and a Christologically grounded natural law.

• Ethics & Ecology: Utilizing the Totus Christus (the Whole Christ) framework to develop a non-anthropocentric ecological ethic and a Christologically grounded natural law.

THE ARS PATRIS: REVISITING AUGUSTINIAN PNEUMATOLOGY AND RECENTRING CHRISTOLOGY IN RELATION TO AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Bennett D.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

"THE GARDEN AS SIGN: AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF CREATION, ARTISTIC MATERIALITY, AND THE LONGING FOR EDEN"

Yearwood A.(Speaker), Independent ~ Oxford, England ~ United States of America

THINKING ABOUT THE SEMIOTICS OF THEOPHANY WITH ST AUGUSTINE

Ritzema J.(Speaker), University of Oxford; Pharos Foundation. ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

AN AESTHETIC APPROACH TO ECO-THEOLOGY: AUGUSTINE AND THE BOOK OF NATURE

Biron L.(Speaker), Balliol College University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

SUSTAINABILITY AND JEWISH ETHICS: IN/EQUALITY, RESPONSIBILITY, AND INTERRELIGIOUS HORIZONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Hanoch Ben Pazi
Chair: Miriam Feldmann - Kaye, Yehudah Mirsky, Evner Dinur

Open panel with an innovative framework for addressing sustainability, responsibility, and justice through Jewish ethics and philosophy. Bringing together biblical interpretation, rabbinic literature, modern Jewish philosophy, phenomenology, ethics, and social critique, the panel demonstrates how Jewish sources generate distinctive perspectives on ecological crises while remaining in active conversation with wider religious and interreligious discourses.

The panel challenges anthropocentric and justice-centered assumptions shaping contemporary ethical thought. Close engagement with biblical texts destabilizes expectations that nature conforms to human moral categories, revealing realities governed by forces exceeding human knowledge and control. Philosophical readings of revelation and discovery redirect human agency away from mastery toward attentiveness, restraint, and responsibility.

Several contributions extend ethical reflection across expanding horizons of time and space. Jewish philosophical resources are applied to questions of technological ambition, outer space exploration, and collective power, emphasizing moral intention over scale. Sustainability requires ethical commitments questioning prevailing economic, cultural, and political assumptions. Economic culture and spatial organization are examined as moral systems through religious lenses rather than as neutral scientific frameworks. Jewish sources offer critiques of consumerism, perpetual growth, and inequality, alongside alternative models of shared responsibility and collective wellbeing. Gender-attentive readings foreground vulnerability, care, and embodied ethical labor under conditions of environmental precarity and persistent questions of in/equality. The panel welcomes participants from other religious traditions and values interreligious dialogue, contributing to EuARE's commitment to critical, cross-traditional reflection on religion and global challenges.

RELIGION, ECONOMICS AND THE CRISIS OF SUSTAINABILITY: NEW PERSPECTIVES FROM JEWISH RE/SOURCES

Benstein J.(Speaker), Heschel Sustainability Center, Bar Ilan University ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

THE JUBILEE AND DEBT REMITTANCES IN THE JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES: PAST AND RECENT HISTORY

Kostoris Padoa Schioppa F.(Speaker), Luiss University ~ rome ~ Italy

THE EQUAL RIGHTS OF FUTURE GENERATIONS: A CHALLENGE FOR RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR JEWISH THOUGHT

Dinur A.(Speaker), Sapir College ~ Sderot ~ Israel

"ERUV" IN JEWISH LOCAL COMMUNITIES – INCLUSIONARY PRACTICE OR EXCLUSIONARY COMMUNITIES?

Vardi S.(Speaker), Emek Yezreel Valley College ~ AFULA ~ Israel

CATHOLIC ENVIRONMENTAL DISCOURSE AND THE MOBILIZATION OF CATHOLIC-JEWISH SOLIDARITY

Dillon M.(Speaker), University of New Hampshire ~ Durham ~ United States of America

THE WEEPING WATERS OF CREATION: GENDERED ELEMENTS AND SUBJUGATED MATTER FROM MIDRASH TO BACHELARD

Verliebter R.(Speaker), Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden, University of Hamburg and Bar-Ilan University ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

JEWISH OUTER SPACE ETHICS: INDIVIDUAL MISSION AND COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Baharier B.(Speaker), Bar Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

GENDERED ETHICS OF DROUGHT: A LEVINASIAN READING OF TALMUDIC STORIES

Sinclair Y.(Speaker), Bar Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

JUSTICE, EQUALITY AND HUMAN SOLIDARITY OVER TIME

Mirsky Y.(Speaker), Brandies University ~ BOSTON ~ United States of America

BEYOND JUSTICE: THE HUMAN PLACE IN NATURE IN THE DIVINE RESPONSE TO JOB

Ben Pazi H.(Speaker), Bar Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

SUSTAINABILITY IN CONTEMPORARY READINGS OF BIBLICAL TEXTS

Melloni A.(Speaker), Ben Pazi H.(Speaker), University of Bologna and Modena/Reggio Emilia ~ Bologna ~ Italy

DISCOVERY, SUSTAINABILITY, AND JEWISH ETHICS: HUSSERL, ARENDT, AND THE BURNING BUSH

Feldmann -- Kaye M.(Speaker), Bar Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM'S VATICAN ARCHIVES INITIATIVE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - A101

Contact: Emily Jeffres
Chair: Emily Jeffres

In March 2019, Pope Francis announced that access to the Vatican's archival materials for the pontificate of Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) would be granted in March 2020. Scholars conducting research in this massive new set of documents, comprising an estimated 16 million pages of material across multiple archives, have made major strides in the last five years. As part of these research efforts, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) has been sending a team of scholars and archivists to Vatican City to survey these new materials. Subject to permission by the archives, the USHMM has obtained digital scans of approximately 600,000 pages that are available at the USHMM for research purposes.

This panel consists of the USHMM's Vatican Archives Initiative team and external scholars engaged in research at the Vatican archives. Its goal is to describe the team's research and archival efforts and to share initial findings.

THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM'S VATICAN ARCHIVES INITIATIVE: AN OVERVIEW

Carter--Chand R.(Speaker), Levine Z.P.(Speaker), Steck A.(Speaker), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum ~ Washington, DC ~ United States of America

RESEARCH FINDINGS: A CASE STUDY OF EARLY EFFORTS TOWARD CHRISTIAN-JEWISH DIALOGUE

Brown--Fleming S.(Speaker), United States Holocaust Memorial Museum ~ Washington, DC ~ United States of America

GREEK CATHOLICS, THE HOLY SEE, AND THE HOLOCAUST: NEW FINDINGS IN THE POPE PIUS XII COLLECTIONS

Popa I.(Speaker), Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Manchester ~ Manchester ~ United Kingdom

HOW SILENCE WORKS: RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY, MORAL LANGUAGE, AND EPISCOPAL RESPONSES TO THE HOLOCAUST (1941–1943)

Stolarczyk--Bilardie M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

NEW GENERATIONS AND THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - A203

Contact: Peter De Mey
Chair: Jason Welle

The Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network invites papers for a session that explores ecclesial and theological responses to generational shifts in society. To what extent do the spiritual needs of younger generations shape the structure of the church, notions of Christian identity, and the explicit and implicit ecclesiologies shaping both common life and public witness in the church? What are possible visions of youth ministries in a future where young people are navigating increasingly complex matters? Possible paper topics might include, but are not limited to:

1. The intersection of masculinity studies with religious conversion and deconversion, particularly in view of the recent phenomenon of interest in Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions among young men
2. Eco-ecclesiology and other responses to climate disaster and apocalypticism
3. The church's engagement with content creators and online spiritual communities
4. Loci for theological research and education that are found beyond the limits of traditional settings such as seminaries and universities
5. The church's reception of post-denominational Christianity and/or multiple religious belongings
6. Unity and conflict in intergenerational and intercultural spaces

FOR A PEDAGOGY OF FAITH IN THE AGE OF CONTENT CREATORS

Avellino A.(Speaker), Sapienza universitá di Roma ~ Roma ~ Italy

TOWARDS INTERCULTURAL PASTORAL CARE IN EUROPE

Biemans W.(Speaker), Tilburg School of Catholic Theology ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

THEOLOGICAL CACOPHONY

Purina L.(Speaker), University of Latvia ~ Riga ~ Latvia

ALL ECCLESIOLOGY IS LOCAL? GLOCAL CATHOLICISM TODAY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 11:20 to 12:20

Pola - A206a

Contact: Massimo Faggioli
Chair: Massimo Faggioli

How do the particular churches—canonically understood as dioceses and their equivalent in the Eastern Churches—relate to the “one, holy, catholic, apostolic” ecclesial reality? This is not only a question from the Council of Nicaea 1700 years ago. It is a burning question today, all the more as other Christian traditions face schism, whether between the Ukrainian and Russian Orthodox churches, the Anglican Communion and GAFCON, or the now-disunited United Methodist Church. It is deeply connected as well to the rise of non-denominational Christians spurred on by new technologies, organizational possibilities, and political-ideological cleavages offering revolutionary new way of resourcing and communicating. The question here is about Global Catholicism, inevitably part and parcel of this larger context. What does Catholicism look like on the ground in its various instantiations? How does it hold together? What centripetal and centrifugal forces are at play in the vast network that is Global Catholicism? Is a common juridical authority, based ultimately on concepts derived from ancient Roman law, sufficient to hold together something that is no longer an imperial construct? What can we learn from stories of specific Catholic churches in specific places? What does an historically grounded geo-ecclesiological lens offer? What might that suggest for the third millennium of the Catholic Church, one characterized not by an overwhelming presence in a limited part of the world but by a moderate to significant presence all over the world? Can lessons regarding catholicity per se speak to politics and political questions at a time of fragmentation and global power vacuums rapidly being filled by players acting on naked self-interest? What about doctrine of war and of peace? If all politics is local, surely all ecclesiology is local as well.

MENDING THE FISHERMEN’S NET: NETWORK DYNAMICS FOR RELATING AND RECONCILING GLOBAL AND LOCAL CHURCHES

Thomas S.(Speaker), Palm Beach Atlantic University ~ Palm Beach ~ United States of America

K-POP TO K-TRUMP IN GLOBAL TO LOCAL RELIGIOUS RESPONSE TO KOREAN POLITICAL TURMOIL

Bretzke J.(Speaker), John Carroll University ~ Cleveland ~ United States of America

Holding the Center without a Center? Geo-Ecclesiology as Public Missiology in the Study of Global Catholicism

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RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES UNDER PRESSURE. DOCUMENTING RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN RUSSIA 2022-2025

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 11:20 to 12:20

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Sergei Chapnin
Chair: Dmitry Uzlaner
authorAMC: Sergei Chapnin
Speaker: Andrey Kordochkin, Dmitry Uzlaner

This panel examines systematic religious persecution in the Russian Federation following the February 2022 invasion of Ukraine, wherein state authorities instrumentalize both legal frameworks and ecclesiastical structures to suppress faith-based opposition to military aggression.

The persecution exhibits cross-confessional characteristics, affecting Orthodox, Baptist, Pentecostal, Catholic, Jewish, and Buddhist communities alike. Orthodox Christians confront uniquely severe dual mechanisms of repression: concurrent criminal prosecution by state authorities and canonical sanctions through ecclesiastical courts. This phenomenon represents a significant distortion of Orthodox canonical tradition, whereby church discipline is transformed from a means of preserving spiritual integrity into an instrument of political conformity.

Evidence reveals methodical escalation patterns: initial administrative warnings advance to "foreign agent" designations, succeeded by administrative penalties and culminating in criminal prosecutions carrying substantial custodial sentences. Digital surveillance infrastructure undergirds this system, while state authorities actively cultivate cultures of denunciation wherein parishioners report clergy for minimal liturgical deviations from prescribed texts.

Institutional silence constitutes a particularly significant dimension of this crisis. Russian religious hierarchies and most international ecumenical bodies have failed to offer public solidarity with persecuted believers. The Ecumenical Patriarchate remains a notable exception in providing canonical refuge. This ecclesiastical abandonment normalizes the subordination of religious conscience to state imperatives, with implications extending throughout post-Soviet space, including Belarus and Russian-occupied Ukrainian territories.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES UNDER PRESSURE. DOCUMENTING RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN RUSSIA 2022-2025

Chapnin S.(authorAMC), Orthodox Christian Studies Center, Fordham University ~ New York ~ United States of America

CONSTITUTIONAL INTOLERANCE. THE FASHIONING OF THE OTHER IN EUROPE'S CONSTITUTIONAL REPERTOIRES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 11:20 to 12:20

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Adelaide Madera
Chair: Adelaide Madera
authorAMC: Marietta van der Tol
Speaker: Massimo Faggioli, Rossella Bottoni, Luca Ozzano

The panel is aimed at discussing the book Constitutional Intolerance: The Fashioning of 'the Other' in Europe's Constitutional Repertoires (2025), by Mariëtta van der Tol. In her work, Marietta van der Tol challenges the assumption that intolerance is a flaw unique to illiberal regimes. She argues that vulnerability for minorities is actually inscribed in the structures of constitutional law itself, which defines certain groups as "the other" and regulates their public visibility.
By examining cases across the liberal-illiberal spectrum—specifically France, the Netherlands, Hungary, and Poland—van der Tol demonstrates how both legal and pseudo-constitutional frameworks are used to target religious, ethnic, and sexual groups. Her work reveals that these legal mechanisms often draw on historical practices of "toleration" to justify contemporary restrictions on minority representation

CONSTITUTIONAL INTOLERANCE. THE FASHIONING OF THE OTHER IN EUROPE'S CONSTITUTIONAL REPERTOIRES

Van Der Tol M.(authorAMC), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

INVISIBLE RELIGIOUS SPACES - INTERRELIGIOUS & TRANSREGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A204

Contact: Fani Gargova
Chair: Fani Gargova, Jaap Geraerts

Throughout history, minority and marginalized religious communities have frequently faced constraints on the visibility of their places of worship and the public performance of their rituals. Construction of such structures was often restricted or religious practice forbidden, compelling communities to operate covertly and limiting integration of their religious spaces into the built environment and public sphere. Some chose inward religious practice, whether from fear of persecution or spiritual conviction. Consequently, these “clandestine” or “hidden” minority religious spaces remain largely unrecognized, invisible, or destroyed. Financial constraints, situational demands, and the need for discretion further fostered ephemeral or temporary structures, including occasional use of buildings belonging to other religions.

Beyond historical factors contributing to their invisibility, scholarship has often overlooked the centrality of such religious spaces to their communities. This oversight can be attributed to several factors, including the paucity of sources and surviving sites, as well as a scholarly preference for spaces deemed noteworthy—historically or artistically.

This panel aims to address this historiographical gap by examining inconspicuous, clandestine, ephemeral, or temporary places of worship of minority and marginalized religious communities across Europe and the Mediterranean from the Middle Ages to the 20th century. While such spaces have been studied for particular religious communities, the objective is to foster dialogue from an interreligious historical perspective to identify common threads, underlying concepts, and contextual factors. Through this inclusive lens, the panel aims to understand the diverse strategies employed by minority and marginalized communities in navigating their specific cultural, political, and social environments.

HIDDEN, MOBILE, AND (UN)DOCUMENTED: ALEVI RELIGIOUS SPACES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Erol U.(Speaker), IEG ~ mainz ~ Germany

SUSTAINING AND ALEVIZING THE KARACAAHMET SHRINE IN ISTANBUL

Dinc G.(Speaker), Utrecht University ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

RELIGION IN TROUBLED SOCIETIES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A206a

Religion continue to be used as a tool of repression in many Global North Countries. Research has shown that conflict which has a religious undertone is hard to mitigate especially if the adherents exhibit extremist behaviours. As such, political parties, have seen the power of religion in consolidation undemocratic practice to an extent of using it to stay long in power. The foregoing questions the moral validity of religion in conflict or oppressive society. Thus, this panel seeks to interrogate the question of religion in suffering from many angles such as philosophy, sociological and educational among many other variables. Part of the debate is centered around how Eurocentric religions have been eternalised in African context to an extent that they contribute to suffering of people? How diminishing religion in the European context have such a great influence in Global South in relation to political oppression and silencing dissenting voices? Such question and many others are able to position this topic as novel in contributing to the current conversation about and on religion and its presence in Global South

COLONIAL MIMICRY, RELIGIOUS ABUSE, AND THE MORAL VALIDITY OF NEO PENTECOSTALISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

Motuku K.P.(Speaker), University of South Africa ~ Pretoria ~ South Africa

ENLIGHTENMENT AND ITS CRITIQUE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Wael Abu-Uksa
Chair: Wael Abu-Uksa

This panel revisits the place of Enlightenment in the intellectual history of the Middle East from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. Rather than treating Enlightenment as a singular, secular, and exclusively European phenomenon, the four papers collectively argue for a plural, dialogical, and multi-religious understanding of Enlightenment. By bringing together Jewish, Muslim, and Christian intellectual engagements with Enlightenment under Ottoman and post-Ottoman rule, the panel highlights the Middle East as an active site of knowledge production, critique, and epistemic negotiation.
At the core of the panel lies a shared concern with how intellectuals working within religious frameworks engaged with Enlightenment ideas. Across confessional boundaries, these figures confronted similar dilemmas: how to reconcile inherited forms of religious authority with emerging regimes of reason, science, and history; how to reform communal life without epistemic subordination; and how to articulate notions of progress that could preserve moral authority and social cohesion in a rapidly changing imperial and global order.

DEBATING ISLAMIC ENLIGHTENMENT

Hatina M.(Speaker), The Hebrew University of Jerusalem ~ Jerusalem ~ Israel

THE “GOLDEN MEAN” RECONSIDERED: JEWISH EPISTEMOLOGIES OF REFORM UNDER MUSLIM RULE

Karkason T.(Speaker), Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg ~ Halle-Wittenberg ~ Germany

CHRISTIAN AND ISLAMIC CRITIQUES OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY ARABIC THOUGHT

Abu--Uksa W.(Speaker), The Hebrew University of Jerusalem ~ Jerusalem ~ Israel

RE-MEMBERING MEDUSA. A RADICAL AND INTERSECTIONAL REVISIONING OF CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUALITY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A203

Contact: Emiliano Russo
Chair: Laura Carnevale

This panel takes Re-membering Medusa as a critical lens through which to rethink contemporary spirituality from radical and intersectional perspectives. Its point of departure is the 2012 initiative Medusa's Head Has Been Restored, an international ritual performed by groups of contemporary Witches, which sought to reclaim Medusa from centuries of patriarchal demonization and epistemic violence, reframing the Gorgon as a figure of female power, rage, and resistance within Goddess and alternative spiritual milieus. Over the past decade, Medusa's meanings have further evolved. Increasingly, she has been mobilized not only as a feminist symbol but as an intersectional one, invoked to address embodied difference, marginalization, trauma, queerness, racialization, and disability in spiritual, mythic, and ritual contexts. Her figure thus serves as a powerful prototype for examining how other mythic, saintly, or archetypal personas are similarly reworked within contemporary spiritualities to contest gender essentialism, challenge binary cosmologies, and articulate more complex configurations of power and identity. Moving beyond polarized academic readings of alternative spirituality as either empowering and feminist or conservative and essentialist, this panel invites contributions that explore how gender, sexuality, race, and embodiment are negotiated within contemporary spiritual practices and discourses. Drawing on religious studies, intersectionality, gender studies, and critical myth studies, we focus on "re-membering" as both an act of remembrance and a practice of reassembling fragmented bodies, histories, and subjectivities. By centering Medusa as a dynamic and contested emblem, the panel highlights contemporary spirituality as a key site for the rearticulation of intersectional imaginaries, where myth, politics, and lived experience converge in ways that call for renewed scholarly attention.

SACRED MASCULINITY AND DIVINE FEMININE. THE CHALLENGE OF BEING A PRIEST OF THE GODDESS IN ITALY

Russo E.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

"RE-MEMBERING" MARY MAGDALENE. A RETROSPECTIVE READING OF HER-STORY IN NEOPAGAN DIGITAL SPIRITUALITIES

Stornaiuolo P.(Speaker), University of Bari "Aldo Moro" ~ Bari ~ Italy

FROM ALGOL TO ASTEROID MEDUSA: REINTERPRETING MYTHS AND ARCHETYPES IN CONTEMPORARY “WESTERN” ASTROLOGY

Liederman C.(Speaker), University of Fribourg ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

RE-MEMBERING LILITH: BETWEEN FEMINIST JUDAISM AND CONTEMPORARY SPIRITUALITIES

Padovani M.(Speaker), University of Rome La Sapienza ~ Rome ~ Italy

HOW LAW AND POLITICS SHAPE MIGRANT RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola- A101

Contact: Astrid Mattes
Chair: Burkhard Berkmann, Astrid Mattes

The intersection of law, politics, and religion has long shaped the religious landscape of Europe. Law is involved in two ways: the law by which a state regulates religion, and the internal law by which religious communities organize themselves. With regard to the first, it was historically developed in alignment with dominant churches, reflecting the cultural and political hegemony of established religious traditions. However, in the age of migration, these legal systems are increasingly confronted with the challenge of accommodating and embedding new and diverse religious communities. With regard to the second, the question is which legal structures a religious community provides for immigrant members and how they relate to the established communities.
The politicization of both religion and migration has further complicated efforts to address these challenges. Political debates surrounding migration often frame religion as a site of cultural conflict, which can hinder the development of well-thought-out legal solutions. The instrumentalization of religion in political discourse risks divisions and undermines the potential for constructive dialogue between religious migrant communities, host societies, and state institutions.
This panel brings together interdisciplinary perspectives from legal studies, political science, and theology to critically assess the impact of legal frameworks and religion politics on the state of migrant religious communities. We cover developments in contemporary Europe and include comparative global perspectives from different religious traditions. The panel seeks to explore pathways for fostering legal and social environments that are both inclusive and responsive to the realities of religious diversity. Thereby, the panel aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the interplay between law, politics, and religion in shaping the future of increasinlgy plural and mobile societies.

CATHOLIC MIGRATION TO GERMANY: CANON LAW STRUCTURES AND INTERFAITH RELATIONS

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München ~ Munich ~ Germany

THE CANON–IHL COLLABORATIVE MODEL: PROTECTING RELIGIOUS MIGRANTS IN EUROPE THROUGH SOVEREIGN RELIGIOUS DIPLOMACY

Barilla F.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

“EVERYONE SHOULD BE FREE TO CHOOSE WHETHER OR NOT TO MIGRATE.“ (POPE FRANCIS) FORGOTTEN VICTIMS: BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF REFUGEE LAW AND NORMATIVE DEFICITS IN LAUDATO SI' AND INTERNATIONAL LAW IN THE CONTEXT OF ADVANCING CLIMATE CHANGE

Seidel P.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München ~ Munich ~ Germany

RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES AND STATE POLICIES: ETHICAL EXAMINATION OF THE AMBIVALENCES WITHIN MIGRATION DISCOURSES

Nwosu C.F.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München ~ Munich ~ Germany

ON THE DILEMMA OF STATE CREDIBILITY ASSESSMENT IN CONVERSION CASES

Kowatsch A.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

NATIONAL EMBRACE OR FEDERAL HANDSHAKE? LEGAL AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS OF HINDU RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN SWITZERLAND AND AUSTRIA

Limacher K.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

MULTIPLE PRESSURES: MIGRANT RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES BETWEEN POLITICAL EXPECTATIONS, LEGAL REQUIREMENTS, INTRA-COMMUNITY TENSIONS, AND CLAIMS FROM FORMER HOMELANDS

Mattes A.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Munich ~ Austria

INJUSTICE & SOCIAL TRANSFIGURATION IN THE ANTHROPOCENE: AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Nikolaos Asproulis
Chair: Nikolaos Asproulis

We are currently living in the Anthropocene, a time of polycrisis defined by humanity's collective self-conceit as a technologically advanced species that produces myriad environmental, social and economic injustices. As Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew says, "[t]he root cause…lies in our self-centeredness and in the mistaken order of values, which we inherit and accept without any critical evaluation…" This order of values is rooted in a neoliberal consumeristic vision of prosperity as abundance in which the vices of arrogance, greed, gluttony and indifference, rather than virtues, such as justice, prudence, or compassion, are actively promoted. This neoliberal socioeconomic system forces people worldwide to view both nature and our fellow human beings as bearing merely a utilitarian value to be exploited for pleasure or profit so, even people who engage in this system unwillingly or unknowingly are guilty of what Orthodox theologians call involuntary sin. Therefore, "What is asked of us is not greater technological skill but deeper repentance, metanoia, in the literal sense of the Greek word, which signifies fervent 'change of mind' and radical transformation of lifestyle" (Bartholomew 2009). Such a social transfiguration requires practicing a "communal asceticism" (Bartholomew 1997) that will entail cultivating nēpsis, a state of mindfulness, which can enable a recognition of how our pathological desires (pathoi) for material wealth or social status have been manipulated for profit by powerful elites who exacerbate inequalities and advance the value system at the heart of our polycrisis. Further, it requires a view of flourishing as relational rather than acquisitive and the development of socioeconomic practices rooted in a eucharistic disposition of gratitude for one another and nature so that,"the economy becomes a servant of humanity, not its master" (Bartholomew 1999)

ECOLOGICAL SIN & NATURAL LAW

Durante C.(Speaker), Associate Professor of Theology - Saint Peter's University ~ New York ~ United States of America

SIN: DIET, DEGRADATION, REPENTANCE

Nellist C.(Speaker), PanOrthodox Concern for Animals ~ London ~ United Kingdom

CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Kostarelos F.(Speaker), Governors State University ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

DIGITAL HUMANITIES, RELIGION, AND THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF KNOWLEDGE ACCESS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A102

Over the past several decades, the rise of digital humanities has reshaped the intellectual and technological landscape of the humanities. What began as a relatively specialized set of computational methods—often focused on text encoding and database construction—has developed into a broad interdisciplinary field encompassing digitization, data modeling, computational analysis, visualization, platform design, and public-facing scholarship. Within the study of religion, these developments have had especially significant implications. Religious texts and traditions are deeply rooted in material archives, linguistic complexity, and historically situated interpretive communities, and digital humanities approaches have transformed not only how these materials are studied but also who can access them.

Yet increased availability does not automatically produce meaningful access. Digital religious materials are mediated through technical infrastructures—interfaces, metadata, encoding standards, and platform design—that shape how texts can be discovered, interpreted, and compared. These design choices often reflect scholarly priorities that may remain opaque to non-specialists, creating new forms of gatekeeping even as older barriers fall.

This panel therefore asks what democratization means in the context of digital religious scholarship. Is it simply a matter of making materials freely available, or does it require deeper forms of participation and interpretive agency? How do digital tools redistribute authority among scholars, institutions, religious communities, and the public? And how might digital humanities projects be designed to promote equity, inclusivity, and sustainability rather than reproducing existing hierarchies in digital form?

PROJECT FOR DIGITAL PRESERVATION AND ANALYSIS OF SYRIAC ORTHODOX CHURCH REGISTERS AND INVENTORIES FROM MARDIN

Bcheiry I.(Speaker), Atla ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

ONLINE BIBLES AND DIGITAL READING PRACTICES: FROM EXCERPTS TO EXEGESIS

Pennarola C.(Speaker), Università di Napoli Federico II ~ Napoli ~ Italy

QUARRYING WATER FROM UNFAIR TEXTS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 18:20

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Marco Settembrini
Chair: Marco Settembrini, Donatella Scaiola, Daniele Pevarello

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This panel welcomes contributions in the field of biblical reception research that engage with scriptural passages perceived as troubling or "unfair" by contemporary Western European readers. It seeks to explore how issues of inequality—pertaining to gender, ethnicity, social status, or family relations—have been received, reinterpreted, or redeemed across the centuries. Participants are invited to draw on insights from ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary exegetical traditions, tracing how challenging texts may yield fresh resources for reflection today. Contributions may also examine legal norms, social practices, and moral discourses—such as those governing gender, sexuality, family, and status— in order to illuminate shared assumptions, tensions, and divergences in ancient constructions of inequality. Bringing together Biblical Studies, Classics, and Ancient History within an interdisciplinary framework, the panel seeks to analyze how multiple and overlapping forms of inequality—based on gender, economy, class, ethnicity, legal status, and disability—were articulated, negotiated, and contested in ancient texts and institutions.

DEATH FOR GATHERING STICKS? REFLECTIONS ON NUMBERS 15:32-36

Settembrini M.(Speaker), Facoltà Teologica dell'Emilia-Romagna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

“DO YOU THINK I WAS SCARED BY THE BONES?”

De Panfilis D.(Speaker), Università Pontificia Salesiana ~ Roma ~ Italy

CAN A MISOGYNISTIC TEXT LIKE QOHELET 7:25–8:1 STILL MATTER TODAY?

Scaiola D.(Speaker), Associazione Biblica Italiana ~ Rome ~ Italy

GENDER INEQUALITIES IN THE ROMAN WORLD: ADULTERIUM AND STUPRUM

Mongardi M.(Speaker), Bologna University ~ Bologna ~ Italy

WHO MAY SPEAK FOR GOD? PROPHETIC AUTHORITY AND DISCURSIVE INEQUALITY IN ZECHARIAH 13:2–6

Pizarro I.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

RESET ON THE CHRIST: JEWISH HERITAGE AND CATHOLIC FAITH IN A HERMENEUTICAL FRAME TO REV 7:1-8

Malatacca R.G.(Speaker), Associazione Biblica Italiana (ABI) ~ Lucera ~ Italy

CATHOLIC WOMEN AND GENDER DYNAMICS IN EARLY 20TH CENTURY CHINA: AGENCY, SERVICE, AND REPRESENTATION

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Pola - A206b

Contact: Valeria Stella Papis
Chair: Valentina Bottanelli, Raissa De Gruttola

The panel explores the role of Catholic women in changing ideas and practices of womanhood in China from the late Qing to the mid-twentieth century. At the turn of the century, Chinese women's lives were largely shaped by patriarchal family structures, Confucian norms, and social and legal inequalities, with marriage and domesticity as central expectations. At the same time, war, political upheaval, and reform movements intensified debates on women's education, morality, and social participation. Catholic missionary, as members of female religious congregations, operated within male-dominated church hierarchies, yet differed sharply from most Chinese women in being unmarried, institutionally supported, professionally trained, and mobile. Through schools, hospitals, orphanages, and charitable work, they exercised forms of authority and autonomy that challenged prevailing gender norms, while remaining embedded in unequal religious and transnational power relations.

The panel examines Catholic institutions as spaces where alternative models of womanhood were constructed and negotiated. These institutions both reproduced social and gender hierarchies and offered limited but significant opportunities for agency, including access to education, skills, public service, and life paths beyond marriage. Using perspectives from gender history and the study of religious feminization, the panel treats women's agency as relational and situational, shaped by everyday negotiations between missionary women and local Catholic women.

Comparative and connected approaches are welcome, including studies of Protestant missions, Buddhist nuns, indigenous religious initiatives, or transnational networks, contributing to broader debates on religion, gender, and inequality in modern China and East Asia.

THE EDUCATION OF CHINESE GIRLS IN CATHOLIC MISSIONS. THE CASE STUDY OF THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE'S JINGYI GIRLS SCHOOL IN KAIFENG

Papis V.S.(Speaker), Facoltà Teologica di Lugano, Università della Svizzera italiana ~ Lugano ~ Switzerland

NEGOTIATING MODERNITY: CATHOLIC ACTION AND THE REIMAGINING OF WOMANHOOD IN THE CATHOLIC WOMEN'S QUARTERLY (1934)

Bottanelli V.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

FRANCISCAN SISTERS AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE EVANGELIZATION OF EARLY 20TH-CENTURY CHINA

De Gruttola R.(Speaker), Ca' Foscari University of Venice ~ Venice ~ Italy

PERFORMING THE SACRED: RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATIONS IN MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 18:20

Pola - A103

Contact: Virginia Lauria
Chair: Niccolò Brandodoro

Sacred performances in the Modern Age (1300-1600) show how religious practices contributed, in different and often ambivalent ways, to the construction and management of social (in)equalities. In Europe, sacred performances served both as a tool for mitigating marginalisation and as a device for producing and consolidating social roles and codes. The panel aims to analyze, but is not restricted to, confraternities' sacred representations; civic and liturgical spectacles promoted by urban and ecclesiastical authorities; penitential processions and charitable rituals; missionary and conversional performances; school and college theatre, notably within Jesuit educational contexts; courtly and dynastic religious ceremonies; and devotional practices structured around images, relics, and ritualised bodily performances. In these different settings, the performative dimension of the sacred operated as a means of mobilising communities, shaping identities and behaviors, fostering new theological approaches, and articulating social roles and hierarchies.
In this context, the performative dimension of the sacred played a dual role: on the one hand, it promoted practices of assistance, inclusion and cooperation, contributing to the mitigation of social marginalisation; on the other hand, it reproduced and consolidated hierarchical structures, social codes and prescriptive roles through the mediation of religious and educational institutions. The panel aims to bring together diverse perspectives and methodologies to understand how the performances of the sacred contributed, in complex and often ambivalent ways, to the removal and reproduction of (in)equalities in early modern Europe. The panel welcomes contributions from Christian studies, History, Literature, Philosophy, Art History, and Performing Arts.

PERFORMING THE SACRED: MATRIMONY OF ENSLAVED PEOPLE IN LISBON

Nunes J.(Speaker), Polytechnic of Viseu; CHSC - University of Coimbra ~ Viseu ~ Portugal

CIVIC AUTHORITY'S AND RELIGIOUS MINORITY'S REPRESENTATION IN EARLY MODERN ROME

Emiliani V.(Speaker), Scuola nazionale del patrimonio e delle attività culturali ~ Rome ~ Italy

PERFORMING PAPAL UNIVERSALISM: GIULIANO DATI'S CANTARI DELL'INDIA

Lauria V.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE PERFORMATIVE CONSTRUCTION OF SANCTITY: IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA IN THE SPANISH JESUIT THEATRE (SIXTEENTH–SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES)

Brandodoro N.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

PERFORMING THE SACRED THROUGH GEOMETRY: GUARINO GUARINI AND THE DIDACTIC REPRESENTATION OF DIVINE ORDER IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY RELIGIOUS CULTURE

De Camillis D.(Speaker), Università degli studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

PERFORMING NORMS AND NEGOTIATION IN ROMAN FEMALE CONSERVATORIES (18TH–19TH CENTURIES)

Pietroletti E.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Rome ~ Italy

SACRED PROTEST: RELIGION, POWER AND RESISTANCE IN AN ERA OF UPHEAVAL

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Matthew Ryan Robinson
Chair: Miriam Schneider
authorAMC: Henry Jansen, Paul Hedges, Kai Shmushko, Charles Young-Chul Ryu
Speaker: Henry Jansen, Paul Hedges, Kai Shmushko, Charles Young-Chul Ryu

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With this panel the European Society for Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies (ESITIS) proposes to revisit a critical conversation on the topic of Religion and Social Protest, taking the new book Sacred Protest (Brill 2026) as the catalyst for the discussion. Contributors to the volume will come into dialogue with one another on this panel, reconsidering their chapters in light of the dramatic upheavals in societies worldwide in only the past few years. In particular, contributing authors will aim to bring topics into the conversation that were not addressed in the book, including technology, neo-faschisms, apocalyptic motifs, religious minority vs. majority groups among other topics. As the book discusses, "religion and protest converge and diverge and in pursuit of various ends, making careful analysis of religion and protest necessary. Sacred Protest seeks to make a timely and constructive contribution to this critically important conversation." (Publisher's website) Panelists: Paul Hedges, Kai Shmushko, Charles Ryu, Henry Jansen.

SACRED PROTEST: RELIGION, POWER AND RESISTANCE IN AN ERA OF UPHEAVAL

Jansen H.(authorAMC), Hedges P.(authorAMC), Shmushko K.(authorAMC), Young--Chul Ryu C.(authorAMC), Independent scholar ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AS REPETITION: THE PERSPECTIVE OF (IN)EQUALITY, (IN)DIFFERENCE, (IN)COMMENSURABILITY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Rita Serpytyte
Chair: Rita Serpytyte, Danute Baceviciute

Panel description: In the contemporary conceptualization of religious experience, the structure of "secular religiosity" and a number of other definitions of (religious) experience raise questions about the boundaries and limits of religious experience, highlighting the (in)commensurability, identity/difference of other experiential structures, as well as their (in)equality in relation to religious experience. The structure of experience that universally accumulates the ambivalence of the relationship between religious experience and other, different, diverse experiences is, we believe, the structure of repetition. Although this structure appears in discourses that seem quite distant from religious experience, its roots are religious. Giorgio Agamben speaks of repetition as anakephalaíösis/ricapitolazione, appealing to the Greek tradition and the letters of the Apostle Paul. In Jacques Derrida's figure of hantise, at least three phantasmagorical levels can be distinguished: phantasm, phantom, and revenant (repetition). The dimension of spectrality is ontologically "flawed" dimension of "being-other," one of whose levels is namely repetition.
This panel therefore invites us to reflect on the limits of religious experience, based on the structure of repetition. This perspective may include not only a reconsideration of Agamben's messianism as a structure of repetition, Derrida's inquiry into the (non)spirituality of revenant's "being", Kearney's perspective of anatheism, which directly raises the question of secular religiosity, and the thinking of many other contemporary authors on the limits of religious experience.

REFLECTIONS ON THE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE: POST-SECULAR PERSPECTIVE

Ramanauskaite--Vilde M.(Speaker), Vilnius university ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

MESSIANISM AND ESCHATOLOGY IN SUSAN TAUBES'S THOUGHT

Scollo F.(Speaker), Vilnius university – Barcelona Pompeu Fabra university ~ Vilnius/Barcelona ~ Lithuania

DIVINE BEAUTY: RECOLLECTION OR REPETITION?

Ivanauskas A.(Speaker), Vilnius University ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

REPETITION AS DECREATION: THE AMBIGUITY OF SELF-NEGATION IN SIMONE WEIL'S THOUGHT

Gelžinyte B.(Speaker), Vilnius university ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

SUBVERSIVE CITATIONS: ITERABILITY, PERFORMATIVITY, AND THE RUPTURE OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

Bischoff S.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Berlin ~ Germany

THEOLOGY OF PEACE: THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - AT13

Contact: Ambrogio Bongiovanni
Chair: Ambrogio Bongiovanni, Paolo Trianni

The panel aims to gather interdisciplinary contributions to re-think the foundations of a theology of peace from an interreligious and intercultural perspective in an age of growing local and international conflicts. Areas of interest: the history of nonviolence and its main interpreters from various religious traditions and contexts; the theory and practice of peace studies that accompany nonviolence and social justice; the analysis of the theme of peace in the founding texts of various religious traditions, starting with Christianity; the theme of peace in international cooperation and interreligious dialogue; peace education and in-depth study of some documents of the Magisterium of the Catholic Church dealing with the theme of peace.

THE IMPERATIVE OF NONVIOLENCE THEOLOGY: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

Mokrani A.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Roma ~ Italy

NEW AND OLD APPROACHES IN THEOLOGICAL ETHICS TO QUESTIONS OF SECURITY POLICY AND JUST PEACE IN A TIME OF UPHEAVAL: THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN GERMANY AND ITS NEW PEACE MEMORANDUM OF 2025 (“WORLD IN DISORDER – JUST PEACE IN VIEW")

Peterson P.S.(Speaker), University of Tuebingen and Center for Military History and Social Sciences of the Bundeswehr / German Armed Forces ~ Tuebingen and Potsdam, Germany ~ Germany

FRATERNITY FOR WORLD PEACE: A MEANS TO ADDRESS INEQUALITIES IN CATHOLIC CHURCH DOCUMENTS?

Dini E.(Speaker), Gregorian Pontifical University - Université Catholique de Lyon ~ Rome ~ Italy

SYNODALITY AS RESONANCE: LISTENING, RECIPROCITY, AND THE THEOPOLITICAL HORIZON OF PEACE

Bountsebe Ekassi J.E.(Speaker), KU Leuven / Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

OVERCOMING AN ORIGINAL OPPOSITION TO BUILD A THEOLOGY OF PEACE
SUPERARE UN'OPPOSIZIONE ORIGINARIA PER COSTRUIRE UNA TEOLOGIA DELLA PACE

Zetea S.S.(Speaker), Universita Babes-Bolyai, Facolta di Teologia greco-cattolica ~ Cluj ~ Romania

THE HORIZON OF THE ORDO AMORIS FOR TODAY'S PATH TO PEACE

Marchionni S.(Speaker), Pontifical Gregorian University; Pontifical Athenaeum of Sant'Anselm ~ Rome ~ Italy

FAMILY, SEX, AND FAITH: THE BIOPOLITICS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Benedetto Matricini
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl
authorAMC: Pål Kolstø
Speaker: Dmitry Uzlaner, Bojidar Kolov, Irina Paert

As the communist regimes of Eastern Europe collapsed towards the close of the twentieth century, the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) reemerged as an influential actor in Russian society. In Family, Sex, and Faith: The Biopolitics of the Russian Orthodox Church, Pål Kolstø investigates the manifestations of the ROC's newfound influence and legitimacy and the purposes of its strategic action. Here, Kolstø makes the argument that the fulcrum of the ROC's intrusion of the private sphere and its negligence of socioeconomic issues lies in a detailed ethical program and advocacy for traditional family values. These cardinal points, however, cater to different audiences. The ethical program of traditional values speaks to broader Russian and international society, whereas the inculcation of traditional values targets a more restricted circle of hardcore adherents. The ethics of private life, moreover, serve as instruments of regimentation of individual sexuality and sexual relations. In his book, Kolstø points out that the moral teachings of the ROC involve what Foucault called "biopolitics": The management of life itself in the modern age as opposed to ancient right to take life and let live. At the heart of Foucault's concept of biopower lies the regulation of sexuality: This power is invested in the individual discipline of the body (anatomo-politics) and the control over populations and biological processes (biopolitics). As the bridge between the individual and populations, normative prescriptions on families becomes the object of the ROC's biopower. In this Author-Meets-Critics session, the author will discuss his book with Bojidar Kolov, author of "Ecclesiastical populism in contemporary Russia? 'The people' in the political discourse of the orthodox church" (2024) and with Kristina Stoeckl and Dmitry Uzlaner, authors of The Moralist International. Russia in the Global Culture Wars (2022).

FAMILY, SEX, AND FAITH: THE BIOPOLITICS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Paert I.(), University of Tartu ~ Tartu ~ Estonia

IN THE (ARCHIVAL) FOOTSTEPS OF PAUL GAUTHIER AND MYRIAM LACAZE. FROM POVERTY ISSUE TO LIBERATION THEOLOGY ?

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 17:10

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Claire Maligot
Chair: Claire MALIGOT, Silvana KANDEL LAMDAN

Paul Gauthier (1914-2002) was a key figure in the reflection on poverty at the time of Vatican II. This panel brings together scholars from various backgrounds who crossed paths with either Gauthier or his wife, Myriam Lacaze (1928-2017) in their research, in an attempt to retrace their steps based on archival records they left behind in their correspondence with others, in the international press, and in their books. The aim is to retrace, “from the outside” and without direct access to their personal papers, not only the unique biographical trajectory of this theologian, humanist, and activist—first a priest, then a layman, after marrying Lacaze, herself a former nun.

Their careers and activism spanned several continents, following the “hot spots” where activism and theology were shaping new reflections on poverty: Europe (France, Italy, Belgium), the Middle East (Israel-Palestine, Lebanon), Asia (India), and Latin America (Brazil). This panel aims to report on the evolution of Catholic thinking on poverty, based on three major milestones: 1. pushing further and beyond social doctrine on “worker issues” after the worker-priests experiment ended, from Europe to Israel-Palestine; 2. the conciliar commitment within the group Jesus, the Church, and the Poor and their critical repositioning in favor of solidarity with Palestinians; 3. the beginnings of liberation theology, when Gauthier and Lacaze left Jerusalem after 1967 for Lebanon, India, and then Brazil.

The panel proposes to retrace the stages of this journey of intellectual and humanitarian, theological and militant commitment within a changing Church; to analyse Gauthier's and Lacaze’s critical stance, sometimes visionary, sometimes following pre-existing lines of thought, and their legacy (and eventually limitations to it); all while highlighting the dialectical relationship between center and periphery; marginality and institutions; rupture, institutionalization, and reception; gender and power dynamics.

AFTER 1967: LEAVING JERUSALEM. PAUL GAUTHIER AND MYRIAM LACAZE AT THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF CHRISTIANS FOR PALESTINE

Maligot C.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

RELIGION AND GENDER IN EUROPEAN CONTEXTS: ENTANGLEMENTS, TENSIONS, CONTESTATIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Alberta Giorgi
Chair: Stefania Palmisano, Alberta Giorgi

This panel investigates how gendered norms and power relations are produced, negotiated and contested across religious, spiritual and post-secular contexts in contemporary Europe. While research on gender and religion has increasingly moved beyond binaries of oppression versus emancipation, divergent empirical sites continue to reveal tensions between institutional authority, personal agency and cultural expectations.

The contributions assemble multi-sited analyses, ranging from yoga cultures to Catholic women's organizations and Jewish feminist reform movements in Italy, to queer negotiations within Lithuanian Catholicism, and debates over the Istanbul Convention on Lithuanian mass media. Drawing on methodologies including discourse and content analysis, ethnography and qualitative interviewing, the papers collectively demonstrate how religious and spiritual formations both reproduce and unsettle dominant gender regimes.

Exclusionary mechanisms emerge through embodied norms and religious-doctrinal discursive boundary-work; yet actors also adopt agentic strategies (including feminist and queer approaches) to expand the meanings and understandings of religion, and reconfigure religious authority and norms. At the same time, struggles over gender unfold across religious institutions, media, civil society and everyday life, where religious actors remain key participants in broader cultural debates on sexuality, family and citizenship. In this perspective, the hybrid public and mass media discourse play an extremely relevant role in contributing to shaping the discursive opportunity structures in which individual actors and religious institutions operate. Hence, the panel offers a broad and encompassing overview of contemporary relationships between religion and gender.

GENDERED BODIES, NORMATIVE SELVES: REASSESSING THE "YOGA FOR EVERYBODY" TROPE

Di Placido M.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

RELIGIOSITY AND FEMINISM IN THREE ITALIAN CATHOLIC ORGANIZATIONS

Rolandi M.(Speaker), University of Milano ~ Milan ~ Italy

WOMEN RABBIS: ORIGINS OF EXCLUSION AND NEW FEMINIST MOVEMENT

Baldini F.(Speaker), La Sapienza University ~ Rome ~ Italy

RELIGION, GENDER, AND FAMILY IN LITHUANIAN MEDIA DEBATES (2011–2025) ON THE ISTANBUL CONVENTION

Poce G.(Speaker), Vytautas Magnus University ~ Kaunas ~ Lithuania

‘I DO NOT WANT TO BE TOLERATED, I WANT TO BE ACCEPTED’: NEGOTIATING THE NEED FOR QUEER FRIENDLY CHURCH

Ališauskiene M.(Speaker), Vytautas Magnus University ~ Kaunas ~ Lithuania

THE 2025 LGBT PILGRIMAGE: A LENS ON THE NEGOTIATION OF GLOBAL CATHOLIC PASTORAL RESPONSES TO LOCAL LGBTQ CLAIMS

Tricou J.(Speaker), Université de Lausanne ~ Lausanne ~ Switzerland

THE (IM)POSSIBILITY OF DECOLONIAL PEDAGOGY IN THE ACADEMY: REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING RELIGION WITHIN DIVERSE CONTEXTS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - A107

Contact: Cherry Muslim
Chair: Francesco Cargnelutti

The panel foregrounds how epistemological hierarchies, rooted in colonial histories, racialised knowledge systems, gendered exclusions, and Eurocentric academic canons, continue to shape whose religions, spiritualities, and ways of knowing are recognised as legitimate within higher education. Bringing together African (focus on South Africa) and European perspectives, this panel examines how educators attempt to teach religion in ways that resist epistemic injustice while operating within institutions still structured by colonial and neoliberal logics.

We engage critically with questions of epistemological privilege: Who gets to define what counts as religion, spirituality, theory, and evidence? How are race, gender, and religious identity entangled in the production of academic authority? And how might pedagogies rooted in relationality, lived experience, spirituality, and plural ways of being disrupt dominant hierarchies of knowledge? Rather than offering a celebratory narrative of "decolonisation," the panel situates decolonial pedagogy as an ongoing, fragile, and contested practice, one that exposes both the possibilities and the limits of teaching religion within unequal worlds.

THE HUMAN, JOHN WESLEY AND THE AFRICAN: A DECOLONIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH WESLEY'S CONSTRUCTION OF 'MAN'.

Matthew L.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Durban ~ South Africa

D. ONLINE FACILITATION AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION WITHIN A DECOLONIAL FRAMEWORK: CLASSROOM DISCUSSION AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR METHODOLOGICAL LEARNING

Rovellini M.(Speaker), Oggiono ~ Lecco ~ Italy

B. RELIGION, INEQUALITY, AND DECOLONIAL PEDAGOGY: TEACHING ISLAM IN EUROPEAN–AFRICAN VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS

Muslim C.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Durban ~ South Africa

FACING THE PAST TO DECOLONIZE THE FUTURE: THE ERASURE OF ITALY'S COLONIAL PAST AND ITS PERSISTENCE IN ITALIAN FEMINIST MOVEMENTS. REFLECTIONS ON HOW TO TAKE ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMAGINE DIFFERENT SCENERIES.

Esposito E.(Speaker), Independent Researcher ~ Rome ~ Italy

STILL AWAITING THE TITLE

Sakuba X.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Pietermaritzburg ~ South Africa

CHRISTIANITY AND MIGRATION: A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF MIGRATION FOR OUR AGE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 17:10

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Jason Welle
Chair: Jason Welle
authorAMC: Peter Phan
Speaker: Gioachhino Campese, Debora Tonelli

This panel engages the pioneering monograph of Peter Phan, Christianity and Migration: A Christian Theology of Migration for Our Age (Oxford University Press, 2025), which Shows the intrinsic links between migration and Christianity, reflects on the connection between migration and eschatology, and presents a new theology of God framing God the Father as the Primordial Migrant, God the Son as the Paradigmatic Migrant, and God the Holy Spirit as the Personal Power of Migration. Discussants include experts on migration and on religion and violence.

CHRISTIANITY AND MIGRATION: A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF MIGRATION FOR OUR AGE

Phan P.(authorAMC), Georgetown University ~ Washington DC ~ United States of America

NARRATIVES BEYOND METAPHYSICS: POSSIBILITIES OF ORDER IN HERMENEUTICAL THEOLOGY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - A105

Contact: Charles Howell
Chair: Charles Howell

At the outset of God as the Mystery of the World, Eberhard Jüngel declares that “narrative has its own place and time” according to faith’s distinctive “structure of perception.” From this claim unfolds a hermeneutical vision in which theology begins not from metaphysical first principles but from the concrete, storied expressions through which God is encountered, confessed, and interpreted. Approaching theology from narrative in this way resists the dominance of totalizing metaphysical systems while opening new possibilities for theological order and critique.

This panel explores the role of narrative in hermeneutical theology as a mode of theological reasoning that operates beyond, against, or alongside classical metaphysical frameworks. Rather than treating narrative as merely illustrative, the panel investigates how narrative itself generates theological intelligibility, shaping accounts of truth, meaning, and normativity. In doing so, it examines how theology can remain critically ordered without recourse to comprehensive metaphysical architectures, and how narrative construals of faith negotiate plurality and difference within theological discourse.

The panel is conceived as an open forum and invites paper proposals from a wide range of theological, philosophical, and interdisciplinary perspectives. Papers may address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

• Narrative as a mode of theological rationality
• Theology beyond metaphysical first principles
• Narrative, history, and temporality in theological interpretation
• Language, metaphor, and storytelling in theology
• Theological order, plurality, and normativity without system
• Narrative, power, and difference in theological traditions

By bringing diverse voices and methods into dialogue, the panel aims to clarify the promise and limits of narrative as a post-metaphysical theological strategy and to foster constructive exchange across disciplinary and confessional boundaries.

THE WORD WITHIN GOD: BONAVENTURE AND THE ONTOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF HERMENEUTICAL THEOLOGY

Howell C.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

NARRATIVE INDIVIDUALITY AND MUTUAL ENTANGLEMENT: AN APPRAISAL OF SELF-CONSTITUTION

Watson B.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

WHEN STORIES MAKE TRUTH RESONATE: THE ANALOGIA INCARNATIONIS AS A GRAMMAR

Busti P.(Speaker), Facultés Loyola Paris ~ Paris ~ France

NARRATIVE IDENTIFICATION AND THE MYSTERY OF GOD IN ROBERT JENSON'S THEOLOGY

Moe K.E.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

NARRATIVE AS A PERSONAL, PHRONETIC, AND AFFECTIVE THEOLOGICAL MODE OF RATIONALITY

Buck R.A.(Speaker), Mesa Global ~ Oxford, UK ~ United States of America

MYSTERY AND THE LIMITS OF NARRATIVE IN HERMENEUTICAL THEOLOGY

Jockel R.M.(Speaker), Justus-Liebig-University Giessen ~ Giessen ~ Germany

THERAPEUTIC LIMINAL SPACES AND THE DEMAND FOR DIGNITY: PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 17:10

Pola - A206b

Contact: Joseph Rivera
Chair: Joseph Rivera

The contemporary landscape of inequality, which is marked by polarization, alienation, and conflict, can be understood as a liminal space increasingly governed by a therapeutic logic. This panel introduces the concept of a therapeutic liminal space to examine how modern societies seek to reconcile or reintegrate inequality through frameworks of identity, recognition, and validation. Drawing on philosophy, theology, and social theory, the panel explores how demands for recognition function both as a source of dignity and as a catalyst for rivalry, resentment, and division.

Francis Fukuyama's Identity: The Demand for Dignity and the Politics of Resentment (2019) provides a key point of departure, framing recognition as a "master concept" that reveals both a fundamental anthropological capacity and a latent source of conflict. If recognition is itself a form of power, does it facilitate or hinder constructive dialogue in contexts of inequality, alienation, and political polarization? How might identity be reconfigured to sustain mutual recognition within therapeutic and dialogical settings, rather than reinforcing competitive or exclusionary dynamics?

The panel also examines the technological and institutional conditions under which certain identities and worldviews are rendered visible and validated, while others are marginalized or suppressed. Finally, it asks whether the pursuit of full equality reshapes the ethical burdens, obligations, and possibilities of dialogue under persistent conditions of inequality. The discussion engages thinkers including Hans Blumenberg, Michel Foucault, René Girard, Edmund Husserl, Jürgen Habermas, Søren Kierkegaard, Catherine Cornille, Francis Fukuyama, Charles Taylor, and Martin Heidegger.

BEYOND THE IDENTITY TRAP: VICTIM IDENTITY, RECOGNITION, AND OUR HIDDEN LIFE IN GOD

Robinette B.(Speaker), Boston College ~ Boston ~ United States of America

AT HOME IN CONTINGENCY: EXISTENTIAL THERAPY FOR GNOSTIC RESSENTIMENT

Rivera J.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

(IN)EQUAL HIERARCHIES OF BIBLICAL EXEGESIS: JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - AT12

Contact: Jonathan Hirschberger
Chair: Jonathan Hirschberger

Jewish Bible interpretation has been positively recognized but also marginalized in Christian exegesis since Late Antiquity, in the Renaissance Period and also in modern times. Simultaneously, there has been an ongoing debate in Jewish tradition about contact with and separation from Christianity when interpreting the Hebrew Bible. Furthered by the fact that both religions share the Hebrew Bible, Jewish and Christian perspectives on biblical interpretation have been interlinked with question of equality and hierarchy. This is especially true for Christian uses of Jewish exegesis for translations of Hebrew Bible texts. This panel will explore this topic by adressing two questions: (1) To what extend were Jewish interlocuters and traditional Jewish bible translations seen as equal sources to use for Christian exegesis? (2) In what form was Jewish exegesis produced in a context dominated by Christian hierarchies? By drawing from historical examples such as e.g. Johannes Reuchlin, Martin Luther and German Field Rabbi's Exegesis in World War I, the panel will seek to reconstruct how traditions form the respective other religion were seen as an (in)equal but necessary partners in own exegetical endeavors.

EARLY CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP AND ITS ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIAL HIERARCHY

Benhur S.(Speaker), Mahindra University ~ Hyderabad ~ India

THE TIQQUNÊ HA-SOFRIM AND PIETRO GALATINO'S TAXONOMY OF JEWISH HISTORY

Angileri I.(Speaker), University "La Sapienza" of Rome - EPHE PSL ~ Rome - Paris ~ Italy

TARGUMIM AND KIMCHIDES – TRADITIONS OF JEWISH TRANSLATIONS AND JEWISH GRAMMAR IN JOHANNES REUCHLIN (1455–1522)

Morgenstern M.(Speaker), Professor emeritus for Jewish Studies ~ Tübingen ~ Germany

HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS, LATIN ANNOTATIONS: THE STUDY OF DAWID QIMHI'S MIKHLOL AMONG CHRISTIAN SCHOLARS BETWEEN XV AND XVI CENTURY

Pepoli M.(Speaker), Università della Svizzera Italiana - Facoltà Teologica di Lugano ~ Lugano ~ Switzerland

MARTIN LUTHER'S INEQUAL USE OF JEWISH EXEGESIS FOR HIS TRANSLATION OF THE HEBREW BIBLE

Hirschberger J.(Speaker), Lecturer for Old and New Testament Studies ~ Augsburg ~ Germany

"PILGRIMS FROM THE BATTLEFIELD": GERMAN FIELD RABBIS' EXEGESIS IN WORLD WAR I

Wolfson G.(Speaker), PhD Candidate ~ Tübingen ~ Germany

TECHNOLOGIES OF THE SACRED: INEQUALITIES, INNOVATIONS, AND INTERRELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 17:10

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Matthew Ryan Robinson
Chair: Anne Hege Grung

The European Society for Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies (ESITIS) invites paper proposals (15-20 min presentations) exploring “technologies of the sacred” in past, present, and future contexts. We are interested in questions concerning the ways technology and the social produce one another as well as contributions that examine how technologies are used and challenged in various religious traditions and contexts in the mediation of tradition, meaning, practice, and authority.

Committed Papers:
+ "I am A and I": AI-induced mutations in religion and religion-induced perceptions of the future of technology" (Anne Kull; University of Tartu)
+ "Impacts of Artificial Intelligence on the Transformation of Teaching and Research in Theology and Religion" (Berg Traboulsi; Haigazian University)

Proposals are invited on topics such as (among others):
+ Historical case studies, e.g., related to pedagogy and devotional practice
+ Ritual, spirituality and technologies
+ Digital innovation and the evolution of religious belief and practice
+ The implications of empirical and natural-scientific turns in the study of religions for the religious self-understandings of religious persons and communities
+ Spiritual practices understood as technologies of the self / community

We particularly invite papers that address these or other topics on religion and technology in relation to the EuARe 2026 theme of "Religions and Inequalities". What potential for (in)equalities within or among religious persons and communities is created or confronted by technological change? How are emerging technologies used to democratise the presence and participation of religious communities in society, and in what ways might they exacerbate exclusion? This open panel aims to foster a rich interdisciplinary conversation about the evolving interplay between sacred traditions and technological innovation.

"I AM A AND I": AI-INDUCED MUTATIONS IN RELIGION AND RELIGION-INDUCED PERCEPTIONS OF THE FUTURE OF TECHNOLOGY

Kull A.(Speaker), University of Tartu ~ Tartu ~ Estonia

IMPACTS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF TEACHING AND RESEARCH IN THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

Traboulsi B.(Speaker), Haigazian University ~ Beirut ~ Lebanon

CATHOLICISM AND GENDER ISSUES IN A TRANSNATIONAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Raffaella Perin
Chair: Raffaella Perin

The panel aims to explore, from a diachronic and transnational perspective, the role of the "feminine" in the history of Catholicism of the 20th century. Through the examination of various case studies, it seeks to analyze the models of femininity and masculinity constructed by Catholicism and reinterpreted by historical actors, the power relations between women and men, and the ways in which lay and religious women mobilized, as well as the causes and struggles that motivated their engagement. Ángela Pérez del Puerto will focus on the ideological crusade of American Catholicism during the 1940s and 1950s against immoral contents in popular reading and comic books. Raffaella Perin will deal with the history of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) – a lay women organization founded in Utica, New York in 1903 as a charitable, benevolent and patriotic sorority for Catholic ladies. The paper aims at sketch the uncovered history of CDA, and to devote particular attention to the period between the 1950s and 1970s. Juliette Masquelier's paper will compare the rural and upper-class Catholic masculinisties in France and Belgium between the 1930s and 1980s. Maria José Esteban will explore an alternative model of femininity that, while not free from tensions, enjoyed a certain degree of legitimacy within Catholic discourse during Francisco Franco's dictatorship. Carmen Mangion will examine the Catholic women religious (sisters and nuns) and HIV/AIDS ministries in Britain in the 1980s-2000s, whereas Raul Minguez Blasco will tackle the debate on the access of women to ordained ministries. The panel highlights the complexity and plurality of the articulations of the "feminine" and the "masculine" in twentieth-century Catholicism, showing how these categories were constantly negotiated, contested, and redefined in relation to political, social, and cultural contexts.

THE NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR DECENT LITERATURE: GENDER AND COMICS IN CATHOLIC CULTURAL CONTROL IN THE USA (1939-1950)

Perez Del Puerto A.(Speaker), Universidad Autónoma de Madrid ~ Madrid ~ Spain

THE CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAS (1950S-1970S)

Perin R.(Speaker), Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore ~ Milano ~ Italy

UPPER-CLASS AND RURAL CATHOLIC MASCULINITIES COPING WITH DECHRISTIANIZATION (BELGIUM–FRANCE 1930-1980)

Masquelier J.(Speaker), Université Libre de Bruxelles ~ Bruxelles ~ Belgium

“SINGLE BY VOCATION”: CELIBACY AND LAY APOSTOLATE DURING THE SECOND FRANCOIST PERIOD

Esteban Zuriaga M.J.(Speaker), Centro Universitario de la Defensa de Zaragoza ~ Zaragoza ~ Spain

QUIET WORK WITH VERY FAR-REACHING IMPLICATIONS: WOMEN RELIGIOUS AND HIV/AIDS MINISTRIES IN BRITAIN, 1980S–1990S

Mangion C.(Speaker), Birkbeck College ~ Londra ~ United Kingdom

WOMEN PRIESTS? THE QUESTION OF FEMALE ORDINATION IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN SPAIN

Minguez Blasco R.(Speaker), EHU University of the Basque Country ~ Leioa ~ Spain

INEQUALITY AS A 'CONTINUED HERITAGE' IN EASTERN EUROPE OR AN URGE TO CREATE A CORRECTIVE TO WESTERN IDEOLOGIES? APPROACHES WHEN DEALING WITH THE UNFINISHED PAST

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 18:20

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Abraham Kovacs
Chair: Corneliu Simut

The panel' goal is to reveal how East-Central European religous communities relate to the struggle for political and economic hegemony exposed by Russia, the USA and the EU for the past 30 years. People feel marginalised as third-class citizens in Europe. Although the West portrays itself reducing and quenching inequalities through commitments to equality but what is their 'Pax Romana' message at its core? It is common knowledge that from the Baltic states down to Bulgaria, the string of post-communist nations constitute a buffer zone for the world's two largest military powers, namely the USA and Russia. The formation and establishment of the EU, as well as its subsequent extension have raised several vital issues for those countries. The region experienced an extremely fast capitalist change from communism to open markets, which resembled what was often designated as the 'wild East', having thus little time to digest the ensuing freedom that was interrupted on occasion by the Balkan war and more recently by the war in Ukraine. Speakers will also seek to investigate how nations churches or political establishments responded to democracy, capitalism, and the imperialist endeavours. Questions will be pursued such as: is nationalist Christian identity a viable corrective to certain Westerm form of liberalism? The former Communist elites have been clinging to power for the past three decades; thus, is this still a valid issue in the region both in the churches and societies. It is believed that these issues are also inextricably connected to the reshaping of Communism into Nationalism by the very same group of elitist individuals/groups Poland, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia. Second, the economic exploitation of the Post-Soviet Countries and the wonders of free Market will be exposed. Third, it is posed that a critical stance against Russia and Western spiritual or political Powers perceived as imperialistic causing various forms of inequalities will be addressed.

MARGINALISED FEELINGS? A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON WESTERN EVANGELICALISM MANIFESTED IN POST-COMMUNIST ROMANIA AFTER 1989

Simut C.(Speaker), Professor, Aurel Vlaicu University ~ Arad ~ Romania

GOOD NEWS OF FREE MARKET IDEOLOGY CONTESTED OR APPROVED? ECONOMIC INEQUALITY IMPACT ON SOCIETY AND RELIGION

Kovacs A.(Speaker), Professor, Debrecen Reformed University ~ Debrecen ~ Hungary

RECOVERING A NATION - THE FEELING OF MARGINALISATION AND RESTORATION IN THE CHRISTIAN CONSTITUTION OF HUNGARY.

Dolan S.(Speaker), Lecturer, St. Mary's University ~ London ~ United Kingdom

TRACING FOR DEFINITIONS OF RELIGION IN POLITICS. THE CASE OF THE HUNGARIAN LEGISLATION IN 1990 AND 2011

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RELIGION IN TIMES OF POWER TRANSFORMATIONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A204

Contact: Kseniia (Xenia) Murastova

The panel illuminates how religions and religious discourses evolved during times of transformations, with a specific context on illiberal political frameworks. Across diverse contexts—from Early Islamic to the late Soviet—the papers examine religion not as a static institution but as a dynamic field of negotiation, adaptation, and contestation. Our contributors analyze order-based networks and repertoires of action and representation in short- and long-term historical perspectives. Some look at specific regions within the longue durée framework—for example, the North Caucasus across Tsarist and Soviet state-building projects. Others interrogate short-term church–state bargains as they were shaped by shifts in religious politics and by the context of transregional and global reconfigurations—such as the case of Russian Orthodoxy producing discourses of exclusion in ecumenical and Cold War contexts. We explore intellectual exchange and engagement among different communities—including ethnic, gender, and others—with religious texts and traditions, as seen in studies of Qur'an translations and women's learning circles during 'perestroika,' or of religious debates in Early Islamic Greater Khurasan, where theology, law, and politics intersected amid changing regimes. What were the moral and "material" costs of institutional survival? How did interconnected yet distinct contexts and practices reshape religious authority? Taken together, the panel argues that periods of political transformation generate not only constraints on religious life but also new spaces for mediation, and the re-articulation of authority. By examining gendered practices, courtly debates, institutional compromises, the contributions reveal how the religious field becomes deeply interwoven with social and political transformations, offering a comparative perspective on religion's capacity for resilience and adaptation in times of upheaval.

COURTS OF DEBATE: RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE DURING POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION IN EARLY ISLAMIC GREATER KHURASAN

Ghasemi E.(Speaker), UniMore (DREST) ~ Palermo ~ Italy

"THE ONLY TRUE CHURCH": THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE AND GENEVA ECUMENICAL INITIATIVES (FROM CONFRONTATION TO RAPPROCHEMENT)

Murastova K.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE USURY DILEMMA - TRADE AND TRUST IN CREDIT AND USURY IN "IL NEGOTIANTE" BY GIO. DOMENICO PERI

Angelucci G.(Speaker), LUMSA ~ Roma ~ Italy

WHY THEOLOGY STILL MATTERS TODAY? THE PUBLIC WITNESS OF METR. JOHN ZIZIOULAS'S THEOLOGY

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Nikolaos Asproulis
Chair: Nikos Kouremenos

Metropolitan John Zizioulas of Pergamon is widely recognized as one of the most significant Orthodox theologians of our time. His theological vision emphasizes personhood as the fundamental mode of existence for both God and humanity. He identifies the Eucharist as the setting where this personhood is momentarily realized and presents an eschatological perspective that shapes his entire hermeneutics and methodology. This coherent and systematic approach may prove relevant to the future of Orthodox theology, especially in light of various challenges, such as religious rigorism, ideological populism, and issues posed to anthropology and the environment by artificial intelligence and the climate crisis. Critics argue that history, as both a horizon and context, is somewhat diminished in his work; however, it remains a crucial backdrop against which Christianity has evolved and matured since its inception. In this regard, Zizioulas's thought engages in a continuous dialogue with the surrounding pre-modern, modern, and post-modern intellectual and social settings. What elements of his thought are relevant to our current scientific and ideological context? How does his eschatological outlook inform our responses to various forms of moral and social evil? What meaningful role can Hellenic philosophy play today in the context of a gradual de-ontologization of Christianity's character? Is the dialectic between nature and personhood still valuable? Are Zizioulas's theological contributions being taken seriously in the field of Ecumenical theology today? Drawing from his posthumous magnum opus, Remembering the Future, and the recently published English translation, Hellenism and Christianity: The Encounter of Two Worlds, a panel will critically reflect on aspects of Zizioulas's public witness in our contemporary, fragmented, and complex world. The focus will be on those aspects that are relevant to the Church in carrying out her mission in the future.

THE ECUMENICAL RELEVANCE OF ZIZIOULAS' ESCHATOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS: A CRITICAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT

De Mey P.(Speaker), Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven University ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

METROPOLITAN JOHN ZIZIOULAS' THEOLOGY AS THE AXIS OF THE DOCUMENT 'FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

Papanikolaou A.(Speaker), Fordham University, USA ~ New York ~ United States of America

A FUTURE-ORIENTED READING OF TRADITION ACCORDING TO METR. JOHN ZIZIOULAS

Kalaitzidis P.(Speaker), Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

METR. JOHN ZIZIOULAS' WORK AS A HOLISTIC CHRISTIAN "UNIFIED GRAND THEORY"

Vasiljevic B.M.(Speaker), Holy Cross, Boston College ~ Boston ~ United States of America

INEQUALITY IN THE CONTEMPORARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A203

Contact: Emmett O'Regan
Chair: Severin Parzinger

This panel invites papers that examine inequality in the contemporary Catholic Church from a wide range of theological perspectives. While Catholic theology affirms the equal dignity of all persons, inequalities persist in how authority is exercised, how experiences are recognized as theologically meaningful, and how inclusion and marginalization are negotiated within ecclesial life.
The panel is anchored by contributions that approach inequality as a theological and hermeneutical problem rather than merely a sociological one. Existing papers engage questions such as the theological status of Christian experience in responding to social inequality; the interpretation of bodily difference, particularly intersex embodiment, within Catholic theological anthropology; and the role of Catholic media in shaping the reception of magisterial authority during the pontificate of Pope Francis.

We warmly welcome papers addressing other dimensions of inequality in the contemporary Catholic Church, including but not limited to: authority and dissent, poverty and economic injustice, gender and sexuality, race and colonial legacies, global Catholicism, synodality, media and power, participation in ecclesial structures, and the reception of doctrine in diverse contexts.
By fostering dialogue across methodologies and themes, the panel aims to contribute to constructive theological reflection on inequality, authority, and justice in the life of the Church today.

This panel is organized on behalf of the Young Curatorium of the European Society for Catholic Theology.

OUR BODIES ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL. ISSUES WITHIN CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS OF INTERSEX.

Schreurs B.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

INEQUALITY AND THE CATHOLIC MEDIA

O''Regan E.(Speaker), The Loyola Institute, Trinity College Dublin ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

“YOU HAVE THE POOR WITH YOU ALWAYS”: PERENNIAL INEQUALITIES IN THE LIGHT OF CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

Evina G.(Speaker), Pontifical Lateran University ~ Rome ~ Italy

CRITICAL EPISTEMOLOGY: TOWARDS AN ACCOUNTABLE SOTERIOLOGY

De Ridder J.(Speaker), Catholic University of Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THE EUROPEAN CHRISTIAN ECOTHEOLOGY RESEARCH NETWORK (ECERN) AND ECOTHEOLOGY IN THE WORLD RELIGIONS: TOWARDS MORE EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES"

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A106

Contact: Tom Sverre Bredal-Tomren
Chair: Tom Sverre Bredal-Tomren, Louk Aourelien Andrianos, Nikolaos Asproulis

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In 2025, the new established European Christian Ecotheology Research network (ECErN), in collaboration with the World Council of Churches (WCC), the VID university and other ecumenical institutions, have initiated the process of making Ecotheology as academic discipline in an international conference involving many theologians from all over the world. This panel on "Ecotheology in the World Religions" explores the capacities of ecotheology as an academic discipline and theological perspectives of diverse faiths to promote ethical frameworks and ecological responsibilites that intercept with global injustices.

As the world grapples with climate change, environmental degradation, and social inequality, ecotheology in all religious traditions have an important role to play in fostering more equitable and sustainable communities.

This panel will examine ecotheological principles in creation care, theology of justice, ecumenical collaboration and eco-spiritual practices across Christian traditions and Indigenous spiritualities. The panel aims at the capacity of ecotheology to inspire both personal and collective actions for just community.

Participants may investigate how each tradition’s sacred texts, rituals, and ethical teachings guide their followers to rethink human interaction with the earth, prioritize creation care, and advocate for vulnerables communities disproportionately affected by eco-injustices.

This open panel seeks to bridge religion and science, faith and action, offering concrete strategies for religious communities to lead in the transformation towards a more just and sustainable world. The discussions will offer insights into how ecotheology not only enhances ecological awareness but also promotes social justice, economic equity, and cultural healing in a rapidly changing world. The panel will highlight ecotheology as a catalyst discipline for building sustainable and spiritually enriched communities.

“TOWARD CLIMATE AND BIODIVERSITY JUSTICE: AN ECO-THEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF HUMAN AND NON-HUMAN RIGHT INEQUALITY IN THE ERA OF ANTRHROPOCENE GREED”

Andrianos L.A.(Speaker), World Council of Churches ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

BRIDGING INEQUALITIES THROUGH NORTH–SOUTH COOPERATION IN ECOTHEOLOGY EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY FROM NORWAY

Bredal--Tomren T.S.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

ECO-DOGMATICS AS A NEW MODEL OF DOING ECOTHEOLOGY IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Asproulis N.(Speaker), The Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

PATHOLOGIES OF SPIRITUALITY: WHEN FAITH TURNS TOXIC

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A102

Contact: Ewelina Berdowicz
Chair: Ewelina Berdowicz

This panel invites contributions that critically examine the dark side of contemporary spirituality, focusing on situations in which religious commitment, spiritual practices, and charismatic authority become sources of harm rather than meaning or ethical guidance. Challenging idealized representations of spirituality, the panel addresses pathological dynamics emerging within religious groups and movements.

We explore phenomena such as spiritual abuse, toxic leadership, coercive control, moral manipulation, symbolic violence, and high-demand religious environments, with particular attention to how authority is constructed and legitimized through religious language, ritual practices, and moral narratives. The panel is especially interested in cognitive, discursive, and embodied mechanisms that sustain dependency, guilt, fear, or silence.

Contributions may address charismatic and entrepreneurial leadership, the economization of faith, narratives of disillusionment and exit, post-membership identity reconstruction, and processes of healing and resistance after leaving harmful religious contexts. The panel also foregrounds comparative and cross-cultural perspectives, alongside methodological reflections on researching sensitive topics, insider–outsider dynamics, and ethical challenges in the study of religious mediated suffering. Contributions are expected to be empirically grounded, theoretically informed, and interdisciplinary.

WHEN SALVATION BECOMES A TRAP: RELIGIOUS LANGUAGE, AUTHORITY, AND THE DYNAMICS OF SPIRITUAL HARM

Berdowicz E.(Speaker), Adam Mickiewicz University ~ Poznań ~ Poland

ALEVI THEOLOGY AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN THE DIASPORA: RELIGION, RECOGNITION, AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF INEQUALITY (CASE STUDIES FROM GERMANY AND AUSTRIA)

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 18:20

Parenzo - A15

Chair: Hüseyin Çiçek

This panel explores how Alevi communities from Turkey have redefined their religious identity and navigated structures of (in)equality in the diaspora contexts of Germany and Austria. Migration opened not only new socio-economic spaces but also initiated a process of religious and political self-empowerment, allowing Alevi actors to articulate their faith more freely within pluralist societies. The panel examines the multi-phased institutionalization of Alevism, from informal gatherings to formalized religious communities engaged in education, welfare, and political representation.

Special attention will be given to the ambivalent relationship of Alevi diasporas to both their country of origin and their host societies: While Turkish state institutions have continued to exert regulatory control over diasporic communities, Germany and Austria have provided new opportunities for institutional recognition. Nevertheless, Alevis still struggle against persistent external categorizations that frame them as a heterodox Islamic sect, undermining their claim to religious autonomy. Drawing on historical analogies and contemporary developments, the panel analyzes how second and third generation Alevi actors serve as key agents of transformation, negotiating visibility, recognition, and self-definition within diasporic and transnational fields.

LEARNING FROM, AND WITH, ALEVI SCHOLARS. THE DEPARTMENT OF ALEVI THEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WEINGARTEN, GERMANY.

Mooney H.(Speaker), PH-Weingarten ~ Weingarten ~ Germany

ALEVI IDENTITY AND INSTITUTIONALIZATION IN AUSTRIA: DIASPORIC RECOGNITION AND THE STRUGGLE FOR RELIGIOUS EQUALITY

Çiçek H.(Speaker), PH-Weingarten and Universtity of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

SACRED FOOD, SOCIAL HIERARCHIES. RELIGION, DIET, AND (IN)EQUALITY ACROSS TIME AND SPACE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A206b

Contact: Fernando Soler
Chair: Jiapsy Arias

Food is never just sustenance. It is a material practice through which religious communities establish, maintain, and contest social hierarchies. From ancient Christianity debates to colonial impositions of “Christian” diets, religious food practices have served as powerful instruments for both naturalizing inequality and imagining more egalitarian communities. This interdisciplinary panel examines how religions have shaped and been shaped by food-related forms of social differentiation across diverse historical and geographical contexts.

This panel examines the relationship between religious food practices and inequality across three key areas. First, it examines the early Christian communities’ use of food to negotiate social hierarchies, with ascetic diets creating spiritual distinctions. Second, it analyses modern theological views on gender and food, highlighting how dietary codes control and challenge gender inequalities. Third, it explores colonial Christianity’s use of food to establish ethnic hierarchies in the Americas, subordinating indigenous foodways and imposing European norms.

Throughout, the panel addresses critical questions: Who eats what, with whom, when, and how much? How do religious food practices simultaneously express ideals of equality (the “open table”) while creating exclusionary boundaries? How have subaltern communities resisted food-based hierarchies through syncretism and alternative commensality? What continuities exist between ancient medical-theological discourses on diet and modern intersections of religion, nutrition, and social justice?

By bringing together historical, theological, and anthropological perspectives, this panel demonstrates how the study of religious foodways illuminates broader patterns of how religions have variously reinforced and challenged specific forms of inequality: a question at the heart of understanding religion’s role in contemporary society.

INTERSECTING FOOD AND RELIGIONS: TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES TO CRITICAL FOOD STUDIES AND FOOD THEOLOGIES

Méndez--Montoya Á.(Speaker), Universidad Iberoamericana ~ Mexico City ~ Mexico

THE STRATIFIED BANQUET: GENDER, AGE, AND HIERARCHY AT CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA'S CHRISTIAN TABLE

Soler F.(Speaker), Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile ~ Santiago ~ Chile

YOU WERE THE PRAISE OF FASTING: MEDIEVAL AND MODERN VISIONS OF THE EAST SLAVIC ASCETIC PRACTICE

Legkikh V.(Speaker), Sprachzentrum ~ Munich ~ Germany

WORK, BELIEFS, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE: GLOBAL INSIGHTS AND EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A20

Contact: José María Díaz-Dorronsoro
Chair: José María Díaz-Dorronsoro

This panel presents key findings from an international survey conducted by the research group Footprints: Young People. Expectations, Ideals and Beliefs, coordinated by the Pontifical University of Santa Croce (Rome). The study involved more than 9,000 young people from nine countries across four continents: the United States, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Kenya, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, and the Philippines. Researchers from Albany Estate University, Universidad Panamericana, St Mary's University, Universidad de Navarra, Universidad Católica de Argentina, Pontificia Università Salesiana, CLE–Unicamp (Center for Logic, Epistemology and the History of Science), and the University of Asia and the Pacific collaborated in the project.

The survey explores young people's relationship with work, focusing on its social and civic dimensions, their preparation for the labor market through education, and the role played by religiosity, personal convictions, and values in shaping professional choices. Particular attention is given to young people's lived experiences, expectations for the future, and the everyday decisions that influence both their current lives and their projected career paths.

By combining a broad international perspective with sensitivity to cultural and social contexts, the research seeks to understand how young people make sense of work not only as economic activity, but also as a meaningful dimension of personal identity and social contribution. The panel will present the global results of the study, followed by focused analyses of the European countries involved, specifically the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain, highlighting convergences, contrasts, and emerging trends within the European context.

WORK, VALUES, AND SPIRITUALITY: EMERGING FINDINGS FROM A GLOBAL STUDY ON YOUTH, WORK AND RELIGION

Díaz--Dorronsoro J.M.(Speaker), Pontificia Università della Santa Croce ~ Rome ~ Italy

WORK, VALUES, AND UNCERTAINTY: YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Sanders K.(Speaker), St. Mary's University ~ London ~ United Kingdom

LIVES ON HOLD? WORK, EDUCATION, AND VALUES AMONG YOUNG ADULTS IN ITALY

Cordisco I.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Salesiana ~ Rome ~ Italy

ATTITUDES TOWARD WORK AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPAIN: AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS

Sádaba C.(Speaker), Universidad de Navarra ~ Pamplona ~ Spain

ENVISIONING SOCIAL MACHINES IN RELIGIOUS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A104

Contact: Lukas Brand
Chair: Lukas Brand, Steffi Fabricius, Dominik Winter, Martin Kutz

Humans encounter AI-based social companions both as equals—as simulacra or reflections of humans—and as qualitatively unequal—inferior to or even transcending humans in various aspects. Against this background, the panel aims to address the positive and negative, intended as well as unintended potentials of such social robots and AI-systems within religious learning environments (RLE) as a new socio-informatic setting. Two dimensions are of particular interest: (1) current research on the impact of social robots and AI on RLE, regarding social and educational in/equalities, and (2) robots and AI as subject matter for discussing (social and structural) in/equality from an ethical and relational point of view.

We invite proposals in the intersection of technology and religious learning that address questions such as:

– What (ontological, functional or relational) in/equalities between robots, teachers, and pupils affect RLE?
– Can AI and robotics enable inclusive access to religious knowledge?
– Does generative AI contain relevant biases (e.g. towards a certain religion, denomination or social group) that would lead particularly to discrimination within RLE?
– How should we shape the religious positioning of an AI-based system for RLE?
– How are AI tools received in religious education depending on the religious and cultural context of the specific RLE?
– How can digital RLE (or a “digital catechesis”) be conceptualized when the teacher is a machine?
– Does the material design of a machine influence the spiritual formation in an RLE, i.e. when it comes to topics such as immaterial values and transcendence?
– How can the in/equality within a triangle of human, deity, and technical artefact be addressed and how does AI’s imitation of humans’ or deities’ behaviour obscure or amplify the differences?
– How should conceptualisations of the human–machine in/equality such as New Materialism be addressed in RLE?

AI-ENABLED CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH BIBLICAL TEXTS IN PRIMARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: INCLUSIVE ACCESS, PROMPT LITERACY, AND METACOGNITIVE REFLECTION

Holm A.(Speaker), Erzdiözese München und Freising ~ München ~ Germany

USING AI IN UPPER SECONDARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. AN (UN)EQUAL TOOL FOR MORE (UN)EQUAL STUDENTS?

Winter D.(Speaker), Universität Erfurt ~ Erfurt ~ Germany

“Not Everything Said Online Is True.” Islamic Influencers from the Perspective of Muslim Students and Their Relevance for Religious Learning Environments

Yagdi S.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

NAVEL, TEACH ME TO PRAY! A SOCIAL ROBOT IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. FIRST GLANCES AT A PROJECT IN GERMANY

Fabricius S.(Speaker), Kutz M.(Speaker), University of Siegen ~ Siegen ~ Germany

SoulMate: Human-centred design of companion technologies for navigating existential and religious concerns

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INTERRELIGIOUS STUDIES AND INTERCULTURAL THEOLOGY: REFLECTIONS ON PAST TRAJECTORIES AND EMERGING HORIZONS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Matthew Ryan Robinson
Chair: Anne Hege Grung

Hosted by the European Society for Intercultural Theology and Interreligious Studies (ESITIS), this panel aims to re-examine the terrain of interreligious and intercultural understanding in relation to academic and transdisciplinary (academic-civic) efforts. Over the past decades, in light of the complexities of living in pluralistic societies, interreligious dialogue and intercultural studies have evolved into a much broader and more diverse set of efforts toward mutual understanding and shared flourishing. Rapid changes — political realignments, environmental crises, digital transformations, and demographic shifts — have raised urgent questions for the relevance and future vitality of interreligious cooperation and peaceful, mutually respectful intercultural coexistence. What can IS and IcT offer to European societies now and in the future? What is needed and what is possible? How can the tasks be delineated and agendas set? What is the particular role of scholarship now and in the years ahead?

Papers and Speakers:
+ The Role of Interreligious Studies Under Conditions of Inequality and Religious Pluralism (Yaser Ellethy; President of ESITIS; Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)
+ Sacred Spirituality: A New Old Approach to Religion, Ethics, and Human Flourishing (William F. Vendley; Senior Advisor for Religion at the Fetzer Institute and Secretary General Emeritus Religions for Peace)
+ Beyond (Dis-)Agreement as a Focus of Interreligious Encounter: Reframings of How We Imagine One Another (Marianne Moyaert)

By situating these themes within wider societal transformations, invited speakers will reflect on how Interreligious Studies can respond creatively to the complexities and injustices of the 21st century while envisioning intellectually and ethically robust futures for the discipline.

THE ROLE OF INTERRELIGIOUS STUDIES UNDER CONDITIONS OF INEQUALITY AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

Ellethy Y.(Speaker), Vrije Universteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

SACRED SPIRITUALITY: A NEW OLD APPROACH TO RELIGION, ETHICS, AND HUMAN FLOURISHING

Vendley W.F.(Speaker), Fetzer Institute ~ Kalamazoo ~ United States of America

BEYOND (DIS-)AGREEMENT AS A FOCUS OF INTERRELIGIOUS ENCOUNTER: REFRAMINGS OF HOW WE IMAGINE ONE ANOTHER

Moyaert M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

RELIGION AND WORLD POLITICS: CONNECTING THEORY WITH PRACTICE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 18:20

Pola - AT14

Contact: Michael Driessen
Chair: Scott Appleby
authorAMC: Erin Wilson
Speaker: Peter Mandaville, Kristina Stoeckl, Gregorio Bettiza

This Author Meets Critics panel invites three established scholars of religion and global politics to engage with Erin Wilson's recently published book, Religion and World Politics: Connecting Theory with Practice (Routledge, 2023). Religion and World Politics aims to reframe the way scholars ask questions about the role of religion in world politics today. Designed for practitioners, policymakers, and newcomers to the topic of religion and global politics, the book emphasizes that religion is not something clear, identifiable, and definable, but is fluid and shifting. Consequently, we need analytical frameworks that help make sense of this ever-changing phenomenon. The book presents a critical, intersectional framework for analyzing religion and applies this to case studies of three core areas of international relations (IR) analysis: (1) conflict, violence, and security; (2) development and humanitarianism; and (3) human rights, law, and public life. These cases highlight how assumptions about what religion is and does affect policymakers, theorists, and activists. The book demonstrates the damage that has been done through policies and programs based on unquestioned assumptions and the possibilities and insights to be gained by incorporating the critical study of religion into research, policymaking, and practice.

RELIGION AND WORLD POLITICS: CONNECTING THEORY WITH PRACTICE

Wilson E.(authorAMC), University of Groningen ~ Groningen ~ Netherlands

CARE OF CREATION AS THEOLOGICAL AGENDA - RELIGIONS, CONFESSIONS, BELIEF SYSTEMS

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Roland Cerny-Werner
Chair: Judith M Damian

Religious systems as normative-performative networks have and continue to be what we might term “moral agenda-setters”. The survival of humanity—however it may have been “created,” “formed,” or “originated”—was probably a cornerstone of such systems from early on, forming the basis of religious concepts and contributing to evaluating, combating, or even preserving social, political, and cultural (in)equalities. Concepts of creation and the care thereof have continually found their way into political and religious action, be it in ancient/late antique theological foundation processes or in medieval hegemonic discourses; in the proto-emancipatory debates of the Reformation or the human rights-related arguments of the 20th century; in theological, philosophical, or political debates among contemporaries or in discourses that span epochs. They can appear as Christian charity, Islamic hospitality, or Jewish justice. Exploring this central structure of faith-based, cultic thinking and action over the millennia and classifying it in the history of theology is one of the two main pillars of the proposed panel. The second pillar of the panel is dedicated to whether and how such theological concepts of the care for creation could constitute a moral compass of climate negotiations in the 20th and 21st. Key questions we are interested in exploring can include but are not limited to: What impetus and self-image do religions derive from their theological program for possible inter- or transnational engagement on the issue of climate change? What can religions agree upon across religious divides? What do they advocate for together? (How) does urgency arise? How and to whom is authority attributed on this issue, and does this result in calls for action or specific policy recommendations? Researchers from all academic disciplines are welcome to propose contributions and submit them to enable a trans- and interdisciplinary discussion.

MORAL IMPERATIVES AND INFORMAL MEANS: RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Mclarren K.(Speaker), Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

NOT EQUAL, YET NOT UNEQUAL. “CARE FOR CREATION” AS A THEOLOGOUMENON IN THE VATICAN’S PEACE POLICY AFTER THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA

Cerny--Werner R.(Speaker), University of Salzburg ~ Salzburg ~ Austria

TIKKUN OLAM – RESTORING EQUALITY IN CREATION: ECOLOGY AND JEWISH IDENTITY

Klein B.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

CO2 OF INEQUALITIES: THE ECONOMY OF FRANCESCO

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Serena Ionta
Chair: Luigino Bruni

Inequality is a complex, multi-dimensional issue, so it is more accurate to speak of “inequalities” in the plural. Treating it as a single problem often limits our ability to understand and address its many facets. Economic, social, legal, and gender inequalities overlap and reinforce one another, and religion has historically supported and challenged these hierarchies. This panel explores these dynamics through the lens of the Economy of Francesco (EoF), a movement born from Pope Francis’ invitation to young economists, entrepreneurs, and scholars to create a Pact for the Economy inspired by St Francis of Assisi. The Pact promotes an economy grounded in justice, peace, care, and human dignity. The EoF community works toward a fairer economy that combats poverty and exclusion, supports dignified work, aligns finance with real needs, values cultural and ecological diversity, and reduces inequalities in all their forms.
Within this framework, the panel examines key themes from the EoF debate, including spiritual capital, the World Fraternity Report, and critiques of aporophobia and meritocracy. Spiritual capital is presented as a crucial but often neglected influence on economic behavior and social relations. The World Fraternity Report seeks to measure relational factors like trust, cooperation, and inclusion that sustain inequalities. Finally, aporophobia and meritocratic narratives are analyzed as cultural forces that normalize exclusion and justify inequality by emphasizing individual responsibility while obscuring structural causes. By offering a fresh perspective on religion and inequality, the panel challenges dominant ideas about merit, growth, work, and value. Rather than viewing religion only as a source of inequality, it highlights ethical principles from religious traditions — particularly the EoF Pact — to imagine new economic relationships and institutions aimed at reducing exclusion, precarity, and systemic injustice.

SPIRITUAL CAPITAL AND THE HERITAGE OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

Bruni L.(Speaker), Lumsa University ~ rome ~ Italy

INEQUALITIES AND SPIRITUAL CAPITAL: PROPOSING A "GOAL 0" FOR THE UN 2030 AGENDA

Rozzoni S.(Speaker), University of Bergamo ~ Bergamo ~ Italy

APOROPHOBIA, MERITOCRACY AND RELIGION

Rotondi V.(Speaker), SUPSI University ~ Manno ~ Italy

THEOLOGY IN THE CAPITALOCENE

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Pola - A108

Contact: Joerg Rieger
Chair: Joerg Rieger
authorAMC: Joerg Rieger, Charlotte Jacobs
Speaker: Cornelia Hildebrandt, Michaela Quast-Neulinger, Tabea Schünemann, Luisa Sello

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This Author Meets Critique (AMC) session engages Joerg Rieger's book Theology in the Capitalocene—Theologie im Kapitalozän, which will be available in German adaptation in the Spring of 2026 (Charlotte Jacobs, trans., Theologische Interventionen, Kohlhammer Verlag). Several chapters of this book are adapted from the English original and revised for European contexts, with some new chapters added.
The book (English subtitle: Ecology, Identity, Class, and Solidarity) argues that the study of theology and religion needs to engage the signs of the times both critically and constructively, proposing that the neologism "Capitalocene" describes our geological age more appropriately than the more common notion of the "Anthropocene."
If we find ourselves in times when the flow of capital determines not only economics and politics but also religion and the future of the planet, theologians and scholars of religion may be able to contribute not only by deepening an understanding of the resulting problems but also by identifying potential solutions. As many people find it easier to envision the end of the world than the end of capitalism, theologians and scholars of religion face a formidable task.
This panel brings together scholars, intellectuals, and activists who have engaged earlier versions of Rieger's work. Their presentations will touch on the theme of this year's European Academy of Religion, "Religions and (Inequalities)," and include reflections on deeper causes, implications, and possible responses to the emergent problems of our time.

THEOLOGY IN THE CAPITALOCENE

Rieger J.(authorAMC), Jacobs C.(authorAMC), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

THE CULTURES OF CANON LAW: GLOBAL CATHOLICISM, GLOCAL LEGISLATION, AND THE LOCAL CHURCHES

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Ryszard Bobrowicz
Chair: Ryszard Bobrowicz
authorAMC: Judith Hahn
Speaker: Bryan Froehle, Kim Mendoza

This book is the first study to consider findings from sociology, legal anthropology, ethnology, legal pluralism, comparative law and theology in order to gain a better understanding of the diverse cultures of global Catholicism and the cross-cultural challenges arising from Roman Catholic canon law within the local churches. The author, renowned for her work at the intersection of socio-legal studies and canon law, examines the latter as a distinctive example of a European religious legal system that cuts across the myriad legal cultures of the local churches. In light of findings on legal transfer and legal colonialism, and by examining canon law within the emerging field of social and cultural studies approaches to law, her book sheds light on how canon law is imposed upon and received by the local churches around the world. It analyses the challenges and problems arising from the law's transcultural claims within these churches. Based on these observations, the study discusses the critical stance of canon law within contemporary Catholicism and the current debates on a synodal reform of the church and its law.

The book adopts different perspectives: As a sociological study, it describes the contemporary Eurocentrism of global canon law and the conflicts arising from it. As a theological study, it presents ecclesiological reasons for challenging the hegemony of global legislation. As a study of canon law, it suggests ways in which legislation could permit greater diversity while maintaining the unity of the universal church. By analysing canon law as a specific example of a religious legal order with cross-cultural ambitions and global claims, the book also contributes to the study of transnational law in general by illustrating the typical problems that accompany transnational legal regimes in both secular legal systems and religious groups.

Full details available at: https://link.springer.com/book/9783032148117

THE CULTURES OF CANON LAW: GLOBAL CATHOLICISM, GLOCAL LEGISLATION, AND THE LOCAL CHURCHES

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ESOTERIC ISLAM AND THE POLITICAL IMAGINATION: REVISITING MYSTICISM, AUTHORITY, AND ACTIVISM

Wednesday 01 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Michele Petrone
Chair: Michele Petrone, Alessandro Cancian

This panel reconsiders the place of Islamic esoteric movements in shaping political authority, social agency, and intellectual history from the 14th century to the present. While Sufism and other esoteric traditions have long been acknowledged as key forces in the formation of Muslim spirituality, their political and social roles remain underexplored or framed through outdated paradigms. The enduring assumption that mystical movements are socially static and politically quietist—an idea consolidated in colonial scholarship and revived in the wake of Iran's 1979 revolution—has obscured the complex ways in which mystical networks have negotiated power, legitimacy, and reform across Muslim societies.
We invite contributions that rethink these assumptions by examining how esoteric actors have shaped, contested, or reimagined political life. Submissions may address, for example:
• How did Sufi lodges, saintly lineages, or esoteric brotherhoods intervene in struggles over sovereignty, taxation, or territorial control?
• In what ways did mystical idioms of sainthood, baraka, or cosmology inform political legitimacy or statecraft?
• How did esoteric networks respond to, appropriate, or resist modernizing reforms, colonial governance, or nationalist projects?
• What forms of activism—social, intellectual, or revolutionary—emerged from mystical circles, and how were they theorized by their participants?
• How did esoteric ideas circulate across Sunni–Shi'i, Arab–Persian–Turkic, or Muslim–non-Muslim boundaries, and what political imaginaries did these exchanges enable?
• How have modern states sought to regulate, co-opt, or suppress esoteric movements, and how have these movements adapted to new regimes of surveillance and authority?
• What methodological approaches allow us to rethink the binary between "quietist" and "activist" Islam in light of esoteric traditions' historical complexity?

THE SOCIAL LIFE OF SANCTITY: RECONSIDERING STATUS AND SPIRITUALITY IN SUFI ORDERS

Petrone M.(Speaker), LUISS ~ Rome ~ Italy

“YOU SHALL NOT BE A BURDEN TO SOCIETY”: WORK, DISCIPLINE, AND SOCIAL ETHICS IN MODERN SHIʿI SUFISM

Cancian A.(Speaker), Institute of Ismaili Studies ~ London ~ United Kingdom

MĀʾ AL-ʿAYNAYN AND THE FĀḌILIYYA NETWORK: SUFISM, AUTHORITY, AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT IN THE LATE 19TH–EARLY 20TH CENTURY SAHARAN MAGHREB

Patrizi L.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

SACRED SPACES UNDER THREAT: NEW APPROACHES TO DOCUMENTING AND UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WORSHIPPERS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Federico Ruozzi
Chair: Federico Ruozzi

Within religious traditions, violence in spaces of prayer may be interpreted as a paradigmatic form of moral and communal rupture, drawing on foundational narratives of fratricide when directed at worshippers and of sacrilege when targeting sacred space. From a scholarly perspective, however, contemporary efforts to study such violent attacks face a methodological paradox: despite their global persistence, they remain fragmented across existing datasets, undertheorized in violence studies, and unevenly documented. Scholars thus face a twofold challenge: documenting attacks that are inconsistently classified across sources, while also developing analytical frameworks capable of accounting for both shared patterns of violence and dynamics specific to the religious contexts where these events occurred.

This panel, built around the emerging research carried out by a group of historians in Bologna, Italy, on the documentation and analysis of attacks against worshippers in religious spaces, is conceived as an open forum for scholars investigating violence against worshippers and sacred sites across different religious traditions, regions, and methodological approaches. Contributions are welcomed from researchers studying the origins of this phenomenon or specific cases, developing documentation practices, analyzing patterns of attack, or examining institutional and community responses to such violence. The panel will include presentations drawing on Plorabunt, a newly developed global dataset documenting attacks on places of worship, alongside contributions based on archival research, historical and philological-exegetical analysis.

The panel addresses a central question: to what extent can the systematic study of violence against places of worship—grounded in improved documentation, cross-regional comparison, and scientific dialogue—both deepen scholarly understanding and respond to the urgent concerns of religious communities facing recurrent threats?

PLORABUNT: MAPPING VIOLENCE AGAINST WORSHIPPERS IN SACRED SPACES

El Ganadi A.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

BEYOND GENESIS: CAIN, FRATRICIDE, AND VIOLENCE IN EARLY JEWISH INTERPRETATION

Ibba G.(Speaker), Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Centrale / Istituto Superiore di Scienze Religiose della Toscana ~ Firenze ~ Italy

CAIN, ABEL, AND THE ORIGINS OF NON-CAPITAL PUNISHMENT: RABBINIC INTERPRETATIONS AND THE PARADIGM OF THE CITY OF REFUGE

Dal Bo F.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

RECONFIGURING FRATRICIDE: CAIN AND ABEL IN Q. 5:27–32

Badini F.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Palermo ~ Italy

THE VIOLENT CONTESTATION OF SPACE: A MASSACRE OF CHRISTIANS AT THE HANDS OF CHRISTIANS IN LATE ANTIQUE ROME

Proietti M.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

OPERATION BLUE STAR AS VIOLENCE AGAINST SACRED SPACE: TRAUMA, VIOLENCE, MARTYROLOGY, AND SIKH COLLECTIVE MEMORY

Shahnawaz S.(Speaker), Student ~ Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

TERRORISM AS DEVIATION FROM THE MIDDLE-WAY: RACHID GHANNOUCHI'S REACTION TO JIHADIST ATTACK IN TUNISIA

Cargnelutti F.(Speaker), Indipendent Researcher ~ Palermo ~ Italy

THE CONTESTED MEANING OF MEMORY MARKERS: CHURCHES, GENOCIDE, AND THE MAKING OF HERITAGE IN RWANDA

Cristofori S.(Speaker), FSCIRE/Link Campus University, Rome ~ Bologna/Rome ~ Italy

BEFORE RECOGNITION. HOW THE POLITICS OF RELIGION SHAPED THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Maria Birnbaum
Chair: Erin Wilson
authorAMC: Maria Birnbaum
Speaker: Elizabeth Shakman Hurd, Iza Hussin, Ely Orrego-Torres

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Recognizing religion in global politics is neither neutral nor benign. This book reveals how recognition operates to reinforce hierarchies, reify religious difference, and deepen political divisions. It reframes religion as a historically contingent category of knowledge and governance. She shifts the question from whether religion should be recognized to how it becomes recognizable. Through the entangled imperial histories of British India and Mandate Palestine, the book traces how colonial and anti-colonial governmental logics shaped the politics of religious minorities, representation, and border-making-dynamics that continue to shape postcolonial states like Pakistan and Israel. Offering a timely critique of the epistemic assumptions underpinning global discourses on religion, sovereignty, and political order, Before Recognition challenges conventional understandings of religion in international relations.

BEFORE RECOGNITION. HOW THE POLITICS OF RELIGION SHAPED THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

Birnbaum M.(authorAMC), University of Basel ~ Basel ~ Switzerland

CONVERSIONS AT THE MARGINS: ENSLAVED WOMEN AND RELIGIOUS POWER IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola A208

Contact: Benedetta Chizzolini
Chair: Massimo Carlo Giannini, Serena Di Nepi

This panel examines how enslaved women in early modern Europe and the Mediterranean navigated the pressures, constraints, and opportunities embedded in processes of religious conversion. By bringing together the work of Chizzolini, Abend, and Jaffe, it investigates conversion not as a unidirectional act of assimilation but as a dynamic field of negotiation shaped by overlapping systems of coercion, religious authority, and systems of power within households.

Chizzolini shows how the baptisms of enslaved Muslim and Jewish women in Medicean Tuscany functioned both as an instrument of grand ducal policy and as one of the few avenues through which captives could seek protection, mitigate mistreatment, or alter their symbolic status. Abend examines cases from seventeenth-century Spain in which enslaved women accused of renouncing God mobilized the jurisdiction of the Spanish Inquisition to challenge their masters' violence, revealing how the language of apostasy could be transformed into a tactical resource. Jaffe analyzes the complex trajectories of enslaved women in converso households in Italy, where informal judaizing and contested forms of religious practice exposed competing Christian and Jewish claims over their identities.

Together, the papers aim to demonstrate that conversion—Christian or Jewish, formal or informal, strategic or coerced—was a crucial arena in which enslaved women in early modern Europe confronted structures of domination while forging fragile yet meaningful forms of agency

FEMALE BAPTISMS AND POLITICAL POWER: THE CONVERSIONS OF ENSLAVED WOMEN IN MEDICEAN TUSCANY

Chizzolini B.(Speaker), Tel Aviv University- ERC FemSMed ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

ENSLAVED WOMEN: RENEGADES AND THEIR MASTERS, CONVERSION, ABUSE, AND AGENCY

Abend N.(Speaker), Tel Aviv University-ERC FemSMed ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

BETWEEN CONVERSION AND JUDAIZING: ENSLAVED FEMALE CONVERTS IN JEWISH HOUSEHOLDS IN EARLY MODERN ITALY

Jaffe E.(Speaker), Tel Aviv University- ERC FemSMed ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

FROM EXPLOITATION TO CONTEMPLATION: ETHICAL DISCERNMENT IN ECOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - AT14

Contact: Domenico Pirozzi
Chair: Domenico Pirozzi, Ambrogio Bongiovanni

Scientific inquiry provides indispensable explanations of natural phenomena. Yet, the resolution of controversial questions concerning the ecological responsibility and the sustainability of human practices inevitably involve ethical judgments exceeding the explanatory scope of the natural sciences. However, ethical discernment requires a broad epistemological horizon to integrate empirical knowledge, moral reasoning, and theological reflection, as well as an openness to the moral wisdom embedded in diverse religious and cultural traditions.

In this context, Laudato si' reimagines the Catholic theology through its proposal of an "integral ecology", an approach that integrates ecological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions, and its recognition of the Earth not merely as an object of use but as a subject of moral and religious significance. Creation is understood as gift and as sign, calling for an ethic grounded in responsibility and care. This vision can be fruitfully placed in dialogue with the ethical-moral sensitivities of other religious traditions, many of which concern the sacredness of nature and the virtues of humility, stewardship, and compassion toward all forms of life. This vision nonetheless requires further theoretical and methodological development, especially with reference to concrete ethical decision-making in contested environmental contexts.

This panel proposes to foster interdisciplinary and interreligious dialogue by integrating several approaches within contemporary environmental ethics, while also acknowledging the contributions of non-Christian religious traditions to the ethical imagination surrounding ecological responsibility. The panel aims to promote an ethically robust and practically discerning approach to environmental responsibility, to address the complexity of contemporary sustainability challenges by retrieving the contemplative and ethical dimensions of the human relationship with the created world.

FROM EXPLOITATION TO CONTEMPLATION: ETHICAL DISCERNMENT IN ECOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES

Whelan G.K.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana – Facoltà di Teologia - Direttore del Dipartimento di Teologia Fondamentale della Missione del Collegium Maximum ~ Roma ~ Italy

RELIGIONS AND ECOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY. TOWARDS NEW LEGAL INSTRUMENTS FOR THE PROTECTION AND SHARED GOVERNANCE OF ECOSYSTEMS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Balsamo F.(Speaker), University of Naples “Federico II”, Department of Law ~ Napoli ~ Italy

BEYOND MORAL WITNESS: INTERRELIGIOUS ENGAGEMENT AND ETHICAL INFLUENCE IN CLIMATE GOVERNANCE AT COP30

Osnato S.(Speaker), Università di Pisa, Università degli Studi di Ferrara ~ Pisa ~ Italy

GREEN PROMISES AND HIDDEN COSTS: RETHINKING SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Pirozzi D.(Speaker), University of Naples “Federico II”, Dep. of Chemical Engineering, Materials and Industrial Production (DICMaPI), Interdepartmental Center for Environment (CIRAM), Interdepartmental Center for Environment (CIRAM) ~ Napoli ~ Italy

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRAL ECOLOGY TEN YEARS AFTER THE ENCYCLICAL “LAUDATO SI': RESULTS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Tigano M.(Speaker), Università di Messina – Dipartimento di Giurisprudenza ~ Messina ~ Italy

GENESIS 1:28 CALLS FOR A SUSTAINABILITY AND ETHICAL RE-INTERPRETATION OF “DOMINION OVER CREATION"

Mendoza--Cano O.(Speaker), Universidad de Colima, México ~ Colima ~ Mexico

EXPERIENCED INEQUALITIES AND SENSITIVITY TO INEQUALITIES IN JEWISH HISTORY AND CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Birgit Klein
Chair: Roland Cerny-Werner, Birgit Klein

Throughout history, Jews have often been victims of inequality perpetrated by members of other religions. Biblical tradition is marked by the memory of enslavement in Egypt and liberation, the Exodus. This has resulted in a call not to oppress others based on one's own experience. However, since Jews had lived under foreign rule since ancient times, they were denied equal participation in society for religious reasons until well into the second half of the 19th century, before once again becoming victims of extreme inequality and antisemitism in the 20th century with the oppression, persecution, and murder of more than six million Jews.
The panel contributions analyze, from both a historical and contemporary perspective, how Jews have been and continue to be victims of social and religious inequality and antisemitism. They also examine the extent to which their own experiences have led to increased sensitivity to inequalities, both within the Jewish community and towards non-Jews.

THE ENGAGEMENT OF JEWISH “SALONIÈRES” WITH RELIGIOUS TOPICS AND IDENTITY IN LIGHT OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL INEQUALITIES

Damian J.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

JOSEPH SÜSS OPPENHEIMER: HOW A JEW NAVIGATED — AND TRIED TO TRANSCEND — THE LIMITATIONS OF HIS SOCIETY

Lüllemann D.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY OF KEMPEN (KĘPNO) VS. THE GOVERNMENT OF PRUSSIA: A SYNAGOGUE’S ATTEMPT TO HIRE A FAMOUS CANTOR IN THE FACE OF INEQUALITY AND XENOPHOBIA

Katz D.(Speaker), University of Cologne ~ Cologne ~ Germany

FROM DEICIDE TO “CHILD-HUNTING”: THE DEICIDE THEOLOGOUMENON AS A FOUNDATIONAL FRAMEWORK—FROM SIMON OF TRENT TO QANON

Cerny--Werner R.(Speaker), University of Salzburg ~ Salzburg ~ Austria

JEWISH REACTIONS TO (ALLEGED) INEQUALITIES IN JEWISH LITURGY

Klein B.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

MESSIANIC JEWS AS BRIDGE OR PROJECTION? EVANGELICAL APPROPRIATIONS AND RELIGIOUS INEQUALITY

Hösel J.(Speaker), Heidelberg University of Jewish Studies ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

INTERACTIVE STORIES OF INEQUALITY, EXCLUSION, AND PERSECUTION: A SERIOUS GAME ABOUT THE ONGOING FIGHT AGAINST ANTISEMITISM

Kathan M.(Speaker), University of Jewish Studies Heidelberg (HfJS) ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

BETWEEN GOLAH AND TFUTZAH: SHMUEL YOSEF AGNON, GERMANY AND THE METAMORPHOSIS OF EXILE

Paoloni G.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia (RE) ~ Italy

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION TODAY: TOPICS - METHODS - APPROACHES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Brandon Watson
Chair: Brandon Watson, Hans-Peter Grosshans

Contemporary approaches and contributions to the field of philosophy of religion can be presented. The issue of the overall EuARe conference “(In)equalities” can be addressed regarding its relevance in and for philosophical study of religion. Of particular interest are contributions which attempt to reconstruct and reorient philosophy of religion considering contemporarily relevant philosophical challenges. The panel also welcomes papers that propose new methodological approaches and studies in the field of philosophy of religion broadly construed. This panel is organized in cooperation with the European Society for Philosophy of Religion (ESPR).

RELIGION AND THE CHALLENGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: PHILOSOPHICAL REFLECTIONS

Ozioko J.U.(Speaker), Pontifical Urbaniana University ~ Vatican City ~ Vatican City State (Holy See)

QUANTUM REALITY AS LIFE-GUIDING: A CRITIQUE OF THE EXISTENTIAL REALIST INTERPRETATIONS OF QUANTUM MECHANICS

Andrejc G.(Speaker), University of Groningen ~ Groningen ~ Netherlands

THE REALITY OF PRESENCE: INGOLF DALFERTH’S THEOLOGICAL REALISM

Myers B.(Speaker), Alphacrucis University College ~ Sydney ~ Australia

DIVERSIFYING PERSPECTIVES: THE RELIGIOUS-PHILOSOPHICAL DEPTHS OF MEANING

Watson B.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

DIVINE HIDDENNESS AND THE UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF THEISTIC BELIEF

Morales D.J.(Speaker), LCC International University ~ Klaipeda ~ Lithuania

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION FROM INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES: PRELIMINARY HYPOTHESES

De Caprio D.(Speaker), University of Strasbourg ~ Strasbourg ~ France

ON INJUSTICE AND INEQUALITY IN THE STUDY OF BUDDHISM

Stepien R.(Speaker), Austrian Academy of Sciences ~ Vienna ~ Austria

GENDER (IN)EQUALITIES IN RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS: THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS, NORMATIVE PRACTICES, AND CONTEMPORARY RECONFIGURATIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Pola - A210

Contact: Davide S Amore

Across religious traditions, gender has functioned as a central axis through which systems of authority, normativity, and social hierarchy have been articulated, contested, and transformed. Theologies, legal frameworks, ritual practices, and symbolic imaginaries have historically both legitimized gendered inequalities and, in certain contexts, provided resources for their critique and reconfiguration. This panel aims to explore how gender (in)equalities are constructed, maintained, and negotiated within diverse religious systems, examining both classical formulations and contemporary reinterpretations.

Bringing together comparative, historical, theological, and anthropological perspectives, the panel invites contributions that analyse gender as a site of tension between tradition and change. Attention will be given to how sacred texts, doctrinal discourses, jurisprudential traditions, and ritual practices shape gender roles, access to religious authority, and embodied religious experience. At the same time, the panel seeks to highlight internal debates, reformist movements, and feminist, womanist, and queer theologies that challenge inherited hierarchies and propose alternative hermeneutical and ethical frameworks.

By situating gender within broader discussions of power, embodiment, and social inequality, this panel aims to foster critical dialogue on the ways religions both reflect and actively participate in the production of gendered (in)equalities. Contributions may address one or more religious traditions or adopt a comparative or transdisciplinary approach, offering insights into how religious thought and practice continue to shape—and be reshaped by—contemporary struggles for gender justice.

Normative Practices, and Gendered Vulnerabilities: Examining the intersection of African and Islamic Religious Traditions as Axis of Inequality in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Societies

Kubai A.(Speaker), Uppsala University and Södertörn University College ~ Uppsala ~ Sweden

BETWEEN HALAKHA AND EGALITARIANISM: ORTHODOX JEWISH COMMUNITIES IN CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

Tourgeman L.S.(Speaker), École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales ~ Paris ~ France

GENDERED (IN)EQUALITIES IN A THREE-SELF CHURCH: WOMEN'S RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY, NORMATIVE PRACTICES, AND INSTITUTIONAL RECONFIGURATION IN RURAL CHINA

Shiliang F.(Speaker), Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonn ~ paris ~ France

THRESHOLDS OF DEVOTION: CONTESTED SACRED GEOGRAPHIES, FEMALE ACCESS, AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY IN PAKISTAN

Chaudhury A.(Speaker), UNIVERSITY OF YORK ~ HESLINGTON, YORK ~ United Kingdom

QUEERING REDEMPTIVE MASCULINITIES: REIMAGINING MASCULINITY IN AFRICAN PENTECOSTAL CONTEXTS

Van Der Walt C.(Speaker), Ngcobo S.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu Natal ~ Pietermarizburg ~ South Africa

PAGAN QUEERNESS. GENDER DYNAMICS AND POLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY PAGANISM

D''Agostino E.(Speaker), SIMBDEA - Italian Society for Museum and Heritage Anthropology ~ Roma ~ Italy

THE FEMININE NUMINOUS AND THE MANAGEMENT OF INEQUALITY IN ANCIENT GREEK RELIGION

Zaffarana C.(Speaker), Independent Researcher, Italy ~ Oleggio ~ Italy

SACRED COMMITMENTS, STRUCTURED INEQUALITIES: A LAW & ECONOMICS ANALYSIS OF ENGAGEMENT IN MOSAIC LAW

Wu N.(Speaker), EDLE (University of Hamburg) ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

SPIRITUAL MOTHERHOOD AND SPIRITUAL FATHERHOOD: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, GENDER AND POWER

Flatebø T.(Speaker), MF - Norwegian School of Theology, Religion, and Society ~ Oslo ~ Norway

SEEKING BHIKKHUNĪ ORDINATION ACROSS BORDERS: ONE WOMAN'S PATH TO UPASAMPADĀ AMID TEXTUAL AUTHORITY AND CONTESTED PRACTICES.

Nenna M.V.(Speaker), Università di Roma La Sapienza ~ Roma ~ Italy

MENSTRUATION BETWEEN SACREDNESS AND POLLUTION: FROM BRAHMANICAL TRADITIONS TO THE DIGITAL REINTERPRETATION OF STIGMA

Giampietri V.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome / Antwerpen University ~ Rome ~ Italy

PRIESTHOOD WITHOUT AN ALTAR: BRIGANTESSE, RITUAL AUTHORITY, AND GENDER IN POST-UNIFICATION SOUTHERN ITALY (1861–1870)

Scianguetta R.(Speaker), SISR - Società Italiana di Storia delle Religioni ~ Montesano sulla Marcellana (SA) ~ Italy

GENDER DYNAMICS IN ISLAM: TEXT, TRADITION, AND CONTEMPORARY RECONFIGURATIONS

Amore D.S.(Speaker), I.C. "G. D'Annunzio"/SISR ~ Motta Sant'Anastasia, CT ~ Italy

DIMENSIONS OF RELIGIOUS BIO-EQUALITY: EXPLORING ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS IN RELIGIOUS CONTEXTS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A203

Contact: Janka Balázs
Chair: Janka Balázs, Ágnes Birtalan

This panel invites scholars to explore the notion of bio-egalitarianism among humans, animals, and plants, as well as non-anthropocentric ethical approaches to life, in the context of traditional and modern religiosity.The philosophical dynamic between humanity, nature, and the divine has been debated since Spinoza's formulation of Deus sive Natura. However, in contemporary scholarship, the academic exploration of religious environmentalism is often traced back to Lynn White's article in Nature, titled The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis (1967). White argues that ecological degradation was caused by the anthropocentric and instrumentalist evaluation of nature, attributed to Christian doctrine. While White's paper sparked decades of critique, the discourse generated by his essay highlighted the need to explore new moral frameworks in religion that could shift the relationship between humans and other species in a less anthropocentric direction. Today, religious environmental ethics is a recognized multidisciplinary field, represented by researchers such as Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Allen Grim, among others, engaging questions such as:How can religious traditions relate to contemporary ideas such as environmentalism or conservationism?; What historical and exemplary (textual or ritual) evidence indicates bio-egalitarian or non-anthropocentric narratives within religious traditions?;How do contemporary religious specialists, influential figures, and their communities respond to ecological crises and the ethics of non-human life?;How does religious practice adapt and transform in the light of new socio-environmental challenges, such as ecological degradation, consumerism, and capitalism? This panel welcomes scholars from all disciplines to contribute their findings and research relating to one or more of these themes.The philosophical dynamic between humanity, nature, and the divine has been debated since Spinoza's formulation of Deus sive Natura. However, in contemporary scholarship, the academic exploration of religious environmentalism is often traced back to Lynn White's article in Nature, titled The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis (1967). White argues that ecological degradation was caused by the anthropocentric and instrumentalist evaluation of nature, attributed to Christian doctrine. While White's paper sparked decades of critique, the discourse generated by his essay highlighted the need to explore new moral frameworks in religion that could shift the relationship between humans and other species in a less anthropocentric direction.Today, religious environmental ethics is a recognized multidisciplinary field, represented by researchers such as Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Allen Grim, among others, engaging questions such as: How can religious traditions relate to contemporary ideas such as environmentalism or conservationism? What historical and exemplary (textual or ritual) evidence indicates bio-egalitarian or non-anthropocentric narratives within religious traditions? How do contemporary religious specialists, influential figures, and their communities respond to ecological crises and the ethics of non-human life? How does religious practice adapt and transform in the light of new socio-environmental challenges, such as ecological degradation, consumerism, and capitalism?

REUNION BETWEEN NATURE AND SOCIETY A CASE STUDY BASED ON MONGOLIAN NARRATIVES ON ANIMAL-SHAPED SPOUSE

Birtalan Á.(Speaker), ELTE Institute of Mongolian and Inner Asian Studies ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

SPIRITUAL COUNSEL FROM THE CHORUS OF CREATION: RISHI SUFISM, WATER, AND MORE-THAN-HUMAN-EQUALITY IN EARLY MODERN KASHMIR

Dziedzic P.J.(Speaker), Harvard University ~ Cambridge, MA ~ United States of America

CULTURE, ECONOMY AND HUMAN DIGNITY: REFLECTIONS ON NON-ANTHROPOCENTRIC ETHICS

Strappati G.(Speaker), Instituto Superior de Musica Jose Hernandez de Buenos Aires ~ Lecturer of Course on Performing Arts Economics in International Relations at the Faculty of Economics G. Fua ~ Festival Pensiero Plurale

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE INTERCONNECTEDNESS OF THE SELF AND THE ENVIRONMENT – REFLECTIONS ON THE TIANTAI THEORY OF THE BUDDHA-NATURE OF THE INSENTIENT

Pap M.(Speaker), ELTE Institute of Chinese Studies ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

THE BUDDHIST ‘REVERENCE FOR LIFE’: THE TEACHINGS OF HSING YUN IN LIGHT OF BIOCENTRIC ETHICS

Balázs J.(Speaker), ELTE Institute of Chinese Studies ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

CREATION AND ECOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION OF THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A103

Contact: Severin Parzinger
Chair: Emmet O'Regan

The increasingly urgent concern for our Common Home in the face of the threats and dramatic effects of climate change, the destruction of biodiversity, reckless exploitation and the struggle for increasingly scarce resources such as water, soil, air, etc. is driving current philosophical and theological debates. Christian faith must re-examine its relationship to creation in light of the crises and conditions of the Anthropocene. The social, cultural and political challenges posed by the experience of an increasing threat to creation are the starting point for fundamental theological and ethical reflections on the relationship between God, humanity and the world.

Any theological approach to creation is therefore always related to practice and has to do with transformation. In the perspective of an ecological theology, creation is the transforming creative impulse of God inherent in creation, which works in human actions and, in view of the responsibility incumbent on human beings as creatures and images of God, expects them to use their creativity to seek and pursue new paths that make a shared and good life on this one planet possible, bearing in mind the limits of growth and the finiteness of the Earth.

However, the development of a profound ecological and hermeneutical transformation in the service of life in abundance for all people and creatures will only succeed through global networking as well as interconfessional, intercultural, and interreligious engagement of theological reflection and faith practice. It concerns not only a liberating practice of sustainability, but also an eco-sensitive and decolonial reorientation of theology itself.

In this sense, the panel – hosted by the Young Curatorium of the European Society for Catholic Theology (ESCT) – seeks to discuss theological and interdisciplinary perspectives from Europe and beyond, that take on this task and seek new paths of Christian faith and theology in the spirit of an integral ecology.

FAITH AND JUSTICE FOR OUR COMMON HOME: AN ECO-THEOLOGICAL APPROACH

Cunningham C.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

REVISITING THEOLOGY OF CREATION IN CONVERSATION WITH LIBERATING THEOLOGIES AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Parzinger S.(Speaker), University of Osnabrück ~ Osnabrück ~ Germany

FROM ST FRANCIS TO POPE FRANCIS: SACRED STEWARDSHIP IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Strumble N.(Speaker), DCU - Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

APPROACHING CREATION WITH A KENOTIC MIND: PATRISTIC THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE WITH CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY OF MIND

Hrabal V.(Speaker), Titus Brandsma Institute ~ Nijmegen ~ Netherlands

SEPTUAGINT STUDIES - TOWARDS VOLUME II OF THE HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL LEXICON OF THE SEPTUAGINT (HTLS): OUTCOMES AND PERSPECTIVES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A1

Contact: Anna Mambelli
Chair: Laura Bigoni

The international project on the vocabulary of the Septuagint that is behind "The Historical and Theological Lexicon of the Septuagint" (ed. by Eberhard Bons and Daniela Scialabba, in collaboration with Anna Mambelli; 4 vols., Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2020–) is close to the publication of the second volume of the lexicon, with lemmas from "delta" to "iota". This panel aims to bring together scholars that have been working on these lemmas to discuss research outcomes and selected examples of the impact of lexicographical analysis on Septuagint research, exploring both its context of origin and its early reception.
The issues explored by the panel include:
a) Septuagint lexicography and translation techniques;
b) Septuagint vocabulary in relation to the Greek world;
c) The contribution of the Septuagint to the history of the Greek language;
d) The impact of Septuagint vocabulary on Jewish and early Christian authors.

CONSTRUCTING, DESCRIBING, AND RE-SEMANTIZING ANCIENT SLAVERY IN THE SEPTUAGINT AND EARLY CHRISTIAN LITERATURE

Mambelli A.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia/FSCIRE, Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE IDEA OF HOPE IN THE SEPTUAGINT AND IN PHILO OF ALEXANDRIA

Bons E.(Speaker), University of Strasbourg/FSCIRE, Bologna ~ Strasbourg ~ France

HOW FAR IS ἘΠΙΣΤΉΜΗ A BIBLICAL LEXEME? TRACING THE ROOTS OF KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN THE SEPTUAGINT AND EARLY CHRISTIAN AUTHORS

Bigoni L.(Speaker), University of Fribourg ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

IS THE FOREIGN AN ENEMY? SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE LEMMA ἜΧΘΡΌΣ FROM CLASSICAL GREEK TO THE LXX

Carnevale L.(Speaker), University of Bari Aldo Moro ~ Bari ~ Italy

TO BE OR NOT TO BE COMPASSIONATE? CONSIDERATIONS ON THE USE OF THE ADJECTIVE ἜΛΕΉΜΩΝ IN THE SEPTUAGINT, JEWISH-HELLENISTIC LITERATURE AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

Scialabba D.(Speaker), Pontifical Biblical Institute of Rome - Fscire ~ Rome ~ Italy

THYMOS BETWEEN GREEK LITERATURE AND THE SEPTUAGINT: SEMANTIC AND THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Bellantuono A.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Lille ~ Lille ~ France

FATED OR REQUIRED? TRACING ΔΕΐ̓ FROM SOCIAL CUSTOMS TO ESCHATOLOGICAL FULFILLMENT IN THE SEPTUAGINT

Negri G.(Speaker), Nadini C.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Roma Tor Vergata ~ Roma ~ Italy

AND THE VEIL WAS TORN: FOR AN ORTHODOX-PENTECOSTAL ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Henrique Mata de Vasconcelos
Chair: Brandon Gallaher, Henrique Mata de Vasconcelos

Two major Christian traditions are known for having the religious experience of the Holy Spirit as the core of their spirituality. Yet, they are not ecumenically engaged as the One Church of the Holy Trinity. Recently, however, it has been suggested by Stephen J. Land and Dony K. Donev that the centrality given to the experience of the Spirit in both St. Simeon the New Theologian's Orthodox tradition and in Pentecostalism are similar. Writings of other Byzantine fathers have also been seen as close to the Pentecostal experience. Not only that, but it has been asserted that, regarding its spirituality, Pentecostalism is more Orthodox and Eastern than Catholic and Western. This panel aims to take these claims into question by opening a space where Christians from both traditions can establish an ecumenical dialogue, charism, and theology, or theologies. From the beginning, two things are fundamental to the development of this ecumenical relationship: First, Christian unity only can be achieved through the process of accepting diversity and by means of, in Ramon Panikkar words, dialogical dialogue. Second, as Wojciech Gajewski notes, "the Pentecostal movement is an exceptionally diverse, multimillion-member, and highly dynamic phenomenon." Therefore, our primary aim is to build Christian Unity, respecting the diversity and uniqueness of each tradition. For this, we will include papers exploring the religious experience of God, ontology, pneumatology, mysticism, liturgy, worship, and sacramentality.

ORTHODOX-PENTECOSTAL ACADEMIC DIALOGUE

Woloschak G.(Speaker), IOTA/Northwestern University ~ Evanston ~ United States of America

"THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE SAY, 'COME'": THE EUCHARIST, THE SPIRIT AND THE RENEWAL OF ECUMENISM IN SERGII BULGAKOV

Gallaher B.(Speaker), University of Exeter ~ Exeter ~ United Kingdom

DIALOGUE FROM THE SPIRIT: SOME FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS FOR ORTHODOX-PENTECOSTAL ECUMENISM IN LATIN AMERICA

Quevedo Rodríguez A.M.(Speaker), Universidad Santo Tomás, Colombia/Babeș-Bolyai University, Romania ~ Bogotá ~ Colombia

TEARS, TONGUES, AND WITNESS: THE MISSIOLOGICAL CHARISMS OF ORTHODOXY AND PENTECOSTAL CHRISTIANITY IN THE 21ST-CENTURY

Yong A.(Speaker), Fuller Theological Seminary ~ Pasadena ~ United States of America

PALAMITE ONTOLOGY AND PENTECOSTAL-CHARISMATIC RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE: AN EXPERIENTIAL AND METAPHYSICAL THEOLOGY

Mata De Vasconcelos H.(Speaker), Faculdade Jesuíta de Filosofia e Teologia, Belo Horizonte/Œcumenicum, Angelicum, Roma ~ Belo Horizonte ~ Brazil

THE PENTECOSTALS AND THE ORTHODOX, SPIRITUAL SIBLINGS? AN OUTSIDERS REFLECTIONS

Stayne J.(Speaker), Œcumenicum, Angelicum, Roma/Durham University, England ~ Durham ~ United Kingdom

SYNODALITY, RENEWAL, AND TRANSFORMATION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS ON THEIR MEANING AND IMPACT

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Jens Van Rompaey
Chair: Jens Van Rompaey, Federico Cinocca

During the pontificate of Pope Francis (°1936-2025; 2013-2025), synodality quickly emerged as a central theme and it prominently figures in his legacy. Now that his pontificate has ended, the real challenge lies in the further implementation of the 2021-2024 synod of bishops. This implementation deserves further attention because of the extent of the process and the number of important topics associated with it. As this process will take until at least 2028, it will be one of the most extensive reform processes since the Second Vatican Council.

Such a process of reform, of 'synodalization' of the Church, however, raises many questions. The Final Document, e.g., calls for a "culture of transparency, accountability and evaluation". However, what this exactly entails is unclear. Moreover, these concepts can be approached in different ways depending on the theological sub-discipline from which questions are raised. In this panel, we do not focus on one specific sub-discipline, however, we do place at the center the overarching question: how can we determine, measure, or assess the synodalization of the Church? By which criteria can we see whether the Church, locally, continentally, or universally, has become or is becoming more synodal, more transparent, accountable, and evaluative? Or, to approach the question of synodalization from another angle: which practices or habits need to be reformed or reconfigured to showcase the further synodalization of the Church?

This panel therefore invites submissions that (i) help to address the question of how to evaluate and understand the synodalization of the Church, (ii) attempt to either learn from concrete synodal practices in the Church or to evaluate the Church from a more systematic understanding synodality, and/or (iii) offer interdisciplinary or ecumenical approaches that contribute to an evaluation or further implementation of synodality in the Catholic Church.

LITURGY AS THE FIRST SCHOOL OF (IN)EQUALITY? A SYNODAL READING

Cinocca F.(Speaker), Emmanuel College ~ Boston ~ United States of America

QUO VADIS? THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE, THE RISKS OF SYNODALITY, AND THE LIMITS OF DISCERNMENT

Bobrowicz R.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

ROOTS OF RESISTANCE TO SYNODAL CONVERSION. FOR AN ECCLESIAL AUTHENTICITY

De Biasio G.(Speaker), Pontifical Theological Faculty of Southern Italy; I.S.S.R. “Ss. Apostoli Pietro e Paolo” ~ Napoli ~ Italy

"WHEN RENEWAL AND ADVANCEMENT STALL”: A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHICAL READING OF THE ASSESSMENT OF SYNODALIZATION IN/OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Van Rompaey J.(Speaker), UCLouvain ~ Louvain-la-Neuve ~ Belgium

DEMOCRACY NEEDS RELIGION AND RELIGION NEEDS DEMOCRACY: ARE CATHOLICS CONCERNED?

Costa P.(Speaker), Fondazione Bruno Kessler, Center for Religious Studies ~ Trento ~ Italy

SYNODAL DIVERSITY WITHIN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. CAN THE LATIN CHURCH LEARN FROM THE EASTERN CHURCHES?

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

NEW SPIRITUAL MOVEMENTS AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ISSUES IN TAIWAN: FROM MOUNT ZION TO TAI JI MEN

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A105

Contact: Massimo Introvigne
Chair: Camelia Marin

This session explores the evolving landscape of new spiritual movements in Taiwan and the challenges they face in securing full protection of freedom of religion or belief. Through six case-based and theoretically informed papers, the panel traces how diverse movements—ranging from the New Testament Church's Mount Zion community to Tai Ji Men—have navigated state institutions, public perceptions, and shifting legal frameworks. The opening paper situates the Mount Zion saga within a comparative perspective, showing how early tensions between the New Testament Church and Taiwanese authorities foreshadowed later conflicts involving other minority spiritual groups. Subsequent contributions examine Tai Ji Men from multiple angles: the spiritual and emotional significance of the Miaoli sacred land; the use of taxation as a tool of indirect discrimination; the relationship between equality, trust, and freedom of belief; the cultural meaning of the master–disciple tradition; and the broader implications of the case for institutional integrity and sustainable governance. Together, these papers illuminate recurring patterns—misinterpretation of spiritual practices, administrative overreach, and the fragility of institutional trust—while highlighting the resilience of Taiwan's spiritual communities. By bringing historical, legal, cultural, and interdisciplinary perspectives into dialogue, the session offers a comprehensive assessment of how Taiwan's democratic system grapples with the rights of new spiritual movements and what these cases reveal about the future of religious liberty on the island.

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH: THE MOUNT ZION SAGA IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

Introvigne M.(Speaker), CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions) ~ Torino ~ Italy

TAI JI MEN'S SACRED LAND OF MIAOLI

Nemes M.(Speaker), Hungarian Academy of Arts Research Institute of Art Theory and Methodology ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

TAXES AS A TOOL OF RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION: THE CASE OF TAI JI MEN

Amore D.(Speaker), IC Gabriele D'Annunzio ~ Motta Sant'Anastasia ~ Italy

EQUALITY, FREEDOM OF BELIEF, AND THE TAI JI MEN CASE

Chuang Y.C.(Speaker), Tai Ji Men Qigong Academy ~ Taipei ~ Taiwan

CONSCIENCE, BELIEF PRACTICES, AND INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY: A SUSTAINABILITY ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE ON THE TAI JI MEN CASE

Lu M.C.(Speaker), National Chung Hsing University ~ Taichung ~ Taiwan

SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY 2026

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A2

For the complete call for papers, including detailed section descriptions, guiding questions, and context, please see: https://scriptureandtheology.org/panels/2026-rome/.
Without consulting the full text, proposals cannot be properly prepared.

The Scripture and Theology Forum invites proposals for its 2026 program at the European Academy of Religion in Rome. The full call outlines five sections:
1. Interactions Between Biblical Studies and Theology: Methodological exchanges, mutual dependencies, and best-practice models (see full call for specific questions and publication details).
2. A History of Scripture and Theology: Three parts on premodern integration, Enlightenment-era separation, and contemporary consequences/retrievals (including precise chronological and thematic scope in the full call).
3. Scripture and Theology – Open Call: Topics and methods are specified in the full call, including examples of acceptable proposals.
4. David Ford on the Gospel of John: Closed session, participation criteria and publication plans described only in the full call.
5. Scripture, Theology, and the Advent of AI: The full call lists required foci, sample themes, and expectations for short papers.

Submission requirements (abstract length, biographical note, deadlines, and word counts for potential publication) are given in detail in the full call.

We welcome contributions from various fields, countries and denominations, and look forward to meet you in Rome!

ART AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY: A BRIEF PANORAMA OF POSSIBILITIES, CHANCES, AND RISKS

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Italy

DEVELOPMENTS AND PROGRESS DEALING WITH THE FAITH-AND-REASON QUESTION

Oviedo L.(Speaker), Pontifical University Antonianum ~ Rome ~ Italy

SCRIPTURAL HERMENEUTICS IN THE ORTHODOX-CATHOLIC DIALOGUE ON PRIMACY AND SYNODALITY

Keramidas D.(Speaker), Pontifical University St Thomas Aquinas “Angelicum” in Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

BIBLICAL NARRATIVE AND METAPHYSICAL ICEBERGS: AN ARGUMENT FOR DIVINE IMPASSIBILITY VIA THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION

Moe K.E.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

SCRIPTURE AND THEOLOGY: THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Elliott M.(Speaker), Highland Theological College ~ Inverness ~ United Kingdom

THE USE OF SCRIPTURE IN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: WOLFHART PANNENBERG AND WAYNE GRUDEM AS CASE STUDIES

Innerdal G.(Speaker), NLA University College ~ Bergen ~ Norway

THE IMPACT OF SCIENCE ON THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN

Turkiewicz G.(Speaker), Pontificial University of Saint Anthony ~ Rome ~ Italy

ESCAPING THE LINGUISTIC TRAP: DECONSTRUCTING THE 'HIGH/LOW' BINARY THROUGH JOHANNINE MESSIANISM.

Ebode Atangana W.M.(Speaker), Cardinal Bea Centre for Judaic Studies ~ Rome ~ Italy

“INCLINE YOUR EAR”: ATTENTION, WISDOM, AND MORAL FORMATION IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Coleman S.(Speaker), Westminster Theological Seminary ~ Philadelphia ~ United States of America

NOVEL AI-BASED APPROACHES TO BIBLICAL STUDIES

Drake L.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

DIVINE KNOWLEDGE AND ARTIFICIAL ‘OMNISCIENCE’

Van Den Belt H.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and Theologische Universiteit Apeldoorn ~ Amsterdam and Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

EQUALITIES AND INEQUALITIES IN CHRISTIAN BIOETHICS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Emily Beatrix Hammer
Chair: Emily Beatrix Hammer, Tabea Ott, Tizia Wendorff

Questions of equality and inequality have always been crucial to the moral life of communities, shaping how societies understand care, justice, and responsibility. Within the Christian tradition, theological and ethical reflection has profoundly influenced attitudes towards helping, healing, and defining the role of health care practitioners. From the early Church's ministry to the sick, to contemporary debates on global health and biotechnology, Christian values continue to inform and at time challenge prevailing assumptions in bioethics and medical ethics. The relationship between religion and bioethics therefore remains both endured and contested, and merits renewed discussion in light of this year's conference theme, Religions and (In)Equalities.

This panel seeks to explore how Christian bioethics can illuminate and respond to issues of equality and inequality in healthcare and medicine. How can theology contribute to and shape the discourse on distributive justice in a world of limited medical resources, and on structural inequalities that affect access to care and health outcomes? What forms of moral responsibility arise for healthcare professionals, religious institutions, and communities of faith? Finally, what role does spiritual care play within healthcare?

We invite contributions from dogmatic, ethical, historical, and exegetical perspectives that analyse how Christian bioethical thought engages questions of justice, equality, and inequality. Papers may address influential theological figures from the church fathers to contemporary theologians, or they may take a thematic approach to issues such as global health disparities, gender and disability, or the ethics of emerging biotechnologies. By bringing diverse perspectives together, the panel aims to clarify how Christian ethical resources can both expose and help redress inequalities in healthcare today.

(IN)EQUALITIES IN ASSISTED REPRODUCTION. REPRODUCTIVE TOURISM AS PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY?

Woehlke E.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München ~ Munich ~ Germany

GLOBAL HEALTH IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CLIMATE CRISIS: CREATION JUSTICE AS A THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIVE HORIZON

Chilian L.(Speaker), Universität Zürich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

HEALTH INEQUALITIES IN THE CONTEXT OF CLIMATE CHANGE: CONTEMPORARY DEBATES AND IMPLICATIONS

Arndt M.(Speaker), Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

VISIBILITY AS AN THEOLOGICAL-ETHICAL TOPOS FOR ADDRESSING BIOETHICAL QUESTIONS

Ott T.(Speaker), Universität Wien ~ Vienna ~ Austria

ALL IN THE MIND?: PERSONALITY DISORDERS AND THEIR THEOLOGICAL CHALLENGE

Baczyk--Bell C.(Speaker), Girton College ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

PRETTY PRIVILEGE. INEQUALITY IN AESTHETIC MEDICINE

Wendorff T.(Speaker), Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg ~ Freiburg ~ Germany

REVISITING PRINCIPLISM IN THE AGE OF BIG DATA: A CHRISTIAN ARGUMENT FOR CENTRING JUSTICE IN INFORMED CONSENT

Hammer E.B.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

A SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - AT13

Contact: Olga Breskaya
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl
authorAMC: Olga Breskaya, Giuseppe Giordan, James Richardson
Speaker: Milda Ališauskiene, Alberta Giorgi, Dmytro Vovk

This panel is dedicated to the discussion of the volume A Sociology of Religious Freedom by Olga Breskaya, Giuseppe Giordan, and James T. Richardson. The book offers a sociological analysis of freedom of and freedom from religion as a key concept for understanding the place of religious and spiritual identities, beliefs, and practices in the contemporary world. Moving beyond purely legal or normative approaches, the volume emphasizes the added value of sociology in explaining why and how religious freedom acquires multiple meanings in society. The authors show that religious freedom is not a fixed or self-evident principle, but rather a socially constructed and contested concept whose content varies across cultural, political, and historical contexts. The book addresses three major questions central to the development of a sociology of religious freedom. First, it asks how religious freedom can be defined as a multidimensional concept, taking into account its complex and often controversial nature. Second, it investigates the recurrent sociological conditions and dominant social perceptions that foster or hinder understandings of religious freedom in different political, legal, and socio-religious environments. Third, it explores the mechanisms through which religious freedom is socially implemented, examining how it becomes embedded in everyday practices, organizational routines, and institutional cultures, thus contributing to its recognition as a fundamental value within human rights frameworks. The volume suggests that any sociological definition of religious freedom must integrate historical, philosophical, legal, religious, and political dimensions specific to a given society. By uncovering the interplay between structural conditions and individual or group perceptions, sociology highlights the normative and value-laden character of religious freedom, as well as its broader societal functions.

A SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

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RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM THROUGH THE LENS OF NONVIOLENCE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Adnane Mokrani
Chair: Nicolás Paz, Luisa Sello, Adnane Mokrani

This panel explores the complex relationship between religious identity, nationalism, and state power within Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, offering alternatives rooted in theologies and principles of nonviolence. It examines how nationalist ideologies have influenced these traditions, often through messianic and apocalyptic frameworks, and considers specific manifestations such as religious Zionism (Jewish and Christian), Sunni and Shia Islamism, and other forms of religious nationalism that have justified violence, territorial claims, and state identity.

The discussion investigates alternative theological and political interpretations that promote nonviolent resistance, just peace, and transformative engagement. It explores how understandings of land, divine promises, and sacred geography might be reinterpreted to reduce conflict and foster coexistence rather than displacement and discrimination. Additionally, it considers the potential of dialogue to disrupt cycles of violence and serve genuine peacebuilding, moving beyond superficial “faith-washing.”

Beyond religious frameworks, the panel includes Marxist and leftist critiques of nationalism and the nation-state, analyzing how concepts of universalism, emancipation, and international solidarity challenge both religious and secular nationalist ideologies, intersecting with broader commitments to peace. It emphasizes how individuals and communities worldwide can foster international solidarity and ethical responsibility through dialogue and cooperation, working toward nonviolent solutions to contemporary conflicts.

The panel is organized by the Interreligious Initiative for Nonviolence Theology (IINT) and Dialop (Dialogue between Socialists/Marxists and Christians).

IS THE MODERN NATIONAL STATE COMPATIBLE WITH RELIGION?

Mokrani A.(Speaker), Centre for Interreligious Studies / Pontifical Gregorian University ~ Rome ~ Italy

UNIVERSALISM, NONVIOLENCE AND THE ROLE OF THE PROPHETIC FOR DEEP TRANSFORMATION

Quast--Neulinger M.J.(Speaker), Universität Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

FROM DESACRALIZATION OF CONFLICTS TO SACRALIZATION OF PEACE. TOWARDS A NONVIOLENT COMPLEX APPROACH TO MEDIATE IN CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS

Paz N.(Speaker), Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca / Catholic Institute for Nonviolence ~ Salamanca ~ Spain

WHY A THEOLOGY OF NONVIOLENCE REQUIRES AN OPEN PATRIOTISM

Palaver W.(Speaker), Universität Innsbruck / OSCE ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

THE UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION OF CLASS STRUCTURES AS A SELF-CONSCIOUS ACTIVITY IN MARXISM AND SECULAR THINKING

Hildebrandt C.(Speaker), Pureza J.M.(Speaker), Rosa Luxemburg Foundation ~ Berlin ~ Germany

IMAGINING THE ENEMY: SCRIPTURAL RE-READINGS AFTER CATASTROPHE IN THE THREE ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - AT12

Contact: Lucia de Lorenzo
Chair: Francesca Badini, Laura Righi

This panel seeks to gather contributions exploring how the sacred scriptures have been employed in the tradition of the three Abrahamic religions, to construct the figure of the enemy in contexts marked by crisis, rupture, catastrophe, or collapse. The aim is to examine how exegetical and scripturally informed narratives in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam transform external or internal adversaries into meaningful agents within broader theological interpretations of history. Particular attention will be given to the link between enemy representation and divine punishment: crises are often reframed as consequences of communal transgression, with the enemy functioning as an instrument—willing or unwitting—of divine judgment, a dynamic that simultaneously explains catastrophe and admonishes the community toward repentance, reform, or renewed cohesion. Contributions may explore a wide range of historical phenomena and sources, such as: the reactivation of scriptural motifs after a military defeat or a political collapse in narrative and exegetical texts; the redefinition of adversaries during periods of sectarian conflict in theological textual controversies or in political discourses; the role of eschatological expectations and elaborations in shaping perceptions of threat; or the deployment of enemy imagery in response to migration, economic disruption, pandemics, or environmental crises through sermons, theological treatises and commentaries. The panel also encourages attention to the material and social dimensions of scriptural interpretation, including how textual transmission, communal leadership, performative settings, or institutional contexts shape the construction of the enemy in moments of upheaval.

CONCEPTUALISING THE ENEMY IN TIMES OF CRISIS: PROPHETIC MOTIFS AND THE ITALIAN WARS

Bontempo Scavo D.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE ENEMY CLOTHED IN PROPHECY: ANTICHRIST NARRATIVES IN REVOLUTIONARY MILITANCY

Abaddi I.(Speaker), Università di Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

AN ENEMY REFRAMED: PROVIDENCE AND IDENTITY IN GREGORY THE GREAT'S REPRESENTATION OF THE LOMBARDS

De Lorenzo L.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE DAJJĀL IN IFRĪQIYA: APOCALYPTIC ENEMY CONSTRUCTION DURING THE FATIMID STRUGGLE AGAINST ABŪ YAZĪD (940S)

Favaretto G.(Speaker), UniPA ~ Palermo ~ Italy

(RE)CLAIMING THE SCRIPTURE: THE USE OF THE BIBLE IN RUSSIAN WAR PROPAGANDA AND ANTI-WAR MOVEMENTS.

Elsner R.(Speaker), Muenster University ~ Muenster ~ Germany

FACING THE GREAT BABYLON: AN IMAGE FROM THE APOCALYPSE IN JOACHIM OF FIORE'S POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Saccenti R.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Bergamo ~ Bergamo ~ Italy

DIDACTICAL APPROACHES TO ENHANCE LEARNING INTO INCLUSION AND EQUALITY IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Monica van Dijk-Groeneboer
Chair: Monica van Dijk-Groeneboer, Andrzej Kielian, Juliëtte van Deursen Vreeburg

Enhancing inclusion and equality in todays' society is difficult. In our time of popularism and short text messages, reflection on what you say to another person is rare, as well as realising that other person is a human being too. Listening in a genuine dialogue, also when the other tells you what you rather not would like to hear, is very difficult. Even more, if their story sounds different or even 'strange' to you, as a consequence of another background, different race, gender, religion or spirituality. In this panel we exchange didactical approaches to work on inclusion and equality in the classroom. We allow scholars to enter the panel who also conduct research amongst teachers or pupils regarding didactic strategies to work on more inclusion in a safe classroom at for instance secondary schools or at university. Critical thinking is needed to owrk on the moral compass of pupils or students, and reflection to what other people's stories bring up inside you. In a real dialogue, both sender and receiver will develop their own compass further. Growing awareness in these processes is a focus on which we base some of our research. Equality between people with a different gender, race, religion is not easy to achieve, even in our highly developed country with high standards on democracy and equal human rights. Research will be presented how young people look towards these issues and what they value in life. This will present a diverse image, that also mirrors the intense situation in the multi-diverse classrooms. Moreover, the different backgrounds of the speakers and their perspectives will add more diversity into the equation in this panel, and therefore will help us to elaborate further on the very topic of the panel and conference.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION WITHIN THE MONTESSORI METHOD

Kielian A.(Speaker), The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow ~ Krakow ~ Poland

LEARNING HOW TO DIALOGUE IN RE

Van Deursen--Vreeburg J.(Speaker), tilburg school of catholic theology ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

ARTICULATING THE CATHOLIC IDENTITY OF CATHOLIC SECONDARY EDUCATION IN SECULARISED AND PLURAL SOCIETIES: A RENEWED PERSPECTIVE INSPIRED BY POPE FRANCIS

Hagens Q.(Speaker), Tilburg University ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

D4D. DIALOGICAL FOR DIDACTICAL

Locorotondo L.(Speaker), PUL ~ Roma ~ Italy

ECCLESIAL INEQUALITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN A SYNODAL CHURCH

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - A209

Contact: Derrick Witherington
Chair: Derrick Witherington

The world is increasingly marked by many crises including political polarization, many forms of inequality, pending environmental catastrophe, war and violence, and the rise of militant and exclusive forms of nationalism. In such a context, the Church is called to be a prophetic voice of peace, reconciliation, and inclusion. The papacies of Pope Francis and Pope Leo have served as a call to openness and solidarity, embodying in both word and deed the prophetic vocation the Church is called to embody in our increasingly wounded world. The call to synodality initiated by Pope Francis and continued under Pope Leo has been an especially potent sign of the direction and posture the Church is called to take at this time, namely, one of humility, dialogical openness, and receptive listening, all in service of creating missionary disciples who are able to proclaim the Kingdom of God prophetically and effectively.

And yet, despite the Church's external commitment to its prophetic and synodal vocation, many ecclesial structures, positions, and mentalities remain seemingly closed to dialogue, growth, and critique (i.e. questions of sex and gender, womens' sacramental leadership, and addressing the causes of sexual abuse, to name a few of the most glaring instances). Moreover, the Church in some part of the world (i.e. Eastern Europe and parts of the United States) uncritically adopting far right political ideologies and the piecemeal and ideologically motivated implementation (or lack thereof) of synodality remain challenges to the Church in fully embracing its prophetic and synodal vocation. All of these realities witness to various "inequalities" within the Church which the Church must respond to faithfully, creatively, and critically. This panel will offer such responses, highlighting how tools within our theological tradition, creatively and critically employed, can enable the Church to better embody its prophetic and synodal vocation.

UNVEILING DISAGREEMENT IN A SYNODAL CHURCH

Flanagan B.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

"EXPERIENCE" IS WORTHLESS

Burbach N.(Speaker), London Jesuit Centre ~ London ~ United Kingdom

BETWEEN HOMONORMATIVITY AND QUEER LONGINGS FOR RENEWAL: LGBTQ+ CATHOLIC VISIONS OF THE ITALIAN CHURCH IN THE ERA OF SYNODALITY

Millesimi G.M.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

FIDUCIA SUPPLICANS, WEAK MESSIANIC FORCE, AND THE RENEWAL OF SACRAMENTAL MARRIAGE

Rodewald N.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

FROM THE MARGINS OF POLARITY TO SYNODAL COMMUNION: R. GUARDINI ON POLARITY, UNITY, AND INTEGRATION

Witherington D.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

LESSONS FROM WALKING TOGETHER WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN CANADA: LISTENING AND ENCOUNTER AS KENOTIC STARTING POINTS ON THE PATH TOWARDS RECONCILIATION

Paparella J.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

QUEERING SYNODALITY: LISTENING, THE TRIUNE GOD, AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITHIN CHURCH

Diaz M.(Speaker), Loyola University Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

EXPLORING THE DYNAMICS OF TENSION BETWEEN PERSONAL (PASTORAL) QUESTIONS AND ECCLESIAL (INSTITUTIONAL) ANSWERS IN A SYNODAL CHURCH

Van Rompaey J.(Speaker), UC Louvain ~ Louvain-La-Neuve ~ Belgium

ABOLITION & THEOLOGY: RETHINKING LIBERATION, VIOLENCE, AND (IN)JUSTICE ACROSS STATE POWER

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Lukas Johrendt
Chair: Dion Forster, Lukas Johrendt, Max Tretter

Our world is shaped by institutions that claim to secure order and justice but often inflict harm and exclude marginalized groups: courts, prisons, and policing frequently turn social vulnerability into punishment, while militaries reinforce global power asymmetries. Abolitionist movements respond with a radical imagination: they argue that systems built on coercion and punitive control should be dismantled and replaced by community-based, nonviolent, and more justice-oriented alternatives.

For theology and ethics, abolitionism poses a profound challenge. While the call to dismantle central institutions may seem destabilizing, its imaginations resonate with and traditions of liberation and reconciliation. This panel brings theological perspectives into conversation with contemporary abolitionism, directly addressing the EuARe 2026 theme Religion and (In)equalities. We explore the legitimacy of state force, the distribution of vulnerability, and the conditions for just coexistence.

From a theological standpoint, abolitionism raises questions such as: How do religious narratives of judgment and community engage the idea of a world without punitive control? Where do traditions resist or support abolitionist demands? And how do religious actors contribute to or critique these movements?

We invite interdisciplinary contributions, including:

• Prison abolitionism and theological critiques of punitive order;
• Police abolitionism and religious concepts of non-repressive security;
• Military abolitionism and the resources of peace ethics;
• Intersectional analyses linking abolitionism with racism and social inequality;
• Practical/pastoral initiatives of religious communities in abolitionist contexts.

The panel aims to identify normative resources for alternative social life and examine where theology remains implicated in justifying violence. By fostering this dialogue, we seek to advance research on the role of religion in contesting contemporary (in)equalities.

CRITIQUE OF CRIMINAL LAW FROM A THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY OF VULNERABILITY

Johrendt L.(Speaker), Helmut-Schmidt-Universität / Universität der Bundeswehr Hamburg ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

BEYOND REFORM? POLICE ABOLITION AND THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

FREEDOM AGAINST DESTINY: LUIGI PAREYSON'S PHILOSOPHY AND POLITICAL AUTHORITY

Mausolf J.(Speaker), Humboldt-Universität ~ Berlin ~ Germany

ABOLITION AND REPARATIONS: WHY YOU CANNOT HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER

Rieger J.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

ECCLESIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS: PROPHETIC IMAGINATIONS AND ECCLESIAL FUTURES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A108

Contact: Jason Welle
Chair: Cristina Lledo Gomez

The Ecclesiological Investigations International Research Network invites proposals for an open call panel, "Prophetic Imaginations and Ecclesial Futures."

In his landmark text, The Prophetic Imagination, Walter Bruggemann writes, “The prophet engages in futuring fantasy. The prophet does not ask if the vision can be implemented… the imagination must come before the implementation. Our culture is competent to implement almost anything and to imagine almost nothing.” (40) This session aims to envision what church in a future may be or look like. What does it mean for the church to be prophetic or to have a prophetic imagination? What does this prophetic - or propheticist (Ignacio Ellacuría) - imagination look like in the future? How might church be like or look like in the future? What does it mean to “future fantasy” in the context of church? And what resources can a prophetic imagination bring to support or critique such a church?

Scholars are invited to engage this topic and these questions creatively and are not restricted to the questions covered in this CfP. Possible ideas that might be broached include theological questions such as how to think ecclesiologically about having a prophetic imagination, or what it means to be prophetic, or the relationship between imagination and implementation. Other questions can be raised on church and social issues such as how the prophetic imagination interfaces on artificial intelligence, transhumanism, technology-backed nationalism, ecojustice, migration, and other subjects. Further questions can also include intra-church or ecumenical matters such as how the church can prophetically re-envision, engage, or concretize synodality, diakonia, or church institutions and programs such as the New International Financial and Economic Architecture (NIFEA) initiative, and where they fit into the church in the future.

This panel is open to a maximum of four presentations.

WHEN 'THE CAESAR' IS IN JEOPARDY AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS DESERTED: WHICH ORTHODOX POLITICAL THEOLOGY FOR THE FUTURE?

Chivu S.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

PROPHETICALLY REIMAGINING SYNODALITY IN OCEANIA

Cornish S.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ North Sydney ~ Australia

FUTURE AS ANAMNESIS: PROPHETIC MEMORY, SYNODALITY, AND THE CHURCH BEYOND SACRED EMPIRE

Levakos P.(Speaker), PhD researcher, Faculty of Theology, Athens / MA student, Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies KU Leuven, Belgium ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

“REIMAGINING SUBLIME COMMUNION AND INTEGRAL ECOLOGY FOR A CHURCH AND WORLD IN ECOLOGICAL, GEOPOLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND WORLD ORDER COLLAPSE: ENVISIONING AN ECCLESIAL FUTURE OF RELATIONAL, MUTUAL LOVE IN ALL CREATION.”

O''Beirne A.(Speaker), BBI - The Australian Institute of Theological Education ~ Sydney ~ Australia

BEYOND THE WALLS: PAUL TILLICH'S LATENT CHURCH AND ECCLESIAL RENEWAL

Magnussen C.(Speaker), Alphacrucis College ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

GEOMETRY, BEING, AND LANGUAGE: IBN AL-?ARAB? IN THE SUFI TRADITION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Nejra Salihbegovic
Chair: Nejra Salihbegovic
Speaker: Pieter Genee

Ibn al-ʿArabī (1165-1240), known as Muḥyī al-Dīn ("the Reviver of Religion") and revered as al-Shaykh al-Akbar ("the Greatest Master"), was one of the most influential Sufi mystics, philosophers, and poets in Islamic thought. Born in Murcia, al-Andalus, he is conventionally regarded as the expositor of "the oneness of being" (waḥdat al-wujūd). His rich corpus of over 300 works spans metaphysics, cosmology, ontology, Qurʾānic exegesis, poetry, philosophy, alchemy, and the science of letters. This panel explores Ibn al-ʿArabī's thought through three interlocking dimensions: geometry, being, and language, understood as integrated modes of divine self-disclosure and the human apprehension of this reality. Geometry functions as a contemplative architecture for mapping the relation between the One and the many, between emanation and return, through points, circles, and lines. Being is the fundamental ground his oeuvre seeks to witness. Language, in its lexical, semantic, scriptural, and embodied dimensions, is the medium of this articulation: letters and words, with hidden properties, meanings, and etymologies, function as living principles of the cosmos, reflecting its layered and dynamic structure. Individual contributions examine the semantic density of Ibn al-ʿArabī's terminology and his virtuosic engagement with the Arabic linguistic tradition, including in his early treatise ʿUqlat al-Mustawfiz. Another contribution places his thought, most prominently al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyya, in a broader Iberian context, comparing his science of letters and geometric cosmology with parallel developments in Jewish Kabbalah. Together, these perspectives illuminate Ibn al-ʿArabī as a thinker for whom geometry, being, and language form a uniquely encyclopaedic, oceanic, and often enigmatic symbolic grammar. Through these novel interpretive approaches, the panel seeks to deepen our understanding of his thought and its enduring significance.

`UQLAT AL-MUSTAWFIZ: INTERTEXTUALITY, POLYSEMY AND SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE IN IBN ARABI

López Anguita G.(Speaker), Universidad de Sevilla ~ Seville ~ Spain

Metaphysical and Grammatical Aspects of the Letter Yā' as a Spiritual Reality in Ibn ʿArabī's Kitāb al-Huwa

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THE SCIENCE OF LETTERS IN IBERIAN SUFISM AND KABBALAH: IBN AL-ʿARABĪ AND THE ZOHAR

Salihbegovic N.(Speaker), Monash University ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

Barzakh

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RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AND INEQUALITY IN EASTERN EUROPE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A107

Contact: István Keul
Chair: István Keul

Discussions and even definitions of the term «religious minorities» sometimes refer to the importance of achieving political or social equality as one of the main aims of numerically and politically non-dominant religious groups. Even though such definitions can be characterized as teleological and normative, their focus on the dynamics in and around such formations seems closely connected to the modern discourse on religious minorities, in which social and religious equality are given central importance. This panel invites paper proposals that inquire into the social processes leading to the emergence of various forms of inequality in and around Eastern European minority religions, as well as the strategies of these groups or their members to assert their status and gain recognition on an individual, institutional or state level.

HARMONY OR INEQUALITY? ALBANIA'S RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Reuter E.(Speaker), University of Graz ~ Graz ~ Austria

RELIGIOUS HIERARCHIES AND GENDER INEQUALITY IN EVANGELICAL ROMA COMMUNITIES IN BULGARIA

Slavkova M.(Speaker), Bulgarian Academy of Sciences ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

RECONSIDERING CULTURAL HERITAGE IN LITHUANIA: ON PAGAN NARRATIVES AND STRATEGIES

Pranskeviciute--Amoson R.(Speaker), Vilnius University ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

BETWEEN RELIGIOUS DIVERSIFICATION AND SOCIAL DISSENT: MINORITIZATION PROCESSES AND INEQUALITY AMONG ROMANIAN GERMANS

Keul I.(Speaker), University of Bergen ~ Bergen ~ Norway

(NEO)PAGANS AND (IN)EQUALITIES IN LATVIA AND ESTONIA

Stasulane A.(Speaker), Daugavpils University ~ Daugavpils ~ Latvia

THE (IM)MATERIALITY OF RELIGIOUS INEQUALITIES IN URBAN SPACES: PAST AND PRESENT

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - A204

Critic: Giuseppe Tateo, Valeria Fabretti, Sara Hejazi

The session transitions from the general theme of urban religious inequalities to a specific analysis of the Roman context through the volume "Superdiversa. Itinerari nella Roma plurale". Rome serves as a quintessential laboratory where established hierarchies and marginalities are made visible through worship architectures and everyday practices. The book maps the presence of communities and "adaptive spaces" that reveal different levels of legitimation and settlement for religious groups in the capital. During the book presentation, Valeria Fabretti (Bruno Kessler Foundation) and Giuseppe Tateo ("Roma Tre" University) will engage in a critical discussion with the authors Maria Chiara Giorda ("Roma Tre" University of Rome) and Silvia Omenetto ("Sapienza" University of Rome). The debate will explore how "superdiversity" challenges the definition of religious heritage and how minority places of worship negotiate visibility against symbolic marginalization. Time will be reserved for questions from the audience. The discussion is moderated by Sara Hejazi (Bruno Kessler Foundation).

SODRUS: CHURCH BUILDINGS PRESERVATION OR TRANSFORMATION: INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY ANALYSIS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Pierre Noel
Chair: Pierre Noel, Alessandro Ferrari

In almost every western country the preservation and the transformation of Church buildings and religious heritage become a major challenge. It involves a lot of interrelated issues: legal, historical, architectural, social and religious. It raises complex questions concerning property, social duties toward cultural heritage, feasibility of conservation or transformation, and so on. Indeed, in North America, in Europe and also in North Africa, we can notice a growing number of articles dealing with different aspects of it. There are also, here and there, seminars or workshops on the subject. Moreover, we can observe in many countries major project of transformation of religious building for new societal goals. There is a need for a more systematize collaboration. The goal of the panel is to have an international and an interdisciplinary view of what is at stake in transformation or preservation of church buildings and religious heritage.

THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF CHRISTIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP IN INDIGENOUS CANADA

Gélinas C.(Speaker), Université de Sherbrooke ~ Sherbrooke ~ Canada

THE “OPEN CHURCHES” NETWORK IN BELGIUM: TOWARDS A HYBRID GOVERNANCE OF LIVING RELIGIOUS HERITAGE

Baraka Akilimali J.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Louvain ~ Louvain-la-neuve ~ Belgium

FROM ASSIGNEMENT TO WORSHIP TO SHARED USES OF CHURCHES IN FRANCE

Fornerod A.(Speaker), UMR 7354 DRES - Droits et religions (CNRS/Université de Strasbourg) ~ Strasbourg ~ France

RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS TRANSFORMATION AND PUBLIC FUNDING: COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

Noël P.(Speaker), Université de Sherbrooke ~ Sherbrooke ~ Canada

CIVIC REAPPROPRIATION OF CHURCHES AND MONASTERIES: GOALS, OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITS

Blantare M.(Speaker), Université de Sherbrooke ~ Sherbrooke ~ Canada

REUSING SACRED SPACE: COLLABORATION, COMPARISON AND FUTURE MODELS

Dimodugno D.(Speaker), University of Turin, Law Department ~ Turin ~ Italy

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL FACTORS IN THE INTER-SYSTEMIC GOVERNANCE OF ITALY'S RELIGIOUS CULTURAL HERITAGE

Tarabiono G.F.(Speaker), University of Insubria – University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

DIGITAL RELIGION IN AN (IN)EQUAL WORLD: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - A101

Contact: Victoria Dos Santos
Chair: Gorazd Andrejc, Giulia Evolvi

The development of new technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the growth of immersive virtual reality platforms, challenge traditional understandings of religious authorities, communities, identities, and practice (Campbell & Tsuria, 2021).
In this context, the ubiquity of digital media in contemporary society reveals a profound ambivalence: while it can foster inclusion and visibility for marginalized religious actors, it can simultaneously reproduce and intensify existing inequalities. On the one hand, religious people can use the Internet to advocate for equality (Peterson, 2022), form alternative spaces of activism and resistance (Echchaibi & Hoover, 2023), or create communities that they cannot find in physical venues (Dos Santos & Cruz, 2024). On the other hand, digital spaces can become spaces to spread hate against religious minorities (Topidi, 2024), support conservative leaders against equality (Righetti et al., 2025), challenge women's emancipation (Leidig, 2023), and amplify patriarchal or theocratic discourses by providing visibility and legitimacy to radicalized voices (Maf'ula, N. R. H. et al., 2025). Taken together, these dynamics highlight digital religion as a contested field in which processes of empowerment and exclusion unfold simultaneously.
Given the nuanced experiences that the Internet can bring to religious people regarding (in)equality, we welcome submissions about:

-Online religious-based activism
-Internet-based hate speech against religions
-Digital communities and the formation of alternative religious identities
-Politics and digital religion
-Materiality, embodiment, and resistance in the digital space
-Intersectional online religious identities around gender, sexuality, race, (dis)ability, ethnicity, nationality, and class.

We welcome papers with a theoretical focus as well as researchers focusing on empirical cases, analyzed both qualitatively or quantitatively.

VIRTUAL AVATARS AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF IDENTITY AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICE IN IMMERSIVE MEDIA ENVIRONMENTS

Dos Santos V.(Speaker), Blanquerna Observatory on Media, Religion and Culture ~ Barcelona ~ Spain

PROCEDURAL WORLDS AND RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION: GAMING, IDENTITY, AND THE CONDITIONS OF BELIEF IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Vukic N.(Speaker), Trinity College Dublin ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

ROLEPLAYING THE PRIEST: REPRODUCING AUTHORITY AND INEQUALITIES IN A FILIPINO CATHOLIC GROUP ON ROBLOX

Ciocca D.(Speaker), University of Milan Bicocca ~ Milan ~ Italy

PLATFORM CAPITALISM AND DIGITAL SPIRITUALITY: THE HALLOW APP BETWEEN CONSERVATIVE CATHOLICISM AND SILICON VALLEY

Mayrink M.(Speaker), Universidade Federal Fluminense ~ Niterói ~ Brazil

THE DIGITAL DISSOLUTION OF BORDERS: ENGINEERING A NEW UNIVERSALISM AND THE METAPHYSICS OF INTERCONNECTIVITY

Colak M.(Speaker), Eurotürk ~ Aachen ~ Germany

LIVED RELIGION IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS: EVERYDAY SPIRITUALITY IN THE CZECHIA AND SLOVAKIA

Sedláková R.(Speaker), University Palacký, Faculty of Theology ~ Olomouc ~ Czech Republic

CHRISTIAN TO WHOM? CATHOLIC FEMINISM AND DIGITAL MEDIA IN ITALY

Evolvi G.(Chair), University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

GODFLUENCERS: THE DISAPPEARING MEDIUM AND THE MAKING OF DIGITAL RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

De La Vega G.(Speaker), Erasmus University Rotterdam ~ Rotterdam ~ Netherlands

WIDE AND WINDING ROADS. RENEWING THE CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Arnold Smeets
Chair: Karim Schelkens, Stephan van Erp

The recent promotion of Cardinal Newman as Doctor of the Church calls for Catholic theology to rethink its position in the Church, the academy, and society. In the past, Catholic thought has proven to widen the scope of culture, sociality and the sciences. Contemporary Catholic theology, however, is as varied and polarised as many other academic disciplines and political spheres, and consequently, the Catholic intellectual tradition seems as scattered and diversified as many other public domains.

What is the contribution a Catholic vision could make in analyses concerning contemporary challenges and questions? Which sources, principles, and styles of thought could it offer to present-day conversations and interventions on economics, politics, ecology, and technology?
Which articulation of Catholic theology offers constructive ideas or a vision to shape an intellectual tradition capable of addressing current challenges and inequalities? Or is there a need for a new paradigm?

This panel invites papers that examine how the concepts of ‘catholic’, understood in its dual sense as an articulation of the Catholic tradition and as a way of thinking wholeness, is experienced within diverse theologies, spiritualities, political formations and communities.

Presenters are invited to reflect on this in relation to current issues and/or to specific Catholic views on values as sustainability, resilience, social cohesion or in reference to the overarching theme of this conference: (in)equality. We also welcome papers that seek to reformulate the plausibility potentials of theology in conversation with society and the sciences or a need to develop a new paradigm or impulse for the Catholic intellectual (theological) tradition.

The panel is a collaboration of the Catholic Study Network (a network of and for Catholic University Leuven, Tilburg University and Radboud University), and the Toronto School of Theology.

CATHOLIC AFFECTIVE MATERIALITIES: AI, DOUBLING AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Napolitano V.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

THE CRISIS OF THEOLOGY: THE CHALLENGES FOR CATHOLIC THOUGHT

Van Erp S.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

AFTER POLARITY: UNITY AND MEDIATION IN THE THOUGHT OF MAURICE BLONDEL

Connelly W.(Speaker), Institut Catholique de Paris ~ Paris ~ France

BETWEEN RIVALRIES: FRIENDSHIP'S CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE CATHOLIC TRADITION

Attridge M.(Speaker), University of St. Michael's College ~ Toronto ~ Canada

CONSPIRACY THINKING AND DEMOCRACY: A POLITICO-THEORETICAL READING IN THE LIGHT OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Cavaliere M.(Speaker), University of Salerno ~ Salerno ~ Italy

RELIGION AND RIGHT-WING POPULISM: BETWEEN DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING AND AUTHORITARIANISM.

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Konstantinos Papastathis
Chair: Luca Ozzano

This panel explores the intersection of religion, right-wing populism, and democratic backsliding or authoritarianism. While much research has focused on the rise of populist radical right (PRR) parties and their religious dimensions, less attention has been paid to how religion is mobilized to support illiberal governance and undermine democratic norms. The panel invites comparative and empirical papers that analyze how religion understood as belief, authority, or civilizational identityis are used as a political tool in populist projects. Topics may include: the instrumentalization of religion in PRR discourse and governance; religious justifications for exclusionary or nationalist policies; alliances between religious institutions and populist regimes; the role of religion in gender politics, digital populism, and education; as well as resistance by religious or secular actors. Contributions should engage with concepts like civilizational populism, moral panic, and authoritarian populism, and assess the real-world policy outcomes in areas such as minority rights, immigration, and democratic resilience.

THE MORALIST INTERNATIONAL IN TIMES OF WAR: RUPTURES AND CONTINUITIES IN RUSSIA'S TRADITIONAL VALUES AGENDA

Stoeckl K.(Speaker), Uzlaner D.(Speaker), LUISS ~ Roma ~ Italy

SACRALIZING THE STATE: ETHNO-RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AS BAROMETERS OF AUTOCRATIC DRIFT

Madera A.(Speaker), University of Messina ~ Messina ~ Italy

COPY, PASTE, AND CHANGE. A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE POPULISM

Ozzano L.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Torino ~ Italy

RELIGION AND AUTHORITARIAN ATTITUDES IN TODAY'S BALKANS

Vekovic M.(Speaker), Zrinšcak S.(Speaker), University of Zagreb ~ Zagreb ~ Croatia

FROM DOOMSDAY TO RE-CREATION: A THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF APOCALYPTIC DYNAMICS IN RIGHT-WING POPULISM AND AFFECTIVE POLARIZATION

Salcido J.R.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

GENDERED AND RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING IN FAR-RIGHT POPULISM

Karagiannopoulou C.(Speaker), Panteion University ~ Athens ~ Greece

THE STRUGGLE FOR FAMILY VALUES – BETWEEN RIGHT WING POPULISM AND RELUCTANT LIBERALISM

Ben--Porat G.(Speaker), Ben-Gurion University ~ Negev ~ Israel

LEGITIMIZING AUTOCRATIC POLITICS WITH METAPHYSICS – RELIGION AND RADICAL RIGHT PARTIES IN A SECULARIZING EUROPEAN CONTEXT

Minkenberg M.(Speaker), European University Viadrina ~ Frankfurt (Oder) ~ Germany

RELIGION AS SYMBOLIC RESOURCE IN POPULIST RADICAL RIGHT NARRATIVES: A SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH

Papastathis K.(Speaker), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki ~ Thessaloniki ~ Greece

SACRALIZING POWER: RELIGION AND POPULIST RULE IN TURKEY, INDIA, AND HUNGARY

Tepe S.(Speaker), University of Illinois ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

MUSIQUES EN RÉSISTANCE: ARVO PÄRT ET VALENTIN SILVESTROV

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Kristina Stoeckl
Chair: Adalberto Mainardi
authorAMC: Constantin Sigov
Speaker: Adalberto Mainardi, Tazio Brunetta, Elizabeth Wilson, Irina Paert

This panel is devoted to the presentation and discussion of Musiques en résistance: Arvo Pärt et Valentin Silvestrov by Constantin Sigov, a deeply moving and intellectually precise reflection on music, friendship, and historical rupture.
Through the intertwined lives and works of Arvo Pärt and Valentin Silvestrov, Sigov reconstructs three pivotal moments in contemporary European history: the Soviet period, marked by the clash between ideals of artistic freedom and political censorship; the years of Estonian and Ukrainian independence, during which both composers experienced a remarkable flourishing of their creative voices; and the tragic and heroic present shaped by Russia's war against Ukraine.
Written from the unique perspective of a close friend and intellectual companion of both composers, the book goes beyond a dual biography. It offers a meditation on music as a form of moral, spiritual, and political resistance, and on friendship as a space of fidelity in the face of historical violence.
The panel will explore the book's aesthetic, ethical, and political insights, addressing the role of music under conditions of repression, transition, and war, and reflecting on how lived experience and intellectual engagement illuminate the work of two major figures of contemporary music. This panel is part of the POLISMOD (2026-31, PI Kristina Stoeckl) project launch.

MUSIQUES EN RÉSISTANCE: ARVO PÄRT ET VALENTIN SILVESTROV

Sigov C.(authorAMC), Kyiv Mohila University ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

ENGAGING IN THE WORLD: SOCIAL JUSTICE AND RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS IN DIALOGUE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 19:30

Pola - A206a

Contact: Patricia Palazzo Tsai
Chair: Patricia Palazzo Tsai, Plinio Tsai, Marcelo da Silva Carneiro

Religious traditions have long been engaged in the pursuit of justice and in political decision-making since antiquity. Such worldly engagement is not unusual in traditions that developed in what are conventionally coined as “West” and “East”. From a non-Eurocentric perspective, since Śākyamuni, the historical Buddha, Buddhist traditions have articulated teachings and practices aimed at the reduction of suffering, interdependence, and the ethical transformation of individual and collective relations. Throughout their history, diverse Buddhist traditions have interpreted these principles across varying social contexts, offering conceptual and practical resources for reflecting on inequality, collective responsibility, and social justice. Similarly, traditions such as Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, African religions, and Indigenous cosmologies articulate normative visions of justice grounded in their ethical, ritual, and communal foundations. This panel proposes an interfaith and interdisciplinary dialogue on how religious and philosophical traditions respond, historically and in the present, to social, economic, and environmental injustices. In a global context marked by widening inequalities between the Global North and South, the rise of far-right ideologies, and new configurations of religious fundamentalism, the panel seeks to examine the contributions of various traditions towards lasting peace and conflict resolution.

The panel intends to discuss the possibilities in which social injustice can be tackled through an inter-relational and interfaith dialogue by different traditions, including their oral transmissions, texts, and practices, that are crucial for a critical dialogue, mutual learning, and transformative action – and thus, engaging in the world.

RECLAIMING DIGNITY IN A FRAGMENTED WORLD: UNIVERSAL RESPONSIBILITY AND AMOR MUNDI IN DIALOGUE

Palazzo Tsai P.(Speaker), Instituto Pramana ~ Valinhos ~ Brazil

INTER-RELATIONAL DIALOGUES OF LIBERATION: BUDDHISM AND LATIN AMERICAN THEOLOGY IN RESPONSE TO THE CRISES OF LATE NEOLIBERALISM

Tsai P.(Speaker), Universidade Metodista de Sao Paulo ~ São Bernardo do Campo ~ Brazil

THE VIOLENCE OF NONVIOLENCE: ANTI-CAPITALIST BUDDHISM AND THE LIMITS OF LIBERAL INTERFAITH DISCOURSE

Shields J.M.(Speaker), Bucknell University ~ Lewisburg, PA ~ United States of America

SEEKING HAPPINESS FOR OTHERS: THE PRINCIPLE OF FRIENDSHIP IN BUDDHISM AND CHRISTIANITY

Takahashi N.(Speaker), Universidade Metodista de São Paulo ~ São Bernardo do Campo ~ Brazil

“BEYOND CONFESSIONAL DIVIDES: ALFRED DELP AND INTERCONFESSIONAL COOPERATION IN NAZI GERMANY”

Evans E.(Speaker), Oakland University ~ Rochester Hills ~ United States of America

REVERENTIAL CARE AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE IN HINDUISM AND JAINISM: A RITUALISTIC STUDY OF THE LIVING TRADITIONS

Dixit S.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

UMBANDA – A RELIGION OF ENCOUNTERS AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Carneiro M.D.S.(Speaker), Universidade Metodista de São Paulo ~ São Bernardo do Campo ~ Brazil

THE SUPERIMPOSED ENEMY: A BUDDHIST HERMENEUTICS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AS A THREAT TO INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM IN BOLSONARO'S NEOLIBERAL DISCOURSE

D''Ottaviano G.(Speaker), Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo ~ São Paulo ~ Brazil

CORANICA

Locorotondo L.(Speaker), PUL ~ IITALY ~ Italy

BETWEEN PROMISE AND POWER: A LAW & ECONOMICS ANALYSIS OF ENGAGEMENT UNDER MOSAIC LAW

Wu N.(Speaker), EDLE (University of Hamburg) ~ Hamburg ~ Germany

GESTURAL SIGNS IN MAHĀYĀNA AND CATHOLIC ART: ETHICAL AND AESTHETIC CONSIDERATIONS

Leão K.(Speaker), Universidade Metodista de São Paulo ~ Valinhos ~ Brazil

HEAVEN HAS A WALL. RELIGION, BORDERS, AND THE GLOBAL UNITED STATES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - Aula AT13

Contact: Ely Orrego Torres
Chair: Maria Birnbaum
authorAMC: Elizabeth Shakman Hurd
Speaker: Alessandro Ferrari, Yvonne Sherwood, Fadi Hachem, Iza Hussin

This proposed panel will convene an Author Meets Critique session on the recently published book Heaven Has a Wall: Religion, Borders, and the Global United States (University of Chicago Press, 2025) by Elizabeth Shakman Hurd. In this timely and provocative book, Hurd argues that borders function as sacred objects in American public life, sustained by what she calls a bipartisan “border religion.” Through concepts such as reverence for national security, a liturgy of immigration, and an eschatological foreign policy, Heaven Has a Wall reframes contemporary debates over US borders by revealing their religious dimensions. Borders, she argues, offer a window onto unexplored political and religious dimensions of the American national project.
The interdisciplinary panel will bring together scholars from religious studies, political theory, international relations, and migration studies to critically engage with Hurd’s core arguments. Interlocutors will examine how the book reshapes understandings of secularism, sovereignty, civil religion, and U.S. global power, as well as its implications for the study of religion beyond the focus on belief or institutions. The author will respond to the discussants’ commentaries, reflecting on the book’s interventions, its main stakes, and future directions for research on religion in national and international politics.

HEAVEN HAS A WALL. RELIGION, BORDERS, AND THE GLOBAL UNITED STATES

Shakman Hurd E.(authorAMC), Northwestern University ~ Evanston ~ United States of America

DAISAKU IKEDA AND SOKA GAKKAI: CIVIC ACTIVISM AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - A102

Contact: Massimo Introvigne
Chair: Massimo Introvigne

This panel brings together interdisciplinary studies that illuminate the global impact of Daisaku Ikeda and the Soka Gakkai movement across the fields of interreligious dialogue, civic activism, and peacebuilding. The first paper examines Ikeda's crucial role in Buddhist-Catholic relations, situating his decades of engagement with the Holy See within the trajectory opened by "Nostra Aetate" and reaffirmed at the Vatican's 2025 anniversary event, where Soka Gakkai participated. The second contribution analyzes the newly established Fondazione Be the Hope and the exhibition Cambio io, cambia il mondo, interpreting them as contemporary expressions of Ikeda-inspired civic engagement amid the current crisis of global climate activism. A third paper explores Ikeda's sustained dialogue with Muslim intellectuals such as Majid Tehranian and Nur Yalman, as well as recent Soka Gakkai initiatives in the Middle East and Southeast Asia, highlighting the evolution from interreligious encounter to cooperative cultural and academic projects. The final study investigates Buddhist peacebuilding at the Toda Peace Institute in Tokyo, drawing on qualitative fieldwork to show how Buddhist ethical frameworks are translated into policy-relevant discourses on peace, human security, and global governance. Together, these papers demonstrate how Ikeda's humanistic Buddhism continues to shape transnational networks of dialogue and civic action, offering a robust framework for reimagining the public role of religion in an era of global uncertainty.

DAISAKU IKEDA, INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE, AND "NOSTRA AETATE"

Introvigne M.(Speaker), CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions) ~ Torino ~ Italy

THE BUDDHIST ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM OF THE BE THE HOPE FOUNDATION

Soryte R.(Speaker), FOB (European Federation for Freedom of Belief) ~ Torino ~ Italy

DAISAKU IKEDA AND ISLAM: FROM DIALOGUE TO COOPERATION

Corrao F.(Speaker), LUISS Guido Carli University ~ Rome ~ Italy

STUDYING BUDDHIST PEACEBUILDING AT THE TODA PEACE INSTITUTE OF TOKYO

Benna F.(Speaker), La Sapienza University ~ Rome ~ Italy

MIRCEA ELIADE AND HIS ITALIAN AND AMERICAN FRIENDS/ENEMIES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - A204

Contact: Wilhelm Danca
Chair: Wilhelm Danca

To commemorate 40 years since Mircea Eliade's passing, we are trying to find out how his work and thinking were received among Italian and American specialists. Some of his "disciples" have remained faithful to his intellectual horizon, even if they have followed other methods in studying religious phenomena, while others have distanced themselves from their master, not for methodological or theoretical reasons, but rather for political ones.
By redrawing the map of Mircea Eliade's reception in Italy and the United States, we seek to find out if there is a generation of Eliadists and what the stakes of their research are. We also want to find out what the effects of political criticism of Mircea Eliade's work are.
Specialists in Eliade's work from the United States, Italy, and Romania will present critical and less critical receptions of Mircea Eliade's work with reference to specialized literature from the United States and Italy.
The panel chair is an Eliade scholar with a thesis on Romanian and European philosophical influences in the development of the notion of the sacred in Mircea Eliade's work.

ELIADE'S ODYSSEY: CYCLOPES, LOTUS EATERS, AND HERDSMEN

Rennie B.(Speaker), Westminster College ~ New Wilmington ~ United States of America

ELIADE, TUCCI AND THE GROWTH OF IRANIAN STUDIES IN ITALY

Cereti C.G.(Speaker), University of California, Irvine School of Humanities ~ Roma ~ Italy

THE "LAST GREAT ROMANTIC IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS": MIRCEA ELIADE THROUGH THE EYES OF THE 'HETERODOX' ALDO NATALE TERRIN

Nanini R.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Hannover ~ Germany

PANTELIS KALAITZIDIS, ORTHODOXY AND MODERNITY: INTRODUCING A CONSTRUCTIVE ENCOUNTER, BRILL, 2026

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Nikolaos Asproulis
Chair: Hans Peter Grosshans
authorAMC: Pantelis Kalaitzidis
Speaker: José Casanova, Aristotle Papanikolaou, Kristina Stoeckl

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Did Orthodoxy come to a halt before modernity? Does Orthodox Christian theology function only in traditional contexts, borrowing schemes and forms of rural society, to which the liturgical and theological symbolisms, the rhetorical models of preaching, the structures of church administration, and its views on the relation between religion, politics, and secular society are closely linked?
Has Orthodoxy accepted the consequences of modernity, or does the Orthodox still feel a nostalgia for pre-modern forms of organization and structures of a glorified past, following in this way fundamentalism? Did even the movement called "Return to the Fathers", as it was understood, and despite its initially renewing character, function unwittingly as a barrier against modernity and its challenges? Modernity and post-modernity constitute, however, the broader historical, social, and cultural context within which the Church is called to accomplish its mission and to ceaselessly incarnate the Christian truth. In this book, Kalaitzidis argues that theology as a prophetic voice and expression of the self-understanding of the Church can only function in reference to the antinomy and the duality of the latter. Just as the Church is not of this world, so is theology aiming to express a charismatic experience and a transcendental reality, over and above words, concepts, or names. Just as the Church lives and goes forth in the world, so is theology seeking dialogue and communication with each historical present, following the language, the flesh, and the schemes of every given era, of each historic and cultural present. Theology is not exhausted by nor is it identified with History, but neither can it function in the absence of History, and more importantly, it cannot ignore the teachings of History. After all, the Revelation of God has always taken place inside the creation and History, not in some unhistoric, timeless, and unearthly universe.

PANTELIS KALAITZIDIS, ORTHODOXY AND MODERNITY: INTRODUCING A CONSTRUCTIVE ENCOUNTER, BRILL, 2026

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OUR SHARED SACRED STORY: EXPLORING INTERRELIGIOUS NARRATIVES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES (ORBIS 2025)

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A102

Moderator: Matthew Ryan Robinson
Speaker: William F Vendley, Mohamed Elsanousi, Lea Mühlstein, Bruno Guiderdoni, Elena Dini

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Our Shared Sacred Story is a groundbreaking project that brings together teams of scholars and practitioners from diverse religious and spiritual traditions to collaboratively retell their traditions' sacred narratives in ways that speak to contemporary global challenges. Sponsored by the Fetzer Institute, this initiative has engaged contributors from Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Indigenous Spiritualities, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism, and Interspirituality. Each tradition assembled a team of academics and practitioners, modeling the scholarly-practitioner dynamic that defines the field of Interreligious Studies. These teams worked together to reinterpret their foundational stories, articulating a larger, collective narrative that acknowledges difference while fostering shared wisdom and connection. The result was a groundbreaking volume that presents these sacred retellings alongside reflections on the challenges and opportunities of interreligious storytelling in a pluralistic world.

This 90-minute panel will feature four contributors to the Our Shared Sacred Story volume (Orbis, 2025) who authored sections of the volume. This panel offers a unique opportunity to engage with leading scholars who have reimagined sacred narratives for a pluralistic world, illuminating both the challenges and possibilities of interfaith storytelling in academic, pedagogical, and civic contexts. Each panelist will briefly present their contributions to the volume, discussing their tradition’s sacred story, how it has been reinterpreted within the project, the challenges they faced in articulating a shared narrative, and insights gained from engaging with diverse traditions in the project.

OUR SHARED SACRED STORY: EXPLORING INTERRELIGIOUS NARRATIVES, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES (ORBIS 2025)

Vendley W.F.(authorAMC), Fetzer Institute ~ Kalamazoo ~ United States of America

CREATIVELY MOVING DAVID TRACY'S THEOLOGY FORWARD

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Andreas Telser
Chair: Andreas Telser

While David Tracy's (1939–2025) work is frequently considered serious, demanding, and capacious, this can hamper the creative reception of his theology and philosophy of religion. This panel strives to remedy this by uncovering the relevance of Tracy's theology today in its correlations with a wide range of current concerns.
A central approach to any reception of Tracy's work is understanding his theology as conversation. While this may seem mundane, conversations worthy of the name are rare, as they require certain attitudes on the part of its participants. One such attitude is ›playfulness‹ for genuine conversations are only possible if they are ›game-like‹ in the sense of being played by the questions that occur and by the texts, persons, rituals, situations, etc. that one is engaged with.
Whether you are a Tracy connoisseur or intrigued by his thought from a distance, the panel aims to provide opportunities to engage in a creative conversation between your own questions and aspects of Tracy's philosophical and theological texts:
• How can we do and understand theology in times that fluctuate between secularization and edifying religion that is politicized or privatized?
• How must such a theology be structured to prove itself critically, both intellectually and as a way of life, while using its rich sources for the transformation of society toward a ›justice to come‹?
• What form of discourse on ultimate reality, whatever name it may be given, is appropriate to do justice to the incomprehensibility of this reality and to avoid any kind of closure?
• How should suffering be dealt with so that its raw inexplicability is not ›sublated‹ or absorbed in the bosom of a God or ultimate reality, while yet disallowing this suffering from having the last word?
• In overly complex lives, how can we hold together and maintain a resistance that seeks justice and a connection to everything imbued with overwhelming beauty?

CLASSICS, FRAGMENTS AND HOLY SCRIPTURE

Palfrey B.(Speaker), St. Augustine's College of Theology ~ London ~ United Kingdom

DAVID TRACY'S (RADICAL, THEOLOGICAL) AESTHETICS OF "LETTING GO"

Chase C.(Speaker), Manhattan University ~ Bronx, New York ~ United States of America

TRACY'S HERITAGE TODAY: THE ROLE OF CREATIVITY IN MODERN THEOLOGY

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independent Researcher ~ Rome ~ Italy

TRAGEDY AND GRACE: TRACY'S RECOVERY OF THE TRAGIC AS AN INVITATION FOR THEOLOGY

Rader K.(Speaker), All Saints Episcopal Church, Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

POLITICS, SOCIETY AND RELIGION IN RUSSIA: TRANSFORMATIONS SINCE 2022

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo A2

Contact: Marianna Napolitano
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl, Marat Shterin, Marianna Napolitano

This panel examines transformations at the intersection of politics, society, and religion in Russia since 2022. Bringing together perspectives from sociology of religion, political science, and intellectual history, the contributions analyze the changing role of religion in legitimizing power, framing social crises, and reconfiguring public discourse under conditions of war and heightened authoritarianism. Several papers revisit the long-standing debate on post-Soviet religious revival, asking whether recent developments mark a qualitatively new “second stage” and how these dynamics should be assessed in relation to secularization theory. Others focus on the Russian Orthodox Church’s engagement with demographic decline, civilizational narratives, and palingenetic visions of national survival and rebirth, highlighting how bodies, reproduction, and morality have become central sites of political and religious mobilization. Taken together, the panel sheds light on religion’s evolving function as a key symbolic and institutional resource in Russia’s wartime society, while also addressing internal tensions, ambiguities, and limits within these processes. This panel is part of the POLISMOD (2026-31, PI Kristina Stoeckl) project launch.

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AND “THE DEMOGRAPHIC CRISIS”

Kolstø P.(Speaker), University of Oslo ~ Oslo ~ Norway

PALINGENETIC CIVILISATIONISM AND THE BODY POLITIC: ORTHODOXY, SURVIVAL AND REVIVAL IN RUSSIA SINCE 2022

Kolov B.(Speaker), University of Oslo ~ Oslo ~ Norway

THE HAGIOPOLITICS OF THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH: CANONIZATION OF 'PATRIOTIC SAINTS' AND RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM

Shtyrkov S.(Speaker), Yerevan Center for International Education (YCIE) ~ Yerevan ~ Armenia

LAW AND RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY RUSSIA BASED ON THE PRACTICE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL COURT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Arkhipov F.(Speaker), PhD candidate of the Italian National Doctoral Program in Religious Studies DREST, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, University of Insubria ~ Como ~ Italy

MECHANISMS OF FEAR AND CONTROL IN RUSSIAN RELIGIOUS LIFE: ORTHODOX CLERGY UNDER REPRESSION

Beilinson D.(Speaker), Rousselet K.(Speaker), Kordochkin A.(Speaker), OVD-Info ~ Moscow ~ Russian Federation

STRATEGIES OF WAR-NAMING AND MORAL MOBILIZATION IN ROC SERMONS SINCE 2022

Kress B.(Speaker), Mennecke O.(Speaker), University of Hildesheim ~ Hildesheim ~ Germany

FROM STALIN TO PUTIN: ORTHODOX EPISTEMOLOGY AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF RUSSIAN PRAVOSLAVIE IN SERVICE OF STATE PROPAGANDA

Gabunia A.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THE SECOND STAGE OF THE ‘RELIGIOUS REVIVAL’ IN RUSSIA: HOW TO EVALUATE IT FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE SECULARIZATION DEBATE

Uzlaner D.(Speaker), FU Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

HERESY, POLITICS, AND IDENTITY: CONTESTING PAPAL AUTHORITY UNDER JOHN XXII

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - AT12

Contact: Francesca Barresi
Chair: Francesca Barresi, Martina Maria Caragnano

This open panel aims to examine the relationship between Pope John XXII (1316–1334) and the diverse dissident groups that emerged before and during his pontificate. The late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries witnessed the proliferation of dissenting religious movements—such as, but not limited to, the Spiritual Franciscans—as well as lay communities including, for instance, beguines and beghards. These groups sought official recognition from the Avignon papacy or struggled to preserve their identity—at times denied, at times reshaped—and their institutional autonomy.

At the same time, several figures saw their positions formally condemned. A notable example is Meister Eckhart, whose propositions were censured in the bull In agro dominico (1329), illustrating John XXII's determination to define the boundaries of orthodoxy in the face of emerging theological currents. His pontificate was also marked by vigorous action against a broader spectrum of opponents. The conflicts with major Italian Ghibelline powers—such as the Visconti and the Della Scala—reveal how accusations of heresy, rebellion, and political disobedience could intersect, especially when ambitions in temporal matters challenged papal claims.

The panel seeks to shed light on the dynamics of encounter, negotiation, and conflict between these religious, lay, political, and intellectual actors and John XXII. It will explore how different communities and individuals positioned themselves in relation to papal authority, which strategies they adopted in moments of tension, and what political, social, theological, and ecclesiological consequences arose from such confrontations.

Proposals addressing these themes are welcome. Please submit an abstract of no more than 300 words by 13 March, 2026 to: francesca.barresi@unimore.it and martinamaria.caragnano@unimore.it

JOHN XXII'S FRANCISCAN ADVISORS: CO-OPERATION, CONFLICT AND THE MANAGEMENT OF DISSENT

Brunner M.(Speaker), Institute for Medieval Studies, University of Leeds ~ Leeds ~ United Kingdom

AUTHORITY IN PIECES: SELECTIVE QUOTATION AND THE CHARGE OF HERESY IN THE REIGN OF JOHN XXII

Cresswell R.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

DEBATING THE POPE: THE BEATIFIC VISION CONTROVERSY AND CAMBRIDGE, UL MS II 3.10

Cozzi L.(Speaker), DREST - Università della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli ~ Caserta ~ Italy

JOHN XXII AND UMBRIA: DISSIDENCE AND REPRESSIONE FROM THE DOCUMENTS OF THE STATE ARCHIVES OF PERUGIA (1318-1323).

Maiorca A.M.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Trieste ~ Trieste ~ Italy

NAMING THE “SCHISMATIC”: PAPAL AUTHORITY, EASTERN CHRISTIANITY, AND THE POLITICS OF ORTHODOXY UNDER JOHN XXII

Kouremenos N.(Speaker), Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

WOMEN'S MYSTICISM AS A LANGUAGE OF RELIGIOUS DISSENT IN THE AGE OF JOHN XXII

Barresi F.(Speaker), DREST, University of Verona ~ Verona ~ Italy

CONTESTING PAPAL AUTHORITY: BONAGRATIA OF BERGAMO’S LONG APPEAL OF 1332 AGAINST JOHN XXII

Caragnano M.M.(Speaker), DREST, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

JEWISH THEOLOGY AS A SCIENCE? PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AS DEMOCRATIC AGENTS IN SYSTEMS OF PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE - THE UNIVERSITY OF POTSDAM'S SCHOOL OF JEWISH THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Yiftach Fehige
Chair: Yiftach Fehige

Across Europe, confessional theology occupies a contested place within public universities. Historically grounded in Wissenschaft, it now operates within arrangements involving state authorities, religious communities, and public funding. This panel invites papers addressing the question: under what institutional, epistemic, and political conditions can Jewish theology plausibly function as a scientific discipline within democratic systems of public knowledge? Public universities shape epistemic legitimacy, transparency, accountability, and academic freedom through governance structures, appointment procedures, curricular authority, and funding within a system of public knowledge.In addition to three invited papers, the panel is open to solicit fresh perspectives. We welcome submissions engaging this question with particular attention to the institutionalization of Jewish theology at the University of Potsdam (2013) as an analytically illuminating case. The panel aims to include graduate students and early-career scholars, alongside established scholars.

(1) Conceptual foundations — whether "Jewish theology" is a coherent category, and how it relates to Jewish studies.

(2) Institutional and normative questions — whether "Jewish theology" is better situated within a public university or in rabbinical seminaries/independent institutes, and the trade-offs this entails for academic freedom, confessional integrity, professional formation, and public accountability.

(3) Comparative case studies — contrasting Potsdam with rabbinical seminaries and Jewish academic institutions elsewhere (in Europe and beyond).

(4) Analytically framed studies of Potsdam's crisis since 2022 — focusing on governance, legitimacy, integrity norms, and public trust, rather than adjudicating personal responsibility or institutional failures.

Submissions from STS, Jewish studies, philosophy, law, political theory, and history are welcome.

CAN JEWISH THEOLOGY BE A SCIENCE? A CRITIQUE OF GERMANY'S ANSWER

Fehige Y.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

THE LEGAL CONTEXT OF CONFESSIONAL THEOLOGIES IN GERMANY

Hahn J.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

THEOLOGY AT A NON-RELIGIOUS UNIVERSITY

Hafner J.(Speaker), Universität Potsdam ~ Potsdam ~ Germany

MEDIA PERSPECTIVE: A REFLECTION ON CONTEMPORARY PROGRESSIVE-RELIGIOUS ARGUMENTATION DISPUTES IN THE MEDIA

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - AT13

Contact: Terézia Roncáková
Chair: Terézia Roncáková

The religious element is an integral part of the current cultural and ethical public debates conducted on the conservative-liberal "front line". One of the spaces that most faithfully capture these discussions is the media. Their research is therefore particularly meaningful when observing various aspects of current conceptual and ideological disputes. Quantitative and qualitative media analyses can focus on texts, institutions, creators and audiences and can use, for example, methods of frame, argumentation, attribution, etc. theories. The findings can then be deepened in individual in-depth interviews and focus groups, or in questionnaire surveys on numerically rich samples. In our section, we welcome a variety of contributions based on media material and contributing to answering some current questions, e.g.:
- what are the current argumentative disputes between conservatives and liberals;
- how emotions are handled in these discussions;
- how language, especially expressive language, is handled;
- what are the psycho-social causes of conservative and liberal attitudes;
- what contributes to the deepening of polarization;
- what role religious faith plays in these disputes;
- what is the position of religious argumentation in the public space at present...

These questions (implicitly) include the issue of (in)equality, because equality is one of the basic starting points of contemporary progressivism, and conservatism (relying on the Christian religion) argues against its misunderstanding with harmful consequences for the (long-term/eternal) well-being of the individual.

WHO SWEARS JUICIER? LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIVENESS IN CONSERVATIVE AND LIBERAL MEDIA

Roncáková T.(Speaker), Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Faculty of Arts ~ Ružomberok ~ Slovakia

POLARIZATION SURROUNDING THE DOCUMENT FIDUCIA SUPPLICANS: HOW MEDIA FRAMING HAS TRANSFORMED PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHURCH'S POSITION ON EQUALITY AND BLESSINGS

Dorková B.(Speaker), Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Faculty of Arts ~ Ružomberok ~ Slovakia

PRESENTATION OF EUTHANASIA IN THE MEDIA

Bicianová P.(Speaker), Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Faculty of Arts ~ Ružomberok ~ Slovakia

THE POLARIZING INFLUENCE OF DISCUSSION GROUPS AS A CONSEQUENCE OF DEPERSONALIZING VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION AND THE LATEST MAGISTERIUM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AIMED AT RESTORING REAL INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Gavenda M.(Speaker), TV LUX ~ Bratislava ~ Slovakia

RELIGIOUS TIKTOK IN ITALY: GENDERED VISIBILITY, PLATFORM AUTHORITY, AND INEQUALITIES OF RECOGNITION

Conti G.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

IMAGE OF THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT IN MEDIA DISCOURSE BASED ON ARTICLES PUBLISHED ON PCH24.PL

Jarzebak W.(Speaker), Doctoral School in the Humanities at the Jagiellonian University ~ Cracow ~ Poland

THE DIALECTIC OF THE SACRED AND THE SYNTHETIC, IN POPULAR CULTURE

Afangide--Késmárki U.U.(Speaker), Pázmány Péter Catholic University - Doctoral School of Social Sciences ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

CROSSES ON MOUNTAINTOP: MEDIA AND POLITICAL POLARIZATION BETWEEN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Rech G.(Speaker), Università Telematica Pegaso ~ Napoli ~ Italy

CHRISTIAN ATHEISM / ATHEISTIC CHRISTIANITY: GENEALOGIES, PARADOXES, AND CONTEMPORARY RECONFIGURATIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A108

Contact: Martin Weiss
Chair: Martin Weiss

Christian atheism designates a paradoxical constellation within the history of Western thought in which central Christian motifs - incarnation, kenosis, death, and resurrection - are reinterpreted without recourse to a transcendent, metaphysical God. The panel aims to explore the historical depth and philosophical transformations of this constellation. Its genealogy reaches back to early Christian sources: patristic reflections on divine kenosis (Phil 2), negative theology in authors such as Gregory of Nyssa and Pseudo-Dionysius, as well as radical interpretations of the Deus absconditus. Medieval and early modern developments—ranging from Meister Eckhart to Luther's theology of the cross—further destabilize classical theism by emphasizing divine self-withdrawal, suffering, and finitude. In modern philosophy, these motifs are systematically reworked. Hegel's speculative theology interprets the death of God as an immanent moment of absolute spirit, thereby inaugurating a post-transcendent reading of Christianity. The early Left Hegelians radicalize this move by translating theological contents into anthropological and political categories. Alexandre Kojève's existential reading of Hegel foregrounds finitude, negativity, and historical finality, while contemporary thinkers such as Slavoj Žižek explicitly articulate an "atheistic Christianity" centered on incarnation without divine remainder, emphasizing loss, abandonment, and the ethical consequences of God's death. The open panel invites contributions from philosophy, theology, religious studies, and related disciplines that investigate these trajectories, tensions, and reinterpretations. By situating contemporary debates within a long historical arc, the panel seeks to clarify whether Christian atheism represents a culmination of theological self-critique, a transformation of religious meaning, or a distinctive mode of post-metaphysical thought.

SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK'S CHRISTIAN ATHEISM

Weiss M.(Speaker), University of Klagenfurt, Department od Philosophy ~ Klagenfurt ~ Austria

"THE ABSENCE OF GOD RESEMBLES GOD" – BATAILLE'S ATHEOLOGY MEETS MUSIL'S LAY THEOLOGY

Boelderl A.(Speaker), University of Klagenfurt, Robert-Musil-Institut für Literaturforschung ~ Klagenfurt ~ Austria

KEIJI NISHITANI ON CHRISTIANITY AND ATHEISM – PERSPECTIVES FROM CHRISTIAN SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Jockel M.(Speaker), Department of Theology, University of Giessen ~ Giessen ~ Germany

TOWARDS RELIGIOUS AND THEOLOGICAL LITERACY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola A208

Contact: Simon Polinder
Chair: Ulrich Nitschke

Following the religious turn in International Relations (IR), several people and organisations have argued for more religious literacy or even cross-cultural religious literacy. But it might be necessary to go a step further. Our current world of international politics is full of religious expressions, incidents, and religion is often instrumentalized and weaponized. On the other hand, on average, four in every five people across the globe hold to some sort of belief system and the religious turn came about because people realised religion matters.
Religious literacy helps us understand our religious world, by tapping into the religious drives and motivations of people and political systems. Yet approaching religion as one more sociological factor or as a personal preference often ignores the deeper transcendent assumptions being claimed. How to understand why President Putin of Russia sees himself as a katechon if one doesn't know what this means? What to do when religion is used as political leverage; when religious rhetoric enters conversations and negotiations? When is religion not really being religion?
Apart from the knowledge that helps us understand the world, we need ways of discerning how to navigate it. Perhaps we need to move towards "theological literacy", to help uncover deeper assumptions and reintroduce the transcendent into IR. In this panel we explore this concept in more detail and welcome practical examples and cases.

FAITH, RELIGION AND WORLDVIEW IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND FBO IN DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE PROCESS

Lange E.(Speaker), Researcher PIRON Global Development ~ Bonn ~ Germany

ON THE NECESSITY OF THEOLOGICAL LITERACY: LESSONS FROM COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM IN NIGERIA IN KENYA

Polinder S.(Speaker), Postdoctoral researcher at the Department History of International Relations at Utrecht University ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

Fieldwork in Orthodox Religious Communities in Times of Radicalization

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RELIGIOUS ILLITERACY AND EU RELIGIOUS DIPLOMACY: INTERPRETIVE LIMITS IN THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF

Uxhi P.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia / "Giuseppe Alberigo" European School for Advanced Religious Studies ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA AND THE AMBIVALENCE OF THE SACRED IN POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Thomas S.(Speaker), Blackfriars Hall, Las Casas Institute for Social Justice, University of Oxford ~ Oxford, United Kingdom ~ United Kingdom

RELIGIOUS LITERACY IN HUMANITARIANISM: THE CASE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Intropido S.(Speaker), Analyst at AMIStaDeS Study Centre on Research, Analysis, and Training in International Affairs ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE HOLY SEE AND THE "BOARD OF PEACE" INITIATIVE: A CASE OF THEOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL JUDGMENT IN INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY

Bianchi E.(Speaker), Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore ~ Milan ~ Italy

FROM RELIGIOUS LITERACY TO THEOLOGICAL LITERACY: SEMANTICALLY WEAPONIZED RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT

Tolstoj K.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

THEOLOGY AND MARGINALITY: EPISTEMOLOGY, IMAGINATION, AND THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Marcel Macelaru
Chair: Marcel Macelaru

This panel approaches marginality as a critical reimagining of Christian existence in light of a Christological horizon. Christianity has long occupied positions of cultural dominance and institutional power, often sustained through political proximity and participation in hegemonic arrangements. Against this background, the panel aims to articulate a Christian public theology that disrupts such alignments with power.

We hope to explore public theology from the margins, not as a theology emerging from socially marginalised groups, but as a mode of theological reflection shaped by non-conformity to dominant political and cultural orders, as well as to their symbolic logics. In this sense, marginality functions as a theological epistemology: a way of knowing and speaking that emerges when Christian identity is reoriented away from privilege and toward a cruciform logic marked by vulnerability and critique. Such an epistemological shift challenges dominant modes of public reasoning that rely on claims of neutrality, abstraction and institutional authority, and instead foregrounds how theological knowledge is conditioned by proximity to power.

Within this framework, the panel also addresses inequality as a structural and symbolic reality that public theology must interpret and contest. Inequality is sustained not only by economic and political systems, but also by moral narratives, cultural imaginaries and religious legitimations that normalise exclusion. Public theology shaped by a reimagined, Christologically grounded marginality seeks to expose these dynamics while articulating alternative visions of public life that resist sacralised power and hegemonic religion.

By bringing these perspectives into conversation, the panel contributes to debates on religion and inequalities by proposing marginality not as a sociological label, but as a critical theological stance through which Christian engagement with the public square may be ethically reconfigured.

CHRISTIAN EXISTENCE AS MARGINALITY: TOWARD A THEOLOGY APPROPRIATELY PUBLIC

Macelaru M.(Speaker), Aurel Vlaicu University ~ Arad ~ Romania

RETURNING TO MARGINALITY IN CONTEMPORARY EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY: A PROPOSAL FOR EFFECTIVE ACTION IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Simut C.(Speaker), Ars Theologica Research Centre ~ Arad ~ Romania

MAKING INJUSTICE AUDIBLE: HIP HOP AND THE WORK OF PUBLIC THEOLOGY

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

RETURNING TO MARGINALITY IN CONTEMPORARY EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY: A PROPOSAL FOR EFFECTIVE ACTION IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE

Simut C.C.(Speaker), Aurel Vlaicu University ~ Arad ~ Romania

BIBLICAL STORIES AS EXISTENTIAL MIRRORS OF MARGINALITY: A TRAJECTORY OF DIVINE CALLING AND HUMAN RESPONSE

Oprean D.-.G.(Speaker), Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania ~ Arad ~ Romania

A PNEUMATOLOGICAL EPISTEMOLOGY OF MARGINALITY: PENTECOST(AL) DECENTERING AND THE REIMAGINING OF PUBLIC THEOLOGY

Gheorghe--Luca C.(Speaker), Ars Theologica Research Center (Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad) ~ Arad ~ Romania

MARGINALITY, VULNERABILITY, AND THEOLOGICAL RECONFIGURATIONS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN BORDER

Rapisarda D.L.(Speaker), VID Specialised University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE MAJORITY RHETORIC. REALISING AN IDEAL OF RADICAL CHRISTENDOM VERSUS EXTREME LIBERALISM IN EUROPE?

Kovacs Prof Dr A.(Speaker), J. Selye University ~ Komarom ~ Slovakia

REMEDYING INEQUALITIES — OR ELSE? CATHOLIC ASSISTANCE TO FORMER ALLIES' ENEMIES AFTER WORLD WAR II

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Pola - A203

Contact: Francesco Zavatti
Chair: Gianfranco Armando

This panel examines post-WWII Catholic assistance to former Nazi collaborators excluded from Allied relief, war criminals seeking to evade or mitigate prosecution, and displaced fascists fleeing Europe for fear of repatriation. It brings together two complementary perspectives — one focused on the Vatican's institutional engagement with postwar justice, the other on the lived religious and political negotiations between displaced fascists and their Catholic assistants — in order to address the following question: To what extent did the Church's religious and political objectives overlap with its humanitarian activities and its critique of postwar justice? Drawing on recently released archival sources, the panel shows that these assistance efforts were deeply entangled with Christian reconciliation and forgiveness, re-Christianization, anti-communism and fears of Soviet communism's expansion, the Church's competition with other Christian churches, confessional tensions, ambiguous relationships between the Vatican Secretariat of State and former Axis elites, and the prioritization of institutional reputation over retribution. These findings call into question the very nature of the Vatican's critique of the war crimes trials as forms of "victor's justice" and of the discreet operations to assist fascists on the run, offering new perspectives on Christian charity at the crossroads of material assistance, politics, and religion. By shedding light on the so-called "Vatican ratlines" and on the Vatican's critique of the postwar trials, the papers in this panel explain the Vatican's investment of charitable, diplomatic, religious, and political resources as means toward a moral reconstruction of Europe that marginalized postwar justice and accountability. By doing so, this panel demonstrates the complex entanglements between Catholic responses to the Holocaust, Catholic humanitarianism, and the shaping of postwar justice.

THE VATICAN, NUREMBERG, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR POSTWAR JUSTICE: RETHINKING CATHOLIC RESPONSES TO THE HOLOCAUST

Steinacher G.J.(Speaker), University of Nebraska–Lincoln ~ Lincoln ~ United States of America

PATHS TOWARD REDEMPTION OR TOWARD ARGENTINA? CONVERSIONS TO CATHOLICISM AND RELIGIOUS DEVOTIONS AMONG DISPLACED ROMANIAN FASCISTS AFTER WWII

Zavatti F.(Speaker), Södertörn University ~ Stockholm ~ Sweden

ESCHATOLOGICAL UNITY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Jason Welle
Chair: Jason Welle
authorAMC: Piotr Zygulski
Speaker: Adnane Mokrani, Anna Canton

This panel engages the recent monograph of Piotr Zygulski, Eschatological Unity: Findings from a Catholic-Shiʿi Experience (Palgrave Macmillan, 2025), which explores the potential for eschatology to serve as a common ground for both Catholicism and Shīʿa Islam. The volume discusses the role of eschatological unity as a unifying theme in theological discourse, suggesting it as a key to examine aspects of unity within Catholic eschatology and the Shīʿī belief in the Imām Mahdī. Both discussants are scholars of Islamic studies and interfaith dialogue, including specific expertise in eschatology and mysticism.

ESCHATOLOGICAL UNITY

Zygulski P.(authorAMC), ISSRM S. Michele Arcangelo ~ Foggia ~ Italy

THE BLACK GODDESS ARCHETYPE AS AN EMPOWERING FORCE FOR OPPRESSED AND MINORITY GROUPS ACROSS CULTURES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A206b

Contact: Dorota Kaminska-Jones
Chair: Patrizia Granziera

Black goddesses in many cultures have historically emerged as figures venerated by groups excluded from mainstream society. In some of the earliest recorded traditions, for example, the Hindu goddess Kali was worshipped by thieves and social outcasts. Similar patterns can be observed across diverse cultures worldwide. In contemporary contexts, the rise of Santa Muerte has likewise been closely associated with marginalised populations, including socially suppressed groups and criminalised communities. Although cults devoted to such goddesses sometimes gain more institutional or socially accepted forms, the Black Goddess continues to function as an empowering symbolic figure for oppressed and disenfranchised groups.

In the modern era, cross-cultural exchanges have further expanded the reach of this archetype. Black goddesses such as Kali have been adopted in Western contexts, where they often serve new emancipatory functions. For instance, Kali has become an empowering archetype for older women confronting age-based discrimination. By invoking her as a figure of strength and transgressive power, these women assert claims to equality and social visibility within cultures dominated by ideals of youthfulness.

This panel seeks to examine the Black Goddess archetype across cultures, focusing on its role in promoting empowerment, equality, and recognition for oppressed and minority groups within different societies.

We invite scholars to contribute to this discourse by submitting original research papers or case studies addressing various dimensions of this intricate subject. We seek in-depth, scholarly papers from diverse theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary perspectives.

GODDESS KALI AS A SYMBOL OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN THE LATE 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES IN VISUAL ART

Kaminska--Jones D.(Speaker), Nicolaus Copernicus University ~ Torún ~ Poland

THE UGLY GODDESS: REFLECTIONS ON IMAGES OF THE FEMININE FORCE IN ANCIENT MEXICO AND INDIA

Granziera P.(Speaker), Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos ~ Cuernavaca ~ Mexico

BETWEEN WITNESSING AND MARTYRDOM: SEMANTIC SHIFTS AND TRANSLATION ISSUES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Francesca Badini
Chair: Anna Mambelli, Laura Bigoni, Francesca Badini

This panel investigates the semantic transformations and translation strategies associated with the concepts of “witnessing” and “martyrdom” from a diachronic perspective. Starting from the foundational texts of the Biblical and Quranic traditions, the panel examines how specific semantic fields have been rendered, reinterpreted, and at times reshaped in translations and receptions across different historical moments. Particular attention is paid to translational choices as sites of negotiation between philology, theology, and historical contexts, revealing how acts of translation both reflect and produce doctrinal, cultural, and ideological shifts.
Spanning from antiquity to modern languages and cultures, the panel highlights processes of semantic slippage, expansion, and re-semanticisation within the lexicon of martyrdom. By foregrounding the interaction between textual tradition, audience, and purpose, it aims to show how translation does not merely transfer meanings, but actively participates in the construction, stabilization, and transformation of religious concepts over time, shaping the ways in which they are understood, mobilised, and reactivated in different religious and intellectual perspectives.

TESTIMONY AND MARTYRDOM: FROM THE SEPTUAGINT TO ITS TRANSLATIONS INTO MODERN LANGUAGES

Mambelli A.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia - FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

FROM WITNESSING TO DYING IN THE PATH OF GOD. THE QUR’AN IN ITALIAN TRANSLATIONS (1861 - 2000)

Badini F.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Palermo ~ Italy

WITNESS-LESS MARTYRDOM: FROM MARTYR TO 殉道 (XUNDAO)

Bottanelli V.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

RESHAPING THE CONCEPT OF TESTIMONY AND MARTYRDOM IN CHRISTIAN MEDIEVAL CENTRAL ASIA

Barbati C.(Speaker), University of Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

THE TERMS ŠAHĀDA AND ŠAHĪD IN SUFI VOCABULARY: SEMANTIC SHIFT AND NEW INTERPRETATIONS OF THE CONCEPTS OF “MARTYRDOM” AND 'MARTYR'

Budelli R.(Speaker), Fscire ~ Palermo ~ Italy

A MARTYRDOM IS BORN: SEMANTIC EXPANSION AND DECONTEXTUALISATION OF A WORD IN MODERN ITALIAN

Bigoni L.(Speaker), University of Fribourg ~ Fribourg ~ Switzerland

USE AND ABUSE OF THE WORD "MARTYR" IN RECENT DEBATES

Bons E.(Speaker), University of Strasbourg/FSCIRE Bologna ~ Endingen, Germany ~ France

MARTYRDOM BETWEEN RELIGION AND POLITICS: FROM THE MACCABEES TO THE CONTEMPORARY FAR RIGHT

Bellantuono A.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Lille ~ Lille ~ France

CONCEPTUALISING HIERARCHY IN AND THROUGH RELIGIONS - FROM PLATO TO MARSHALL SAHLINS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - AT14

Contact: Alessandro Testa
Chair: Alessandro Testa

For many scholars of religion, the conference's overarching topic "religions and (in)equalities" immediately evokes the idea of hierarchy, first because religious hierarchies – human, spiritual, or divine – are well known in history and anthropology, and second because the very word "hierarchy" is etymologically connected to the sphere of the sacred. And yet inequality and hierarchy are two very different things, although they are obviously semantically and conceptually connected: inequality is assessed quantitatively, whereas hierarchy is inherently qualitative. Indeed, the two ideas might even be considered opposites, for inequality evokes imbalance, whereas hierarchy evokes order.
This panel invites papers to address hierarchy in different religious traditions, theoretical approaches, and geographical and historical contexts, offering a comparative conceptual exploration of it as a key analytical concept in the study of religions, examining its transformations from classical to contemporary thought. The papers will investigate how hierarchy has been conceptualised, exalted, contested, and reconfigured religiously as well as through reflections on religion, sometimes in utterly original and creative ways.
The ideal temporal alpha and omega of the panel have been identified in Plato and Marshall Sahlins. In fact, Plato's reflection is perhaps the first in history to systematically tackle the (metaphysical) principle of ordered difference (although he did not use the Greek word "hierarchy"), providing an early and influential framework for thinking about hierarchy as a principle linking cosmology, ethics, and political organisation. Similarly, but very recently, after decades of reflection on human societies and cultural orders, Marshall Sahlins came to the conclusion, contrariwise to his disciple David Graeber, that hierarchy (or rather the principle and the mythopoetic imagination thereof) is in human societies inevitable, or rather inescapable.

HIERARCHY AND HEAVENLY POLITICS: THE ROLE OF THE DIVINE TRIAD IN RULING THE COSMOS IN MESOPOTAMIAN AND GREEK MYTHS

Corrente P.(Speaker), Università di Salerno ~ Salerno ~ Italy

THE CURSE OF HAM? INEQUALITY, DIVERSITY, HIERARCHY IN THE LIGHT OF THE NOBILITY'S INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLICAL STORY

Rygielska M.(Speaker), University of Katowice ~ Katowice ~ Poland

1 CORINTHIANS 11:2–16 AS EARLY EXAMPLE OF CREATION ORDER

Barleben M.(Speaker), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

"THE CHILDREN WHO WILL COME AFTER US". HIERARCHICAL ORGANIZATION AND DYNAMICS OF INCLUSION AND EXCLUSION IN NAG HAMMADI CODEX I

Mocellin D.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia (DREST) ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

ENCHANTED HIERARCHIES: THE NEW SCIENCE OF MARSHALL SAHLINS

Della Subin A.(Speaker), Independent scholar ~ New York City ~ United States of America

HIER-ARCHY: DIVINE OR DIABOLICAL? REFLECTING ON HUMAN, META-HUMAN, AND METAPHYSICAL HIERARCHIES FROM PLATO TO SAHLINS

Testa A.(Speaker), Charles University ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

THE CHARISMA OF SPEECH: REINSTATING OR CHALLENGING HIERARCHY?

Tateo G.(Speaker), Università Roma Tre ~ Roma ~ Italy

REINTRODUCING HIERARCHY IN EGALITARIAN REGIMES: A HUMAN DIGNITY PERSPECTIVE

De Noüel E.(Speaker), Ecole pratique des Hautes Etudes ~ Paris ~ France

SIMONE WEIL AND POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - A107

Contact: Zoe Boyle
Chair: Zoe Boyle

In response to the increasingly demanding and knotty problems of our world, we require new strategies of analysis and ways of thinking. Taking up this challenge, political theology unmasks the frayed relationship between the secular and the religious at the cornerstone of liberal, technocratic (post)modernity. Many scholars invested in the insights of the vast field of political theology have often engaged heavily with Simone Weil (1909–1943); however, no connection between political theology and Simone Weil has yet been fully fleshed out. During her short lifetime, Weil's thought is infused by her witness and resistance to the totalitarianism welling up around her. Many recognize that her later turn to Christian mysticism is no less than a continuation of her explicitly political writings, such as those on Marx, labour, Hitlerism, French colonization, as well as Indian, Tibetan, and Ancient Greek thought. This panel is interested in how Weil's work through a theopolitical lens can shed new insights into our failing world and how this approach best fits with her own faithfulness to such a world.

THE EMPTY THRONE: SIMONE WEIL ON SOVEREIGNTY AND NEGATIVE POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Boyle Z.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Austria

GRACE, GRAVITY, AND ANARCHY IN THE WORKS OF SIMONE WEIL

Costello V.(Speaker), University of Illinois, Chicago ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

THE VIOLENCE OF THE GOOD? SIMONE WEIL AND THE RISK OF POLITICAL THEOLOGY

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"DIEU DANS PLATON": MYSTICISM AND MEDIATION IN SIMONE WEIL'S PLATONISM

Schneider P.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

MYSTICISM, WORK AND THE AUTONOMY OF MAN. WEIL'S SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY OF NECESSITY IN THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL THEOLOGY.

Faber C.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE NEED FOR ROOTS: WHAT TRADITION DO WE NEED?

Robertson A.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

THE AGE OF SAINTS: POLITICAL MODERNITY AS A SPIRITUAL OPPORTUNITY IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF SIMONE WEIL.

Rabah B.(Speaker), Universite de Reims (URCA) ~ Reims ~ France

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES AND THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE: AGENCY, POWER AND PURPOSES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Davide Dimodugno
Chair: Davide Dimodugno

The decline of Christianity as a socially hegemonic religion coincides with the emergence of “outgoing” Christians. This perspective invites Christian communities to be understood as open, relational and territorially embedded actors, actively involved in the production of urban space and places of encounter. Community is thus conceived not as a fixed identity, but as a dynamic and relational process shaped by shared practices, proximity and responsibility.
Moving beyond formal hierarchies, this inquiry explores dynamics of representation, power and legitimacy within Christian communities, examining how authority and agency are negotiated among clergy, laity and local groups. It considers how different organisational models – centralised or distributed – affect the capacity of communities to inhabit public space and engage contemporary urban cultures.
The notion of an “architecture of encounter” continues to inform many initiatives promoted by Catholic communities, fostering both the encounter with God and the encounter with others through practices of service and the generation of social, relational and spiritual goods. These initiatives may involve traditional ecclesiastical infrastructures, such as parishes reinterpreted beyond the idea of sacred enclosure, or extend into new spaces of social and urban engagement. They often include the reuse and re-signification of deconsecrated churches and ecclesiastical heritage, contributing to a reconfigured pastoral geography.
The call is open to contributions that investigate innovative ways in which Christian communities make and inhabit space, focusing on outcomes, methods and underlying theological, pastoral, legal, architectural and economic assumptions. It addresses regulatory frameworks, governance models and institutional conditions that enable community action in public space, as well as to the economic, patrimonial and heritage implications of these practices.

PARISHES 2.0: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES IN A CHANGING WORLD

Dimodugno D.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

SOCIAL REUSE OF ITALIAN ECCLESIASTICAL PROPERTIES: SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS

Giani F.(Speaker), Fondazione Humanitate ETS

CHURCH IN A SUITCASE: SPATIAL PRACTICES OF ORTHODOX COMMUNITIES OF DISPLACED UKRAINIANS IN GERMANY

Timofeeva Z.(Speaker), University of Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

RE-ENCHANTING THE COMMONS THROUGH THE “BUNDLE OF RIGHTS”: CATHOLIC LAND CONCESSIONS AND THE PRODUCTION OF SPACE IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

Baraka Akilimali J.(Speaker), Université Catholique de Louvain, UCLOUVAIN ~ Louvain-la-Neuve ~ Belgium

CANON LAW AND PASTORAL SPACES. REORGANISING PARISHES AND CHURCH BUILDINGS

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

MARIA REDEMPTORIS MATER: THEOLOGY, VISUAL CULTURE, AND THE REPRESENTATION OF THE VIRGIN

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A103

Contact: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO
Chair: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO

This panel explores the figure of the Virgin Mary as a central intersection between theological reflection, devotional practice, and visual culture, spanning from the early Middle Ages to the early modern period. Anchored in historical mariological texts — patristic writings, medieval treatises, and early modern devotionals — it examines how core doctrines of Marian theology, including divine maternity, intercession, purity, and queenship, were translated into complex visual systems, iconographic formulas, and performative devices.

The analysis focuses on the interplay between textual authority, as exemplified in documents such as Redemptoris Mater, and artistic production, demonstrating how Mary's image functioned not merely as illustration but as a dynamic medium shaping perception, piety, and memory. Paintings, sculptures, and illuminated manuscripts are examined to reveal strategies by which the Virgin was depicted as a locus of protection, authority, and affective engagement.

By correlating doctrinal developments with visual expression, the panel reconstructs a nuanced Marian semiotics, highlighting the enduring impact of visual culture on the reception and transformation of Mariology across centuries.

"MARVELOUS VISIONS": MAPPING THE GEOGRAPHY OF EXTRAORDINARY MARIAN IMAGES IN DAUNIA

Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), UNIVERSITà DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA ~ REGGIO EMILIA ~ Italy

FRIAR J. B. HEPBURN'S VIRGA AUREA : ON A KABBALISTIC IMAGERY FOR MARY

Angileri I.(Speaker), University "La Sapienza" of Rome - EPHE PSL ~ Rome - Paris ~ Italy

DEACONS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. WOMEN AND MEN?

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Luc Forestier
Chair: Serena Noceti

In the Roman Catholic church, the Synodal path (2021-2024) has showed how gender questions are at stake in different aeras, especially in ecclesiology. Despite the great diversity of societies, cultures and political rights granted to women and men across different continents, the diocesan, national and continental syntheses, and finally the Final Document of 26 October 2024, adopted by Pope Francis, have shown the extent to which profound reforms must be undertaken to respect the equal dignity of all baptised faithful, regardless of their gender, age, social status, etc.
The old arguments, used by generations of theologians to justify the fact that only baptised men can be validly ordained as deacons, priests or bishops, have shown their limitations. Furthermore, the presence of women in positions of high responsibility in local churches and in the Roman Curia, as well as the growing involvement of women in biblical exegesis, church history, dogmatic theology, canon law, etc., are contributing to a shift in the balance.
This panel aims to study the more specific question of the diaconate from an ecumenical, interdisciplinary and international perspective. We welcome proposals for papers on the question of the diaconate in Christian churches, particularly on how women and men can respond to this vocation. This panel will also be an opportunity to study the epistemological questions, particularly in relation to history and the social sciences.

WOMEN DEACONS? REASONS FOR SAYING YES IN THE DOCUMENTS OF THE 2021-24 SYNOD

Noceti S.(Speaker), Istituto Superiore di Scienze Religiose della Toscana ~ Firenze ~ Italy

FROM SYNOD TO SYNOD

Quisinsky M.(Speaker), Institut für Katolische Theologie. Pädagogische Hochscule Karlsruhe ~ Karlsruhe ~ Germany

WOMEN AND MINISTRIES. AN AGE-OLD QUESTION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN FRANCE

Forestier L.(Speaker), Université catholique de Lille ~ Lille ~ France

MODERNITY IN PERSPECTIVE: AN ALTERNATIVE GENEALOGY OF THE MODERN SUBJECT

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 16:10 to 18:20

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Arianne Conty
Chair: Arianne Conty
authorAMC: Arianne Conty
Speaker: Norbert Hintersteiner, Kurt Mertel, Frédéric Lelong, Judith Crews

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The normative history of modernity begins with the Renaissance and the invention of linear perspective in order to emphasize the placing of man, instead of God, at the center of the world. The vanishing point of linear perspective gives the world to be seen from the perspective of the single right eye of a singular subject, and it is this perspective that inspired Descartes' optics and his isolated cogito as the prime example of modern subjectivity. This book will return to the invention of linear perspective in order to seek another interpretation of linear perspective that might give an alternative modernity to be seen. Using the work of Renaissance theologian and mystic Nicolas of Cusa, we will trace a different genealogy, one that provides a different vision of modernity that allows the world, and the painting, to return our gaze. In elucidating the critique of the Cartesian subject by 20th century philosophers Benjamin, Heidegger, Lacan, Sartre, Merleau-Ponty and Marion, we will ask how modernity could be re-conceived if philosophers were to take into account the geometric vision of Nicolas de Cusa, and how his alternative vision might enable us to escape narcissism and share our world with the absolute other.

MODERNITY IN PERSPECTIVE: AN ALTERNATIVE GENEALOGY OF THE MODERN SUBJECT

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WHOSE BIOETHICS? RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AND NON-RELIGIOUS TRANSLATIONS IN A PLURAL WORLD

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 16:10 to 18:20

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Tommaso Ropelato
Chair: Georgiana Diana Apostica, Lucia Galvagni, Tommaso Ropelato

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Addressing bioethical questions through the lens of religious traditions is both demanding and necessary. Even in contemporary secularised societies, religious imaginaries continue to shape how we understand life and death, illness and healing, vulnerability and care.
Yet when we speak of bioethical standards, whose standards are we invoking? The language of dignity, autonomy, or vulnerability embedded in the debate and reported in protocols and policies often presents itself as universal while reflecting particular Western and secular genealogies. This framing can obscure a more complex reality: bioethics as a field shaped by plural grammars of value, lived identities, and overlapping worlds of meaning. Rather than presupposing a fixed opposition between religious and secular ethics, the panel invites reflection on how diverse moral worlds intersect, challenge, and translate one another.
We aim to move beyond narratives of conflict or incompatibility by exploring how religious and faith traditions may function as substantive interlocutors in contemporary bioethical discourse. We welcome contributions that examine how religious and faith values and imaginaries are reconfigured within secular frameworks, how they inform practices of care, clinical decision-making, and policy debates, and how they might help articulate more equitable and imaginative bioethical futures.

Possible Topics and Approaches

- Comparative analyses of religious and non-religious approaches to autonomy, dignity, or vulnerability
- The translations and adaptations of religious values within non-religious bioethical or legal frameworks
- The role of ritual, embodiment, and suffering in shaping moral reasoning in healthcare
- Public theology and bioethics in democratic deliberation and policy design
- Empirical or ethnographic studies of how religious and moral imaginaries inform care practices

THE DISENCHANTMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT: RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS AS EPISTEMIC RESOURCES

Ropelato T.(Speaker), University of Turin / Bruno Kessler Foundation - Center for Religious Studies ~ Trento ~ Italy

TRANSHUMANISM AND CATHOLICISM: RECONCILING TECHNOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT WITH RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

Balistreri M.(Speaker), DISTU, University of Tuscia ~ Viterbo ~ Italy

THE STATE OF CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTION REGARDING END-OF-LIFE DECISIONS IN CERTAIN EUROPEAN STATES – A COMPARATIVE LEGAL ANALYSIS

Köbel D.(Speaker), Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church of Hungary ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

CATHOLIC BIOETHICS

Pegoraro R.(Speaker), PONTIFICIA ACCADEMIA PER LA VITA-CITTA' DEL VATICANO ~ ROMA ~ Italy

CARE AND JUSTICE IN GLOBAL HEALTH: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE GLOBAL FAITH-BASED HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

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THE ITALIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PAUL WITHIN JUDAISM PERSPECTIVE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Giulio Mariotti
Chair: Giulio Mariotti, Gabriele Boccaccini

Over the last two decades, and with growing momentum in the past five years, the Paul within Judaism perspective has become a central paradigm in contemporary Pauline studies. By questioning traditional accounts of Paul's rupture with Judaism, it has profoundly reshaped discussions of law, evil, Gentiles inclusion, messianism, and eschatology. This panel, proposed by the Enoch Seminar, brings together Italian scholars from different disciplinary backgrounds to assess the historical scope, methodological implications, and recent developments of this approach within Italian scholarship.

The panel focuses on a series of influential works published from 2020 to the present—such as Le tre vie di salvezza di Paolo l'ebreo, Gli esercizi di Paolo di Tarso, Paolo di Tarso, un ebreo del suo tempo, Riattivare Paolo di Tarso, Paolo di Tarso nel pensiero ebraico, as well as the forthcoming Italian translation of Paul the Pagan's Apostle. These studies have played a significant role in consolidating, refining, and critically interrogating the Paul within Judaism paradigm in Italy.

The individual papers address a wide range of topics, including Paul and Jewish apocalyptic traditions, the interpretation of Romans in the context of the Roman Empire, the patristic reception of Paul, Catholic and Reformed theological debates, modern Jewish thought, and Jewish–Christian dialogue. Particular attention is given to issues of continuity, internal pluralism, and cultural negotiation within Second Temple Judaism, as well as to the theological and pedagogical implications of recent historical-critical research.

Taken together, the contributions highlight the originality and interdisciplinary character of Italian scholarship and its growing impact on the international debate surrounding Paul's Jewish identity and legacy.

PAUL AND THEOCRACY WITHIN THE ROMAN EMPIRE. A POSSIBLE NEW READING OF ROMANS 13

Marcone A.(Speaker), Lorenzini F.(Speaker), University of Roma Tre ~ Rome ~ Italy

PAUL IN THE WITHIN JUDAISM PERSPECTIVE AND JEWISH–CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE

Gargiulo M.(Speaker), Pontificial Gregorian University ~ Rome ~ Italy

TEACHING AND PREACHING: INTEGRATING THE PAUL-WITHIN-JUDAISM PARADIGM IN CATHOLIC ITALIAN CONTEXTS

Zygulski P.(Speaker), Istituto Superiore di Scienze Religiose Metropolitano ~ Foggia ~ Italy

«QUOMODO POTEST LEGEM TENERE QUI LONGE EST A LEGIS AUCTORE?». LAW AND CIRCUMCISION IN AMBROSE OF MILAN'S EXEGESIS OF ROMANS 2:17-29 AND 3:1-2, IN LIGHT OF THE "PAUL WITHIN JUDAISM PERSPECTIVE"

D"Incà A.(Speaker), Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Settentrionale ~ Milano ~ Italy

THE PAUL WITHIN JUDAISM PERSPECTIVE IN REFORMED PAULINE STUDIES: DEFENDING THE "LUTHERAN PAUL"

Noffke E.(Speaker), Facoltà Valdese di Teologia ~ Rome ~ Italy

JEWISH PERSPECTIVES ON PAUL OF TARSUS: TWENTIETH-CENTURY JEWISH THOUGHT

Milani C.(Speaker), Catholic University of Sacred Heart ~ Milano ~ Italy

CHURCH HISTORY AND AUDIOVISUAL ARCHIVES: NEW APPROACHES AND STUDIES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A203

Contact: Federico Ruozzi
Chair: Raffaella Perin

In recent decades, audiovisual archives—films, television news, documentaries, radio recordings, and, more recently, born-digital materials (recent popes, for example, have social media accounts)—have become indispensable sources for the history of the Church. These materials not only document events, figures, and ecclesial practices, but also actively contribute to shaping the religious imaginary, forms of ecclesial communication, and the ways in which Catholicism has represented itself in the global public sphere.

This open panel seeks to host and present research that proposes a methodological rethinking of the relationship between Church history and media, critically interrogating the traditional categories of religious historiography in light of the visual and media cultures of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Through case studies ranging from the mediatization of major ecclesial events (councils, jubilees, conclaves, papal journeys) to film and television production, and including presentations of new digital libraries dedicated to collecting audiovisual sources concerning the Italian Church, the panel aims to be a space for reflection on how moving images have transformed both the ways of making, narrating, and transmitting Church history and the ways of studying it—placing new sources on the historian's workbench.

By adopting interdisciplinary approaches that weave together religious history, social and political history, media studies, and cinema and television studies, the panel seeks to bring together scholars that innovatively draw on audiovisual sources for the study of contemporary history. Audiovisual archives are not merely documentary repositories but historical actors that participate in the shaping of contemporary Catholic cultures.

MEDIA, RITUAL, AND POWER: A CENTURY OF JUBILEES IN THE AGE OF MASS COMMUNICATION

Viganò D.E.(Speaker), International Telematic University UNINETTUNO ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE MISSION ON FILM: THE CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE OF THE PONTIFICAL INSTITUTE FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS

Adreani D.(Speaker), Archivio Generale Pontificio Istituto Missioni Estere ~ Milano ~ Italy

MEDIATING THE CONCLAVE: RITUAL, POWER, AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Ruozzi F.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia/Fscire ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

LITURGY AND MEDIA: THE CONCILIAR REFORM FROM ITS INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION TO THE CONTEMPORARY “MASS-MEDIA” PAPACY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Proietti M.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

REFORMING HOLLYWOOD: THE HOLY SEE AND THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF DECENCY DURING THE PONTIFICATE OF PIUS XII (1939-1958)

Montanari A.(Speaker), International Telematic University UNINETTUNO ~ Rome ~ Italy

NARRATIVES OF LIBERATION IN RELIGIONS: INTERSPACES AND RESONANCES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A104

Contact: Antje Roggenkamp
Chair: Simone Sinn, Antje Roggenkamp

In the face of crises and experiences of oppression, religious traditions have developed different narratives of liberation. Amidst the current changes and in view of global interconnections, these narratives are being expanded, adapted and transformed. Where different religious traditions coexist in specific places, the resonance and intersecting spaces of different religions lead to the acceptance, but also the rejection, of narratives of liberation. In doing so, narratives of liberation articulate a specific way of dealing with experiences of powerlessness, injustice and violence, thus opening up concrete perspectives on the understanding of justice, productive resistance and peace. Nevertheless, liberation narratives are not as politicisable as perhaps narratives of justice or peace: they encompass the relationship between the individual and the community and also draw attention to forms of violence; they address the field of responsibility towards the self, the collective, but also society and the global community.
Spaces between indicate that there are not only areas of differences and similarities between religions, but also hybrid border areas. Resonances draw attention to the fact that there are vibrations within and between individuals who deal with religion, but who also live religion. If one reads the approach in terms of practical theory, then resonances would be comparable to the affordances of things that produce spaces between. Resonances as vibrations also indicate that responsibilities and moods (can) change even in individuals who feel, live and deal with religion. Interstices and narratives thus help to answer the question of how a narrative, or more specifically a narrative of liberation, works.

INTERRELIGIOUS NARRATIVES OF FREEDOM IN DEALING WITH CONCEPTIONS OF GOD AS RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOD

Roggenkamp A.(Speaker), University of Münster, Faculty of Protestant Theology ~ Münster ~ Germany

LIBERATION NARRATIVES IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: ASSESSING THE ROLE OF THEOLOGY AND AGENCY

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SCRIPTURE & ORAL LAW IN THE THEOLOGY OF DAVID WEISS HALIVNI

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A108

Contact: Samuel Kessler
Chair: Benjamin Frogel

Scholarship in Jewish theology has long oriented itself in relation to the canon of modern Jewish thought which wrestled with the polarity between reason and revelation. However, since the middle of the twentieth century, another strain of Jewish theology has existed, one that challenges the philosophical assumptions of the more dominant paradigm. Rather than presupposing the absolute perfection of divine reality and the limits of its human reception, this subaltern theology investigates the character of the human response to divine word and revelation, finding within it a theological space—even necessity—for the human role in interpreting and shaping the face of the divine will.

This panel brings together four papers on the theology of David Weiss Halivni, a specifically insightful exponent of the essence and implications raised by this alternate strain in modern Jewish theology. Halivni does not ask how we live in the tension between reason and revelation, but rather, how do we construct a coherent vision of God's will when confronted by the "maculate" (i.e., seemingly imperfect) template of revealed scripture? As Halivni wrote, "Even the most conservative scholars concede that the literal surface of the scriptural Torah is such that adjunct nonscriptural traditions are required to enable actual observance." This panel seeks to expound both the core issues at play in Halivni's theology—the axial, perhaps even ontological relationship between Scripture and Oral Law—as well as is implications for a Jewish theology still in shadow to the reason-revelation dichotomy.

INTERPRETING A MACULATE TORAH: DAVID WEISS HALIVNI ON REASON AND REVELATION

Rashkover R.(Speaker), William & Mary ~ Williamsburg ~ United States of America

MACULATE COHERENCE: TRACING A THEOLOGY OF RESTORATIVE COMMENTARY BETWEEN EZRA AND THE MISHNAH IN THE WRITINGS OF DAVID WEISS HALIVNI

Kessler S.(Speaker), Virginia Commonwealth University ~ Richmond ~ United States of America

WHAT IS UNORTHODOX? A THEOLOGICAL COMPARISON BETWEEN HALIVNI AND S.R. HIRSCH

Kohler G.Y.(Speaker), Bar-Ilan University ~ Ramat Gan ~ Israel

LIBERATION: THEOLOGICAL, BIBLICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Simon Hewitt
Chair: Tasia Scrutton

Christian discourse frequently declares itself in favour of equality and human liberation. Yet how authentic is this commitment? What theological, scriptural and psychological resources might be brought to its aid? This wide-ranging panel, which discusses not only theology as such, but also its biblical underwriting and its outworking in the psychology of political agents, seeks to address these, and other, questions.

The premise of the panel is that conversations between these three subject areas – theology, biblical studies, and psychology – will prove fruitful for resourcing a Christian commitment to liberation. Particularly novel is our inclusion of psychology in the conversation. This results from a conviction that the operation of ideology at the level of thoughts, desires, and emotions is important to understand as integral to an account of how theology can promote transformation. We are interested in both explicitly religiously-inflected psychological work and in work which draws out the theologico-political implications of 'secular' psychologies.

Theologically, we want to see how the major themes of Christian theology can be brought to bear on questions of liberation and equality, as well as how theology can interact with other disciplines to this end. Biblically, insights concerning the text and historical context of biblical writings, as well as ones about the reception history and contextual reading of those writings, well help to situate our questions within Christian communities understood as reading communities.

Submissions would be welcome on theology, biblical studies or psychology – as these subjects relate to liberation and equality. Alternatively, submissions dealing with the intersection of two or more of these subject areas would be particularly welcome.

'THY KINGDOM COME': DIVINE AND HUMAN ACTION IN CATHOLIC ECOTHEOLOGY RELATING TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Scrutton A.(Speaker), University of Leeds ~ Leeds ~ United Kingdom

ALL THINGS IN COMMON: RECEPTION HISTORIES OF THE ACTS OF THE EARLIEST CHRISTIANS

Crossley J.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

NON-CONTRASTIVE THEOLOGY: BIBLE, LIBERATION THEOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Hewitt S.(Speaker), University of Leeds ~ Leeds ~ United Kingdom

RATIONAL SOULS AND INTELLIGENT MACHINES: THOMISTIC PERSPECTIVES ON HUMAN DIGNITY IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Clemens Cavallin
Chair: Oskari Juurikkala

The Thomistic tradition is currently experiencing a revival within philosophy and theology. However, recent developments within artificial intelligence raise questions about the nature of cognition, abstract thought, artifacts, the soul, and the notion of imago Dei that seem to challenge Thomistic conceptions and favor materialist stances.
For example, assuming that AI agents will eventually outperform human beings in most areas, would it still be intellectually viable to hold that artificial intelligence is merely a simulacrum of intelligence and that artificial agents lack true insight and understanding? Can the Thomistic view that abstract thought requires an immaterial medium (a rational soul) be sustained? Is the Aristotelian-Thomistic dichotomy between “natural substances” and “artifacts” able to account for the nature of potentially superintelligent AI-agents? How is the relationship between AI-agents and their human creators to be conceived, and to what extent will the AI-revolution force us to reconceive what it means to be created in the image of God?
These questions concern human uniqueness and have social consequences regarding agency, autonomy, and the future of work. Human dignity and equality need to be reestablished in relation to a social life that includes increasingly competent simulations of human rationality and creativity. The panel is dedicated to discussing whether the Thomistic tradition, broadly understood, offers valuable insights for Christian reflections on the ontological, anthropological, and social implications of AI, or whether Thomism is of limited use due to its Aristotelian background, especially as regards natural sciences and technology.

THE DIGNITY OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Cavallin C.(Speaker), NLA University College ~ Bergen ~ Norway

PHILOSOPHICAL TURING-TESTS AND THE IMMATERIALITY OF THE SOUL: WILL THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENERAL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE UNDERMINE THOMISTIC ANTHROPOLOGY?

Wahlberg M.(Speaker), Umeå University ~ Umeå ~ Sweden

HUMAN PERSONS, LLMS, AND THE NATURE OF MENTAL REPRESENTATION

Wahlberg Å.(Speaker), Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule Sankt Georgen ~ Frankfurt am Main ~ Germany

INTELLECT AND WILL IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: AN AUGUSTINIAN READING OF AQUINAS

Ek A.(Speaker), Uppsala university ~ Uppsala ~ Sweden

ARTIFICIAL CREATIVITY AND HUMAN DIGNITY: THOMISTIC REFLECTIONS ON AI MUSIC AND CULTURAL PRODUCTION

Strappati G.(Speaker), Instituto Superior de Musica Jose Hernandez de Buenos Aires ~ Lecturer of Course on Performing Arts Economics in International Relations at the Faculty of Economics G. Fua ~ Festival Pensiero Plurale

(IN)EQUALITY IN DOROTHEE SÖLLE'S THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A102

Contact: Julius Trugenberger
Chair: Konstantin Sacher

Dorothee Sölle was one of the most influential voices in 20th-century liberation theology. Known for her radical political theology, she fought for a world free from economic and military oppression. Her writings continue to inspire Christians around the globe to challenge structures of injustice and to envision a life rooted in solidarity, hope, and care for the victims of capitalist markets.

Sölle herself, however, came from a privileged European background and never denied how deeply she was shaped by the liberal and bourgeois education of her childhood. Her theological work is full of references to classic authorities of modern German theology and philosophy. Not least because of this, her texts convey a strong sense of normativity based on a fixed value system that might today introduce new forms of inequality. For instance, one may ask whether Sölle's appeal to emancipatory ideals creates new boundaries—between higher and lower educated milieus, or between more idealistic and progressive versus more materialistic and conformist ways of life.

The title of our panel points to this potential tension. How can traditional ("old-European") patterns of normativity coexist intellectually with a theology for marginalized communities—both in Sölle's work and more broadly? Is Sölle the right theologian today to integrate perspectives from groups who are not used to academic reflection into theology? Where do problematic biases appear in her theology? And how tolerant is her thought?

We invite contributions that engage with, but are not limited to, the following themes:

• The theological foundations of equality in Sölle's work
• Open and hidden patterns of inequality in her thought
• Sölle's critique of capitalism, patriarchy, and authoritarianism—its scope and authenticity
• Theory and practice of Political Theology (opportunities, ambiguities, and challenges today)
• Contemporary relevance of Sölle's feminist and liberation theology

IT IS THE OTHERS THAT DO THE WORK - DOROTHEE SÖLLE'S CRITICISM OF CAPITALISM IN THE LIGHT OF HELMUT SCHELSKYS SOCIOLOGY OF INTELLECTUALS

Trugenberger J.(Speaker), University of Cologne ~ Cologne ~ Germany

CRITICISM OF POWER AND POWER OF CRITIQUE IN DOROTHEE SÖLLE

Opalka K.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

On Earth as it is in Heaven: Dorothee Sölle and Theological Praxes of Justice

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BEYOND INNOCENCE: THEOLOGY, VULNERANCE, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Judith Gruber
Chair: Ryszard Bobrowicz

Contributing to the conference theme “Religion and In/Equality,” this panel examines theology’s entanglement with structures of domination and inequality. Across diverse contexts, Christian theological imaginaries have too often claimed innocence in the face of harm by conceiving themselves as sources of salvation, reconciliation, or moral guidance while remaining implicated in practices of exclusion, violence, and hierarchical power. The panel takes as its starting point the recognition that theology is never innocent: it participates in shaping the conditions under which inequality is justified, sustained, and sometimes resisted.

Focusing on soteriological and ecclesial frameworks, the panel explores how doctrines of salvation, pastoral care, and ecclesial life both reflect and reproduce asymmetrical relations of power, even as the (cl)aim to be transformative. The concept of vulnerance - the active capacity to harm - serves as a central analytical lens through which to interrogate these theological dynamics. By confronting the vulnerance of theology itself, the panel seeks to uncover how Christian discourses of redemption and care can perpetuate inequality and how they might be reimagined in ways attentive to accountability and justice.

Drawing on insights from feminist, queer, political, and postcolonial theologies, the panel situates its critique within wider efforts to expose the complicity of Christian thought in sustaining systemic inequality, while seeking resources within the tradition for a more accountable and liberative theological practice. Together, the contributions uncover the manifold ways theology itself participates in inequality conceptually, institutionally, and pastorally, while opening spaces for critical and constructive reorientation. Moving beyond innocence requires acknowledging theology’s vulnerance and cultivating practices of thought and care grounded in equality, justice, and interconnectedness.

THE VULNERANCE OF INNOCENCE: A POLITICAL THEOLOGY OF COLONIAL DURESS

Gruber J.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

QUEER TABLES

Méndez--Montoya Á.(Speaker), Universidad Iberoamericana ~ Mexico City ~ Mexico

MIGRANT POLITICAL SPIRITUALITY, VULNERANCE, AND THE GENEALOGY OF ETHICS: RETHINKING THEOLOGICAL INNOCENCE THROUGH MIGRANT SUBJECTIVITIES

Villas Boas A.(Speaker), Universidade Católica Portuguesa ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

HERRSCHAFTSLEGITIMATION AND PHANTOMBESITZ: TOWARD A POSTCOLONIAL PRACTICAL-THEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF INEQUALITY IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AND GENDER RELATIONS

Schurink A.(Speaker), University of Salzburg ~ Salzburg ~ Austria

JESUS FATIGUE: INCLUSIVITY AND THE LIMITS OF DECONSTRUCTION

Van Den Berg M.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

QUEERING THEOLOGY. TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPEKTIVEN UND PRAXIS QUEERENDER THEOLOGIEN (TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES OF QUEERING THEOLOGIES)

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A209

Contact: Charlotte Jacobs
Chair: Sonja Thomaier
authorAMC: Joerg Rieger, Charlotte Jacobs, Sonja Thomaier
Speaker: JJ Warren, Tris Genoske, Luke Larner

This Author Meets Critique (AMC) session introduces the anthology Queering Theology, edited by Charlotte Jacobs, Sonja Thomaier, and Jörg Rieger. The volume advances a distinctive approach to queer theological work by centering the concept of queering. “Queer” is understood here not only as an identity but also as a critical practice: queering. From this starting point, queer theology draws not only on queer theory but also on liberation theology and materialist social analysis in order to address the matters of (in)equalities and (in)justice. Queering theology thus becomes a practice of challenging and overcoming the perceived non-alternativeness of dominant ways of thinking, working, and living. It is not an end in itself, but a collective endeavour aimed at enabling a better life for all. In this perspective, queer and materialist approaches are inherently intertwined, and transformative queer theologies integrate them from the outset. The contributions in this volume follow these trajectories while also breaking new ground. By deepening queer theology’s liberationist commitments, the anthology reclaims queer theology as a mode of interrogating structures of power and imagining collective alternatives. It raises essential next questions for the field: How can queer theologies maintain their resistive edge? How can they unfold their transformative potential? And how might they become theologies of liberation for the 99%?
In this panel, respondents J.J. Warren, Tris Genoske and Luke Larner – each well-versed in the field – offer critical and constructive responses to the volume. Their perspectives will open into a broader conversation with the editors and the audience, creating an opportunity for scholars to engage with the book’s contributions to international queer theological discourse and to reflect on its relevance for reshaping theological practice today.

QUEERING THEOLOGY. TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPEKTIVEN UND PRAXIS QUEERENDER THEOLOGIEN (TRANSFORMATIVE PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES OF QUEERING THEOLOGIES)

Rieger J.(authorAMC), Jacobs C.(authorAMC), Thomaier S.(authorAMC), University of Jena ~ Jena ~ Germany

RELIGION AND GLOBAL SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE 21ST CENTURY: A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Benedetto Matricini
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl

This panel explores how contemporary Catholic thought and practice engage with challenges of global social justice in the twenty-first century. Drawing on sociological research, Catholic social ethics, and interreligious dialogue, the panel examines how Catholic actors interpret and operationalize commitments to human dignity, solidarity, peace, and the common good in contexts marked by migration, inequality, conflict, and cultural pluralism. By bringing together academic analysis and ecclesial experience, the panel offers a nuanced Catholic perspective on global social justice that is both theologically grounded and empirically informed.

SAMUELE SANGALLI: CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING AND THE GLOBAL HORIZON OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

Sangalli S.(Speaker), Dicastery for Evangelization of the Holy See ~ Vatican City ~ Vatican City State (Holy See)

ANNA ALESSANDRA CIURLO: MIGRATION, GENDER, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN GLOBAL CATHOLICISM

Ciurlo A.A.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Rome ~ Italy

AMBROGIO BONGIOVANNI: INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AS A PATH TO PEACE AND JUSTICE

Bongiovanni A.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Rome ~ Italy

(NOT) TOTAL DEPRAVITY: REDEFINING REFORMED ANTHROPOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A101

Contact: Pieter Rouwendal
Chair: Pieter Rouwendal

The Reformed view of human nature is often summarized as “total depravity.” This is the T in the acronym TULIP, which is often presented as a concise representation of Reformed doctrine. However, TULIP was not used as such until the 20th century. Is it a correct summary of classical Reformed doctrine, or a later (mis)interpretation of it? This panel examines what the classical Reformed view of humanity was, what its sources were, how it relates to the view of humanity held by other Christian denominations, how it has developed, and what its consequences are for, for example, preaching, pastoral care, psychology, and education. It focuses on redefining Reformed anthropology for the present day, in relation to classical Reformed and Christian sources.

MEDIEVAL BACKGROUNDS OF (POST) TRIDENTINE ROMAN CATHOLIC AND REFORMED ANTHROPOLOGY

Goris H.(Speaker), Tilburg University, Tilburg School of Catholic Theology ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

450 YEARS UNABLE TO DO ANY GOOD: EXPOSITIONS OF HEIDELBERG CATECHISM QUESTION 8, 1563-2013

Rouwendal P.(Speaker), Theological University Apeldoorn ~ Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

REFORMED ANTHROPOLOGY AND PUBLIC THEOLOGY.

Den Hertog N.(Speaker), Theological University Apeldoorn ~ Apeldoorn ~ Netherlands

TOWARDS A CRITICAL RE-EDITION OF CALVIN'S CORRESPONDENCE: THE "EPISTOLAE JOHN CALVIN" PROJECT AND BEYOND

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A206b

Contact: Gianmarco Braghi
Chair: Gianmarco Braghi

This panel introduces “Epistolae John Calvin”, an international project launched by the Stichting Calvin’s Reforming Correspondence (calvin-digital.nl) – in collaboration with with the Theologische Universiteit Utrecht, FSCIRE, the Huygens Instituut (KNAW), and Éditions Droz (Geneva) – to deliver a new critical edition of the surviving letters of John Calvin (1509-1564). Approximately 3,200 letters to and from Calvin are extant, in Latin and in French. The project’s core aim is to publish, annotate, and historically embed this corpus in hybrid form: as a sequence of printed volumes in the Ioannis Calvini Opera Omnia denuo recognita (Droz) – resuming and extending the editorial work that advanced with the publications by Cornelis Augustijn and Frans van Stam – as well as a digital environment designed to support further research. By revisiting the correspondence with contemporary critical standards and by integrating sources and findings that have emerged since the foundational nineteenth-century editorial enterprises (notably the Corpus Reformatorum), “Epistolae John Calvin” treats the reformer’s epistolary as a dense documentary interface shedding light on pastoral practice, political theology, ecclesiastical conflict, and transregional information flows (from Geneva to France, the Swiss Confederation, and beyond). This panel invites contributions from Calvin scholars, Reformation historians, and historians of sixteenth-century Christianity engaging with epistles as sources for social and intellectual history, and the role of communication networks in the learned “republic of letters” in the sixteenth century. It will also welcome digital humanities papers, tackling specific topics such as editorial challenges (variants, attribution, transmission), the methodological questions raised by hybrid editions, and the opportunities and risks of moving from monumental print editions to hybrid and data-rich critical infrastructures.

MARKERS OF THE EVOLUTION OF CALVIN'S ECCLESIOLOGY IN HIS STRASBOURG PERIOD (1538-1541)

Baretti M.(Speaker), DREST | FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE ROLE OF EPISTOLARY NETWORKS IN THE FIRST YEARS OF THE SPREAD OF THE GENEVAN REFORMATION IN FRANCE (C.1555-C.1562)

Braghi G.(Speaker), University of Palermo | FSCIRE ~ Palermo ~ Italy

MAPPING A REFORMED ‘REPUBLIC OF LETTERS’: CALVIN’S INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE

Klok J.(Speaker), Theological University Utrecht ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

IMPROVISED READING: BIBLICAL EXEGESIS AND PASTORAL PRACTICE IN CALVIN’S LETTERS

Woo K.(Speaker), Pittsburgh Theological Seminary ~ Pittsburgh ~ United States of America

HEALING THE BODY, SAVING THE SOUL: MEDICINE, RELIGION, AND PRACTICES OF CARE BETWEEN SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND SPIRITUAL BELIEF PANEL DESCRIPTION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A103

Contact: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO
Chair: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO

This panel aims to explore the multifaceted intersections between the history of medicine and religion, highlighting how, across different periods and cultural contexts, the care of the body has been inextricably linked to the salvation of the soul. Far from constituting separate domains, medicine and religion have shared languages, practices, and interpretative models, jointly contributing to the construction of a holistic vision of the human being.

Contributions may examine the role of religious institutions in the transmission of medical knowledge, the therapeutic function of ritual and prayer, the sacralization of illness and healing, as well as the figures of healing saints and saintly physicians. Particular attention will be devoted to processes of legitimizing medical knowledge, the boundaries between empirical practice and miracle, and the symbolic and performative dimensions of healing practices.

The panel welcomes interdisciplinary approaches—historical, medical-historical, religious-historical, iconographic, and anthropological—and seeks to offer a nuanced reflection on the ways in which medicine and religion have cooperated—and at times conflicted—in responding to the human need for health, meaning, and redemption.

THE MATERIALITY OF HEALING: COSMAS AND DAMIAN AND THE VISUAL CULTURE OF MEDICAL PRACTICE

Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), UNIVERSITà DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA/ISACCL BUCAREST ~ REGGIO EMILIA ~ Italy

THE IDEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE IN THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Burzanovic D.(Speaker), Autonomous University of Barcelona ~ Barcelona ~ Spain

FROM CURE TO OBLATION: HEALING, CARE, AND SELF-DONATION IN LATE ANTIQUE EGYPT

Lee G.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

BETWEEN MEDICINE AND PRAYER: THE HEALING OF BODY AND SOUL IN NEMESIUS OF EMESA AND GREGORY OF NAREK

Apresyan A.(Speaker), Matenadaran-Mesrop Mashtots Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts ~ Yerevan ~ Armenia

CHRISTAN WORSHIP – A UNIVERSAL PHENOMENON WITH LOCAL MANIFESTATIONS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A204

Contact: Knut Alfsvåg
Chair: Terese Bue Kessel

It is an essential aspect of the Christian church that believers meet to worship. In this panel, we will investigate different aspects of Christian worship both as a universal phenomenon and as a phenomenon with local manifestations.

1) Christian worship understands God as really present in the midst of the worshippers. One of the papers investigate the understanding of what is here called liturgical realism in the context on contemporary systematic theology.

2) The understanding of the Eucharist defines the understanding of worship but has also created a lot of controversy. Two distinct voices in this context are Martin Luther and Jean Luc Marion. This paper investigates the theology of the Eucharist in Luther and Marion, aiming at finding common elements with ecumenical potential.

3) The sacrament of confession is also an important aspect of the liturgy. Originally a Roman-Catholic practice, variations of it has been adopted in traditions as different as Orthodoxy and Pietist Lutheranism. This papers investigates confessional practices in these three traditions, looking for similarities and differences.

4) Some African churches are growing very rapidly. One way of handling the scarcity of clergy this creates is volunteer ministry, and one of the contributions investigate how this is done within the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus.

5) The Women's World Day of Prayer (WDP) is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women. One of the papers investigate how liturgical material from the International Committee organizing WDP is adapted in a particular context.

6) Environmental advocacy may take liturgical practices into new areas. One paper investigates this phenomenon, arguing that it should not be understood as the instrumentalization of liturgy for political ends, but as a mode of action that renegotiates the boundaries between worship, witness, and ecological responsibility.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST AS A WORLD VIEW

Alfsvåg K.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

LITURGICAL REALISM

Skoglund N.(Speaker), Church of Norway ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

LITURGICAL AND THEOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION IN CATHOLICISM, ORTHODOXY, AND THE CHURCH OF NORWAY

Petrov V.(Speaker), The Holy Irina Congregation - Orthodox Church ~ Klepp ~ Norway

PARTICIPATORY LITURGY: LAY AND CHILD INVOLVEMENT IN THE ETHIOPIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH MEKANE YESUS

Kessel T.B.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

THE WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER (WDP): ANALYSIS OF LITURGICAL ADAPTATIONS IN THE NORWEGIAN CONTEXT

Mestad K.M.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

LITURGY AS PROTEST: ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY AND RITUAL TRANSFORMATION

Lund A.J.(Speaker), VID Specialized University ~ Stavanger ~ Norway

THE CATHOLIC DIALOGUE SCHOOL: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE AND BACK

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Lieven Boeve
Chair: Ryan McAleer
authorAMC: Lieven Boeve
Speaker: Laurent Kružic, Geoffrey Legrand, Fáinche Ryan, Sean Whittle

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Based on the author's previous fundamental-theological work on 'a theology of interruption' and his practical experiences as head of Catholic education in Flanders (Belgium), Lieven Boeve explores how Catholic schools can reconfigure their identity in a context that is profoundly transformed by the processes of secularisation and pluralisation. After elaborating on the way in which the Catholic dialogue school project has taken concrete shape in Flanders, Boeve explains the theological, social, empirical and ecclesial background of the project. He also provides examples of mission texts, a variety of good practices, empirical data, and a strategy to implement an integral and coherent identity policy at school. He concludes the book by formulating a number of challenges, as well as some advice for the future of Catholic education in Europe. So doing, he argues that the project of the Catholic dialogue school offers a both contextually plausible and theological legitimate recontextualisation of the Catholic identity of schools in the current post-Christian and post-secular European context.

THE CATHOLIC DIALOGUE SCHOOL: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE AND BACK

Boeve L.(authorAMC), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

SYNODALITY AND INEQUALITIES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 18:20

Pola - Aula School of Journalism

Contact: Michele Dillon
Chair: Michele Dillon

Synodality - as ethos and practice – was a defining characteristic of Pope Francis's tenure, and the lay-centered synodal themes selected (family, youth, and synodality itself) amplified his stated commitment to a rebalancing of the church's priorities and a new openness to reflexive dialogue between doctrinal ideas and lived realities. Since ascending the papacy, Leo XIV has signaled his commitment to a synodal Church and the consistory of cardinals he convened in January 2026 reinforced this ethos as a central element of a Church that seeks to be relevant and in dialogue with a healthy secularism. In the spirit of interdisciplinarity and contextual theology outlined by Ad Theologiam Promovendam, this panel invites papers from the social sciences and theology and from within a diversity of macro and micro settings to address issues of synodality and inequality. Specifically, what new opportunities does synodality offer for the implementation of Vatican II's more egalitarian model of the Church as the People of God? And what structural and cultural challenges, whether located within the hierarchy's and/or the laity's lived practices, impede a truly synodal Church at this current moment?

SYNODALITY, INEQUALITY, AND LIVED CATHOLICISM

Baigent A.(Speaker), University of Durham ~ Durham, UK ~ United Kingdom

CAN AN INCLUSIVE THEOLOGY MITIGATE SEX AND GENDER INEQUALITIES IN CATHOLICISM?

Dillon M.(Speaker), University of New Hampshire ~ Durham, NH ~ United States of America

LISTENING AND AUTHORITY: EPISTEMIC INEQUALITY IN THE PRACTICE OF CATHOLIC SYNODALITY. AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLIES OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS (2023–2024)

Oseka J.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

SYNODALITY, CO-RESPONSIBILITY, AND LIVED CATHOLICISM

Baigent A.(Speaker), Durham University ~ Durham ~ United Kingdom

COMMUNICATING INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A106

Contact: Lea Chilian
Chair: Lea Chilian

This panel explores how inductive theology reshapes the ways theology is taught, developed, and communicated across academic, ecclesial, and societal contexts.
Inductive theology has emerged as an approach within systematic theology, emphasizing knowledge that arises from engagement with empirical material, lived experience, and concrete practices. Inductive theology thus explores theologies "from below," bringing them into dialogue with academic theories. By taking concrete experiences, practices, and contexts as starting points, inductive approaches also offer resources for identifying, critically engaging, and potentially transforming social, epistemic, and religious inequalities that shape theological knowledge production and communication.
This shift has implications not only for theological research but also for how theology is taught, developed, and communicated across contexts. Organized by the International Network of Inductive Theologies (InIT), this panel invites papers addressing one of the following areas:
(1) Teaching inductive theology – exploring how students can integrate theologies from empirical material, lived experience, and concrete practices in systematic theological reasoning.
(2) Communicating inductive theology in society – discussing the relevance of inductively generated theological insights for public discourse and societal contexts, for example in applied ethics, healthcare, or ecological debates.
(3) Communicating between academia and church – reflecting on how academic inductive theological approaches may contribute to church context, and in particularly how the inductive approaches, starting from shared practices and experiences, can open new spaces for ecumenical dialogue across denominational traditions.
(4) Communicating across academic disciplines – asking how inductive theology can engage in dialogue with other academic disciplines.

COMMUNICATING CONTEXTUAL THEOLOGY OF DIACONIA: BETWEEN ACADEMIC THEOLOGY AND THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS IN THE FIELD

Arndt M.(Speaker), Heidelberg University ~ Heidelberg ~ Germany

TEACHING INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Graff--Kallevåg K.(Speaker), MF Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society ~ Oslo ~ Norway

AN INDUCTIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING DIGITAL THEOLOGY

Robinson M.R.(Speaker), Leuphana University ~ Lüneburg ~ Germany

THEOLOGY FROM THE MARGINS: HIP HOP AND THE HORIZONS OF INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

ENSLAVED WOMEN, CHARITY, AND RELIGIOUS CONVERSION: GENDERED INEQUALITIES IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A105

Contact: Joseph Jackson-Eade
Chair: Giovanni Tarantino

This panel examines how charitable and religious institutions shaped, exploited, and mediated the lives of enslaved women across the early modern Catholic Mediterranean. Mobilizing case studies from Florence, Livorno, and Lisbon, the papers argue that charitable institutions were ambivalent spaces, aimed to cater for the salvation of enslaved women while also reinforcing and reproducing gendered, racialised, and religious inequalities.

In sixteenth-century Florence, the Ospedale degli Innocenti relied on the reproductive and domestic labour of enslaved wetnurses while simultaneously receiving and baptising their abandoned children, revealing the racialised and religious logics that shaped the exploitation of enslaved women and the future of their offspring within Catholic institutions.

In the same years, in Lisbon, the experiences of Maghrebi washerwomen sentenced by the Inquisition to serve in the Royal Hospital highlight the convergence of punitive and charitable structures. Their skilled yet stigmatised labour made them indispensable to the daily functioning of the hospital, while their coerced service was framed as a moral rehabilitation into Catholic society.

The third paper explores the forced artisanal labour of enslaved Muslim women in Livorno who crafted components of their baptismal garments. The ceremony of baptism, materially staged by a charitable institution, relied both on the symbolic purity of Christian ritual and the economic utility of enslaved women's craftsmanship.

Together, the papers illuminate how charitable institutions managed poverty and welfare while controlling the bodies and labour of enslaved women, whose presence destabilised notions of domestic order and civic responsibility. They demonstrate that charitable practices and related religious rituals were entangled with quotidian labour regimes and the management of enslaved women's bodies, through processes that naturalised, prolonged, and legitimised gendered inequality.

MOTHERS AND BABIES: ENSLAVED WOMEN AND THEIR ABANDONED CHILDREN AT THE OSPEDALE DEGLI INNOCENTI IN FLORENCE

Ovadia E.(Speaker), ERC-advg FemSMed, Tel Aviv University ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

‘WASHING THEIR DIRTY LINEN IN PUBLIC?’: WASHERWOMEN AND CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS IN SIXTEENTH-CENTURY LISBON

Jackson--Eade J.(Speaker), ERC-advg FemSMed, Tel Aviv University ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

THE CHARITABLE FASHIONING OF SALVATION: THE BAPTISMAL DRESS OF ENSLAVED WOMEN IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY LIVORNO

Molina L.(Speaker), ERC-advg FemSMed, Tel Aviv University ~ Tel Aviv ~ Israel

EQUALIZED? REPRESSION, NORMALIZATION, AND RELIGIOUS INEQUALITIES IN THE SOVIET UNION

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Viktoriia Serhiienko
Chair: Francesco Zavatti

With the overarching goal of understanding how the state repression of civil society and the establishment of inequalities become normalized, this panel brings together two papers that examine how the Soviet Union produced, normalized, and managed religious inequalities. Drawing on Soviet history and Vatican history, the panel analyzes how communist regimes constructed hierarchical religious orders by selectively repressing, tolerating, co-opting, or exploiting religious communities according to political goals. Focusing on the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, its repression, and its long-term marginalization in both political and epistemic terms, the contributions investigate the shifting combinations of repression, control, infiltration, and instrumentalization of religious life. Particular attention is given to the processes through which repression was not only imposed but also normalized and justified through bureaucratic classification, legal regulation, surveillance practices, diplomatic negotiations, and scholarly representation. By situating the repression and normalization of religious life in the Soviet Union within broader East–West dynamics, the panel highlights the role of international actors, including the Vatican, and of diplomacy and soft diplomacy in shaping both the practice and the interpretation of religious repression. In doing so, it illuminates how national politics and international relations interacted to produce enduring forms of structural inequality around established religions. Ultimately, the panel seeks to establish a cross-disciplinary conversation on how inequalities are produced, stabilized, and contested at the intersection of religion, power, and knowledge in modern Europe.

UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE VATICAN'S POLICY TOWARD EASTERN EUROPE: PAST AND PRESENT INEQUALITIES

Serhiienko V.(Speaker), German Historical Institute Warsaw ~ Warsaw ~ Poland

FACETS OF THE SELF IN EARLY MODERN CHINA: ESCAPE FROM AUTHORITARIAN AND MORALISTIC PREDICAMENTS

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Pola - A210

Contact: Roccolorenzo Scianguetta
Chair: Roccolorenzo Scianguetta
authorAMC: Paolo Santangelo
Speaker: Maurizio Paolillo, Riccardo Pozzo

This Author Meets Critique panel engages with Paolo Santangelo's Facets of the Self in Early Modern China: Escape from Authoritarian and Moralistic Predicaments (Cambria Press, Amherst–New York, 2025). The book examines how Confucian moral discourse, religious thought, and political authority interacted in shaping — and contesting — moral hierarchies, social inequalities, and individual subordination from the late Ming to the early Qing.

Challenging the view of Confucianism as an exclusively communitarian and hierarchical tradition, Santangelo reconstructs a vibrant intellectual landscape in which thinkers reassessed key oppositions such as collective interest (gong 公) and private interest (si 私), governance by virtue (dezhi 德治) and governance by law (fazhi 法治), ritual conformity and moral conscience. Central to this reconfiguration is the rehabilitation of emotions (qing 情) and desires (yu 欲), traditionally distrusted, as morally meaningful forces capable of grounding a more autonomous yet socially embedded self.By foregrounding figures such as Li Zhi, Wang Yangming, Dai Zhen, Yuan Mei, and Huang Zongxi, the book shows how critiques of Confucian orthodoxy and moralistic paternalism exposed the use of religious-ethical norms to legitimize inequality and authoritarian control, while also providing resources for dignity, moral equality, and resistance. Religion thus emerges as an ambivalent force, simultaneously reinforcing and challenging unequal moral and political orders.

The panel aims to explores how Confucian ethical frameworks contributed to debates on (in)equality, authority, and moral governance, and how these debates resonate with contemporary discussions on religion's role in sustaining or contesting social and political inequalities.

With Paolo Santangelo present as author, the discussion will be led by Riccardo Pozzo (Università di Roma 2, Tor Vergata) and Maurizio Paolillo (Università di Napoli, L'Orientale).

FACETS OF THE SELF IN EARLY MODERN CHINA: ESCAPE FROM AUTHORITARIAN AND MORALISTIC PREDICAMENTS

Santangelo P.(authorAMC), Università di Roma, La Sapienza ~ Rome ~ Italy

DEBATING JESUS AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY: SEVENTEENTH- AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CRITICAL CURRENTS AND THEIR AFTERLIVES

Thursday 02 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Miriam Benfatto
Chair: Miriam Benfatto

This panel invites papers examining how Jesus and the origins of Christianity were conceptualized within Deism, the Enlightenment, and related seventeenth- and eighteenth-century intellectual currents, as well as the reactions and forms of reception these interpretations provoked. From early deist attempts to reconstruct Christianity as a religion of reason and natural morality to Enlightenment portrayals of Jesus as philosopher, reformer, or moral exemplar, the period witnessed a profound rethinking of both his figure and the early Christian tradition. The panel also welcomes contributions addressing the role of early modern skepticism and the Radical Enlightenment, whose more disruptive critiques challenged traditional views of revelation, miracles, scriptural authority, and the historical Jesus.

The panel seeks to map the circulation and typology of writings that addressed Jesus and early Christianity within these movements, as well as the written and institutional responses they provoked from Catholic authorities, such as condemnations by the Index of Forbidden Books or interventions of the Holy Office. By tracing both the intellectual transformation and the historical reception of these interpretations, the panel explores how early modern thought negotiated the boundaries between faith and reason, belief and critique, history and myth, thereby shaping modern understandings of religion in the age of reason. The panel also aims to investigate the modes of reception and the various forms of reaction these themes elicited over time, how they were received within subsequent historiography, when key shifts occurred, and what motivations underpinned them, as well as the different ways in which such writings or topics were contested, appropriated, or reframed.

HOBBESIAN CHRISTOLOGY: FROM LAWGIVER OF PEOPLES TO SHEPHERD OF SOULS

Schino A.(Speaker), Elukin J.(Speaker), University of Rome, La Sapienza ~ Rome ~ Italy

GENEALOGIES OF RELIGIOUS CRITIQUE: FROM ANTIQUITY TO ENLIGHTENMENT CHALLENGES TO JESUS

Elukin J.(Speaker), Trinity College ~ Hartford ~ United States of America

THEOLOGY ‘WITH’ AND NOT ‘ABOUT’: BRINGING INTERDISCIPLINARY WORK BETWEEN THEOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY INTO DISCUSSION OF RELIGION AND INEQUALITY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A105

Contact: Susie Triffitt
Chair: Susie Triffitt

In this panel, through a diverse range of geographical and distinct religious ethnographies, the CAT Network will explore how our interlocutors navigate religious inequalities and equalities. The CAT (Cambridge Anthropology-Theology) Network was founded in 2022 as an online space to foster global collaboration between scholars of Anthropology and Theology, who share a research interest in contemporary religion, ritual, belief, and doctrine. Since our start, we have grown to a global community including over 350 academics in over 20 countries. At the heart of CAT is the belief that Anthropology and Theology work well together and are useful conversation and methodological partners in addressing central religious debates. By engaging with thorough fieldwork on the ground we have endeavoured to do theology ‘with’ our interlocutors experiencing inequality, and not just write ‘about’ them. The papers in this panel cover a diversity of topics from religious inequalities in UK state schools, to the use of European rap to process, reconcile and constructively challenge inequality, to the use of silence in Malaysia to create equality amongst Christians, to the productivity of hope amongst the homeless in Bradford, Yorkshire. Together we will not only grapple with religious (in)equalities but also how to balance two valuable disciplines, so that neither becomes merely the handmaiden to the other.

NAVIGATING FAITH UNDER SCRUTINY: BRITISH MUSLIM TEACHERS AND RELIGIOUS INEQUALITIES IN UK STATE SCHOOLS

Bham M.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

EXILIC INEQUALITIES: RELIGION, STREET CULTURE AND EXCLUSION

Bosscher F.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

WHAT IS NOT SACRED: MISSIONARY COLLECTIONS AND THE HIERARCHIES OF VALUE

Mulat Mekonnen Y.(Speaker), University of Bonn ~ Bonn ~ Germany

PHILANTHROPY AS MORAL INFRASTRUCTURE: THE PRODUCTIVE AMBIGUITY OF PROTESTANT NGO NETWORKS IN BRAZIL

Pinto Abreu C.(Speaker), Higher School of Economics ~ St Petersburg ~ Russian Federation

HOMELESS HOPES: LISTENING TO HOPE IN SPACES OF DESPAIR

Triffitt S.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

FROM TEXT TO TRENCHES: NAVIGATING ENVIRONMENTAL PEDAGOGY IN ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A204

Contact: Oumama Emad Hamasha
Chair: Oumama Emad Hamasha, Nouhad Awwad

This open panel examines the integration of environmental learning into Islamic religious studies in response to contemporary ecological crises and the inequalities they intensify. Climate change and environmental degradation disproportionately affect communities in the Global South and marginalised populations, raising urgent questions about environmental justice, access to knowledge, and the ethical responsibilities of religious institutions. Islamic higher education and religious leadership training thus emerge as influential yet under-examined sites for addressing environmental inequality through pedagogy, theology, and public engagement. Bringing together perspectives from theology, education, and applied religious practice, the panel explores how Islamic texts, traditions, and institutions are mobilised to cultivate environmental awareness and responsibility. It addresses the challenge of translating normative religious sources into contemporary environmental pedagogy, alongside the institutional constraints faced by universities and training program in diverse socio-political contexts. The panel features complementary studies tracing the movement from text to practice. Contributions include a case study of curriculum reform at the University of Jordan, examining efforts to integrate climate change, sustainability, and environmental ethics into Islamic higher education; analyses of climate education integration in Indonesian Islamic universities through faculty development; a study of imam training in Jordan focusing on jurisprudential frameworks and institutional links with the Ministry of Awqaf; and a textual analysis of modern Qurʾānic interpretation engaging concepts such as stewardship, reform, corruption, and justice. As an open panel, it invites further contributions across Islamic and comparative religious contexts, fostering critical dialogue on religion's role in confronting environmental inequality and shaping sustainable futures.

FROM ETHICAL TEXTS TO CLIMATE COMPETENCIES: INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENTAL PEDAGOGY INTO ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN

Hamasha O.E.(Speaker), Assistant Professor of Theology and Religion\Islamic Studies at the Department of Foundations of Religion, The University of Jordan, Amman, Jordan ~ Amman ~ Jordan

FROM GREEN SYMBOLISM TO JURISTIC AUTHORITY: CLIMATE RESILIENCE, ISLAMIC LAW, AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS IN JORDAN

Awwad N.(Speaker), The Ummah for Earth's Campaigner and Global Outreach Coordinator at Greenpeace MENA ~ Beirut ~ Lebanon

FROM SIGNS TO RESPONSIBILITY: ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS AND SOCIAL REFORM IN MODERN QURʾĀNIC INTERPRETATION

Moussalli S.(Speaker), Nature Conservation Center-American University of Beirut\MA Student ~ Beirut ~ Lebanon

TEACHING THE PRAISING COSMOS: ENVIRONMENTAL PEDAGOGY, WATER ETHICS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL WORSHIP IN ISLAMIC HIGHER EDUCATION

Dziedzic P.J.(Speaker), Harvard University ~ Cambridge, MA ~ United States of America

THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN ENHANCING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Hamasha O.(Speaker), The University of Jordan ~ Amman ~ Jordan

RELIGIOUS NATIONALISMS AND AUTHORITARIAN POLITICS TODAY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Philip Gorski
Chair: Genevieve Zubrzycki

Until recently, many scholars of nationalism regarded "religious nationalism" as an oxymoron. Nationalism, they argued, was a secular phenomenon. No longer. This panel examines three of the most consequential cases of contemporary religious nationalism: the United States, Israel and Russia.

THE EVOLUTION OF MAGA: FROM WHITE CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM TO WHITE CHRISTIAN

Gorski P.(Speaker), Dieckhoff A.(Speaker), Yale University ~ New Haven ~ United States of America

RELIGIOUS JEWISH NATIONALISM IN ISRAEL

Dieckhoff A.(Speaker), Sciences Po ~ Paris ~ France

PANEL TITLE: JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN (IN)EQUAL SOCIETIES - RECENT RESEARCH FINDINGS IN EUROPE AND BEYOND

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola A208

Contact: Márk Nemes
Chair: Massimo Introvigne

This session aims to disseminate recent research findings on Jehovah's Witnesses from the past decade. Early studies of this movement were mostly influenced by theological perspectives, often resulting in surface-level understandings. Before the new millennium, the Organization kept a distance from researchers, rarely allowing more than historical analysis. A noticeable shift began in the 1970s, during which researchers were permitted to investigate the "blood issue," lived apolitical experiences, everyday expressions of millenarian beliefs, and other sensitive issues. The late 1990s further expanded the accepted topics, including legal and FoRB-related topics, critical historical reviews, literary analysis, sociological and anthropological inquiries. This correlated with the gradual widening of the circle of invested scholars. Over the past two decades, the Organization's attitude shifted from mere tolerance to more active, initiative cooperation. These collaborations produced richer research materials and challenged former paradigms about Witnesses. US- and Western Europe-centric findings have been enriched by new inquiries: digital cultural output, media preferences, child-rearing, education, gender, and social empowerment; insider scholarship; literacy; and even ex-member and apostate narratives have been included in ongoing discussions on a global scale. Our panel seeks papers whose research was conducted in this progressive-cooperative environment. We seek contributions focusing on inductive research conducted in the past decade within the Witness community. The panel's focus aligns with current scholarly trends: papers that employ cross-cultural critical analysis, multidisciplinary methodologies, and enrich the scholarship by extending beyond the conventionally accepted borders of the cultural West are highly welcome.

EVALUATING RECENT FINDINGS OF THE 2022-2024 JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES RESEARCH PROJECT IN HUNGARY

Nemes M.(Speaker), CESNUR; HAA-RIATM ~ Torino; Budapest ~ Italy

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN POST-SOVIET ARMENIA

Tokmantcev A.(Speaker), Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Armenian Studies ~ Budapest ~ Hungary

STRONG IDENTITY, RELIGIOUS COPING, AND PROSOCIAL ATTITUDES OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN RESPONSE TO STRESSFUL EVENTS: FINDINGS FROM THE JW-RWA STUDY

Di Marzio R.(Speaker), The Center for Studies on Freedom of Religion, Belief and Conscience (LIREC) ~ Roma ~ Italy

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES' LIVED EXPERIENCE OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Bódi M.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

ESTABLISHING FACTS, NOT FEELINGS: CHALLENGES TO RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS IN LIGHT OF THE RECENT CASE LAW IN EUROPE

Peltonen O.M.(Speaker), EAJW ~ Frankfurt ~ Germany

THEOLOGIES AFTER: UNCOMFORTABLE QUESTIONS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - AT12

Chair: Katya Tolstoj

This panel starts from the diagnosis that dominant theological frameworks circulating within European academic and ecclesial contexts now operate in a post-imperial condition for which their inherited analytical and normative resources no longer suffice. In the aftermath of the Soviet collapse and amid renewed large-scale war in Europe, theological discourse continues to rely on categories shaped by the Cold War, moral universalism, and abstract invocations of peace. These categories fail to correspond to social realities marked by asymmetrical violence, ideological mobilization, and persistent inequalities of suffering, authority, and moral visibility. They also tend to evade the most difficult questions by stabilizing inherited vocabularies rather than exposing them to critical pressure. The panel therefore proceeds explicitly under the sign of theologies after: theology after empire, after state atheism, after the loss of peace as a self-evident ordering category, and after the presumed moral clarity of late twentieth-century paradigms.
The panel is organized around deliberately uncomfortable theological, theoretical, and methodological questions that contemporary theology and the humanities often neglect. How do religious actors operate when peace initiatives are structurally entangled with power, surveillance, and geopolitical asymmetry? How does martyrdom function once it ceases to be a closed chapter of memory and becomes an operative theological grammar ordering visibility, authority, and inequality in the present? How can theology articulate responsibility and guilt under conditions of ongoing war without collapsing into ideological mobilization or moral abstraction?

AFTER PEACE: SUFFERING, GUILT, RESPONSIBILITY, AND THE RETURN OF MARTYRDOM

Tolstoj K.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

EARLY MODERN CRITERIA FOR MARTYRDOM AND THEIR CONTEMPORARY REUSE

Van Veen M.(Speaker), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam ~ Amsterdam ~ Netherlands

FIELDWORK IN ORTHODOX RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN TIMES OF RADICALIZATION

Timofeeva Z.(Speaker), Muenster University ~ Muenster ~ Germany

WHOLES IN PARTS: CATHOLICITY AND MUSIC

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Philip McCosker
Chair: Philip McCosker

Recent explorations of catholicity (kath'holou: 'according to/towards the whole') emphasise its coordination of parts and whole, finites and infinite, particulars and universal. Whatever the 'whole' catholicity aspires to actually is, it is thought to include all creaturely particulars. As de Lubac insisted: 'nothing is excluded', or as Maritain put it 'catholicity…embraces everything that is real'. In this view of catholicity, finite particulars somehow relate to and express the whole.

Analogously, music seems to coordinate parts and whole, finite and infinite. Pieces of music point to wholes which are not reducible to the sum of their parts. Whether as absolute form or expressing meaning or emotion, music conjugates variety or difference with unity. As Stravinsky emphasised, music needs both difference and similarity: 'Contrast is an element of variety, but it divides our attention. Similarity is born of a striving for unity. The need to seek variety is perfectly legitimate, but we should not forget that the One precedes the Many. Moreover, the coexistence of the two is constantly necessary, and all the problems of art...revolve ineluctably about this question, with Parmenides on one side denying the possibility of the Many, and Heraclitus on the other denying the existence of the One.'

This coordination of endless variety and holistic unity gives music its immediacy and power, for von Balthasar. But he also thinks that the whole or unity which music expresses, or aspires to, is Godself, and this is linked to music's endless variety and asymptotic aspirations to that ultimate unity. That's why, for von Balthasar, music also has a tragic or incomplete nature: its repetitions are always pointing to more, to an ever-greater whole.

This panel seeks papers considering relations between catholicity and music. These could reflect on von Balthasar's 1925 essay 'The Development of the Musical Idea: Attempt at a Synthesis of Music', or other suitable resources.

THE DIVINE MUSICIAN: IRENAEUS ON UNITY, VARIETY, AND COSMIC ORDER IN CREATION

Andemicael A.(Speaker), Yale University ~ New Haven. CT ~ United States of America

CATHOLICITY BETWEEN MUSIC AND BIOGRAPHY: THE DEVELOPMENT OF A THEOLOGIAN

Heaney Vdmf M.L.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Brisbane ~ Australia

MUSICAL APOPHASIS

Mccosker P.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

“MEASURING” CATHOLICITY IN MUSIC: GREGORIAN CHANT’S IDIOM AS CRITERION FOR MODERN SACRED MUSIC IN LIGHT OF VATICAN II AND ANSERMET

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independ Researcher ~ Rome ~ Italy

OLIVIER MESSIAEN AND ARVO PÄRT: IDEALS OF UNIVERSAL CATHOLICISM

Sholl R.(Speaker), Royal Academy of Music and University of West London ~ London ~ United Kingdom

THEOLOGY AND MUSICAL SPACE: ARNOLD SCHOENBERG, COLIN GUNTON, AND JEREMY BEGBIE AND THE CONCEPTION OF UNITY

Stearns C.(Speaker), The Seattle School of Theology & Psychology ~ Seattle ~ United States of America

HOW INTEGRAL ECOLOGY AS A PARADIGM IS RESHAPING INDIVIDUALS' BEHAVIOURS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND SOCIETIES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Pola - A209

Contact: Andrea Sestino
Chair: Andrea Bizzozero, Andrea Sestino

The paradigm of Integral Ecology offers a comprehensive and relational perspective that may inspire the social sciences and enrich contemporary scientific debate. Rooted in a systemic understanding of life, it integrates environmental, social, economic, and spiritual dimensions, proposing an epistemology where interdependence becomes the foundation of knowledge and action. Beyond its theological origins, Integral Ecology provides conceptual tools to rethink organizations, innovation, and governance in light of ethical responsibility, mutual care, and the regeneration of human and natural systems. In an era marked by climatic, social, and epistemic crises, it offers a philosophical and methodological foundation for rethinking progress and innovation, serving as a unifying interpretive lens across business ethics, environmental philosophy, innovation management, and organizational behaviour.

Social sciences, organization and management studies increasingly recognize the need to move beyond extractive and profit-driven models toward regenerative and inclusive paradigms. Likewise, legal studies and innovation policy promote frameworks ensuring fairness, transparency, and participation in socio-technical transitions. Technological and open innovation processes are evolving from efficiency and control toward collaboration, care, and moral responsibility. Transformations driven by digitalization, artificial intelligence, and the green transition call for a reinterpretation of what it means to innovate responsibly. Integrating Integral Ecology into social and organizational sciences opens a path toward "ecological rationality", a way of thinking and acting grounded in interdependence and relational ethics.

By welcoming multidisciplinary contributions, this Panel explores how Integral Ecology may reshape individuals, organizations, and societies fostering new models of knowledge, dialogue, and practice.

ECOLOGICAL ENTREPRENEURIAL DISPLACEMENT IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Nasta L.(Speaker), 1. John Cabot University, Rome, Italy - 2. Luiss Guido Carli University, Rome, Italy ~ Rome ~ Italy

FROM VULNERABILITY TO CARE AND OPPORTUNITY. THE CASE STUDY OF OIKOS MEDITERRANEO

Zecca F.(Speaker), 1. Pontificia Università Antonianum, Rome, Italy; 2. Oikos Mediterraneo ETS Euro-mediterranean Center for Integral Ecology ~ Taranto ~ Italy

ECOLOGICAL RATIONALITY IN LAW. DEVELOPING A LEGAL FRAMEWORK INSPIRED BY LAUDATO SI'

Mounir M.(Speaker), 1. Researcher Affiliate in CERCCLE, Bordeaux University, France; 2. Affiliate Researcher in Law, DiTEIM Dept. of Human Centric Digital Transformation and Ethical innovation Management @CUIRIF ~ Paris ~ France

INTEGRAL ECOLOGY INSPIRING OPEN INNOVATION PRACTICES? TOWARD AN INTEGRATIVE FRAMEWORK

Sestino A.(Speaker), 1. Catholic University of Sacred Heart, Rome - 2. Luiss Guido Carli University, Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE EFFECTS OF DIGITALIZATION IN MENAS. IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGIC SECTORS FROM AN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND INTEGRAL ECOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

Sagona A.(Speaker), 1. Alumni Luiss Guido Carli University, Rome, Italy - 2. Adjunct Faculty, Pontifical University Antonianum, Rome, Italy ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE ROLE RELIGIOUS RULES CAN PLAY IN PROTECTING THE EVIRONMENT

Larcom S.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

INTEGRAL ECOLOGY AS A PARADIGMATIC FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY: INSIGHTS FROM A PILOT COURSE

Siaudvytiene E.(Speaker), LCC International University ~ Klaipeda ~ Lithuania

LANGUAGE, FEMININE LANGUAGE, AND POETIC LANGUAGE FROM AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE IN THE PRISM OF INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

Demneri E.(Speaker), Gaudiano V.(Speaker), Istituto Universitario Sophia ~ Florence ~ Italy

CUSANUS TOMORROW: ONGOING RECEPTIONS OF NICHOLAS OF CUSA

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Adam Smith
Chair: Adam Smith

Extensive scholarly work on Nicholas of Cusa only began in earnest with the Cusanus renaissance of the nineteenth century. Originally centered in Tubingen, this work culminated with the Heidelberg edition of Cusa's Opera omnia initiated under Raymond Klibansky's editorial guidance in 1932. This project was only completed in 1982, long after Klibansky had moved to McGill University. Along with the publication of the important work Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance in 1927 by Klibanky's colleague Ernst Cassirer, this set the frame of reference for subsequent accounts of Cusa's reception in terms of a debate on the appropriateness of applying medieval or modern categories to Cusa. While Cusa's thought is perpetually innovative in anticipating both contemporary philosophical and theological debates, this innovation is tied directly to an intensive retrieval of ancient Greek philosophy. His influence on subsequent thought is both wide-ranging and extensive—ranging across German Idealism, neo-Kantianism and French phenomenology—but this influence is not always easy to track and quantify in precise terms.

In this panel, we propose to explore the problematic of 'reception' in Cusanus' philosophy. This panel will therefore address the question of reception in Nicholas of Cusa from three interrelated angles: (i) Cusa's own reception of ancient Greek philosophy, especially Plato and Aristotle in light of his Medieval/Renaissance context; (ii) the nineteenth century retrieval of Cusa and how this has shaped the subsequent assessments and re-assessments of Cusa's thought and debates surrounding its historical location; (iii) ongoing or possible applications of Cusa's work to novel philosophical works and contexts.

Re-thinking the concept of reception both in and for Nicholas of Cusa's work will aid us in moving past impasses in the scholarship, as well as underscore the growing significance of Cusa's work.

GOD BEYOND GROUND: THE RECEPTION OF NICHOLAS OF CUSA IN HEIDEGGER AND MARION

Smith A.(Speaker), McGill University ~ Montreal ~ Canada

EXPLORING THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND ETHICS: CONSEQUENCES OF CUSA'S APPROACH TO BEING AND KNOWLEDGE FOR NATURAL LAW

De Souza A.(Speaker), McGill University ~ Montreal ~ Canada

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND COMBATTING INEQUALITY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A19

Contact: Peter Admirand
Chair: Peter Admirand

Inequalities within religious institutions and societies are often paralleled or perpetuated through interfaith dialogues where certain groups, themes, priorities, or identities are marginalised, silenced, or under-represented. Think, for example, of the still marginal role of many women at the institutional levels of interfaith dialogues; the failure to include atheists; or the lack of ethnic and class diversity in many interfaith groups. Most glaringly, many interfaith dialogues are dominated by the most liberal representatives of faith and ideological systems, often skewing its focus, representation, aims, and effectiveness. Sometimes, these issues are unaddressed or not even seen as issues. But there are also brave and creative initiatives, trailblazers, public events, and texts that demand deeper inclusivity or seek to address these inequalities. Interfaith dialogues of life initiatives may also focus on working for greater equity, fairness, and justice through societal, cultural, legal, creative, and economic actions.
In this panel, organised by Dublin City University's Centre for Interreligious Dialogue, abstracts are invited on the following interrelated topics:

• Inequalities unaddressed or maintained through interfaith dialogues, including but not limited to: racial, economic, class, gender, social, and educational identities
• Examples of interfaith dialogue initiatives and trailblazers who address societal and other types of inequalities
• Sub topics can include (but is not limited to!) the following:

a. Women and Interfaith Dialogue
b. The Working Class and Interfaith Dialogue
c. Disability and Interfaith Dialogue
d. Race and Interfaith Dialogue
e. Interfaith Dialogue and Youth
f. Interfaith Dialogue and Traditional/Evangelical/Conservative Believers
g. Interfaith Dialogue and Atheists
h. Interfaith Dialgue and Indigenous Faiths

THE SOURCE OF OUR EXPECTATIONS: THE MEANING OF "DIALOGUE"

Tonelli D.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Rome ~ Italy

(IN)EQUALITY AND THE RELATIONAL CONDITIONS OF ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE

Mekeresi M.(Speaker), Pontifical Gregorian University ~ Rome ~ Italy

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND ECHO CHAMBERS

Admirand P.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

WOMEN AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Grung A.H.(Speaker), University of Oslo ~ Oslo ~ Norway

EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS AND INTERFAITH DIALOGUE: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS

Bargár P.(Speaker), Protestant Theological Faculty, Charles University ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ACTORS OF DIALOGUE: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE PERIPHERIES OF INSTITUTIONAL DIALOGUES

Dini E.(Speaker), Pontifical Gregorian University - Université Catholique de Lyon ~ Rome ~ Italy

AFRICANA AND INDIGENOUS PARTICIPATION IN THE PARLIAMENT OF THE WORLD'S RELIGIONS

Lefebure L.(Speaker), Georgetown University ~ Washington ~ United States of America

ACCESS AND INCLUSION IN INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS FROM KENYA, NIGERIA AND SRI LANKA

Eder M.(Speaker), Centre for Society and Religion/ AGIAMONDO Germany ~ Colombo ~ Sri Lanka

INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND MINORITY BELIEVERS. STATE-SPONSORED INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AS SOFT POWER IN FAVOR OF LAICITÉ (FRANCE- QUÉBEC)

Strack F.(Speaker), University of Sherbrooke ~ Montréal ~ Canada

6. DIALOGUES OF LIFE: INTERFAITH PRACTICE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN DUBLIN

Cristea A.(Speaker), Dublin City University ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

BELIEF IN PLURALITY: DESIGNING A STUDY ON MULTIPLE RELIGIOUS BELONGING IN INTERFAITH CONTEXTS

Pulinx R.(Speaker), Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

“BE FRUITFUL AND MULTIPLY AND FILL THE EARTH AND SUBDUE IT” (GEN 1,28). HUMAN-ANIMAL-INEQUALITY AND THE CONCEPT OF RESPONSIBILITY FROM AN INTERRELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Cornelia Mügge
Chair: Julia Enxing

The human mandate to rule over the earth within the Abrahamic religions has produced ambivalent and often highly problematic outcomes. In the Jewish and Christian creation narratives, this mandate has often been interpreted as an archetypal justification for human superiority and the exploitation of nature and animals. In Islam, the concept of ḫalīfa, which positions humans as God’s representatives, can similarly give rise to tension-laden interpretations. Such selective readings of sacred texts continue to shape contemporary human–nature and human–animal relationships in ways fundamentally marked by hierarchy and inequality.

Over the past few decades, the call to “subdue” has often been reinterpreted as “taking responsibility”, implying a more respectful approach in regards to the non-human (or: more-than-human) world. However, responsibility is also an ambigue concept and its interpretation can perpetuate the inequality between humans and animals in certain respects. For instance, responsibility is frequently invoked as an argument for human superiority.

This panel, hosted by the DFG network “Related in the face of God. The Human–Animal Relationship in Interreligious Perspective“, explores the addressed ambiguity. It features contributions that revisit, question, or reimagine the notions of dominion, ḫalīfa and responsibility in light of insights from human-animal studies, recent developments in animal ethics, and the growing impact of the Anthropocene discourse.

We will discuss questions such as: Are there religious resources for a responsible relationship with non-human animals? Does framing humans as “responsible” risk reinforcing hierarchies? Is it necessary to move away from these traditions, can they be creatively reinterpreted, or is it worthwhile to revisit overlooked texts? In how far does the idea of the human being as the image of God function as a potential source for repentance or rather as a pitfall for the exploitation of our common home?

BEYOND STEWARDSHIP: VULNERABILITY AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF HUMAN–ANIMAL RESPONSIBILITY IN CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC ETHICS

El Maaroufi A.(Speaker), Universität Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

RESPONSIBILITY AS SOLIDARITY. TOWARDS AN EQUALITY-ORIENTED UNDERSTANDING OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE MULTI-SPECIES COMMUNITY

Mügge C.(Speaker), Universität Münster ~ Münster ~ Germany

NATURE, ANIMALS, AND THE ETHICS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN JEWISH THOUGHT

Attia Y.(Speaker), Universität Paderborn ~ Paderborn ~ Germany

JEWS LEARNING FROM AND WITH OTHER ANIMALS: COMMENTARIES TO PEREK SHIRA OVER THE CENTURIES

Schorsch J.(Speaker), Universität Potsdam ~ Potsdam ~ Germany

BROKEN WEBS, WANING BEES: DESTABILIZING HUMAN-CENTRISM IN KELLER AND JASAREVIĆ

Mirsadri S.(Speaker), Université de Genève ~ Genève ~ Switzerland

'AN EYE FOR AN EYE'. RETHINKING THE BIBLICAL LAW OF MERCY WITH REGARD TO ANIMALS

Ruster T.(Speaker), Universität Dortmund ~ Dortmund ~ Germany

HIKMA 2.0? ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSHUMANISM, NEUROTECHNOLOGY, AND AI IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Hureyre Kam
Chair: Hureyre Kam, Morteza Hashemi

The rapid technological transformations driven by artificial intelligence (AI), neurotechnology, and transhumanist visions of the future are profoundly reshaping our understanding of personhood, soul, responsibility, and community. These developments challenge traditional Islamic theological frameworks while simultaneously opening up new avenues for rethinking human existence in light of divine creation and ethical responsibility. This panel brings together scholars from theology, ethics, and religious education to explore how Islamic thought can respond to these paradigm shifts. The papers address the intersections between technological enhancement of human body, tech-driven social and political transformations in Muslim communities, moral agency, and Islamic theology;probing questions such as: What does it mean to be human in an age of algorithmic autonomy? How can Islamic ethics engage with technologies of self-optimization and enhancement? What are the socio-political implications of digital age for the Muslim societies? And what role does religious education play in fostering digital and moral literacy in a world increasingly shaped by machines?
By integrating systematic-theological reflection with ethical, medical, and pedagogical perspectives, the panel aims to reposition Islamic theology as a vital voice in global debates on transhumanism and the Anthropocene. It seeks to highlight the potential of Islamic responsibility ethics and educational practice as resources for navigating a technologically saturated future and for shaping ethically grounded Muslim engagements with emerging technologies in Europe and beyond.

SUPERINTELLIGENCE + MUSLIM = SUPERMUSLIM? ON BUILDING A MUSLIM POSTHUMAN VOCABULARY

Kam H.(Speaker), University of Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

TRANSHUMANIST RE-READING OF ALI SHARIATI'S POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Hashemi M.(Speaker), university of Nottingham ~ Nottingham ~ United Kingdom

TRANSHUMANIST RE-READING OF ALI SHARIATI'S POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Hashemi M.(Speaker), University of Nottingham ~ Nottingham ~ United Kingdom

ENGAGING TRANSHUMANIST DEBATES IN ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Aysel A.(Speaker), University of Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

THEOLOGY AND ATTENTION: PRACTICES, ETHICS, AND TRANSFORMATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:00

Parenzo - A1

Contact: Tabea Ott
Chair: Tabea Ott, Ann-Sophie Markert, Madlen Geidel

Our present age is characterized by a constant competition for our attention — shaped, fragmented, and directed by digital technologies, media environments, and social structures. This panel approaches the question of attention from a theological and religious studies perspectives: What constitutes attention, and to what extent can it be guided, cultivated, or controlled? Which religious practices attract or cultivate attention? How do the attention logics of algorithms reshape religious practices and experiences? What practices of attention can be identified within religious traditions — such as compassion, empathy, and (neighborly) love — and how might they offer alternative models of perceiving and responding to the world? What are the negative dimensions of attention — for example, phenomena such as attention fatigue in health care or exposure — and how do they challenge theological or ethical reflection? Finally, what role does attention play in reinforcing or challenging global inequalities?

We welcome both theoretical contributions that examine attention on an abstract or analytical level and practical studies that address it in applied settings, for instance in spiritual counseling or pastoral care. We invite papers from all theological disciplines, ethics, religious studies, and related fields that investigate the relationship between religion and attention in a broad sense.

ETHICS OF ATTENTION

Ott T.(Speaker), Unversity of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

CHRISTIAN INFLUENCERS AND ATTENTION

Geidel M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität ~ Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Germany

BODY/PHYSICALITY AND BODY KNOWLEDGE AS A LOCUS OF INDUCTIVE THEOLOGY: BETWEEN PERCEPTION AND ATTENTION (WORK IN PROGRESS)

Sallandt U.(Speaker), Carl-von-Ossietzky-Universität Oldenburg ~ Oldenburg ~ Germany

ATTENTION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Markert A.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität ~ Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Germany

ATTENTION AS THE BEGINNING OF DEVOTION: CULTIVATING AWE THROUGH EMBODIED SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Van Emmerik M.(Speaker), Pembroke College, University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

SOFT POWER AND SACRED INEQUALITY: PATRONAGE, TRANSLATION, AND THE MAKING OF MARY MAGDALENE FROM EUROPE TO CHINA

Lin E.(Speaker), Wenzao Ursuline University of Languages ~ Kaohsiung ~ Taiwan

COUNTER-FORMING THE ALGORITHM: A MYSTICAL PEDAGOGY OF ATTENTION FOR THE DIGITAL AGE

Medyarto P.A.G.(Speaker), Regis College, Toronto School of Theology ~ Toronto ~ Canada

LOSS OF ATTENTION AS A LOSS OF THE ABILITY TO NARRATE

Sixta T.(Speaker), Charles University ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

LAW, RELIGION, AND ATTENTION: PROTECTING SPIRITUAL FOCUS IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS

Özgü R.(Speaker), University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

FROM FRANCIS TO LEO XIV: AN INTERREGNUM OR A REINVENTION OF THE PAPACY?

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A101

Contact: Massimo Faggioli
Chair: Bryan Froehle

Since the nineteenth century and the rise of nationalism, the papacy has played an outsized role both within the international system and the internal workings of the Catholic Church. This was only heightened by post-colonialism as the nation states of the world entered into the world created by the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia. Before 1900, a majority of Catholic bishops were named by some combination of local authority and historic custom within their territories. Today, the vast majority of Catholic bishops are named by Rome under the authority of the Pope. In spite of the decentralizing tendencies of episcopal collegiality as it emerged in the Second Vatican Council, the papacy under Paul VI, John Paul II, and Benedict XVI became only more centralized. The Francis papacy was an effort to undermine the Roman curial bureaucracy and nonetheless was marked by a kind of personal, charismatic leadership confronting the strongmen of the post-liberal world order, especially Donald Trump. After Francis, where does this leave the papacy today? What are the lasting contributions of Francis to the self-understanding of Roman authority by Catholics, lay and leaders alike, around the world and within the Curia itself? Is the Leo papacy a return to the past and the longed-for status quo ante of so many Catholic conservatives? Or is it the consolidation of long-overdue changes stemming from the Council that had been put aside before Francis? What is the emerging role of the papacy in addressing the quasi-religious and messianic features of today's post-liberal and illiberal regimes?

EMBRACING THE CRUCIFIED CHRIST AND THE CHURCH'S ABSENT CENTER: THE SHIFT FROM BENEDICT'S CHURCH OF GLORY TO LEO'S FOCUS ON THE MARGINS

Klug F.(Speaker), University of Marburg ~ Marburg ~ Germany

DONALD TRUMP LEARNED HIS CATECHISM WELL: NORMAN VINCENT PEALE, POSITIVE THINKING, AND THE GOSPEL OF WEALTH

Massa M.(Speaker), Boston College ~ Boston ~ United States of America

SOVEREIGN ENTITY AND MICROSTATE FOREIGN POLICY: THE HOLY SEE'S TREATIES AND INTERESTS IN ASIA

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FROM A POPE OF SYNODALITY TO A SYNODAL POPE? JESUIT CHEMISTRY FOLLOWED BY AUGUSTINIAN CALCULUS

Paparella J.(Speaker), Pontifical John Paul II Theological Institute for Marriage and Family Sciences ~ Vatican City ~ Italy

FROM "FIELD HOSPITAL" TO "LEAVEN FOR A RECONCILED WORLD" : ECCLESIAL AND PAPAL THEOPOLITICAL RECONFIGURATION IN THE TRANSITION FROM FRANCIS TO LEO XIV

Bountsebe Ekassi J.E.(Speaker), KU Leuven / Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

DATASETS, WORKFLOWS, SOFTWARE AND AIS TO STUDY RELIGIONS: WHAT IS NEW AND WHAT IS AHEAD?

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Pola - A210

Contact: Francesca Cadeddu
Chair: Francesca Cadeddu

The Digital Turn in Religious Studies is a shift that is nurtured by the never ending duality that presents scholars as mere technology consumers or as actors in the production of technology that are able to face the challenge of complexity (ages, cultures, languages, type of sources, type of supports, semantics) that emerges from the scientific field.
The panel, promoted by RESILIENCE, the European research infrastructure for religious studies, is framed to be an open forum for all scholars who make use of advanced technologies in the study of religions. Local, national and international projects are welcome to present their research and development outputs and outcomes, to reflect on the role played by the research community in the current digital turn and to address one question: can the complexity of our field of study be a driver for technology developments that are applicable in other scientific and commercial domains?

UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS OF USERS, SUPPORTING THEIR UPSKILLING. CHALLENGES FOR RESILIENCE, THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE ON RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Cadeddu F.(Speaker), FSCIRE - Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

HORTUS: AN INTEGRATED AND MODERATED PLATFORM FOR THE DIGITAL TURN IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Demo R.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

INTRODUCING THE PLORABUNT DATASET

Ruozzi F.(Speaker), El Ganadi A.(Speaker), Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia/FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

SANCTUARIA: A DIGITAL ARCHIVE OF SANCTUARY FOUNDATION LEGENDS AND EX VOTOS

Papasidero M.(Speaker), University of Palermo ~ Palermo ~ Italy

SEEING MARY: MARIAN ICONOGRAPHY BETWEEN VISUAL CULTURE, RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND GAZE STUDIES

Ruozzi F.(Speaker), Papasidero M.(Speaker), Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

RE-READING PAPAL DOCUMENTS: REGESTA, DIPLOMATICS, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Righi L.(Speaker), Università degli studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia/FSCIRE ~ Bologna ~ Italy

DELINEATING PROFILES OF CULTURAL IMBALANCES BETWEEN DIGITAL HUMANITIES, LIBRARIANSHIP, ISLAMIC STUDIES AND NON-LATIN SCRIPTS: REFLECTIONS FROM THE DIGITAL MAKTABA PROJECT

Vigliermo R.A.(Speaker), Mem s.r.l. ~ Bologna ~ Italy

JUDGING A BOOK BY ITS FRONTISPIECE: AN “LLM-AS-A-JUDGE” APPROACH FOR CONSTRAINED TOPIC IDENTIFICATION

El Ganadi A.(Speaker), FSCIRE _ Fondazione per le scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

A WORKFLOW FOR DIGITIZING AND SHARING ETHIOPIC MANUSCRIPTS

Ferrandino G.(Speaker), University of Naples "L'Orientale" ~ Naples ~ Italy

IXTHEO: RESEARCH TOOL AND RESEARCH ANALYSIS

Fassnacht M.(Speaker), University Library Tuebingen / Specialised Information Services ~ Tübingen ~ Germany

ARABIC TOPIC MODELING WITH LLMS: A PROMPTING-BASED APPROACH

Aftar S.(Speaker), Vigliermo R.A.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

ECUMENICAL FILOCALIA FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: WHAT TO SAVE WHEN THE WORLD ENDS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A102

Contact: Luca Ferracci
Chair: Luca Ferracci

This open panel invites papers on a concrete, ecumenically charged question: which works—texts, corpora, and "schools" of Christian thought and practice—should be preserved and transmitted to future generations of ecumenists, and by what criteria? The title invokes an end-of-the-world horizon in order to make a present difficulty harder to evade: the transmission of ecumenical theological knowledge is under strain, and the places and habits that once sustained it can no longer be taken for granted. Under threats of destruction, churches often struggle to speak and act together.

Part of the difficulty is institutional. Academic theology faces shrinking infrastructures, changing student publics, contested authority, and fragmented formation. At the same time, theology is increasingly displaced into a widened ecosystem—private educational institutes, think tanks, ecclesial initiatives, media platforms, and influencer-driven publics—often with different incentives and measures of credibility. In this setting, ecumenism is especially vulnerable: in many contexts, the generation now assuming leadership is less instinctively committed to ecumenism, less trained to read across confessions, and less formed by the "slow" virtues of dialogue.

This panel asks what it would mean to assemble an Ecumenical Filocalia for the twenty-first century: not a nostalgic canon, and not a default "Western classics" syllabus, but a deliberately ecumenical selection—Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Pentecostal and charismatic—with a global horizon beyond Europe and North America. We welcome proposals on cross-confessional classics with real reception; key texts and debates in modern ecumenical theology; authors and corpora from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and diasporas; documentary, historiographical, and biographical works shaping ecumenical memory; and monastic and ascetical literature (ancient and modern) as part of the ecumenical archive.

HISTORIES AND HISTORIOGRAPHIES OF THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Ferracci L.(Speaker), Fscire ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE AGE TO COME AS CALL AND JUDGMENT: THE ESCHATOLOGICAL OUTLOOK OF METR. JOHN ZIZIOULAS AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR THE FUTURE OF ECUMENISM

Asproulis N.(Speaker), Volos Academy for Theological Studies ~ Volos ~ Greece

CHRISTOS YANNARAS: THE LIMITS OF AN ETHNOCENTRIC RECEPTION OF THE WEST

Keramidas D.(Speaker), Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas - Angelicum ~ Rome ~ Italy

TOWARD AN ECUMENICAL FILOCALIA FOR THE ANTHROPOCENE: REIMAGINING CHRISTIAN INTERIORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY BEYOND CONFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

Surowiec P.R.(Speaker), The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin ~ Lublin ~ Poland

PREPARING FOR THE END OF THE WORLD: ECUMENICAL DISCOURSE IN 1930S FRANCE

Brown S.(Speaker), Assosiate member, Institut romand de systématique et d'éthique ~ Geneva ~ Switzerland

UNITY AND DIFFERENTIATION. INQUIRING NON-DUALISM AS INTERDISCIPLINARY PARADIGM

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A2

Contact: Gabriele Giampieri
Chair: Gabriele Giampieri

The panel aims to investigate non-dualism as a cross-cutting paradigm between physics and metaphysics capable of fostering fruitful dialogue across disciplines and religions that are often perceived as distant. By rejecting ontological separations such as subject versus object or consciousness versus matter, non-dualism opens an immanent field of potentiality understood as a continuous process of self-manifestation. Phenomenal reality is not conceived as something external to this field but as its expression or modality, a dynamic play of internal self-differentiation unfolding through ongoing processes of contraction, folding, or topological inversion.

A first goal of the panel is to examine the presence of non-dual intuitions within metaphysical traditions that are usually considered far apart, and to open a dialogue among frameworks that view reality as a unitary process from which multiplicity emerges through immanent differentiation. Examples may range across religious traditions, highlighting how non-dual intuitions ground practices of comparison and interreligious dialogue, question hierarchical models of reality, and contribute to ethical and social frameworks aimed at reducing symbolic, epistemic, and social inequalities.

A second aim is to explore how these metaphysical systems may offer fruitful interpretive models for contemporary sciences. The panel encourages contributions that identify robust resonances with quantum mechanics, morphogenesis and autopoiesis, enactive approaches to cognition, theories of self-consciousness, semiotics, set theory, mereology, sound engineering, or biochemistry. Researchers working in religious, philosophical, linguistic, and scientific fields are invited to propose avenues of dialogue showing how a non-dual perspective can provide an interdisciplinary epistemological ground, a unified lens capable of illuminating complex phenomena by allowing multiplicity to be understood through unity.

DĀRĀ SHIKŌH AND THE USE OF NON-DUALISM IN RELIGIOUS COMPARISON

Colagrossi E.(Speaker), University of Genoa ~ Genoa ~ Italy

INTUITION, IMAGINATION, AND THE (IR)FIGURABILITY OF UNITY: MAIMONIDES BETWEEN PHYSICS, LANGUAGE, AND METAPHYSICS

Dal Bo F.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

THE VIRTUE OF DISCIPLINE. OPPENHEIMER AND THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ IN THE 1932 LETTER

Fanelli F.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Roma ~ Italy

FROM UNITY TO DIFFERENTIATION: BHARTṚHARI ON LANGUAGE AND REALITY

Ferrante M.(Speaker), Austrian Academy of Sciences ~ Wien ~ Austria

UNFOLDING MANIFESTATION: NON-DUALIST ARCHITECTURES FOR AN EPISTEMIC MEETING GROUND

Giampieri G.(Speaker), University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

QUANTUM PHYSICS AND THE STUDY OF RELIGION: EPISTEMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES FROM THE QUANTUM TURN

Giorda M.C.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Roma ~ Italy

THE LOST DUALITY IN THE TRANSITION FROM THE MICROSCOPIC TO THE MACROSCOPIC

Dell''Anna R.(Speaker), Bruno Kessler Foundation ~ Trento ~ Italy

THE LOST DUALITY FROM THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE COLLECTIVE. A CASE STUDY IN THE RELIGIOUS DOMAIN

Hejazi S.(Speaker), Bruno Kessler Foundation ~ Trento ~ Italy

IS NEUROSCIENCE MAYA?: WHAT REMAINS OF THE STUDY OF THE BRAIN, MIND AND CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE LIGHT OF ADVAITA VEDANTA?

Haikonen J.(Speaker), University of Tartu ~ Tartu ~ Estonia

FROM THE HIERARCHY OF PURUṢA TO THE AUTONOMY OF THE SELF: NON-DUAL PARADIGMS BETWEEN SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND THE DECONSTRUCTION OF AHAṂKĀRA

Mencarelli R.(Speaker), Historian of Religions (Independent Researcher) ~ Civita Castellana ~ Italy

ENTANGLED ENCOUNTERS: MATERIAL AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN EUROPE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A206b

Contact: Susanna Trotta
Chair: Valeria Fabretti, Farah Hasan, Susanna Trotta

Since the turn of the millennium, migration to Europe has significantly increased. Individuals have come to this continent often fleeing conflict and political instability as well as seeking improved social and economic wellbeing. For migrants, engagement in religious practice is a key resource in the post-migration period. Religious activities and infrastructure offer practical and spiritual support, as well as being a source of social belonging for newly arriving migrants. These factors often help individuals navigate structural inequalities, for example, facilitating access to social services. Yet, they may also reproduce inequality, for example when religious authority is used to regulate behaviour within these groups and/or to foster prejudice and discrimination against other groups. At the same time, these dynamics unfold within European contexts shaped by varied secularisation trajectories, which influence how religious practices are perceived and negotiated in everyday life. This panel examines encounters between migrant religious communities and other religious and secular groups within these shifting contexts. Such encounters often involve material transformations: repurposed religious buildings, adapted ritual forms and new uses of public space, which might extend to the digital realm. They also generate embodied and sensorial experiences and modes of expression that engage sight, sound, touch, taste and smell. Analysing these encounters from perspectives that are intersectional/multidimensional can help gain significant insights into how changes in gender-, age-, and social-status-related dynamics happen in religious communities who experience migration processes. We invite papers exploring how, through these entanglements, religious traditions are reinterpreted and transformed and, in turn, contribute to shaping contemporary and future European societies.

ENTANGLEMENTS OF INTIMACY AND VISIBILITY: MUSLIM DATING APP ADS IN BERLIN'S PUBLIC SPHERE

Hasan F.(Speaker), Hebrew University ~ Jerusalem ~ Israel

SPACE-SHARING AND RELIGIOUS TRANSFORMATION: ENCOUNTERS BETWEEN THE ST. PAUL'S CONGREGATION AND THE ST. GEORGIS ERITREAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN BERLIN, GERMANY

Trotta S.(Speaker), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

KIRCHENKAFFEE AS A SPACE FOR INSPIRING ENCOUNTERS: INTERRELIGIOUS REFLECTIONS ON INTEGRATION IN EUROPE

Colak M.(Speaker), Eurotürk ~ Aachen ~ Germany

SUFFERING, THE CROSS, AND GOD'S SOLIDARITY: MOLTMANN'S CRUCIFIED GOD AND UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANTS

Okafor A.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

PENTECOSTAL YOUTH BETWEEN RELIGION AND THE SECULAR: NEGOTIATING RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND DIFFERENCE IN STATE SCHOOLS IN BERLIN, GERMANY

Boche C.(Speaker), Humboldt University Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

WHO BELONGS? MIGRATION, RELIGION, AND MUSLIM POSITIONINGS IN MULTIRELIGIOUS SPACES

Bärtlein S.(Speaker), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

FROM ANANDPUR SAHIB TO ITALY: THE CELEBRATION OF HOLA MAHALLA IN THE SIKH DIASPORA

Musconi T.(Speaker), Università di Padova ~ Padova ~ Italy

RELIGION AND THE MAKING OF (IN)EQUALITIES IN AFRICA: POWER, KNOWLEDGE, GENDER, AND COLONIAL LEGACIES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A3

Contact: Ilaria Macconi
Chair: Innocent Maganya, Xolani Sakuba

Religion plays a fundamental role in Africa, shaping social relations, moral orders, identities, and political authority. While it has often served as a powerful resource for empowerment and the pursuit of equality, it has also contributed significantly to the production, legitimation, and persistence of multiple forms of inequality. Adopting a multidisciplinary perspective, this panel examines the ambivalent role of religion – including Christianity, Islam and African religious traditions – as both a vehicle for emancipation and a mechanism of domination in African contexts, from the colonial period to the digital present.

Drawing on the collaborative experience of a well-established Euro-African network of scholars and on different empirical and theoretical case studies, the panel explores how religious institutions, discourses, and practices intersect with structures of race, gender, slavery, colonial violence, education, and epistemic authority. It seeks to foster dialogue among historians, scholars of religion, theologians, and practitioners working on Africa and the African diaspora.

The panel invites three additional contributions addressing different religious traditions, regions, and historical periods. It particularly welcomes papers that conceptualize religion in Africa as a site of contestation and resistance, as well as inequalities, and that adopt comparative, decolonial, or interdisciplinary approaches. The panel will be organized around four thematic sections: (1) religion and power dynamics (colonial legacies); (2) religion and gender dynamics; (3) religion, knowledge production and epistemic authority; and (4) religion and socio-cultural dynamics.

MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA AND SLAVERY IN SÉGOU (FRENCH SUDAN), LATE 19TH - EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Rovellini M.(Speaker), Independent researcher ~ Oggiorno, Lecco ~ Italy

FOREIGN CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES AND THE NARRATIVES OF COLONIAL VIOLENCE IN THE PORTUGUESE EMPIRE IN AFRICA (1961-1975)

Lopes Pereira J.(Speaker), Centre for the History of Society and Culture (University of Coimbra, Portugal) and at the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies of the KU Leuven (Belgium) ~ Coimbra and Leuven ~ Belgium

COLONIAL PAST, CHRISTIAN IDENTITIES, AND THE CHALLENGES OF RECONCILIATION IN SOUTH SUDAN

Umeokoli C.C.(Speaker), KU ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

FROM COLONIAL POWER TO 'INCULTURATION'. THE IDENTITY PROPOSAL OF CATHOLICISM IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

Chiarolanza G.(Speaker), University of Rome Tor Vergata ~ Rome ~ Italy

WOMEN'S INVISIBILITY AND SUBORDINATION IN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY: THE CASE OF AFRICA

Mbabazi V.(Speaker), Department of Religion and Peace Studies, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Makerere University (Uganda) ~ Kampala ~ Uganda

WHO SPEAKS FOR ISLAM? MUSLIM WOMEN, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND RELIGIOUS INEQUALITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

Muslim C.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal, Director of Islamic Studies Research Unit (ISRU) ~ Durban ~ South Africa

INTERPRETING AFRICAN RELIGION IN WESTERN SCHOLARSHIP: EPISTEMIC POWER, REPRESENTATION, AND INEQUALITY

Maganya I.(Speaker), Tangaza University (Director Institutional Advancement and Development) ~ Nairobi ~ Kenya

THE POLITICS OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN COLONIAL AFRICA AND THE RISE OF INEQUALITIES

Mojo M.(Speaker), Arrupe Jesuit University ~ Harare ~ Zimbabwe

THE HUMAN, JOHN WESLEY AND THE AFRICAN: A DECOLONIAL ENGAGEMENT WITH WESLEY'S CONSTRUCTION OF 'MAN'

Matthew L.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Durban ~ South Africa

FROM BABEL TO JUBILEE: DECONSTRUCTING REFORMED APARTHEID HERMENEUTICS AND REIMAGINING PENTECOSTAL ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Motuku K.P.(Speaker), University of South Africa ~ Pretoria ~ South Africa

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN RELIGION SERVES AS A SOCIETY'S-QUALIFICATIONS-AUTHORITY: A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON RELIGION'S (OFTEN FORGOTTEN) CONTRIBUTION TO THE INVENTION OF INEQUALITY

Sakuba X.(Speaker), University of KwaZulu-Natal ~ Durban ~ South Africa

RELIGION A CONDUIT OR ACCOMPLICE IN PERPETUATING INEQUALITY, A PARADOX: A CASE STUDY OF SOME RITUAL CEREMONIES IN ZIMBABWE.

Zangairai F.(Speaker), Arrupe Jesuit University ~ Harare ~ Zimbabwe

BRIDGING THE INEQUALITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA AND EUROPE: A CASE STUDY OF THE VEREAD PROJECT.

Macconi I.(Speaker), Mojo M.(Speaker), Fondazione per le scienze religiose Giovanni XXIII ~ Bologna and Palermo ~ Italy

SEEING AND BELIEVING: VISUAL CULTURE AND THEOLOGICAL ELABORATION IN CHRISTIAN AREA

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A103

Contact: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO
Chair: ANTONIO PIO DI COSMO

It is well known that Basil of Caesarea (Homilia in Barlaam martyrem, PG 31, 488) and, later, Gregory
the Great (Epistula I ad Serenum Massiliensem Episcopum, PL 77, 1027) explicitly emphasized the
instructive function of religious images. Building upon the insights of these two Church Fathers,
this panel seeks to reconsider and discuss the educational potential of medieval visual production
within Christian culture. Drawing on the most recent historiographical developments, the
contribution examines images as privileged instruments for the transmission of theological
knowledge and salvation history, capable of communicating complex contents both to learned
audiences and to non-literate faithful. Particular attention is devoted to the emotional, liturgical,
and material dimensions of images—including their spatial setting, cultic use, and the employment
of precious materials—as well as to their inherently polysemous character. The panel adopts an
interdisciplinary approach that integrates Visual Studies, anthropology, and Gender Studies, while
also highlighting the role of Marian and female saints' imagery in shaping models of learning,
devotion, and the representation of femininity within medieval society.

IF LORENZO OF SIPONTO SPOKE FLORENTINE. THE VITAE LAURENTII AND THE GARGANO MICHAELIC TRADITION IN TUSCAN VISUAL CULTURE

Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), UNIVERSITà DI MODENA E REGGIO EMILIA/ISACCL BUCAREST ~ REGGIO EMILIA ~ Italy

AN EXAMINATION OF THE REPRESENTATION AND INTERACTION WITH IMAGES OF SAINT ANTHONY IN SLOVAK CHURCHES.

Varotti C.(Speaker), Universidade Aberta ~ Lisbon ~ Portugal

IMAGES AS A THEOLOGICAL MEDIUM OF READING THE BIBLE: EXAMPLES FROM THE WRITINGS OF AUGUSTINE AND GREGORY THE GREAT

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independent scholar ~ Rome ~ Italy

KAIROS AND (IN)EQUALITY: RELIGIOUS TEMPORALITIES AND SOCIAL DIFFERENCE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A107

Contact: Magalena Lubanska
Chair: Magdalena Lubanska, Ewelina Drzewiecka

This panel examines religious temporalities, particularly the concept of kairos, and their role in shaping reflection and responses to the problem of social inequality. Our point of reference is the experience of kairos as a special time, a critical moment of reflection or change. Rather than approaching inequality solely as structural or juridical, it foregrounds temporal frameworks that shape how social difference may be experienced and interpreted. Contributions draw on perspectives from various academic disciplines, showing how temporal frameworks can reframe, bracket, or otherwise alter the experience of social hierarchies without necessarily overturning them. By attending to religious time as a critical lens, the panel highlights the interplay between temporality, agency, and social difference.

We consider kairos in both descriptive and prescriptive terms: descriptively, as a critical moment retrospectively identified as a turning point, and prescriptively, as a call to action oriented toward possible futures. We explore religious temporal framings that mobilize such kairotic moments in relation to inequality and exclusion, including their entanglement with eschatological, apologetic, and normative traditions, as well as with religious vocabularies that are articulated, silenced, or imposed.

Submissions that investigate religious temporalities as offering forms of agency under conditions of constraint are particularly welcome. Papers may explore historical, philosophical, or ethnographic cases, highlighting modes of inhabiting social roles without being fully defined by structural positions, and are encouraged to consider implications beyond explicitly theological contexts.

LIVING WITHIN HŌS MĒ: KAIROS AND THE EXPERIENCE OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Lubanska M.(Speaker), Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Warsaw ~ Warsaw ~ Poland

BETWEEN PENANCE AND DEATH: KAIROTIC TIME, SANCTION, AND SALVATION IN MEDIEVAL SLAVONIC RELIGIOUS NORMATIVITY

Naydenova D.(Speaker), Cyrillo-Methodian Research Centre at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

CHRISTIANIZATION AND THE KAIROTIC EXPERIENCE OF THE BULGARIAN INTELLECTUALS IN 20TH CENTURY

Drzewiecka E.(Speaker), Institute of Slavic Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences ~ Warsaw ~ Poland

THE POWER AND POWERLESSNESS OF BIOGRAPHICAL NARRATIVES ABOUT “TURNING POINTS” IN THE CONTEXT OF HOLISTIC SPIRITUALITY

Karamelska T.(Speaker), New Bulgarian University, Bulgarian Akademy of Sciences ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

“I AM A PERFECTLY NORMAL PERSON WHO GOES TO CHURCH”: RELIGIOUS MINORITIES AND (AB)NORMALITY IN ORTHODOX BULGARIA

Petrova Z.(Speaker), Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski” ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

THE WAYS OF PERCEIVING TIME AND THE KAIROTIC EXPERIENCE BY THE RESIDENTS OF THE SOUTH MURANÓW NEIGHBOURHOOD, THE POST-GHETTO PLACE IN WARSAW, POLAND

Chomatowska--Szalamacha B.(Speaker), University of Warsaw ~ Warsaw ~ Poland

“THE MOON BECAME FULL BUT WE DID NOT”: THE ANXIETY OF MISSING THE VIRTUOUS MOMENT IN TEHRAN

Naghshband Z.(Speaker), Max Weber Center at Erfurt University ~ Erfurt ~ Germany

BETWEEN ASYMMETRIES AND EQUIVALENCES: COMPARATIVE VIEWS ON JESUIT HISTORIOGRAPHY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 10:00

Pola - AT14

Contact: Francesco Gusella
Chair: Sabina Pavone

Inequality lies at the very core of the postcolonial debate, that intellectual turn that deconstructed the myths of Western civilizing mandate by highlighting its implicit hierarchies of race, religion, and culture. This scholarly shift also affected Jesuit historiography, especially those apologetic versions that envisioned Jesuit agents as pioneering promoters of interreligious dialogue and cultural exchange.
Historians still struggle to reconcile these two aspects of the Jesuit missionary experience. On the one hand, the tension towards a genuine ecumenism and the complex search for a balance with the communities where missionary activity was carried out. On the other, the asymmetries of power that permeated the missions themselves. These asymmetries could see the Society in a position of strength as well as in the role of a “guest” carefully controlled by radically different authorities. Furthermore, we shall also consider the internal asymmetries within the Society itself between competing groups, as well as the complex relationship with political opposers, sponsors, the Holy See, and other religious orders engaged in the same areas.
Comparative analysis of these conditions is essential to assess how the various strategies for adaptation, negotiation and interaction with the local communities took shape. This panel brings together early-career scholars in the field of early modern and contemporary historiography of the Society of Jesus with a comparative focus on three areas of research: Southeast Europe, South Asia, and China. The parallel establishment of Jesuit missions across these diverse regions allows us to reflect on the inherent ambiguities of the Jesuit missionary experience with special attention to the search for equivalents across different cultural traditions, as well as the dialogical strategies implemented in local contexts.

A MISSIONARY LABORATORY IN THE “INDIES” OF SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE: THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN THE OTTOMAN BALKANS (SECOND HALF OF 16TH – FIRST HALF OF 17TH CENTURY)

Notarfonso S.(Speaker), University of Macerata ~ Macerata ~ Italy

BEYOND CULTURALIST APPROACHES TO JESUIT MISSIOLOGY IN EARLY MODERN SOUTH ASIA

Gusella F.(Speaker), University of Naples "L'Orientale" ~ Naples ~ Italy

BRIDGING ASYMMETRIES THROUGH DIALOGUE: FATHER ROBERT JACQUINOT DE BESANGE'S NEGOTIATIONS FOR PEACE IN WARTIME SHANGHAI (1927–1937)

Zhang Y.(Speaker), University of Rome "La Sapienza" ~ Rome ~ Italy

PERCEPTION AND UNDERSTANDING OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE- THEOLOGICAL, PHILOSOPHICAL, ANTHROPOLOGICAL, AND ETHICAL PERSPECTIVES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - Aula Magna

Contact: Jonas Miklavcic
Chair: Bojan Žalec

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly encountered not only as a technical tool but as a conversational and social presence—one that people interpret, trust, resist, or rely on in shaping how they learn, decide, relate, and make meaning. This panel focuses on perception and interpretation: how individuals and communities experience AI's agency, limits, authority, and bias, and how these perceptions reshape epistemic security, moral responsibility, and everyday as well as institutional practices. It builds an interdisciplinary dialogue among theology and religious studies, philosophy, anthropology, ethics, psychology, and education. Within this horizon, the panel foregrounds religious and theological dimensions of AI's growing influence: its impact on spiritual practice and discernment, religious formation and catechesis, and contemporary imaginaries of transcendence, the divine, and human dignity. It also examines how interaction with AI reconfigures empathy and emotional attachment—especially when AI is experienced as advisor, companion, or substitute for human presence—and how such experiences may alter relationships, vulnerability, and accountability. Overall, the panel investigates how AI is perceived and narrated in ways that co-shape contemporary understandings of the human person, community, and God.

EDUCATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE: THE "MIRROR" CHARACTER OF AI, TECHNO-MORAL VIRTUES, AND MORAL UPSKILLING AND DESKILLING

Žalec B.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

AI AND THE CLASSICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMAN BEING

Zichy M.(Speaker), University of Bonn, Faculty of Catholic Theology ~ Bonn ~ Germany

THE ETHICS OF CARE AS A FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION IN THE AGE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Vodicar J.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EDUCATION: HUMAN FORMATION IN THE AGE OF ALGORETICS

Kraner D.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

HUMAN–AI EMOTIONAL INTERACTION: EMPATHY, EMOTIONAL BONDS, AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Simonic B.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

TECHNOLOGY, RELATIONALITY, AND DIVINE ORIGIN: FROM SCRIPTURE TO ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Centa Strahovnik M.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

WHO SPEAKS OR WHAT SPEAKS? AI AS A CONVERSATIONAL PARTNER

Klun B.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

ACCELERATED AI AND DIGITALIZATION: CRITICAL ECOTHEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Furlan Štante N.(Speaker), The Science and Research Centre Koper, Institute for Philosophical and Religious Studies ~ Koper ~ Slovenia

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – BETWEEN THE EMPOWERMENT AND THE THREAT TO HUMAN AUTONOMY

Globokar R.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

PERCEPTIONS OF AI IN CLINICAL DECISION-MAKING: ANSWERABILITY AND DEFERENCE

Miklavcic J.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

INTEGRATING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE INTO SPIRITUAL LIFE: OPPORTUNITIES, LIMITS, AND DISCERNMENT

Platovnjak I.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

FROM CLINICAL JUDGMENT TO ALGORITHMIC AUTHORITY: WHO HOLDS EPISTEMIC PRIMACY?

Štivic S.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

LARGE LANGUAGE MODELS, BUT CHRISTIAN? RELIGIOUS AI AND THE POLITICS OF FRAMING

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

THE DIALOGICAL FORMATION OF PERSONAL (FAITH) IDENTITY IN THE AGE OF AI: BETWEEN CRISIS AND OPPORTUNITY

Mc Aleer R.(Speaker), KU Leuven ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

THE DEVELOPMENT OF VIRTUES IN THE DIGITAL AGE - EMPATHY, RELATIONSHIPS AND VIRTUAL REALITY

Valenta T.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

FROM EFFICIENCY TO COLLABORATION: RETHINKING HUMAN–AI INTERACTION IN EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Poljak Lukek S.(Speaker), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Theology ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

AI, EPISTEMIC LABOR, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-DECENTERING

Sandsmark E.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

FACING THE SHOGGOTH. APOPHATIC LANGUAGE IN THE FACE OF THE OPACITY AND ALIENITY OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Lipinski T.(Speaker), PTH Sankt Georgen ~ Frankfurt ~ Germany

RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE AND EQUALITY: THE FUNDAMENTAL BLUEPRINT FOR THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNEQUAL EQUALS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Rita Serpytyte
Chair: Rita Serpytyte, Naglis Kardelis

In the writings of Jan Gruzewski, a prominent 17th-century Polish-Lithuanian thinker, we find a synthesis of philosophical, theological and juridical ideas that were instrumental in shaping the intellectual landscape of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Republic of Two Nations. The focus on fairness and equality in Gruzewski's legacy invites us to address the problem of religion's relation to equality from a more general perspective.

The word religion is derived from the Latin verb religare, meaning "to join, connect, relate". Such understanding of religion defined the Christian view on the nature of man's religious attitude. According to this view, any authentic religious relationship is based on man's absolute trust in God: in the sense that any trust presupposes mutual respect and fairness, the religious relationship is that between equals, albeit fundamentally unequal equals, having in mind the absolute ontological distance between God and man. Man's love of God and trust in Him presupposes mutuality, reciprocity of such an attitude also on the part of God.

The appreciation of equality arises from the discerning of differences between those who are unequal in some particular sense. Therefore, striving for equality includes an effort to negotiate differences in order to find some common ground, that is, some level – or "equal" – ground which then becomes a mutually acknowledged basis for building, figuratively speaking, "superstructures" of unequal height on top of this level ground.

Thus the religious relationship between God and man as unequal equals becomes a blueprint for all non-trivial kinds of equality in various forms of human interaction. It is also at the core of logic and rational reasoning as such – and tied to the very possibility of any human dialogue.

ON THE EQUALITY OF ACQUIRED VIRTUES IN JAN GRUZEWSKI'S ULTIMA ET MAXIMA HOMINIS MUTATIO

Pabijutaite Z.(Speaker), Vilnius university ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

THE DEVELOPMENT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AS AN ELEMENT OF THE PROCESS OF SOCIETAL MODERNIZATION

Gruzevskis B.(Speaker), Lithuanian Centre for Social Sciences-Vilnius university ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUIVALENCE: RELIGION AS THE COMMUNISATION OF SPIRIT BEYOND LAW IN HEGEL'S EARLY WRITINGS

Dumbliauskas P.(Speaker), Vilnius University ~ Vilnius ~ Lithuania

ACTIVATE THE SACRED THROUGH TEXTS: TRANSLATION AND VULGARIZATION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Parenzo - A8

Contact: Benedetta Manfrinetti
Chair: Carsten Wilke

The purpose of this panel is to explore how sacred texts are activated through practices of translation, vernacularization, and narrative mediation across different religious and historical contexts. Rather than approaching translation as a merely linguistic operation, the contributions gathered here investigate how textual strategies, material arrangements, and audience-oriented choices enable sacred texts to become meaningful, efficacious, and experientially potent beyond their original linguistic settings. In doing so, the authors contribute to broader discussions on religious experience, textual authority, and the material and intellectual practices through which sacred texts are made present, intelligible, and effective within specific communities. Moving from the late medieval period to the present, and across Jewish, Christian, Islamic and other religious traditions, the panel aims to question the relationship between sacred language and vernacular expression, questioning the assumption that sacrality is intrinsically tied to a specific language and literary genre. It asks instead if the sacred may be mobilised through storytelling, compilation, layout, paratexts, and modes of address that shape readers' engagement with the text. Translation and vulgarization emerge not only as tools of access, but as practices that negotiate authority, legitimacy, and the boundaries between ritual use, personal devotion, and cognitive understanding. By foregrounding concrete textual artefacts, the panel investigates how different forms of textual mediation "activate" the sacred in distinct ways: through narrative immersion, pedagogical framing, hermeneutical guidance, or polemical positioning. Particular attention is paid to the intended audiences of these texts and to the ways in which linguistic choices reflect assumptions about who is entitled to interpret, internalise, or experience the sacred.

WOLF VON ZÜLNHART (CA. 1450-1519) ACTIVATING THE SACRED: NOT THE LANGUAGE BUT THE STORY COUNTS

Schuil K.J.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE SPANISH VULGARIZATIONS OF THE SIDDURIM: A SPIRITUAL INSTRUMENT OF SOCIAL COHESION

Manfrinetti B.(Speaker), DREST - Università di Modena-Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

THE GARDEN AND TORRENT OF "HEDONE": TRANSLATING PLEASURE FROM THE OLD GOSPEL

Piergiacomi E.(Speaker), Pegaso Telematic University ~ Naples ~ Italy

TRANSLATING THE UNKNOWN: A DIVINATORY TEXT IN EARLY MODERN KERALA

Pattery T.J.(Speaker), Central European University ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE LIVING VOICES OF THE PALI SUTTAS: DEBORDERING SOUND AND MEANING IN A THAI BUDDHIST MONASTERY.

Nenna M.V.(Speaker), Università di Roma La Sapienza ~ Roma ~ Italy

FROM RECITATION TO COMPREHENSION: ACTIVATING THE QURʾĀN IN THE AHMADIYYA ITALIAN TRANSLATION (1986)

Badini F.(Speaker), FSCIRE ~ Palermo ~ Italy

INTERMEDIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDERED INEQUALITIES: AGENCY AND AUTHORITY IN RELIGIOUS CONTEXTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A104

Contact: Martina Bär
Chair: Martina Bär

This panel examines how gendered inequalities are produced, stabilised, and contested through intermedial operations in religious and religion-inflected contexts, spanning early modern devotional literature and contemporary art. Rather than treating inequality as a secondary effect of belief or doctrine, both contributions conceptualise it as an outcome of historically specific discursive, performative, and medial configurations that distribute agency, authority, and visibility unevenly.

The first paper analyses early modern devotional literature as an intermedial site in which female agency is simultaneously enabled and restricted under conditions of male authorship and theological normativity. Drawing on a church-historical adaptation of Judith Butler's concept of performativity, it examines biblical figures such as Jael, Judith, and Lot's wife to show how agency becomes permissible only as a pious reiteration of divine order. Through the interweaving of biblical narration, exegesis, prayer, and poetic texts, female agency is rendered visible while remaining bound to humility, obedience, and gender-coded ideals.

The second paper develops a cross-temporal heuristic by analysing contemporary art as a multimodal environment in which religiously inflected gender norms continue to generate inequalities. Focusing on media operations such as repetition with difference, fragmentation, spatial re-coding, and ritualised inscription, it examines how gendered authority and addressability emerge across image, text, space, materiality, and institutional framing.

Together, the panel positions intermedial analysis as a key approach for studying religious inequalities, foregrounding how gendered asymmetries of agency and authority are produced and maintained through mediated operations across time.

INTERMEDIAL SPACES OF AGENCY IN EARLY MODERN DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE

Bauer B.(Speaker), University of Jena, Department for Church History ~ Jena ~ Germany

Early Modern Masculinities and their Divine Role Models

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POLITICAL MYSTICISM: DIALOGUE AND THE DIVINE IN DARK TIMES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A206a

Contact: Theo Poward
Chair: Ely Orrego-Torres

This panel seeks to bring together mystical theology and political theory to explore how a political mysticism can provide a much needed alternative vision of world politics. Mysticism can be understood as an aspect of theology and spirituality that focuses on devotional practices that attempt to enact some form of union with the divine. In this interpretation, mysticism can arguably be discerned across the world's theological traditions, with these variegated practices often inspiring quite un-traditional explorations of spirituality outside, and often against, any institutionalised faith.
Mysticism has influenced a full spectrum of political engagement—from anarchists who argue that union with the divine translates to opposition to worldly power structures to more institutional interpretations that emphasise the social cohesion brought about through ritualised devotion to the divine. This range of ethical and political applications lends mystical theology to various conversations currently underway in political theory, from post-anarchism to relational ontologies to pluriversality, leading it to emerge as a point of interest for thinkers ranging from Simone Weil to Jacques Derrida to Simon Critchley. This panel welcomes work that explores how to unite these conversations in a spectrum of critique and resistance that can speak both to rooted traditions and radical thinkers. To this end, the panel seeks to build a dialogue that can address pressing issues facing our planet, from the environmental crisis, to rising political violence, to narratives about the 'end of the world'. In each case mystical theology offers ways of thinking together across disciplines and traditions in ways that hold the potential for pathways forward.

POLITICAL MYSTICISM IN CREATIVE TENSION

Poward T.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ Edinburgh ~ United Kingdom

"THE BREAKING OF THE VESSELS"

Davis E.(Speaker), Northwestern University ~ Chicago ~ United States of America

MYSTICAL POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND THE PROBLEM OF HIERARCHY

Newheiser D.(Speaker), Florida State University ~ Tallahassee ~ United States of America

EXPERIENCING NIRVANA IN POLITICAL ACTIVISM: THE EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF AUROBINDO GHOSE IN EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY INDIA

Portilla I.(Speaker), Kone Foundation, Tampere University ~ Tampere ~ Finland

"EVERYTHING BEGINS IN MYSTICISM AND ENDS IN POLITICS": ADAM MICKIEWICZ AND CHARLES PÉGUY IN DIALOGUE ON THE DIVINE ENCOUNTER IN DARK TIMES

Sawicki L.(Speaker), Independent Researcher ~ Rome ~ Italy

MYSTICISM AND ANARCHISM IN NIKOLAI BERDYAEV

Vitali Rosati F.(Speaker), Università degli studi di Torino ~ Turin ~ Italy

HÖLDERLIN AND THE QUESTION OF GOD: POETRY, PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 12:20

Pola - A203

Contact: Marco Fiorletta
Chair: Isabella Bruckner, Helmut Jakob Deibl

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, Hölderlin's thought has played a decisive role across a wide range of discourses and has been extensively received in philosophy, political theory, theology and, more recently, in ecological thought.
This panel starts with the assumption that in nearly every poem by Hölderlin it is possible to find a reference to the divine. These references can be seen as a form of direct engagement with the question of God. This engagement does not culminate in fixed or dogmatic definitions; rather, it remains productively open, preserving the openness of the question itself.
This panel seeks to explore contemporary ways of engaging with Hölderlin's poetry and philosophical fragments by starting from current questions and urgent problems. From this perspective, it aims to assess the ongoing relevance and productivity of Hölderlin's question of God for present-day debates.
What contributions can Hölderlin's poetry and philosophical drafts offer to contemporary discussions of the divine? How can his reflections help us rethink the relations between poetry and philosophy, religion and politics, humanity and nature today? Which resources can offer Hölderlin's question of God for us today?

Abstracts are welcome in the following areas:
- Hölderlin and the question of God
- Hölderlin's philosophy of religion
- Hölderlin's political theology
- Hölderlin and ecological debates
- Hölderlin and philosophy of history
- Hölderlin and Aesthetics

«DENN ES WALTET EIN GOTT IN UNS»: RHETORIC AND MEANING OF A MOTIF IN HÖLDERLIN'S "DER ABSCHIED"

Carvalho Pereira H.(Speaker), Brown University ~ Providence, RI ~ United States of America

THE QUESTION OF GOD IN HÖLDERLIN WITH SPECIAL REGARD TO "DICHTERBERUF"

Deibl H.J.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

CHRIST AND THE GODS: SACRED MEDIATION IN HÖLDERLIN

Myers B.(Speaker), Alphacrucis University College ~ Sydney ~ Australia

POETRY AS ACCESS TO THE DIVINE: THE POLITICAL POWER OF BEAUTY IN HÖLDERLIN'S THOUGHT AND LITERARY LEGACY

De Acutis G.(Speaker), Universität Wien ~ Wien ~ Austria

GOD AND NATURE IN HÖLDERLIN'S DIE TITANEN: AN ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Fiorletta M.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THE DIVINE IN THE LANDSCAPE: HÖLDERLIN'S CONTEMPLATIVE ECOPOETICS

Conzo A.(Speaker), University of Salento ~ Lecce ~ Italy

DWELLING: HOME AND THE DIVINE IN HÖLDERLIN AND NOVALIS

Huisman M.(Speaker), University of St Andrews ~ St Andrews ~ United Kingdom

PEACE THROUGH LAW OR PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH? RELIGIONS, POLITICS, AND FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS IN CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 17:10

Parenzo - A20

Contact: Fabio Franceschi
Chair: Pierluigi Consorti, Antonello De Oto

In a global landscape increasingly characterized by profound inequalities, persistent conflicts and growing social and political polarisation, the Western world, which in the post-war period had built peace on the basis of rights and the rule of law in general, is now witnessing the return of the cult of war, often based on identities propagated as strategic resources. The global geopolitical framework we have known until now, based on the primacy of law, is increasingly being challenged and replaced by one based on the logic of force (military, political, economic, etc.). The proposed panel aims to examine the future of law in the era of identity-based force and, above all, how religions and the religious element in general fit into this new dynamic. Indeed, religions can have a strong impact both on the promotion of peace (the commitment of religious actors and leaders to stability and peacebuilding) and on the affirmation of a new cult of war (religious fundamentalism, support by religious institutions for ideologies promoted by the state or specific groups that sanctify military conflict, often merging religious dogma with nationalism, etc.). In this context, the role of interfaith dialogue in peacebuilding policies is also fundamental for addressing contemporary conflicts and inequalities.

RELIGIONS, VIOLENCE, AND THE (CONTROVERSIAL) RIGHT TO PEACE

Franceschi F.(Speaker), Sapienza University of Rome ~ Rome ~ Italy

PEACEBUILDING IN PIXEL: LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN DIGITAL GAMING ECOSYSTEMS

Baldetti S.(Speaker), University of Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

SMART CITIES AND THE PURSUIT OF URBAN PEACE: THE RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

Tarantino D.(Speaker), University of Genoa ~ Genoa ~ Italy

THE BATTLE OF KARBALA IN CONTEMPORARY CONFLICT: THE ROLE OF SHIA LEGAL-RELIGIOUS DOCTRINE AND IRAN'S RESISTANCE NARRATIVE AGAINST THE UNITED STATES AND ISRAEL

Chafi Founna I.(Speaker), University of Girona ~ Girona ~ Spain

IMPARTIAL AND NEUTRAL, BUT NOT INDIFFERENT. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S FRATERNAL COMMITMENT TO PEACE IN THE AGE OF FORCE.

Lo Giacco M.L.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro ~ Bari ~ Italy

IDENTITY, RELIGION, PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE, AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS: THE CASE OF ALBANIA

Foglia S.(Speaker), Universita' di Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

GOVERNING RELIGION IN AN AGE OF SECURITY: LEGAL LIMITS AND DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGES IN EUROPE

Madera A.(Speaker), University of Messina ~ Messina ~ Italy

FRATERNITY BEYOND IDENTITY: RECLAIMING A VULNERABILITY BASED LEGAL GRAMMAR IN AN AGE OF CONFLICT

Bartolucci V.(Speaker), Università di Pisa ~ Pisa ~ Italy

PRE-EMPTIVE AND PREVENTIVE WAR IN INTERNATIONAL LAW AND THE THEOLOGY OF JUST PEACE: THE 2026 IRAN CRISIS

Tripp H.(Speaker), Institut for Canon Law and Law on Religions/Theological Faculty of University Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

VALUES-DRIVEN COLLABORATION

Dalla Villa C.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Teramo ~ Teramo ~ Italy

INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AS A VEHICLE FOR PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL CONCEPTUAL EXPANSION, A LINGUISTIC TOOL FOR COMMUNICATION, AND A CATALYST FOR SOCIO-CULTURAL FLEXIBILITY

Levi J.(Speaker), Florentine School of Advanced Studies in Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue, FSD ~ Florence ~ Italy

MESSIANIC AFTERTHOUGHTS: THE LINGERING OF AN IDEA

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 18:20

Pola - AT13

Contact: Giustina Benedetta Baron
Chair: Giustina Benedetta Baron, Marco Martino, Martina Perotta

Messianism originates from the Hebrew term māšīaḥ (מָשִׁיחַ), which translates as “the anointed one.” In its earliest context, the term referred to a specific ritual within the ancient Sinaitic tradition: the anointing of a king, a ceremony that signified divine selection and political legitimacy. Initially, māšīaḥ denoted a present ruler whose authority was established through ritual. Over time, the meaning of the term shifted, and the anointed king became a figure of future expectation, envisioned as a redeemer who would restore the Kingdom of Israel. This shift introduced prophetic and eschatological dimensions, connecting political authority to the promise of ultimate redemption. This panel begins from the observation that messianism is never solely temporal. While scholarship has often emphasized futurity, anticipation, and deferred redemption, messianic imagination is equally articulated through the sacralization of concrete geographies - holy lands, promised territories, imperial spaces, or revolutionary homelands - endowing them with theological and political meaning. Messianism thus operates not only as a structure of time but as a powerful mechanism of territorial sacralization, transforming land into the site of divine election, historical destiny, and maximalist political claims. By placing different perspectives in dialogue with broader religious and political traditions, this panel explores how messianic narratives contribute to the sacralization of land in Jewish, Christian, Islamic, and secular contexts, as well as in nationalist, revolutionary, and colonial imaginaries. From Zionist and post-Zionist debates to imperial and post-imperial visions of destiny in Russian culture, messianism continues to shape how territory is imagined as redemptive, inviolable, or absolute. The panel is explicitly comparative, without flattening traditions or detaching messianism from its historical genealogies.

THE BASILEUS AND THE ORACULA LEONIS: A LIMINAL FIGURE AND ESCHATOLOGICAL ACTOR AT THE END OF TIMES

Di Cosmo A.P.(Speaker), Martino M.(Speaker), DREST Unimore ~ Modena ~ Italy

PARADISE DENIED: HUMAN EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNISM'S TWILIGHT, 1989-1991

Martino M.(Speaker), Scuola Normale Superiore ~ Pisa ~ Italy

SHAS AND GUSH EMUNIM: DIVERGENT APPROACHES TO THE MODERN STATE AND RELIGION-NATIONALISM RELATIONS

Hazan M.(Speaker), UniMoRe - Università Ca' Foscari - Venezia ~ Venezia ~ Italy

"THE CITY UPON A HILL": LA SACRALIZZAZIONE DELLO SPAZIO POLITICO E IL DESTINO MANIFESTO DEGLI STATI UNITI, DAI PADRI FONDATORI A DONALD TRUMP

Paparcone D.(Speaker), Università della Campania "Luigi Vanvitelli" ~ Caserta ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS-ZIONISM AND ITS AFTERTHOUGHTS: TOWARD A THEORY OF CORRECTIVE MESSIANISM

Perotta M.(Speaker), University of Trento ~ Trento ~ Italy

HISTORY, META-HISTORY, UNHISTORY: MESSIANIC TIME IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY APOCALYPTIC THINKING IN GERMAN PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

Mahdevar S.(Speaker), Goethe University ~ Frankfurt ~ Germany

LAW AT THE TIME THAT REMAINS: MESSIANISM, REPUBLICANISM AND SOCIALISM ACCORDING TO MAHMUD MUHAMMAD TAHA

Pagani S.(Speaker), Università del Salento ~ Lecce ~ Italy

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN KINGSHIP AND THE IMAGINATION OF MESSIANIC TERRITORY

Annus A.(Speaker), University of Tartu ~ Tartu ~ Estonia

PEOPLE, LAND, AND COMMUNITY: MARTIN BUBER'S REIMAGINING HALEVI'S KUZARI

Scordari C.C.(Speaker), Università di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

TECHNOLOGICAL REDEMPTION: MESSIANIC AND APOCALYPTIC MOTIFS IN RUSSIAN COSMISM

Baron G.B.(Speaker), DREST Unimore; University of Tartu ~ Turin - Tartu ~ Italy

THE EVOLUTION OF MESSIANIC BEFORE- AND AFTERTHOUGHTS: THE CASES OF ITALIAN VOLUNTEERS IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR AND FOREIGN FIGHTERS IN UKRAINE

La Bella M.(Speaker), LUISS, Tor Vergata ~ Rome ~ Italy

WAITING FOR THE MESSIAH: TRENDS OF CHRISTIAN PHILO-SEMITISM IN THE 17TH CENTURY

Giardini M.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Ferrara ~ Italy

QUEER(ING) LIVING SYSTEMS: AN INTERFAITH DIALOGUE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 09:00 to 11:10

Pola - A108

Contact: Ivy Helman
Chair: Sonja Thomaier

Throughout history, religions have played a complex role in the development of cultural values and systems (legal, ecological, and familial in particular). As this year's Conference theme demonstrates, religions have functioned to both advance and to undermine efforts for equity. This panel explores religious systems that have created and/or perpetuated harm by supporting/exacerbating inequalities and hierarchies. At the same time, it seeks to both queer such systems in order to construct more just, egalitarian ways of living and flourishing, as well as to name the queer qualities of some such systems, opening possibilities from within. We welcome diverse perspectives from various religious and spiritual traditions at the intersection of feminist and queer theories, systematic theologies, eco-theologies, and inter-religious dialogue.

PROPOSING AN ECOFEMINIST JUDAISM: DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM SYSTEMATICS AND QUEER THEORY

Helman I.(Speaker), Charles University ~ Prague ~ Czech Republic

A (QUEER) SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Warren J.(Speaker), Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School ~ Rochester ~ United States of America

QUEER(ING) MATRIMONY? BLESSING POLYCULES AND NON-MONOGAMOUS PARTNERSHIPS AS A CHALLENGE FOR THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN GERMANY

Thomaier S.(Speaker), University of Hildesheim ~ Hildesheim ~ Germany

CHALLENGES AND CRISIS AMONG THE UKRAINIAN CHURCHES – AND WAYS FORWARD FOR GLOBAL ORTHODOXY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Kristina Stoeckl
Chair: Jose Casanova

The ongoing war in Ukraine has profoundly reshaped the religious landscape of Eastern Christianity, bringing long-standing ecclesial tensions into the open while generating new theological, institutional, and geopolitical challenges. The Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU), the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (UOC), and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) have each been compelled to respond to questions of war and peace, national sovereignty, ecclesial authority, and transnational Orthodoxy. These responses have not only deepened internal crises but have also raised broader questions about the future of Orthodoxy as a global religious tradition.

This panel brings together representatives of Ukrainian churches alongside independent scholars and public intellectuals working on Ukrainian Christianity to engage in a rare, dialogical conversation across ecclesial, confessional, and analytical perspectives. Rather than focusing solely on conflict and fragmentation, the panel aims to explore pathways out of the current crisis: theological resources for reconciliation, institutional reforms, and models of inter-church engagement that could contribute to a renewed vision of Orthodox Christianity in Ukraine.

By situating the Ukrainian case within wider debates about global Orthodoxy, the panel seeks to move beyond diagnosis toward constructive reflection. The discussion will address not only the immediate Ukrainian context but also the implications for Orthodox Christianity worldwide, including its relationship to democracy, human rights, and interreligious coexistence. This panel is part of the POLISMOD (2026-31, PI Kristina Stoeckl) project launch.

THE THREE KYIVAN CHURCHES

Casanova J.(Speaker), Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs ~ Washington D.C. ~ United States of America

THE SITUATION OF THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Bureha V.(Speaker), Kyiv Theological Academy ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

THE SITUATION OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF UKRAINE

Sigov C.(Speaker), Kyiv Mohila University ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

THE UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN RELATIONS WITH UKRAINIAN ORTHODOXY

Babynskyi A.(Speaker), Ukrainian Catholic University ~ Lviv ~ Ukraine

Orthodox Churches in Ukraine: Current Policy Developments, Challenges and Potential Solutions

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POST-DIGITAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: INSIGHTS FROM THE URPP «DIGITAL RELIGION(S)» EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 10:10 to 12:20

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Fabienne Greuter
Chair: Thomas Schlag

The interdisciplinary University Research Priority Program (URPP) «Digital Religion(s)» at the University of Zurich examines how digital transformations influence and reconfigure religious practices, forms of authority, and modes of community among individuals and institutions. Within different research areas - like digital pastoral care or emeriging technologies - four subprojects within an interdisciplinary cluster focus on «Religious Education within the Post-Digital Context».

A central concern of this cluster is how religious education can foster critical media reflection and thereby strengthen religious digital literacy as a key competency for navigating contemporary mediatized environments. Attention is also given to how issues of equality and inequality are reproduced, negotiated, or challenged within digital media practices. While the concept of literacy has a long intellectual history, it remains indispensable in light of accelerated developments in digitalization and artificial intelligence. Religious education is thus understood not merely as the transmission of technical digital skills but as fostering ethical, analytical, and critical capacities that enable adolescents to engage responsibly and reflectively with digital media and AI, including an awareness of power relations and ethical responsibilities in digitally mediated contexts.

The post-digital is approached as a critical analytical concept highlighting opportunities and challenges inherent in digital transformation processes. It raises questions about how young people encounter and manage these dynamics and how reflective, autonomous, and ethically grounded media practices can be supported in religious educational settings.

The proposed panel introduces the interdisciplinary framework of the URPP «Digital Religion(s)» and presents initial empirical and theoretical insights from two educational subprojects for scholarly discussion.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH PRIORITY PROGRAM (URPP) «DIGITAL RELIGION(S)»

Schlag T.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s), University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

NAVIGATING SYNTHETIC REALITIES. RELIGION, GENERATIVE AI, AND DIGITAL VISUAL LITERACY

Trattner K.(Speaker), Department of Political Science, University of Salzburg ~Salzburg ~ Austria

LOVE OF NEIGHBOR, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE – FOSTERING CRITICAL MEDIA REFLECTION THROUGH THEOLOGICAL NARRATIVES

Greuter F.(Speaker), URPP Digital Religion(s), University of Zurich ~ Zurich ~ Switzerland

THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR: HISTORICAL ROOTS, RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS, AND IDENTITY-BASED CONFLICTS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 10:10 to 19:30

Pola - AT14

Contact: Marianna Napolitano
Chair: Marianna Napolitano

This panel builds upon and expands the discussion initiated by the volume Religious and Identity-Based Roots of the War in Ukraine, published by Routledge in January 2026. The panel explores the Russo-Ukrainian War through its deep historical roots, religious dimensions, and identity-based conflicts, examining how religious narratives intersect with state power and identity formation in both post-Soviet Russia and Ukraine.

A crucial focus is the 2018-2019 recognition of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine's autocephaly by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, representing a fundamental rupture in Orthodox unity with profound geopolitical implications. The Moscow Patriarchate considered this act a direct challenge to its authority and to its historical and traditional relationship with Ukraine. Papers will examine the Russkyi Mir ideology and how this notion shapes Church-State relations and provides theological frameworks for political objectives, alongside the concept of political autocephalies and the relationship between ecclesiastical and political authority in both countries.

The panel will further discuss the role of religious minorities in the conflict and the state's regulation of religious pluralism in both Russia and Ukraine, examining Eastern Europe as a crossroads of Christian denominations and European conflicts. Public history represents a key analytical dimension: papers will investigate monumentalization, commemorative practices, and artistic production as means through which competing historical memories are constructed, with contemporary art serving as sites for collective trauma processing and contestation of official discourse.

The panel aims to trace the historical, religious, political, and cultural dynamics of the conflict, examining their evolution and transformations to illuminate how these historical trajectories inform contemporary hostilities.

ORTHODOX IDENTITY TRANSFORMATIONS AND THE PATH TO UKRAINIAN AUTOCEPHALY: FROM SOVIET COLLAPSE TO THE 2022 WAR

Napolitano M.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze Religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS AND PATHS TO PEACE IN EASTERN EUROPE. A LOOK AT THE PAST

Garzaniti M.(Speaker), University of Florence ~ Florence ~ Italy

POLITICAL AUTOCEPHALIES (1967–2022): ECCLESIOLOGY, STATE POWER, AND GEOPOLITICS IN CONTEMPORARY ORTHODOXY

Mainardi A.(Speaker), University of Modena and Reggio Emilia ~ Reggio Emilia ~ Italy

TRUTH BEFORE NATION: ORTHODOX DEADLOCKS IN THE UKRAINIAN WAR

Keramidas D.(Speaker), Pontifical University St. Thomas Aquinas “Angelicum" ~ Rome ~ Italy

ORTHODOXY AS BOND AND FAULT LINE IN RUSSO-UKRAINIAN RELATIONS (LATE 17TH–18TH CENTURIES)

Bovgyria A.(Speaker), Institute of History of Ukraine/University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ Ukraine

THE KREMLIN AND THE MOSCOW PATRIARCHATE IN XX CENTURY

Roccucci A.(Speaker), Roma Tre University ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE WAR AS A CLASH OF IDENTITY REGIMES: THE ROAD TO THE SECURITIZATION OF IDENTITY IN UKRAINE AND RUSSIA

Puleri M.(Speaker), Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

TOWARDS A RETURN OF THE AVANT-GARDE? SOME REMARKS ON RUSSIAN ART TODAY

Marchesini I.(Speaker), Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna ~ Bologna ~ Italy

DECONSTRUCTING THE “RUSSIAN WORLD”: COUNTER-NARRATIVES OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH OF UKRAINE IN WARTIME DISCOURSE AND VISUAL CULTURE

Pidkuimukha L.(Speaker), National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy ~ Kyiv ~ Ukraine

MEDICINE AND THEOLOGY IN DIALOGUE: STEPS TOWARDS MORE EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL CARE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - A101

Contact: Lluis Oviedo
Chair: Miriam Leal

In recent times, medicine and theology have become very distant and alien fields. Even among those committed to dialogue between science and theology, the medical sciences and healthcare have remained outside their area of interest. The question arises as to whether this distance or disengagement is beneficial, or whether interaction and even synergy could be more beneficial. Assuming that modern medicine and healthcare have developed within a secularising model, an alternative approach could be to recognise that medicine without religion is less effective, and that theology ignoring the pursuit of health and better therapy might be missing some relevant issues. Recent research on religion and health, religious coping, and spiritual care suggests new ways to integrate the two social systems of medicine and religion more effectively. This awareness calls on theology to take on a responsible role in discerning and designing models of positive interaction and even intervention, for instance in the field of spiritual care. This panel brings together scholars who, from an interdisciplinary perspective, are exploring and applying ways to integrate medicine and healthcare with religion and theology, with particular attention to those efforts aimed to better develop interventions in the area of spiritual care.

WHY A GOOD THEOLOGY MATTERS FOR BETTER SPIRITUAL CARE

Oviedo L.(Speaker), Antonianum University ~ Roma ~ Italy

HEALTH AND SPIRITUAL CARE– EVIDENCE-BASED AND LIVED EXPERIENCE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF A HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONAL

Leal M.(Speaker), Catholic University of Brasilia ~ Brasilia ~ Brazil

BETWEEN HEALING AND RECOGNITION: MEDICAL, THEOLOGICAL, AND COMMUNICATIVE ASPECTS OF DEAFNESS IN THE AGE OF AI.

Bednarska M.(Speaker), University of Information Technology and Managment ~ Rzeszow ~ Poland

SPIRITUALITY IN PERINATAL PALLIATIVE CARE: SPIRITUALITY AS A THERAPEUTIC TOOL IN THE MANAGEMENT OF ANTICIPATORY GRIEF

Freire M.M.(Speaker), Brazilian Maternal and child Hospital ~ Brazilian ~ Brazil

FROM PATHOLOGY TO LIBERATION: REIMAGINING SPIRITUAL CARE BETWEEN MEDICINE AND THEOLOGY

Bischoff S.(Speaker), Independent Scholar ~ Berlin ~ Germany

PROTESTANTISM AND (IN)EQUALITIES: THEOLOGICAL RESOURCES FOR JUSTICE AND MERCY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 18:20

Pola - A203

Contact: Davide Ibrahim
Chair: Davide Ibrahim

This open panel explores how Protestant traditions can offer theological resources to name, resist, and heal contemporary (in)equalities. The panel will invite critical and constructive engagement with key loci, such as creation and the imago Dei, sin and structural evil, justification and dignity, sanctification and social holiness, vocation and labor, the diaconate and mercy, the protection of the vulnerable, and eschatological hope as a horizon for public witness. The conversation will be intentionally hospitable to a range of Protestant perspectives. We welcome papers that retrieve historical Protestant figures, classical Protestant sources, engage global and minoritized Protestant voices, or test Protestant moral claims in concrete contexts such as migration, poverty, war, disability, education, and incarceration.

HERMAN BAVINCK ON SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

Harinck G.(Speaker), Theological University Utrecht ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

SOCIO-SYSTEMIC SIN AND THE CONCEPTUALIZATION OF ABRAHAM KUYPER, RENÉ PADILLA, AND TIM KELLER

Ibrahim D.(Speaker), Theological University Utrecht ~ Utrecht ~ Netherlands

SIN: THE GREAT EQUALIZER

Karr Iv P.R.(Speaker), Istituto di Cultura Evangelica e Documentazione ~ Rome ~ Italy

DISABILITY, DIGNITY, AND THE IMAGO DEI: AN EVANGELICAL REFLECTION ON THE PROMISE OF A RELATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Di Bartolomeo G.(Speaker), Istituto di cultura evangelica e documentazione (ICED) ~ Roma ~ Italy

CREATION CARE AND GLOBAL INEQUALITY: AN EVANGELICAL FRAMEWORK FOR ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

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UNEQUAL SUFFERING AND DIVINE PROVIDENCE: ASSESSING RICHARD SWINBURNE'S THEODICY OF LOCATION-BASED EVIL

Meregaglia C.(Speaker), Facoltà di teologia di Lugano ~ Lugano ~ Italy

THE POLITICS OF KAIROS: A JOURNEY BETWEEN EXISTENTIALISM AND ESCHATOLOGY IN THE PHILOSOPY OF PAUL TILLICH

Fazio D.J.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Milano, Facoltà di Filosofia ~ Milan ~ Italy

RELIGION, MOBILITY, AND INEQUALITY: RETHINKING SOCIAL BOUNDARIES IN A CHANGING WORLD

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

POLA - A104

Contact: Daniela Tarantino
Chair: Lorenzo Sinisi

This panel, convened by Daniela Tarantino (University of Genoa), Director of the Interdepartmental Research Centre on Migratory Religious Phenomena and Territorial Transformations, explores how religion, migration, and space intersect in shaping contemporary inequalities. It examines the dual role of religion as both a resource for social cohesion and a source of exclusion, focusing on how faith-based actors, institutions, and communities negotiate visibility, recognition, and justice within contexts of mobility and structural inequality. Through interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives, the panel seeks to rethink religion's contribution to the redefinition of equality, belonging, and coexistence in an era marked by global migration and territorial transformation. The panel is organized into two complementary sections, reflecting both the historical-legal roots of religious inequality and the contemporary and future dynamics of faith, mobility, and justice.

CATHOLIC BISHOPS AND DIOCESES IN THE CRUSADER STATES OF MEDIEVAL GREECE (13TH-16TH CENTURIES): REDRAWING RELIGIOUS BOUNDARIES BETWEEN EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Barbagli A.(Speaker), University of Catanzaro ~ Catanzaro ~ Italy

THE ITALO-ALBANIAN COMMUNITIES IN THE KINGDOM OF NAPLES BETWEEN MIGRATION, RELIGIOUS IDENTITY AND DEFENSE OF EQUALITY. HISTORICAL PATHS OF LAW AND RELIGION.

Maradei F.(Speaker), University of Catanzaro ~ Catanzaro ~ Italy

THE MINISTRY OF DEACONESSES IN THE CANONICAL TRADITION: FROM LATE ANTIQUITY TO THE MIDDLE AGES

Fiocca M.(Speaker), University of Rome La Sapienza ~ Rome ~ Italy

DEMOCRACY, LAW, AND SOCIETY IN THE ENCYCLICALS OF LEO XIII

Colonna D.(Speaker), University of Genoa ~ Genoa ~ Italy

CHRISTIANIZATION AND RELIGIOUS REPRESSION IN THE IBERIAN PENINSULA BETWEEN THE MIDDLE AGES AD HUMANISM

Mazzei R.F.(Speaker), University of Catanzaro ~ Catanzaro ~ Italy

MINORITIES WITHIN MINORITIES: CHRISTIAN ADIVASI COMMUNITIES AND BOUNDARIES OF BELONGING

Colagrossi E.(Speaker), University of Genoa ~ Genoa ~ Italy

Eco-spirituality as an ethical and spiritual response to the global ecological crisis

Baghino A.(Speaker), University of Chile Alberto Hurtado ~ Santiago de Chile ~ Chile

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND (IN)EQUALITIES: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A18

Contact: Mari van Emmerik
Chair: Oliver Wright

Artificial intelligence is rapidly reshaping modern societies, yet this transformation generates profound inequalities. Social inequalities such as poverty, discrimination, and exclusion are being amplified and reconfigured through algorithmic systems that determine access to employment, housing, healthcare, and justice. Just as industrialisation created new class divisions while promising prosperity, AI now presents similar paradoxes—offering efficiency and innovation while simultaneously encoding bias, concentrating power, and deepening existing inequalities. While philosophy and sociology dominate AI ethics discourse, theology and religious traditions remain largely absent from these conversations. What is urgently needed is an articulation of the distinctive contribution religion and theology can make to addressing AI-generated inequalities.

This panel examines AI-generated inequalities—algorithmic bias, economic displacement, surveillance, and concentrated power—through the lens of religious and theological responses. Our speakers explore what theology and religious traditions can contribute to understanding and addressing these inequalities. Rather than focusing narrowly on religious inequalities, we ask how religion and theology can speak to the broader social inequalities that AI creates, offering distinctive ethical frameworks, prophetic critique, and visions of justice that secular AI ethics may lack. What resources do religious traditions offer for critiquing and transforming AI systems that perpetuate inequality? Can theological concepts of human dignity, the sacred, justice, and the common good inform more equitable AI development? Has religion's marginalisation in AI discourse deprived society of crucial moral resources? The panel will discuss these and similar questions.

DIGITAL COLONIALISM AND EMBODIED INTELLIGENCE: RETHINKING A(G)I THROUGH THE INCARNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Van Emmerik M.(Speaker), University of Cambridge ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

INSTRUMENTALITY AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Wright O.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

AI, PERSONHOOD, AND THE LIMITS OF CO-INHERENCE: CHRISTIAN HUMANISM IN AN ALGORITHMIC AGE

Bennett D.(Speaker), University of Oxford ~ Oxford ~ United Kingdom

THE AMBIVALENCE OF RELIGIOUS LLMS: OPPORTUNITIES, RISKS, AND REGULATION

Tretter M.(Speaker), Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg ~ Erlangen ~ Germany

A PNEUMATOLOGICAL EQUALITIES ADDRESSING AI INEQUALITIES

Buck R.A.(Speaker), Mesa Global ~ Oxford, UK ~ United States of America

ALGORITHMIC EXEGESIS AND THE PARADOX OF AUTHORITY: GENDER, SACRED TEXT, AND AI GOVERNANCE IN SURAH MARYAM (QUR'AN 19)

Rosli Asmara L.(Speaker), Nanyang Technological University Singapore ~ Singapore ~ Singapore

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN EUROPE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A106

Contact: Alberta Giorgi
Chair: Effie Fokas, Alberta Giorgi

The panel introduces the recently published Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics in Europe, through the voices of its contributors and editors.
The handbook brings together and bridges different perspectives and disciplines in examination of intersections between politics and religion, including contributions from political science, religious studies, anthropology, legal studies – to name a few. A central aim is to ask what, exactly, is distinctively European about the entanglements between religion and politics under scrutiny.
The handbook is structured in three sections. The first section, Theoretical Underpinnings and Methodological Perspectives, aims at offering an overview of the main analytical frameworks that are adopted in contemporary analyses of religion and politics in Europe. Altogether, they suggest decentering and deconstructing the dominant narratives, while also questioning theoretical traditions; advocate for nuanced analyses over binary understandings, emphasizing hybridity, ambivalence, and contextual complexity; and explore the factors and the processes contributing to shape religiosity and the place of religions in contemporary societies. Section 2 is devoted to Actors, Policies, and Institutions. The chapters included in this section focus on religious and political actors in the European space and their interconnections, paying attention to religions beyond the institutional settings; on legal and political institutions and their impact on the intersections of politics and religion in Europe, paying attention to how religions contribute to shaping political and public institutions and how legal and political institutions contribute to shaping religions and religiosity; and, finally, on policies regulating religions or shaping the contexts in which religion and politics intersect. Section 3 is designed to introduce emerging themes and approaches by focusing on contemporary debates, ranging from religion and AI to the pandemic.

RELIGION AND HUMAN RIGHTS – EUROPEAN PUZZLES

Breskaya O.(Speaker), Giordan G.(Speaker), Zrinščak S.(Speaker), University of Padua ~ Padua ~ Italy

RELIGION, POLITICS, AND THE PANDEMIC

Conway B.(Speaker), Maynhoot University ~ Maynhoot ~ Ireland

RELIGION AND ENVIRONMENTALISM

Becci I.(), University of Lausanne ~ Lausanne ~ Switzerland

THE EU GUIDELINES ON THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF AND THE EU'S EXTERNAL ACTION

Annicchino P.(Speaker), Università di Foggia ~ Foggia ~ Italy

RELIGION AND PARTY POLITICS IN EUROPE

Ozzano L.(Speaker), University of Turin ~ Turin ~ Italy

CENTRIPETAL AND CENTRIFUGAL DYNAMICS OF RELIGION AND POLITICS AT THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Fokas E.(Speaker), American College of Greece ~ Athens ~ Greece

INTERSECTING GENDER, RELIGION, AND POLITICS IN EUROPE. AN OVERVIEW AND A RESEARCH AGENDA

Giorgi A.(Speaker), University of Bergamo ~ Bergamo ~ Italy

FREEDOM WITH RELIGIONS. RETHINKING CIVILITY THROUGH POLITICAL INCLUSIVISM IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Pola - A108

Contact: Valentina Gentile
Chair: Sebastiano Maffettone
authorAMC: Valentina Gentile
Speaker: Aakash Singh Rathore, Carla Bagnoli, Mohammed Hashas, Debora Spini

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The Author Meets the Critics panel, coordinated by the Ethos Observatory, is devoted to a discussion of Valentina Gentile's book Freedom With Religions. Rethinking Civility through Political Inclusivism in Liberal Democracies (Routledge, 2026). The book offers a re-reading of political liberalism aimed at addressing the deep forms of religious pluralism that characterise contemporary democracies, steering a middle course between orthodox defences and radical critiques of this project.

At the core of the argument lies the concept of political inclusivism, a normative framework that remains faithful to the principles of public reason while expanding their interpretation in light of the lived experiences of religious citizens. On this basis, the book introduces the notion of a culture of civility, understood as a socially embedded complement to the duty of civility and as a bridge between public justification and the ethical life of civil society. Through these conceptual innovations, the book advances a more inclusive vision of the ethos of liberal democracies.

The panel will be introduced and chaired by Sebastiano Maffettone (Ethos Luiss). The book will be discussed by Aakash Singh Rathore (Ashoka University & Jindal Global University), Mohammed Hashas (University of Rome Tor Vergata), Carla Bagnoli (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia & National Academy of the Lincei), Debora Spini (New York University in Florence), and Tom Bailey (John Cabot University, tbc). The author will respond to the discussants' comments.

FREEDOM WITH RELIGIONS. RETHINKING CIVILITY THROUGH POLITICAL INCLUSIVISM IN LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES

Gentile V.(authorAMC), Luiss University ~ Rome ~ Italy

SECULARISM AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN ITALY. RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 16:00

Parenzo - A12

Contact: Maria Cristina Ivaldi
Chair: Maria d'Arienzo
authorAMC: Maria Cristina Ivaldi
Speaker: Rossella Bottoni, Alessandro Ferrari

This AMC session explores the legal and symbolic tensions at the heart of the Italian "positive secularism" (laicità), as analyzed in the monograph Secularism and Freedom of Religion in Italy. The volume provides a multi-layered investigation into how religious symbols shape the contemporary legal landscape, focusing primarily on their presence within public institutions and the resulting challenges to state neutrality.
The book's core inquiry aligns with the EuARe 2026 theme, "Religions and (In)equalities", by scrutinizing how the institutional management of religious symbols – from the historical "special significance" of Rome for Catholicism to the display of the crucifix in schools, courtrooms, and polling stations – impacts citizens' equality. Furthermore, the session will address the legal status of religious symbols worn by believers – such as the hijab, the Sikh kirpan, or the niqab – as well as other systemic "symbolic" issues. These include long-standing controversies over Muslim places of worship and the denial of cooperation agreements (intese) to non-confessional groups, such as the UAAR.
A significant portion of the discussion is devoted to the comparative dimension, contrasting the Italian "passive symbol" doctrine with French laïcité and other Western judicial approaches, including the seminal Lautsi saga. Led by the session Chair, the Author and two legal scholars will examine how these legal stalemates and the "living law" generate new forms of (in)equality, highlighting the ongoing absence of a general law on religious freedom and the wide margin of state discretion in managing religious diversity in the twenty-first century.

SECULARISM AND FREEDOM OF RELIGION IN ITALY. RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS IN THE PUBLIC SPACE

Ivaldi M.C.(authorAMC), University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli ~ Caserta ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS CONSTRUCTIONS OF MORTALITY: INEQUALITY, NORMATIVITY, AND THE MEANING OF DEATH

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A14

Contact: Roccolorenzo Scianguetta
Chair: Roccolorenzo Scianguetta

Death is a universal event, yet the ways in which it is imagined, interpreted, and governed are profoundly shaped by religious worldviews that define its meaning, its normative force, and its social visibility. Far from being a purely biological threshold, mortality becomes a conceptual and ritual field in which distinctions of status, gender, economic condition, and cultural belonging are negotiated, reinforced, or contested.

This panel invites contributions examining how religious traditions construct the phenomenology, ethics, and management of death—from philosophical and theological conceptions of mortality and human dignity, to ritual economies of commemoration, to normative frameworks regulating access to care, mourning, or recognition. Particular attention is given to the ways in which these constructions participate in the production, legitimation, or mitigation of social and legal inequalities.

Possible directions include: religious models of dignified dying and the moral value of the deceased; symbolic systems that encode or challenge hierarchical distinctions; ritual, ethical, or legal regimes that differentially allocate care, memory, or ritual privilege; and the interplay between religious conceptions of death and public policies concerning end-of-life issues or the management of the dead.

Bringing together perspectives from the history of religions, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and related fields, the panel aims to critically interrogate the complex nexus between mortality, religious normativity, and the dynamics of (in)equality.

LOVE IS STRONGER THAN DEATH

Danca W.(Speaker), University of Bucharest/Romanian Academy ~ Bucharest ~ Romania

KIERKEGAARD AND THE WANDERING JEW: DEATH AS FULFILMENT AND THE CURSE OF NOT BEING ABLE TO DIE

Tavilla I.(Speaker), C.E.R.I.S.K. Central European Research Institute Søren Kierkegaard ~ Ljubljana ~ Slovenia

AGENCY, ASCETIC DEATH, AND LEGAL MISRECOGNITION: NOTES ABOUT THE (INAPPROPRIATE) COMPARISON BETWEEN SALLEKHANĀ AND SATĪ

Scianguetta R.(Speaker), SISR ~ Montesano sulla Marcellana (SA) ~ Italy

RESURRECTION AND LEGAL INEQUALITIES: THE DIVERSE ACCOUNTS OF JESUS' APPEARANCES FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Di Lenardo A.(Speaker), Ca' Foscari University of Venice, University of Udine, and University of Trieste ~ Venice, Udine, Trieste ~ Italy

'LIFE IN DEATH AND LIGHT IN DARKNESS': PRAYERS ON DEATH IN GREGORY OF NAREK'S PRAYER BOOK

Apresyan A.(Speaker), Matenadaran, Mashtots Research Institute of Ancient Manuscripts ~ Yerevan ~ Armenia

SCIENTOLOGY AND DEATH AS PASSAGE: DOCTRINE, RITUAL PRACTICES, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SPIRITUAL IMMORTALITY

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THINKING IN OPPOSITES: BEYOND POLARISATION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - School of Journalism

Contact: Philip McCosker
Chair: Philip McCosker

The ways we live and think in and about our world seem to be increasingly polarised into mutually exclusive oppositions. Our understanding of opposition and difference seems to have become crude and coarse: either/or trumps both/and. The zero-sum of inequality proliferates, displacing the differentiated unities of forms of equality.

This panel seeks to explore richer ways of conceiving opposition and difference, taking its impulse from a number of under-appreciated works including Romano Guardini's Der Gegensatz (1925) and Paul Roubiczek's Thinking in Opposites (1952), as well as Nicholas of Cusa's coincidentia oppositorum. What are the ways of thinking through opposition and difference we can (re)source from the humanities and social sciences: how can we imagine our way beyond simplistic polarisations?

We invite papers which consider ways of thinking about opposition (or difference) in fresh and variegated ways, from whatever discipline. While links to the thinking of Cusanus, Guardini, or Roubiczek are welcomed, they are not necessary. The papers may be historical and/or constructive.

This session is linked to the research project on ‘Theologies of Catholicity’ based at the Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry at the Australian Catholic University in Melbourne, and co-led with colleagues from KU Leuven and St Andrew’s University.

BEING MYSTERIOUS: THE IMAGO DEI AND THINKING IN OPPOSITES

Insole C.(Speaker), Durham University ~ Durham ~ United Kingdom

OPPOSITES VISUAL AND CONCEPTUAL

Eikelboom L.(Speaker), ACU ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

FAITH IN FITTING OPPOSITES: THE AESTHETIC NAVIGATION OF BEGINNINGS AND ENDINGS

Despain B.(Speaker), Australian Catholic University ~ Melbourne ~ Australia

PLAYFUL ORTHODOXIES IN HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

Ocker C.(Speaker), Graduate Theological Union ~ Berkeley ~ United States of America

TENSEGRITY AND POLAR OPPOSITION: EXTENDING ERICH PRZYWARA'S ANALOGIA ENTIS

Migliore S.(Speaker), Pontifical Lateran University ~ Vatican City ~ Vatican City State (Holy See)

LOOKING TO THEOLOGY FOR A PEDAGOGY OF OVERCOMING POLARISATION

Ryliskyte L.(Speaker), Boston College Theology Department ~ Chestnut Hill, MA ~ United States of America

COINCIDENCE AND CATHOLICITY: A COMPARISON OF NICHOLAS OF CUSA AND ROMANO GUARDINI

Van Erp S.(Speaker), KU Leuven / Australian Catholic University ~ Leuven ~ Belgium

AGAINST INEQUALITIES AND STRUCTURAL EXPLOITATION: CHRISTIAN AND MARXIST CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIAL AND ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A206b

Contact: Angelina Giannopoulou
Chair: José Manuel Pureza

Social inequalities are not merely dysfunctions of a particular economic model, but rather constitutive features of the exploitation inherent in capitalism. Within liberation theology, these dynamics of exploitation have been conceptualised as structural sins, pointing to structural forms of injustice that exceed individual moral failure. The Gospel itself can be read as a prophetic cry against inequality, exploitation, & social injustice, one that nevertheless derives its transformative force from the promise of eschatological salvation.
Marxism, on the other hand, has historically constituted a major intellectual and political project that identified exploitation as a defining feature of human history and argued that the abolition of inequalities presupposes the abolition of exploitative relations as such. The socialist utopia thus emerged as a horizon of collective hope, orienting struggles aimed at overturning the existing socio-economic order. Hope lies at the heart of every social utopia and every eschatology, functioning as a force against resignation. For the Christian–Marxist dialogue promoted by the Dialop Project, hope represents a privileged site of convergence and critical exchange. Starting from the distinct theological and philosophical articulations of hope within their respective traditions, Christian & Marxist interlocutors aim to develop a shared social and political orientation that can counter contemporary regimes of inequality and exploitation. This dialogue gains renewed relevance in light of Pope Francis's call for a Holy Year of Hope. Marxist participants in the dialogue, in turn, draw on Bloch's 'The Principle of Hope' –described by W. Benjamin as a "system of theoretical messianism"– a work that played a foundational role in the rehabilitation of social utopia.
This closed panel brings together Christian and Marxist scholars in dialogue to reflect on social and eschatological hope as a counterforce to inequality & structural exploitation.

CHRISTIAN HOPE AS THEOLOGICAL RESOURCE AND THE DIALOGUE WITH MARXISM

O''Byrne D.(Speaker), SOPHIA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE - ISTITUTO UNIVERSITARIO SOPHIA ~ Figline e Incisa Valdarno ~ Italy

GROUNDS FOR HOPE: A MARXIST ENGAGEMENT WITH CHRISTIAN THOUGHT ON PEACE AND THE PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

Baier W.(Speaker), Party of the European Left ~ Vienna ~ Austria

MESSIANIC HORIZONS OF MARXISM: ERNST BLOCH IN DIALOGUE WITH THE THEOLOGY OF HOPE

Giannopoulou A.(Speaker), Sophia University Institute - Istituto Universitario Sophia ~ Figline e Incisa Valdarno ~ Italy

THE STRUGGLE FOR A HUMAN ECONOMY: MAMADOU DIA, CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT, AND AFRICAN SOCIALISM

Stanley I.(Speaker), London School of Economics ~ London ~ United Kingdom

CHRISTIAN ESOTERICISM IN THE “LONG NINETEENTH CENTURY”: CHALLENGES AND STRUGGLING FOR SURVIVAL

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A103

Contact: Giulio Dalla Grana
Chair: Luca Siniscalco

The “long nineteenth century” was marked by the flourishing, (re-)discovery, and invention of religious knowledge. The acceleration of global connections facilitated the diffusion of exotic doctrines and extra-European religions. Also, the new inequality between the emergent rational-positivistic mindset and traditional Christian theologies led to the latter’s response through either integration with or resistance to the former. Furthermore, analogous to the massive fascination with the “East”, the interest in the “occult”, and instances of attraction to Paganism, Christianity saw the development of heterodox currents imbued with esoteric features.
Concerning institutional Christianity, the long nineteenth century exhibited two paradoxical aspects. On the one hand, Christianity faced emergent secularisation and anti-clerical sentiments. On the other hand, the same century led to the empowerment of ecclesiastical institutions due to their nature as competitors or allies of nation-states. In turn, the inequality of these developments played a fundamental role in spreading popular devotion and sparking interest in mystical religious manifestations.
Whereas past scholarship investigated several of these traditions, the question of establishment, transfer, and circulation remains understudied. By contextualizing this subject within political institutions or across state borders, this panel aims to investigate the social, intellectual, and political challenges faced by Christian esotericism between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries.

The panel focuses on three themes:
1. Authority: Technical development and scientific research involved in the affirmation or condemnation of Christian esoteric aspects.
2. Routinisation: The circulation of heterodox doctrines and religious experiences and the attempts to halt them.
3. Coexistence: Conflicts and interactions between positivistic science, institutional confessions, social groups, and Christian esotericism.

THE SURVIVAL OF AN ÉLITE: CHURCH AND STATE AGAINST TOWIANISM

Dalla Grana G.(Speaker), Södertörn University ~ Flemingsberg ~ Sweden

SHINCHEONJI, A KOREAN NEW RELIGION IN GLOBAL CONTEXT; EXPANSION, CONTROVERSY, AND PUBLIC PERCEPTION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola A208

Contact: Márk Nemes
Chair: Davide Amore

This session examines Shincheonji as a rapidly expanding Korean Christian new religious movement whose global trajectory has generated both interest and controversy. The first paper introduces Shincheonji's history, millenarian theology, and the dynamics behind its rapid growth, situating recent Korean scandals—COVID-19 accusations and alleged political interference—within broader patterns of anti-cult mobilization in South Korea and abroad. The second paper analyzes the Victoria, Australia, Inquiry on "cults," highlighting how apostate narratives, media framings, and institutional anxieties converged to construct Shincheonji as a campus threat despite limited empirical evidence. The third paper turns to Latin America, focusing on Argentina, and explores Shincheonji's Bible courses as flexible spaces of graded participation while tracing how transnational anti-cult rhetoric is locally reactivated and judicialized. Paper 4 presents Shincheonji's missions in Europe, with particular attention to Central Europe, examining both the movement's strategies of implantation and the forms of opposition it encounters—opposition shaped simultaneously by global anti-cult campaigns and region-specific concerns. The session concludes with response papers by European representatives of Shincheonji, who offer an emic perspective on their interactions with society, the media, governmental agencies, and scholars, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the movement's lived realities and public reception.

AN INTRODUCTION TO SHINCHEONJI: MILLENARIAN MOVEMENT OR "EVIL CULT"?

Introvigne M.(Speaker), CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions) ~ Torino ~ Italy

SHINCHEONJI AND THE VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA, INQUIRY ON "CULTS": APOSTATES, MORAL PANICS, AND CAMPUS FEARS

Soryte R.(Speaker), FOB (European Federation for Freedom of Belief) ~ Torino ~ Italy

SHINCHEONJI IN LATIN AMERICA: BIBLE COURSES, GRADIENTS OF COMMITMENT, AND ANTI-CULT RHETORIC

Vardé M.(Speaker), University of Buenos Aires ~ Buenos Aires ~ Argentina

(IN)EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ON THE RELIGIOUS MARKET – OVERVIEWING SHINCHEONJI'S EUROPEAN PRESENCE

Nemes M.(Speaker), CESNUR – Center for Studies on New Religions, Torino, Italy ~ Torino ~ Italy

SHINCHEONJI IN THE UK: MEDIA BIAS, "CULT" LABELS, AND THE REALITY OF A BIBLE-CENTERED COMMUNITY

Amicarelli A.(Speaker), European Federation for Freedom of Belief ~ London ~ United Kingdom

A POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN 21ST CENTURY EUROPE

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Benedetto Matricini
Chair: Kristina Stoeckl
authorAMC: Kristina Stoeckl
Speaker: José Casanova, Gionathan Lo Mascolo, Sigrid Rettenbacher, Regina Elsner

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A Political Sociology of Religious Moderation in 21st-Century Europe is the title of a five-year research project (2026–2031) hosted at Luiss Guido Carli and funded by an FIS3 Advanced Grant of the Italian Science Foundation (PI: Kristina Stoeckl). The project addresses a major gap in current scholarship on religion and politics in Europe by shifting attention away from radicalization and reactionary Christian mobilization toward a largely overlooked group: religious moderates. This Author-Meets-Critic Panel discusses the role of religious moderates as actors ambiguously placed in between the presence of religion in public life and the rejection of its politicization with José Casanova, Gionathan Lo Mascolo, Sigrid Rettenbacher, Regina Elsner, and Richard Wood.

While existing research has extensively analyzed the role of conservative and far-right religious actors in contemporary “culture wars,” POLISMOD focuses on believers, clergy, and activists who reject the instrumentalization of Christianity for illiberal political ends, yet do not fully align with secular progressive positions on contested moral issues. Positioned between reactionary Christianity and secular liberalism, religious moderates face increasing pressure in polarized political and religious environments.

The panel introduces the project’s theoretical framework and mixed-methods comparative research design, spanning Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox contexts in Italy, Germany, Finland, and Romania. It invites discussion on how religious moderation is socially constructed and theologically legitimated as well as politically and institutionally enacted. This panel kick-starts the POLISMOD project for future debates on how religious moderation operates within and beyond the dynamics of contemporary culture wars in Europe.

A POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION IN 21ST CENTURY EUROPE

Stoeckl K.(authorAMC), Luiss University ~ Rome ~ Italy

SPORT AND RELIGION IN THE GLOBAL ARENA: NEUTRALITY, FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, AND THE GOVERNANCE OF DIVERSITY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Pola - A206

Contact: Maria Cristina Ivaldi
Chair: Maria d'Arienzo, Alessandro Ferrari

This panel explores the multifaceted interactions between sport and religion in the contemporary global arena, focusing on legal perspectives – particularly fundamental rights, equality, and non-discrimination – while embracing interdisciplinary approaches.
Traditionally, the principle of institutional neutrality towards religion, politics, and ideology has informed international sports law, including the Olympic legal framework, and has increasingly interacted with internationally recognized human rights standards. This principle, intended to safeguard inclusivity and equality, presents intricate challenges when religious identities and practices interact with sports governance and regulatory frameworks at both national and international levels.
Sport provides a unique setting for the expression and negotiation of religious identities, where beliefs may shape participation norms such as dress codes, dietary rules, days of rest, and gender roles. Historically, sport has also served as a tool for moral education, community-building, and religious communication, thereby frequently challenging strict interpretations of neutrality in contemporary pluralistic societies.
Contributions may address inter alia:
• religious approaches across different traditions (doctrines, sacred texts, and narratives);
• religious practices and accommodations (symbols, dress codes, dietary rules, and days of rest);
• religious identity and outreach through sport (encompassing belonging, proselytism, and faith-based competitions);
• normative tensions between religion and sport (equality, non-discrimination, hate speech on religious grounds, and the balancing of gender and sexuality claims).
By merging legal analysis and socio-cultural perspectives, the panel seeks to examine how neutrality in sports law interacts with religious diversity and identity claims, highlighting the tensions and accommodations emerging today.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IN SPORT: LEGAL ISSUES RELATING TO GENDER IDENTITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND RELIGION

Gagliardi C.(Speaker), University of Naples Federico II ~ Naples ~ Italy

ATHLETES' RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND THE SPORT SYSTEM. LEGAL ASPECTS OF A CHANGING IDENTITY

Rea F.S.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Napoli "Federico II" ~ Napoli ~ Italy

FROM RITUAL TO PERFORMANCE: ORTHODOXY AND THE FORMATION OF SPORTING ETHICS – BULGARIAN PERSPECTIVES

Dimitrova N.(Speaker), Bulgarian Academy of Sciences ~ Sofia ~ Bulgaria

SPORT AND RELIGION: BETWEEN INTERNATIONAL RULES AND NATIONAL ADAPTATIONS. A COMPARISON OF SOME CASES

Durisotto D.(Speaker), University of Cagliari ~ Cagliari ~ Italy

FOOTBALL, FAITH, AND NATIONAL FEDERATIONS: NAVIGATING RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

Ivaldi M.C.(Speaker), University of Campania Luigi Vanvitelli ~ Caserta ~ Italy

SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH SPORT: THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUSLY INSPIRED THIRD SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

Balsamo F.(Speaker), University of Naples Federico II ~ Naples ~ Italy

RELIGIOUS SYMBOLS AND OLYMPIC NEUTRALITY: THE “ATHLETES’ CROSS” AT MILANO-CORTINA 2026.

Osnato S.(Speaker), University of Pisa, University of Ferrara ~ Pisa, Ferrara ~ Italy

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON (IN)EQUALITIES: RACE, NATION, AND SECULARISM

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 19:30

Parenzo - A15

Contact: Donghyung Lee
Chair: Donghyung Lee, Taeha An

This panel offers global perspectives on how religious ideas intersect with forms of (in)equality across race, nation, and secularism. Recognizing that religious traditions can both reinforce social hierarchies and promote visions of equality, the panel draws on theology, religious studies, political theory, economics, and postcolonial theory to examine religion's ambivalent role in society. The papers present global case studies that address issues such as colonial legacies, sovereignty, economic cultures, and secularization. Collectively, they investigate how religious concepts and practices can challenge and reinforce inequality. The panel invites interdisciplinary dialogue on religion's capacity to confront or perpetuate inequalities in diverse cultural contexts. By integrating these issues and frameworks into the discussion, this panel underscores the relevance and intricacy of its inquiry. In a world marked by contested sovereignty, neoliberal disparities, migration upheavals, and secularism, questions regarding how religious ideas perpetuate inequality or foster resistance are more pertinent than ever. Cases from a global perspective exemplify these tensions within specific contexts—ranging from finance-dominated debt cultures and postcolonial nationalisms to religion-state relations and reimagined identities after slavery. The panel suggests that understanding religion's double-edged role necessitates moving beyond simplistic binaries. It calls for a nuanced, interdisciplinary engagement encompassing theology, political theory, economics, and ethics to discern how religious traditions can both inspire movements for equality and potentially reinforce injustice. Ultimately, the panel contributes to a comprehensive exploration of whether and how religion can be mobilized to confront rather than perpetuate the persistent inequalities of our era.

PERPETUAL PROGRESS AND CONSUMER DESIRE: GREGORY OF NYSSA'S DOCTRINE OF EPEKTASIS AND RESTLESS DESIRE IN CONSUMER CAPITALISM

Lee D.(Speaker), Yale University ~ New Haven ~ United States of America

MINJOK, STATE SOVEREIGNTY, AND CHRISTIAN ACTION: A KOREAN CHRISTIAN POLITICAL THEOLOGY AFTER THE 2024 MARTIAL LAW CRISIS

An T.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

DECHURCHED EVANGELICALS AND NEW MODES OF RELIGIOUS LIFE: A BRAZILIAN FORM OF SECULARIZATION?

De Vasconcelos H.M.(Speaker), Pontificia Università San Tommaso d'Aquino—Angelicum ~ Rome ~ Italy

THE RITUALIZATION OF THE NEW SOUTH: REGIONAL LIMINALITY AND REINCARNATION

Scholer P.(Speaker), Vanderbilt University ~ Nashville ~ United States of America

FROM COLONIAL SOVEREIGNTY TO INTERNALIZED ADMIRATION FOR IMPERIAL MODERNITY: THE POLITICAL-THEOLOGICAL RUINS OF JAPANESE COLONIALISM IN KOREA AFTER LIBERATION

Cho H.(Speaker), University of Toronto ~ Toronto ~ Canada

DECRYPTING SECULARIZATION: COLONIAL POWER, RELIGION, AND INEQUALITY IN THE HISPANIC CARIBBEAN

Lebrón--Gómez N.(Speaker), Princeton Theological Seminary ~ Princeton, New Jersey ~ United States of America

EQUALITY WITHOUT SAMENESS: SAID NURSÎ'S MORAL AND LEGAL CRITIQUE OF INEQUALITY IN MUN??AR?T (DISPUTATIONS)

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A102

Contact: Hakan Gülerce
Chair: Ahmet Yildiz, Hakan Gülerce

This panel proposes a focused examination of Said Nursî's conception of equality as articulated in his early twentieth-century work Munāẓarāt (Disputations), situating it within broader debates on religion, freedom, social justice, and (in)equalities.

Written in the context of late Ottoman constitutionalism (Meşrutiyet), Munāẓarāt addresses long-standing and unresolved questions concerning equality before the law, political inclusion, minority rights, social hierarchy, economic disparity, individual liberty, religious authority, and social cohesion. Nursî advances a conception of equality that rejects both hierarchical domination and reductive egalitarianism. Equality, in this framework, does not entail sameness of belief, virtue, or social role, but rather rests on justice, dignity, freedom as non-domination, and moral responsibility.

Approaching Munāẓarāt as a normative and political text, this panel explores how a religious moral framework can simultaneously critique despotism, challenge structural inequalities, and sustain pluralism. By foregrounding Nursî's reflections on law, governance, and social morality, the panel contributes to EuARe 2026's theme of how religious traditions have both reinforced and contested modern forms of inequality.
The panel welcomes interdisciplinary contributions from religious studies, political theory, sociology, history, law, and ethics that ground their analyses in close readings of Munāẓarāt and examine its relevance for contemporary debates on constitutionalism, citizenship, minority rights, and equality. Papers comparing Nursi's Munāẓarāt with other works and thinkers are also welcome.

Suggested Topics for Papers (Not limited to):

- Equality before the law and respecting religious differences
- Religion, constitutionalism, and political inclusion
- Minority rights, dignity, and coexistence
- Despotism as a source of structural inequality
- Social class, poverty, and moral responsibility

“EQUALITY WITHOUT SAMENESS:” JUSTICE, DIGNITY, AND NON-DOMINATION IN SAID NURSÎ’S MUNĀẒARĀT

Yildiz A.(Speaker), Fatih Sultan Mehmet Foundation University ~ İstanbul ~ Turkey

A MUSLIM CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF EQUAL CITIZENSHIP: THE LEGACY OF OTTOMAN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND PRACTICE

Kurt H.(Speaker), Northeastern University ~ Boston ~ United States of America

EQUALITY AS MORAL RESPONSIBILITY: SAID NURSÎ ON INEQUALITY, ʿUBŪDIYYA, AND NON-DOMINATION IN MUNĀẒARĀT

Nayed A.A.(Speaker), Kalam Research and Media ~ Benghazi ~ Libya

NURSI ON FREEDOM, CONSTITUTIONALISM, EQUAL RIGHTS, AND ETHICS

Abu Sway M.(Speaker), Prof. Dr. Mustafa Abu Sway Integral Chair for the Study of Imam Al-Ghazali's Work at the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Al-Quds University ~ Jerusalem ~ Palestinian Territory, Occupied

METROPOLITAN GEORGES KHODR (1923–PRESENT) NEW

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 17:10

Pola - A204

Metropolitan Georges Khodr stands as one of the most influential figures in modern Arabic Orthodox theology. His intellectual, pastoral, and public engagement has profoundly shaped theological reflection, political theology, and ecclesial life within the Antiochian sphere and beyond. This paper examines the significant role he played in shaping contemporary Arab Christian thought, with particular attention to the intersections of faith, culture, politics, and social responsibility. His influence extends beyond the Orthodox Church to the wider Arab intellectual milieu and ecumenical circles.

Special emphasis is placed on his long-standing commitment to the Palestinian cause and the defense of Palestinian rights. From the early 1950s through the second decade of the twenty-first century, his writings, speeches, and public interventions articulated a theology grounded in justice, human dignity, and solidarity with oppressed peoples. Through theological reflection, advocacy, and participation in regional and international forums, Metropolitan Khodr developed a Christian discourse that engaged political realities without reducing faith to ideology, while affirming the Church’s moral responsibility toward injustice.

The paper also explores how his thought shaped generations of students, clergy, and intellectuals who later became influential figures in theological, cultural, and political life. His legacy is not confined to written works but lives on through teaching, mentorship, dialogue, and sustained public engagement. By reflecting on his influence on our own intellectual formation, this study highlights the enduring relevance of his vision and situates Metropolitan Georges Khodr as a central reference in modern Arab Christian thought, offering valuable insights into theology, politics, and commitment to justice in a fragmented world.

SHIFTS IN 20TH/21ST-CENTURY CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: RETHINKING THE SUBJECTS OF THEOLOGY IN LIGHT OF INEQUALITIES

Friday 03 July 2026 from 15:00 to 18:20

Pola - A107

Contact: Isabella Bruckner
Chair: Nikita Semenikhin

As inequalities sharpen into focus in contemporary life, the “relevant subject” of theological discourse expands: not only the universal concept of “human being” in abstract terms, but concrete, embodied, socially situated humans (and increasingly nonhuman creation). In other words, 20th/21st-century theological attention shifts from the subject in general to subjects marked by corporeality, vulnerability, power and injustices. The panel traces a movement from fundamental theological premises to their concrete ecclesial and socio-political expressions in contemporary times, their epistemological and finally to their cosmo-ecological implications. These discursive movements highlight how theology reorients itself, adapting patristic insights to address modern asymmetries while preserving its core concerns.

The panel begins with an exploration of postlapsarian metaphysical inequality through the patristic symbol of the “garments of skin”, which provides the conceptual point of departure for the discussion as a whole. The panel then turns to contemporary theological “subjects” like institutional inequality by asking whether (and in what sense) there is a difference between laity and priesthood. From there it moves to gender inequality between men and women, before shifting to social inequality between rich and poor. The fifth contribution reflects the relation of mystic experience or contemplative knowledge and scientific knowledge in the theological discourse, whereas the sixth paper widens the scope beyond the human sphere by questioning species inequality, challenging anthropocentrism and reflecting on creation as a whole.

We are looking for two further contributions which are reflecting on the dimension of vulnerability and disability, or on the inequality of ratio and affectus in the theological discourse.

THE “GARMENTS OF SKIN” AND THE BIRTH OF INEQUALITY: GREGORY OF NYSSA ON THE POSTLAPSARIAN CONDITION

Semenikhin N.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

BRIDGING A SEPARATION, HONOURING A DISTINCTION: THE LEKTORENAMT OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AUSTRIA BETWEEN BAPTISMAL PRIESTHOOD AND ORDAINED MINISTRY

Jöri J.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

GENDER AND DIGNITY: THE NEW EU GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGIES IN DIALOGUE WITH CONTEMPORARY THEOLOGY

Reitano A.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

AND YET, THE PERIPHERIES AT THE CENTER. BETWEEN THE LEGACY OF FRANCIS AND THE INHERITANCE OF LEO XIV

Cofrancesco C.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

PRAISE OF THE EARTH. BIBLICAL ANTHROPOCENTRISM IN DISCUSSION

Bruckner I.(Speaker), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo ~ Rome ~ Italy

COMPREHENSION BETWEEN EXPERIENCE AND SCIENCE

Dohna Schlobitten Y.(Speaker), Pontificia Università Gregoriana ~ Rome ~ Italy

„DEAD MEN DON‘T RAPE“, OR: FEMALE RAGE AS CATALYST OF THEOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Tautz S.(Speaker), Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg ~ Würzburg ~ Germany

SYNODALITY WITHOUT ECUMENISM? RETHINKING THE SUBJECT OF CHRISTIAN UNITY UNDER CONDITIONS OF CONFESSIONAL INEQUALITY

Surowiec P.R.(Speaker), The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin ~ Lublin ~ Poland

DEVELOPMENT IN THEOLOGICAL ETHICS

Friday 03 July 2026 from 16:10 to 18:20

Pola - A108

Contact: Anton ten Klooster
Chair: Arnold Smeets

The teaching of churches on the content of their beliefs (doctrine) and the moral behavior considered fitting for their members (ethics) has developed over time, and still develops. To some, this is a given, whereas to other the notion of 'change in teaching' is contentious. The purpose of this session is to unite scholars interested historical, apparent, or proposed developments in (sexual) ethics.

There are several angles from which the question of development can be studied. Historically, it could be argued that some teachings and practices do change. When they do, the question remains how a tradition accounts for it: what happened to the content of a fundamental category such as natural law, when the permissibility of slavery is challenged?

In Catholic theology, Newman's 'Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine' is foundational. More recently, Seewald's 'Theories of Doctrinal Development in the Catholic Church' reflects on how Newman and others have shaped views continuity and discontinuity. Might there be ecclesiological perspectives that allow for an idea of rupture or reversal without challenging the unity of a given faith tradition?

The question of development can touch upon neuralgic issues, specifically considering human sexuality. We invite speakers to explore fundamental questions such as human dignity, the function of penal law, or natural law. Does the emergence of 'human dignity' as a fundamental notion, take precedence over other concerns, such as the apparent necessity of retribution for capital crimes? Possible paper subjects include, but are not limited to: methods and dynamics of actual or possible change, the role of theology in development, the appropriation of new ideas such as human dignity, the use of traditional ethical categories for new topics such as gender issues, reflection on 'silent' reversals in pastoral practices, ecclesiological processes of discerning future developments etc.

PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES TO SEXUALITY

Iula E.(Speaker), Pontificia Facoltà Teologica dell'Italia Meridionale ~ Napoli ~ Italy

OPEN QUESTIONS ON GENDER IN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY

Ten Klooster A.(Speaker), Tilburg University ~ Tilburg ~ Netherlands

FROM DIVINE MARRIAGE TO MODERN SEXUAL ETHICS: COMPETING VISIONS OF LOVE, COVENANT, AND THE HUMAN PERSON

Villeneuve A.(Speaker), Sacred Heart Major Seminary ~ Detroit ~ United States of America

DEVELOPMENTS OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINE ON MARRIAGE

Lintner M.M.(Speaker), PTH Brixen ~ Bressanone ~ Italy

DISCERNING TO CONSERVE: UNDERSTANDING CONTINUITY'S LOCUS

Baczyk--Bell C.(Speaker), Girton College ~ Cambridge ~ United Kingdom

MINORITY, INEQUALITY, AND THE POLITICS OF RELIGION AND THEOLOGY

Friday 03 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Pola - AT12

Contact: Spyridoula Athanasopoulou-Kypriou
Chair: Ulrike Ernst-Auga, Spyridoula Athanasopoulou-Kypriou

This panel builds on the rich body of theological and interdisciplinary scholarship that has critically examined minority perspectives in relation to religion and inequality. It aims to further explore how such perspectives interrogate the production, legitimation, and contestation of social, legal, and gendered inequalities within religious and theological fields. Departing from dominant, "major" theological frameworks that often align with sovereignty, normativity, and institutional power, the panel foregrounds theological practices that emerge from marginal locations, including feminist, queer, postcolonial, decolonial, and other subaltern religious articulations.

Drawing on Bourdieu's analysis of symbolic power as well as scholarship on religion, gender, biopolitics, performativity, and agency, the panel understands theology as a political, embodied, and knowledge-producing practice shaped by unequal regimes of visibility, recognition, and authority. At the same time, it remains attentive to emerging theoretical approaches that question fixed identity frameworks and explore "minor" modes of religious and theological articulation as critical, relational, and transformative practices.

We invite papers that examine how religious traditions, institutions, and discourses both reproduce and resist inequalities related to gender, sexuality, race, class, citizenship, embodiment, and religious diversity. Contributions may address: invisible or normalized inequalities within religious and theological fields; the effects of implicit or invisible religion in social, political, and legal contexts; the politics of theological recognition and exclusion; symbolic power within religious knowledge production; religion as a site of both symbolic violence and emancipatory imagination; and reconfigurations of equality beyond universalist, liberal, or identity-centered paradigms.

FROM MINORITY TO MINOR: GENEALOGY, POSTIDENTITY, AND BECOMING IN RELIGION

Ernst--Auga U.(Speaker), Humboldt-University of Berlin ~ Berlin ~ Germany

INVISIBLE INEQUALITY: GENDER AND CHRISTIAN ORTHODOX POLITICAL THEOLOGY

Athanasopoulou--Kypriou S.(Speaker), University of Crete ~ Rethymno ~ Greece

IMPLICIT RELIGION BEFORE THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Fokas E.(Speaker), American College of Greece, Deree London School of Economics Hellenic Observatory ~ Athens ~ Greece

DECOLONISING THE ICON: THE POLITICS OF ICON RECEPTION IN WESTERN EUROPE

Michalska A.F.(Speaker), Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan ~ Poznan ~ Poland

THE INVISIBILITY OF DEACONESSES AS GENDERED INEQUALITY: RECEPTION, RESISTANCE, AND THEOLOGICAL RECOGNITION IN CONTEMPORARY GREEK ORTHODOX DISCOURSE

Drosia A.(Speaker), Aristotle University of Thessaloniki ~ Thessaloniki ~ Greece

THE EMPEROR'S LIGHT AND THE MARGIN'S SHADOW: POLITICAL THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN MEDIEVAL CHINESE CHRISTIANITY

Balmont A.(Speaker), The Chinese University of Hong Kong ~ Hong Kong ~ Hong Kong

"FIRST-PERSON´S EXPERIENCE" FEMINIST, DISABILITY, QUEER AND TRANS HERMENEUTICS. PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS FOR THEOLOGIES

Wozna Urbanczak A.M.(Speaker), Bergische Universität Wuppertal ~ Wuppertal ~ Germany

NORMS AND NORMATIVITY AFTER VATICAN II: PROCESSES, SOURCES, MODELS, AND CENTERS OF NORMATIVE PRODUCTION AFTER THE COUNCIL

Friday 03 July 2026 from 16:10 to 19:30

Parenzo - A13

Contact: Davide Gardini
Chair: Massimiliano Proietti

Within the framework of the historicization of the post–Vatican II period, research carried out so far has primarily highlighted the need for a change of perspective, reflecting and concretizing the broadening of outlook that the Council itself sought to promote.
Along this trajectory, this panel aims to engage directly with the dynamics of the implementation of the Council, focusing in particular on the issue of the normalization of Vatican II. The panel therefore aims to highlight this phase of normalization by investigating its different moments and key turning points, and by bringing to light the crucial issues that emerged during the conciliar implementation phase. The panel will thus address the topic from the analytical perspective of this process of normalization, focusing in particular on:
• Post-Vatican II norms: the production of normative documentation within local churches (dioceses and diocesan synods; Episcopal conferences); the drafting of the Codex Iuris Canonici and the Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium; the elaboration, promulgation, reception, and effects of decrees and documents issued by the Holy See from Paul VI to Francis, or by bodies established in the post-conciliar period (post-conciliar commissions, Curial dicasteries), which marked turning points in the post-conciliar era; the activity of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.
• Vatican II as a norm: conflicts surrounding the implementation of Vatican II; conciliar ecclesiology in relation to the reform of the Roman Curia and the development of the Synod of Bishops; the normative status of the conciliar corpus itself for subsequent theological reflection and for the practices of local churches.

THE LEX ECCLESIAE FUNDAMENTALIS AND THE PROBLEM OF THE CODEX AFTER THE VATICAN II

Gardini D.(Speaker), Sapienza Università di Roma - DREST ~ Roma-Bologna ~ Italy

PAUL VI AND THE CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH: DOCTRINAL POLICY AND NORMATIVE PRODUCTION AFTER VATICAN II

Sintoni A.(Speaker), DREST - Alta scuola Europea di scienze religiose G. Alberigo ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THE STANDARDIZATION OF VATICAN II ECCLESIOLOGICAL LANGUAGE IN THE HOLY SEE'S MAGISTERIUM (2000-2025)

Corvo F.M.(Speaker), Alta scuola Europea di scienze religiose G. Alberigo ~ Bologna ~ Italy

A FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF THE CHURCH. ADOPTING ECUMENICAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS IMPULSES FROM THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

Berkmann B.(Speaker), Ludwig-Maximilian-University ~ Munich ~ Germany

RECONFIGURING JUDICIAL AUTHORITY: THE DOCTRINE OF DELICTA CONTRA SEXTUM IN THE 2021 REFORM OF BOOK VI OF THE CODE OF CANON LAW

Profeta A.(Speaker), Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia ~ Modena ~ Italy

DEALING WITH EXPECTATIONS AFTER NOSTRA AETATE 4. EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES ELABORATING GUIDELINES ON RELATIONS TO JEWS (1965-1973)

Maligot C.(Speaker), Fondazione per le Scienze religiose ~ Bologna ~ Italy

THEOLOGY AND SOCIAL CRITICISM

Friday 03 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A105

Contact: Stephen Bush
Chair: Stephen Bush

Theology speaks of a God who is just, and thus it must take justice as a matter of central concern. Modern conceptions of justice place great emphasis on equality, that is, that people will not be subordinated or dominated on the basis of race, gender, sexuality, nationality, class, etc. These reflections have put theology in conversation with social criticism, the attempt to understand unjust inequities, to mitigate them, and to propose new ways of living together. The papers on this panel discuss three specific engagements of theology with social criticism. The panel starts with Augustine, whom many have charged with being at the root of sexist features of church doctrine and practice. The first presentation engages William Connolly's The Augustinian Imperative, arguing that Augustine has resources for a more appreciative embrace of diversity than Connolly and many others think. The second presentation looks at the motif of martyrdom in nineteenth-century abolitionist movements, arguing that it played a powerful role in social criticism in that era and can do so today. The third paper looks at the postliberal theology of George Lindbeck and George Frei, addressing concerns that their perspective is inherently conservative by suggesting that their important insights about theology are not, in fact, incompatible with a more critical and progressive approach.

AUGUSTINE AND FEMINIST THEOLOGY

Stewart--Kroeker S.(Speaker), Princeton Theological Seminary ~ Princeton, NJ ~ United States of America

RELIGION, MARTYRDOM, AND ABOLITION: SOCIAL CRITICISM AND THE POLITICS OF EQUALITY

Dumler--Winckler E.(Speaker), St. Louis University ~ St. Louis, MO ~ United States of America

THE FUTURE OF POSTLIBERAL THEOLOGY

Bush S.(Speaker), Brown University ~ Providence, RI ~ United States of America

ARE “BRAINWASHING” THEORIES COMING BACK? RENEWED TRANS-NATIONAL ANTI-CULT ACTIVISM

Friday 03 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - A106

Contact: Massimo Introvigne
Chair: Mark Nemes

This session brings together six interdisciplinary papers that examine the contemporary resurgence of anti-cult discourse and the revival of “brainwashing” narratives across diverse cultural, legal, and political contexts. The first paper maps this global revival, tracing how transnational anti-cult networks have fueled renewed anxieties in countries as varied as Australia, Argentina, Japan, the United Kingdom, and South Korea. The second paper analyzes the Victoria (Australia) Inquiry on “cults,” showing how the extension of “coercive control” to religious movements repackages discredited theories under a new legal vocabulary. A third contribution explores sacred eroticism and the mechanisms through which anti-cult rhetoric delegitimizes esoteric erotic spiritual practices, often enabling disproportionate state intervention. The fourth paper examines the French agency MIVILUDES, highlighting how its reliance on the legally codified notion of “psychological subjugation” exposes structural weaknesses in France’s anti-cult model. The fifth paper offers an emic and psychological analysis of POYRA (Path of YahRa), showing how media campaigns construct stigmatizing representations that threaten religious liberty in the Czech Republic. The final paper presents the testimony of a Church of Almighty God refugee, documenting both persecution in China and the transnational extension of repression into democratic countries. Collectively, the session demonstrates how anti-cult discourse continues to shape public policy, media narratives, and legal frameworks, with a bizarre return of “brainwashing” theories scholars discredited long ago, raising urgent questions about pluralism, state power, and the protection of freedom of belief in contemporary societies.

FROM AUSTRALIA TO SOUTH KOREA: A RENEWED ANTI-CULT ACTIVISM

Introvigne M.(Speaker), CESNUR (Center for Studies on New Religions) ~ Torino ~ Italy

THE VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA, INQUIRY ON “CULTS”: “BRAINWASHING” DISGUISED AS “COERCIVE CONTROL”

Soryte R.(Speaker), FOB (European Federation for Freedom of Belief) ~ Torino ~ Italy

SACRED EROTICISM, ANTI-CULTISM, AND THE REVIVAL OF "BRAINWASHING" NARRATIVES

Marin C.(Speaker), Soteria International ~ Copenaghen ~ Denmark

MIVILUDES UNDER SCRUTINY: INSTITUTIONAL FRAGILITY AND THE LIMITS OF FRANCE'S ANTI-CULT MODEL

Roux E.(Speaker), United Religions Initiative (URI) ~ San Francisco ~ United States of America

POYRA (PATH OF YAHRA), ANTI-CULT DISCOURSE, AND "BRAINWASHING" ACCUSATIONS

Tomanova K.(Speaker), Psychologist ~ Brno ~ Czech Republic

PERSECUTION, "BRAINWASHING" ACCUSATIONS, AND TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION: AN EMIC PERSPECTIVE FROM A CHURCH OF ALMIGHTY GOD REFUGEE

Li X.(Speaker), Observatory of Religious Liberty of Refugees (ORLIR) ~ Rome ~ Italy

COMMON GOOD AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN OPPOSITION?

Friday 03 July 2026 from 17:20 to 19:30

Pola - Aula Magna

Contact: Benedetto Matricini
Chair: Ingeborg Gabriel, Kristina Stoeckl

The notion of the common good is back in public and academic discussion. Extensively used in classic political philosophy (Aristotle, Cicero) followed by the Catholic social traditions, Niklas Luhmann some time ago denounced it as “Old-European”. And indeed, the social philosophy of Enlightenment in its liberal as well as in its Marxist versions discarded the notion of the common good. At present, the term is back and has become a flagship for authors who want to return to a pre-modern political philosophy, like Patrick J. Deneen who pleads for a common good conservatism, to which he devotes a whole chapter in his book Regime Chance (2023). To overcome the shortcomings of liberal (political) philosophy, he as well as others propose a 180 degree turn away from individualism which they (falsely) associate with individual rights.
These positions are of increasing political importance since they are taken up and even radicalized by nationalist and nativist politics which are in ascent in the West and beyond, the more since they are linked to earlier versions of nationalism using the slogan Common good before individual good (Gemeinwohl geht vor Eigenwohl was a widespread slogan in Hitler Germany). Though abusus non tollit usum, and the principle of common good being much older than its twentieth century usage, the urgent question that remains is how the individual good (of which human rights are an important component) and the common good, e. g. the good of all, are interrelated and how they are to be balanced in the contemporary political order. This requires the acknowledgment of a weak spot of political liberalism, which regards the common good as the simple sum of individual goods without a value of its own.
The panel is to discuss this from historical, social ethical and sociological perspectives. How do various philosophical-normative and religious perspectives integrate the common good in social philosophical discourse?

“WHICH GOODS, WHOSE RIGHTS?”

Gorski P.(Speaker), Yale University ~ New Haven ~ United States of America

“CATHOLIC POST-LIBERALISM AND ANTI-LIBERALISM: CONVERSIONS AND REVERSIONS”

Faggioli M.(Speaker), Trinity College Dublin ~ Dublin ~ Ireland

FEARING THE ANTICHRIST: PETER THIEL, POLITICAL THEOLOGY, AND THE LIBERTARIAN CRITIQUE OF GLOBAL ORDER

Palaver W.(Speaker), University of Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

D.C. SCHINDLER'S « POLITICS OF THE REAL": A CRITICAL READING

Neulinger M.(Speaker), University of Innsbruck ~ Innsbruck ~ Austria

"CAN THE COMMON GOOD BE UPDATED AND IF YES - HOW?"

Gabriel I.(Speaker), University of Vienna ~ Vienna ~ Austria

THEOLOGY OF PRIESTHOOD: MISSION

Friday 03 July 2026 from 18:30 to 19:30

Pola - A108

Chair: Maeve Louise Heany

This panel reconsider relationships between contemporary theologies of presbyteral ordination in the Catholic Church as it functions in the world and offers a voice of a moral authority in its championing of human dignity. At the same time, the Catholic Church maintains a commitment to essentialising theologies of difference in relation to its understanding of baptismal dignity and ordained authority. Therefore, the Church has provided some of the most trenchant and far-ranging critiques of inequality across the globe, while also carrying the profound legacy of its past implication in colonial projects that generated the vastly unequal global present.
How should presbyteral priesthood in the Catholic Church be understood theologically in the light of this complex past and present? The Second Vatican Council reframed Catholic ecclesiology to focus on the shared reality of Baptism, insisting that all Catholics were equally called to holiness and to participate in the prophetic priesthood of Christ – an awareness would soon develop into the various, manifold ministries in which the people of God work out this call to follow Christ as members of his body. That same Council, however, did not offer an account of presbyteral ministry commensurate with this significant reframing. These panels seek to consider how Catholic theologians might offer generative theologies of the priesthood for the 21st century, taking the implications of Vatican II into the era of the Synodal Church. Each panel will consider a key issue from both an inside and outside perspective, considering how priesthood can be understood from within traditional sources of authority, and from outside of them.

(RE)NEGOTIATING CULTURE: INSIDE-OUT ECCLESIAL CULTURES

Mackinlay S.(Speaker), Heany Vdmf M.L.(Speaker), Archdiocese of Brisbane ~ Brisbane ~ Australia

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