

Research Institute for Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies



Philosophy of mind and language is one of the topics studied in the programme Cognitive Humanities.

The Research Institute for Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies (PTR) enhances our understanding of humankind's response to fundamental questions relating to society, human beings and their place in the natural world. Its research is organized in three interdisciplinary thematic programmes.

Programme 1: Competing Worldviews

Researchers working in this programme examine 'Philosophy, Theology, and Science as Competitors and Complements.' Throughout history, theology, philosophy and the sciences have emerged as large interpretative and explanative frameworks. In some periods these frameworks complemented each other; in others, they were rivals. This programme focuses on this history and the current state of their interaction. Key topics are concepts *e.g.*, 'cause', 'soul' and 'justice'; institutions (*e.g.*, universities, courts, monasteries and laboratories), methods (*e.g.*, exegesis, experiment and analysis) and documents (*e.g.*, encyclicals, inquisitional proceedings and university textbooks). This research programme, which is coordinated by Prof. Lüthy, encompasses the *Center for the History of Philosophy and Science* and the *Center for Catholic Studies: Historical and Systematic Perspectives*.

Programme 2: Cognitive Humanities

Culture – which includes language and religion – and the human cognitive system are inextricably intertwined. On the one hand, language, religion and other cultural artefacts are products of the human mind. On the other hand, they provide a unique cognitive niche within which the human mind can function and flourish. Researchers working in the Cognitive Humanities programme investigate language and religion by using existing knowledge of the human cognitive system. Conversely, they investigate the human cognitive system through insights into language and religion. The programme, which is coordinated by Prof. Venbrux, consists of a thematic group working on *Cognition, Culture and Language* and a thematic group working on *Religion and the Crisis of Meaning*.

Programme 3: Modernity Contested

Modernization involves the discovery of subjectivity and the dominance of science in the domain of knowledge, societal differentiation, rationalization and secularization. The process of modernization is essentially contested. The critique of modernity and of its symptoms, whether inspired by religious, philosophical, or societal concerns, is pitted against equally passionate apologies. Contemporary culture is marked, for instance, by heated debates about Islam, and about religion in general. Researchers working in this programme investigate the status and legitimacy of various contestations of modernity. This programme, which is coordinated by Prof. Wils, combines a thematic group working on *Islamic Studies* with the *Center for Contemporary European Philosophy*.

Research facilities

The Faculty library, which is integrated in the central humanities library, has excellent collections of books and journals on philosophy, theology and religious studies. It houses one of the world's largest microfilm collections of medieval and Renaissance manuscripts on logic, semantics, natural philosophy, metaphysics and theology. The library also contains several special collections and includes the Catholic Documentation Centre – a unique source for anthropological and missiological research.

Collaboration

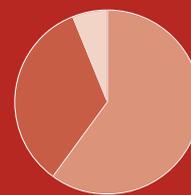
Researchers at the Institute collaborate intensively with colleagues, locally, nationally and internationally. Locally, collaboration consists of joint research groups with other faculties. For example, the new book series, *Radboud Studies in Humanities*, which was launched in October 2014, is edited jointly by members of the Faculty PTR and of the Faculty of Arts. Scholars from the Center for the History of Philosophy and Science collaborate with researchers from Historical, Literary and Cultural Studies in the Radboud Medieval and Early Modern Studies group. And researchers from the Cognitive Humanities programme collaborate with the Center for Language Studies and with the Donders Institute for Brain, Cognition and Behaviour.

Staff

Prof. P.J.J.M. Bakker (p)	Tenured	
Prof. S. van Bijsterveld (p)	Full Professors	9.3 FTE
Prof. J.A.M. Bransen (o)	Associate Professors	1.8 FTE
Prof. H.G.G.M. Driessen (e)	Assistant Professors	6.5 FTE
Prof. B. Geurts (o)	Researchers	1.4 FTE
Prof. M.A.C. de Haardt (p)		
Prof. P.I.M.M. van Haute (o)	Non-tenured	
Prof. G.J. van der Heiden (o)	Researchers	5.0 FTE
Prof. C.A.M. Hermans (o)	Doctoral candidates	13.6 FTE

Prof. C.H. Hübenthal (o)
Prof. C.H. Lüthy (o)
Prof. D.A.T. Müller (o)
Prof. K. van Nieuwkerk (o)
Prof. P.J.A. Nissen (p)
Prof. J. van Oort (p)
Prof. C.R. Palmerino (o)
Prof. J.B.A.M. Schilderman (p)
Prof. M.V.P. Slors (o)
Prof. J.M.M.H. Thijssen (o)
Prof. P.J.M. van Tongeren (o)
Prof. P.J.C.L. van der Velde (p)
Prof. H.J.M. Venbrux (o)
Prof. J.G. van der Watt (o)
Prof. F.J.S. Wijzen (o)
Prof. J.-P. Wils (o)
Prof. E.J. van Wolde (o)
Prof. E. van der Zweerde (p)

Research funding



■ Core ■ Grants ■ Contracts

(o), (e) and (p) see Glossary

Nationally, members of PTR participate in various research schools. In 2014, for example, the annual conference of the National Research School of Philosophy took place in Nijmegen (260 participants; organizers: Prof. P. Bakker & Dr Ch. Bax). Other PTR researchers regularly participate in the Netherlands School for Advanced Studies in Theology and Religion, in the Netherlands Interuniversity School for Islamic Studies and in the Research School for Medieval Studies.

Internationally, PTR researchers collaborate extensively with international researchers and research groups, including those at high-ranking institutes such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University College London, and Paris IV/Sorbonne in Paris. Programme 1 continues a series of joint-degree PhD projects, with the University of Bucharest, the Free University of Brussels, and the Technische Universität, Berlin. There has also been fruitful collaboration with the Excellence Cluster 'Religion und Politik' at the University of Münster, the international network 'Justice,

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Knowledge and Spirituality', the Institutum Carmelitanum (Rome) and the international research group working on Cathars, CIRCAED. Researchers in Programme 2 collaborate with the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, the Central European University Budapest, UCL, MIT, and the Universities of Oslo, Copenhagen, Aarhus, Edinburgh, Durham and Tel Aviv. Researchers in programme 3 collaborate with the Institute of Hermeneutics (Zurich University), the Geneva Institute of Social Studies, the RGGU (Moscow), the Arizona State University, the International Society for Psychoanalysis and Philosophy, the Collegium Phaenomenologicum, the Institute Dialog Ethik in Zurich, the University of Pretoria, the University of the West of England in Bristol and the Freud Museum in Vienna.

Research results

Programme 1

Daniela Müller presented heresy as part of a culture of dialogue that is characteristic of Christianity and that has contributed to the emergence of Europe's democratic structure. William Duba studied a notorious fourteenth-century text according to which Aristotle cannot have been 'saved' in the Christian sense, and identified the author as the conservative Franciscan theologian Hugh of Novo Castro. Christoph Lüthy has proposed a new genealogy of Descartes' metaphysics that connects the ontology of the 'Triumph of Philosophy' of Nicolaus Taurellus (1573) through Gorlaeus and Regius to Descartes' dualism. Elena Nicoli discovered that the earliest Renaissance reception of Lucretius was by no means limited to philology, but that the first impact was, unexpectedly, in the domain of philosophy and in what we would nowadays call biology and physics. Frederik Bakker found that Lucretius' zoogonical theory, which essentially reproduces Empedocles' zoogony by means of natural selection, has been modified in response to Aristotle's criticism of Empedocles. In his forthcoming book, Kuni Sakamoto explains the enigmatic Julius Caesar Scaliger, whose bizarre but highly successful *Exoteric Exercices* (1557) were applauded both by Aristotelians and by their opponents, as well as by Catholics and Protestants. Erik Dücker provided a trenchant analysis of the ethical dilemmas involving deep-sea biologists, who can only carry out their work with the funds of international companies, but at the same time have to protect the deep sea precisely from the mining plans of these companies.

Programme 2

Leon de Bruin has shown that the predictive coding approach to the brain solves classic problems in social cognition research. Bart Geurts and Marc Slors have both argued that philosophical and commonsense psychology should not be mistaken for pre-scientific cognitive psychology; this underscores the added value of philosophical analysis of commonsense psychology and helps to reinterpret results of cognitive psychological and neuroscientific research. Ellen van Wolde and Ruti Vardi have included methods from Construction Grammar, Collostructional Analysis, and

Cognitive Grammar in the study of Biblical texts. Thus, they made significant steps towards a methodological approach by means of which moral information may be identified in texts where direct imperatives, virtue and vice lists, etc. are not present. Thomas Quartier initiated an international debate on monastic liturgy, combining methods and theories from ritual studies, liturgical studies and spirituality studies.

Carl Sterkens and colleagues found that salience of religious identification influences willingness to maintain social distance with out-groups. This finding highlights the role of out-group trust in ethno-religiously stratified societies with collectivist culture such as the Philippines. Chris Hermans and Carl Sterkens published an article on four major issues on methodology in cross-religious research. Hans Schilderman has shown that the definition and measurement of religion is highly problematic, since the assumption of a simple harmony between the scientific concept of religion, church doctrine and practiced belief can no longer be assumed.

Programme 3

Gert-Jan van der Heiden and Antonio Cimino have developed new perspectives on metaphysical categories such as 'plurality' and 'contingency'. In the ongoing project on the Letters of Saint Paul, Ezra Delahaye demonstrated that the contemporary philosophical interest in these letters is well motivated by their severe political consequences. Philippe Van Haute has shown that the introduction of Freud's *Oedipuscomplex* was much later than is often assumed. This underscores congeniality of early Freudian thinking to contemporary philosophers such as Deleuze and Guattari. Research on the foundations of democracy by Evert van der Zweerde and Marin Terpstra has shown their essential relationship to the philosophical and religious heritage of Europe. Thus, they show that the loss of trust in (European) democracy corresponds to growing doubts about the European identity and the future of modernity. Jean-Pierre Wils has argued that these doubts are also visible in the uncertainty about the philosophical and cultural relationship between religion and arts.

In research that has received ample media attention, Martijn de Koning investigated Islam activism and motivations for radicalization in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. De Koning shows how resistance of different networks to perceived humiliation, repression and submission by non-believers, leads to opting for an idealized view on Islam and society. This view, in turn, changes their perception of media and politics.

Societal impact

With diverse forms of knowledge utilization, the impact of PTR research on society is very substantial. Media attention for our research on Islam, Salafism and IS, for instance, is huge. Two practical resource brochures on peace building produced by PTR



Dr Corien Bary is Associate Professor at the Department of Philosophy of Mind and Cognition and the Principal Investigator of the ERC Starting Grant project '*Unraveling the Language of Perspective*'. On November 17th 2014 was the kick-off meeting of this project.

researchers are now widely used by NGOs in Indonesia. And an edited website with Biblical material made generally available received 1 million hits last year.

PTR researchers have a strong track record of public lectures, newspaper articles, interviews for various media and publications for wider audiences. With 73 public lectures, varying from the Amsterdam Brainwash festival to the Flemish Parliament, 38 interviews on national and international TV (Fox News, Nieuwsuur, Een Vandaag) and radio (NPO radio 1, 2 and 5), 44 newspaper interviews and 94 publications aimed at a broad audience, including some very well received books, this tradition was certainly kept alive in 2014.

But the societal impact of PTR research is not limited to these forms of dissemination. Manifestations, workshops, summer-schools, exhibitions, theatre productions and even the publication of a glossy magazine are also on the repertoire. Leon de Bruin, for instance, worked on an interactive theatre production on 'The Collective Unconsciousness'. Brenda Matthijssen produced a 'glossy' on funeral cultures – *Doodzaak* – and organized a master class for undertakers. Inigo Bocken was co-organizer of an exhibition on Van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden at the Rijksmuseum Twenthe, and contributed to the impressive catalogue. Christoph Lüthy developed a philosophy course for primary school, which culminated in a presentation by pupils at the Faculty. Christoph Hübenthal organized a conference on societal responsibility for the Thijmgenootschap, William Duba gave a summer school on medieval manuscripts and Ria van den Brandt organized public events on the Holocaust, including an exhibition in Westerbork.

Future research

Reseachers working in programme 1 will organize high-profile international conferences on Julius Caesar Scaliger and Girolamo

Cardano (Sakamoto & Lüthy), on the History of Phaenomenology (Leijenhorst & Cimino), and on early-modern psychology (Colloquium: P. Bakker, Spruit & Lüthy). The first two volumes of John Buridan's Commentary on Aristotle's Physics will be published (P. Bakker, Thijssen, Streijger, Sylla). William Duba will co-organize a workshop at the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, Paris, on the medieval genre of principia-questions on the Sentences, which he has discovered to be the first 'paper debates' in history. Prof. Müller will focus on the role of women in religious debates as a possible point of departure for the emancipation of women in Europe. She will also work on self-sacrifice and suicide in the Christian tradition.

In programme 2, the ERC project on unravelling the language of perspective enters its second year (Dr Bary). Dr de Bruin intends to study the idea of 'uncertainty management', while a new NWO-funded programme on management of the self in psychiatry, supervised by Prof. Slors, will commence. Researchers working on death studies will extend their comparative research on how Catholicism and Protestantism have shaped relationships between the living and the dead in contemporary Europe. Biblical scholars will create an extended database (in the form of a source book) on Graeco-Roman and Hellenistic Jewish texts, guided by the Gospel of Luke, and will reconsider the Jewishness versus Graeco-Roman nature of the Gospel of John. Research collaboration with colleagues at the University of Groningen will result in a book on the Discursive Study of Religion.

In programme 3, a new edition of the 'Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie' (Sigmund Freud) will be prepared by Philippe Van Haute and Herman Westerink. New lines of research on 'Citizenship in the Arab World' (Roel Meijer), on the 'Sahaba Project on Companions of the Prophet' (Nicole Boekhoff-van der Voort), on the 'Social Dynamics of Public Goods'

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Key publications

Abanes, M.S., Scheepers, P.L.H. & Sterkens, C.J.A. (2014). Ethno-religious groups, identification, trust and social distance in the ethno-religiously stratified Philippines. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 37, 61-75. doi: 10.1016/j.rssm.2014.02.001.

Bakker, P.J.J.M. (2014). Fifteenth-Century Parisian Commentaries on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. In F. Amerini & G. Galluzzo (Eds.), *A Companion to the Latin Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Metaphysics* (pp. 575-629). Leiden: Brill.

Brandon, P. (2014). Body and self: an entangled narrative. *Phenomenology and the Cognitive Sciences*. Retrieved from <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs11097-014-9369-8>.

Francken, J.C. & Slors, M.V.P. (2014). From commonsense to science, and back: the use of cognitive concepts in neuroscience. *Consciousness and cognition*, 29, 248-258. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.concog.2014.08.019>.

Gijsbers, V. & Bruin, L.C. de (2014). How Agency Can Solve Interventionism's Problem of Circularity, *Synthese*, 1775-1791. doi: 10.1007/s11229-013-0366-1

Haute, P.I.M.M. van (2014). Freud against Oedipus. *Radical Philosophy*, 188 (nov/dec 2014), 39-46.

Heiden, G.J. van der (2014). *Ontology after Ontotheology. Plurality, Event and Contingency in Contemporary Philosophy*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.

Hense, E.H., Jespers, F.P.M. & Nissen, P.J.A. (Eds.). (2014). *Present-Day Spiritualities. Contrasts and Overlaps* (Studies in theology and religion, 18). Leiden - Boston: Brill.

Kok, F.J. (2014). John Buridan's Commentary on the *Metaphysics*. In F. Amerini & G. Galluzzo (Eds.), *A Companion to the Latin Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Metaphysics* (Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition, 43) (pp. 495-549). Brill.

Müller, D.A.T. (2014). *Ketzer und Kirche. Beobachtungen aus zwei Jahrtausenden* (Christentum und Dissidenz, 1). Münster: LIT.

Nieuwkerk, K. van (2014). 'Conversion' to Islam and the Construction of a Pious Self. In L. Rambo & C. Farhadian (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Conversion* (pp. 667-687). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tiel, B.J.M. van (2014). Embedded scalars and typicality. *Journal of Semantics*, 31 (2), 147-177. doi: 10.1093/jos/ffto02

Wils, J.-P. (2014). *Kunst. Religion. Versuch über ein prekäres Verhältnis*. Tübingen: Klöpfer & Meyer.

Wolde, E.J. van (2014). Cognitive Grammar at Work in Sodom and Gomorrah. In B. Howe & J.B. Green (Eds.), *Cognitive Linguistic Explorations in Biblical Studies* (pp. 193-221). Berlin, München, Boston: De Gruyter.

Dissertations:	14
Scientific publications:	240
Professional publications:	133

Director: Prof. Marc Slors

Since November 2005, Marc Slors has been Professor of Philosophy of Mind and Cognition at Radboud University. He got his PhD in philosophy from the University of Utrecht in 1997 (his supervisor was at the University of Illinois in Chicago). He then worked as an NWO postdoc and later as a KNAW research fellow at Radboud University and at the Australian National University. He has published widely on problems connected to the mind-brain relationship, mostly in international scholarly journals, but recently also for wider audiences. He is associate editor of *Philosophical Explorations*.



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(Jean-Pierre Wils) on the 'Changing Culture of Death and Dying' (Jean-Pierre Wils), on 'The Idea of Contestation in Modernity' (Marin Terpstra), on 'The Ethics of New Media and the Transformation of the Public Space' (Marcel Becker) and on 'Democracy in a New Key' (Evert van der Zweerde).

Awards and Grants

- Dr Michael Scherer-Rath (RU) – in cooperation with Prof. M.A.G. Sprangers (principal investigator; AMC) – acquired an NWO grant for a research programme entitled 'Improving the conceptualization and measurement of quality of life of patients with multiple chronic morbidities, exemplified by patients with cardiac disease undergoing cardiac intervention' (2 PhD projects).
- Prof. Slors acquired an NWO grant for a research programme on 'Management of the Self: A Humanities approach to self-management in psychiatry and psychosomatic medicine' (2 Postdocs and 2 PhD projects).
- Prof. C.A.M. Hermans and Dr T. van der Zee acquired funds for a research programme on 'spirituality and school leadership' (2 PhD projects). This research is financed by private funds.
- Prof. Jan van der Watt received the Alexander-von-Humboldt-Stipendium 2014 (to be taken up in 2015) and a prestigious award for Christian publications (Christian Publishing Company, and Christian Art Company), 2014.
- Drs. Fleur Jongepier received a Frye Stipendium.
- Prof. Paul Bakker, Dr Leen Spruit and Prof. Christoph Lüthy obtained funding for a Colloquium from the KNAW (Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences).
- Dr Leen Spruit was appointed as a 'KNAW Visiting Professor'.
- Dr William Duba was appointed as a 'Radboud Excellence Fellow'.
- Prof. Gert-Jan van der Heiden received an external senior Frias Fellowship.
- Prof. Jean-Pierre Wils' monograph 'Kunst. Religion. Versuch über ein prekäres Verhältnis' (Tübingen: Klöpfer & Meyer) was designated as 'Book of the Month' in September by the journal *Publik-Forum*.