

Research Institute for Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies



Researchers at PTR study social interactions and relationships. The picture shows a flash mob dance event.

The Research Institute for Philosophy, Theology, and Religious Studies (PTR) enhances knowledge related to fundamental questions about 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 investigate 'Philosophy, Theology, and Science as Competitors and Complements'. In the course of 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 the interaction between frameworks. Key topics are concepts (*e.g.*, soul, cause, heresy, and Catholicism), institutions (*e.g.*, universities, courts, monasteries, and public discourse), methods (*e.g.*, exegesis, experiment, and analysis) and documents (*e.g.*, encyclicals, inquisitional proceedings, and university textbooks). The programme is coordinated by Prof. Christoph Lüthy.

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, 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 is coordinated by Prof. Peter Nissen.

Programme 3: Modernity Contested

Modernization involves the discovery of subjectivity and the dominance of science in the domains 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 is coordinated by Prof. Gert-Jan van der Heiden.

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

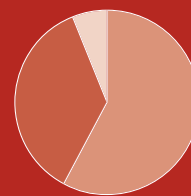
Researchers at the Institute collaborate with colleagues locally, nationally and internationally. Locally, collaboration consists of joint research groups with other faculties and institutes, including the Faculty of Arts (*e.g. the Radboud Medieval and Early Modern Studies*) and the Donders Institute. Nationally, members of PTR participate in various research schools. Internationally, PTR researchers collaborate extensively with researchers and research groups at many universities abroad, including such high-ranking institutes 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 universities in Berlin, Brussels, and Pisa. It also initiated collaboration with Heriot-Watt University (Edinburgh) on opening up the personal archives of Sir Charles Lyell. Furthermore, the programme has engaged in fruitful collaborations with the Internationale Gesellschaft für Theologische Mediävistik as well as the Centre d'études en sciences sociales du religieux (EHES, Paris) and the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHES, Paris), the Institutum Carmelitanum (Rome), and the international research group working on Cathars, CIRCAED.

Researchers in Programme 2 collaborate within the new Research Network on Death Rituals (universities of Zurich, Fribourg, Lancaster, Bath, Copenhagen and Radboud University) and within

Staff

Prof. P.J.J.M. Bakker (p)	Tenured	
Prof. S. van Bijsterveld (p)	Full Professors	9.2 FTE
Prof. J.A.M. Bransen (o)	Associate Professors	2.1 FTE
Prof. H.G.G.M. Driessen (e)	Assistant Professors	5.9 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	5.7 FTE
Prof. C.A.M. Hermans (o)	Doctoral candidates	13.9 FTE
Prof. C.H. Hübenthal (o)		
Prof. C.H. Lüthy (o)	Research funding	
Prof. D.A.T. Müller (o)		
Prof. K. van Nieuwkerk (o)		
Prof. P.J.A. Nissen (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)		



■ Core ■ Grants ■ Contracts

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

the AHRC research network Crossing-Over: New Narratives of Death. Further partners include the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, the Central European University Budapest, Rutgers University, and the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome.

Researchers in Programme 3 collaborate with the Institute of Hermeneutics (Zurich University), the Geneva Institute of Social Studies, RGGU (Moscow), Arizona State University, the International Society for Psychoanalysis and Philosophy, the Collegium Phaenomenologicum, the Symposium Phaenomenologicum, the Institute Dialog Ethik in (Zurich), the universities of Pretoria, Stellenbosch, Sao Paolo, Bristol, Paris VII/Diderot, Stockholm, and the Freud Museum in Vienna.

Research results

In Programme 1, a group of researchers developed a multifaceted account of public theology, bringing together various approaches. These include research into the spirituality of societal renewal,

which reveals the hidden forces that still shape the dynamics of public life; research into the spirituality of religious orders and congregations; and research on the theological origin of a secular public. These approaches converge in a view that understands public theology as a form of apologetic communication. Daniela Müller explained in a monograph how heresy provided new impulses to the evolution of Christian doctrines and a European culture of dispute, and specifically examined the role that women played in this process. Lyke de Vries translated and examined a hitherto unknown 1616 report for the Vatican censors on the works of the controversial Renaissance physician Paracelsus, which, somewhat unexpectedly, was written by the papal botanist Johannes Faber, himself a partisan of Paracelsus. Davide Cellamare retraced the emergence of a new type of Renaissance psychology between Melanchthon in Wittenberg and Snellius Sr. in Leiden, showing the first beginnings of a new mind-body dualism. Sanne Stuur investigated the way in which the philosopher Paul Cassirer modified his initial Kantianism step by step as a consequence of his encounter with the physics of Albert Einstein.

Doina Rusu and Christoph Lüthy discovered that Francis Bacon's posthumous *Sylva sylvarum* (1626) is not a Baconian book at all, but a pile of notes that Bacon's erstwhile chaplain, in need of money and patronage, falsely peddled as a genuine work. Thanks to the efforts of Paul Bakker and Michiel Streijger, the edition of John Buridan's commentary on Aristotle's *Physics*, finally came to fruition with the publication of the first of three volumes. Frederik Bakker and Carla Rita Palmerino traced a thought experiment employed by Galileo Galilei to the ancient philosopher Plutarch. And Hans Thijssen investigated the reasons why philosophy stopped looking for happiness and developed into a purely theoretical discipline.

In Programme 2, researchers refined the concept of 'continuing bonds', which is widely used in the contemporary study of bereavement, in the sense that these bonds have an expiry date and need to be located between physical and social death. They also analysed the crisis of meaning concerning death and dying as a threefold process of fading vocabularies, namely that of verbal, ritual, and symbolic vocabularies or repertoires. Other researchers contributed to linking together the approaches of socio-cognitive Discourse Analysis with the Theory of the Dialogical Self.

Other researchers proposed a unified solution to three puzzles involving negation, denial and commitment in 'non-canonical reports'. They also proposed a non-representational model of basic coordinated collaboration between humans. Others proposed new ways in which cognitive neuroscience can contribute to improving our everyday self-understanding. The concepts of 'heresy' and 'determinism' in biblical texts were studied and it was demonstrated that determinism is not an all-encompassing framework in the Hebrew Bible.

In Programme 3, Philippe van Haute and Herman Westerink published a new edition of Freud's *Drei Abhandlungen zur Sexualtheorie* that deviates from earlier editions in crucial respects, thus forcing interpreters to rethink the evolution of Freud's work and in particular the status of sexuality in relation to the Oedipus complex and the law. Annabelle Dufourcq problematized the difference between real and imaginary from a phenomenological perspective. The researchers working in the NWO-funded research programme on the contemporary philosophical readings of Saint Paul organized an international, multi-disciplinary conference bringing together philosophers, theologians and classicists. Gert-Jan van der Heiden showed how the philosophical interpretations of Paul's concept of faith emphasize the ethical rather than the epistemological dimension of this concept.

Marcel Becker's research showed how Aristotle's virtue ethics helps us to understand the ethical dimensions of the human interaction with the new digital media. Jean-Pierre Wils re-examined MacIntyre's virtue ethics in light of his critique of modernity, thus showing the complicated relationship between virtue ethical concepts and narratives of modernity. Marin Terpstra published a monograph that shows why modernity is contested and why this implies that there is no unchallenged standard to identify modernity. Evert van der Zweerde's research on the South Caucasian region shows how religion, nationalism and democracy influence each other in societies that are only now beginning to modernize.

Joas Wagemaker's and Martijn de Koning's studies on Salafism and Jihadism in Islam studies show that 'Salafism' refers to a diverse group in which the tendency to violence is characteristic of only a small proportion of its supporters. Also, it has become clear that the ideology of Salafists and Jihadists should be taken into account in the actions of this movement, and that these actions should not be understood in terms of socio-economical and political reasons alone. It has also become clear in the research by Karin van Nieuwkerk that the study of Islam should include a study of why people leave Islam.

Societal impact

It is in the nature of research in the humanities, as practised in our faculty, that its societal and cultural relevance manifests itself primarily in active participation in the public sphere. In part this involves informing the general public through publications, lectures, and media appearances, but in particular we consider it our responsibility to enhance the quality of the public debate by providing expert advice and ethical reflection for its participants, by way of publications, workshops, and training programmes. Therefore, a substantial portion of our research output consists of publications and lectures aimed at a general audience, media appearances, and so on.



Marc Slors (Professor of Cognition Philosophy). Cognition Philosophy involves the study of the nature of the human mind in relation to the brain and the body. Closely related to the Philosophy of Psychology and Philosophy of Cognition Sciences this sub-discipline also includes questions about free will, the causal effectiveness of mental states and the nature of consciousness. Prof. Marc Slors focuses on a Neuro-phenomenological theory about the 'unity of body and mind'.

Researchers working on Programme 1 presented their research to the larger public in the 50th-anniversary conference on the encyclical *Gaudium et Spes*; in a public debate on Nijmegen's theological position (*Theologia noviomagensis*); and in book presentations and public lectures, including one at the Senate in The Hague. An interactive app ('Games of Gods') was developed, which offers a guided tour through Xanten Cathedral. They also addressed audiences ranging from primary and high schools, students at summer schools and Radboud's Honours Academy to senior citizens. Paul Bakker and Cees Leijenhorst organized and participated in dozens of public events for Radboud Reflects, the Science Café, LUX and the Radboud Ambassadors Lectures. William Duba's research on the medieval paper revolution was featured in various national newspapers. Carla Rita Palmerino gave the Dijksterhuis Lecture, honouring E.J. Dijksterhuis' scientific and literary legacy, and Christoph Lüthy delivered the Buijtendijk Lecture, reflecting on the contorted history surrounding the university as an institution.

Researchers working in Programme 2 sought to contribute to a better understanding of the changing patterns of death, dying, and bereavement in the contemporary world, and they did this by sharing their knowledge with professionals of the three major Dutch funeral companies, by giving lectures for a broader audience, through popular publications, and through media performances. They co-organized an expert meeting with over 130 professionals on ethics and etiquette in dealing with human remains at the anatomical museum of Radboudumc. Other researchers are involved in the Life Insight Application Study to enhance quality of life among cancer patients, in cooperation with Cancer Fund/Alpe de'HuZes and Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies. A number of researchers also participated in a symposium on religion in a secular society in the Senate Building of the Dutch Parliament. Most scholars working within Programme 2 are regularly invited

for public lectures, radio talks, or newspaper interviews. Peter Nissen was a member of the KNAW Foresight Committee for theology and religious studies, which published its report in 2015.

In contemporary society, the role of Islam is a much-debated issue. As far as Programme 3 is concerned, the chair of Islam Studies participates significantly in this debate. Joas Wagemakers and Martijn de Koning edited a volume for a general audience to which all staff members contributed. Martijn de Koning was an expert witness at the trial of the so-called 'Contextzaak' and wrote a report. Since the attacks in Paris, Salafism, Jihadism and radicalization are important themes in the media. On these topics, lectures were organized in cooperation with Radboud Reflects, and staff members were interviewed in various national news media (Volkskrant, Trouw, De Gelderlander, and the TV programme Nieuwsuur).

Stefan Schevelier, who also works in Programme 3, developed a democracy game 'Wie is de beste burger?' (Who is the best citizen?), in which the players are confronted with the questions and problems encountered by participants in a democracy. Jean-Pierre Wils contributed to a Swiss committee to develop a model for an oath for physicians and more generally contributed to reflections on the ethical dimensions of healthcare. Wils is also often invited by societal institutions to give advice on the political, ethical and cultural dimensions of their policies.

Future research

The group engaged in systematic religious studies will integrate their research within the Global Network of Public Theology. Two international conferences are planned: 'Kierkegaard and Public Theology' and 'Kant and Public Theology'. Church historians will investigate the relationship between impurity and sexual restriction in relation to conventional views of women in the church. Inquisitorial trials will be examined as a model for the

Key publications

Abramova, E. & Slors, M.V.P. (2015). Social Cognition in Simple Action coordination: a Case for Direct Perception. *Consciousness and Cognition*, 36, 519-531. doi: 10.1016/j.concog.2015.04.013

Anthony, F.-V., Hermans, C.A.M. & Sterkens, C.J.A. (2015). *Religion and conflict attribution. An empirical study of the religious meaning system of Christian, Muslim and Hindu students in Tamil Nadu, India* (Radboud Studies in Humanities, 3). Leiden: Brill.

Becker, M.J. (2015). *Ethiek van de digitale media*. Amsterdam: Boom.

Cimino, A. & Kontos, P. (Eds.). (2015). *Phenomenology and the Metaphysics of Sight* (Studies in Contemporary Phenomenology, 13). Leiden: Brill.

Dufourcq, A. (2015). The fundamental imaginary dimension of the real in Merleau-Ponty's philosophy. *Research in phenomenology*, 45 (1), 33-52. doi: 10.1163/15691640-12341301

Geurts, B. & Rubio-Fernández, P. (2015). Pragmatics and processing. *Ratio*, 28, 446-469. doi: 10.1111/rati.12113

Gusman, S.W. (2015). Against Unnecessary Duplication of Selves: A Sartrean Argument Against Zahavi. *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 46 (4), 323-335. doi: 10.1080/00071773.2015.1054148

Hense, E.H. (2015). New Philology as Helpful for Spirituality Research. *Spiritus*, 15, 172-190.

Lardinois, A.P.M.H., Levie, S.A., Hoeken, H. & Lüthy, C.H. (Eds.). (2015). *Texts, Transmissions, Receptions. Modern Approaches to Narratives* (Radboud Studies in Humanities, 1). Leiden: Brill.

Meijer, R. (2015). Liberalism in the Middle East and the Issue of Citizenship Rights. In H. Meir (Ed.), *Liberalism in the Middle East after 67* (pp. 63-83). New York: Palgrave/MacMillan.

Müller, D.A.T. (2015). *Frauen und Häresie. Europas christliches Erbe* (Christentum und Dissidenz, 2). Münster: LIT Verlag.

Palmerino, C.R. (2015). Libertus Fromondus' Escape from the Labyrinth of the Continuum (1631). *Lias: Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and its Sources*, 42 (1), 3-36. doi: 10.2143/LIAS.42.1.3092395

Streijger, M. & Bakker, P.J.J.M. (2015). *John Buridan, Quaestiones super octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis (secundum ultimam lecturam)*. Libri I-II (Medieval and Early Modern Science, 25). Leiden: Brill.

Wagemakers, J. (2015). The Concept of Bay'a in the Islamic State's Ideology. *Perspectives on Terrorism*, 9 (4), 98-106.

Wolde, E.J. van (2015). 'Creation out of nothing' and the Hebrew Bible. In J. van der Watt & R.A. Culpepper (Eds.), *Creation Stories in Dialogue: The Bible, Science, and Folk Traditions* (pp. 157-176). Leiden: Brill.

Dissertations:	9
Scientific publications:	270
Professional publications:	139

Director: Prof. Bart Geurts

Bart Geurts studied philosophy in Nijmegen, obtained his PhD in linguistics from the University of Stuttgart, and was affiliated with IBM Germany, several universities in Germany and the Netherlands, and the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics in Nijmegen, before returning to his *alma mater* in 1999, where he is now Professor in Philosophy of Language and Logic. His research interests centre mainly on language and communication, but he has also published on neighbouring areas such as language acquisition, human reasoning and social psychology. He is a member of the advisory board of *Language Acquisition* and Editor of *Theoretical Linguistics*.



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tribunals of the French Revolution during the 'Grande Terreur'. The Center for the History of Philosophy and Science has planned several international conferences, including 'Athanasius Kircher's Science', 'Space, Imagination and the Cosmos', and 'The Ideas of Phenomenology'. It will also contribute to the encounter of giants: Peter Sloterdijk and Bernard Stiegler. Part II of Buridan's Commentary of Aristotle's Physics and vol. I of the Oxford edition of Descartes' *Correspondence* will be published.

Within Programme 2 the research on death, ritual, and spirituality will be continued, also comparatively in Europe. Related research into material religion will be further explored, in cooperation with a number of museums in the Netherlands and abroad. Research on growing evangelical churches in the Netherlands will be extended in collaboration with universities in Belgium and the UK. The Cognition, Culture and Language group will organize a workshop to prepare a research grant application on linguistic culture from a cognitive perspective.

In Programme 3 the work on virtue ethics, on the conflicts in modernity and on the origin of Freud's thought will be continued. A series of new projects will be started concerning the phenomenology of animality, the hermeneutics of testimony and attestation, and the status of asceticism, mysticism and spirituality in Foucault and De Certeau. In Islam Studies researchers will continue to work on the questions of citizenship in the Arabic world and will start a new line of research on moving in and out of Islam as well as the re-enchantment of Christian and Moorish celebrations in the Mediterranean.

Awards and grants

- Brenda Mathijssen MA was awarded a Frye Stipendium.
- Prof. Carla Rita Palmerino delivered the Dijksterhuis Lecture, on 'E.J. Dijksterhuis, Ferryman between the Exact Sciences and Literary Culture'.
- Prof. Christoph Lüthy delivered the Buytendijk Lecture, on 'The Usefulness of the University. A History of Unfulfilled Expectations'.
- Dr Delphine Bellis won a three-year postdoctoral fellowship at Ghent University, from the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO).
- Dr Erik Dücker obtained access to the family-owned scientific heritage of the 19th-century 'father of geology', Sir Charles Lyell, thanks to a matching construction between the RU and Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh.
- Lyke de Vries MA obtained an NWO PhD grant.
- Prof. Peter Nissen delivered the Comenius Lecture in Naarden.
- Prof. Philippe van Haute was appointed extraordinary professor by the University of Pretoria.
- As part of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Indonesian government, three PhD projects on Islam in Indonesia are to be initiated.
- Prof. Sophie van Bijsterveld received the Jhr. Mr. A.F. de Savornin Lohman Award for her book on the relationship between government and religion in the Netherlands.