



RELIGIOUS STUDIES WORKSHOP SERIES

XIV. RELIGIONESQUE: AN EMPIRICAL TOOL FOR EXAMINING ALTERNATIVE RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES AND PRACTICES

Sára Eszter Heidl

Empirical religious studies research in contemporary alternative spiritual settings often encounters the problem of applying the terms “religious” and “spiritual” to certain practices and experiences that are interpreted differently by practitioners and the researcher. While there is a connection to religion or spirituality in these interpretations, it is also clear that the practitioners prefer to avoid the usual labels and leave their beliefs, experiences, and practices undefined. In a research context, however, a conceptual approach is needed to understand the nuances of what counts as religion or spirituality and for whom. To overcome this difficulty, this workshop will discuss the previously proposed and useful concepts (spiritual, sacred, quasi-, pseudo-, Ersatzreligion) and also present a new umbrella term “religionesque” to encompass the different interpretations and fill the terminological gaps in empirical research.

Sára Eszter Heidl is a Researcher at the Research Centre for Religion and Transformation in Contemporary Society at the University of Vienna. She holds an M.A. in Religious Studies from the University of Szeged and a Ph.D. in Religious Studies and Sociology from the University of Erfurt and the University of Graz (Cotutelle de thèse, 2024). She is interested in contemporary social anthropological and sociological theories and methods, with a focus on event studies, alternative forms of religion and spirituality, and the religious experience.

26 November 2024

11:30–12:15

Seminar Room 1 (Ground floor)

Schenkenstraße 8-10