

Academic lectures – Rohrbacher Peter

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2026

New Insights into the Work of Oka Masao in Vienna (1938–1940): Evidence from Newly Discovered Archival Sources in the Bundesarchiv Berlin” (working title, key note).

Conference: *Reconsidering the History of Anthropology Before and After World War II Based on Archival Materials (working title).*

Location: Osaka University, Japan.

Dates: 27–28 November 2026.

Project link: <https://kaken.nii.ac.jp/grant/KAKENHI-PROJECT-24K00190/>

2026

Archibald Henry Sayce and the Shift to Racial Theory in Victorian Biblical Archaeology.

Panel: *History of Archaeology* (Convenors: Caitlin Chien Clerkin, Harvard University; Leticia R. Rodriguez, University of Houston).

Conference: *ASOR Annual Meeting* (American Society of Overseas Research).

Location: Chicago, United States.

Dates: 20–22 November 2026.

Link: <https://www.asor.org/>

2026

Between Darwin and Grammar: The Origin of Language and Concepts of the Orient in the Works of Leo Reinisch and Friedrich Müller in the Habsburg Monarchy.

Conference: *Egypt and Austria XV: Antiquity and Modern Times – Oriental Studies and Cultural Contacts in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.*

Location: Graz, Eggenberg Palace, Institute of Classics, University of Graz; Archaeology Museum, Universalmuseum Joanneum.

Dates: 8–10 October 2026.

Link: https://www.egyptandaustria.at/pdf/EA_XV-Call_for-papers-English.pdf

2026

The Rongorongo Tablets in the Weltmuseum Wien: Object Biography and Colonial Provenance.

Panel: *#185 Archaeological Objects and Their Textual and Visual Afterlives: A Complementary Biographical Perspective* (Organisers: Daniel Modl, Universalmuseum Joanneum Graz; Katie Meheux, University College London, Institute of Archaeology Library).

Conference: *32nd EAA Annual Meeting* (European Association of Archaeologists).

Location: Athens, Greece.

Dates: 26–29 August 2026.

Link: https://www.e-a-a.org/EAA/EAA/Events/Future_Annual_Meetings/EAA_2026.aspx

2026

Attempts to Decipher Ancient Mexican Codices in Austria (1910–1945).

Panel: *Archaeological Decipherment: Discovery, Conviction.*

Conference: *European Society for the History of Science – History of Science Society Joint Meeting.*

Location: Edinburgh, United Kingdom.

Dates: 13–16 July 2026 (presentation on 16 July 2026).

Link: <https://eshs.org/>

2026

Oka Masao and German-Speaking Volkskunde, 1935–1940.

Symposium: *Who Is the Volk? A German Concept and Its Japanese Trajectories.*

Location: Kyushu University, Japan.

Dates: 14–15 February 2026.

Link:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5bfbe86ae17ba3b146041174/t/697819d98ab4f94f3bd7b76a/1769478617781/Symposium+program+and+abstracts.pdf>

2025

New Insights into Childe’s Diffusionist Approach to Prehistory.

Symposium: *Celebrating the Centenary of Childe’s The Dawn* (Vere Gordon Childe Centre).

Location: University of Sydney, Australia.

Dates: 5–6 December 2025.

Link: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/arts/our-research/centres-institutes-and-groups/the-vere-gordon-childe-centre.html>

2025

Japanese Studies at the University of Vienna, 1939–1945.

Workshop: *Oka Masao, a “Missing Link” in Anthropological and Folklore Studies: Bridging Prewar Fascism and Postwar Democracy in Japan and Europe.*

Location: IKGA, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria.

Date: 23 September 2025.

Link: <https://www.oeaw.ac.at/ikga/veranstaltungen/event-detail/oka-masao-a-missing-link-in-anthropological-and-folklore-studies>

2025

The Road to Internationalization: The Conflictual Relationship between Prehistoric

Archaeology and Sociocultural Anthropology in Austria in the 1950s.

Conference: *Research History of Archaeology in Austria: An Assessment of the Current Situation.*

Location: University of Innsbruck, Institute of Archaeology, Austria.

Dates: February 26–28, 2025 (presentation on February 28, 2025).

Link:

https://www.uibk.ac.at/archaeologien/aktuelles/2024/2025_forschungsgeschichte_archaeologie_programm.pdf

2024

Philipp Paulitschke—An Austrian Pioneer of the Ethnography of Northeast Africa.

Conference: *Exploring the Ethnographic Archive: Early Ethnographers in the Long Nineteenth Century.*

Organized by: HOAN, HAR, and BEROSE.

Location: Online.

Dates: December 5–6, 2024.

Link: <https://histanthro.org/news/announcements/exploring-the-ethnographic-archiveonline-conference/>

2024

P. Wilhelm Koppers in Central India: Theoretical Reflections on His Collecting Activities in 1938–39.

Transdisciplinary international conference: *A Laboratory for Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue? Missionary Collections at the Interface of Religion, Science, and Global Society.*

Organizers: University of Bonn and the Steyler Missionaries (Societas Verbi Divini).

Location: St. Augustin (Bonn), Germany.

Dates: September 10–12, 2024 (presentation on September 12, 2024).

Link: <https://globalheritagelab.org/project/a-laboratory-for-intercultural-and-interreligious-dialogue/>

2024

The Reception of Blumentritt by the Filipino Anthropologist Marcelino N. Maceda (1925–2006).

Roundtable: *Blumentritt Beyond Rizal: Revisiting the Scholarship and Politics of a European Filipino.*

13th Conference of the European Association for Southeast Asian Studies (EuroSEAS).

Location: University of Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Dates: July 23–25, 2024 (presentation on July 25, 2024).

Link: <https://euroseas2024.org/>

2023

“White Africa” and the Institute of Egyptology and African Studies in Vienna.

Guest lecture for the course *African Studies Research since the 19th Century at the Interfaces of Language, Culture, and Society* (Instructor: Arno Sonderegger).

Location: University of Vienna, Institute for African Studies, Austria.

Date: January 11, 2023.

Link: <https://ufind.univie.ac.at/de/course.html?lv=143016&semester=2022W>

2022

Main Currents of Ethnology in Austria during the Interwar Period.

4th International Symposium: *Main Currents and Central Themes of German-Speaking Sociology in the Interwar Period.*

Organizer: Commission for the History and Philosophy of Sciences, Working Group History of Sociology (Karl Acham, Stephan Moebius).

Location: Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria.

Date: December 3, 2022.

2022

The Vienna School of Ethnology and Fu Jen University in Beijing, 1933–1949.

Guest lecture at Peking University (PKU).

Location: Beijing, China (online).

Date: November 23, 2022.

2022

History of German-Speaking Anthropology: An Overview.

Guest lecture at Peking University (PKU).
Location: Beijing, China (online).
Date: November 16, 2022.

2022

Moderator, Panel 1: *Historical Disciplines and Politics.*

Conference: *Daily Life – Memory – Reappraisal at the University of Vienna: Historical Sciences, Institutes, Structures, and Actors in Austrofascism, National Socialism, and the Postwar Era.*

Location: University of Vienna, Austria.
Dates: November 10–11, 2022.

2022

Introduction to the ISA Online Guest Lecture: Sophie Schasiepen, *Colonial Extraction and the Foundation of the Institute of Anthropology and Ethnography at the University of Vienna.*
Location: Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Social Anthropology, Vienna, Austria.
Date: October 20, 2022.

2022

Diffusionism Meets Prehistory: Vere Gordon Childe and His Archaeological and Anthropological Network in Vienna.

Seminar at the Royal Anthropological Institute (with Maxime Brami, Victoria Immervoll, Kathi Meheux, and David Shankland).
Location: London, United Kingdom (online).
Date: October 10, 2022.

Link: <https://www.therai.org.uk/events-calendar/eventdetail/803/-/rai-research-seminar-diffusionism-meets-prehistory>

2022

Father Wilhelm Schmidt: Selected Interactions with the Church and Politics during the Nazi Era.

Lecture on the occasion of the 147th anniversary of the founding of the Steyl Missionaries.
Location: St. Gabriel Mission House, Austria.
Date: September 8, 2022.

Media coverage:

- “P. Wilhelm Schmidt und seine geheime Mission,” *Steyler*, September 12, 2022. <https://lmy.de/rrir>
- “Forscher: Ethnologe P. Schmidt spielte Schlüsselrolle im NS-Widerstand,” *Kathpress*, September 13, 2022. <https://lmy.de/tvncQ>

2022

University and Resistance? Opposition Using the Example of Ethnology. Symposium: *Dictatorship and Resistance.*

Organized by: House of the European Union; Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Fundamental and Human Rights; Vienna Regional Criminal Court; Juridicum, University of Vienna.
Location: University of Vienna, Austria.
Date: July 1, 2022.

2022

“The Aryan Orient”: The Research Institute for East and Orient in Vienna, 1916–1923.
Workshop: *Oriental Societies and Societal Self-Assertion: Associations, Funds, and Societies for the Archaeological Exploration of the “Ancient Near East”.*

Organized by Thomas L. Gertzen (Berlin) and Olaf Matthes (Hamburg).
Location: Free University of Berlin, Germany (online).
Dates: February 23–25, 2022.

2022

(with Andre Gingrich) Book Launch: *Völkerkunde zur NS-Zeit aus Wien* (Vienna, 2021).
Royal Anthropological Institute.
Location: London, United Kingdom (online).
Date: February 22, 2022.

2021

“White Africa”: A Counterproposal to the Indo-European North and East Thesis.
Workshop: “Semitic Sciences”? Egyptology and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in the “Third Reich”.

Organized by Heike Behlmer, Annette Zgoll, Andreas Effland, Orell Witthuhn, and Thomas L. Gertzen.

Location: University of Göttingen, Germany (online).
Dates: November 26–28, 2021 (presentation on November 27, 2021).

2021

(with Andre Gingrich) **Book Presentation: *Ethnology in the Nazi Era from Vienna*.**
Organized by the Austrian Academy of Sciences Press.
Contributors: Thomas Jentzsch, Oliver Jens Schmitt, Johannes Feichtinger.
Location: Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria (online).
Date: November 3, 2021.

2021

The Portrait of Kissilerobo: On the Reception of a Colonial Photograph from German East Africa.

Location: Bonartes Photo Institute Vienna, Austria.
Date: October 7, 2021.

2021

The Portrait of Kissilerobo: Public Engagement with “Racial” Icons.
Workshop 6 (Working Group Museum and Working Group History of Anthropology).
Workshop theme: *Colonialism and Racism, Salvage Anthropology, Cultural Heritage Protection, and Decolonization*.
GAA Conference: *Worlds. Zones. Atmospheres. Seismographies of the Anthropocene*.
Location: University of Bremen, Germany (online).
Date: September 30, 2021.

2021

“Semi-Civilized or Uprooted”: Thurnwald’s Colonial-Ethnological Approaches during the Second World War.
International colloquium *Changing Fields: Hilde and Richard Thurnwald’s Ethnology*.
Organized by Laurent Dedryvère (Université de Paris), Roselyne Malpel (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle), and Céline Trautmann-Waller (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle / IUF), in association with Bérose – International Encyclopedia of the Histories of Anthropology.
Location: Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, France (online).
Dates: July 8–9, 2021 (presentation on July 8, 2021).

2021

Southeast Asia and Anthropologists from Vienna during the Nazi Years (SEAINDO Group). (with Andre Gingrich).

ISA Online Guest Lecture.

Location: Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria.

Date: May 27, 2021.

2020

Ethnology during Austria's Interwar Period: Academic Interactions with Church and Politics.

ISA Online Research Forum, Institute for Social Anthropology (ISA/OeAW).

Location: Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria.

Date: September 10, 2020.

2020

Folklore Studies for the Waffen-SS: Caucasus and "Turkestan" Research from Vienna at the End of the Second World War.

Conference: *EASA2020 – New Anthropological Horizons in and beyond Europe.*

Panel P049: *Uncomfortable Ancestors: Anthropology (Not) Dealing with Totalitarian Regimes.*

Location: University of Lisbon, Portugal (online).

Dates: July 21–24, 2020.

2019

Field Research among the "Bambuti Pygmies": The Debate on "Mixed Race" and "Blood Purity" between Paul J. Schebesta and Martin Gusinde.

GAA Conference.

Location: University of Konstanz, Germany.

Date: September 30, 2019.

2019

History of Caucasus and "Turkestan" Research in Vienna during the Nazi Period.

Location: Institute for Social Anthropology, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria.

Date: May 22, 2019 (Tullnerbach retreat).

2019

The Influence of the Hamitic Hypothesis on the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt.

Research history platform: *Archaeology and Republic: Reflections on Archaeology in Austria in the First and Second Republics.*

Location: Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria (OREA).

Dates: January 31–February 1, 2019 (presentation on February 1, 2019).

2018

The Racial Debate in the Roman Curia: New Research on the Planned Encyclical against Racism.

International congress: *Church, Fascism, and Jews: The Turning Point of 1938.*

Location: Rome, Italy.

Dates: November 19–20, 2018 (presentation on November 20, 2018).

2018

The Role of the Hamitic Thesis in Prehistoric Egypt.

International workshop: *Prehistory and History—Reflections on German Prehistoric Research in Egypt in the 20th Century*.

Location: German Archaeological Institute, Cairo, Egypt.

Dates: November 16–18, 2018 (presentation on November 16, 2018).

2018

Sigmund Freud’s Psychoanalysis from the Perspective of Father Wilhelm Schmidt: New Insights into a Longstanding Ethnological Debate on Religion.

GAA Conference: *Religion and Culture: Historical Perspectives*.

Location: University of Halle/Saale, Germany.

Dates: November 1–2, 2018 (presentation on November 2, 2018).

2018

Robert von Heine-Geldern, Egon von Eickstedt, and the “Aryan Question,” 1935–1938.

Symposium: *Lived Interdisciplinarity: Robert von Heine-Geldern—Life and Work*.

Location: Natural History Museum Vienna, Austria.

Date: October 25, 2018.

2018

“Personnel Changes”: Vienna *Völkerkunde* and the “Anschluss,” 1938.

Wednesday Seminar, commemorative year 1938/2018.

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Date: March 14, 2018.

2018

Seligman, the Royal Anthropological Institute, and the Race Debate, 1930–1945.

RAI Research Seminar.

Location: Royal Anthropological Institute, London, United Kingdom.

Date: April 25, 2018.

Link: <https://therai.org.uk/events/rai-research-seminar-peter-rohrbacher/>

2017

German Missionary Initiatives in Rome: The Campo Santo Teutonico as a German Place in Rome, 1870–1918.

Conference: *Papacy and Patriotism*, marking the 100th anniversary of the death of Anton de Waal.

Location: Vatican City, Campo Santo Teutonico.

Dates: November 22–25, 2017 (presentation on November 23, 2017).

2017

The Beginnings of Old Mexican Studies in Austria, 1910–1945.

GAA Conference 2017.

Location: Free University of Berlin, Germany.

Date: October 5, 2017.

Conference report:

– Han F. Vermeulen, *HAR Review*, February 22, 2018.

<https://histanthro.org/news/observations/history-of-anthropology-and-a-name-change-at-the-german-ethnological-society-meeting-in-berlin-conference-report/>

2017

Vienna Ethnology in the Nazi Era: Father Wilhelm Koppers, 1938–1945.

Wednesday Lectures.

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Date: May 3, 2017.

2016

“Funding without Application”: Dominik Josef Wölfel and Canary Islands Research, 1938–1945.

GAA Interim Conference, Working Group History of Anthropology.

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Date: December 9, 2016.

2016

Diffusionism in the Context of National Socialism.

Guest lecture, *Introduction to the History of Anthropology* (Course 240010; Instructor: Gertrude Eilmsteiner-Saxinger).

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Date: June 16, 2016.

2016

Father Wilhelm Schmidt, SVD, in Exile: Wehrmacht Deserters and Intelligence Services, 1943–1945.

Research colloquium organized by Bettina Beer.

Location: University of Lucerne, Switzerland.

Date: May 18, 2016.

2016

Father Wilhelm Schmidt, SVD, in Swiss Exile: Interactions with Wehrmacht Deserters and Intelligence Services during the Second World War (1943–1945).

Organized by the Anthropological Society in Vienna.

Location: Natural History Museum Vienna, Austria.

Date: March 16, 2016.

Link: <http://ag-wien.org/>

2015

“Anthropos”: The Personal Network of Fr. Wilhelm Schmidt, SVD, in Swiss Exile.

GAA Conference, Workshop 52: *Teaching, Research, and Survival in Exile: The Emigration of German and Austrian Ethnologists Forced by National Socialism from 1933 Onward.*

Location: University of Marburg, Germany.

Date: October 2, 2015.

2015

Scientific Racism—Historical Overview: Origins and Discourses.

Guest lecture, *Introduction to Colonialism, Racism, and Ethnicity* (Course 240008; Instructor: Ulrike Davis-Sulikowski).

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Date: June 8, 2015.

2015

The “Race Debate” at the Curia in the Context of *Mit brennender Sorge*.

International conference: *Catholicism, Racisms, and Totalitarianisms: The Encyclical “Mit brennender Sorge”*.

Location: Université de Bretagne Occidentale, Brest, France.
Date: June 4, 2015.

2015

“Swastika Research”: New Insights from the Papers of Friedrich Röck.

10th Days of Social and Cultural Anthropology 2015, Workshop 16: *Vienna Ethnology in the Nazi Era*.

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Date: April 23, 2015.

2015

Diffusionism.

Guest lecture, *Introduction to the History of Anthropology* (Course 240015; Instructor: Gertrude Eilmsteiner-Saxinger).

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Date: April 20, 2015.

2014

Ignaz Zollschan’s “Race Inquiry” (Vienna, 1934): An International Network to Combat Nazi Racial Doctrine.

9th Days of Social and Cultural Anthropology 2014, Workshop 8: *Vienna Anthropologies*.

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Date: May 15, 2014.

2014

The Encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge*, Pacelli, and the Steyl Missionaries.

International conference: *The Vatican and the “Race Debate” in the Interwar Period*.

Location: Vatican City, Campo Santo Teutonico.

Date: February 22, 2014.

2013

The Changing Concepts of Human Diversity in Africa during the 20th Century.

Location: Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin, Germany.

Date: February 21, 2013.

2012

Austrian Missionary Experts as Curial Advisors in the “Race Debate.”

Final conference of the research project *Pius XI and Austria*.

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Historical Theology, Austria.

Date: November 22, 2012.

2012

“Hamitic Migrations”: The Prehistory of Africa between Fiction and Reality.

Workshop: *On the Migration of Peoples: Representations and Narratives of Migrations in Ancient Studies*.

Cluster of Excellence TOPOI, Cross-Sectional Group V.

Location: Free University of Berlin, Germany.

Date: October 12, 2012.

2012

“Light-Skinned Hamites”: Hermann Junker and the Reorientation of Hamitic Studies in

Vienna, 1919–1945.
Egypt and Austria Lecture Series.
Location: Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, Austria.
Date: April 26, 2012.

2011

The Contribution of African Intermediaries in the Early Phase of Austrian African Studies.

Conference: *Histoire interculturelle de l'Africanisme Allemand*.
Organized by UMR 8547 *Pays germaniques – transferts culturels* (ANR-DFG Transnat).
Location: German Historical Institute Paris, France.
Date: March 18, 2011.

2010

Dominik Josef Wölfel (1888–1963): A Vienna Linguist and Ethnologist between Resistance and Adaptation in the Nazi Era.

6th Days of Social and Cultural Anthropology: *Fieldwork in the Archives—Historical-Anthropological Research in Vienna*.
Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.
Date: April 22, 2010.

2009

(with Clemens Gütl) Research on the Development of Austrian African Studies: An Interim Assessment.

Workshop: *University in the 20th Century—History of Science in Context*.
Forum *Contemporary History of the University of Vienna*.
Workshop II: *Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Approaches*.
Location: University of Vienna, Aula at the Campus, Austria.
Date: December 4, 2009.

2009

(with Clemens Gütl and Birgit Pack) Creating Knowledge in the Context of Colonialism and the Totalitarian State: Methodological Reflections on Biographical Research in Austrian African Studies (Albert Drexel, Robert Stigler, Hermann Junker).

5th Days of Social and Cultural Anthropology: *Biographical Research—An Interdisciplinary Workshop on Methods and Practice*.
Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.
Date: April 23, 2009.

Organized academic conferences and workshops

2023

(with Katja Geisenhainer, Oliver Loeb, and Karoline Noack)
Workshop: *Historical and Current Knowledge Production and Knowledge Transfer in Anthropology*.
Working Group Museum and Working Group History of Anthropology.
GAA Conference: *Contested Knowledge: Ethnological Perspectives*.

Location: Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, Germany (hybrid).
Dates: July 25–28, 2023.

2022

(with Katja Geisenhainer)

Prevention and Rejection: Historical Authority Structures in Anthropology and Their Influence on Internal and Public Discourses.

GAA Interim Conference, Working Group History of Anthropology.

Location: Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, Germany (hybrid).

Date: September 8, 2022.

2021

(with Katja Geisenhainer, Oliver Loeb, and Karoline Noack)

Workshop 6: *Colonialism and Racism, Salvage Anthropology, Cultural Property Protection, and Decolonization*.

Working Group Museum and Working Group History of Anthropology.

GAA Conference: *Worlds. Zones. Atmospheres. Seismographies of the Anthropocene*.

Location: University of Bremen, Germany (online).

Dates: September 27–30, 2021.

2021

(with Katja Geisenhainer)

Workshop: *The Interdisciplinary Orientation of German-Language Anthropology in the First Half of the 20th Century*.

GAA Working Group History of Anthropology.

Location: Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute for Social Anthropology, Vienna, Austria (online).

Date: March 19, 2021.

2016

(with Peter Schweitzer and Marie-France Chevron)

Workshop: *Why the History of Anthropology—and Who Should Write It? Social and Cultural Anthropology and Its Relationship to Its Own History and to the Historical Sciences*.

GAA Working Group History of Anthropology.

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Dates: December 9–10, 2016.

2015

Workshop: *History of Anthropology: Vienna Ethnology under National Socialism—Problems in the Interpretation of Nazi Sources*.

Location: University of Vienna, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Austria.

Dates: April 23–25, 2015.

2014

Conference: *The Vatican and the “Race Debate” in the Interwar Period (Pontificate of Pius XI, 1922–1939)*.

Organized with Thomas Brechenmacher (Professor of Modern History, German-Jewish History, University of Potsdam) in cooperation with the Roman Institute of the Görres Society (RIGG).

Location: Vatican City, Campo Santo Teutonico.

Dates: February 21–22, 2014.