Curriculum Vitae

Dr. (phil) Mag. (phil) Peter Rohrbacher
born in Zurich / Switzerland
Austrian citizen
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Current position

Researcher
Department of Cultural Anthropology and European Ethnology (DCAEE) at the University of Graz
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Scholarly education

1998-2001	Studies at Vienna University in Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Vienna Doctoral thesis: The Hamitic myth: a contribution to the historical image of the African continent (in German)
1991-1997	Studies at Vienna University in Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Vienna Diploma thesis: Hendrik Witbooi: The Namibian national hero in the context of the so-called colonial guilt lie and contemporary nationalism (in German)

Academic work experience

2002-2014	Exhibition and Museum education at castle Schallaburg, Lower Austria
2000-2002	Assistant at the Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna, Public Relations and Marketing Department

Academic employment

2026-present	Researcher at the Department of Cultural Anthropology and European Ethnology / University of Graz
2018-2026	Researcher at the Institute for Social Anthropology / Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna
2014-2018	Postdoctoral Assistant Professor at the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology / University of Vienna
2013	Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science Berlin

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Academic memberships and academic representatives

2020-	Correspondent of the History of Anthropology Network (HOAN) at the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) https://easaonline.org/networks/history-of-anthropology/hoan-team/
2019-2023	Deputy speaker of the working group "History of Anthropology" at the German Anthropological Association (GAA)

Academic teaching

2026, 2025	Guest lecture "Sociocultural Anthropology during the Nazi period in Vienna" (11.11.2026; 19.11.2025, chair: Peter Schweitzer, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Vienna)
2024	Guest lecture "Sociocultural Anthropology during the Nazi period in Vienna" (26.11.2024, chair: Peter Schweitzer, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Vienna)
2023	Guest lecture "'White Africa' and the Institute of Egyptology and African Studies in Vienna" (11.01.2023, chair: Arno Sonderegger, African Studies at the University of Vienna) https://ufind.univie.ac.at/en/course.html?lv=143016&semester=2022W
2022	2 Guest lectures "History of German-speaking Anthropology" (16.11. and 23.11.2023) at Peking University (PKU), Beijing (BA and MA)
2021, 2023	"Wiener 'Völkerkunde' in the first half of the 20th century: Selected texts on the institute's history" (with Andre Gingrich, 2 MA seminars at the University of Vienna) https://ufind.univie.ac.at/en/course.html?lv=240521&semester=2021S https://ufind.univie.ac.at/en/course.html?lv=240524&semester=2023S
2015	Guest lecture "Scientific Racism – Historical Overview: Origin and Discourses" (8.6.2015, chair Ulrike Davis-Sulikowski, Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Vienna)
2014-2018	Reading anthropological texts (6 BA seminars at the University of Vienna)
2014-2018	Introduction to academic work (7 BA seminars at the University of Vienna)

Awards

2025	St. Lee Visiting Fellowship Grant (Guest lecture at the University of Sydney)

Research areas │ Expertise

- History of Anthropology, with a focus on Central European traditions and their global interconnections
- Missionary Anthropology and Catholic Knowledge Production in the 19th and 20th centuries
- Science, Religion and Politics in the interwar period and under National Socialism
- History of African Studies, Oriental Studies and interdisciplinary transfers between ethnology, archaeology, linguistics and prehistory

- Reflexive historiography of the humanities
- Colonial knowledge production, racial theories and their entanglement with scholarly practice

Research funding

2026-2030	Austrian socio-cultural anthropology 1945-1965, funded by FWF stand alone project: Grant DOI 10.55776/PAT3135524 https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-radar/10.55776/PAT3135524
2020-2026	Socio-cultural Anthropology during Austria's interwar period 1918-1939, funded by FWF stand alone project: Grant DOI 10.55776/P33427 https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-radar/10.55776/P33427
2020-2022	Socio-cultural Anthropology during Austria's interwar period, funded by AAS, Innovation Fund Research, Science and Society (approved by the AAS, but not assumed by me)
2019	History of anthropology of Caucasus and "Turkestan" research in Vienna during the Nazi period, funded by AAS / DDr. Franz-Josef Mayer Gunthof Wissenschafts- und Forschungsstiftung
2014	Preparation of a file edition on Pius XI and Austria 1922-1939, funded by the Austrian Historical Institute Rome (OeHI-Rome) and the Austrian Academy of Sciences (AAS)
2013	Wilhelm Schmidt SVD (1868-1954) and the draft for an encyclical against racism (1938), funded by the Austrian Historical Institute Rome (OeHI-Rome) and the Austrian Academy of Sciences (AAS)
2013	The Change in the Concepts of Human Diversity in Africa in the 20th Century, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science Berlin
2012	Father Wilhelm Schmidt SVD (1868-1954) and the Vatican: Catholic mission, anti-communism and the contemporary racial debate, funded by the Austrian Historical Institute Rome (OeHI-Rome) and the Austrian Academy of Sciences (AAS)
2010-2011	Catholic missionary experts and the contemporary racial debate: Archival research in Vatican Archives for the research project "Pius XI and Austria", funded by the Department for Church History at the University of Vienna

Reviewer of journals │ books

- Archaeologia Austriaca/OeAW
- cultura & psyché – Journal of Cultural Psychology
- Histoire Epistémologie Language
- Language & History
- Paideuma. Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde
- Sociologus – Journal for Social Anthropology
- The History and Impact of German Archaeology in the Near and Middle East (edited volume)