



# Myth and the More-than-Human Community in the Twenty-First Century

8-9 Oct, 2026

Keynote speakers:  
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# Myth and the More-than-Human Community in the Twenty-First Century

## Workshop Topic

Can community—and, more specifically, the more-than-human community—be conceived as anything other than a myth? The term myth itself embodies a fundamental ambivalence: it can signify a lie, fabrication, or ideological fiction, yet it simultaneously refers to a primordial, sacred, and potentially non-hierarchical form of speech through which worlds are disclosed and relations instituted. Rather than seeking to resolve this tension, the workshop places it at the centre of its inquiry, examining the processes through which community is enacted, reflected upon, and mediated. It asks how more-than-human forms of coexistence might be conceptualised through engagement with relational and Indigenous ontologies, without romanticising or appropriating them. Ultimately, the workshop questions whether myth can serve not merely as an object of critique but also as a resource for rethinking community beyond identity, hierarchy, sovereignty, and mastery.

Against this backdrop, the question of belonging emerges as the political and religious articulation of community: who belongs and on what terms. Contemporary debates oscillate between nationalist and exclusionary imaginaries grounded in identity, sovereignty, and closure, and emerging concepts of more-than-human communities shaped by interdependence, exposure, and entanglement in the face of ecological crisis. This workshop starts from the premise that what these formations share is not a stable foundation, but a constitutive mythic dimension that determines who can speak, act, and share responsibility. It asks how the institutionalisation of community through myth can enact an immunitarian logic, simultaneously protecting certain members while delimiting others, rendering belonging both a safeguard and a justification for exclusion or even sacrifice.

Against this background, the workshop also asks how more-than-human community can be thought politically beyond the logic of sovereignty and moral universalism. How might concepts of vulnerability, exposure, becoming-animal, and ecological entanglement challenge dominant political imaginaries of protection, mastery, and immunisation? In this sense, the workshop seeks to open a space for rethinking community not as a moral or juridical project of inclusion, but as a fragile, conflictual, and transformative field of shared life across species.

## Forms of Submission

Presentations may take the form of individual papers. To be considered, proposals must include the presenter's name, paper title, and full contact details (email address and institutional affiliation), along with an abstract (500 words) and a brief biographical note. The workshop will take place in Vienna on 8–9 October 2026. Presentations will be 20 minutes in length and will be followed by 30 minutes of discussion. Submissions should be sent electronically as a single PDF file. Scholars at all stages of their academic careers are warmly encouraged to apply.

## Content of Submission

Bracketing the binary between the real and the fictive, and drawing on thinkers such as Derrida, Nancy, Latour, Haraway — as well as Nietzschean and post-Nietzschean critiques of humanism, morality, and political sovereignty — the workshop explores community as poised between impossibility and inevitability, between rupture and relational becoming. Focusing on myth as both a totalising and interruptive form, it investigates how communities take shape through narratives, practices, and institutions—such as taboo, sacrifice, ritual, law, technology, and regimes of purity and pollution—and how these determinations are legitimised, naturalised, and contested. Centering on the consequences for interspecies relations and ecological entanglements, the workshop examines how the stabilisation of community simultaneously establishes boundaries and exclusions.

Recognising the wide spectrum of questions encompassed by the workshop's theme, we invite contributions that engage with, but are not limited to, the following questions:

- Can myth operate as an interruptive rather than totalising form, enabling non-identitarian, non-sovereign modes of coexistence?
- How can community be approached as a process of exposure and relation rather than a stable foundation, particularly in more-than-human contexts?
- How can Nietzschean critiques of humanism, morality, and political sovereignty help to rethink community beyond liberal inclusion and moral universalism?
- How might diverse modes of relationality—such as kinship, companion species, sympoiesis, and Terrestrials—shape, extend, or even rethink the notion of community?
- How do narratives and practices relate to one another, and in what ways do myths both reflect and enable practices of eating, killing, sacrifice, care, mediation, and automation while drawing lines of inclusion and exclusion?
- In what ways can dialogue between postmodern thought and Indigenous knowledge generate productive insights for understanding community, relationality, and practice?

## Contact

Please submit proposals to: [myth.community@lists.univie.ac.at](mailto:myth.community@lists.univie.ac.at) until the 17.7.2026.

The workshop is organized by Matthäus Leidenfrost, Lukas Geiszler, Georg Harfensteller and Dr. Michael Staudigl.

The organizers are exploring publication options; however, participation in the workshop does not imply a promise of publication.