



## INVITATION

Essen, 16.04.2026

### **Truth and Judgement at the Limits of Liberalism**

Wenn und Aber – Philosophische Fragen zur Zeit

**Wednesday, 22 April 2026, 18:30**

**Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities Essen (KWI), Gartensaal**

**Goethestraße 31, 45128 Essen**

**Are today's "red lines" still institutional boundaries – or have they become moral performances of exposure and outrage? This lecture offers a new reading of contemporary polarization. Rather than locating its origins solely in the radical right, it argues that liberal institutions of judgement have been undermining themselves from within. It traces how neoliberalism has eroded these institutions, reshaping how truth is produced and politically mobilised.**

As institutional mediation weakens, truth increasingly appears not as something to be adjudicated through established procedures, but as something to be exposed – through testimony, conscience, and quasi-theological forms of revelation across the political spectrum. Focusing on whistleblowing, the lecture shows how liberal institutions tend to treat truth-telling as a liability rather than as a public good grounded in accountability. This shift signals a broader transformation in the status of truth: from an object of institutional judgement to a moralised practice of disclosure.

#### **SPEAKER**

Dorit Geva, University of Vienna

#### **MODERATION**

Mona Leinung, KWI

#### **PARTICIPATION ON SITE**

This is a public event and participation is free of charge. There is no registration necessary.

#### **ORGANIZATION**

Organized by the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (KWI) in cooperation with the Folkwang University of Arts, as part of the annual theme 2026/27 „Red Lines“.

#### PRESS CONTACT

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

[Event on the KWI website](#)

**We would appreciate the circulation of this press release.**

### **About the Annual Theme 2026/27 “Red Lines”**

With our 2026/2027 theme “Red Lines”, we explore practices and modes of thought that set boundaries and make distinctions visible. What political and aesthetic strategies are used to draw these red lines, and to what ends? How are they crossed, ignored, or defended? Where do red lines lead, and to what extent can one even grasp a “thin red line”? Together with our guests and members of the public, we aim to embark on shared expeditions: tracing various red lines, always exploring both sides of each divide.

### **About the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities Essen (KWI):**

Part of the University Alliance Ruhr, KWI is an interdisciplinary research centre for the humanities and cultural sciences, in the tradition of international Institutes for Advanced Study. Current research fields at KWI are: aesthetic practices, constellations of historical impact, dialogues between the cultural and social sciences, science studies, and visual literacy. Within the Ruhr area, KWI is a place to share the results of ambitious humanities research with interested parties from the region, and to convene discussions on the politics of scholarship. [www.kulturwissenschaften.de](http://www.kulturwissenschaften.de)

**Please note:** If you do not wish to receive any further press releases from the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities (KWI), please send a short message to [presse@kwi-nrw.de](mailto:presse@kwi-nrw.de). Many thanks

**NEWSLETTER:** The KWI Newsletter provides news about the institute twice a semester. Click [here](#) to register.

**PODCAST:** Listen now to the latest episode of the new podcast "[Krumme Straße](#)" from KWI & Merkur!

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