

CALL FOR PAPERS—Deadline October 31 2014

“The Jewish Life of Jesus (Toledoth Yeshu) in Context: Jewish-Christian Polemics in Ancient, Medieval, and Modern History.”

June 28 – July 1 2015

Institut für Judaistik, University of Bern, Switzerland—www.judaistik.unibe.ch

Abstract: The Jewish life of Jesus (Toledoth Yeshu) is now the object of renewed scholarly interest, following the publication of a Princeton conference held in 2009 (Toledot Yeshu [“The Life Story of Jesus”] Revisited, P. Schäfer, M. Meerson, Y. Deutsch eds., Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2011) and anticipating the synoptic edition of more than hundred manuscripts under the directorship of Peter Schäfer. The development of this protean textual tradition, narrating the life and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth from a Jewish anti-Christian point of view can be followed in the long run of Jewish-Christian relations and polemics from the late antique to the modern periods. Whereas the Toledoth Yeshu are most often studied from a text-critical perspective, the present conference will seek to go beyond philological debates and raise general questions on the function of Toledoth Yeshu and related traditions in the different historical and cultural contexts in which they surface and circulate. Engaging the Toledoth Yeshu from a cultural history perspective will allow us to connect our inquiries into these particular texts to wider issues pertaining to the construction, transformation, and preservation of religious identities, and the inherent discourse on gender, ethnicity, and religion.

Topics to be considered:

- Ø The literary genres of Toledot Yeshu
- Ø Intertextuality and extratextuality in the Toledoth Yeshu
- Ø Toledoth Yeshu and defence strategies of minority groups
- Ø Gender representations in Toledoth Yeshu and related traditions
- Ø Power and authority as reflected in in Toledoth Yeshu and related traditions
- Ø Toledoth Yeshu and the discursive construction of emotional communities
- Ø Magic and discourse of magic in the Toledoth Yeshu
- Ø The Toledoth Yeshu, othering discourse, and the construction of identity.

Confirmed speakers include: John G. Gager (Princeton University); Daniel Stoekl Ben Ezra (EPHE, Paris); Philip Alexander (The University of Manchester); Gideon Bohak (Tel Aviv University); Israel Yuval (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem).

Call for papers: In order to encourage young scholars to participate, we invite submissions from graduate and post-doctoral students in the field of Jewish studies, Jewish history, religious studies, medieval culture and history, middle eastern studies, textual/literary studies. Cross-

disciplinary approaches are especially welcome. No registration fees. Abstracts of no longer than 300 words, along with a CV, should be sent before October 31 to:
daniel.barbu@theol.unibe.ch

General information: The conference will be held at the Haus der Universität, Schösslistrasse 5, 3008 Bern, Switzerland. Speakers will be given 30 minutes each, followed by a 15-minute discussion. In order to support a collective discussion, speakers will be asked to circulate their papers in advance.

Publication: Select papers from the conference will be considered for publication in the form of a peer-reviewed collective volume.

Information/contact: daniel.barbu@theol.unibe.ch