



Department of Jewish Thought



The Israeli Association for the Study of Religions

The 2nd Annual Conference

Call for Papers

Sacred Scriptures – Their Nature and Their Place in Religions

11-12 March 2018

Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan

The Israeli Association for the Study of Religions was founded in October 2015, in order to advance the academic study of religions in the country by acting as a forum for relevant scholarly activities, and holding varied events, such as conferences, workshops and seminaries. The IASR's elected President is Prof. Ithamar Gruenwald (Tel Aviv University), and its Academic Board includes representatives from Israeli Universities, colleges and research institutions.

The Department of Jewish Thought at Bar Ilan University will host the 2nd Annual Conference of the IASR. This year's conference will focus on **Sacred Scriptures – Their Nature and Their Place in Religions**, and will take place during 11-12 March 2018.

Scriptures constitute a foundational element in religions and pose important questions regarding the processes of their formation and crystallization as holy texts, in terms of belief, the organization of religious institutions, and the shaping of society and ritual. In most cases (though not in all), scriptures contain the religion's "story", its myth(s). While the phenomenon of scriptures is seemingly shared by both Eastern and Western religions, variances between religions and their scriptures – as well as the themes

manifested in these texts – should be examined. In most cases, scriptures change over time and contribute to the shaping and organization of religions and religious behavior.

One of the most important issues concerning the study of scriptures is their formation and editing process. Research has shown that, in most cases, scriptures include and represent various traditions that sometimes contradict each other. One of the important factors in scriptures is the element of interpretation, which expands both its textual framework as well as its content. Interpretation can be a part of scriptures themselves, as well as of the tradition that shapes their content and essence post factum.

Scriptures in Judaism and Islam are but two examples for the dynamics of the creation of scriptural status through non-canonical texts. It can be argued that non-canonical interpretive traditions form a canon in their own right, such as The Mishna in Judaism and the Hadith in Islam. The expansion of scripture and its rewrite in apocrypha and deuterocanonical books should be examined as well.

Prof. Laurie Zoloth, Dean of University of Chicago Divinity School and former President of the American Academy of Religion, will deliver the Keynote Lecture.

We invite scholars and advanced post-graduate students to submit proposals for single presentations and/or full sessions. Doctoral candidates are requested to include the supervisor's approval in the proposals.

The deadline for submissions is 25 December 2017. Notifications regarding proposals and conference participation will be emailed in January 15th. Proposals should be email to the IASR's Secretary, Dr. Shai Feraro, Israel.iasr.2015@gmail.com.

The Conference's Steering Committee:

Dr. Irit Averbuch (Tel Aviv University), Prof. Hanoch Ben Pazi (Bar Ilan University),
Dr. Avraham Elqayam (Bar Ilan University), Dr. Shai Feraro (Max Stern Academic College of Emek Yezreel and the Zefat Academic College), Prof. Ithamar Gruenwald (Tel Aviv University), Prof. Barbara Meyer (Tel Aviv University).