

With the support of Mr. Larry Enkin, Canada, the Spiegel Family Foundation Chair for European Jewish History,
and the Cymbalista Jewish Heritage Center, TAU

'With God on Our Side'

Holy War and Sacred Struggle in Judaism, Christianity and Islam

A Collaborative International Conference in Interreligious Studies

2-4 June, 2013, Tel Aviv University

(Unless otherwise indicated, all sessions will be held in the *Gilman Building, Room 133*)

Sunday, June 2, 2013

14.00-17.00: **Session I - Sacrifice**

The session will focus on how the binding of Isaac/Ishmael is understood and deliberated, and the type of paradigm it constitutes in the three religions, how the notion of giving to God transforms into self-sacrifice, and how sacrificial death or a life of sacrifice inform the notion of a "sanctified" life in the three traditions?

Rev. Dr. David Neuhaus SJ, Latin Patriarchal Vicar, Saint James Vicariate for Hebrew-Speaking Catholics in Israel

Prof. Israel Knohl, Biblical studies, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Prof. Reuven Firestone, Hebrew Union College

Moderator: **Prof. Meira Polliack** – Hebrew Culture, TAU

Opening Event (The Cymbalista Jewish Heritage Center)

17.30-18.00: Reception

18.00-18.30: Greetings

Prof. Joseph Klafter, TAU President

Prof. Eyal Zisser, TAU Dean of Humanities

Prof. Simon Goldhill, Director, CUPRIH, University of Cambridge

Prof. Menachem Fisch, Director, CRIS, TAU

Opening Remarks

Prof. Shlomo Biderman, Vice President MTA, Philosophy, TAU

18.30-20.00: **Opening Lecture** under the auspices of the Spiegel Family Foundation Chair for European Jewish History

Contact, Conflict and Compromise

Interactions Between Jews, Christians and Muslims in Iberia and Beyond

Prof. David Abulafia, Professor of Mediterranean History, University of Cambridge

Chair: **Prof. Jeremy Cohen**, Abraham and Edita Spiegel Family Foundation Chair for European Jewish History, TAU

Monday, June 3, 2013

10.00-13.00: **Session II - Fighting for God: Traditions of Holy War**

The Concept of a war commanded by God, fought in His name and conducted as a religious duty differs subtly between and within the three religions. The session will focus on the different ways the paradigmatic holy war - the conquest of the Holy Land - is read and understood in the three traditions

Dr. Nathan MacDonald, Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge

Prof. Uri Rubin, Arabic and Islamic Studies, TAU

Prof. Menachem Lorberbaum, Hebrew Culture, TAU

Moderator: **Prof. David S Katz** – History, TAU

13.00-14.30: Lunch Break

14.30-17.30: **Session III - Martyrdom**

The session will focus on the religious meaning of "living" and "dying" for God at different moments in the history of the three traditions, and how it relates to Martyrdom and other sacrifices in the name of God.

Prof. Karen L. King, Harvard Divinity School

Prof. Ron Margolin, Religious Studies, TAU

Prof. Meir Litvak, Center for Iranian Studies, TAU

Moderator: **Dr. Barbara U Meyer** – Religious Studies, TAU

18.00-20.00 (The Cymbalista Jewish Heritage Center)

A Public Forum in Collaboration with the Mosaica Center for Religious Conflict Transformation in the Middle East



Religious Violence in Judaism, Islam and Christianity **Contemporary Religious Responses**

Rabbi Michael Melchior, Former Minister of Social & Diaspora Affairs and Knesset Member, Chief Rabbi of Norway and congregational rabbi in Jerusalem

Dr. Mahmoud Habash, Palestinian Authority Minister of Religious Affairs (Awqaf)

Most Rev. Elias Chacour, Vice President and Archbishop, Greek Melkite Archeparchy of Akko

Moderator: **Dr. Raquel Ukeles**, Curator of Israel's National Library Islam and Middle East Collection

Conference Dinner

Tuesday, June 4, 2013

10.00-13.00: **Session IV - Struggling with God**

The session will focus on the book of Job and the idea of struggling against God Himself in the three faith traditions — not as a struggle against religion, but as a struggle motivated by religion.

Dr. Victoria Harrison, Forum for Philosophy and Religion, University of Glasgow

Dr. Nehama Verbín, Philosophy and Religious Studies, TAU

Prof. Camilla Adang, Arabic and Islamic Studies, TAU

Moderator: **Dr. Ori Goldberg**, Humanities, TAU

13.00-14.30: Lunch Break

14.30-17.30: **Session V - Psychomachia – The Inner Struggle**

All three Abrahamic traditions share the understanding that "Holy War" is a struggle not only with the enemy without, but with the enemy within - with one's desires and evil inclinations. Here also the struggle is conceived of as commanded by God, fought in His name, and conducted as a solemn religious duty. And, again, each tradition views it in interestingly different terms pertaining to their intriguingly variegated anthropologies.

Prof. Ishay Rosen-Zvi, Hebrew Culture, TAU

Prof. Sara Sviri, Comparative Religion, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Prof. Yossef Schwartz, The Cohn Institute for History and Philosophy of Science, TAU

Moderator: **Dr. Uriya Shavit** – Religious Studies, TAU

18.00-20.00: **Summary Roundtable Discussion**

Prof. Karen King – Harvard Divinity School

Prof. Paula Fredriksen – Comparative Religion, Hebrew University, Jerusalem

Prof. Simon Goldhill – Director, CUPRIH, University of Cambridge

Dr. Adam Afterman – Hebrew Culture, TAU

Moderator: **Prof. Menachem Fisch** – Director, CRIS, TAU