‘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 “sacrificed” life in the three traditions.
Rev. Dr. David Neuhaus SJ, Latin Patriarchal Vicar, Saint James Vicariate for Hebrew-Speaking Catholics in Israel
Prof. Israel Knahl, Biblical studies, Hebrew University, Jerusalem
Prof. Reuven Firestone, Hebrew Union College
Moderator: Prof. Menachem Lorberbaum, 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. Yael 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 Conspicuous Interactions Between Jews, Christians and Muslims in Iberia and Beyond
Prof. David Abudafia, 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 solemn religious duty differs subtly between and within the three religions, how it relates to Martyrdom and other sacrifices in the name of God.
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 Knesser 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

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 Verbin, 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 Srivi, Comparative Religion, Hebrew University, Jerusalem
Prof. Yoosef 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 Alterman - Hebrew Culture, TAU
Moderator: Prof. Menachem Fisch - Director, CRIS, TAU