

Program

International Conference

Religion and Politics in Contemporary Society

University of Haifa

Wednesday, October 17 and Thursday, October 18, 2018

Venue: Ofer Observatory and Senat (Eshkol Tower)

Contemporary societies all over the world are currently witnessing a reemergence of religious actors, claims and slogans into the political and social sphere. Although long proclaimed dead in the wake of secularization theory, religion and religious self-identification seem to be on the rise in contemporary societies again. Individualization, political and social conflict as much as socio-economic stratification and crises of political legitimation all over the globe have made religion attractive as a tool of collective and individual empowerment, but also as a source of othering and political and social exclusion. From a sociological perspective, religion can be seen as a mode of identification, a way of social organization and a way to frame political claims. As such, it might be a way of identifying oneself and others and of construing sameness and difference and a way of positioning oneself in relation to others. Understood as a mode of social organization, religion can also be seen as a way of framing, channeling and organizing social relations in societies, also across national borders. Thus, religion can acquire transnational meaning and become a powerful resource to construct global communities in the name of religion. In contemporary societies all over the world, religion and politics seem to coexist, coproduce each other and collide in different contexts.

Further, the role of the state and its means of self-narration play a crucial role of creating a national identity, using religion and religious repertoires (narrative, symbols) to legitimate and justify state power and specific forms of inclusion and exclusion. In these cases, the state is the producer of a specific form of nationalism that derives its territorial, political or moral legitimation from specific religious sources.

Wednesday, October 17th,

Ofer Observatory, Floor 30, Eshkol Tower

- 9:30-10:00 Welcome
Martin Weiss, Austrian Ambassador
Prof. Eli Salzberger, Director of the HCGES
- 10:00-11:30 **Panel 1: Trilateral Dialogue on “Religion as a matter of contemporary politics”**
Reflections on a relationship in transformation. Perspectives from
Western/Northern Europe, from Eastern/Southern Europe and the Middle East
- Chair: **Dr. Johan Nicolai**, HCGES
Prof. Michael Minkenberg, Europe University Viadrina
Prof. Andras Máté-Tóth, Szeged University
Dr. Gudrun Harrer, University of Vienna
- 11:30-12:00 *Coffee Break*
- 12:00-13:00 **Keynote 1: Secularization – Pluralization – Transformation**
Chair: **Dr. Ayman Agbaria**, University of Haifa
Dr. Gergely Laszlo Rosta, University of Muenster
- 13:00-13:15 **Input**
Karoline Edtstadler, State Secretary in the Austrian Ministry of Interior
- 13:15-14:00 *Lunch Break*
- 14:00– 16:00 **Panel 2: Insights from 4 countries** (Israel, Palestine, Turkey, Austria)
Relationship Religion – Politics – State – with a special focus on historical and
sociological reasons
- Chair: **Mareike Riedel**, Max Planck Society
Israel: **Dr. Ayelet Banai**, University of Haifa
Palestine: tba
Turkey: **Prof. Aviad Rubin**, University of Haifa
Austria: **Prof. Regina Polak**, University of Vienna
- 16:00-16:30 *Coffee Break*

Senat, Floor 29, Eshkol Tower

16:30-17:30 **Keynote 2: Functions of Religion within polity – politics – policy**
Chair: **Prof. Helmuth Berking**, Humboldt University of Berlin
Prof. Martin Baumann, University of Luzern

19:00 *Dinner Downtown (Rola)*

Thursday, October 18th

Ofer Observatory/Senat, Floor 30/29, Eshkol Tower

10:00-13:00 **Workshop Phase I - Theory**

Workshop 1: Interreligious Dialogue: Possibilities and Limits within conflict

Chair: **Hana Bendcowsky**, Jerusalem Centre for Jewish-Christian Dialogue

Input: **Prof. Daniel Stateman**, University of Haifa

Transcript: **Dr. Florian Musil**, HCGES

Workshop 2: The “theological” Perspective: Jewish, Christian and Muslim positions towards the relationship between religion and politics

Chair: **Prof. Regina Polak**, University of Vienna

Input: **Dr. Marcie Lenk**, Shalom Hartman Institute, Jerusalem

Transcript: **Magdalena Neumueller**, HCGES

13:00-14:00 *Lunch Break*

14:00-17:00 **Workshop Phase II – Projects and Practice**

Workshop 3: Preventing radicalization through education - Religion and Politics in Practice- Peer Education in Berlin, Germany

Chair: **Amina Nolte**, University of Giessen

Input: **Susann Karnapke**, Kiga-Berlin

Transcript: **Elif Akbas**, HCGES

Workshop 4: Religious coexistence in Israel?

Chair: **Tobias Kriener**, Nes Ammim

Input: **Azar Ajaj**, **Rabbi Or Zohar**

Transcript: **Katharina Konarek**, HCGES

Senat, Floor 29, Eshkol Tower

17:00-17:30 Conclusion

Ofer Observatory, Floor 30, Eshkol Tower

17:30-17:45 Opening of the academic year 2018-19
Prof. Ron Robin, President, University of Haifa
Emanuel Giaufret, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Israel
Dr. Susanne Wasum-Rainer, German Ambassador to Israel

Music: May & Gal, Department of Music, University of Haifa

18:00 Festive Dinner