

Stories We Live By: Relating to the Self and Other

PROGRAM OUTLINE¹

Sunday, June 28, 2020

13:30	On-Site Registration of Conference Participants	13:30 – 15:00
15:15	Bus transfer to the venue of the opening event	
16:00	Opening Event Moderators: Pavol Bargár (Czech Republic) / Lucia Faltin (Slovakia) Keynote Speaker: Mary Boys (USA) Stories We Live By: Relating to the Self and Other (<i>working title</i>) Greeting Addresses by Representatives of Religious and Civic Organizations and Institutions + Reception	16:00 – 19:00 (simult. transl.)
19:00	Bus transfer to the venue of the dinner	
19:30	Dinner	
22:00	Bus transfer to the conference hotel	

¹ Biographical information about the speakers can later be found in the program booklet of the conference, chapter "Presenters and Speakers"; a first draft of the program booklet will be published anytime soon.

Monday, June 29, 2020: Religious Traditions – Stories of the Self and the Other

7:00	Jewish Morning Prayer			Christian Morning Prayer		
8:00	On-Site Registration for Day Guests					
8:30	Meditative Moment					
9:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Plenary I: Stories of the Self and the Other: Jewish and Christian Perspectives</p> <p>Moderator: Deborah Weissman (Jerusalem) Speakers: František Ábel (Slovakia) Peter Dubovsky (Slovakia) Ruth Langer (USA)</p> <p>This plenary session will explore how Jews and Christians express their religious identities as the overarching story of their community and how their history shapes the way they speak of the people of other religions, both positively and negatively. Particular attention will be given to strategies to avoid lethal and destructive stories and to nurture life-affirming stories instead. Furthermore, the speakers will reflect on the process of revising one’s sacred stories in the light of deeper interreligious understanding. In other words, how does the new relationship between Jews and Christians affect the interpretation and embodiment of one’s “master narratives”?</p>					<p style="text-align: right;">9:00 – 10:30 (simult. transl.)</p>
10:30	Coffee Break					
11:00	<p style="text-align: center;">Plenary II: Deconstructing Abraham: The Meanings of Abraham in the “Abrahamic” Religions</p> <p>Moderator: Morteza Rezaadeh (Iran) Keynote Speaker: Reuven Firestone (USA) Respondents: Elena Dini (Italy) Mohammad Hannan Hassan (Singapore)</p> <p>This session will explore the variant meanings of story and narrative in the three Abrahamic traditions by focusing on the core story we all agree represents the essence of monotheism and faith: the story of Abraham. The three speakers will consider the person of Abraham in the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and will argue that the Hebrew Bible Abraham is not the same as the New Testament Abraham, the Qur’anic Abraham or the Talmudic Abraham. In each sacred text he represents the quintessential monotheist, but each considers that quintessence differently. They are both in conversation and argument over the meaning of monotheism, and this tension is reflected in the ways in which the religious traditions relate to one another.</p>					<p style="text-align: right;">11:00 – 12:30 (simult. transl.)</p>
12:30	Lunch					
14:00	Workshop A1 (simult. transl.)	Workshop A2 (English)	Workshop A3 (English)	Workshop A4 (English)	Workshop A5 (English)	Workshop A6 (English)
15:30	Coffee Break					

16:00	Plenary III: Stories about the Land	16:00 – 18:00 (simult. transl.)
	Moderator: Philip A. Cunningham (USA) Speakers: Haifa Alayan (Jerusalem) Jesper Svartvik (Sweden) Deborah Weissman (Jerusalem)	
	<p>Following the path opened by the previous session, this plenary session will narrow down its focus to explore the Land of Israel/Palestine, the symbol-reality that plays a central role in all Abrahamic traditions. Consequently, all three traditions foster various, often contradictory stories related to the Land. Given the complexity of these stories, how is it possible to have a dialogue about the Land among people who tell and live different “stories” there? The speakers will reflect on how their personal self-understanding has been shaped by their experience of living in the Land of Israel/Palestine.</p> <p>This session marks the imminent publication of the book <i>Enabling Dialogue about the Land: A Resource Book for Jews and Christians</i>, eds. Philip A. Cunningham, Ruth Langer, and Jesper Svartvik (forthcoming from Paulist Press), the result of a research project sponsored by the ICCJ.</p>	
18:00	Dinner	
20:30	Evening Program	

Tuesday, June 30, 2020: Story and Context

7:00	Jewish Morning Prayer	Christian Morning Prayer
8:00	On-Site Registration for Day Guests	
8:30	Meditative Moment	
9:00	Plenary IV: Central European Volte-face – From Fascism to Communism to Neo-Nazism	9:00 – 11:00 (simult. transl.)
	Moderator: Lucia Faltin (Slovakia) Introduction: Jan Figel (Slovakia) <i>On Human Dignity in the Whirlwind of Stories</i> Panelists: N.N.	
	<p>Why are people in Central Europe prone to succumb to the global rise of extremist ideologies and practice, particularly neo-Fascism and neo-Nazism and practice just 30 years after they freed themselves from Communist dictatorship?</p> <p>Lucia Faltin brings together a number of movers and shakers from the fields of history, philosophy, journalism, international security, and civic activism to seek an explanation. The panel takes form of a talk show, audience input is strongly encouraged.</p>	
11:00	Coffee Break	

11:30	Workshop B1 (simult. transl.)	Workshop B2 (English)	Workshop B3 (English)	Workshop B4 (English)	Workshop B5 (English)	Workshop B6 (English)
13:00	Lunch					
15:00	Bus Transfers to the Sites of Local Trips					
15:30	Trip 1	Trip 2	Trip 3	Trip 4	Trip 5	Trip 6
	Free Evening					

Wednesday, July 1, 2020: Stories of the Contemporary World

7:00	Jewish Morning Prayer	Christian Morning Prayer
8:00	On-Site Registration for Day Guests	
8:30	Meditative Moment	
9:00	<p>Plenary V: False Prophecies, False Prophets, False Hopes Moderator: Liliane Apotheker (France) Speakers: Judith Frishman (Netherlands) Pavel Hošek (Czech Republic) Michael Trainor (Australia)</p> <p>At the start of the third millennium we see our world changing at an accelerated pace. New technologies allow for the high-speed circulation of information and create new families of thought seemingly outside the realm of space and time. Sectarian views and even lies motivated by ideologies are spread in a ubiquitous and instantaneous manner. Truth often becomes relative, reality does not seem to matter anymore. One of the major questions that arises from this reality is, What is truth? Is there an absolute truth? Can anyone claim to hold it? What factors shape the ways we relate to the other and the world as legitimate and “true”? Is it “source,” or “tradition”? If some stories bring about separation, disruption, and enmity, can they be held as true today? Our religions can provide us with resources to address these questions as religious</p>	
		9:00 – 10:30 (simult. transl.)

stories seek to establish some form of truth that relies on tradition and transmission. However, these stories themselves need to be explored critically. This is what this plenary session will strive to do. Ultimately, it will explore how the stories we hold as foundational and sacred can inform us about the world we live in and, even more importantly, how they can inform an increasingly secularized world, so that we do not fall prey to false prophets and false prophecies.

10:30

Coffee Break

11:00

Workshop C1 (simult. transl.)	Workshop C2 (English)	Workshop C3 (English)	Workshop C4 (English)	Workshop C5 (English)	Workshop C6 (English)
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12:30

Lunch

14:00

Workshop D1 (simult. transl.)	Workshop D2 (English)	Workshop D3 (English)	Workshop D4 (English)	Workshop D5 (English)	Workshop D6 (English)
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15:30

Coffee Break

16:00

Plenary VI:					16:00 – 18:00 (simult. transl.)
Stories to Tell and Live by: A Festival of Ideas					
Moderator:	George Wilkes (UK)				
Speakers:	Adriana Biela-Belanji (Slovakia)				
	Mary Boys (USA)				
	Kathy Ehrensperger (Germany)				
	Adam Gregerman (USA)				
	Shmuel Sztainhendler (Chile)				
<p>This concluding plenary session will not only reflect on the whole conference but also address its main questions once again, perhaps from a different angle. The panelists will ponder the following questions: What stories of the contemporary world are worth telling and living? What stories from our religious traditions can make a constructive contribution to the well-being and transformation of our societies? How does one's own story relate to the stories of others? What positive role can stories, both religious and secular, individual and collective, play in conflict resolution and the building of interreligious and intercultural relations?</p>					

19:30

Festive Dinner