

# Judaism and Pluralism in the Context of Global Diversity

## Workshop Program

April 29–30, 2025

Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University

April 29<sup>th</sup>

### Opening Remarks

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM

Giancarlo Bosetti, Jocelyne Cesari, and Jose Casanova

### Session I – Theological Foundations of Pluralism

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

“Pluralism in Modern Jewish Thought: From Mendelssohn to the Mizrahi Revolt” – Cedric Cohen Skalli (University of Haifa)

“The Tower of Babel as a Theology of Multiplicity” – Miriam Feldman Kaye (Bar-Ilan University)

**Discussants:** Jocelyne Cesari (Birmingham University/Georgetown University) and José Casanova (Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University)

### Session II – The Intimate Other

11:45 AM – 1:00 PM

“Myth, Metaphor, and Metamorphosis: Divine Love and Human Marriage in Jewish-Christian Dialogue” – Avital Davidovich Eshed (Tel Aviv University)

“Religious Feminism Versus Religious Fundamentalism in Israel” – Ronit Irshai (Shalom Hartman Institute/Bar Ilan University)

**Discussants:** Uriel Simonsohn (University of Haifa) and Alessia Passarelli (Reset DOC/Fscire)

Lunch Break: 1:15 PM – 2:15 PM

### Session III – Interreligious Relations

2:15 PM – 3:30 PM

“Authority and Prophethood in the Scriptural Monotheisms” – Reuven Firestone (Hebrew Union College)

**“A Jew, Even Though He Sinned: Apostasy, Kinship, and Legal Identity in Gaonic Responsa”** – Uriel Simonsohn (University of Haifa)

**Discussant:** José Casanova (Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University)

## Session IV – Legal and Political Expressions of Pluralism

3:30 PM – 5:15 PM

**“Rethinking Enlightenment and Tradition in Israeli Nationhood”** – Meir Buzaglo (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**“National Imaginaries and the Multiplicity of Jewish Identity”** – Yaacov Yadgar (University of Oxford)

**“Between Nationalism and Pluralism: Recent Israeli Conversion Cases”** – Leora Batnitzky (Princeton University)

**“Discourses of Authenticity and Charisma: The Emergence of Anarchy, Authoritarianism, and Pluralism in Religious Zionism”** – Shlomo Fischer (Jewish People Policy Institute)

**Discussants:** Jocelyne Cesari (Birmingham University/Georgetown University) and Yochi Fischer (Van Leer Jerusalem Institute)

5:30 PM – 6:45 PM PUBLIC PANEL (Healy Family Student Center Social Room)

## JUDAISM AND PLURALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBAL DIVERSITY

This public panel brings together leading scholars to explore how Jewish thought, identity, and practice navigate the challenges and opportunities of pluralism in a globalized world: relativism, atheism, pluralization of norms. Panelists will reflect on how Judaism both contributes to and is transformed by the broader currents of cultural and religious diversity. Engaging voices from theology, philosophy, politics, and sociology, this conversation invites the public to consider whether and how Jewish pluralism is possible in a fractured yet interconnected world.

### Participants:

José Casanova (Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University)

Jocelyne Cesari (Birmingham University & Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Georgetown University)

Yochi Fisher (Van Leer Jerusalem Institute)

Ronit Irshai (Shalom Hartman Institute/Bar Ilan University)

Uriel Simonsohn (Haifa Laboratory for Religious Studies, University of Haifa)

Yaacov Yadgar (University of Oxford)

## April 30<sup>th</sup>

9:30 AM – 10:45 AM: Roundtable Discussion, Synthesis, and Next Steps

Convened by Yochi Fischer, Uriel Simonsohn, and Jocelyne Cesari