

CFP: British Association for Jewish Studies Annual Conference Call for Papers

by Helen Spurling

British Association for Jewish Studies Annual Conference Call for Papers

World in Crisis: Reflections and Responses from Antiquity to the Present

5th to 7th July 2021

University of Southampton and the Parkes Institute for the Study of Jewish/non-Jewish Relations

The annual conference of the British Association for Jewish Studies 2021 will explore Jewish perspectives on a world in crisis, whether real or imagined, in different spaces from antiquity to the present. Crisis can be found or understood in a variety of arenas of life from the political to the existential, and can be traumatic and yet, in some instances, lead to innovation. The conference aims to bring together scholars from diverse academic disciplines to explore Jewish perspectives of dramatic or perceived social, political, historical, ideological or religious change, originating from within Jewish worlds and without. The conference will assess Jewish engagement with change and crisis throughout history from the local to the transnational, including within the context of relationships with non-Jews. Analysis of the varied spectrum of reactions to and representation of times of crisis can do much to shed light on diversity within the Jewish experience in different contexts, whether impacting an individual or a community. Furthermore, challenges to the significance of the concept of crisis in Jewish history and culture, and emphasis on long-term trends are an important facet of this discussion. Papers will highlight the multiplicity of Jewish approaches to a world in crisis from resistance to rationalisation, whether literary or visual, and with an interdisciplinary perspective that characterises Jewish Studies. The conference is intended to provide a forum for reflection and critical contributions to significant, long-standing or contemporary issues of crisis and response, and the place of Jews, Judaism and Jewish Studies within this.

We welcome papers that explore Jewish traditions in different parts of the world and in different historical periods. Topics can include, but will not be limited to the following:

- Jews and theological, religious, philosophical or ideological crisis
- Jews and political engagement or activism
- Cultural or social crisis and responses
- Jewish literary explorations of crisis whether real or imagined
- Visual representation of crisis: museums, art, film and television
- Antisemitism
- Nationalism and populism
- Reception, legacy and re-imagining of crisis
- Challenges to concepts of crisis in Jewish history and culture

As usual with BAJIS conferences, papers on topics unrelated to the conference theme are also very welcome, including proposals by graduate students wishing to present on their doctoral research.

Confirmed keynote speakers

- Prof Hindy Najman (University of Oxford and Director of the Centre for the Study of the Bible in the Humanities)
- Prof Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (Technische Universität Berlin and Director of the Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung)
- In addition, there will be a plenary panel session discussing how work in Jewish Studies can contribute to understanding and addressing questions of crisis – whether longstanding or contemporary – around the world today

Paper proposals should include an abstract of no more than 250 words and a speaker biography of maximum 100 words.

Panel proposals are welcomed. Proposals should include a brief rationale for the panel of no more than 100 words, abstracts of maximum 250 words for each paper proposed as part of the panel, and speaker biographies of no more than 100 words each. Panels should be mixed in terms of gender, and, where possible, reflect a range of career stages.

Speakers will be allocated 30 minutes for their presentation and questions. Papers should be a maximum of 20 minutes in length followed by 10 minutes for questions and discussion.

We have a limited number of bursaries available for postgraduate students and early career researchers. If you would like to be considered, please state this as part of your proposal and send your CV (maximum 2 pages).

Please send paper and panel proposals and all conference-related correspondence to BAJS2020@soton.ac.uk

The deadline for proposals is **Monday 18th January 2021**. Registration will open in April 2021.

Many thanks to the following institutions for their support of the conference: European Association for Jewish Studies (EAJS), the Parkes Institute, and the History Department of the University of Southampton.