

## **Intra-Religious Disputes and Divisions**

### **Call for Applications for Post-Doctoral Scholarships for the 2025-26 Academic Year**

Religious traditions and communities are arenas of ideological and political struggles. They consist of factions that dispute theology, morality, law, mysticism, messianism, militancy, innovation, authority, ritual, canon, mission, inclusion and exclusion, and many other issues. Religious disagreements are often intertwined with social and political power struggles, as factions compete for followers and seek to consolidate their influence and gain dominance. In some cases, ideological and political disputes lead to schisms and the formation of new sects, while in other cases they are resolved through implicit mutual recognition, and communal cohesion is preserved. Such dynamics have played crucial roles in the history and evolution of religions in all ages.

For the 2025-26 academic year, the Center for the Study of Conversion and Inter-Religious Encounters (CSoC) at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev will focus its activities on intra-religious disputes and divisions. Research students working on any of the world's religions or on comparative religion - whose work is rooted in disciplines such as Religious Studies, History, Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Cultural Studies, Literature and the Arts, Conflict Resolution and Management - are invited to submit research proposals related to at least one of the following topics:

1. Case studies of doctrinal and moral disputes, their socio-political contexts, and/or consequences.
2. Case studies of disputes concerning religious law and practice, their socio-political contexts, and/or consequences.
3. Disagreements regarding canonical literature and its interpretation.
4. Religious wars and their interplay with politics.
5. Tolerance and intolerance in handling disputes; mechanisms for dispute resolution within religious traditions.
6. Transformation of disputes into accusations of blasphemy or heresy, leading to the emergence of new religious movements.
7. Historiography of religious disputes and divisions.
8. Ethnographic studies on the formation of new religious communities.
9. Gender perspectives on intra-religious disputes and divisions.
10. Struggles over religious authority.

**Prof. Daniella Talmon-Heller**  
Department of Middle East Studies  
Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, resident fellow Center for the  
Study of Conversion  
and Inter-Religious Encounters, director  
[talmond@bgu.ac.il](mailto:talmond@bgu.ac.il)

**Raya Even-David**  
Administrative Manager,  
\* The Center for the Study of Conversion and Inter-  
Religious Encounters  
\* JEWFACT project funded by the ERC  
[raya@bgu.ac.il](mailto:raya@bgu.ac.il) +972-8-6428377

### Eligibility and Scholarship Details:

Researchers who submitted their doctoral thesis within the past five years, or who will have submitted their doctorate by October 2025 at the latest, are eligible to apply for the fellowship. The scholarship will consist of 86,385 NIS spread out over 12 months, a shared workspace in the Center's offices on BGU's Marcus Campus in Be'er Sheva, and full library privileges. It offers an affiliation with a vibrant group of scholars, and intellectual and social support from peers and senior researchers.

Scholarship recipients must be physically present on campus every Tuesday during semesters and attend the weekly seminar/reading group (12:00-14:00), and other activities. Additionally, fellows are expected to present their research and take an active part in the planning of the annual program even before the beginning of the academic year.

To apply, please send the following documents (in Hebrew or English) via email to the CSoC administrative manager, [Raya Even-David](#):

- A research proposal (up to 1,000 words) that focuses on the annual theme described above.
- Abstract of dissertation (up to 1,000 words).
- Updated CV and a full list of publications.
- Two recommendations, one of them from PhD supervisor, sent directly to [rayaed@bgu.ac.il](mailto:rayaed@bgu.ac.il)

For more information about CSoC, visit our [website](#), [Facebook page](#), or [YouTube channel](#).

**Application deadline: March 22, 2025**

Notifications of acceptance: April 2025

For inquiries, please contact Prof. [Daniella Talmon-Heller](#), Director of the Center for the Study of Conversion and Inter-Religious Encounters at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

**Prof. Daniella Talmon-Heller**  
Department of Middle East Studies  
Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, resident fellow Center for the  
Study of Conversion  
and Inter-Religious Encounters, director  
[talmond@bgu.ac.il](mailto:talmond@bgu.ac.il)

**Raya Even-David**  
Administrative Manager,  
\* The Center for the Study of Conversion and Inter-  
Religious Encounters  
\* JEWTRACT project funded by the ERC  
[rayaed@bgu.ac.il](mailto:rayaed@bgu.ac.il) +972-8-6428377