



Centre de recherche
français à Jérusalem



In collaboration with:

The Goldstein-Goren Center for American Jewish History at New York University
The Goldstein-Goren International Center for Jewish Thought, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
The Goldstein-Goren Center for Hebrew Studies, University of Bucharest
Centro di Judaica Goren-Goldstein, Università degli Studi di Milano
Centre de Recherche Français à Jérusalem (CRFJ)
École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (CNRS-EHESS)

Call for Papers

Minhagim: Custom and Practice in Jewish Life

International Conference
Tel Aviv University
13-15 May, 2012

Parallel to the *Halakhic* laws that are gathered in the great codes, like the *Shulhan Arukh*, the *minhagim* (customs) are dependent on local practices and the regional schools of sages and rabbis. The *minhagim* played a decisive role in the history of the Jewish communities and in the formation of traditions of religious rulings. They gave stability, continuity, and authority to the local institutions.

The aim of the conference is to tackle the concept of *minhag* in the broadest sense of the word. Focusing on the relationship between *dinim*, *takkanot*, and *minhagim* and their impact on every aspect of Jewish life, the scope of the papers will range between history, development, and evolution of the *minhagim* and the historical, anthropological, religious, and cultural function of rites and rituals in establishing the Jewish self-definition and the identity of the local communities that adhered to them. Of particular interest is, of course, the examination of the different types of customs (*Minhag avoteinu*, *Minhag ha-hakhamim*, *Minhag ha-makom* or *Minhag ha-kehilah*, *Minhag ha-medinah*) and their interrelation.

The academic steering committee will consider applications on any subject related to the following session headings. The main topics that will be addressed in the conference are:

- *Minhagic* Literature: An Evolving Genre in the Middle Ages
- Transmission of Customs and Printed Customal Books
- *Halakha* and *Minhag*
- Mysticism, *Kabbalah* and *Minhagim*
- *Piyyut*, Prayers and Liturgy: Between *Halakha* and *Minhag*
- Rituals of the Life Cycle
- Historical Events and the Rise of Local Custom
- Gender-Related Customs
- *Minhag* and Modernity
- Culinary Customs and Folk Culture
- Musical Traditions and Innovations
- Costume and Clothing
- Jewish Art Depicting Customs: An Historical Mirror?
- Jewish Customs in the Eyes of Gentiles

All lectures will be delivered in English, and a volume of the conference proceedings will subsequently be published in English as well. Scholars who wish to present twenty-minute papers are invited to submit proposals to the steering committee (see address below) by **September 30, 2011**. Proposals should be written in English and include:

- Full name and academic title
- Academic affiliation
- Contact details
- Short CV
- Title of proposed lecture and an abstract of about 200 words

We look forward to receiving your applications, and the steering committee will inform you of its decision in the weeks following the deadline.

Please send your submissions to:

Sara Appel : saraappe@post.tau.ac.il

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