

**Webinars 2021 SNSF Conference
Université de Lausanne (IRSB)**



**WAS WISDOM TRANSFORMED
TO TORAH
IN SECOND TEMPLE JUDAISM?**

*THE RECEPTION OF THE TORAH
IN AND BEYOND ISRAELITE AND JEWISH WISDOM LITERATURE*

30 April – 01 May 2021

Université de Lausanne, FTSR

13:00-15:30 (30th, Friday); 09:00-17:30 (1st, Saturday)

Organizers

Prof. Thomas Römer

Dr. JiSeong J. Kwon

Online Register (Free)

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1IMfsdXxzjhJgi6Py6buy-mu8RWL9-ihVJf7HO3FAmq4/edit>

For inquiries, please contact Dr. JiSeong Kwon:
Jiseong.Kwon@unil.ch



Schweizerische Akademie der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaften
Académie suisse des sciences humaines et sociales
Accademia svizzera di scienze umane e sociali
Accademia svizra da ciencias humanas e sociais
Swiss Academy of Humanities and Social Sciences



SCHWEIZERISCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR ORIENTALISCHE ALTERTUMSWISSENSCHAFT



FONDS NATIONAL SUISSE
SCHWEIZERISCHER NATIONALFONDS
FONDO NAZIONALE SVIZZERO
SWISS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION



UNIL | Université de Lausanne
Institut romand des sciences
bibliques

Courtesy of Dr. Pierre Sprumont, "Scribes (Notarii) at work in the various languages of Sicily"
from "Anatomical Terms: towards Development of Terminologies"

[Webinars] 2021 SNSF Conference
Université de Lausanne (IRSB)

Was Wisdom Transformed to the Torah in Second Temple Judaism?

*The Reception of the Torah in and beyond Israelite and Jewish
Wisdom Literature*

Information

- Date: 30 April - 01 May 2021 (Friday-Saturday)
- Time: 13h00 (30 April)-17h30 (01 May)
- This conference will be held by Webinar (ZOOM).

Online Registration (for General Participants)

- There is no registration fee for this conference.
- Except for invited presenters, participants should write and submit the on-line registration form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1lMfsdXxzhjJgi6Py6buy-mu8RWL9-ihVJf7HO3FAmq4/edit>

- For conference webinar (ZOOM) access code and password will be sent to each person after confirming the registration form.

Program Description

Research on the association between “Wisdom” and “Torah” has been undertaken by scholars who study the reception history of the Torah in the Second Temple wisdom texts inside and outside the Hebrew Bible. Scholars (Von Rad, Hengel, Schnabel, Sheppard, Blenkinsopp, Collins, Sanders, etc) have debated over the identification of Wisdom as Torah in the Second Temple Judaism; whether Wisdom is torahised or Torah is sapientialised. Nonetheless, although the combination of priestly and non-priestly Pentateuchal sources already occurred in the Persian period, the Pentateuch, as a collection of Mosaic laws, might not gain authority until the Maccabean revolt (167 BCE), and Hellenistic wisdom texts such as Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon did not seem to be dominated by the ideology of the Pentateuch in a canonical consciousness. Furthermore, while the term *hokmah* has been defined as having unified elements and historical contexts as a literary tradition, an increasing number of interpreters have doubted the existence of the cohesive Israelite/Jewish wisdom tradition that has been transmitted and composed by “sages”/“wise men”. If the long-standing framework of “torahized” wisdom in Israel and early Judaism makes substantial misconceptions in understanding the nature of wisdom literature, it is necessary to re-examine and rethink assertions in terms of the transformation of Jewish wisdom texts from the Achaemenid period to the Hellenistic period. In order to challenge the conventional paradigm, we ask: “Was Israelite Wisdom finally transformed into and by the Mosaic Torah in the Hellenistic period?” This conference particularly focuses on how one can reformulate the model of Wisdom-Torah identification, confluence, or transformation in Jewish wisdom texts.

Specific Questions

- Is the notion/term of “torah” in biblical and non-biblical wisdom texts in the Second Temple period identified as the Mosaic Torah/the Pentateuch, or broad Jewish laws and their interpretation beyond the Mosaic Torah (esp. Sirach)?
- Is the supposition, that Wisdom was transformed and converted to Torah in the Second Temple Judaism, appropriate to the understanding of wisdom texts? Is “Wisdom” finally subjugated to a Torah-centred Judaism or ideology? If “yes”, when and how did it happen? If “no”, why did not it happen?
- Do authors of the biblical wisdom corpus (generally Proverbs/Job/Ecclesiastes), deuterocanonical wisdom literature (e.g., Sirach, the Wisdom of Solomon, Baruch, etc), Qumran wisdom texts (4Q525, 4Q184-5, 4QInstruction, 4Q424, the Book of Mysteries), and other related texts refer to specific languages in the Mosaic Torah or simply share prevalent expressions and themes in Judaism as well as in the ancient Near Eastern literature?
- Can we find evidence of certain theological and ideological changes in the Persian and Hellenistic wisdom texts that scribal culture(s) in the corresponding period produced?
- Other secondary issues may be discussed; e.g., the notion of “authority”, “authoritative”, or “authorization” within Israelite/Jewish texts; the “canon-consciousness” in wisdom corpus.
- In terms of Israelite and Jewish wisdom texts as “dynamic modes of cultural discourse” in the relationship with the Mosaic discourse including Pentateuchal narrative, laws, and diverse interpretations, please refer to the workshop, “Wisdom and Torah as Dynamic Modes of Scribal

Discourse in Israel and Early Judaism: Beyond Biblical Genres and Traditions” in 2019 EABS;
[Press the LINK.](#)

Suggestions about Concepts and Assumptions as a Theoretical Challenge

Definitions of “Wisdom” and “Wisdom Tradition”

In the study of the mutual influence between “Torah” and “Wisdom”, it would be significant to define the concept of “Wisdom”. Though James Crenshaw made a great effort to define the term “wisdom”, the use of the term *hokmah*, unfortunately, has still been misused. Further, one can identify the social setting behind wisdom literature—the majority of scholars have pointed to a wisdom school and a professional circle of sages, in particular, the possibility of a royal advisory group as its social location—but theories about the professional group of “sages” and “wise men” either in religious institutions or in the national government in Jerusalem have been less persuasive. Nonetheless, for the sake of discussion in our scholarly debates, it might be useful to understand “wisdom” as a grouping of texts that display genealogical similarities (or family resemblances), for instance when speaking of ancestral and divine instructions for a successful life by observing human life and nature, or of authoritative teachings as shown in ancient instructional genres. Rather than adopting the theory of form-criticism which subscribes to a static and external taxonomy, it might be useful to denote the wisdom genre and tradition as dynamic and functional, not as restrictive.

The Status of “Torah” in the Second Temple Period and the Authority of the Pentateuch

Before looking at textual links between Pentateuchal materials and wisdom texts, it is worthwhile to mention the category and the extent of the term “torah”. As using the “confluence” model that Torah and Wisdom ultimately became one innovative in the Hellenistic period, scholars do not correctly identify the meaning of “torah” in its nature. Does מצוה/תורה in given texts mean the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses as a canonical division or is it in a narrow sense equal to Deuteronomy or to Deuteronomi(sti)c laws? Does it indicate cultic and ritual Torah in Priestly materials from Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers? Otherwise, does it mean either the broad legal tradition and narratives in Pentateuch including Mosaic laws or all the commandments, moral rules, and ethics including authoritative and religious interpretations in Pentateuchal/Non-Pentateuchal materials in the Second Temple period? Otherwise, does it indicate no more than parental or divine “instruction”, just as the proverbial instruction in Proverbs and Job?

Schedule/Timetable

Friday, 30 April. Wisdom and Torah in the Hellenistic Jewish Writings (Introduction and 4 Presentations)

13h00: ZOOM System Check-Up

13h10: Greetings and Address of Welcome: Thomas Römer

13h20: Introduction of Theme: JiSeong J. Kwon

13h40: Pancratius C. Beentjes, Tilburg University, Netherlands
Ben Sira and his grandson on torah. Similar or divergent views?

14h30: George Brooke, University of Manchester, UK
Wisdom and Torah in the Hodayot and the Great Psalms Scroll: The Place of Prayer in Understanding Some Early Jewish Pedagogy

15h20-15h50: Short Break

15h50: Luca Mazzinghi, Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Italy
Wisdom and Law in the Book of Wisdom

16h40: Torleif Elgvin, NLA University College, Norway
The Song of Songs between Torah, Creation, Celebration and Libertinism

17h30: End of the Friday session

Saturday, 01 May. Wisdom and Torah in the Biblical Writings (4 Presentations)

08h50: ZOOM System Check-Up

09h00: Thomas Römer (Université de Lausanne, Swiss)

The Question of Wisdom Influence in the Composition of the Joseph Narrative

09h50: Eckart Otto (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Germany)

The Amalgamation of 'Wisdom' in the Post-Deuteronomistic Deuteronomy of the Persian and Hellenistic Period

10h40-11h00: Short Break

11h00: Bernd U. Schipper (Universität Berlin, Germany)

Proverbs 28 and the Discourse on Wisdom and torah in the Book of Proverbs

11h50: JiSeong J. Kwon, Université de Lausanne, Swiss

Does Instructions of the Book of Proverbs Refer to the Mosaic Torah?

12h40-14h00: Lunch Break

Saturday, 01 May. Wisdom and Torah in the Biblical Writings

(3 Presentations and Conclusion)

13h50: ZOOM System Check-Up

14h00: Schwienhorst-Schönberger Ludger (Universität Wien, Austria)

The Interpretation of the Torah in the Light of Wisdom: Some selected examples from the Wisdom Literature

14h50: Stuart Weeks (University of Durham, UK)

Failing to Be Wise: The Case of Qohelet

15h40-16h00: Short Break

16h00: Tobias Häner (Universität Wien, Austria)

Creation under Debate: Reading Job 38-39 against the Background of Gen 1:1-2:4a

16h50: Conclusion

Thomas Römer

Discussion of Publication

JiSeong Kwon

17h30: End of the Meeting