



Universität Hamburg

DER FORSCHUNG | DER LEHRE | DER BILDUNG

## WORKSHOP

# EXPRESSIONS OF SCEPTICAL TOPOI IN (LATE) ANCIENT JUDAISM

Scepticism has been a driving force in the development of cultures of the past and the impetus for far-reaching scientific achievements and philosophical investigations. Sceptical ideas were shaped in the works of Greek and Roman thinkers of the past, leaving us numerous literary monuments. Early Jewish culture, in contrast to Graeco-Roman culture, has avoided creating consistent representations of this doctrine.

However, Judaism of the first centuries was characterized by persistent intellectual activity, whose literary fruits are works devoted to oral law, religious norms and regulations, Bible exegesis and other traditional areas of Jewish knowledge. To detect sceptical ideas in ancient Judaism requires a closer analysis of its literary heritage and cultural context.

The aim of this workshop is to discuss elements of sceptical thought in Ancient and Late Ancient Judaism through a new analysis of relevant texts. Participants will discuss a wide spectrum of texts: Jewish writings of the Second Temple period, Rabbinic literature, Magical texts, as well as reflections of Jewish thought in Early Christian and Patristic writings.

18 – 19 APRIL 2016  
(SEMINAR ROOM/5<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR)

MAIMONIDES CENTRE  
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES

SCHLÜTERSTRASSE 51  
20146 HAMBURG

CONVENOR:  
REUVEN KIPERWASSER

ספקנות

Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies  
JEWISH SCEPTICISM

DFG

## PROGRAMME

### MONDAY, 18 April 2016

10:00 - 10:30 **Welcoming Remarks and Introduction**

*Giuseppe Veltri* (MCAS, Hamburg)

*Reuven Kiperwasser* (MCAS, Hamburg)

10:30 - 12:30 **Session I**

*Chair: Racheli Haliva* (MCAS, Hamburg)

**Philosophical Scepticism and Apocalyptic Certitude**

*Cana Werman* (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva)

**Reasonable Doubts of the “Other“:**

**Jewish Scepticism in Early Christian Sources?**

*Serge Ruzer* (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

13:30 - 17:00 **Session II**

*Chair: Bill Rebiger* (MCAS, University of Hamburg)

**Scepticism and Belief in the Attitude Towards  
Gods and Demons in the Jewish Religious  
World of Sasanian Babylonia**

*Geoffrey Herman* (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**“If a man tells you he is God...“**

*Tali Artman Partock* (University of Cambridge)

**Facing the Omnipotence  
and Shaping the Sceptical *Topos***  
*Reuven Kiperwasser* (MCAS, Hamburg)

### TUESDAY, 19 April 2016

09:30 - 11:30 **Guided Tour: Jewish Hamburg**

12:30 - 13:30 **Conclusion and Final Discussion**  
*Chair: Reuven Kiperwasser* (MCAS, Hamburg)

The event is open to the public, with advance registration via e-mail.  
Contact: [maimonides-centre@uni-hamburg.de](mailto:maimonides-centre@uni-hamburg.de)