

## Workshop

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# Faith, Scepticism, and Human-Animal Boundaries in Jewish and Christian Religious Cultures

9–10 August 2023

It is widely accepted that Judaism and Christianity helped to form a long-lasting barrier between humans—created in God’s image and destined to rule the planet—and all other living creatures. To this day, the human-animal distinction permeates human society, culture, and religion. Yet recent studies have nuanced our understanding of the human-animal boundary, offering valuable insights into the shared worlds that arise through interspecies interactions. Across periods and areas of study, scholars have also demonstrated how different attitudes and environmental ethics have been applied to animals in various religious sources, breeding scepticism and doubt about the line that separates humans and animals.

This interdisciplinary workshop aims to rethink the perceived borders between humans and animals within religious culture and theology. We seek to examine critical interpretations of the human-animal relationship within religious traditions and to reveal voices that either promoted moral consideration for animals or challenged dogmatic assumptions about humans’ uniqueness and supreme role in creation. Our goal is to contextualise these voices in broader theoretical and historiographical perspectives that will open new ways to consider animals in the history of thought, scepticism, and religious traditions.

### Convenor

- Ran Segev (Universität Hamburg)

### Participants

- Beth Berkowitz (Barnard College, Columbia University)
- Celia Deane-Drummond (University of Oxford)
- Aaron Gross (University of San Diego)
- David Grumett (University of Edinburgh)
- Frank Kurzmann (Universität Hamburg)
- Alma Massaro (Università degli Studi di Genova)
- Kate Rigby (Universität zu Köln)
- Jonathan Schorsch (Universität Potsdam)

### Venue

#### Maimonides Centre for Advanced Studies

Please contact MCAS for registration  
and further information.

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