"On the way he came
to the Samaritan town
called Sychar, near the land
that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.
Jacob's well is there . . ."

— **John 4:5-6a (NJB)**



PATRIARHIA ROMÂNĂ
MITROPOLIA BANATULUI

Universitatea de Vest din Timişoara

The 6th International Symposium on Biblical Exegesis

TIMIŞOARA, ROMANIA
12–14 NOVEMBER 2026

וְאָנֹכִי וּבֵיתִי נַעֲבֹד אֶת־יְהוָה

"As for Me and My House, We Will Serve the Lord" (Josh 24:15) Shechem in Scripture, History, and Tradition Across the Ages

ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ ἡ οἰκία μου λατρεύσομεν κυρίῳ

link: meet.google.com/odx-xyvt-ktr

- **Shechem and Israelite Identity in Biblical Traditions**
- **Jacob, Joseph, and the Patriarchal Traditions of Israel**
- **The Ten Lost Tribes of Israel in Biblical and Post-Biblical Traditions**
- **Samaritan Traditions, Mount Gerizim, and Sacred Geography**
- **Archaeology and Historical Geography of Shechem and Ancient Israel**
- **Biblical, Patristic, and Theological Interpretations of Shechem, Joseph, and Israel**
- **Hymnography, Iconography, and Cultural Memory of Shechem and Joseph Traditions**
- **Joseph Traditions in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam**

Other papers related to Joseph traditions, Shechem, Israel, Samaritan traditions, and the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel are also welcome.

ISBE Committee

Fr. Dr. Iosif Stancovici
(Timişoara/Sibiu, Romania)

Dr. Ljubica Jovanović
(Charles Town, WV, United States)

Fr. Dr. John Applegate
(Manchester, United Kingdom)

Fr. Dr. Ioan Mihoc
(Timişoara, Romania)



with the assistance of

Fr. Dr. Constantin Oancea
(Sibiu, Romania)

Fr. Dr. Constantin Jinga
(Timişoara, Romania)

Fr. Dr. Srećko Koralija
(Toulouse, France)

Fr. Dr. Marian Vild
(Bucharest, Romania)



Deuteronomy 6:4-5:

𐤉𐤔𐤓𐤀𐤋 𐤉𐤄𐤅𐤄 𐤀𐤋𐤄𐤉𐤍𐤅 𐤉𐤄𐤅𐤄 𐤀𐤇𐤃
𐤅𐤀𐤄𐤁𐤕 𐤀𐤕 𐤉𐤄𐤅𐤄 𐤀𐤋𐤄𐤉𐤊
𐤁𐤊𐤋 𐤋𐤁𐤁𐤊 𐤅𐤁𐤊𐤋 𐤍𐤐𐤔𐤊 𐤅𐤁𐤊𐤋 𐤌𐤀𐤃𐤊

(Samaritan Pentateuch)

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֶחָד׃
וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ
בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדֶךָ׃

(Masoretic Text)

Ἄκουε, Ισραηλ· κύριος ὁ θεὸς ἡμῶν κύριος εἷς ἐστιν·
καὶ ἀγαπήσεις κύριον τὸν θεόν
σου ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς
σου καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς δυνάμεώς σου.

(Septuagint)

audi Israhel Dominus Deus noster
Dominus unus est
diliges Dominum Deum tuum
ex toto corde tuo et ex tota anima tua
et ex tota fortitudine tua

(Vulgate)

Слы́ши, їи́лю: гдь бг҃ъ на́шъ гдь є́дино́ъ є́сть.
И́ возлю́биши гда́ бг҃а твоего́
отъ́ всего́ се́рдца твоего́, и́ отъ́ всея́ души́ твоея́,
и́ отъ́ всея́ кре́пости твоея́.

(Church Slavonic Bible)



▲ Detail of the map *Ancient Israel*, illustrating the geographical locations of Shechem, Mount Gerizim, Mount Ebal, Shiloh and Samaria. Source: Erin Barker, *Drive Thru History – Ancient Israel Map* (2014), Behance. Reproduced as a cropped detail.

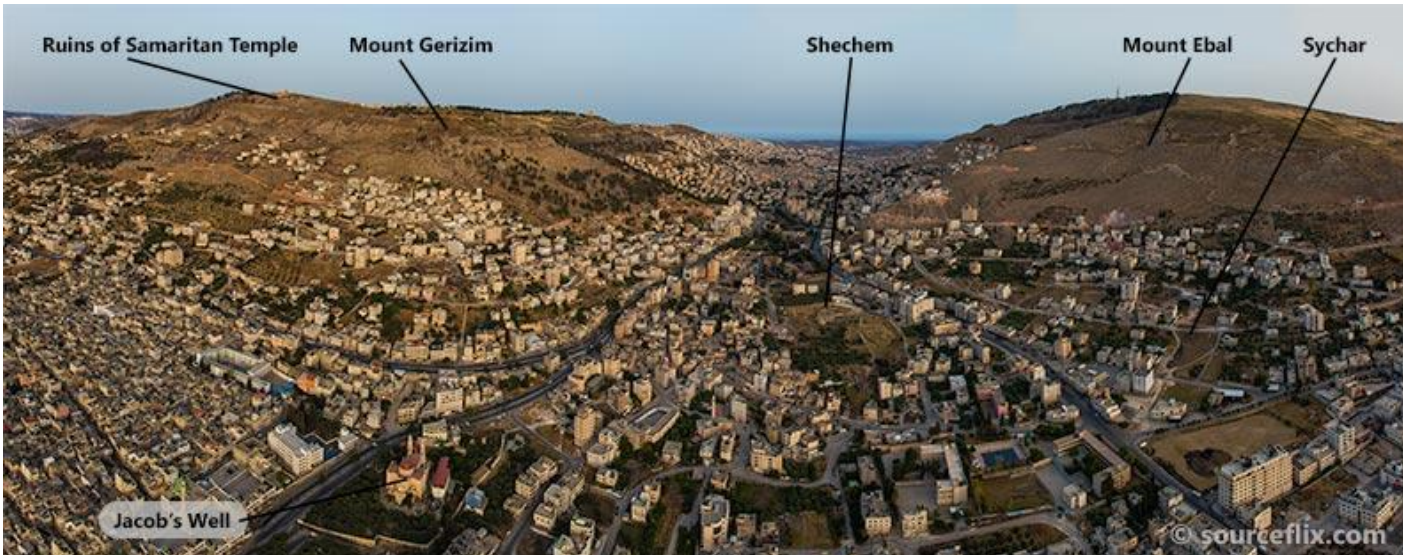
Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one.
And thou shalt love the LORD thy God
with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,
and with all thy might.

(Jewish Publication Society 1917)

Ascultă, Israele, Domnul Dumnezeul nostru
este singurul Domn.
Să iubești pe Domnul Dumnezeul tău,
din toată inima ta, din tot sufletul tău
și din toată puterea ta.

(Romanian Orthodox Synodal Bible)

▼ "Shechem: Two Mountains and a Deep Well," digital photograph, *SourceFlix*, July 14, 2015, sourceflix.com.



Faculty of Letters, History, Philosophy and Theology
West University of Timișoara, Romania
November 12–14, 2026, online.

ISBE 2026

Shechem in Scripture, History, and Tradition Across the Ages

All times indicated in the programme are Romanian local time.
Participants joining from other countries
are kindly asked to take the time difference into account.

November 12 (Thursday)	November 13 (Friday)	November 14 (Saturday)
Symposium Inauguration and Session 1 (09:00–11:00) Chair: Fr. Dr. Constantin Jinga	**Session 5** (09:00–11:00) Chair: Fr. Dr. Iosif Stancovici	**Session 9** (09:00–11:00) Chair: Fr. Capodistrias Hämmerli
09:00 Inauguration	09:00 **Dr. Mihai Handaric**	09:00 **Dr. Meira Polliack**
09:20 **Abood Cohen**	09:20 **Dr. Benjamin Kilchör**	09:20 Q&A
09:40 Q&A	09:40 **Fr. Dr. Tomasz Koszarek**	09:40 **Fr. Dr. Iosif Stancovici**
10:00 **Fr. Dr. Olimpiu Nicolae Benea**	10:00 **Dr. Basil Lourié**	10:00 **Luka G. Lukić**
10:30 Q&A	10:20 Q&A	10:20 Q&A
10:40 short break	10:40 short break	10:40 short break
Session 2 (11:00–15:00) Chair: Fr. Dr. Olimpiu Nicolae Benea	**Session 6** (11:00–15:00) Chair: Fr. Dr. Constantin Jinga	**Session 10** (11:00–15:00) Chair: Fr. Dr. Marian Vild
11:00 **Dr. Eusebiu Borca**	11:00 **Dr. Wojciech Kosek**	11:00 **Dr. Alexandru Mihăilă**
11:20 **Dr. Magdalena Burlacu**	11:20 **Dr. Magnus Rabel**	11:20 **Dr. Aleksandar Danilović**
11:40 **Dr. Tobias Siegenthaler**	11:40 **Fr. Dr. Ivan Bodrožić and Maja Rončević**	11:40 **Dr. Linda Saskia Menczel**
12:00 Q&A	12:00 Q&A	12:00 Q&A
12:20 lunch time	12:20 lunch time	12:20 lunch time
Session 3 (15:00–17:00) Chair: Fr. Dr. John Applegate	**Session 7** (15:00–17:00) Chair: Fr. Dr. Ioan Mihoc	**Session 11** (15:00–17:00) Chair: Fr. Dr. Srećko Koralija
15:00 **Fr. Dr. Mihai Ciurea**	15:00 **Dr. József Zsengellér**	15:00 **George Antoniu Nicoară**
15:20 **Dr. Marek Baraniak**	15:20 **Dr. Željko Stanojević**	15:20 **Fr. Dr. Ioan Mihoc**
15:40 **Mariia Boichun**	15:40 **Fr. Dr. Ion Sorin Bora**	15:40 **Fr. Dr. Marian Vild**
16:00 **Fr. Dr. Ionuț Daniel Băncilă**	16:00 **Fr. Dr. John Applegate**	16:00 **Dr. Kees den Biesen**
16:20 Q&A	16:20 Q&A	16:20 Q&A
16:40 short break	16:40 short break	16:40 short break
Session 4 (17:00–18:30) Chair: Dr. Maria Cioată	**Session 8** (17:00–18:00) Chair: Fr. Dr. John Applegate	**Session 12** (17:00–18:00) Chair: Dr. Ljubica Jovanović
17:00 **Dr. Amrei Koch**	17:00 **Mihailo Milenković**	17:00 **Dr. Fotios Apostolos**
17:20 **Dr. Ljubica Jovanović**	17:20 **Fr. Dr. Giuseppe Scollo** (40 min.)	17:20 **Yaroslav Panfilov**
17:40 **Emilija Vuković**		17:40 **Fr. Dr. Srećko Koralija**
18:00 Q&A	18:00 Q&A	18:00 Q&A
18:20 Summary of the first conference day	18:20 Summary of the second conference day	18:20 Summary of the third conference day



CONFERENCE DAY 1
Thursday, November 12th, 2026

09:00 Opening of the Symposium and Welcome Addresses

- His Eminence, the Most Reverend **Ioan Selejan**, Archbishop of Timișoara and Metropolitan of Banat.
- Dr. **Claudiu Mesaroș**, Associate Professor of Philosophy, and Fr. Dr. **Constantin Jinga**, Associate Professor in Old Testament Studies. Faculty of Letters, History, Philosophy and Theology, West University of Timișoara.

09:20 First Session
Shechem and Mount Gerizim: Samaritan Sacred Geography and Christian Pilgrimage
- Chair: Fr. Dr. Constantin Jinga

09:20 **Abood Cohen**, Samaritan Community, Mount Gerizim, Nablus.

"Meet the Samaritans:
History, Faith, and Life Today"

09:40 Discussions (Q & A)

10:00 Fr. Dr. **Olimpiu Nicolae Benea**, Associate Professor in New Testament Studies. Faculty of Orthodox Theology, Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj Napoca, Romania.

"'Shechem as a Place of Pilgrimage
in Christian Tradition"

10:30 Discussions (Q & A)
Short Break 10:40–11:00

11:00 Second Session
Shechem, Covenant, and the Biblical-Theological Identity of Israel
- Chair: Fr. Dr. Olimpiu-Nicolae Benea

11:00 Dr. **Eusebiu Borca**, Lecturer in Old Testament Studies. Justinian the Archbishop Faculty of Letters, North University Centre of Baia Mare, Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

"Choosing to Serve the Lord:
Joshua's Final Speech (Joshua 24)"

11:20 Dr. **Magdalena Burlacu**, Member of scientific staff in the SNF project IMAGO. Institute for Old Catholic Theology, Faculty of Theology, University of Bern, Switzerland.

"The Stone That Heard: Textual Pluriformity and
Patristic Reconfigurations of Joshua 24"

11:40 Dr. **Tobias Siegenthaler**, Research Fellow. School of Divinity, University of St Andrews, Scotland, United Kingdom.

"How the Gospel of John Envisions the Inclusion
of the Samaritans, the Joseph-People?"

12:00 Discussions (Q & A)
Lunch Break

15:00 Third Session
Shechem, Mount Gerizim, and Samaritan Traditions in Biblical and Historical Perspective
- Chair: Fr. Dr. John Applegate

15:00 Fr. Dr. **Mihai Ciurea**, Associate Professor of New Testament Studies and Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Craiova, Romania.

"From Mount Gerizim to Jacob's Well: Samaritan Identity and the Encounter with Jesus in the Gospels"

15:20 Dr. **Marek I. Baraniak**, Associate Professor of Hebrew Studies. Faculty of Asian and African Studies University of Warsaw, Poland.

"Shechem in the Aramaic Targums"

15:40 **Mariia Boichun**, Doctoral Researcher in Biblical Studies. Faculty of Theology, Institute for Biblical Studies and Church History, Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg, Halle (Saale), Germany.

"The Chosen Place Inscribed:
Mount Gerizim in Samaritan Torah
Manuscripts and Their Paratexts"

16:00 Fr. Dr. **Ionuț Daniel Băncilă**, Researcher in the History of Religions. Romanian Academy, Bucharest, Romania.

"The Samaritan Origins of Gnosticism:
Imagining History in an Out-of-Fashion
Historiographical Theory"

16:20 Discussions (Q & A)
Short Break 16:40–17:00

17:00 Fourth Session
Joseph in Jewish and Christian Traditions: Textual, Exegetical, and Visual Reception
- Chair: Dr. Maria Cioată (University of Manchester)

17:00 Dr. **Amrei Koch**, Lecturer in Biblical Hebrew. Faculty of Theology, University of Greifswald, Germany.

"Characters in Opposition: Some Remarks
on Joseph and the Antagonists in 4Q372 1"

17:20 Dr. **Ljubica Jovanović**, APUS, Religious Studies, Charles Town, West Virginia. UCNJ, History, Cranford, New Jersey. Seton Hall University, Catholic Studies, South Orange, New Jersey, USA.

"The Interpretations of the Patriarch Joseph's Character in Rabbinic Midrashim and Christian Apocrypha"

17:40 **Emilija Vuković**, PhD candidate in History of Art and Architecture. University of Belgrade, Serbia.

"Rethinking Inverse Perspective:
The Story of Beauteous Joseph at Sopoćani"

18:00 Discussions (Q & A)
18:20 Summary of the first conference day.



CONFERENCE DAY 2
Friday, November 13th, 2026

09:00 Fifth Session
Shechem, Shiloh, and the Historical and Religious Traditions of Ancient Israel
• Chair: Fr. Dr. Iosif Stancovici

09:00 Dr. **Mihai Handaric**, Associate Professor in Old Testament Studies. Faculty of Humanistic and Social Sciences, Aurel Vlaicu University of Arad, Romania.

"Shechem, the First Altar Built by Abraham upon Arrival in the Promised Land"

09:20 Dr. **Benjamin Kilchör**, Professor of Old Testament Studies and Prorector. STH Basel, Switzerland.

"Was There a Writing Culture in Shechem and Shiloh during the Iron Age I?"

09:40 Fr. Dr. **Tomasz Koszarek**, Lecturer. Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Jerusalem, Israel.

"Power, Kinship, and Urban Elites in Shechem: A Sociological Reading of Judges 9"

10:00 Dr. **Basil Lourié**, Head of the Laboratory of Christian Orient. Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts, Yerevan, Armenia.

"From the Fall of the Watchers to the Sukkot in Shiloh: Judges 19–21"

10:20 Discussions (Q & A)
Short beak 10:40–11:00

11:00 Sixth Session
Shechem, Covenant, and the Interpretation of Israel's Biblical Traditions
• Chair: Fr. Dr. Constantin Jinga

11:00 Fr. Dr. **Wojciech Kosek**, Independent Scholar in Biblical Studies. Bielsko-Biała, Poland.

"From the Sea to Shechem: The Jordan Crossing, Ebal, and the Covenant Logic of Joshua"

11:20 Dr. **Magnus Rabel**, Postdoctoral Researcher. Faculty of Theology and the Study of Religion, University of Zurich, Switzerland.

"Shechem Erased, Shechem Restored: Joshua 24 in Greek"

11:40 Fr. Dr. **Ivan Bodrožić**, Full Professor of the History of Christian Literature and Christian Doctrine, and **Maja Rončević**, PhD Student. Faculty of Theology, University of Split, Croatia.

"Shechem and the Reconfiguration of Israelite Identity in Jerome's Biblical Exegesis"

12:00 Discussions (Q & A)
Lunch Break

15:00 Seventh Session
Archaeology, Sacred Geography, and the Historical Memory of Shechem
• Chair: Fr. Dr. Ioan Mihoc

15:00 Dr. **József Zsengellér**, Professor of Hebrew Bible and Jewish Studies. Jewish Theological Seminary – University of Jewish Studies, Budapest, Hungary / J. Selye University, Komárno, Slovakia.

"Text and Archaeology: Mount Gerizim in Recent Research"

15:20 Dr. **Željko Stanojević**, Hebraist and Biblical Philologist. President of the Institute for Hebrew Language and Literature, Belgrade, Serbia.

"The Name Shechem (שְׁכֶם): Comparative Semitic Etymology, Topographic Motivation, and Biblical Usage"

15:40 Fr. Dr. **Ion Sorin Bora**, Lecturer in New Testament Studies. Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Craiova, Romania.

"Shechem, Gerizim, and Ebal: Sacred Geography, Memory, and Identity in Joshua 8 and 24"

16:00 Fr. Dr. **John Applegate**, Archdeacon Emeritus. Honorary Research Fellow in Religions and Theology, University of Manchester, United Kingdom.

"'Eighty Men from Shechem, Shiloh and Samaria': A Note on the Murderous Text of Jeremiah 41"

16:20 Discussions (Q & A)
Short beak 16:40–17:00

17:00 Eighth Session
Jacob, Joseph, and Israel: Patriarchal Narratives and the Pedagogy of Divine Revelation
• Chair: Fr. Dr. John Applegate

17:00 Mihailo Milenković, PhD candidate. Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Belgrade, Serbia.

"The Patriarch Jacob in Jewish and Christian Exegetical Traditions before John Chrysostom"

17:20 Fr. Dr. **Giuseppe G. Scollo**, Assistant Professor of Biblical Theology. St. Augustine's Seminary, Toronto, Canada.

"Jacob, Joseph, and Israel in the Gradualness of God's Revelation: A Paradigmatic Example of Pedagogy and Progression in Divine-Human Relationships"

18:00 Discussions (Q & A)
18:20 Summary of the second conference day.



CONFERENCE DAY 3
Saturday, November 14th, 2026

09:00 Nineth Session
Joseph, Shechem, and the Memory of Israel in Biblical Traditions
- Chair: Fr. Capodistrias Hämmerli, PhD candidate (University of Fribourg, Switzerland)

09:00 Dr. **Meira Polliack**, Professor of Biblical Studies. Faculty of Humanities, Tel Aviv University, Israel.

"Joseph Enfolding Hagar: Analogous Aspects of Nested Characters and their Reception Exegesis"

09:40 Fr. Dr. **Iosif Stancovici**, Associate Lecturer in Old Testament Studies. Faculty of Letters, History, Philosophy and Theology, West University of Timișoara, Romania. St. Andrei Șaguna Faculty of Orthodox Theology, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania.

"From Shechem to Dothan: The Anonymous Man and the Narrative Geography of Joseph's Journey (Genesis 37:12–17)"

10:00 **Luka G. Lukić**, PhD candidate. Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Belgrade, Serbia.

"Joseph, Shechem, and the Memory of Israel in Stephen's Speech: Acts 7:9–16"

10:20 Discussions (Q & A)
Short beak 10:40–11:00

11:00 Tenth Session
Community Boundaries, Archaeology, and the Visual Memory of Biblical Places
- Chair: Fr. Dr. Marian Vild

11:00 Dr. **Alexandru Mihăilă**, Associate Professor in Old Testament Studies. Justinian the Patriarch Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Bucharest, Romania.

"Friends and Adversaries in the Book of Ezra: Defining Community Boundaries in the Persian Province of Yehud"

11:20 Dr. **Aleksandar Danilović**, Research Assistant in Old Testament. Theological Faculty, University of Heidelberg, Germany.

"From the Shephelah to Scripture: Archaeological Discoveries from Tel Azekah"

11:40 Dr. **Linda Saskia Menczel**, Vice President of the Orthodox Women's Society of Timișoara. Member of the Union of Romanian Visual Artists.

"Shechem in Visual Art: A Journey Within"

12:00 Discussions (Q & A)
Lunch Break

15:00 Eleventh Session
Jacob, Samaritan Worship, and the Reception of John 4 in Jewish and Christian Traditions
- Chair: Fr. Dr. Srećko Koralija

15:00 **George Antoniu Nicoară**, PhD candidate. Faculty of Orthodox Theology, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

"'The Father Seeks True Worshippers': John 4:19–24 in the Context of Shechem"

15:20 Fr. Dr. **Ioan Mihoc**, Lecturer in New Testament Studies. Faculty of Letters, History, Philosophy and Theology, West University of Timișoara, Romania.

"The Samaritans' Journey to Faith: An Ethical and Narrative Analysis of John 4:31–42"

15:40 Fr. Dr. **Marian Vild**, Associate Professor in New Testament Studies. Justinian the Patriarch Faculty of Orthodox Theology, University of Bucharest, Romania.

"The Samaritan Woman in Patristic Perspective: Gender, Mission, and Theological Symbolism in John 4 and the Early Church"

16:00 Dr. **Kees den Biesen**, Independent Scholar of Early Christian Literatures. Visiting professor at the Pontificio Istituto Orientale, Rome, Italy.

"At Jacob's Well: Ephrem the Syrian's Surprising View on the Encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan Woman"

16:20 Discussions (Q & A)
Short beak 16:40–17:00

17:00 Twelfth Session
Joseph in Jewish and Christian Literary and Liturgical Traditions
- Chair: Dr. Ljubica Jovanović

17:00 Dr. **Fotios Apostolos**, Assistant Professor of the History and Theology of Divine Worship. School of Theology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece.

"The Influence of Jewish Synagogical Worship on the Formation of the Early Christian Offices of Vespers and Matins"

17:20 **Yaroslav Panfilov**, Institute for Oriental and Classical Studies, HSE University, Moscow, Russia.

"The Image of Joseph in Ethiopian Christian Literature"

17:40 Fr. Dr. **Srećko Koralija**, Director of the Research Institute (DRI). Domuni Universitas, Toulouse, France.

"From Shechem to Holy Monday: Joseph's Biblical Traditions and Their Reception in the Synaxarion"

18:00 Discussions (Q & A)
18:20 Summary of the third conference day.