CFP

The Bible in Middle Eastern Manuscript Traditions

Dates and Venues:
April 22-23, 2026, **University of Rome Tor Vergata**
April 24, 2026, **Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo**

Conveners:
George A. Kiraz, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton

Sabine Schmidtke, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton

Valentina Sagaria Rossi, University of Rome Tor Vergata

Submission deadline: January 1, 2026

IAS SCHOOL OF HISTORICAL STUDIES INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDY

TOR VERGATA UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI ROMA

PONTIFICIO ATENEO SANT'ANSELMO Roma

This interdisciplinary workshop aims to explore the rich and complex role of biblical manuscripts within Middle Eastern cultures, past and present. The event seeks to highlight the diverse scribal practices, transmission histories, and cultural interpretations that have shaped the reception of the Bible across the region.

Topics may include manuscript production in (Judeo-)Arabic, Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, and (Judeo-)Persian, including multilingual copies of (parts of) the Bible and polyglots; the movement of texts across linguistic and religious communities; the use of biblical material in liturgy, theology, and polemic; and the significance of material culture—such as script, text arrangement and chapter divisions, illumination, codicology, and binding—in expressing local and regional identities. The workshop also invites reflections on the afterlives of biblical manuscripts in modern collections, digital preservation, and cultural heritage debates.

Titles and abstracts (750–1000 words) should be **submitted by January 1, 2026 to Uta Nitschke-Joseph at nitschke@ias.edu**. Scholars are expected to fund their travel to/ from and accommodation in Rome. Lunches will be provided. Speakers will be invited to contribute to a proceedings volume. All contributions will undergo a double-blind peer-review process.

For Middle Eastern Manuscript Traditions (MEMaT), a multidisciplinary project which aims at studying various aspects of manuscript production, utilization, and transmission history, see https://www.ias.edu/hs/islamic-world/memat.