



מכון ון ליר בירושלים
THE VAN LEER JERUSALEM INSTITUTE
معهد فان لير في القدس

FRIDAY
13.11.20
12:00

Theological Thought
and the Anthropocene
Reading Group is delighted
to host a lecture by

PROF. MICHAEL S. NORTHCOTT

Indonesian Consortium of Religious Studies
Universitas Gadjah Mada Graduate School

ASYMMETRIC POWER AND THE NEED FOR A 'KATECHON' IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Opening remarks:

Dr. Hagai Boas, the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute

Dr. Ofri Ilany, Polonsky Academy,
the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute

The earliest legal codes of ancient Mesopotamia and Israel specified that the defining purpose of just governance was to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak and to uphold the cause of the poor. When rulers rule in such a way that the poor receive justice and the children of the needy are saved from want, then it is said in the Tanakh that "the mountains shall bring peace to the people" and "showers shall water the earth" (Psalm 72:3, 6). The climate and ecological crises, and the current COVID-19 crisis, increase the extent to which the powerful oppress the weak, but they do so through the power of systems: the Earth system and technological systems that are both now dominated by global corporations and intergovernmental agencies. In this lecture Prof. Northcott asks in what the "restraining power" or "katechon" against such asymmetric power might be found.