Canadian Society for Jewish Studies Annual Conference: on line, May 2-7, 2021

To register and receive Zoom links, contact Justin Jaron Lewis, Justin_Lewis@umanitoba.ca, with CSJS in the subject line. There is no charge to attend, but all attendees are invited to consider becoming members of CSJS: http://www.csjs.ca/membership.

Times are Eastern Time (Toronto/Ottawa/Montreal/New York). Remember to adjust for your location. All odd-numbered panels are 10-11:30 am Eastern; other times vary.

Schedule of panels with participants and paper titles

Panel 1: Jews and Antisemites
        Sunday May 2, 10-11:30am

Eyal Davidson: The Yellow Star in Jerusalem—Discriminatory Decrees against Jews in the Late

        16th Century

Pedro Réquio: The Dreyfus affair in Portugal—The perspectives of O Século and A Nação

        (1894-1889)

Galit Haddad: French-Jewish POWs in German captivity (1940-1945)

Panel 2: Teaching and learning the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Israel
        Sunday May 2, 2-3 pm

Rudy Kisler: Learning how to conquer a mountain: History education at the Ha'castel national
        heritage site, Jerusalem
Roy Weintraub: Teaching the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Case Study for Jewish Religious-
        Secular Historical Controversies in Israel

Theatre: Golden Age Travel – A Zoom-performed teleplay
        Sunday May 2, 7-8:30pm

Benjamin Rubin (playwright/director): Golden Age Travel IV—North End 1924
        With Ralph Benmergui, Nava Yefet Rubin, Daniel Samson, Ron Riesenbach, Perla
        Riesenbach, Susan Charendoff, Stewart Stein, Art Kaminsky, Ruth Rohn

Panel 3: Times of Crisis
        Monday May 3, 10-11:30 am

Mayer Gruber: Starvation and Pellagra in Lamentations

Lilach Ben Zvi: "This horrible question of our days"—The Jewish State in Yeshayahu
      Leibowitz's Thought

Levi Cooper: *Kaddish* during COVID: Mourning Practices during a Pandemic

Panel 4: Changes and Challenges in Halakhah
      Monday May 3, 1 – 2:30 pm

Simcha Fishbane: *Yartzheit*: Rituals for the Living or the Dead?

Ellie Ash: Partnership Minyans: The institutionalization of a new Jewish liturgical convention

Betina Appel Kuzmarov and Deidre Butler: Warning Labels: Rabbinic Stories of Canadian
      Divorce

Panel 5: Challenges to Rabbinic Authority
      Tuesday May 4, 10-11:30 am

Brachi Elitzur: "The Lightest Ones of the World and the Greatest Ones of the World" in the

      Palestinian Traditions of the Mishnaic and Talmudic Periods

Laliv Clenman: Intermarriage Crises in Early Rabbinic Midrash

Itshak Cohen: The Proposed Domestic Partnership Law – Circumvention of the Religious

      Marriage Law

Panel 6: The Land, Jews, and "Others", Then and Now
      Tuesday May 4, 2-3:30 pm

Jonathan Bourgel: Discussing the Samaritans' Status as a Reflection of Jewish-(Christian)
      Identity: The Samaritans in the New Testament

Roy Shukrun: Moroccan Jewish Activism in Québec and Israel

Amir Locker-Biletzki and Jasmin Habib: Economy of Civil War and the Zionist-Palestinian
      Conflict

Panel 7: Buber and Others in Dialogue
      Wednesday May 5, 10-11:30 am

Evyatar Varman: On Human Potential in Martin Buber's Dialogic Thought

Emma Davis: "The Domain of Life Itself": Brit Shalom's Apolitical Zionism

Daniel Reiser: Faith of Pi: *Life of Pi* in Dialogue with James, Wittgenstein, and Buber

Panel 8: Love and Sacred Space in Israeli Literature and Film
  Wednesday evening May 5, 7-8:30 pm

Yael Halevi-Wise: Delayed Gratification: The *Song of Songs'* Heritage in Contemporary Hebrew
  Fiction
Laura Wiseman: Love *as* Sacred Space in Sivan Har Shefi's "Love after the Holidays" and "The
  Inner Sanctum"
Sara R. Horowitz: Religious Philosophy and Feminist Upheaval: Love, Doubt and Sacred Space
  in Rama Burstein's *La'avor et ha-Qir /* Wedding Plan

**Panel 9: Beit Hamidrash and Djalasa - Cross-Cultural Influences Between Islam and
  Judaism**
  Thursday May 6, 10-11:30 am

Neri Ariel: Rav Hai Gaon's Jurisprudential Monograph *KITĀB ADAB ALQAḌĀ* Reconstructed from
  the Cairo Genizah
Mohamed Ahmed: Hidden Literature: Arabic Poetry as a Judaeo-Islamic Heritage
Ronel Atiya: The *Majlis*: Public Cultural Debate and Its Variants in North African Jewish
  Society

Panel 10: Jewish Activism
  Thursday evening May 6, 7-8:30 pm

Lily Kim: Blacks, Jews, and a Shared Memory: Black Women Founders for Christian-Jewish
  Cooperation
Sura Anna Enkin Lewis: Jewish Environmental Organizations and Jewish Identity
Tyler Pearce: Rejoicing, Tu BiShvat, and Climate Change

Panel 11: Literature and Interpretation
  Friday May 7, 10-11:30 am

Judy Barrett: "Remember the Ladies": name matters in the Zohar
Ira Robinson: Yehuda Kaufman Even Shmuel: the Last Commentator on *Moreh Nevukhim*
Esti Mayer: Let's Talk: Toward a Theory of Translation in the Study of Religion

Panel 12: Critical Perspectives on Spaces, Fame, and Friendship
  Friday May 7, 1-2:30 pm

Sarah Gelbard: A Jewish lens on non-Jewish space: It's not a Jewish problem. Or is it?
Diane Klein: The Hyperreality of Ivanka Trump's Jewish Motherhood
Sara Sharpe: Friendship, Gender, and Jewishness: Interpersonal Connections Between Jewish
    Women in Montreal

Summary of panel times (Eastern Time, Canada / USA)

Panel 1 – Sunday May 2, 10-11:30 am
Jews and Antisemites

Panel 2 – Sunday May 2, 2-3 pm
Teaching and learning the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Israel

Theatre – Sunday May 2, 7-8:30 pm
Golden Age Travel IV—North End 1924

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Panel 5 – Tuesday May 4, 10-11:30 am
Challenges to Rabbinic Authority

Panel 6 – Tuesday May 4, 2-3:30 pm
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Abstracts

Panel 1: Jews and Antisemites
  Sunday May 2, 10-11:30am

Eyal Davidson: The Yellow Star in Jerusalem—Discriminatory Decrees against Jews in the Late 16th Century

In the second half of the 16th century, the situation in the Land of Israel in particular began to deteriorate, as it did across the entire Ottoman Empire: natural disasters, market collapses, along with cracks in its military might. The first to suffer from the difficulties were the ethnic minorities, above all the Jews. The ruling power's hold over those provinces geographically remote from the central government in Istanbul was tenuous, and it was the local rulers who essentially controlled the situation. They did as they pleased in their own territories even though they were official subjects of the government.

This forms the general background to the severe decline in the state of the Jewish community in Jerusalem beginning at the close of the century. In this lecture, we shall examine the information on this topic, as it appears in the historical and *halakhic* sources of the period. We shall discuss the various decrees: the closing of the main synagogue, the desecration of cemeteries, the imposition of harsh taxes, and above all the decree on dress manifested in the effort to undermine the right of the Jews to pray in *talitot* (prayer shawls) in the synagogue. The discussion will rely on evidence from the Sages of the period, Rabbi Yosef Mitrani, Rabbi Moshe

Alshich, Rabbi David Ben-Zimra and Rabbi Shmuel de Uçeda, as well as the travel literature and the sultanate court archives.

Pedro Réquio: The Dreyfus affair in Portugal—The perspectives of O Século and A Nação (1894-1889)

The main objective of this research was to analyze and confront the perspectives of two Portuguese newspapers – O Século and A Nação - in the face of the Dreyfus affair. The Dreyfus affaire consisted of the accusation of treason of a French-Jewish military man in 1894. Around this issue, French and world public opinion became polarized.

I chose O Século for being a republican and democratic newspaper which took a long time to believe in Dreyfus's innocence, thus standing out from Portuguese republican journalism, which was hegemonically pro-Dreyfus. In contrast, I chose A Nação for being a Catholic, monarchical and traditionalist publication. It is thus expectedly antisemitic and anti-Dreyfus, continuing to advocate for his punishment. Even after President Loubet pardoned him.

These publications provide content that illustrates two particularities of two Portuguese political sectors: A group of republicans aligned with the French state and an absolutist monarchist organization that is symptomatic of a particular form of antisemitism that still prevailed in Portugal at the end of the 19th century. More than a comparison, this study seeks to assess how certain political behaviours can contribute to the perpetuation of antisemitism.

Galit Haddad: French-Jewish POWs in German captivity (1940-1945)

In June 1940, the Battle of France ended in a fiasco and resulted in the deportation of some 1.8 million French soldiers to POW camps in Germany, including some 10 000 to 15 000 French POWs of Jewish descent. While Jews in France were mainly deported to concentration and extermination camps, Jewish POWs enjoyed a relatively protected status, and managed to return to France after Liberation.
By contrast to Nazi Germany racial policies, Germany's POWs policy was not conducted according to racial criteria. In fact, POWs were defined and treated primarily according to the national uniforms they wore during their capture and not by their religious or ethnic origins. Wearing a French uniform, thus, offered Jews a modicum of protection and rights.
Yet, in violation of Geneva Convention, Jewish POWs were generally subject to targeted discriminatory treatment and measures compared with other prisoners: they were forced to perform the most painful labours and endured humiliating treatment and physical abuses. The scale and gravity of abuses varied from one camp to another.
This paper highlights the distinctive captivity experience of French-Jewish POWs and uncovers the complex dynamics between Jewish identity, anti-Semitism, and anti-Jewish abuse

in German POW camps. Furthermore, it delineates the impact of collaboration between the Vichy regime and Nazi Germany on the fate of French-Jewish POWs.

Panel 2: Teaching and learning the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Israel
       Sunday May 2, 2-3 pm

In this panel, the authors will present their work in progress surrounding history education in the Jewish-Israeli education system. More specifically, the papers will discuss how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been presented and studied both in school history curricula and heritage sites. Exploring this often-overlooked subject will allow the authors to draw original links between Israeli history, education and contemporary Jewish identity.

Rudy Kisler: Learning how to conquer a mountain: History education at the Ha'castel national heritage site, Jerusalem

Today, the global resurgence of nationalism has revealed divisions over explanations of the past. Specifically, historical remnants (e.g., statues, monuments, and artifacts) have become sites of conflict. Indeed, heritage is profoundly political, as policymakers and educators have often harnessed heritage education to transmit national ideals. However, scholars have warned that nationally-oriented history education can impose a monolithic reading of history. This may result in the privileging of one group's history over others', consequently inspiring nationalistic sentiments. Nowhere is this more evident than in Israel today, where competing historical narratives on contentious topics such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continue to fuel division, fear, and animosity.

      In my presentation I will discuss Israel's official heritage policy and its educational goals. To do so, I will present the case-study of the Ha'castel National Heritage Site. The site, situated on the mountainous terrain of the Jerusalem area, commemorates the battles which occurred during Israel's War of Independence at what use to be the Palestinian village Al-Qastal prior to 1948. Since the early days of Israel, the Ha'castel battle has become a landmark in Jewish-Israeli collective memory, symbolizing the first Jewish victory towards winning the battle for Jerusalem.

      This empirical study is a first of its kind attempt to critically investigate the institutional memorialization of the Ha'castel history by carefully combining multiple methods – document analysis, interviews and participant observation. By doing so, I suggest a new reading of Jewish-Israeli history education and how it is manifested in cultural heritage.

Roy Weintraub: Teaching the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: A Case Study for Jewish Religious-Secular Historical Controversies in Israel

In the late 1990s, a widespread public outcry erupted over how history textbooks for the State (secular) system portray the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Religious Zionists led the critique,

seeing the books as a dangerous penetration of post-Zionist and postmodern ideologies into the public education system. It was a major catalyst that pushed Religious Zionism to publish its independent curriculum and textbooks.

In this lecture, I will explore the changes that have taken place in the teaching of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict over the past twenty years. I will map and analyze the various characteristics of the subject teaching between the State and State Religious (SR) education systems. The textual analysis will be based on a wide range of sources, which provide various perspectives: from curricula and textbooks to teachers' seminars, matriculation exams, and lesson plans.

The findings show that the two systems have many similarities, both even adopted historiographical findings that could undermine the classical Zionist narrative. However, while the State system seeks to present a complex picture, it is evident that the SR has leveraged the developments to strengthen its worldview. For example, SR compares the suffering involved in the War of Independence with the Six-Day War and argues for the similarity between Jewish settlement on Palestinian lands occupied in 1948 and those occupied in 1967. Thus, it presents the Gush Emunim movement as a direct continuation of the settlement efforts since the beginning of Zionism.

Golden Age Travel IV—North End 1924: A Zoom-performed teleplay by Benjamin Rubin
        Sunday May 2, 7-8:30pm

This is an original play, performed on Zoom. Parts of it will appear to conference participants as if they are on a Zoom call with these characters. So, in addition to its dramatic and philosophical dialogue, this "Zoom teleplay" also talks to the strange new world of 2020-21, where so much - even the CSJS annual conference - is virtual, on Zoom, and mediated by screens.

The play uses the concept of time travel to explore issues in Jewish history, historiography and identity – personal and collective.

Toronto's Izzy Zimmerman, a Bob Dylan wannabe on a self-knowledge quest, convinces his old Brandeis University rock band to travel back to Winnipeg 1924, when his mother was born. He is accompanied by Yehuda HaLevi, the Hebrew poet and "Kuzari" philosopher from the Golden Age of 12th century Islamic Spain. HaLevi is a time travel spy, one of the Minor Prophets of the "Golden Age Prophecy" mission, sent in 1199 to scout out the Jewish future. On this journey, he seeks to understand something utterly foreign to his Golden Age Arabic worldview – the historical reality of Ashkenazi Yiddish-speaking Jews in the 1920s, making the transition from Eastern Europe to the new world. They are also accompanied by Hershel of Ostropol – the Baal Shem Tov's grandson's jester.

Together, they investigate the mysteries and histories – personal and collective – of Izzy's grandfather, for whom he is named, who was the first superintendent of Winnipeg's Jewish Old Folks home; and of North End Winnipeg 1924, the Golden Age of Yiddish Canada.

Cast: Ralph Benmergui as Maimonides • Nava Yefet Rubin as Prophetess Devora • Daniel Samson as Hershel of Ostropol • Ron Riesenbach as Izzy • Perla Riesenbach as Sati • Susan

Charendoff as Joni • Stewart Stein as Argo • Art Kaminsky as Art • Ruth Rohn as Dr. Maimenbaum • Benjamin Rubin as Yehuda HaLevi

🎵 **Music:** "Dror Yikra" by Ron Davis 🎵 "Absolutely Sweet Beliefs" by Louis Simao 🎵 "Mayn
Shtetele Belz" by Toronto Jewish Chorus 🎵 "Partinglass Dreamspeech" by Wendy Rubin 🎵

Panel 3: Times of Crisis
Monday May 3, 10-11:30 am

Mayer Gruber: Starvation and Pellagra in Lamentations

In Chapter 5, verse 10 of the biblical book of Lamentations, the lamentation poet(s) declare(s), "Our skin was burnt as by an oven because of malnutrition." Already in 1950 in *Festschrift Alfred Bertholet*, Geoffrey Rolles Driver argued that the Hebrew expression *zal'apot ra'ab,* which I translate 'malnutrition', denotes specifically severe burning pains in the stomach, which are symptoms of acute starvation. In addition, Driver argues that the burning of the skin described in the initial verset of Lam 5.10 refers to the flaking off of skin, which is also a well-known symptom of acute starvation. Consequently, I shall demonstrate that the Bible here speaks about a symptomatic inflammation of the skin, which is a consequence of malnutrition. This causal relationship corresponds to the nexus between skin lesions and dietary inadequacy in pellagra. As we shall see, Lam 5:10 reflects the tragic reality that Judah's wheat and barley fields and grain storage facilities were destroyed in the course of the war, in which Judah was defeated by the army of Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylonia. Indeed, a major consequence of war in many times and places is that the civilian population suffers from acute malnutrition with all the associated symptoms. Let there be no doubt. The author of Lam. 5:10 is not describing metaphorically the overthrow of one or another group of male elites but the suffering unto death of innocent civilians, especially women, children, and the elderly.

Lilach Ben Zvi: "This horrible question of our days"—The Jewish State in Yeshayahu Leibowitz's Thought

Establishing Israel as a modern state requires it to embrace these structure principles, as a democracy that accepts pluralism and secularism as a permanent feature of modern life. However, declaring Israel also as a Jewish state creates a continued question regarding the relationships between these two components, but more than that, regarding the exact meaning and content of this Jewishness.

I want to address this issue by reaching Yeshayahu Leibowitz's philosophy and his approach to what he called the "horrible questions of our days" –the meaning of Judaism in a modern and secular era.

Thus, Leibowitz saw in the establishment of Israel a crisis, perhaps the biggest one ever of the Jewish world. Establishing a "Jewish" state by people who are no more defining Judaism in religious terms, it is no longer clear who this nation is, and there is a real danger of replacing religious values in demonic one and defining the Jewish nation by its state. Striving for an eternal cultural fight between religion and the modern, secular state is the only chance, according to Leibowitz, to save the Jewish state.

Leibowitz's unique approach, I will argue, provides a different point of view of processes currently occurring in Israeli society, and enables a re-observation of the discourse regarding religion and the modern state.

Levi Cooper: *Kaddish* during COVID: Mourning Practices during a Pandemic

According to Jewish tradition, mourning practices include the recitation of *Kaddish* – a liturgical prayer in Aramaic that affirms the sanctification, greatness, and eternality of God. This responsive prayer ritual is led by mourners as part of the religiously mandated bereavement process and is experienced as one of the key elements of prayer services. Even Jews who are not observant may undertake daily *Kaddish* recital out of respect for a deceased parent.

An important prerequisite of *Kaddish* recital is the presence of a *minyan* – a quorum of ten Jews. Traditionally this was a quorum of ten men, though in contemporary liberal streams of Judaism the quorum may be comprised of men and women.

This paper will explore various suggestions and discussions regarding the *Kaddish* ritual under quarantine or lockdown conditions where gathering for a prayer quorum was not possible. Proposals included the formation of online prayer quorums, vicarious *Kaddish* recitation by someone in a location where there were no gathering restrictions, replacement prayers in lieu of the traditional *Kaddish*, and physical prayer gatherings without proximity by standing in backyards or on balconies while remaining in the confines of the home.

The paper will analyse the various vectors, their achievements and drawbacks, and assess how each proposal responded to different religious needs of those reciting *Kaddish*. In addition, precedents will be adduced and alternatives from Jewish history will be considered, in order to place the contemporary challenges in historical perspective.

Panel 4: Changes and Challenges in Halakhah
Monday May 3, 1 – 2:30 pm

Simcha Fishbane: *Yartzheit*: Rituals for the Living or the Dead?

This paper will explore the custom of observing *Yartzheit,* the day that is acknowledged yearly on which a relative or any other Jewish individual chosen to be recognized had passed away. The term *Yartzheit* is a German – Jewish or Yiddish word that is translated year time or time of the year. The custom to observe *yartzheit* can be traced to the 12th century, the period of the *rishonim*. The only ritual mentioned in these early documents is fasting on this day of *yartzheit*.

Additional rituals such as reciting the *kadish*, lighting a candle etc. were introduced later. My intention is to analyze the social- historical and anthropological understanding of this custom and the rituals associated with it using theoretical frameworks such as memory theory and the sociology of family. While there are numerous rabbinical sources that discuss *yartzheit* I have found no scholarly writing devoted to this topic.

After presenting my methodology, I will explore each separate ritual. They include, fasting, reciting *kadish*, visiting the cemetery, lighting a candle, family gatherings studying *Mishnah*, leading the prayer in the synagogue, *aliya* to the Torah and reciting the *yizkor* prayer. I will also attempt to explore the different customs of the various factions in Judaism. In my concluding remarks I will analyze and present the development, societal need and intent of the *yartzheit* rituals as well as their relationship to mourning customs

Ellie Ash: Partnership Minyans: The institutionalization of a new Jewish liturgical convention

"Partnership" congregations are a new format for Jewish worship that emerged two decades ago at the margins of the Modern Orthodox community, but the history of their emergence has not yet been told. This paper examines the institutionalization of the partnership format into a culturally available liturgical convention. The format represents an innovative compromise between a desire for gender equality and traditional Orthodox ritual law. Worship services with elements of the partnership format began to occur in the US and Israel in the 1980s and 1990s, but the congregational style only became a culturally recognized genre after the 2002 founding of Shira Hadasha in Israel. At that point, new congregations imitating the format began to spring up in Israel and around the Anglophone Jewish world. This paper explains the process of institutionalization in the North American context, including the spread of knowledge of the new congregations, legitimation from rabbis and the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance, and the provision of labels and a definition of the partnership style. Ideological justifications of the format were an important part of the legitimation process, but, surprisingly, published justifications initially only dealt with one of the relevant liturgical innovations, leaving others undefended. To understand this, I draw on the sociological insight that people understand cultural institutions like liturgical forms via "taken for granted accounts." Since most people account for partnership congregations in routine, rather than ideological, ways, they do not feel pressure to understand every component individually, but are likely to accept or reject the format as a package.

Betina Appel Kuzmarov and Deidre Butler: Warning Labels: Rabbinic Stories of Canadian Divorce

They need to know that if they have this type of divorce and they find a person from another movement or they get a rabbi from another movement, it's not going to hold. You know, they might have to go through the process all over again. (2018)

This warning as to how a non-Orthodox divorce might be accepted is offered to divorcing couples by Rabbi Shekel, the *Mesaderet Gittin* (the rabbi responsible for organizing divorces) of the Toronto Reform *Beit Din.* We hear similar cautions from Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist Rabbis in our interviews (2016-2021) from our ethnographic project on Jewish divorce in Canada. Personal status and the ability to Jewishly marry depends on correct divorce practice. Canadian rabbis are acutely aware of what is at risk: divorces delegitimized, children rendered *momzerim*, and women chained again to unwanted marriages. What is striking is that we also hear modern Orthodox and *Hareidi* rabbis pragmatically admitting that there are always more stringent legal decisors who may not accept *their* practice. Woven through these narratives is an invocation of "tradition" as the marker of their own correct practice as well as a profound concern for the ways in which more stringent interpretations threaten *K'lal Yisrael*. Our theoretical framework, Troubling Orthopraxies, targets the ways in which correct practice becomes conflated with stringency. Rabbis clearly assert the legitimacy and authenticity of *their* practice as being fully in continuity with Jewish tradition even as they issue these warnings. We probe how the shared language of tradition does important work in obfuscating how orthopraxy cumulatively troubles divorce practice. These warning labels reveal deep fissures in the cohesion of the Jewish community, driven deeper and wider by a normalization (and stigmatization) of diverging practice around issues of personal status.

Panel 5: Challenges to Rabbinic Authority
　　　Tuesday May 4, 10-11:30 am

Brachi Elitzur: "The Lightest Ones of the World and the Greatest Ones of the World" in the Palestinian Traditions of the Mishnaic and Talmudic Periods

In this paper I plan to discuss the development of a rabbinic tradition that draws on verses from Samuel's speech dealing with the authority of leaders (1 sam 12, 6 - 11) against the background of rabbinic political circumstances. In its earliest manifestations, this tradition is integrated in a story describing one of the confrontations concerning the determination of the Jewish calendar. These confrontations occurred in the *beit midrash* in Yavne under the leadership of Rabban Gamliel. I trace the changes it underwent during the transitions between the different literary genres and suggest that these changes were influenced by the character of the social tension that existed when each genre was redacted. This paper deals with the question of authority, power and leadership in Palestine in the period of the Sages (*Hazal*) .

Laliv Clenman: Intermarriage Crises in Early Rabbinic Midrash

The characterisation of intermarriage as a crisis is a familiar trope in contemporary Jewish discourse. When Michael Satlow noted the hysterical tone of discussion, in his *Jewish Marriage in Antiquity* (2001), intermarriage rates in the American Jewish community stood at 32% (1990), while the most recent PEW Portrait of Jewish Americans (2013) found the rate to be steadily increasing in recent years, with intermarriage rates at 44% overall and significantly higher in non-Orthodox communities. Turning to antiquity, this paper will argue that *Midrash Torat Cohanim* (*Sifra*) *Acharei Mot* to Leviticus 18, otherwise known as the *Mekhilta d'Arayot*, similarly casts intermarriage as a series of crises that ultimately threaten the utter destruction of the Jewish people. I shall demonstrate that this crisis discourse exists within a midrashic context that is dominated by struggles between particularism and universalism, as well as isolationism and integration. Furthermore, I will propose that the so-called schools of R. Akiva and R. Yishmael took radically different exegetical approaches to intermarriage, leaving only the Akivan school with an intermarriage crisis. This divergence may be explained by exegetical

constraints on the Akivan interpretive tradition, such that a wider range of approaches to intermarriage remained available to the Yishmaelean exegete. Finally, I will briefly consider how these findings might be understood historically in relation to the nature of rabbinic infulence and Jewish communities in the period when these midrashim were likely redacted, which falls squarely within the period between the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE and the Judaizing renewal that Seth Schwartz has posited circa 400 CE.

Itshak Cohen: The Proposed Domestic Partnership Law – Circumvention of the Religious Marriage Law

The proposed Israeli Domestic Partnership Law 5778 – 2013 would introduces an opportunity for individuals who are not permitted to marry under religious law and presently need to formalize their spousal relationship abroad. From now on they would be able to do so through the Israeli Registrar of Domestic Partnerships. The law also intends to address the larger population of common law spouses. Prior to this law, the three available alternatives to religious marriage were civil marriage entered into abroad, private marriage, and a common law marriage. The proposed law introduces a civil model that actually offers a fourth alternative to religious marriage for formalizing the spousal relationship in Israel. It not only includes the advantages of the existing alternatives but also responds to their disadvantages in the following ways. Upon its establishment, the formal spousal relationship would be officially recognized, uncontrolled by religious law, and reflected in the civil registry. During the spousal relationship, the partners would benefit from all the rights of a married couple. Upon its dissolution, the spouses would need neither a rabbinical court proceeding nor a *get* divorce document.

My lecture will respond to several challenges that may arise in the implementation of this law. Most difficult is the concern whether the ceremony before the civil registrar will be

recognized as a valid marriage under religious law. If that is so, then separation of a couple without a *get* might prohibit each of them from entering into a subsequent marriage. In contrast, dissolution of a marriage with a *get* will make the content of this law less effective by returning the issue of the *agunah* and the refusal of giving a *get* to the civil model.

My lecture will offer suggestions for coping with these challenges: restriction of the law to those sectors in which the question of marriage under religious law will not arise; incorporation of conditions in the ceremony before the registrar that will minimize the concern of recognizing it as a religious marriage, so that a *get* and its disadvantages will be unnecessary; consideration of the relevant grounds for divorce. These suggestions can assist the law and enable its implementation in the complicated reality of Israeli family law that does not yet have a separation of religion and state.

Panel 6: The Land, Jews, and "Others", Then and Now
Tuesday May 4, 2-3:30 pm

Jonathan Bourgel: Discussing the Samaritans' Status as a Reflection of Jewish-(Christian) Identity: The Samaritans in the New Testament

Despite periods of tension between Jews and Samaritans in the Second Temple period, a number of sources suggest that there was continuous religious and social contact between the two communities in the centuries to come.

It is interesting to note that, in the decades following the destruction of the Jewish sanctuary (70 CE), the status of the Samaritans remained a subject of lively debate among Jews. Although the rulings of Rabban Gamaliel were particularly sympathetic to the Samaritans, other *Tannaim*, such as Rabbi Eliezer, took a sharply anti-Samaritan position. Similarly, Josephus' hostility toward the Samaritans is evident throughout his writings.

The aim of this paper is to show that early Jewish-Christians were actively involved in discussions regarding the status of the Samaritans and their degree of kinship with the Jews. Indeed, the New Testament attests to the fact that this issue was also widely debated within the nascent Christian community. Whereas Matthew (10:5b-6) utterly rejects the mission to the Samaritans because he does not consider them to be part of the "House of Israel," the community reflected in John 4:4-42 regards them as full-fledged Israelites worthy of receiving the Gospel. Although Luke's portrayal of the Samaritans is rather ambiguous and it is never made clear whether he holds them to be Israelites or Gentiles, he nevertheless includes them in his vision of universal mission. What is

remarkable is that, despite these very different views, all of these references consider the Samaritan community from an exclusively Jewish perspective that is grounded in traditional representations of the relationship between Jews and Samaritans.

Roy Shukrun: Moroccan Jewish Activism in Québec and Israel

This article explores the transnational ties between Moroccan Jews in Quebec and Israel through the lens of community activism and international solidarity organizations between 1960 and 1990. I argue that the construction of local "Sephardi" or "Mizrahi" identities can be better understood by analyzing the development of Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) diasporic networks rather than exclusively studying national contexts. In Quebec, the Anglo-dominated Canadian public and Ashkenazi-dominated Jewish spheres created difficulties for the integration of many newly arrived Moroccan Jewish migrants who had anticipated a Francophone environment. In light of Quebec's Quiet Revolution, Moroccan Jewish community activists seized on the province's program of francization to articulate a "Sépharade" identity adapted to Quebec's changing public and private spheres, leading to conflict with the longer established and largely Anglophone Ashkenazi community. At the same moment in Israel, decades of protests stemming from discontent with their economic and political marginalization by Ashkenazi elites culminated in the 1971 Black Panther demonstrations launched by Moroccan and other MENA Jews. In response to these protests, Moroccan Jews in Montreal would join MENA diaspora communities in Latin America, Europe, and Israel in implementing programs aimed at challenging racial inequality in Israel by coordinating activism and philanthropy through transnational solidarity organizations. The desire for Moroccan Jews in Quebec to distill a cohesive "Sépharade" identity thus intersected with the growing discourse about racial inequality in Israel, so that what it meant for Moroccans to be Canadian and Quebecois developed in conversation with what it meant for them to be Sephardi and Israeli.

Amir Locker-Biletzki and Jasmin Habib: Economy of Civil War and the Zionist-
        Palestinian Conflict

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is described as a conflict of two groups bifurcated along lines of ethnonational identity. Two national movements wishing to create and maintain a national identity in a nation-state all on the same land. In the article presented here we argue for a different approach to the conflict. Using concepts derived from the works of political economists Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler and from peace studies, we contend that the conflict is a civil war taken place on the same political unit. Using the rendering of one state by the Israeli scholars Moshe Behar and Yehouda Shenhav as well as the understandings of settler-colonialism of Gershon Shafir and the commodification of land by Communist ideologues, in conjunction with Collier and Hoeffler's greed and grievance conflict models – we argue that the Palestinian-Israeli conflict exhibits elements of a struggle over a lootable source land. We continue to argue that the looting of land leads to the ethnopolitical grievance of those who stand to lose this source further fueling the conflict. We conclude by suggesting that the possible future transformation of the

conflict is already outlined in its present. Namely, turning the conflicted Israeli-Palestinian joint space into a peaceful one.

Panel 7: Buber and Others in Dialogue
Wednesday May 5, 10-11:30 am

Evyatar Varman: On Human Potential in Martin Buber's Dialogic Thought

In 1923, Martin Buber published his seminal work *I and Thou*, in which he formulated his dialogic philosophy. Unlike his earlier writings, the philosophy presented in the book shows an assertion of the human being's limitations in relation to, as well as dependence on his surroundings in the world and on God. Buber established this through a definition of two relations a person may have with her surroundings: I- Thou and I-It. In my paper, I will offer a new understanding of Buber's perspective on this issue. I wish to illustrate the eternal human potential portrayed in *I and Thou* through a study of Buber's use of the pregnancy and birth phenomena.

As I will show, Buber holds a literary-philosophical discourse with rabbinic literature and with the works of Plato and Kierkegaard on human ability and dependence, and adopts perspectives from each. I claim that Buber diminishes the gap between human being and God, between finite and infinite — by embedding divine potential in the human being and her surroundings in the world, and by connecting between the two relations (I-Thou and I-It). Indeed, there have been more than a few comparisons drawn between Buber and Kierkegaard, but until now, no serious analysis has involved Buber's 'double pregnancy' model and its Platonic connection. Accordingly, this essay will identify *Sehnsucht*, the innate ability of humans in the I-It reality, and the connection it has to the creation that occurs in I-Thou reality.

Emma Davis: "The Domain of Life Itself": Brit Shalom's Apolitical Zionism

With the ongoing stalemate in negotiations regarding a two-state solution in Israel/Palestine, the idea of a binational Israel has once again entered into contemporary political discourse. Within Zionist thought, the origin of the binational idea is typically associated with Brit Shalom, a political organization founded in Jerusalem in 1925 and made up of prominent Central European Jewish intellectuals such as Martin Buber, Gershom Scholem and Hannah Arendt. While many contemporary scholars and pundits gesture to Brit Shalom as an early voice of liberal Zionism, there has yet to be serious scholarly engagement with Brit Shalom's political ideology. Understanding the contours of their early Zionist binationalism can help illuminate the opportunities, pitfalls, and potential contradictions of binationalism today.

Through archival analysis of members' publications, letters and diaries, this essay will show that Brit Shalom's members claimed their Zionism to be apolitical due to their rejection of the need for Jewish state in Palestine and their commitment to building relationships between Israelis and Palestinians through dialogue and compromise rather than political confrontation.

The essay will then argue that in constructing their Zionism as politically uncontroversial, the group avoided addressing Palestinian objections to Jewish land acquisition and settlement in Palestine. This ideological inconsistency led to Brit Shalom's failure to achieve concrete political gains with Palestinians as well as its dissolution in 1933. Any serious attempt to construct a contemporary bi-national Zionism must, I argue, engage with the Palestinian objections to prestate Zionist settlement that Brit Shalom ignored.

Daniel Reiser: Faith of Pi: *Life of Pi* in Dialogue with James, Wittgenstein, and Buber

My lecture examines a strikingly modern and original interpretation of the Kabbalistic theory of *tsimtsum* in Yann Martel's (a Canadian novelist), bestselling novel *Life of Pi*. This interpretation advances two different possibilities, the veracity of which cannot be determined, regarding whether *tsimtsum* is literal or allegorical. These two different readings hold vastly divergent implications for the human soul, its approach to life and its perception of God. In addition, I argue that the creative interpretations of *Life of Pi* touch directly upon broader questions of faith and meaning, and thus I place them into conversation with the of the teachings of William James, Martin Buber and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Yann Martel's 2001 bestselling novel *Life of Pi*, later released in 2012 as a prize-winning box office hit, addresses themes such as religion, faith, imagination and more. A large part of the book is a tale of survival. Pi the only human survivor from a Japanese cargo ship named the *Tsimtsum*. His entire family, and all other passengers perished. He drifts across the Pacific Ocean in a lifeboat which is named too, like its mother ship, the *Tsimtsum*. The author "ostensibly" does not address Judaism, but the opening chapter of the book mentions, undoubtedly, the Jewish Kabbalist doctrine of *Tsimtsum*:

> My suffering left me sad and gloomy. Academic study and the steady, mindful practice of religion slowly wrought me back to life. […] After one year of high school, I attended the University of Toronto and took a double-major bachelor's degree. My majors were religious studies and zoology. My fourth-year thesis for religious studies concerned certain aspects of the cosmogony theory of Isaac Luria, the great sixteenth-century Kabbalist from Safed. (p. 3)

In my paper Martel's interpretation is compared to classical Jewish sources with a particular eye to the readings of *tsimtsum* in Hasidic texts and the famed theological dispute between the early Hasidic masters and the disciples of the Vilna Gaon

Panel 8: Love and Sacred Space in Israeli Literature and Film
    Wednesday evening May 5, 7-8:30 pm

This panel addresses relationships between love and sacred space in modern Israeli literature and film. Each of the three papers focuses on a different genre: prose, poetry, and cinema. The presentations explore ways in which sacred space becomes a locus for different approaches to spiritual and physical love, doubt, faith, or faithlessness.

Yael Halevi-Wise: Delayed Gratification: The *Song of Songs'* Heritage in Contemporary Hebrew Fiction

This paper focuses on A. B. Yehoshua's frustrated attempts to rewrite the *Song of Songs* through his lifelong intertextual relationship with Nobel Prize winner, S. Y. Agnon. Since antiquity, the *Song of Songs* has functioned as an emblem for an infinitely deferred harmony between two passionate lovers, whose truncated relationship is traditionally equated to a soured (and triangulated) love affair between God, the people, and the land of Israel. But, across his career, and especially in *The Liberated Bride* (2001), Yehoshua has striven to liberate his lovers from the burden of an overdetermined relationship toward/with a dysfunctional past. In so doing, Yehoshua, too, strives to liberate himself from the influence of Agnon and the long interpretative legacy of the *Song* from antiquity to modern times.

Laura Wiseman: Love *as* Sacred Space in Sivan Har Shefi's "Love after the Holidays" and "The Inner Sanctum"

Ahava Aḥarei he-Ḥagim (Love After the Holidays) and *Be-Ḥadrei Ḥadarim* (The Inner Sanctum) are two love poems in a sequence by Sivan Har-Shefi (2010). The poetry follows a couple to the *huppa* and the wedding chamber as the partners season their home with love and situate their relationship at the juncture of earthly and ethereal Jerusalem. In the process the poet draws on the architecture of the tabernacle and choreography of the cherubim for the orientation and attitude of the lovers. In amplifying and interpreting culturally specific, canonical components and organic motifs that Har-Shefi embeds in these works, Wiseman discerns the poet's projection of love *as* sacred space.

Sara R. Horowitz: Religious Philosophy and Feminist Upheaval: Love, Doubt and Sacred Space in Rama Burstein's *La'avor et ha-Qir /* Wedding Plan

Rama Burshtein's film *La'avor et ha-Qir* (Wedding Plan, 2016) employs cinema as a medium for sacred Jewish thought. Horowitz identifies Burshtein's story-telling style similar to that of Reb Nachman of Bratslav: complex, sometimes convoluted tales that reach beyond Jewish thought to investigate faith in tension with doubt. The film is philosophy that addresses questions of faith, love, doubt and despair, as well as the instability of revelation and sacred space.

Panel 9: Beit Hamidrash and Djalasa - Cross-Cultural Influences Between Islam and Judaism
Thursday May 6, 10-11:30 am

Neri Ariel: Rav Hai Gaon's Jurisprudential Monograph *KITĀB ADAB ALQAḌĀ* Reconstructed from the Cairo Genizah

In this paper I argue for a distinct and sufficient proof for the discovery of a hitherto almost completely unknown treatise written in Judaeo-Arabic by Rav Hai b. Sherira Gaon. The reconstruction reveals that this monograph, a manual for Judges, represents a Jewish instantiation within the well-established Muslim genre *Adab al-Qāḍī*. In the past, only several indirect remnants translated into medieval Hebrew have been shown by scholars to be part of this almost entirely lost work. After careful work, research has shown that great parts of the skeleton of this halakhic monograph can be reconstructed from Genizah fragments, so one can sketch a greater picture of this lost book. Not only is this work of great importance for the understanding of courtly issues, but also it has a tremendous impact on the understanding of halakhic literature written in Judaeo-Arabic generally. This paper will be dedicated to summarizing the historical-philological considerations that have contributed to this exciting discovery.

Mohamed Ahmed: Hidden Literature: Arabic Poetry as a Judaeo-Islamic Heritage

There is evidence of shared interest in poetry between Jews and Muslims from the 7th century onwards, which lasted through the ages until modern times. As Arabic speakers, Jews adopted this creative literary writing in the pre-Islamic. The emergence of secular Hebrew poetry in Andalusia was a direct consequence of exposure to Arabic poetry traditions. Al-Ḥarīzī (ca. 1166–1225), for instance, was one of the Jewish poets who wrote in both Arabic and Hebrew. Medieval Arabic poetry written in Hebrew script (Judaeo-Arabic) can be found in many fragments in the Cairo Genizah, which adds further evidence of this intertwined Judaeo-Islamic heritage in a multicultural society.

This presentation investigates what the extant poetry can tell us about social strata, religious identities and relations between Muslims and Jews in medieval Egypt. It will also discuss the way in which the shared knowledge of Arabic poetry shaped, or was shaped by Muslim-Jewish interactions.

Ronel Atiya: The *Majlis*: Public Cultural Debate and Its Variants in North African Jewish Society

Cross-cultural influence is a common result of historical inquiry. Many researchers describe various manifestations of this process, in which lifestyle, educational policy, cultural life, and even religious rite are shaped and developed along the hidden channels of communication that connect one culture to another. In my lecture, I will present a distinct phenomenon that developed in northern Africa, first in Medieval Islamic society and consequently in Tunisian

Jewish society in later times. Surprisingly, few researchers describe this phenomenon and the various forms it assumed. Originally known as *majlis,* it denotes a conference that involves a rational debate over religious and theological issues. I present the various forms of *majlis* that are found in Jewish society in Tunisia from the late eighteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth.

There are a number of sources that document the participation of Jews in public debates. These debates were organized by the government in various locations and usually included leaders of additional religions as well. There are also accounts of internal Jewish debates, such as between rabbinic Jewish leaders and representatives of the Karaite community, that were facilitated by Muslim rulers. In some periods, these debates became integral parts of Jewish communities' sociocultural life. This phenomenon did not assume an important role in most Jewish communities. In the Tunis community, however, it was indeed an important function, as I will describe in my lecture.

Panel 10: Jewish Activism
Thursday evening May 6, 7-8:30 pm

Lily Kim: Blacks, Jews, and a Shared Memory: Black Women Founders for Christian-Jewish Cooperation

Jews and Blacks have had long and shared histories of struggle. Rarely, however, has studying their shared past focussed on the role of women and religious dimensions of struggles for social equality. Understanding the role of female organizational founders unlocks the past, including traumas, with which Jews and Blacks could identify.

Identifying common threads of imperial domination or oppression revives the submerged narratives of communities with the existential dimensions of human suffering. From journalistic Post-Reconstruction leader Ida B. Wells (Niagara Movement) to Mary McLeod Bethune's rise and influence (e.g., NACW, Black Cabinet), the mobilization of action by Black women founders of organizations, in religious networks, created bridges of peace through Christian-Jewish bonds.

The role of Black women founders of national organizations warrants examination for their contributions in- / outside communities of the South. Contemporaries Ida B. Wells and Mary McLeod Bethune were instrumental in advancing not only their race, but also, Christian-Jewish cooperation throughout the continent. The Civil Rights Movement was a part of the legacy that grew from their interreligious networks, which were built upon cultures of memory. Recalling a shared past—even its old wounds—provides a key to fostering identities that can shape an interconnected future.

Sura Anna Enkin Lewis: Jewish Environmental Organizations and Jewish Identity

This paper asks the question: how are Jewish environmental organizations drawing on Jewish identity to move forward the climate justice movement? Additionally, it asks: are Jewish

organizations aiming to use Judaism as an entry point to environmentalism or environmentalism as a pathway to Judaism?

I analyze websites and publications of three prominent Jewish environmental organizations. The organizations focused on are Dayenu, the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, and the Jewish Climate Action Network. I identify themes that exist among the organizations. This paper places Jewish environmentalism within the context of scholarship on Jewish pursuits of social justice. It explores the ways in which 'tikkun olam' and a motivation for justice have already become part of Jewish identity, and argues that Jewish environmental organizations are attempting to integrate environmentalism, as well, into Jewish identity. It also draws on the recent surveys of Canadian and American Jews and discusses whether the environmental organizations are relating environmentalism to the key aspects of Jewish identity that the surveys identify. The paper asks how Jewish environmental organizations are constructing Jewish identity in comparison to how Canadian and American Jews in these studies depict their own identity.

This paper will contribute to scholarship on climate change and may prove beneficial to Jewish climate organizations who wish to improve their messaging.

Tyler Pearce: Rejoicing, Tu BiShvat, and Climate Change

This non-academic presentation introduces *The Ruah Haggadah*, compiled for a Tu Bishvat seder focused on climate change.

Originally pulled together for a home-based seder, and for a mix of observant and non-observant friends, *The Ruah Haggadah* seeks to remain true to the spirit of any Jewish new year —a time of rejoicing!—within a context for which we can only lament. (Who could *rejoice* during climate emergency?) Aiming to loosen our attachments to cynicism / despair / avoidance / depression in our response(s) to climate emergency, the haggadah seeks to remember our bonds with the earth and with each other, and seeks to turn to Jewish sources to think-and-feel (and perhaps pray!) our way to other modes of being and action as we "stand in the wind" of climate change.

This presentation tells the story of the creation of the Haggadah, its first uses and its possible future. The session offers a meditation stemming from these initial experiences—a lay person's attempt to draw from Jewish sources for spiritual sustenance for her closest friends— and to ask what seems to be a missing, urgent question in general discourse about climate change: how are we going to keep our bonds to each other?

The session will invite participants to be a part of *The Ruah Haggadah*'s ongoing construction.

Panel 11: Literature and Interpretation
      Friday May 7, 10-11:30 am

Judy Barrett: "Remember the Ladies": name matters in the Zohar

Much has been made in the secondary literature of the Zohar's progressive view of 'the feminine'. Little notice has been given, though, to the treatment of actual female characters in its hundreds of stories.

The present study rereads the Zoharic narratives in light of this oversight and considers: 1) concrete women (e.g., as mothers and daughters), and

2) oblique references to concrete women (e.g., as objects of appreciation or of violence).

Lexical differences are examined and, perhaps most peculiar, what question the Zohar never asks of its women.

Ira Robinson: Yehuda Kaufman Even-Shmuel: the Last Commentator on *Moreh Nevukhim*

This presentation will focus on Yehuda Kaufman Even-Shmuel's (1886-1976) multivolume (and unfinished) work on Moses Maimonides' twelfth century classic work of Judaic thought, *Guide of the Perplexed* [*Moreh Nevukhim*]. Even-Shmuel began his work on Maimonides in the 1930s, influenced by Ḥayyim Naḥman Bialik's project to make classic Judaic works relevant and accessible to a modern Jewish readership. Even-Shmuel published four volumes on the *Moreh* that appeared over a half century (1935-1987 [posthumous]).

Even-Shmuel's work is interesting and significant in several ways. It was written over a period of several decades, and reflects Even-Shmuel's intellectual and religious path from secular Labor Zionism to identification with Orthodox Judaism. It reflects as well developments in Maimonidean scholarship in the twentieth century. It is also noteworthy as the last major study of the *Guide* presented as a running commentary. It thus takes into its purview the latest available scholarly studies of the *Guide*, while at the same time actively engaging in dialogue with the work's medieval and early modern commentators.

This presentation therefore seeks to analyze Even Shmuel's work in order to contribute to the following areas of scholarly discourse:

- Maimonidean scholarship and the reception of the *Guide of the Perplexed* in the twentieth century.
- The development of Israeli scholarship and Israel's intellectual history in the twentieth century.
- A fuller understanding of the intellectual development of Yehuda Even Shmuel.

Esti Mayer: Let's Talk: Toward a Theory of Translation in the Study of Religion

Religion scholars often rely on and make use of a large variety of modern, old, or ancient foreign language texts. The perfect scholar of religious texts would have to be versed in Hebrew, Sanskrit, Arabic, Greek, Latin, English, German, French, Persian, Chinese, Japanese, and a host of other languages, as well as in the many dialects, patois, and linguistic variability over time. To

master these languages would take several lifetimes, so the second-best scholarly route to access foreign language texts is through translation.

Ideally, translation transforms the source text and hopes that nothing changes in the process. But translation is in fact a hermeneutic endeavour, a rewriting act of interpretation, that is subject to the priorities and aspirations of the translator. Most translators are familiar with the expression "*traduttore, traditore",* meaning the translator is a traitor to the original text. All translators navigate their own personal experiences with the difficulties in translation, and take care not to allow their own voice to overpower the original text. But for the readers and scholars of translated texts, there is no systematic method of assessing the quality of translations in the field of religious studies. One cannot regard the translated body of text as fully representative of the original, nor can one rely on translators' reputation and artistry as testament to the accuracy of the target text.

This paper aims to create a theoretical scaffold upon which a full theory of translation may be constructed, so scholars of religion may have a systematic assessment tool to measure translations for their accuracy and usefulness. My model comprises two mutually dependent variables: the translator's strategy, and the category of the source text. The model describes four main strategies a translator may employ: technical writing, version writing, mimetic writing, or literary re-writing. Each strategy is best suited to one or more of the three source language categories, be they procedural, literal, or poetic/literary. Finally, the determinants of quality for any translated text assess the particular characteristics of the source text, examine the strengths and weaknesses of the chosen strategy vis-à-vis the category's compatibility with the chosen translation strategy, and review the goal of the translator in relation to the target audience and their interest in the source text.

Panel 12: Critical Perspectives on Spaces, Fame, and Friendship
        Friday May 7, 1-2:30 pm

Sarah Gelbard: A Jewish lens on non-Jewish space: It's not a Jewish problem. Or is it?

Urban planning participates in reproducing inequity not just when restricting minority groups or objecting to their spatial claims, but in the production of everyday secular spaces. In addition to conflicts arising from Jewish spatial claims to the city (eg. eruvim), Jewish experiences of non-Jewish urban spaces are able to reveal further conflicts with the dominant urban narrative and planning authority. These day-to-day experiences offer critical insight about: how planning represents and reproduces dominant majority desires, values, and needs in urban space; how changing urban landscapes, under the influence of urban plans, fail to serve minority needs and fail to reflect their values and heritage; how planning and development of the urban landscape, contribute to creating and perpetuating displacement and disbelonging.
        Feminist, queer, black, and indigenous urban scholarship—in addition to representing particular marginalized and alternative experiences of the city—provide critical lenses that expose the dominance of patriarchal, cis-hetero, white, settler-colonial values that are embedded

in the supposedly neutral public policies and procedures that shape our cities. Collectively, these critical lenses reveal the bias within urban structures and systems that are implicated in producing and perpetuating urban inequities.

Meanwhile, very little urban scholarship has interrogated the influence of Christian values on public policy and city-building, or how these dominant values are similarly effaced by the supposed neutrality of state secularism and public policy.

This paper will review some preliminary research and experiments in developing a critical Jewish lens on the city. This paper will also include reflections by the author on the struggles of pursuing Jewish studies beyond Jewish studies departments as its own example of non-Jewish spaces.

Diane Klein: The Hyperreality of Ivanka Trump's Jewish Motherhood

While still in her 20s, Ivanka Trump began dating Jared Kushner, scion of a prominent (if scandal-ridden) New York Jewish family. The relationship encountered some opposition from the Modern Orthodox Kushners. But then Ivanka converted, and the couple were married in 2009. When Donald Trump was sworn in as President of the United States in 2017, Jared, Ivanka, and their three children became the first Jewish members of the First Family. Since that time, even as Donald Trump presided over an administration regularly criticized for its tolerance (if not encouragement) of anti-Semitism, Ivanka, while serving as a White House senior advisor, maintained a social media presence that frequently depicted her and her children engaged in high-gloss versions of traditional Jewish practices. What, if anything, does this mean? This paper explores the commodified hypervisibility and visuality of Ivanka Trump's performance of Judaism and Jewish maternality, using notions of hyperreality and spectacle, and assesses it as a paradoxical form of erasure, in which Judaism is de-spiritualized, and drained of meaning and context, especially any political meaning, converted into mere style and mobilized as an aspect of the pornography of affluence. The analysis will be set against the backdrop of massive Orthodox Jewish and White evangelical support for Trump (in both 2016 and 2020); and equally lopsided non-Orthodox Jewish (and Black Protestant) opposition to Trump, as an alternative critical instantiation of a possible connection between politics and spiritual/faith (including Jewish) commitments.

Sara Sharpe: Friendship, Gender, and Jewishness: Interpersonal Connections Between Jewish Women in Montreal

My MA thesis research engages ethnographic data from interviews with underrepresented Jews in order to ask: how do friendships help people to claim and find meaning in their cultures and traditions while negotiating their multiple, complicated social positions? The strategy labelled *sifting* has been explored among Jewish feminists. It is a process by which cohesive identities are constructed out of potentially conflicted ones through 'trying-on' practices and attitudes of a certain reference group, evaluating them and then either identifying with them or 'screening them out' of one's identity.

By focusing on Jews who are not traditionally heard in androcentric, heteronormative

Jewish spaces, and informed by this notion of *sifting,* this research asks what does Jewish identity mean to people who are typically excluded from dominant institutions of Judaism, and how are interpersonal relationships, and thus intersubjectivity, significant to this sense of meaning?

This project is based on interviews with 12 senior heterosexual Jewish women, members of the Women's Learning Group at the Spanish and Portuguese synagogue in Montreal, employing intersectional feminist and queer theory in order to analyse the friendships between the women. This presentation will focus on my interviews with the founder of the group, first at her home in 2019, and then again over Zoom in 2020, after she had run the group online for the first time ever, determined to carry on despite the pandemic.

This project employs critical analysis of interactions between Jewishness and gender. How might age, and other social locations, impact these interactions? Many of the participants are Middle Eastern immigrants; how does this experience interact with gender and Jewishness? What is meant by categories such as 'woman' and 'Jewish'? The nuclear family structure holds great significance in Western societies surrounding the prescribed gender and cultural/religious roles of Jewish women. My research emphasizes the friendships formed between Jewish women outside of the family structure, in order to understand how interpersonal relationships which are independent from familial roles (such as wife and mother) help women to inform and construct a sense of autonomous Jewish identity. My interviews indicate that through interpersonal relationships, women have the ability to reciprocally empower each other, to help imbue each other with a sense of autonomy and significance.