**AN INTIMATE RIVALRY**

How Jews Thought of Muslims in the Middle Ages

ROSS BRANN, Cornell University

In popular circles, the pre-modern history of Jewish-Muslim relations is sometimes seen as informing straightforward ways the modern political conflict in the Middle East. Ross Brann will share the historian’s view: that pre-modern Jewish-Muslim relations are characterized by an exceedingly rich and complex dynamic of minority-majority interaction.

Ross Brann is Milton R. Konvitz Professor of Judeo-Islamic Studies and a Stephen H. Weiss Presidential Fellow at Cornell University. His publications include *The Compunctious Poet: Cultural Ambiguity and Hebrew Poetry in Muslim Spain*, which received the National Jewish Book Award in Sephardic Studies, as well as four edited volumes on the intersection of Jewish and Islamic cultures.

**Special post-lecture performance:** Voices of Sephard

November 6, 2011 | 7:30 p.m., Mount Zion Congregation

**American Jews and the Holocaust in the Postwar Era**

HASIA DINER, New York University

American Jews in the two decades after the end of World War II found many ways to make the tragedy that had engulfed their people during the war part of the history of the German Nazis and its relation to Judaism. Bernard Levinson shows how Goethe creates a myth of the Jew as culturally “other” in contrast to the German “self” as exclusively universal. Goethe’s biblical interpretation lay at the root of German thinking about Jews, anticipating the difficulties of modern German-Jewish relations.

Bernard M. Levinson is professor of classical and Near Eastern studies and of law at the University of Minnesota, where he holds the Berman Family Chair in Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible. His research focuses on biblical and cuneiform law, textual reinterpretation in the Second Temple period, and the relation of the Bible to Western intellectual history. He was named a 2010–13 Scholar of the College by the College of Liberal Arts and recently was Henry Luce Senior Fellow in Religious Studies at the National Humanities Center.

March 1, 2012 | 7:30 p.m., Bet Shalom Congregation

13613 Orchard Road, Minneapolis; 952-933-8525

Co-sponsors: U of M Dept. of Classical and Near Eastern Studies, Bet Shalom Congregation, Hillel at the University of Minnesota, Beth Jacob Congregation

**ISRAELI JEWS, LIBYAN JEWS**

The Paradox of Ethnic Identity in Contemporary Israel

HARVEY E. GOLDBERG, Hebrew University

The 35,000–40,000 Jews in Libya in 1948 were the smallest of the North African Jewish communities. Most of them immigrated to Israel over the next few years. Besides facing the hardships of all newcomers, they were a group barely noticed. In recent years, they have established an attractive cultural center and museum to call attention to their Libyan heritage, and the media has begun to pay attention to their history. Harvey Goldberg will explore the paradoxes of Israelis who feel a special tie to Libya.

Harvey E. Goldberg is the emeritus Sarah Allen Shaine Chair in Sociology and Anthropology at the Hebrew University. His research concerns Jews in the Middle East, ethnic and religious identities in Israeli society, and the overlap between anthropological and Jewish studies. He is the author of *Jewish Life in Muslim Libya: Rituals and Relations* and *Jewish Passages: Cycles of Jewish Life and Legal Tradition in Sephardi and Middle Eastern Jewries*.

November 20, 2011 | 7:30 p.m., Adath Jeshurun Congregation

10500 Hillside Lane W, Minneapolis; 952-545-2424

Co-sponsors: U of M Center for Medieval Studies, IAS Mediterranean Collaborative, U of M Dept. of Anthropology, Minneapolis Chapter of Hadassah, Adath Jeshurun Congregation

**ERNST LUBITSCHE**

American Comedy from Berlin to Hollywood

RICK MCCORMICK, University of Minnesota

When Ernst Lubitsch left Berlin for Hollywood at the end of 1922 to direct a film with Mary Pickford, he was the most successful German film director. He became famous in America in the 1920s for suggestive, “sophisticated” comedy that got past the censors. During the mid-1930s, strict enforcement of film censorship guidelines made it difficult for Lubitsch. By the late 1930s, he was making comedies set in Europe that were more overtly political. His most famous comedy, *To Be or Not to Be*, was an anti-Nazi comedy that was controversial in 1942 but has since inspired many filmmakers, including Mel Brooks.

Rick McCormick, a professor of German at the University of Minnesota, is a scholar of German film and culture whose work focuses on the intersection of art, culture, and politics, with a special emphasis on gender, sexuality, and ethnic/national identity. His work has explored how postwar German film has represented the legacy of the Holocaust and Nazism as well as the complex political and cultural dynamics of Germany’s Weimar Republic (1918–1933). He is working on a book on Lubitsch.

December 8, 2011 | 7:30 p.m., Shir Tikvah Congregation

1360 W. Minnehaha Parkway, Minneapolis; 612-822-1440

Co-sponsors: U of M Dept. of German, Scandinavian, and Dutch; Shir Tikvah Congregation

**GOETHE AND THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

Germans and the Myth of Jewish Exclusiveness

BERNARD LEVINSON, University of Minnesota

In a study of the Decalogue (Ten Commandments), Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the greatest figure in 18th-19th century German literature, advanced a particular view of German cultural identity and its relation to Judaism. Bernard Levinson shows how Goethe creates a myth of the Jew as culturally “other” in contrast to the German “self” as exclusively universal. Goethe’s biblical interpretation lay at the root of German thinking about Jews, anticipating the difficulties of modern German-Jewish relations.

Bernard M. Levinson is professor of classical and Near Eastern studies and of law at the University of Minnesota, where he holds the Berman Family Chair in Jewish Studies and Hebrew Bible. His research focuses on biblical and cuneiform law, textual reinterpretation in the Second Temple period, and the relation of the Bible to Western intellectual history. He was named a 2010–13 Scholar of the College by the College of Liberal Arts and recently was Henry Luce Senior Fellow in Religious Studies at the National Humanities Center.

March 1, 2012 | 7:30 p.m., Bet Shalom Congregation

13613 Orchard Road, Minneapolis; 952-933-8525

Co-sponsors: U of M Dept. of Classical and Near Eastern Studies, Bet Shalom Congregation, Hillel at the University of Minnesota, Beth Jacob Congregation

**NO GENERATION OF SILENCE**

American Jews and the Holocaust in the Postwar Era

HASIA DINER, New York University

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**MARCH 21, 2012 | 7:30 p.m., Temple Israel**

2324 Emerson Ave S, Minneapolis; 612-377-8680

Co-sponsors: U of M Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Immigration History Research Center, and Dept. of History; Temple Israel, Mount Zion Congregation, National Council of Jewish Women-St. Paul Section

**More Events**
SHOULD JEWS BE ALARMED?
Rethinking the ‘New Anti-Semitism’

JO NATHAN J UDAKEN, Rhodes College

The rhetorical and political battle about contemporary anti-Semitism is often portrayed in the media as “alarmists” vs. “deniers.” Jonathan Judaken sees this debate as a dialogue of the deaf waged as a war to the death, which can only stoke the fires of global anti-Semitism and the Arab-Israeli conflict. He will lay out 10 commandments for how we should think about the growing attacks against Jewish individuals and institutions of the past decade.

Jonathan Judaken will assume the Spence L. Wilson Chair in Humanities at Rhodes College in 2012 after serving as Dunavant Professor of Modern European Cultural and Intellectual History at the University of Memphis. His work focuses on representations of Jews and Judaism and blacks and racism as a prism for exploring modernity, tolerance, and identity. He is the author of Jean-Paul Sartre and the Jewish Question and editor of Naming Race, Naming Racisms. He recently lectured in Israel as a Fulbright Senior Specialist.

April 26, 2012 7:30 p.m., Beth El Synagogue
5224 W. 26th St, St. Louis Park, 952-920-3512
Co-sponsors: U of M Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies and Dept. Of History, Beth El Synagogue, JCRC of Minnesota and the Dakotas