

Friends and Sponsors of the Martin Buber House to the Boston conference 2023 – Report

The conference provided an unparalleled opportunity to meet and connect with individuals deeply invested in the field of Jewish-Christian relations. One of the most remarkable aspects of the event was the diversity of attendees - a rich tapestry of backgrounds, cultures, and experiences all converging to engage in meaningful discourse. Conversations flowed freely, with participants sharing personal stories, academic insights, and lived experiences that enriched the collective knowledge base. It was a great experience for a first timer like myself.

Keynote speakers graced the podium, delivering thought-provoking addresses that ignited lively debates and introspection. Nevertheless, the heart of the conference lay in its meticulously organized workshops and sessions. These workshops addressed a broad spectrum of themes, ranging from historical perspectives on interfaith relations to modern challenges faced by both communities. The conference was not merely a platform for intellectual exchange; it fostered the creation of enduring relationships. Informal gatherings during breaks and after sessions transformed into avenues for forging connections that transcended geographical boundaries. I made some great connections and relationships, and am truly thankful for this.

I thought that the topic of intersectionality was a good topic to focus on. It really helped set the scene and connect between different issues in Jewish-Christian relations. While at times it did feel US focused, it nevertheless provided significant lessons for other contexts as well. More importantly, when discussing intersectionality, it forces us to look at Jewish-Christian relations through the lens of power dynamics, race, gender, oppression, justice and action. In other words, it helped everyone go out of the comfort zone of intellectual conversations and into thinking practically. I would definitely continue the conversations in this spirit.

However enriching and insightful the ICCJ conference in Boston was, it was evident that there was a noticeable absence of young participants. The event, while fostering important intergenerational dialogue, failed to attract a significant representation of the younger generation. This absence is concerning, as the involvement of young

minds is crucial for the continuity of Jewish-Christian relations and the evolution of collaborative efforts in the modern world.

As a Palestinian Christian attendee, I found it disappointing that there was little to no discussion on Jewish-Christian relations specifically within the context of the Holy Land or the Israel-Palestine conflict (besides my workshop). While the conference aimed to address sensitive and global issues, the omission of this topic felt like a missed opportunity to engage in a nuanced dialogue about a complex and sensitive matter. The perspectives of individuals like myself, who navigate the intricacies of identity and faith in a region marked by historical and ongoing tensions, could have contributed significantly to the conference's goals. This is practically the case when Christians have recently been under attack by Israeli-Jewish extremists. Likewise, from my conversations at the conference, it seems that Palestinian Christian dialogue with different Jewish and European Christians has collapsed and not really functioning. Something I would like to advance and promote should there be interest.

In any case, the conference allowed to develop, grow, connect and learn about Jewish-Christian relations. It was a privilege to be there, and I hope to continue advancing interfaith dialogue in the Holy Land and elsewhere. I would like to thank the Friends and Sponsors of the Martin Buber House for allowing me to get to the conference.

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