1. **Title Page**

Professional Development Grant Report

Invited Talk

Colloquium on Prophetic Urgency

June 5-6, 2017

Hebrew University

Jerusalem, Israel

Dr. Sarah B. Stein

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1. **Restatement of the Professional Enhancement Opportunity**

I received funding to to attend and present a paper that I have been invited to give at a in a colloquium titled *Prophetic Urgency* to be held June 5-6 at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Israel. I was specifically invited to give my paper “Disfiguring Hebrew: The Bible as British Inheritance in Lowth and Smart” after a colleague saw me speak at a recent meeting of the American Society of Eighteenth-Century Studies.

My presentation explored how biblical sublimity came into being as a category of sublime literature. Many past and current critics have viewed this as a form of philosemitism, an embrace of the Jewish tradition in Western literature. However, as this paper will argue, the acceptance of the Hebrew Bible as sublime literature came at the cost of any connection to real Jews or a real Hebrew language. Hebrew became a space in the linguistic imaginary and Jews became the romanticized Ancient Israelites. Although the authors who forged this Hebraic sublime believed that they were describing actual qualities of biblical literature, the notion of sublimity that developed throughout the century merely equated an imagined Biblical Hebrew with the revelatory aesthetic qualities of sublimity. How eighteenth-century authors invoked the Hebraic sublime varied, but the idea eventually found academic legitimacy in the work of Bishop Robert Lowth.

While I was in Jerusalem, I was also able to take advantage of the superb archival material in the field of Jewish Studies available at the National Library. This work will be part of the fifth chapter of the monograph I am currently working on.

1. **Brief review of professional enhancement opportunity**

While at the conference I had the opportunity to hear the work and network with the top scholars in my area of specialization in my field from all over the world. The networking opportunities were unparalleled, and I received invaluable feedback on my work.

Attending the conference and researching in the archives will inform both my research and teaching in the future. I found material there that I will present at the Modern Language Association meeting in January 2018 and which will eventually be published in the Wordsworth Circle, a peer reviewed journal. Out of this archival work also grew an idea for enhancing my British Literature to 1800 class, where I now intend to include unit on original archival research.

1. **Summary of finding, outcomes, and experiences had**

The talk was a great success. In addition to successfully presenting my paper and learning about new approaches in my field, I worked on research for my book, prepared materials for a presentation at the Modern Language Association meeting next year, and developed ideas for teaching archival research in the classroom.

My research will turn into a peer reviewed publication in 2018, following its presentation at the MLA conference.

1. **Conclusions**

Participation in the conference allowed me to present my work to an international audience and network with colleagues in my field. As a result of the conference, I have new ideas for the classroom and have moved forward substantially in my research and publication schedule.