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**A CELEBRATION OF JEWISH STUDIES IN OTTAWA  
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

**OCTOBER 24-25, 2007**

**LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA  
395 WELLINGTON STREET, OTTAWA, ON**

**CO-SPONSORED BY THE CANADIAN SOCIETY FOR JEWISH STUDIES (CSJS),  
VERED JEWISH CANADIAN STUDIES PROGRAM, UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA, MAX  
AND TESSIE ZELIKOVITZ CENTRE FOR JEWISH STUDIES, CARLETON UNIVERSITY,  
AND THE JACOB M. LOWY COLLECTION OF LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA.**

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**CONFERENCE PROGRAM AND ABSTRACTS**

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**DAY 1: WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 24, 2007 | 1ER JOUR: MERCREDI, LE 24  
OCTOBRE 2007**

**8:30-9:15 Auditorium Foyer | Foyer de l'auditorium Registration and Coffee |  
Inscription et café**

**9:15-9:30 Room | Salle 156 Welcoming Remarks | Mots de bienvenue**

**TBA (Library and Archives Canada | Bibliothèque et Archives Canada)  
Ira Robinson (Canadian Society for Jewish Studies | Société canadienne d'études  
juives)**

**Session 1A: 9:30-11:30, Room 156 | Salle 156**

**Nation and Jew: A Political Life | Les Juifs et le concept de nation ; applications  
pratiques dans la vie politique  
Chair | Animateur : Pierre Anctil, Université d'Ottawa**

**1. Recent Growth in Canadian Jewish Historiography: an Analysis of Gerald  
Tulchinsky's *Taking Root* and *Branching Out* | La croissance de l'historiographie  
juive canadienne : une analyse des ouvrages de Gerald Tulchinsky intitulés  
*Taking Root* et *Branching Out***

**Richard Menkis, University of British Columbia**

As Yosef Yerushalmi argued in his seminal work *Zakhor*, in the pre-modern world, the past (selectively) mattered a great deal to the Jews, but historians and their writings did not. The past was commemorated above all in ritual, such as the re-living of the exodus from Egypt, and the custodians of memory were ritual experts, not historians. In the nineteenth century, however, the Jewish historian moved from the margins of Jewish cultural life into a more prominent role. Challenged by European historicism, Jewish historians looked to show the place of Jewish ideals in world history, and needed to do it in non-providential terms. Another challenge came from the tight interdependence between nationalism and national historical writing. Nations, in Benedict Anderson's classic formulation, are "imagined communities," and attitudes to the past help coalesce those imaginations/communities. In Germany, much of German historical writing of the nineteenth century served to legitimize the concept of a German nation. Jews, who were either citizens or wanted to be citizens, needed to establish a

relationship to that German national past. One of the challenges facing Jewish historians was to explore the paradoxical relationship between Jewish integration (often couched apologetically as “contributions”) to their non-Jewish surrounding and the retention of a distinctive Jewish identity.

With its current focus on Germany, the study of Jewish historiography runs the risk of replaying the discredited approach that looked to Germany Jewry as the setting for the beginnings of the modern Jewish experience. Some scholars, however, have studied Anglo-Jewish historiography and French Jewish scholarship and have tried to come out from under the overdetermining place of Germany’s *Wissenschaft des Judentums*. There have also been important studies on the impact of Jewish nationalism on historical writing, most notably by David Myers. In my current project, I hope to contribute to the broadening of the study of Jewish historiography by studying the production and circulation of narratives of Canadian Jewish history. It is my contention that Canadian Jewish historical writing has been affected in both method and content by the contingencies of Canadian national history and history-writing. In other papers, I have discussed the impact of French Canadian nationalism and Canadian regionalism. In the current paper, I plan to examine the historical work of Gerald Tulchinsky, especially his two-volume history of Canadian Jewry that appeared in the last decade of the twentieth century. In the paper, I will show both the features that could be linked idiosyncratically to the author as well as the ways in which late twentieth century Canadian multiculturalism has affected his work.

My sources for the study will be, for the most part, the published works of the author. Tulchinsky, however, has also offered me access to his archives located at Queen’s University in Kingston, as well as to other privately-held papers. I intend to work on these papers in the next few months, and could have an impact in ways that I cannot anticipate at present.

## **2. Être le défenseur de ses coreligionnaires à l’Assemblée législative du Québec : les interventions de Peter Bercovitch en faveur des droits de la minorité juive, 1924-1935 | Defending His Fellow Jews at the Legislative Assembly of Québec: the Interventions of Peter Bercovitch in Favour of the Rights of the Jewish Minority, 1924-1935**

**Geneviève Richer, Université d’Ottawa**

Peter Bercovitch est une des personnalités éminentes de la communauté juive de Montréal à s’être illustrée au Québec au cours du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Cet homme marque l’histoire du Québec et celle des Juifs de la métropole puisqu’il est le premier député juif à siéger à l’Assemblée législative du Québec. Avocat de profession et avide de politique depuis les années 1900 et 1910, Bercovitch se laisse séduire par l’appel de ses coreligionnaires qui lui demandent de représenter la circonscription de Montréal-Saint-Louis, dont le siège est demeuré vacant à la suite du départ du député libéral Godfroy Langlois en 1914 ; il s’agit d’une circonscription dans laquelle se concentrent un bon nombre de Juifs. En effet, Bercovitch désire donner une voix démocratique à la collectivité juive montréalaise, et ce, en se présentant comme candidat libéral en 1916.

À la suite de son élection, le jeune député entame une longue carrière politique à l'Assemblée législative. Il se fait réélire à six reprises, ce qui lui permet d'être député libéral pendant 22 années consécutives.

Au cours de sa carrière de député provincial, Bercovitch est principalement reconnu pour ses interventions qui préconisent la justice sociale. Il plaide en faveur du respect des droits de tous les Québécois, peu importe leur nationalité ou leur religion. Mais, ce qui attire surtout notre attention, c'est le fait que le député ne demeure pas insensible face à certaines situations inquiétantes qui briment les droits de la minorité juive au Québec. Dans cet exposé, nous tenterons de démontrer que dans la période qui englobe les années de 1924 à 1935, Bercovitch s'affiche comme le fervent défenseur des droits des Juifs au Québec. Il cherche à convaincre ses confrères de l'Assemblée législative que ses coreligionnaires et lui ont droit au respect et à la reconnaissance, au même niveau que les autres citoyens canadiens ou québécois. Par conséquent, il va s'impliquer à fond dans l'affaire des écoles juives (1922-1931) ; il va lutter contre les publications diffamatoires (1932) et il va prêcher en faveur du privilège juif de travailler le dimanche (1935).

### **3. La campagne antisémite d'Adrien Arcand 1929-1939 | Adrien Arcand's Antisemitic Campaign in the Interwar Period: 1929-1939**

#### **Hugues Théorêt, Société canadienne d'études juives (SCEJ)**

En 1929, tous les astres sont alignés pour donner naissance à une campagne antisémite au Québec. Le 22 mars 1929, le gouvernement libéral de Louis-Alexandre Taschereau introduit à l'Assemblée législative à Québec le bill 208 qui propose d'accorder aux Juifs des écoles confessionnelles à Montréal. Réputé pour ses talents de polémiste, le journaliste Adrien Arcand est alors approché par les autorités ecclésiastiques montréalaises pour mener une campagne contre cette loi que le clergé québécois trouvait tout à fait inadmissible. Arcand entreprend alors d'écrire une série d'articles dans les divers journaux qu'il publie en compagnie de son associé, l'imprimeur Joseph Ménard, soit *Le Miroir* et *Le Goglu*, pour dénoncer cette loi. Arcand lance une série d'attaques contre le gouvernement Taschereau et les députés juifs Joseph Cohen et Peter Bercovitch.

Cette controverse survient au moment où l'économie mondiale est plongée dans la pire crise économique de l'histoire moderne. Au Québec, la campagne *d'Achat chez nous* est alors lancée pour boycotter les commerçants juifs. Sous l'impulsion d'Adrien Arcand et de ses Goglus, les plus fanatiques profitent de cette campagne pour attiser le sentiment de haine contre les Juifs à qui l'on attribue tous les maux de la société. C'est à cette époque qu'Adrien Arcand adhère aux théories des *Protocoles des Sages de Sion* selon lesquelles les Juifs auraient organisé une conspiration dans le but de dominer le monde en travaillant à la ruine physique et spirituelle du christianisme. Arcand associe les Juifs aux « Rouges » de Moscou et aux libéraux à Québec et à Ottawa. Lors des élections fédérales de 1930 et 1935, les conservateurs de Richard B. Bennett profitent de l'occasion pour louer les services d'Arcand qui mène une campagne de dénigrement contre les libéraux de William Lyon Mackenzie King. Arcand

utilise les profits qu'il en retire pour poursuivre la publication de ses journaux antisémites. Il bénéficie également des dons de généreux mécènes dont le Dr Paul-Émile Lalanne.

En 1934, Arcand s'inspire de l'avènement au pouvoir d'Hitler en Allemagne pour fonder son parti : le Parti National Social Chrétien. Il adopte les symboles nazis : la croix gammée et les uniformes, et lance son journal, *Le Fasciste Canadien* qu'il publie de 1935 à 1938. Arcand noue des relations avec des organisations antisémites aux États-Unis, en Angleterre, en France et en Allemagne. Arcand écrit, imprime et distribue de la littérature antisémite, dont la brochure *La Clé du Mystère (The Key to the Mystery)*, aux quatre coins du globe.

Dès 1937, le Congrès juif Canadien s'inquiète de cette propagande haineuse qui circule par la poste au pays. Mais les autorités canadiennes tolèrent les activités des fascistes. L'ennemi est ailleurs. Il se trouve à l'Est. Ce n'est que lorsque le Canada entre en guerre contre l'Allemagne en 1939 que les forces de l'ordre décident de sévir contre Adrien Arcand. En mai 1940, Arcand et les têtes dirigeantes du Parti de l'Unité nationale du Canada sont arrêtés. Ceux-ci sont emprisonnés dans des camps d'internement en Ontario et au Nouveau-Brunswick pour toute la durée de la Seconde Guerre mondiale. L'arrestation des fascistes canadiens mettait ainsi un frein à une campagne haineuse dirigée contre les Juifs au Canada. Mais le mal était fait. La campagne antisémite allait se poursuivre après la guerre sous le couvert d'un ennemi que l'on craignait davantage : le COMMUNISME.

#### **4. Lea Roback: Social Activist and Feminist in the Twentieth Century | Lea Roback : activiste sociale et féministe du siècle dernier**

##### **Claire Stern, Montreal**

My subject is Lea Roback, feminist, activist in a most tumultuous period of Quebec and world history. This paper will deal with that period – the 1930's and the anti-semitism that was prevalent in Quebec. It was this anti-semitic thrust and the fear of fascism that turned Lea Roback to the Communist Party. At that time she believed that communism was the answer to these turbulent and frightening times.

It was during this period that anti-semites such as Adrian Arcand became more emboldened and his newly formed party, the National Social Christian Party with his new emblem suggested that Nazism could be Canadianized. Hate literature became more prolific. What was witnessed during this time was the intellectual anti-semitism of Le Devoir, the Arcand movement, the racial prejudice of parish priests and with no denouncement by Maurice Duplessis and his party.

All this at a time when the situation was becoming more horrific in Europe and there appeared to be no understanding of what was occurring in Europe. Six million Jews were to die in the Holocaust and as Pierre Anctil has stated "the Francophone Quebecois, like many other peoples, took far too much time to apprehend the impact of the Holocaust."

Lea Roback lived through this history and was a player in this history. She saw what ignorance could do to a people and was determined to change that. Her fight

against fascism, the exploitation of workers and her later involvement in peace movements and the rights of women has inspired others to continue her work in the social issues of Quebec society today.

**11:30-12:30 Auditorium Foyer | Foyer de l'auditorium Lunch | Déjeuner**

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**Session 2A: 12:30-2:30 | Room 156 | Salle 156**

**2A. The Ties That Bind: Gender, Memory and Community | Les liens qui unissent : l'appartenance sexuelle, la mémoire et la communauté  
Chair | Animatrice: Rebecca Margolis, University of Ottawa**

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**1. Identity, Community and Religious Leadership as Expressed through the Role of the Rabbi's Wife | Les valeurs identitaires, communautaires et de leadership religieux telles que reflétées à travers le rôle joué par l'épouse du rabbin**

**Susan Landau-Chark**

My doctoral research explores the role of the Canadian rabbi's wife - more specifically, the woman married to a pulpit rabbi who can be hired and fired. How does she see herself in relation to his position in the congregation, and what expectations does she have of herself in that role?

Until recently, the secondary sources available in Canada did not support a broader understanding of the role of the clergyman's wife.

This void in Canadian Jewish history became the impetus for my research.

While most of the women I have interviewed to-date have their own careers, they also considered themselves involved with their husband's career. In a preliminary sampling of my interview data, several points emerged that demonstrate that in Canada at least, the rebbetzin 1) continues to be held to a similar standard of involvement as her husband, the paid rabbi, 2) that the Canadian rebbetzin feels she has the freedom to create a niche for herself within the congregation. and 3) that while there may be disdain by some wives for the term rebbetzin, many of their activities and involvements mirrored the characteristics that have come to define the position within Jewish popular culture.

Since March of 2004 I have been interviewing wives of rabbis across Canada in order to highlight the role of the Canadian rabbi's wife. This exploration is cross-denominational as women have been interviewed whose husbands were trained in Yeshivot, in seminaries, in rabbinical schools, and individually.

Drawing on my research (which will be completed by the time of the conference) my paper will touch generally on two aspects of her "fit" with the congregation: private versus public boundaries, congregational activities and relationships, as well as more specifically issues of control and self-development.

My preliminary research indicated that Canadian congregations tend to be more traditional than their American counterparts and this is reflected in the expectations attached to the role of the rabbi's wife.

## **2. Threads of Identity: The Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles || Tisserands de l'identité juive : la Pomegranate Guild of Jewish Textiles**

**Barbara Weiser**

This talk will look at the intersection of religion, visual culture, and gender based on the experience of the Pomegranate Guild in Toronto which is celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. This group of Jewish textile enthusiasts until recently were the only group of its kind in Canada. They have created projects which extend beyond themselves benefiting the community at large all the while adhering to halacha. Within the context of mainstream hand made items disappearing in light of industrialization, this group continues to function and create sacred items for the Jewish community at large. Their community projects bring the energies of the group together and over time have served to forge lasting friendships. The postmodern shift in their artistic direction relating to Jewish iconography has been incorporated into many of their works and will be highlighted noting that guild members have set new standards for textile ritual items both in terms of craftsmanship, design, all the while exhibiting a Jewish feminist identity. A study of this group indicated that a large number of the members were born in Montreal, have diversified professional backgrounds. In addition, most members have no formal training in textile work and very little formal Judaic education. Membership in the guild manages to address all these findings. The works produced by individual members and group projects are intended to fill sacred spaces and enhance cultural identity all the while contributing to the body of works for Canadian Jewish material culture.

## **3. L'engagement littéraire et communautaire d'Ida Maze, la « mère des écrivains yiddish » montréalais | The Literary and Community Involvement of Ida Maze, the "Mother of Yiddish Writers in Montreal"**

**Chantal Ringuet, Université d'Ottawa**

De tous les écrivains yiddish montréalais, Ida Maze (1893-1962) est sans contredit une figure déterminante. Cette femme, née en Biélorussie, a émigré aux États-Unis en 1907, avant de s'établir l'année suivante au Canada, où elle a joué un rôle significatif dans le milieu yiddish. Maze y a en effet exercé une activité littéraire très intense, caractérisée par une production florissante et un engagement social de haute importance. La publication de ses premiers poèmes intitulés « L'ider vegn mayn kind » (*Poèmes au sujet de mon enfant*) dans la revue *Kanade*, qui lui a valu plusieurs éloges, a donné le coup d'envoi à sa carrière d'écrivaine, de poète et d'essayiste. Spécialiste de la littérature pour enfants et pour les jeunes, ses textes ont paru dans diverses

revues littéraires publiées à Toronto, Montréal, New-York, Paris, Los Angeles et en Israël, tels que *Heftn*, *Zamlungen*, *Montreal*, *Keneder Adler*, *Tsukunft*, *Kinder Velt*, *Goldene Keyt*, *Far Undzere Kinder* et *Khezhbn*. Considérée comme « one of Montreal's most highly regarded Yiddish poets » (Margolis, 2005 : 90), Maze s'est distinguée, en outre, par son implication majeure dans sa communauté. Prodiguant un soutien indéfectible à de nombreux écrivains, elle a appuyé de jeunes poètes dans leurs projets de publication, d'une part et, d'autre part, elle s'est portée au secours des plus démunis durant la sombre période de l'Holocauste, en aidant de nombreux écrivains et activistes culturels à obtenir des visas pour émigrer au Canada, puis en leur prêtant main forte au cours de leur processus d'adaptation au pays. À une époque où peu d'avenues s'offraient aux femmes dans la société québécoise, Maze s'est ainsi illustrée par un double engagement, à la fois littéraire et communautaire, qui lui a valu le titre de « mère des écrivains yiddish » montréalais (Fuks, 2005 : 221).

Dans cette communication, nous retracerons ces deux aspects de l'engagement d'Iza Maze dans le Montréal des yiddishophones. En ayant recours aux témoignages d'écrivains (Shtern, 2007 ; Massey, 1994) et au discours des critiques à son endroit (Waddington, 2004; Margolis, 2005), nous montrerons que son parcours et son œuvre en font un cas unique, ce qui nous permettra de l'inscrire dans l'histoire littéraire montréalaise.

#### **4. Duties of the Heart: Jewish Feminist Ethics, Feminist Historiography and the Shoah | Les devoirs du cœur : l'éthique féministe juive, l'historiographie féministe et la Shoah**

**Deidre Butler, Carleton University**

Jewish feminist ethics should be more than a mere subgenre of Jewish feminism in general; in order to find its own voice, it must develop its own questions, concerns and rubrics. This will require that it take into account its investment in its own intellectual history and how it shapes itself as a discipline. In this paper I will show how feminist historiography can provide a useful model for this foundational project.

Feminist historiographers stress that gender as a category of analysis does much more than merely add women's experiences to historical accounts. Bringing together the disciplinary critiques of women's history and feminist history, these scholars seek to disrupt and recast the theoretical and methodological underpinnings of historical analysis.

Over the last thirty years, feminist historiographers of the Holocaust have struggled with a simple question: given that that the Nazi genocide was aimed at all Jews, why should we focus our attention on Jewish women? A full answer to this question must necessarily involve a consideration of the theorist's own continuity with this history and must make explicit the ways in which ethical tasks are already taking place in this historiographical work. This yields an attentiveness to the reflexive relationship between what they are doing as disciplinary practitioners and the history they are describing.

This paper presents a way of thinking about Jewish feminist ethics which has been refined by consideration of these questions of reflexivity. A central feature of this approach is a set of principles which echo the structure of medieval Jewish manuals and texts. In presenting these principles my intent is to map out the conceptual terrain of a feminist ethics that speaks to the concerns of contemporary Jews while remaining anchored in the particular historical experiences of Jewish women.

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**Session 2B. 12:30-2:30 | Room 154 | Salle 154**

**2B. Issues of Antisemitism and the Holocaust in Cultural Representation | Les enjeux touchant à l'antisémitisme dans les représentations culturelles de l'Holocauste**

**Chair | Animateur: James Casteel, Carleton University**

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**1. Wandering Dwellings: the Diasporic Home | Le familier et l'étrange : la demeure juive dans la diaspora**

**Sarah Gelbard, Carleton University**

Historically, the 'Wandering Jew' is perceived of as dehumanized and rendered eternally homeless through the Euro-Christian construction and representation of his 'self' as 'other', ie non-Christian, and of his house as 'other', ie a non-[Christian] home. The tragic homelessness experienced by the 'Wandering Jew' is therefore conceived of as a hegemonic construct of Euro-Christian ideology rather than the intrinsic existential condition of the Diaspora. Historically, the Jewish People identified with a multiplicity of places simultaneously, carrying a sense of the familiar into the foreign, creating continuity between the seeming dualities of existence. Emmanuel Levinas' definition of habitation as the being's sojourn in a dwelling suggests a meeting between permanence and impermanence and the complex spatio-temporal relationship between the transient (*meuble*) and the stationary (*immeuble*). Deeply rooted in Jewish tradition, the "Home" becomes the intersection of the transient self and the stationary architecture where the self is free to recollect in its interiority and simultaneously position itself in relationship with the exterior elements. Both the function and form of the architecture of "Home" are understood as a (1) mnemonic device to evoke recollection and (2) facilitator of physical relationship with the other through its openings and transitional spaces. The re-construction of a Jewish home is therefore intrinsically tied to a re-collection of the fragmented cultural and tectonic memories of house images carried by the Diaspora, specifically the importance attributed to the *mezuzah*, *talit*, *tefillin*, the *sukkah* and the *eruvim*. The Wandering Jew suggests a framework for reinterpreting the relationship between the *heimliche* (literally home, rootedness, hidden, or buried), the *unheimliche*.

## **2. Jeremy Maron. My Father's Gift to Me: the Reality of the Fable in *Life is Beautiful* | Le cadeau de mon père et l'aspect réel de la fabulation dans *La vie est belle***

On first glance, Roberto Benigni's *Life is Beautiful* (1997) is a bittersweet fairy tale whose overarching theme is that love and romance can triumph even in the most horrific of circumstances. My paper argues, however, that the film's fabulist structure serves as an explicit means of mediation that *self-consciously* masks only part of the reality of the concentration camp universe. Moreover, I will argue that when this fabulist mask is read as self-conscious, the film's advocacy that "life is beautiful" assumes a subversive function that confronts how the Italian experience of Holocaust was disseminated in postwar Italy, largely to the postwar generation to which Benigni belonged.

*Life is Beautiful's* narrative and form both point to instances that create fissures in the film's fairy-tale-like narrative, and in turn afford glimpses into the reality of the Holocaust. As such, the form of the film mirrors the fiction that the protagonist constructs for his young son – that their imprisonment in a Nazi concentration camp is merely a planned "game." Instances of Holocaustic reality repeatedly emerge in both the film's form, and in the "game" within the film. While many writers, such as New Yorker columnist David Denby and psychoanalyst Slavoj Žižek, have argued that by presenting the Holocaust as a fairy tale, Benigni shields his audience from horror in the same way that the father in the film attempts to shield his son, these readings fail to account for the numerous constructed fissures that rupture the fairy tale. Because *Life is Beautiful* is revealed to be memorial recollection on the part of an adult who lived through the narrative as a child who experienced the concentration camp as a fairy tale, the film's fabulist form does not act as a means of audience protection. Rather, it becomes a means of acknowledging an experience of the Holocaust that cannot be separated from the mediation constructed by the "game." A fabulist, "beautiful" conception of the Holocaust is all that the narrator was left with after his experience. Furthermore, this subjective distortion, which mollifies the horrors of the Holocaustic experience, confronts the discursive trajectory of the Italian history of the Holocaust, confronting the myth of a comparatively "mild" Holocaust in Italy that persisted in both a scholarly and popular-cultural sense until the early- to mid-1980s, which was disseminated as such to the Italian population, largely to the post-war generation of which Benigni was a part.

## **3. Purity and Danger in History: Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *Garbage, the City and Death* | *Purity and Danger* perçu à travers le prisme de l'histoire par le biais d'une lecture de la pièce de Rainer Werner Fassbinder *Les Ordures, la Ville et la Mort***

**Barbara Gabriel, Carleton University**

One of the more remarkable features of anthropologist Mary Douglas's now classic study *Purity and Danger* (1966) is the way in which it evacuates the historical moment in which it is published and received. Although her analysis of purity ritual cross-culturally seems almost a tropological map for the meta-narratives of National Socialism, Douglas makes no reference at all to the European Holocaust. As a Symbolic Anthropologist, Douglas worked synchronic models which left out the historical record altogether, a model example, arguably, of some of the limitations of structural analysis. By contrast, post-structuralist theorists of abjection, like Julia Kristeva, take up the lessons of purity ritual together with psychoanalytic theory to read the ways in which the questions they raise bear on individual and collective subjects in historical moments. What is at stake here, then, is not just social ritual, but identity formation, and in terms that pose danger, and even death, for others, at recoverable times and places.

I want to argue for a reading of Fassbinder's play *Garbage, The City, and Death* (1976) within this inter-disciplinary theoretical matrix. Widely controversial and charged with anti-semitism in Germany at the time of its production, this deliberately provocative play by a major West German filmmaker who was also the bad boy of the New German Cinema, was eventually shut down in response to opposition from Jewish groups (only to be performed at a later date in other European venues, but also in Israel by the Yoram Loewenstein school of drama.) Like the theatre of French playwright Jean Genet which inspired it, *Garbage, The City, and Death*, I will argue, provides a radical critique for understanding the relationship between identities and historical processes- in ways that here join anti-semitism up with other structures of abjection such as gender, race, dissident sexuality, and class. The purity ritual invoked in *Purity and Danger* may or may not be universal, but, following Douglas, we can conclude with some certainty that it is widespread historically across cultures. What Douglas forgot, however, and what Fassbinder remembers is that these operations need to be folded back into our thinking of historical subjects and processes. Arguably, it is only then that the manifest 'danger' of Douglas's title, never fully explained or elaborated in her pioneering study, becomes fully realized. Arguably, it was Fassbinder's willingness to both critique this operation and stage his own complicity (as both perpetrator and victim) in it that rendered his staging so controversial. It was a signal risk he was prepared to take throughout his career as one of the leading directors of post-war German Cinema.

#### **4. French Cinema of the 1930s and the Language of Antisemitism | Le cinéma français des années trente et le langage de l'antisémitisme**

**Chris Faulkner, Carleton University**

This paper will examine how certain offensive terms in the (French) language of everyday life came to be appropriated for anti-Semitic purposes in both French cinema and in the French film press of the 1930s. Particular attention will be devoted, on the one hand, to the work of the right-wing film reviewer Lucien Rebatet, as someone who mobilized this language to promote anti-Semitism and, on the other, to Jean Renoir's

1939 *La Règle du jeu*, as an example of a film which invokes this language to critique anti-Semitism.

After c.1933 and through the Second World War, certain offensive words in everyday use in French (e.g., *crapules*, *métèque*) – some of which already had broad racist overtones – took on the additional burden of becoming charged with specifically anti-Jewish connotations. This pattern of language use can be discerned most readily in the work of Lucien Rebatet, who wrote weekly film review columns from the beginning of the 1930s for the notorious right-wing papers *Je suis partout* and *Action française*. Under the pen name François Vinneuil, Rebatet was a self-declared anti-Semite who used his film columns to promote his political views. In the climate of the French nineteen-thirties, when France was wracked by something like a cold civil war, the use of the film review to these ends was not unusual. The film review columns of daily and weekly newspapers on both the Left and the Right were much more politicized than most films of the period. I will locate Rebatet's film criticism in the larger context of this newspaper practice and indicate how his emergent use of a certain vocabulary assumes the weight of anti-Semitic diatribe.

Although few films in the French nineteen-thirties are as overtly politicized as most film reviews of the period, nevertheless those films that do use vernacular speech (usually in the mouths of working class characters) can be shown to participate in political life. In short, a certain kind of speech becomes a form of political engagement. I believe that this is nowhere more apparent than in Jean Renoir's *La Règle du jeu* of 1939. As the designated filmmaker of the French Left from 1935 on, Renoir had made more than one film on behalf of working class interests, had given his support to the cause of anti-Fascism, and had written against the spread of anti-Semitism in Europe. In both *La Règle du jeu* and *La Grande Illusion*, two of the main characters are explicitly Jewish, and both films were attacked for their sympathies by anti-Semites (including Lucien Rebatet). What I believe to be especially interesting about *La Règle du jeu*, however, is its conscious use of the language of everyday anti-Semitism against itself. The film both demonstrates an awareness of how certain speech has become coded for political purposes, while it critiques those purposes at the same time. In order to demonstrate this argument, I will have recourse to an analysis of a few exchanges of dialogue in the film.

In short, the language of everyday life, in the newspaper review and in the cinema, will be shown to have an unexpected potency that is now lost to us but which was particular to the political pressures of the nineteen-thirties.

The paper will be presented in English, although the examples of language use will be quoted in French. Much of the source material for this paper comes from archival research in French daily newspapers of the nineteen-thirties.

**2:30-2:45 Break | Pause Auditorium Foyer | Foyer de l'auditorium**

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**Session 3A: 2:45-4:15**
**3A. New Arts and War | Les arts nouveaux et la guerre  
Chair | Animatrice: Aviva Freedman, Carleton University**


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Art about war is not new. Examples abound: from Goya's etchings series Disasters of War on Napoleon's imperialism, to Picasso's anti-Franco/anti-Fascist mural Guernica, to Natan Rappoport's Monument to the Warsaw Ghetto, to Gertrude Kearns' painted portraits of Romeo Dallaire in Ottawa's Canadian War Museum. Our panel turns to art about Jewish wars produced by contemporary women artists from Canada, the UK, and Israel.

The subjects of war art are conventionally heroic, sacrificial, or martyred, and almost inevitably, gendered male. Recent war work by Jewish women revises and alters the tradition's tropes, imagery and media. Innovative genres and aesthetics emerge through the new technologies of video and the digital arts. And, as our papers suggest, as women artists engage the spaces of masculine ritual, monuments become unfixed, conflicts become electronic visual ceremonies, and war histories become different kinds of narratives. Reesa Greenberg's paper "Mobile Monuments" examines the shift in mobility and media in recent work addressing the Holocaust. Carol Zemel's paper on Yael Bartana's video art explores modes of socio-political critique conveyed through camera, sound, and performative time.

Because of the time-based nature of the art works discussed —ie, the need to show significant segments of video clips (rather than exclusively still images)--the panel consists of only two papers. This format, we believe, will allow clearer presentation of the works themselves, and stimulate more informed discussion from viewers/listeners.

**1. Mobile Monuments: War Imagery in the Art of Vera Frenkel, Susan Hiller, and Melissa Shiff | Monuments passagers : l'image de la guerre dans l'art de Vera Frenkel, Susan Hiller et Melissa Shiff**

**Reese Greenberg, Concordia University/York University**

One of the tasks of art representing the Holocaust is to maintain its relevance. Vera Frenkel's *Body Missing* (1994), Susan Hiller's *The "J" Street Project* (2004) and Melissa Shiff's *Ark* (2006) avoid "image fatigue" by representing Hitler's war against the Jews in non-habitual ways: fragmented narratives of stolen art, *Judenrein* towns and streets in today's Germany, or the fate of the collection of the Jewish Museum in Prague. Their visual vocabulary of new media, contemporary editing styles, and installations consisting of multiple parts is as instrumental in "refreshing" their Holocaust imagery as their subjects.

Unlike permanent Holocaust monuments, these large installations move from place to place and, as I show in this paper, they take on additional meanings wherever

they are displayed. In addition, the use of video and digital media to construct moving images mobilizes emotions and memories. The movement of and in the works speaks to the lack of geographic and temporal boundaries of war memories and the ongoing repercussions of genocide.

## **2. Conflict and Ambivalence in Video Art by Yael Bartana | Conflit et ambivalence dans les vidéos d'art de Yael Bartana**

**Carol Zemal, York University**

For most of us outside the conflict zone, it is impossible to imagine war's impact on the habits and experience of daily life. This may be especially true for Israel, where the view from outside is shaped by our varying positions, allegiances and principles. First access to the war zone comes from press reports—textual, photographic and televisual. While these are crucial shaping accounts, important for their editorial stance as well as their data, they are time-bound by the journalist's deadlines. A more contemplative—though no less engaged—view comes from artists, who manage to produce their work even in the most extreme circumstances. Israel's war zones encompass military engagement, as well as interior violence that includes terrorism, social repression, and the toll of quotidian stress. In contrast, however, to a past cultural history of Zionist idealism and triumphant nationalism, art in Israel today is marked by an emphatically critical stance on official state politics and policies.

This paper focuses on examples of such work--the video art of Israeli artist Yael Bartana--to re-view the tensions and accommodations of a war weary society. Bartana's subjects are Israeli habits and rituals—those of the military, the orthodox, youthful protesters, macho play. As visual accounts of actual or staged events, these works rely on the rhetorics of camera and sound to complicate and nuance the situations they critique. The effect, I argue, draws viewers—inside and outside Israel—into the country's social and political complexity, and as aesthetic intervention, the work replaces easy or facile certainties with an unsettling and thoughtful ambivalence.

**Session 3B: 2:45-4:15**

**3B. Ancient and Medieval Judaism | Le judaïsme ancien et médiéval  
Chair | Animateur: Barry Walfish, University of Toronto**

**1. Constructing the Temple in a Rabbinic Image: a Literary-Anthropological Reading of the Mishnah's Ritual Narratives | Le Temple dans sa conception rabbinique : une lecture littéraire et anthropologique des rites tels que décrits dans la Mishnah**

**Naftali Cohn, Concordia University**

A series of narratives throughout the Mishnah describe rituals said to have taken place in the past when the second temple still stood in Jerusalem. Drawing on the approach to historiographic narrative developed by Hayden White and to accounts of ritual developed by Catherine Bell and Philippe Buc, this paper describes two choices made or emphases given in narrating past ritual in the Mishnah which express rabbinic claims for authority.

First, focusing on Mishnah *Pesahim* 5:5-10, the Passover sacrifice narrative, I demonstrate that the Mishnah's ritual narratives emphasize entry into and exit from ritual space by repeating these words and by beginning and ending the narratives with these actions. Comparison to earlier non-rabbinic accounts of Passover sacrifice shows that the rabbis place special emphasis on and ritualize these actions. Using an approach built from the work of Arnold van Gennep, Jonathan Z. Smith, and others, I suggest that this narrational choice expresses a rabbinic understanding of ritual, rhetorically acts to construct boundaries in the imagination of the audience, and asserts a rabbinic claim for the Temple.

Second, with reference to a narrative of ritual failure in *Yoma* 2:2 and one of court control against sectarian resistance in *Parah* 3:7-8, I show that the Mishnah's ritual narratives repeatedly construct the court from the time of the Temple as the ultimate authority over Temple ritual. Comparison with pre-rabbinic accounts of *sunedria* and similar institutions illustrates that this court control over Temple ritual is a rabbinic invention. The rabbinic construction of the court as their predecessors in recurrent chain of transmission narratives elsewhere in the Mishnah suggests that the rabbis remember the court as the authority over past ritual in order to support their own claim for authority over post-Temple ritual.

## **2. Did Maimonides See Job's Reflection When He Looked in the Mirror? | L'image de Job apparut-elle à Maïmonide alors qu'il se regardait dans un miroir ?**

**Jason Kalman, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion**

More than twenty scholarly articles have examined the two chapters of Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed* devoted to the biblical book of Job. In the *Guide* Maimonides presents Job and his friends as representatives of various philosophical camps, each propounding its own understanding of divine providence. Scholars have primarily been interested in exploring this interpretation of the book of Job in its medieval philosophical context, but, to date, no one has asked why Maimonides turned to the book of Job in the first place. Robert Eisen has recently demonstrated the tremendous influence Maimonides' reading of Job had on later generations of philosophically minded exegetes. Given this influence, a further examination of Maimonides' very personal connection to Job is appropriate.

Maimonides' devoted a significant portion of the *Guide* to Job because he saw himself in its main character. His personal letters, particularly that concerning the death of his brother, demonstrate his early commitment to exploration of study as a remedy to suffering and this is precisely how he suggested Job should respond to his situation. Maimonides' argument that the story of Job is parable makes Job an everyman, which

would suggest that Maimonides' saw many people in the image of Job. However, his ranking of various events and afflictions which cause people to suffer are reminiscent of discussions of Maimonides' own travails; persecution in Spain, the loss of his brother and patron, and the burden of community leadership.

To conclude, the *Guide of the Perplexed* III:22-23 should be understood as the culmination of approximately ten years of Maimonides' reflection on the nature of his own seemingly undeserved suffering. It is a more thorough discussion of ideas he laid out in earlier personal writings and these make a number of obscure elements in the *Guide* much clearer.

### 3. Ginger Hegedus. Where is Paradise? The Notion of the Afterlife and the Understanding of Time in Medieval Jewish and Islamic Thought | Où se trouve le paradis ? La survie de l'âme et la compréhension de la durée temporelle dans la pensée juive médiévale et dans l'islam

**Dr. Ginger Hegedus, Saint Francis Xavier University**

Both **Maimonides** and **Avicenna** have been heavily criticized and even considered heretics given the fact that they did not believe in the doctrine of bodily resurrection.

In my lecture I would like to dig into the roots of why these philosophers were criticized and why the doctrine of the bodily resurrection is such an important issue in both the Jewish and Islamic religions.

During the lecture I will investigate four sources: three medieval Jewish texts, two from the 10<sup>th</sup> and one from the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and an Islamic philosophical source.

I argue that the Jewish and Muslim thinkers, theologians and philosophers considered paradise and hell in light of two models: (1) as the **afterlife**, understood in terms of temporal-spatial categories; and (2) as an **otherworld**, understood in terms of a purely spiritual realm which coexists simultaneously with the physical world. The first model is ontological (it regards paradise and hell as concrete places); and the second is epistemological in nature (it regards paradise as an illuminated, mental state.)

In the paper the following views will be analyzed:

- a. In the *Book of Beliefs and Opinions (Kitab al Amanat wa-'l-'tiqadat*, Baghdad, 933), **Saadya Gaon**, the towering figure of Jewish rationalist theology (*kalam*), holds the view that the afterlife will take place in the future after the bodily resurrection and that it is an act of recompense.
- b. In *The Book of Lights and Watchtowers (Kitab al-anwar wa-al-maraqib*, Syria, 936), **Ya'qub al-Qirqisani**, a karaite philosopher, argues two models in temporal succession: the recompense of the resurrected body in paradise and hell, followed by the eternal survival of the soul in a now disembodied, timeless state (Vol. 2, p 241.)
- c. In *The Foundation of the World (Yesod `Olam*, 14<sup>th</sup> century Spain), the mystical view of the Neo-Platonic Jewish philosopher Elkhanan b. Abraham univocally negates the future aspect of the afterlife. He claims to follow the Empedoclean

tradition in arguing that the continuous contemplation of the essence of God realizable in this life is equal to paradise.

- d. Epistle 83 of *The Epistles of the Sincere Brethren* (*Rasa'il ikhwan as-safa' wa-khillan al-wafa'*, first part of the 10<sup>th</sup> century), claims that the first model, which is historical-cosmological, is for the common people; whereas the second, which is individual-psychological, is for the elect (the philosophers) (p 241.)

I suggest that the two conceptions of the afterlife are based on two distinct notions of time:

- (1) linear time, that is, time flowing from past to future; in this model, eternity is understood as an infinite line.  
 (2) multi-layered time, which consists in a realm of motionless eternity "subtending" linear time; in this model, eternity is experienced as the world without time.

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**Keynote Lecture and Reception: 7:30-10:00 pm, Auditorium**

**Keynote Speaker and Lowy Anniversary Lecturer | et conférencier invité à l'occasion du 30e anniversaire de la Collection Lowy**

**EMILE SCHRIJVER**

**UNCOVERING THE LOWY HAGGADAH MANUSCRIPT | DÉCOUVRIR UN MANUSCRIT : LA HAGGADAH DE LA COLLECTION LOWY**

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**DAY 2: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2007 | 2ÈME JOUR :  
JEUDI, LE 25 OCTOBRE 2007**

**Registration and Coffee | Inscription et café : 9:00-9:30, Auditorium Foyer | Foyer de l'auditorium**

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**Session 4A: 9:30-11:30 am, Room 156 | Salle 156**

**4A. Portrayals/Constructions of Jews and Judaism | Images des Juifs et du judaïsme**  
**Chair | Animatrice: Deidre Butler, Carleton University**

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**1. The Invisibles: Jewish Canada and Television Culture | Invisibles : Les Juifs canadiens face à la culture télévisuelle**

**Michele Byers (Associate Professor, Saint Mary's University)**  
**Rosalin Krieger (PhD Candidate, OISE/University of Toronto)**

There is a long tradition in the United States of work that examines Jewish involvement and Jewish portrayals in the popular media. In fact, we have actively contributed to this literature in the last few years. While a similar literature exists for the study of Jewish literature in Canada, less academic study has been devoted to the examination of Jewish involvement in the Canadian mass media, and almost none to Canadian media texts that depict Jews and Jewishness. We believe that there is a need to interrogate this elision and to actively engage in building theory around a number of questions, some of which are set out below.

At the 2003 CAJS conference, Michele presented a paper entitled: "Searching for Canadian-Jewishness in television and the Mass Media," which the proposed paper will build upon. We note several important things in examining the ambivalent but highly visible expressions of Jewishness which are pervasive in American television (and film to a certain degree) and are (or appear to be) absent in Canadian television. First, Canadian and American television have developed along very different historical trajectories, just as there are historical nuances to the immigration and settlement patterns of Jews in Canada and the US. Second, in both countries Jews have played central roles in television's ownership structure. Third, both countries have produced Jews who have participated in this and other mass mediums as actors, directors, writers, and producers. Fourth, in both countries Jewish actors and narratives are often disguised as Gentile(s).

We argue that the historical differences in the development of television in Canada and the US, particularly the Canadian fear of American cultural Imperialism via

the mass media, had a rather unusual side effect. If the Jewish presence in Hollywood and its roots in Yiddishkeit — even if often forced underground — lent American television a Jewish feel even where/when Jews were absent, then, we argue, part of the legacy of this association has been a rejection of Jewishness in the rejection of Americanness in Canadian television production and its regulation. That is, because Jewishness is, in some way, the mother tongue of American television, Jewishness has been marginalized to the point of invisibility in Canadian TV, despite the presence of Jews in all areas of its production and for much of its history. Ironically, while Canadian TV has been mandated to represent the cultural differences of the nation, Jewishness has here been coded as the mainstream outside that Canadian television must guard against.

In our presentation we will elaborate on this theorization, drawing extensively on American and Canadian television history and Jewish Cultural Studies and on television and film texts, both Canadian and American.

## **2. The Passion of Larry David: Jewish Identity and Humour in *Curb Your Enthusiasm* | La passion de Larry David: l'identité juive et l'humour dans l'émission *Curb your Enthusiasm***

**Benjamin Wright, Carleton University**

This paper will examine identity construction and humor in the HBO comedy series *Curb Your Enthusiasm* with the aim of revealing the hybridized nature of Jewish humor within the show and, more broadly, contemporary popular culture. The series resonates with an imbricated comic nature that challenges essentialist categories of Jewish identity and humor, leading some critics to applaud the show's bold treatment of Jewish subjects and others to castigate it for upholding stereotypes of the "self-hating Jew." To be sure, recent studies of contemporary Jewish film and television comedies have not addressed the broader social and cultural factors that shape the ways in which modern Jewish identities are portrayed on screen.

To understand the novelty of Jewish identity formation and humor within this series, what is most helpful is a theory of comic performance that discloses the inventive and hybridized nature of Jewish themes and characters within this television show. Indeed, this paper will suggest ways in which the social and cultural structure of *Curb Your Enthusiasm* reflects a particular mode of comic performance embodied in its star, Larry David. Socially rude, he is viewed by his friends and family as a coarse critic who is, ironically, enormously successful and respected in the Hollywood community. In him crudity and compassion co-exist in an alternating dialectic that is played out in each episode. To put this in theoretical terms, it is with respect to the conjunction of Jewish and Gentile identities that the humor and novelty of this series becomes most apparent. While David may display the persona of a traditional Jewish comic who is torn between his inner Jewish self and the hostile Gentile world, he often subverts Jewish customs and remains ignorant of much of his religion. As such, this paper will begin with a theoretical framework that can illuminate the imbricated nature of this inherently Jewish

comic style, and then explore David's reliance on specific traditions of Jewish humor, particularly his status as a modern *schlemiel*.

On the nature of Jewish laughter, Irving Howe has suggested that Jewish humor is not humorous at all. In fact, the distinctive quality of this humor is in its ability to examine and criticize cultural attitudes from a marginalized position. More than criticizing the mainstream, however, Jewish humor has been historically defined as a critical apparatus that also involves a healthy dose of self-criticism. The acute social observations that pepper the jokes of classical and contemporary humorists often include self-criticism and ridicule. This double-bind of Jewish humor, its oscillation between pride and criticism, supports the notion that the exact nature of Jewish identity remains an anomalous beast that resists articulation. However, despite the tendency to suppose that there is a single or privileged modern "Jewish identity," it is important to consider the diversity of David's own Jewish identity, as he subverts the "traditional" expectations and theorizations of Jewish humor with a cultural sensibility that is both reverent and insulting.

### **3. Arctic Narrative in Mordecai Richler and Michael Chabon | Les régions arctiques dans l'œuvre de Mordecai Richler et Michael Chabon**

**Sarah Casteel, Carleton University**

**Session 4B: 9:30-11:30 am, Room 154 | Salle 154**

**4B. Negotiating New Realities | À la rencontre de nouvelles réalités  
Chair | Animatrice: Alti Rodal, Public Works and Government Services Canada**

**Chava Rosenfarb and The Tree of Life | Chava Rosenfarb et son œuvre intitulée The Tree of Life**

**Goldie Morgentaler, University of Lethbridge**

*The Tree of Life* is that rare thing in Yiddish literature—an epic. What is even more unusual, it is an epic written by a woman. While several Yiddish writers attempted the epic form—I. J. Singer and Sholem Asch come to mind—epics in Yiddish are nevertheless rare. Rarer still are women novelists. The vast majority of women who wrote in Yiddish were poets or short story writers.

This paper will focus on a Yiddish-Canadian author who is an exception to both rules. Chava Rosenfarb, in the traditional fashion of women writers in Yiddish, did in fact begin her literary career as a poet, but the enormity of her experiences during the Holocaust led her to the conclusion that in order to recreate her annihilated Polish-Jewish community, she would have to turn to prose. The result was the three-volume

novel, *The Tree of Life*, one of the few fictional—as opposed to autobiographical or factual—accounts by an actual survivor of what it was like to be incarcerated in the Lodz Ghetto during the Nazi occupation of Poland.

My paper will give a brief overview of the life of Chava Rosenfarb and of her epic novel. But its focus will be primarily on one of the sub-themes of Rosenfarb's work, namely on the way in which *The Tree of Life* addresses the subject of the Jewish place within Western culture. Given that *The Tree of Life* raises this question quite urgently and does so within the context of the worst calamity ever to befall the Jews, I believe that this topic deserves more attention than it has received to date.

In *The Tree of Life*, the ongoing debate about the role and value of art and culture in the face of barbarity centres specifically on the significance of Western non-Jewish culture for the Jews. It also takes on a generational tinge, since it is the novel's younger generation that rejects the assumptions of the older one about the inherent value of Western culture.

For instance, one of the characters in *The Tree of Life* is the assimilated school teacher Dora Diamond, who tries to comfort her Jewish charges after the Nazis invade Poland by teaching them Shakespeare. But after a Nazi raid on the school which results in a number of boys being taken away to forced labour, the students no longer pay attention to the lesson. For them, Western culture has been exposed as bereft and sterile. Yet, the issue cannot be so easily dismissed, because Jews are, after all, part of Western culture as well, although the historical moment that the novel depicts seems to suggest that they are the most problematic part, not only for themselves, but for the world at large. Thus *The Tree of Life* forces us to question the value of Western culture in addressing the problem of being Jewish in a world that despises Jews.

## **2. Fremd Lebn: Yiddish Immigrant Life in Interwar Paris as Reflected in Yosl Cukier's œuvre | Fremd Lebn : la vie immigrante juive à Paris dans l'entre-deux-guerres telle que reflétée dans l'œuvre de Yosl Cukier**

**Dr. Pnina Rosenberg (Haifa, Israel)**

*Leben vi Got in Frankraych* (To live like God in France) — this Yiddish saying was part of the world outlook of many of the East-European Jewish immigrants who, in the 1920-30s, saw France as the promised land that would provide them with a safe refuge. This population, mostly working-class and impoverished who came from Eastern Europe, were attached to their mother tongue, as is revealed by the rich Yiddish cultural life flourished in interwar Paris - newspapers, books and journals, editors as well as Yiddish theater.

Yosl Cukier (1912, Radzin, Poland – 1942, Auschwitz), was one of the authors who took an active part in the Paris Yiddish literary circles. Cukier, who dreamed of becoming a painter — a "Jewish Bruegel" — worked for his living as a lamp manufacturer, depicted in his novels the Yiddish immigrants' life with the accurate insight of an insider.

In his novel *In einem a hois* (In One of the Houses), which is part of his anthology *Fremd Lebn: Derzeilungen fun yiddishen lebn in Pariz* (Estranged Life: Stories of

Yiddish Life in Paris, Warsaw, 1939), the "house" is actually a third rate "Hôtel moderne," situated in the immigrant quarter of Belleville. In contrast to its pretentious name, the hotel accommodates in each its tiny, suffocating rooms an entire family or several single immigrant refugees. The story takes place mainly indoors, thereby creating an atmosphere of claustrophobia, similar to the protagonists' feeling of suffocation. The immigrants' inner space not only reflects their miserable life condition but serves also as a metaphor to their very narrow and confined world, from which they yearn to escape.

Using Zola-like naturalism, Cukier depicts the various inhabitants with bitter irony and meticulous precision: their daily struggle for survival aggravated by the economic crisis of the 1930s; the confrontation between refugees from Nazi Germany and Jewish welfare society employees as well as the daily life of clandestine leftist militants, who had no legal documents and thus lived in constant fear of being expelled from the country.

With the craftsmanship of a gifted author and artist, Cukier depicts through the individual protagonists a collective portrait of a community torn between two worlds — the "*heim*" they left behind and the "house" not yet established in the new world. This is a community with no feeling of constancy, people alienated from the world around them and from themselves. His heroes, or anti-heroes, examine their own lives mercilessly, provoking in the reader a physical sense of horror and despair.

The purpose of this paper is to present the work of Cukier, who was considered by his contemporaries to be a new and promising voice in Yiddish literature, until he was silenced in Auschwitz, and also the rich mosaic of the Yiddish population of interwar Paris, as reflected in his oeuvre.

### **3. Jews without Judaism: Christian Zionist Travel to Israel | Juifs sans être Juifs : les voyageurs chrétiens sionistes en Israël**

**Faydra Shapiro, Wilfrid Laurier University**

Christian Zionism is a general label for a particular orientation and emphasis within evangelicalism that ascribes critical theological and eschatological importance to the Jews living in Israel. For Christian Zionists, the birth of the state of Israel, was a profoundly important event for their own worldview. Support for the state would only grow following the Israeli victory of 1967 that was perceived by many as nothing short of miraculous. The expansion of Israeli territory to include important biblical sites of course increased the excitement of religious Zionists, both Jewish and Christian. This would be followed by the growing importance of the "evangelical right" in domestic U.S. politics, opening the way for Christian Zionist priorities to influence mainstream politics at the highest level.

The modern state of Israel is viewed by Christian Zionists as nothing short of a miracle functioning as the critical connection point between the past and future. Its sheer existence, survival, and advancements are signs of God's keeping of his past promises to his chosen people, and therefore signs of trustworthiness about what is to come both for individuals and the world. The restoration of the Jews to this promised

land in the form of a sovereign state also serves as a sign of the times, an arrow pointing toward the future and the second coming of Christ and his millennial reign. At the same time, these visits are about demonstrating solidarity with God's chosen people in God's promised land, by loving whom God loves, and providing them with material, emotional, spiritual and political support. In this Christian Zionists feel themselves to be partnering with God, helping to further his plan. These material actions on behalf of Jewish residents of the modern state of Israel are understood in explicitly religious, biblical terms to be either "comforting" Israel (Isaiah 40:1) or "blessing" her (Genesis 12:3) or protecting her as a "watchman on the walls" (Isaiah 62:6). To these ends, Christian Zionist activism on behalf of Israel takes many forms, including lobbying government officials (primarily in Europe and the United States) for specific policy or budget changes, publicizing the importance of Israel to other Christians, giving money to Israeli charities, encouraging and financially aiding Jewish immigration to Israel, providing social services to Jews in Israel (such as food banks, aid to the elderly, support to lone soldiers) and prayer intercession/spiritual warfare. And of course one of the big things that Christian Zionists do is visit Israel.

This paper investigates the Christian Zionist construction of Jews and Judaism, as developed while touring Israel. This research is based in extensive fieldwork and interviews with North American Christian Zionist tour groups in Israel. I will show that a profound interest in and commitment to the Jews as the "Chosen People" of God is paired with a remarkable lack of correlative interest in and knowledge about post-biblical Judaism. Ultimately this offers evangelical Christians an ambivalent and idiosyncratic kind of Jew without Judaism, one that is profoundly difficult for Jews to relate to. I will also show, as an example, how this leads to the issue of "Messianic Jews" (i.e. Jewish believers in Jesus) as a crisis point between Christian Zionists and mainstream Jews. What is an utterly unacceptable "hybridity" between Judaism and Christianity in the eyes of mainstream Judaism, is an "ethnic" or "local" expression of the body of Christ for Christian Zionism.

**Lunch | Déjeuner: 11:30-12:30, Auditorium Foyer | Foyer de l'auditorium**

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**Session 5A 12:30-2:00, Room 156 | Salle 156**

**5A. Montreal: Shifting Cityscapes | Les formes évolutives du judaïsme montréalais**

**Chair | Animateur: Ira Robinson, Concordia University**

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**1. The Franco-Sephardim of Montréal: a Francophone Minority in Québec | Les Sépharades francophones de Montréal : une minorité de langue française au Québec**

## **Lillooet Nordlinger McDonnell, University of Ottawa.**

Montréal is one of Canada's most multicultural urban centres, attracting immigrants from all over the globe, including a significant number of Moroccan Francophone Sephardi Jews, who today number approximately 25, 000.<sup>1</sup> Francophone Sephardi Jews from other countries such as Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, and Europe, also reside in Montréal, but these groups are a minority among the Montréal Sephardi community in comparison to the Moroccan Jews.<sup>2</sup>

Moroccan Jews first began to settle in Canada in 1956, the year that Morocco declared its independence from French colonial powers. The political and socioeconomic transformations of the late 1950's along with the emergence of radical forms of Muslim nationalism caused a massive exodus of North African Jews. Due to their familiarity with French culture, many Moroccan Francophone Sephardi Jews chose to settle in Montréal and outlying areas. In the subsequent decades of the 1960's and 1970's, Canada's policy on multiculturalism began to develop. This in turn allowed immigrant groups to continue to express their own cultural heritage within the framework of either British or French linguistic culture. Simultaneously, Québec underwent its "Quiet-Revolution", and changed from a religiously based society to a nationally based one, where the French language and culture became the focal point for the majority of the Province's residents.

Not only did the Québec separatist movement arise, numerous French language laws, intended to protect and promote Franco-Québécois culture, also emerged. The language laws caused tension among Anglophone sectors of Québec society, who felt that they were being alienated from Québec society. The polarity seen within the dominant Francophone and Anglophone sectors of Québec society, was subsequently reflected within the Anglo-Ashkenazi and Franco-Sephardi sectors of the Montréal Jewish community.

Through an examination of the creation and social integration of the *Communauté Sépharade Unifiée du Québec* this discussion will address the nature and expression of the Francophone identity of Montréal's Moroccan Sephardi Jews. Such themes as *Moroccan Jewry under French colonial rule, the historical development of Québec's Jewish community, how English became the lingua franca of established Montréal Jewry, governmental socio-cultural policies, intra-communal tensions in Montréal between Ashkenazim and Sephardim, and the development of the Communauté Sépharade du Québec*, will be explored.

## **2. Hassidim Confronting Modernity | Les Hassidim à la rencontre de la modernité**

### **William Shaffir, McMaster University**

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<sup>1</sup> Gerald J. J. Tulchinsky, *Branching Out: The Transformation of the Canadian Jewish Community* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1998), 316.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

A few years ago, in 2002, I took my son (who is a serious basketball fan) to the Tasher hassidic enclave to celebrate the Hannukah candle-lighting in the *Bays Medresh*. There were some 300 men gathered there, of various ages and he jokingly asked me, 'Do they follow basketball?' I offered to wager one hundred dollars that he would be unable to find seven hassidim among those present who would be familiar with arguably the most famous basketball player ever: Michael Jordan. He did not wish to enter into the wager, but I believe I would have won, if he had. Nowadays, however, I doubt whether the odds would remain in my favour.

The resurgence of hassidic communities, following their near destruction during the Holocaust, has been analyzed elsewhere. In what could not be imagined but a few decades earlier, today's hassidic communities enjoy burgeoning numbers and a plethora of institutions to meet their needs, and rank extremely high on any scale of institutional completeness. Among North American Jewry, hassidim enjoy the highest birth rate at a time when demographic analyses show the overall Jewish birthrate to be declining. Significantly, this sizeable population increment is not matched by a defection stream warranting serious concern for the time being. Moreover, there is little evidence to indicate that the younger generation's commitment to the traditional hassidic lifestyle is diminished; in fact, the reverse may actually be the case.

This paper concentrates on a geographic segment of Montreal hassidim, and examines social change at both the macro and micro levels. The analysis is divided into two segments that reflect different dimensions of change impacting on the community. In the first, I draw upon two extensive surveys that were commissioned by the Coalition of Outremont Hassidic Jews. The other dimension examines social change more closely and focuses on a number of specific problems which informants identified in the course of my field research, problems that they considered to have altered the tenor of their everyday life in their particular hassidic community. In particular, I draw attention to seemingly disparate features of everyday that, in their totality, reflect the impact and consequences of on-going change: The intrusion of the Internet, the increase in divorces, and a movement by some disaffected to sever ties with the community and its stringent way of life.

### **3. Hershl Novak et la fondation de la 1ère école yiddish de Montréal | Hershl Novak and the Founding of the First Yiddish School in Montréal**

**Pierre Anctil, Université d'Ottawa**

En 1957 paraissait de manière posthume à New York un livre intitulé: *Foun mayne yunge yorn* [au sujet de mes années de jeunesse], une autobiographie rédigée par Hershl Novak. Peu connu jusqu'à ce jour, l'ouvrage est d'autant plus intéressant que Novak était un des animateurs de la première école yiddish de Montréal en 1911 puis un des fondateurs en 1913 de la Natsyonale Radicale Shule, plus tard l'école Peretz. De fait, *Foun mayne yunge yorn* jette une lumière exceptionnelle sur les débuts de la communauté juive montréalaise d'origine est-européenne et surtout sur les mouvements idéologiques qui donnèrent naissance aux premières institutions de langue yiddish dans la ville. Immigré à Montréal en 1909 de sa Pologne natale, Novak constitue en somme un exemple des transformations sociales et culturelles qui

frappèrent les Juifs à cette époque, soit au moment de leur départ d'Europe de l'Est et lors de leur arrivée en Amérique du Nord. Le conférencier s'attachera à bien faire comprendre le contexte qui prévalait à Montréal au moment du début de la grande migration juive et comment ces nouvelles idées furent immédiatement appliquées dans la ville.

**Break | Pause café: 2:00-2:15, Auditorium Foyer | Foyer de l'auditorium**

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**Session 6A, 2:15-3:45, Room 156 | Salle 156**

**6A. To Write, To Remember, To Build: The Journalist and Community | Le journalisme et la perpétuation de la communauté**

**Chair | Animatrice: Cheryl Jaffee, Lowy Collection, Library and Archives Canada**

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**1. Chaim Kruger and Jewish Studies in Montreal in the Interwar Period | Chaim Kruger et les études juives à Montréal dans la période de l'entre-deux-guerres**

**Ira Robinson, Concordia University**

In the first half of the twentieth century the scholarly study of Judaism and Jewish history was normally pursued outside colleges and universities, in Jewish institutions of various sorts. In Montreal, though it was possible to study Biblical Hebrew and Semitics at McGill, there were severe limitations to McGill's receptivity to the academic pursuit of Jewish studies, as demonstrated in the case of Yehuda Kaufman and his attempt to study for an M.A. in Jewish studies at McGill (1915-1917). Instead, Jewish studies in Montreal were fostered by Jewish communal institutions, such as the Jewish Peoples' Library and Peoples' University, founded in 1914, and by Montreal's Yiddish-language daily newspaper, *Der Keneder Adler*, founded in 1907.

This paper will examine Jewish studies in Montreal in this period, focusing on the work of Chaim Kruger (1875-1934). Kruger was a rabbinic scholar and yeshiva teacher, who earned his living as a slaughterer (*shokhet*) and was active as well as a journalist at the *Keneder Adler*. Over the years, Kruger published numerous newspaper articles on subjects related to Jewish history and philosophy. His articles on Maimonides, which appeared first in the newspaper, were collected and published in 1933 as *Der Rambam, zayn lebensveg un zayn shriftn*.

A detailed examination of Kruger's journalism and other activities, will enable us to obtain a much clearer picture of the intellectual climate of Montreal Jewry in the interwar period. It will, in particular, give us insight into the ways in which the Keneder Adler acted as a catalyst for intellectual endeavor in the Montreal Jewish community.

## **2. The Keneder Adler and the khurbn: Responses to the Holocaust in the Canadian Yiddish Press | Le Keneder Adler et le khurbn: réponses à l'Holocauste dans la presse yiddish canadienne**

**Rebecca Margolis, University of Ottawa**

Much attention has been paid to the lack of coverage of the events of the Jewish genocide in the popular press; much less has been said about how the Jewish press reported on the Holocaust as it was unfolding. The paper will explore the ways in which Canada's foremost Jewish newspaper, the Yiddish daily Keneder Adler (Canadian Jewish Eagle) dealt with the systematic destruction of Jewish Europe under the Nazis. In particular, it will spotlight the Adler's coverage of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) conference held in Montreal in Autumn of 1944, a pivotal event whose "Jewish angle" received minimal attention in the non-Jewish press. This study will present the active strategies developed by the Canadian Jewish community to address the European crisis.

## **3. Canadian Highlights: a Hasidic Magazine Made In Canada | Highlights : un magazine hassidique rédigé au Canada**

**Steven Lapidus, Concordia University**

Montreal has a long and storied Hasidic history. Beginning in the late 1880s, Jews of Hasidic origins began settling in Montreal. The Holocaust brought another wave of eastern European Hasidic émigrés to Canada, whose arrival enriched, and in some cases overshadowed the earlier arrivals. The postwar period encouraged growth and development such that by the end of the twentieth-century, the Canadian Hasidic community could boast tens of thousands of adherents, the presence of over a dozen Hasidic dynasties, as well as a broad and overarching infrastructure. Not only has Montreal developed into an important international Hasidic structure, the community continues to expand both demographically as well as institutionally.

One of the sure signs of a community's coming of age is the production of public media. In July of 2005, the very first issue of *Highlights — Canada's Premier [sic] Jewish Magazine*, was published in Montreal by a Hasidic individual. This magazine, intended to provide topical and current information for its reading public, ceased publication after only ten issues. Published in both English and Yiddish, this periodical mixes articles of general interest and national news with specifically Orthodox-directed writings.

Newspapers are obviously fruitful tools for understanding the concerns and preoccupations of the community it represents. While published by the community to enhance communal solidarity, cohesiveness, and standards, printed material are also available to the general public. Communal organs, such as *Highlights*, while created to maintain communal boundaries, actually straddle such divisions since the general public has access to them, especially when they are published in English. Therefore, these publications offer information that is “insider” to the community along with an awareness that others may also read this paper. An analysis of such a publication would seem to offer a self-conscious assessment of the community it represents, which, when properly interpreted, will illuminate the concerns and anxieties about Canada’s most significant Hasidic community.

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**Closing Remarks | Mots de conclusion: 3:45-4:30, Auditorium**

**Pierre Anctil, University of Ottawa  
Aviva Freedman, Carleton University**

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