

Why are so many secular, highly-assimilated Jews drawn to Lubavitch? Speaking about women, Feldman writes: “They are unhappy with the pluralistic and relativistic values of modern secular life, and their ‘return’ to Orthodox Judaism reflects a fully-conscious rejection of this culture. They are looking for a sense of community to counterbalance the meaningless individualism of post-modern culture. In Lubavitch, they find the community that they are looking for.” (p. 163)

Feldman is very well-informed about Lubavitch practice and theory, and she is a supporter and defender of their way of life. An observer not thoroughly immersed in this community and its inner life might not be able to understand and evaluate how Lubavitch operates and how it fits into the general society of which it remains, unavoidably, a part. Readers may wonder, nonetheless, whether field work done by someone who is less involved and less enthusiastic might produce different conclusions.

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Elazar, Daniel J., Michael Brown, and Ira Robinson, editors. *Not Written in Stone: Jews, Constitutions and Constitutionalism in Canada*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2003. xiii + 280 pp.

This intriguing and well-researched study of the background to the constitutions of major Canadian-Jewish organizations is essentially two books in one. Essays on Jewish public affairs and institutional life are followed by a compendium of texts of the constitutions and founding documents of a variety of Canadian-Jewish associations.

Several essays place these modern documents in the context of the Torah as the original constitution of the Jewish people—a society which is basically textual. They also provide historical background to the development of the Jewish community in Canada. The authors emphasize the unique situation of Canadian Jews, a minority with close ties both to their countries of origin (mostly in eastern Europe), to the United

States, and to Israel. This is a community with a background in eastern-European languages as well as Hebrew and Yiddish, a group that historically found itself in a bilingual, bicultural, and bireligious society made up of English-speaking Protestants and French-speaking Catholics. It is striking that the organized Jewish community in Canada worked for the adoption of legal instruments—including the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms of 1982—promoting equality and liberty for all Canadians regardless of their religion.

The essays emphasize the differences in charters and organizational structure between United States and Canadian synagogues and other Jewish groups and chart the growth of Jewish communities in Montreal, Toronto, and western Canada. They also trace the development of the Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, and Reconstructionist movements in Canada by analyzing the constitutional documents of synagogues belonging to all of them. The first section, entitled, “The Setting,” is comprised of three essays, the first written jointly by the three editors, the second by Daniel Elazar, and the third by Lorraine Weinrib. In their introductory remarks, the editors state that this volume is intended to explore the extent to which Canadian Jews have adhered to their own political traditions, as well as the degree to which Jewish political organization is a product of specific times and places. A third issue discussed is the influence exerted by Jews on Canadian constitutional issues. Of particular concern to the authors is whether pre-modern Judaic political traditions are evident in contemporary Jewish organizational life, as well as the significance and means of expression of such continuity (p. 3). Weinrib’s article explores the second issue raised in the introduction: the Jewish impact on the constitutional process in Canada.

Attempting in summary fashion to answer these questions, “The Setting” presents a brief history of the political, legal, and organizational life of Canadian Jewry from the latter part of the nineteenth century to the present day. Emphasis is placed on the community’s participation in the country’s politi-

cal and legal life, in particular, as a reflection of the dual French-English social structure. Part II, "Analysis and Discussion," presents three interesting and well-documented essays by Jay Eidelman, Michael Brown and Ira Robinson. Eidelman's "Kissing Cousins: The Early History of Congregations Shearith Israel of New York and Montreal" addresses one of the two central questions of the volume, how the constitutions of Jewish organizations are rooted in both Jewish and local non-Jewish traditions. Eidelman shows how the constitutions of the original synagogues in Canada and the United States reflect the political traditions of their respective countries. Michael Brown's "Signs of the Times: Changing Notions of Citizenship, Governance and Authority as Reflected in Synagogues" discusses membership, leadership and constitutions of the Canadian synagogue, thereby attempting to provide partial answers to the questions raised in the editors' introductory remarks.

Ira Robinson's excellent scholarly study, "They Work in Faithfulness: Constitutional Documents of Jewish Communal Organizations Other than Synagogues," directly addresses all of the book's concerns. "The constitutional documents of Canadian Jewry, which gave voice to these social and political elements are," he writes, "valuable evidence of the dynamics of Canadian Jewish life. A self-conscious expression of identity, the documents present a window onto the re-invention and the constantly evolving process of self definition that characterizes the Canadian Jewish community." (p. 141)

In Part III, the editors have provided "Selected Documents (Excerpts)" from the charters of Canadian Jewish synagogues, social, patriotic, professional, self-help, students' and women's organizations as an appropriate conclusion to this volume. What remains somewhat unclear is the intended readership of this final section. The stated purpose of the collection is to illustrate the points made in the essays, and this the editors have succeeded in doing. The general reader with an interest in Canadian history, however, is unlikely to read through the

entire compilation of founding documents, and the serious scholar of Canadian-Jewish history may be frustrated by the limited number of texts included in this work.

While it is unlikely that the ordinary reader will peruse this volume from beginning to end, the book is an excellent reference source for anyone interested in Jewish history and, in particular, Canadian Jewry. The documents selected serve as interesting examples of the interplay of religious and secular texts in the building of a modern Jewish society. The book as whole is a valuable contribution to the limited number of existing empirical studies in this important and neglected area of Jewish history.

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Frank Bialystok. *Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian-Jewish Community*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000. xiv + 327 pp.

The continued violence in the Middle East, the rising tide of antisemitism around the world, and recent mass murders and attempted genocides in several places make the lessons of the Holocaust more important than ever. Thus Frank Bialystok's important work, *Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community*, is a most welcome publication. It is a pioneering study of the relationship of Canadian Jews to the Holocaust complementing the work of Irving Abella and Harold Troper in *None Is Too Many*, which focuses more on the government and on Canadian society.

Bialystok traces the development of the community's historical memory from 1945 to 1985. He argues that, although the impact of the Holocaust was delayed by a generation, its memory has evolved into an important component of Canadian Jewish identity. In spite of the subjective and elusive nature of memory and identity, the book documents them through the