

**Michael Brown, Richard Menkis, Benjamin Schlesinger
and Stuart Schoenfeld**

INTRODUCTION

Thirty-five or forty years ago, a scholar compiling a bibliography of Canadian Jewry would have found a very limited number of works to list. Some historical research had been done, archival collections established, and memoirs written, but the *Selected Bibliography of Jewish Canadiana*, published in 1959 by David Rome, the pioneer chronicler and antiquarian of Canadian Jewry, was a comparatively brief document. In 1965, Rome himself was in the midst of assembling primary materials and making them available to a small, but growing, audience. In the social sciences, the pioneer demographer, Louis Rosenberg, was still actively engaged in his extensive and detailed examination of census data. At the country's universities, Jewish Studies was not yet a presence.

In the intervening years, the situation has changed remarkably. Most of the founding scholars of Canadian Jewish Studies are no longer with us. As Canadian universities expanded, however, professional scholars with a specialized interest in Canadian Jewry have emerged, some in the Jewish Studies programmes that have been established, some in other departments. *The Guide to the Study of Jewish Civilization in Canadian Universities* (Jerusalem: International Center for University Teaching in Jewish Civilization and Toronto: York University Centre for Jewish Studies, 1998) compiled by Michael Brown lists forty-three institutions of higher learning in Canada offering at least a few courses in Jewish Studies.

Building on the work of local groups, the Canadian Jewish Historical Society was founded in the early 1970s and published *The Journal of the Canadian Jewish Historical Society* between 1977 and 1988. In 1993, the reorganized Society, now called the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies, began publishing *Canadian Jewish Studies/Études juives canadiennes*. By the end of 1999, there were two chairs of Canadian Jewish Studies: the J. Richard Schiff Chair for the Study of Canadian Jewry at York University, held by Professor Irving Abella, and the Chair for the Study of Quebec and Canadian Jewry at Concordia University, held by Professor Norman Ravvin.

On the threshold of the new century, a surprising number of books and articles on Canadian Jews (over 1600 entries here) may be found in the disciplines of history, political science, economics, anthropology, sociology, women's studies, literature, and other fields. For the benefit of researchers, archival sources have been consolidated and described. Several anthologies on contemporary Canadian Jewish life have been published, as well as two focusing on Quebec. Chapters on Jews may be found in numerous books on various topics. The broader field of Canadian Studies, moreover, reflects the country's new multicultural ethos. As a matter of course, notice is now taken of Jews and other once overlooked groups, and the scholarly and popular literature on Canadian Jewish life grows steadily.

The present project is intended to document that proliferation of the literature. It has, as its main goal, the production of a history and social science bibliography on the Jews of Canada and, as a second goal, pointing the way to future research. By highlighting those aspects of Canadian Jewish life, which have already received attention, the editors hope to highlight areas still under-researched.

For example, much detailed and thoughtful research has been done on Jewish immigration and settlement in Canada. In contrast, very little research has been published on the internal migration of Canadian Jews, a process which has had important

implications for Jewish identity, social networks, and organizations. Extensive portraits of the economic conditions faced by the wave of immigrants at the turn of the 20th century have appeared in print. Less is available about contemporary economic issues, such as the occupational choices of recent generations. And much remains to be said about gender issues relating to Canadian Jews. In the area of religion, the practices of Canadian Jews have received some study, but relatively little has been written on synagogues as institutions or on the internal dynamics of the various branches of Judaism. And, despite the extent of the Jewish communal school and social welfare systems in Canada, not very much has been written about their history or the current challenges which they face. These issues are of more than antiquarian interest, since individuals and institutions will be making decisions about the future on the basis of what they know about the past and present.

This work builds upon *Contemporary Jewish Life in Canada*, compiled by Stuart Schoenfeld and Dwight Daigneault in 1993. The latter bibliography was an outcome of the conference, "Canadian Jewry in the 21st Century: Setting the Research Agenda," mounted in 1989 by the York University Centre for Jewish Studies in cooperation with the Jerusalem Centre for Public Affairs. The present bibliography follows another conference at York University, "A Heritage in Transition: Canadian Jewish Studies," held almost a decade later, in 1998. The second conference was sponsored by the York University Centre for Jewish Studies and the Chair for Quebec and Canadian Studies at Concordia University, and it was funded by the Policy Research Branch of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Although it is intimately connected to previous bibliographic endeavours, the present work may be seen to differ from them, not only in its inclusion of more recent materials, but also in its emphases and in its use of some of the newer technologies for locating materials. This bibliography will undoubtedly meet some needs that others do not. As with every

such work, however, the editors have made choices about what to include and about organization which are, to a degree, idiosyncratic. Some explanatory comments may, therefore, be of help to readers.

In order not to replicate the work of earlier bibliographers, the emphasis here has been placed upon books and articles published since 1965. A few earlier works have been included, because they are “classics of the canon,” because they present a unique viewpoint or methodology, or because they are favourites of one or more of the editors. Jews or Judaism are the focus of most of the entries. Some, however, treat religion or ethnicity more generally and are included because they deal with the contexts in which Canadian Jews and Judaism exist. The editors have stressed the disciplines of social science and history, and they have drawn a distinction between analytical studies and products of the imagination. Films, *belles lettres*, and works of art, theology, and music have been excluded, for the most part, although discussions of them as artifacts of culture have been included. Electronic publications, which are often of high quality and very useful, are not yet judged by the same standards as those in print and have therefore been excluded.

Some entries are organized topically. Others are arranged according to geography reflecting the regionalization characteristic of Canada, in general, and Canadian Jewry, in particular. It may be noted that the size, age, and inherent interest of the Montreal community make that section the largest of the city entries. Most groupings with only a few listings have been combined with others. Every attempt has been made to cross reference works which address a multiplicity of topics.

The editors consider this bibliography a “working paper.” That means several things. First of all, it acknowledges the incompleteness of the work. Annotation proved beyond the scope of the compilers, but they are aware that the omission limits the usefulness of their efforts. Although the editors have been engaged in their task for several years and have used a

variety of standard and newer means of gathering entries, they are aware that their work is far from complete. They have attempted to compensate for their particular interests, tastes, and specializations, but those have inevitably influenced choice more than might be desirable.

More serious are the areas omitted from the bibliography. There is a general perception that psychology, social science, and perhaps history address the community's most immediate issues. Unquestionably, however, films, *belles lettres*, and other works of the imagination are able to illustrate and penetrate the human experience as well as—if not better than—many of the studies written by sociologists, demographers, economists, or historians. In the realm of literature, moreover, Canadian Jewry has produced major figures, such as Matt Cohen, Naïm Kattan, A.M. Klein, Mordecai Richler, and Adele Wiseman, as well as a number of writers in Yiddish and a host of other lesser, but not insignificant, lights. And a number of non-Jewish writers have written about Jews in instructive ways. All these works shed much light on the Jews and Judaism in Canada and their context. The next revision of this bibliography should most definitely include imaginative works, not just the memoirs, commentary, and criticism written by novelists, musicians, and artists. One may expect, as well, that the next revision will include an extensive list of electronic publications.

This bibliography, then, is but a way station. We hope that it catalogues the accomplishments of the past and points towards the research of the future. We are aware of its partial nature, but hope nonetheless that it will prove useful to all those with a professional or amateur interest in the past, present, and future of Canadian Jewry. We look forward to the ongoing expansion and revision of our “working paper.”