which made the Yiddish modernist project possible, an acceptance which facilitated the eclipse of Yiddish by the language of Shakespeare.

This intimate, compelling and scholarly collective portrait is essential for anyone interested in the inner life of the Jewish community, and in the immigrant experience in Montreal.

Endnotes

[1] Segal described Caiserman as "my guardian angel (45).

[2] English translation of the French translation: "In my labyrinth of desires and of sparkling sins, where thousands of signs flicker and shine/ I will draw out the wellsprings of my depthless joys/,and explode thousands of bright lights!/You will leave your endless fields/and join me in my kingdom of stones/abandoning the divine calm/ of forests and rivers The poem appears on (90) of the text.

[3] (182). Shari Cooper Friedman looks at the same passage from a different perspective. For her, the tone of a Eastern European Jew looking at Catholic Montreal is almost ironic, the footsteps on the stones that beat the rhythm of Segal`s Hebrew liturgy are small and quiet compared to the ubiquitous ringing bells. Where she sees is David and Goliath, alienation and the refusal to submit to it, Anctil sees celebration. See her "Between Two Worlds, the Work of J.I. Segal" in *An Everyday Miracle, Yiddish Culture in Montreal*, ed. Ira Robinson, Pierre Anctil and Marvin Butovsky, Montreal, Vehicle Press, 1990, 115-158.

[4] Segal has the poetical power to make us believe in phenomena which we no longer feel around us to a world we no longer feel ourselves, (286).

[5] At one point a poem appears, commented, for a second time.

Eve Lerner

Jack Lipinsky, *Imposing Their Will: An Organizational History of Jewish Toronto, 1933-1948*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011. 384 pp.

The alphabet soup of Jewish organizational history is often appreciated without a great deal of concern for the individual

letters and what they mean. Many of us are familiar with the ingredients, either from an interest in community history or from an involvement as staff or volunteers with various organizations, but not with the full recipe. We know many of the terms – the CJC, the JIAS, the FJP – but we leave to specialists the matter of how these parts came together to form the dish that nourishes the entire community. Such avoidance is understandable; organizational history is inherently complex, and efforts to present it in detail can easily seem pedantic. Popular books on Canada's Jewish community usually just provide a taste of a few key institutions, making for easy reading but adding to the underlying confusion.

Fortunately for anyone interested in the process of building community organizations, Jack Lipinsky has written a meticulous, insightful, and surprisingly entertaining account of Jewish Toronto during the formative 1930s and 40s period. *Imposing Their Will* provides a clear understanding of how community organizations evolved from diverse origins to the influential institutions we know today. Even more significantly, Lipinsky has presented the efforts of real people: people with expertise and enthusiasm, but also personal ambition, political views, petty jealousies and ignorance, all of which have contributed to the creation of an organizational infrastructure. As a result, these groups emerge as living, breathing organisms, rather than merely letters in soup.

Lipinsky came to the subject as a grad student many years ago, but was forced to abandon his work as a result of the death of his thesis supervisor and the need to support his family. Thankfully, years later, it was this grateful family that persuaded Lipinsky to go back to his research and complete his study, which he did even though his old notes had to be rescued from obsolete computer disks. No doubt the study would have made a fine thesis had Lipinsky completed it decades ago, but it may also be that the book he has now published has benefited from the enthusiasm and experience he now brings to the material. For a story that most certainly does

not write itself, having a calm hand at the helm is the key to a readable and engaging narrative.

Lipinsky builds his story around three main sources of tension within the Toronto Jewish community that helped forge its infrastructure. The most familiar of these, though the most fundamental, is the Uptowner / Downtowner division. Given that volunteer involvement necessitated a degree of leisure, and that organizational health typically benefitted from the fruits of social connections, the leadership of community organizations in Toronto, as elsewhere, inevitably fell to the local elite, members of the longest-established families that had founded Holy Blossom and other early congregations. The waves of Eastern European immigrants arriving as of the late nineteenth century came to feel they had little in common with this elite; most were disinclined to take part in the emerging umbrella charitable institutions, which they saw as controlling and condescending. Class tension haunts Lipinsky's chapters on the creation (or more properly recreation) of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) in 1933, which sought to be the political voice of Canada's Jews, and his discussion of The Jewish Immigrant Aid Society (JIAS) and the Federation of Jewish Philanthropies (FJP). These organizations fought uphill battles to bring working-class Jews under their respective wings – at least until World War II, when wartime expediency obliged nearly everyone to cooperate. In the 1930s, negotiations often floundered over well-meaning leaders' inability to see the world from a perspective other than that of the comfortable suburbs to which money had permitted them to move.

At the same time, it was this elite that brought Jewish Toronto out of the organizational chaos in which it found itself at the height of the Depression; it is to the imposition of Uptowners' will that Lipinsky's title refers. Ultimately, what was imposed was professionalization; this is the second source of tension permeating the book. The early twentieth century saw the rise of trained social workers and other specialists who saw philanthropy very differently from most lay members of

the Jewish community. Here, Lipinsky brings particular insight. Far from seeing large-scale fundraising as a natural extension of traditional Jewish practices such as *tzedakah*, he emphasizes how the professionals' scientific and centralizing approach clashed with the old idea that helping a neighbour get back on his feet was a religious obligation. Many Downtowners frowned on the idea that one could be trained to do good, and they particularly resisted the claim that in being so trained one did good more effectively. Initially, Toronto's Uptowners were also mired in traditional practices, particularly when it came to fundraising: it took a sea change for most groups to acknowledge and adopt the methods of scientific charity over a reliance on sporadic donation.

The catalyst for this sea change forms one of the most intriguing chapters in Lipinsky's story. By 1934 the Toronto Hebrew Free School had fallen so deeply into deficit that the directors could only meet minimal teacher salary requirements by passing round a hat at board meetings. The situation was saved by the enthusiasm and business savvy of Samuel Godfrey, a parent at the school; as is the case today, schools are often more likely than most organizations to have dynamic young people with a vested interest (at least temporarily) in the institution's welfare. Godfrey called for a dedicated fundraising campaign to pay off the school's capital debt, rather than continue the downward slide by constantly spending operating money on the steadily mounting mortgage. The school's eventual reversal of fortune proved an inspiration to others, particularly Martin Cohn, executive director of the FJP and the man whom Lipinsky puts forth as "a hero of this story." One of the first professional social workers to head a major organization, Cohn centralized the distribution of welfare within Jewish Toronto by applying similar methods to those used at the Hebrew Free School. He also paved the way for the formation of the United Jewish Welfare Fund, an organization whose will was more successfully imposed than any within the community.

The UJWF's success can be contrasted to the fate of the JIAS, which stumbled through the 1920s and 30s amid accusations of inefficiency and irrelevance, and which ultimately had to be brought aggressively under the direct control of the national office, located in Montreal. Similar internal rivalry plagued the CJC, whose Central Division (Toronto) office resisted the managerial advances of the national (Montreal) office. This third source of tension, the one between Toronto and beyond (chiefly Montreal), was exacerbated when the uncompromising Samuel Bronfman took over as national president in 1939 and appointed the equally uncompromising Saul Hayes as executive director of the Canadian Jewish Committee for Refugees (CJCR). The CJCR struggled, not only with lesser Toronto groups, but with international networks such as B'nai Brith and the Anti-Defamation League, to become the chief interlocutors with government on issues of Jewish immigration, antisemitism, and overseas aid. Turf wars played a part in the fascinating stories Lipinsky relates of postwar attempts to break the two-decades-long freeze on Jewish immigration by recruiting hundreds of tailors and furriers (who often had no real qualifications) from the pool of European refugees.

I confess to having come to *Imposing Their Will* woefully ignorant of the history of Toronto's Jews, but eager to clear my vision of what is perhaps typical Montreal myopia. In this I was not disappointed, although I would have liked more in the way of orientation, notably a map showing the locations of key institutions as well as the shifting neighbourhoods where Jews resided during this period. As a Quebecer I was sensitive to some of the underlying attitudes that Lipinsky occasionally shows towards Ontario's eastern neighbour and especially Toronto's perpetual rival. In his introductory chapter, he says that the situation of Jews in Ontario was "better" (with no reference or explanation for the quotes) than in a Quebec in which Jews "found themselves unable to fit among either the French or English" – and then proceeds to outline a striking level of antisemitism in Toronto that, to me, removes the

need to cite chestnuts about Quebec. A similar lack of nuance raises its head in the statement "Quebec law placed responsibility for child welfare in the hands of the churches" (277), which gives a skewed and incomplete picture of that province's organizational structure. Lipinsky contrasts the two systems in order to support his assertion that Hayes did not understand how Ontario Jewish networks worked. Clearly the two societies (the provinces as well as their respective Jewish communities) were distinct on a great many levels, and Lipinsky's argument that the Toronto experience must not be casually lumped in with general studies of Canadian Jews is well taken. His book focuses on Torontonians, and it is natural for him to take their part, but it is unfortunate that the chip-on-the-shoulder attitude towards Montreal and the concomitant stereotypes about Quebec are presented, not as local in nature, but as objective analysis. By making a few sweeping comparisons, Lipinsky weakens his otherwise thoughtful observations about Toronto's drive for autonomy.

My quibbles over casting Montreal as an aggressor is linked to my overall frustration with the book's theme of imposing will. I applaud Lipinsky for not having taken a more political tone: although some may question his emphasis on the achievements of wise Uptowners, I found his tendency to present flawed historical characters sympathetically refreshing; moreover, it allows them to come alive in what otherwise would have been a dull account of disembodied institutions battling over ideological turf. I do feel, however, that Lipinsky did his work a disservice by calling it *Imposing Their Will* and by using this phrase periodically as though he felt obliged to insert a heavy-handed thesis. Yes, the Toronto elite and the agenda of professionalization they eventually adopted did succeed in bringing badly-needed reform to Jewish welfare and other services, but to talk of wills being imposed seems unduly sinister; it would be sad indeed to refer to this success as a *triumph* of will. Reading the book, I was usually absorbed by the narrative and forgot the title, but when reminded of it I stumbled.

That aside, Lipinsky has succeeded in imposing his own will on this complex material and produced a compelling history. *Imposing Their Will* is nourishing soup made all the more delicious by careful preparation. At last, those letters make sense.

Roderick Macleod

McDonought, Graham P., Memon Nadeem A. and Mintz, Avi I. (eds.) *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada*, Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2013. 282 pp.

The place occupied by religious schools within Canada's diverse education systems (i.e. the independent systems of the provinces and territories) is a recurrent topic of debate, often re-surfacing during provincial elections. Most prominently, such schools are critiqued for being recipients of public funding, for promoting religious and cultural values, and even for encouraging segregation within a society that emphasizes a multicultural way of life. This assessment opens the book *Discipline, Devotion, and Dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic Schooling in Canada,* which considers key elements of these debates from the perspective of schools.

The book is organized into three parts, each considering a core critique. In the first part describing the aims and practices of religious schools, the authors mainly address the pedagogical particularities of such schools, including the teaching of religious faith and values, the use of language (e.g. Hebrew), the community served, and challenges faced by the respective communities. The second part seeks to reveal the ways in which schools "negotiate the tension between the demand of the faith and the expectation that they educate Canadian citizens" (6). Finally, the authors discuss how pluralism is handled within schools by addressing strategies for "respond[ing] to internal dissent" (6).

The editors' choice to concentrate on only Catholic, Jewish, and Islamic schools – each offering a different historical perspective to the discussion – is understandable given the wide