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## THE CHALLENGE OF JEWISH DIFFERENCE IN QUÉBEC

Stephanie Tara Schwartz, Independent Scholar

In May 2015, a group of gender studies and Jewish studies scholars were invited to Milwaukee to participate in a conference called “Grammars of Coherence and Difference: Jewish Studies through the Lens of Gender Studies.” The goal of the conference was to explore whether gender studies methodologies might be useful for theorizing Jewishness. The conference organizers proposed the term “Jewish difference” to refer to the relationship between the constructed poles of Jew/non-Jew, in the way that “gender difference” explores the relationship between the presumed categories of “man” and “woman.” Jewish difference and gender difference in these cases are predicated on the relationship between terms set as binaries, based on the philosophical principle of defining a concept as a thing with a coherent identity in relation to that which it opposes. In thinking about the complexity of Jewishness in the context of the ongoing exploration of what it means to be Québécois, I wish to propose an alternative entry point for exploring “Jewish difference.” Gilles Deleuze’s philosophy of difference inverts the hierarchical prioritization of identity over difference, urging us to see difference—a philosophical concept—as defined in-itself rather than “conceived of as an empirical relationship between two terms which each has a prior identity of its own.”<sup>1</sup> Following this philosophy, I use the term “Jewish difference” as a concept that insists upon its own internal complexities and variability, taking into account intra-Jewish differences that are simultaneously being negotiated with definitions of what is or is not Jewish.

A discussion of three media events in Québec will help illustrate the usefulness for theorizing Jewish difference in this way. The first is an interview in the 1977 film *20 ans après* (20 Years Later), in which the Moroccan Jewish filmmaker Jacques Bensimon talks to the director of the Allied Jewish Community Services of Montréal about the Francophone Sephardic community’s desire to have a separate community center.<sup>2</sup> The second is the 2014 interactive documentary *Toi, moi et la charte* (You, Me and the Charter), that invites users to explore competing opinions on Québec’s Charter of Values, including one Francophone Jewish woman’s support for the controversial proposed bill. The third is *Life Outside of Blackness*, a 2016 feature on three generations of Ethiopian Jewish women in Montréal, that was produced as part of the Canadian Broadcasting Company’s (CBC) Montréal journalism series called “Real Talk

on Race." An analysis of these media events points to the challenges of language, race, ethnicity, religion, and gender in defining Jewishness in Québec and the need to understand Jewishness as a theoretically open concept, following Deleuze's philosophy of difference.

### **Jewish Difference in Québec before the 1960s: Jews as "Honourary Protestants"**

Jewish difference conceived as an inherently complex and variable concept is most appropriate for understanding the struggles that Québec Jews have faced in their efforts to define themselves on an individual and a communal level in this Canadian province. Québec distinguishes itself from other provinces in Canada because it continues to fight for recognition as a distinct society with a French-speaking majority and a unique culture and civil law tradition.<sup>3</sup> In this context, Montréal Jews have historically been conceived as a "third solitude," an institutionally complete community with a unique culture heavily influenced by the mass migration of Yiddish-speaking Eastern European Jews between the 1890s and 1950s, and "wedged between the economically dominant English-Protestant minority and the disenfranchised French-Canadian majority" of the city.<sup>4</sup>

Jews had not been permitted to settle in France's Catholic colony of New France, but after the British conquest of New France in 1760, a handful of Jewish merchants who worked as purveyors to the British Army settled in the British-controlled Province of Québec. In 1768, Jewish settlers (most of whom were of Ashkenazi background) established Shearith Israel (the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation), conforming to the Sephardic style of prayer prominent in the American Jewish culture they had participated in before moving to Québec.<sup>5</sup> By 1846 a breakaway English, German, and Polish Congregation (Shaar Hashomayim) was created that followed Ashkenazi rather than Sephardic rites, spurred by the growing migration of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe. Temple Emanu-El, Montréal's first Reform temple, was established in 1882 after controversy surrounding the unorthodox leanings of Shaar Hashomayim's newly hired American Rabbi Samuel Marks led some members to form a new congregation.<sup>6</sup> The population of early Jewish settlers was small, and they tended to achieve some level of socioeconomic stability and integration into Montréal's Anglophone Protestant elite. However, the arrival of larger numbers of poorer, Yiddish-speaking Jews from the former Russian Empire created conflicts between the "downtowner" Jewish immigrant population and the "uptowner" Jews who lived in the wealthier parts of the city. These tensions lasted for decades.

Questions of Jewish difference have been raised anew with each subsequent wave of Jewish migration. The long-lasting debate over Jewish schooling in Québec exemplifies the ways in which Jews have struggled to negotiate intra-Jewish difference in response to externally imposed definitions of "Jew," and the ensuing social, legal, and political consequences. Section 93 of

the Constitution Act of 1867 designated education as the responsibility of the individual provinces that were created under the umbrella of the new Canadian federation. It guaranteed the rights of the Protestant minority in Catholic-majority Québec and those of the Catholic minority in Protestant-majority Ontario, allowing each of the minorities to establish separate institutions of religious education. As a result, Québec developed a confessional school system, in which public education was divided into Roman Catholic and English-Protestant school boards until it was replaced by a linguistically divided system in 1998. In the 1880s and 1890s, members of Shaar Hashomayim who oversaw the Baron de Hirsch Institute (a philanthropic organization created to assist newly arrived Eastern European immigrants) challenged a deal that the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation made with the Catholic school board. In the agreement, the board would return 80 percent of the property taxes that Jews had paid to the congregation in order to operate its Jewish confessional school.<sup>7</sup> The Baron de Hirsch executives argued that their newly created school—which was located in an immigrant neighborhood, served a larger population, and prepared students to attend English-language schools—should receive part of the funds raised by school taxes paid by Jewish property owners. For their part, as a minority in Québec, Anglophone Protestants would benefit from increased revenue to serve Jewish students through their system (though they were unwilling to give up any of their exclusive rights over religious education). After a period of controversy and negotiation, the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation ended its arrangement with the Catholic school board in 1894, and Jewish school taxes would instead be exclusively administered through the Protestant school board.

The confessional school system in Québec forced Jews from different socioeconomic backgrounds and countries of origin to unite in order to advocate for their community, but the different groups of Jews were never able to entirely resolve their conflicts about issues of both internally and externally negotiated Jewish difference. Following a court case between the Jewish community and the Protestant school board, the Québec Legislature passed an act in 1903 that made Jews into “honourary Protestants” for the purposes of schooling.<sup>8</sup> Jewish school taxes were allocated to the Protestant school board and Jewish students could attend Protestant schools, but Jews were not allowed to sit on school boards in the Montréal region (where most of them lived), few Jewish teachers were employed, Jews were not exempt from Protestant religious instruction, and they did not receive accommodation for Jewish holidays. By the early 1920s, the proportion of Jews in the Montréal Protestant school board had risen to more than 40 percent of total enrollment, but their lack of rights within the system had not changed. Yiddish had become the third most spoken language in Québec after French and English. Some schools such as Baron Byng High School in the dense Jewish neighborhood now called the Plateau were 99 percent Jewish, and yet the students were still receiving a Protestant education.

In the early 1920s, the Protestant school board felt financially pressed by the large Jewish student population (who, they felt, were not paying their equal

share), and sought to repeal the 1903 act that permitted Jews to attend Protestant schools. Consequently, the debate over Jewish schooling in Québec's confessional school system raged again both within the Jewish community and between Jews, the Protestant school board, the government of Québec, and the Roman Catholic school board. This time many uptowner Jews—individuals affiliated with the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation or Shaar Hashomayim—advocated for full integration into the Protestant system while downtowners—Yiddishists, Labour Zionists, and working-class Jews—wanted instead to establish a separate Jewish school system.<sup>9</sup> Ultimately Jewish leaders reached an agreement with the Protestant school board. The 1903 act was maintained and Québec's Jewish students could continue to attend Protestant public schools or private Jewish schools. This Jewish schooling issue in Québec, used as an example here, is significant for two reasons: First, it helps explain why multilingual Jews became predominantly Anglophone in the Francophone majority province of Québec. Second, it illustrates the extent to which questions of Jewish difference—internally complicated by divisions of class, language, and ethnicity among Jews, and externally challenged by government systems designed to serve Anglophone Protestants and Francophone Catholics—have existed since the earliest Jewish settlement in present-day Québec.

Tensions between Jewish uptowners and downtowners eased over the years as Eastern European immigrants integrated linguistically and economically into Anglophone Québec. Dramatic upheavals in the 1960s and 1970s, however, provoked a new set of challenges for Québec's Jews. The election of Jean Lesage's Liberal government triggered a social and cultural transformation known as the Quiet Revolution, a period of rapid modernization, secularization, and nationalization of the Québec state, which until then had been dominated by the Roman Catholic Church and Anglophone Protestant capital.<sup>10</sup> The organized Jewish community, which was built to serve Jews in Québec's religiously and linguistically divided system, now had to grapple with the state's push to nationalize and francize social services. With the Holocaust vivid in recent memory, Jews feared Québec's rising nationalism, and events such as the 1970 October Crisis created much anxiety.<sup>11</sup> Tensions culminated in the election of René Lévesque's Parti Québécois (PQ) in 1976. The Parti Québécois enacted Bill 101, the Charter of the French Language, that established French as Québec's only official language in 1977, and it held Québec's first sovereignty referendum in 1980. Thus while the government pursued a quest to define and preserve a Québécois national identity, based on the assumption of a shared French linguistic and ethnic origin, the situation in Québec was complicated by a growing number of racially, ethnically, religiously, and linguistically diverse immigrants who benefitted from the termination of Canada's racist immigration regulations in the 1960s.<sup>12</sup> The immigration of a significant population of Francophone North African Jews during this tense period of language politics prompted both French Quebecers and Anglophone Jews to rethink the presumed coherence of their collective and individual identities. With this background, we can examine our first media

event during the 1970s, in which a Moroccan Jewish filmmaker broached the issue of an independent Sephardic community center with a leader of the Anglophone, Ashkenazi community.

### Media Event One: *20 ans après*

Jacques Bensimon's 1977 film *20 ans après* documents the struggle of Moroccan Jews to settle in Montréal and find their place between the English-speaking Ashkenazi Jewish community and the majority Francophone Catholic culture. Two questions haunt the film: First, can Moroccan Jews become Québécois and be accepted as equals by the majority culture? Second, can Moroccan Jews preserve their unique cultural identity and independence without total absorption into the organized Anglophone Ashkenazi Jewish community?<sup>13</sup> Through individual and group interviews, voice-overs and archival footage, Bensimon depicted the experiences of new North African Jewish immigrants regarding their immigration, schooling, work, religion, sexuality, relationships, and community. It was the first and only film to tackle the conflict between Francophone Sephardic and Anglophone Ashkenazi Jews and is thus a crucial and rare primary source for understanding this issue in its historical setting.

*20 ans après* follows the National Film Board of Canada's (NFB) tradition of activist documentaries by which film was used a tool for social change.<sup>14</sup> Bensimon followed this tradition by giving ample space for discussion and debate in the film, featuring scenes in which Sephardic Jews challenged Ashkenazi Jews, French (non-Jewish) Quebecers, and fellow Sephardic Jews, on a variety of social, political, and religious issues, and in the film's dialogues, interlocutors worked toward resolutions of these conflicts. It is one such scene that can help theorize the contours of Jewish difference in Québec of the 1970s. Bensimon featured a crosscutting of talking head interviews with Manny Batshaw, Director of Allied Jewish Community Services (AJCS), the centralized philanthropic and social service organization for Montréal's Jewish community, and Jean-Claude Lasry, president of the Association sépharade francophone (ASF), the organization formed to advocate for the unique needs of Francophone Sephardic Jews.<sup>15</sup> Batshaw began by stating that it had become necessary for the Jewish community, as for Canada as a whole, to increase its population through immigration because the birth rate was so low that communities did not reproduce themselves.<sup>16</sup> In fact, due to the introduction of the birth control pill in 1961 and the rapid secularization of Québec society, Québec's birth rate had dropped from one of the highest in the Western world to one of the lowest by the 1980s.<sup>17</sup> Opening his interview in this way, Batshaw set the tone for highlighting the AJCS's concern for Jewish cohesion and community preservation in the city that was, at the time, home to Canada's largest Jewish population.

While the migration of North Africans increased the total population of Montréal Jews, it also created a fissure within the community due to Qué-



bec's tense language politics. In the film, Batshaw continued: "We now have a confrontation in regard to one aspect of service. Many of the Sephardim represented by an elite leadership propose that there should be a separate community center for Sephardi youth and adults. We have to ask: is this in the best interest of both the Sephardim and the general Jewish community?"<sup>18</sup> To this, the filmmaker responded in English from off-camera: "But the Sephardim told you that it is in their best interest." Batshaw replied: "Yes, a leadership group has informed us. But to what extent is that leadership representative of all the Sephardim?"<sup>19</sup> This statement is ironic, as Batshaw himself spoke on behalf of a leadership group that was evidently not representative of all Montréal Jews. In any case, Batshaw went on to explain:

And this is the crux of the problem. Are we talking about a total Jewish community, which is the concern of AJCS or are we talking about a sub-community that wants to be almost independent with only a tangential relationship to the Jewish community as a whole? Our insistence is that we cannot see a separate group without some connection, because we have a responsibility to our contributors . . . . We need the strength of all of our Jews, and as a people we have a sense of unity, and we have to find a way of maintaining that unity.<sup>20</sup>

Bensimon prompted: "Otherwise the risk is what?" Batshaw replied: "Losing any one Jew from the general Jewish community is from my point of a view a TRAGEDY. If we were to lose a large segment of that community it would be, as far as we're concerned a HOLOCAUST."<sup>21</sup> Batshaw's likening the desire of Moroccan Jews to have independent institutions to the systematic destruction of European Jews during the Holocaust reveals something of the panic experienced by the AJCS in Montréal in the 1970s. But it also shows the extent to which Jewish Federations in Canada continued to face challenges in trying to do what they had done since their inception, when they had attempted to bring together uptowner and downtowner Jews. Organized community leadership still struggled to forge (or impose) Jewish unity from the community's inherent diversity.<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, the attempts of the organized Jewish community in Canada to impose Jewish unity ran counter to the fact that the boundaries of "Jewish" have never been fixed by a single authority or tradition. Taking this into consideration, I suggest conceptualizing "Jewish" as operating like a rhizome rather than a tree, in the way in which Deleuze and Félix Guattari have distinguished between multivalent "rhizome" thinking and binary "tree" thinking. Deleuze and Guattari have named several qualities that characterize a rhizome. First and second are *connection* and *heterogeneity*: any point of a rhizome can be connected to another and must be. A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections and should never be considered a closed system.<sup>23</sup> Third is *multiplicity*: everything is internally differentiated and changes when the rhizome extends its connections; no point is ever to be considered a unity or pivot point.<sup>24</sup> The unity of a rhizome is an amalgam of buzzing frequencies, a coherence of heterogeneous and moving components; it is only the appearance of unity. Fourth is a *signifying rupture*: the process of territorialization–deterritorializa-

tion–reterritorialization is the rhizome’s way of resisting signification, resisting being pinned down to a single authentic meaning. This is also how a rhizome proliferates. Fifth and sixth are *cartography* and *decalcomania*:<sup>25</sup> the construction of new connections and multiple entryways is stressed, rather than the tracing or exact replication of an original. A tree has multiple branches that all die if severed from the root while a rhizome is like ginger, a more integrated organism that continues to grow even if one section is severed. It is much more difficult to uproot.

Applying this theory to our example, Batshaw worried that a separate Sephardic Jewish community center might “lack a connection” to AJCS. This presumed that AJCS was already representative of the entire Jewish community, and that the allocation of funding to support Sephardim to preserve their unique cultural identity without the overhead supervision of the AJCS was a threat to Jewish cohesion. In a tree-like model of conceiving Jewishness, the severing of a branch (Sephardic independence) from its presumed single trunk (AJCS) potentially damages the entire tree. Moreover, the communities represented by the organizations AJCS and ASF were themselves internally diverse, representing a variety of Jewish voices. (At the same time, the organizations were not representative of many other Jews in Montréal, such as the progressive Jewish left or Hassidic Jews.) A rhizome model of conceiving Jewishness acknowledges that it is impossible to include all Jews definitively and completely within one single centralized organization because Jewish individuals have an ongoing and dynamic relationship with their identity as Jews, and Judaism is a lived religion that “comes into being in an ongoing, dynamic relationship with the realities of everyday life.”<sup>26</sup> Rather than there being a binary Jewish/non-Jewish mode, Jewish is actually difference in its core, constantly changing, shaping, and revising its boundaries. Conceptualizing Jewishness through this metaphor helps explain why “the Jewish people” or “the people of Israel” have endured for so many centuries despite countless attempts to uproot them. Along the same lines, the scholars Daniel Boyarin and Jonathan Boyarin argue for a diaspora model of Jewish identity, based in rabbinic Judaism, rather than a conception of Jewish identity in which a central state plays a defining role.<sup>27</sup>

To further explore the implications of conceiving Jewishness as a rhizome, I turn to insights from gender and sexuality studies. In her article “Queering the Center by Centering the Queer: Reflections on Transsexuals and Secular Jews,” Naomi Scheman juxtaposes the subject positions of secular Jews and transsexuals to bring the “apparatuses” into view that render these positions “normatively incoherent,” i.e., marginal to the centers of heteronormativity and Christian normativity.<sup>28</sup> Scheman’s goal is twofold. She not only seeks to support individuals at the margins, who experience oppression, but she also aims at disrupting the systems that create privilege and oppression in the first place. Scheman’s work was inspired by her attempts to work through her own privilege as a female-born feminist and her puzzlement about “the claim of (most) male-to-female (MTF) transsexuals to be women.”<sup>29</sup> The effort to define the authentic boundaries of the term “woman” (as a means of pro-



tecting people under that category from oppression) created political antagonism between, as one example, some transsexual women and men on one side and some feminists on the other. The conflict centered particularly on how “women-only” spaces should be defined and who should have access to them.<sup>30</sup> In response to these controversies, Scheman advocated the disruption of the center, the supposed coherence of the definition of “woman.” She suggested the term *perinatally pinked* to designate the condition of an individual who was labelled female around the time of birth. In contrast to the term “woman,” perinatally pinked is not a noun with an apparently self-evident epistemological status, but the term describes a process in which outsiders fix a gender to a person around the time of birth. Exposing the apparatus behind the construction of the alleged coherence of the concept “woman” becomes a tool for better understanding the multiple ways in which individuals experience oppression (whether or not they are made intelligible) in relation to this presumably fixed category.

Scheman argues that:

... there is a striking similarity between the heteronormative representation of the homosexual and the representation of the Jew in what I called “Christianormative” discourse. Analogously to the androcentrism of heteronormative gender, Christianormativity purports to divide the world into religions (all presumed to be like Christianity except for being mistaken) while really only have two categories: Christian and not (yet) Christian.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, according to Scheman, the category of Jew is not defined in-itself, that is, accounting for the complexity of difference that challenges its coherent identity as a concept, but it is defined in relation to a Christian definition of religion that sees the Jew as *choosing* not to accept the divinity of Jesus. Furthermore, Scheman used her own relationship to Jewishness—naturally ascribed but not religiously observant—to complicate the definition of Jew under “Christianormative” terms, in Scheman’s rendering. Like in the rhizome theory of Jewish difference, Scheman prefers a conceptual openness—allowing for multiple meanings that define a category from within, in relation to what it is constructed against. In a follow-up article, she wrote:

... rather than trans women’s arguing that there is some core meaning of *woman* that as a matter of fact includes them, or definitely claiming the right to self-identify as women freed from any shared social understanding of what that means, there is more political hope in arguing against the currently normative understandings of gender (understandings that—of course for different reasons—cis-female feminists deplore) and struggling to find plural but interrelated coalitional understandings that do justice to the wide range of gender’s discontent.<sup>32</sup>

To understand Jewish difference in contemporary Québec, we must look to competing definitions of Jewish as a “religion” and as something intelligible based on the changing definition of religion and its supposed opposite: “secu-

larism.” Our second example explores this further in considering the Québec Charter of Values debate of 2013–2014.

### Media Event Two: *Toi, moi et la charte*

The nexus of race, religion, gender, and nation in Québec was on full display during the Charter of Values debate in the years 2013 and 2014. Following le Printemps érable (Maple Spring), a series of protests against post-secondary tuition hikes and austerity measures imposed by Québec’s Liberal government, Pauline Marois led the Parti Québécois to victory in September 2012, becoming Québec’s first female premier. A year later, the PQ proposed Bill 60, the “Charter affirming the values of State secularism and religious neutrality and of equality between women and men, and providing a framework for accommodation requests” to the Québec National Assembly on November 7, 2013.<sup>33</sup> The Charter of Values sought to affirm “the values of State secularism and religious neutrality and of equality between women and men” and to provide a framework for responding to requests for religious accommodation.<sup>34</sup> To this end, the charter recommended that “[i]n the exercise of their function, personnel members of public bodies must not wear objects such as headgear, clothing, jewelry or other adornments which, by their conspicuous nature, overtly indicate a religious affiliation.”<sup>35</sup> In addition, public employees providing services, and individuals receiving public services, must have their faces uncovered.<sup>36</sup> Bill 60 was eventually defeated and in April 2014, the PQ lost the election to the Liberals. However, the debate about the Charter of Values fueled social division and led to increased acts of violence against religious minorities.<sup>37</sup>

The Charter of Values followed on the heels of the “reasonable accommodations” debate, that had raised similar questions about which practices, beliefs, and people were included within the normative definition of “Québécois.” In 2007, the Bouchard-Taylor Commission was formed by the Québec government to investigate a series of complaints about requests for accommodation by religious minorities in Québec. Scholars such as Darryl Leroux, Gada Mahrouse, and Sirma Bilge have argued that the debates over cultural or religious difference in Québec hid a deeper anxiety about racialized difference.<sup>38</sup> Bilge argued that the reasonable accommodations debate was based in an ideology that saw religious communities (Muslims in particular) as a threat to Québécois (civilized, Western) “core values” of gender equality and sexual freedom.<sup>39</sup> In mapping how this ideology came to coalesce, she discussed how fears of the Muslim other (especially post 9-11) in the present were linked to a historical narrative that saw Catholicism as responsible for Québec’s “backwardness” before the Quiet Revolution and women as religion’s primary victims.<sup>40</sup> Fears of racialized, religious others, diluting a presumed coherent Québécois identity (distinct from a Canadian identity), were intricately tied to Québec’s sovereignty aspirations.<sup>41</sup>

Jews fell outside the definition of Québécois in these debates, as they had in previous manifestations of Québec nationalism.<sup>42</sup> The leaders of the organized Jewish community thus took a strong public stand against the Charter of Values. Ever anxious about the position of Jews in Québec, they rejected the PQ's sovereigntist politics and the racist implications of the charter. Many Jews feared its impact on Jewish life in Montréal. On November 11, 2013 the Jewish General Hospital (JGH) released a statement opposing Bill 60 as:

... discriminatory and deeply insulting to public-sector workers ... For nearly 80 years, the JGH had prided itself on the fact that its staff—representing a wide diversity of faiths, with many employees wearing conspicuous items of clothing with religious symbols—had provided care of superior quality to Quebecers [*sic*] of all backgrounds.<sup>43</sup>

The JGH rejected the idea that wearing a kippah, hijab, or turban interfered with the ability of its employees to fulfill their public duties as health care professionals. The fact that the JGH was built in response to discrimination against Jews in Québec's confessional health care system in the 1930s and served primarily the residents of Côte-des-Neiges, "one of the most ethnically, racially, culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse neighborhoods in Canada" provides context for the strong Jewish opposition to the bill.<sup>44</sup>

These concerns were heightened because the Jewish leadership feared that this discriminatory legislation would affect the willingness of Jews to remain in Québec. This was voiced explicitly in the brief that Federation CJA and its advocacy wing, the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, submitted to a parliamentary hearing on December 20, 2013. In it they wrote:

The impact of Bill 60 on our community would be devastating. The social climate that had prevailed since the beginning of this societal debate has the potential to damage the continuity of the Jewish community. Already weakened by the exodus of the 1970's, our aging community devotes all its energy towards programs to keep our youth in Québec, and to attract others, notably from France. Now, the debate on the "Charter of Québec Values" has discouraged our young people, who are starting to question their futures in Québec. Meanwhile numerous French Jewish families tell us that they are considering immigrating to other regions of North America instead.

... Now, the "Québec Charter of Values" threatens to disrupt this precious balance achieved by the Quiet Revolution by imposing an artificially homogeneous framework on Québec national identity to the detriment of the dynamic character of Québec society. We deplore that the spirit of this Bill results from a will to reassert a notion of Québec identity based exclusively on ethno-cultural characteristics of the majority.<sup>45</sup>

The brief referred explicitly to the turmoil of the 1970s that was captured so dramatically in *20 ans après* and the established Québec Anglophone Ashkenazi Jewish community's anxiety that still resonates today. It also mentioned

the community's active recruitment of Jewish immigrants from France to sustain Québec's Jewish population.<sup>46</sup> This echoed the fears expressed by Batshaw as a reason why it was so important to keep North African Jewish immigrants within the fold of a coherent Jewish community in the 1970s (before the exodus of a significant population of Québec's young Anglophone Jews around the sovereignty referendums of 1980 and 1995). The assumption of Jewish unity would again be challenged, however, this time by different values held by Jewish migrants from France in relation to the Charter of Values.<sup>47</sup>

The NFB again offers a unique media event with which to consider how defining "Jew" intersects with the attempt to define "Québécois." NFB directors Vali Fugulin and Jérémie Battaglia partnered with the blog Urbania, and the digital design studio Dpt., to create the interactive web documentary *Toi, moi et la charte* (You, Me and the Charter).<sup>48</sup> On the site's homepage, users are greeted with three floating bubbles, entitled "me," "my values," and "my discomforts," and are invited to populate each of these bubbles with terms from a list supplied adjacent to the bubbles.<sup>49</sup> I dragged the words "Montréal," "woman," and "feminist" into the "me" bubble; "freedom of religion," "respect," and "immigrant," into the "values" bubble; and "crucifix," "racism," and "fundamentalism," into the "discomfort" bubble. After completing this step, the three bubbles merge into one, then split off into a new bubble displaying a "thumb-up" character and a second bubble with a "thumb-down" character. Above the choices, a title reads: "Es-tu plutôt pour ou contre le projet de Charte des Valeurs Québécoises? (Are you for or against the Charter of Quebec Values?) I selected thumb-down. The bubbles merge again and then split off into two new bubbles, with silhouettes of face profiled in them. The title above prompts: "Une des ces personnes est ton opposé: Découvre laquelle" (One of these people is your opposite: discover which).

I selected the profile of a woman. The silhouette morphed into a series of real faces and settled on a close-up of Sonia Sarah Lipsyc, a sociologist, playwright, and founding director of ALEPH, the Centre for Contemporary Jewish Studies of the Communauté sépharade unifiée de Québec (CSUQ) (Sephardic Community of Québec), established in 2009. She was born in Morocco and raised in France.<sup>50</sup> In the interactive documentary, she reads a text message from a phone. In heavy Québécois slang and using expletives, the text complains that "we" must "pay their Kosher tax *de merde* with our money . . . there is no means of boycotting *les osties*, they have 85% of our grocery products."<sup>51</sup> Lipsyc laughs this off, explaining that the text writer's presumed "kosher tax" is a myth. Thereafter, a sequence of cuts follows Lipsyc as she walks through a park and speaks to the camera. She explains that, as a sociologist, she is fascinated by the issues surrounding the Charter of Values rather than offended by them. Thus, Lipsyc's reaction to the debates about the charter differs from the statements by the organized Jewish community, for whom she worked and whose headquarters in Montréal appear on the screen in next scene of the interactive documentary.

Over a background image of the Federation CJA building with an Israeli flag waving in front of it, the user is presented with two questions that can be

clicked to proceed through the documentary. I selected: "Can one be a feminist within the framework of religion?" Images of Lipsyc cut between a talking head interview and shots of her perusing the stacks at the Jewish Public Library. She responds to the question:

Me, I'm a Jewish woman! And I won't let anyone dictate my place as a Jew . . . no rabbi, no notable, no institution! I think that the inequalities in the Jewish tradition can change . . . one example, it wasn't possible for women to study the Talmud . . . . And for 50 years, it's been done! Why? Because female and male feminists, including rabbis . . . considered it unjust that women did not have access to the Talmudic text like men . . . so, in the face of this I can say "yes, I'm a Jewish woman, there are things that don't please me, I can arrange things in my hidden corner [or I can work on it publicly] . . . my tradition, I love it! It's my community, I love it! It has problems, I do too . . . we can try to improve all this."<sup>52</sup>

Her statements regarding the freedom of feminist interpretations within Judaism did not, however, apply to religious freedom vis-à-vis the state:

I am for the Charter because I think that . . . the ostentatious, visible signs of one or another can be put aside by people exercising their functions as authorities. That being said, do we consider on the same point a Sikh who is a magistrate and a Sikh who is a police officer? I believe that these are the questions we must debate. I think that seeing a Sikh in a police turban, this can help in certain circumstances whereas a Sikh judge with his turban . . . could interfere. These are the questions posed . . . .

Lipsyc is a French citizen and a sociologist who immigrated to Canada as an adult, and her approach to the relationship between church and state were likely shaped by the concept of *laïcité*, which is deeply rooted in France's republican culture.<sup>53</sup> *Laïcité* is a model of political secularism whose definition of religion is based on Catholicism. It imposes this definition and its "Christianormative" framework on non-Christian others, interpreting all religious practices (including Judaism) through a Christian-centric and Catholic-centric lens. As Wendy Brown argued in her reading together of Jewish difference and sexual difference:

. . . [b]oth Jews and women, formally emancipated in nineteenth-and twentieth century Europe, gained political equality without fully shedding the stigma of their difference. But for Jews, emancipation is accompanied by the governmentality of tolerance because once the legal strictures are removed, the discursive construction of the Jewish difference ceases to be systematically subordinating as a state or economic operation—and this very loss constitutes a threat to a crucial Euro-Atlantic nation-state norm.<sup>54</sup>

The presumption that one can simply conform to a cluster of privileged characteristics that make up European modernity by choosing to remove a hijab, kippah, turban, or kirpan, ignores the entangled relationship between reli-

gion, gender, and racialized difference, and the “Christianormative” framework that shaped Québec’s debates on *laïcité*.

Many political scientists, anthropologists, and scholars of religion have raised this concern and critiqued Western liberal, state-mandated versions of secularism along these lines.<sup>55</sup> It is worth taking this critique seriously and reflecting on how Islam became a target during Québec’s Charter of Values debate, and what that meant for the understanding of Judaism as another non-Christian religion. Bilge drew on Joan W. Scott’s concept of “sexularism” to critique Québec’s version of *laïcité* and gender equality, vaunted during the reasonable accommodation debates.<sup>56</sup> She wrote:

Sexularism can be defined as a contemporary discourse offering a teleological narrative of the secularisation process, believed to lead inevitably to gender and sexual equality. From the sexularist stand, religion is deemed unambiguously oppressive to women and non-heteronormative sexualities—an assumption that heavily relies on hierarchical binaries (modern/traditional; secular/religious; sexually liberated/sexually oppressed; gender-equal/patriarchal; West/East) and produces the West as the site of gender equality and sexual emancipation thanks to secularism.<sup>57</sup>

At the core of this issue, she argues, is the neoliberal privatization of difference that positions equal rights for individuals and fails to recognize the multiple structures of oppression that render certain individuals outside the civilized nation. Bilge understands this as a sort of reverse Orientalism, that sees the East as sexually repressed and threatening rather than something exotic to be conquered. A look at secular Judaism, as Scheman takes it in her work, reveals the problems with the sexularist discourse. Secular is not the binary opposite of “religious.” Indeed, many secular Jews struggle with their Jewish identities, constructed through complex compounds of practices, belonging, belief, and genealogy. Moreover, the debates around the Charter of Values also raised questions about how Québécois political discourses constructed “Jewish” in relation to Muslim “others.” Increasingly, in recent years Hasidic Jews have come to represent a threat to Québécois *laïcité* and to presumed gender equality. One of the initial disputes that inspired the Bouchard-Taylor Commission in 2007 concerned a request for accommodation by a Hasidic yeshiva in the Montréal neighborhood of Outremont. They asked a YMCA to cover the glass of their windows so that the yeshiva’s male students would not be exposed to the sight of women working out in the adjacent building.<sup>58</sup>

The Charter of Values was predicated upon Western “Christianormative”-cum-secularist ideas of religion as uncivilized, homogenous, anachronistic, and misogynistic. Its proponents declined to see Islam, Judaism, and Sikhism as vibrant, diverse, living religions practiced by their adherents in multiple ways. Yet, Lipsyc demonstrated in *Toi, moi et la charte* that many Jewish individuals creatively engage with feminist critiques of religion, and in dialogue with these critiques, offer their own, often diverging, interpretations of religious laws and practices. In this way, Lipsyc provides counter evidence for the secularist assumption that religion always oppresses women. Her posi-



tion as a Francophone Jewish woman in favor of the Québec Charter of Values, in contrast to the majority Anglophone Montréal Jewish leadership, suggests that it is useful to understand Jewishness in Québec as a rhizome. It is better for leadership organizations or individuals concerned with Jewish unity in the face of a political threat, such as the Charter of Values, to engage with Jewish difference rather than to cut ties with individuals or groups who do not fit the norm. An examination of a third media event, the CBC Montréal piece “‘Life Outside of Blackness’: Montréal Family Reflects on Race, Identity,” explores how race intersects religion and gender in defining both Jewish and Québécois.

### Media Event Three: *Life Outside of Blackness*

The Charter of Values debate gives us insight into the ways in which race, in addition to religion and gender, threatened to place some individuals outside the body of citizenry in Québec. While we possess a robust literature on Jews and race in the United States, neither Jewish studies nor Canadian studies scholars have paid much attention to the study of Jews and race in Canada.<sup>59</sup> Thus, in a recent article, Michele Byers and I called for a sustained exploration of Jews and whiteness and for an examination of how racialization has affected groups such as Sephardic, Mizrahi, and Arab Jews.<sup>60</sup> Jacques Bensimon’s *20 ans après* helped expose the marginalization of North African Jews by Ashkenazi Jews in Canada and Israel and by Francophone Catholics in the 1970s. The migration of Ethiopian Jews to Israel and Canada in the 1980s and 1990s created a different layer of Jewish “blackness.”<sup>61</sup> While the experiences of both North African and Ethiopian Jews complicate presumptions of Jewish whiteness, a further examination of their relationship with blackness challenges the binary division of Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jewish categories that have become dominant norms for conceiving Jewish unity in Montréal.

In 1991, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw coined the term “intersectionality,” to explain how race and gender interrelate in the context of violence against women of color in the United States. I suggest that this concept is also useful for thinking through, in a theoretically informed way, how the complexity of Jews and whiteness operates and what its consequences might be for black Jewish women.<sup>62</sup> According to Crenshaw, intersectionality is:

... a lens through which you can see where power comes and collides, where it interlocks and intersects. It’s not simply that there’s a race problem here, a gender problem here, and a class or LBGTQ problem there. Many times that framework erases what happens to people who are subject to all of these things.<sup>63</sup>

While intersectionality is sometimes used as a blanket term for acknowledging multiple layers of oppression experienced by an individual, its specific intervention around the marginalization of black women by both white wom-

en and black men, and within violent apparatuses of the state, remains crucial. Krenshaw argued that:

. . . political strategies that challenge only certain subordinating practices while maintaining existing hierarchies not only marginalize those who are subject to multiple systems of subordination but also often result in oppositionalizing race and gender discourses. An intersectional critique is thus important in uncovering the ways in which the reformist politics of one discourse enforce subordinating aspects of another.<sup>64</sup>

In the same vein as Scheman's view, Crenshaw's feminist critique in this quote challenges a (white, heterosexual) normative center and exposes the core difference within the definition of "woman." Like the term "Jewish," "woman" is not a closed category, but rather defined (and redefined) through the diverse experiences of individuals who define themselves (or are defined by others) in relation to this category. Drawing from Crenshaw's important analysis, an intersectional approach could help develop better tools for tackling the complexity of Jewish difference in Québec and fighting the oppression of racialized Jewish individuals (women, men, non-binary people) by both Jews and non-Jews.

In 2012–2013, women in Canada and in the United States initiated two major activist movements that spread on social media and gained much visibility in the Canadian public sphere. Idle No More, "one of the largest Indigenous mass movements in Canadian history," began as a series of teach-ins in Saskatchewan protesting parliamentary bills that threatened to erode Indigenous sovereignty.<sup>65</sup> It was catalyzed by Attawapiskat Chief Teresa Spence's hunger strike in December 2012 that called attention to the Canadian federal government's long neglect of Indigenous peoples. Along with the Truth and Reconciliation Committee, set up to investigate Canada's destructive residential school system, and growing support for an inquiry into murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls, Idle No More helped bring Indigenous resistance into mainstream media.<sup>66</sup> An American movement that shared in Idle No More's transnational resistance to colonialism, oppression, and white supremacy, Black Lives Matter was created in July 2012 following the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, an African American teenager. According to its website, the Black Lives Matter initiative aimed at "broadening the conversation around state violence to include all of the ways in which Black people are intentionally left powerless at the hand of the state. We are talking about the ways in which Black lives are deprived of our basic human rights and dignity."<sup>67</sup> While Black Lives Matter began as an American movement, it inspired anti-racist activists in Canada as well.<sup>68</sup>

Discussions about race in Québec are particularly complex and fraught, and they are exacerbated by language divides that separate Anglophones from Francophones and make solidarity between the speakers of different languages more difficult.<sup>69</sup> For example, there is an ongoing debate in Québec about the use of blackface and whether or not it should be considered racist like its American counterpart.<sup>70</sup> A significant intervention in these debates was

CBC Montréal's "Real Talk on Race," a two-week long series produced by Nantali Indogo and launched on March 14, 2016. An article about the series on March 13, stated: "Islamophobia, Black Lives Matter, missing and murdered Indigenous women (MMIW), the Val-d'Or police allegations, blackface in Québec—like everyone else around the world, Montrealers are affected by issues of race."<sup>71</sup> In this series, Canada's national English-language broadcaster considered multiple layers of discrimination, but its focus on race diverged from the more common emphasis on religion, as in the debates around the Québec Charter of Values.

One feature in the series dealt explicitly with Jewish difference and highlighted the importance of Crenshaw's intersectional critique. In her piece "'Life Outside of Blackness': Montréal Family Reflects on Race, Identity," Ainslie MacLellan interviewed three generations of women in the Eyob family, who were Ethiopian Jews and had settled in Montréal in the 1980s.<sup>72</sup> The video clip opened with the Eyob family lighting Shabbat candles and reciting the blessing. Malefiya Zeleke, who was born in Ethiopia and immigrated to Montréal in 1984, tells us: "When I used to live in Ethiopia we always hiding. We don't want to talk too much about the Jewish religion. Most of the time they don't understand about us and they give a bad name. Jewish [is] my religion, and Ethiopian Jewish it's my identity." Her daughter Hirut was born in Ethiopia but arrived as a child in Montréal. She says:

More and more my identity is very much that as an Ethiopian Jew, there are just very few of us . . . maybe a total of 200 . . . my default of community that I go to is the black community, but that hasn't always been the case. There was always that question. You're black, how could you be Jewish? So over and over it's like, well how can you be Jewish and having to explain myself—well that's who I am.

Her sister recalls the difficulty of being the only black person in an all-white Jewish school. Despite being prominent and well-liked by her friends she says: "But. You know what with all being famous and being popular, when prom came, no boy would ask me to prom. And they would never date me. 'Cause I was black." Hirut added:

. . . the idea of blackness, I learned that from coming to Canada at the age of 7. I didn't understand what they are talking about, they're like where are you from because I looked exactly like my friend who was from Sri Lanka. And it's over time that I learn blackness is a political identity. It's a survival identity. It's not necessarily how I might identify but also how I'm perceived.

Here she makes the explicit the role of the other in shaping the coherence of one's identity. Blackness was something imposed from the outside, that she later began to claim as a political identity. It intersected with her Jewishness, complicated it, but did not cover over it.

For Hirut's daughter Méshama, who in 2016 attended a French-language public school in Québec as a Jew, the influence of outsider definitions of one's identity were even more evident. Méshama told the interviewer:

I consider myself what I call "Ethio-Jamaican-Canadian." I was all about Ethiopia. I listened to Ethiopian music, I spoke Amharic and then I went to French school so I was like, I think I'm Québécoise. My first encounter with racism was either grade one or two and there was this girl, she was white, she was always telling me I looked like poo. I went to French school and she was like "*tu ressembles caca.*" That's when I knew, I am different from everyone here. And people are going point it out to me.

I used to have dreads . . . no one looks like me in my environment, no one understands my hair, so like maybe I'm not even meant to have this hair. I just started cutting them, slowly. My parents would find dreads around the house. I would try to like, hide them away so that they wouldn't see them. But eventually they started noticing. Méshama, is that your dread on the balcony? Is that your dread on the floor? We need to talk . . .

My mom had told me that she had an opportunity before coming to Canada to experience life outside of blackness . . . The first time she told me that I was offended. I was like, what's wrong with being black? She was just like, there's nothing wrong with it . . . it's just that I live and breathe blackness . . . going to the mall for me is all about blackness. I can't walk around the mall without someone always following me around the store, I can't look at the police without feeling something inside of me. I cannot just like, be in a public area without just like having . . . oh yea I'm black. People are definitely not black and they're looking at me for it.

Méshama highlights the complexity of being black, Jewish, and bilingual in contemporary Québec and the consequences of being racialized in her everyday life. Mekefiya, Hirut, and Méshama reveal in this article the extent to which their racial, gender, and religious identities were inherently connected, coming to the forefront when reminded of their difference from white Québécois individuals and white Jews.

To understand the Jewishness of these women by only looking at the supposed cohesion of Montréal's Jewish community, or even at the Ashkenazi–Sephardic binary would be impossible. The intervention of taking into account the experiences of the Eyob family calls into question the cohesion of the Jewish community, in relation to both internal and external definitions of Jews as white. As Hirut says, the identification with blackness provided her with a sense of belonging that she could not find in the predominately white Jewish community. Thus, the intersection of language, religion, gender, and race in contemporary Québec affects how Jewishness is defined both from within and outside the Jewish community. The examples discussed in this essay make evident that the definition of "Jewish" is never static. For this reason, the concept of the rhizome helps to capture Jewishness in its moving multiplicity.

The analysis of *20 ans après, Toi, moi et la charte*, and “Life Outside of Blackness” demonstrates that intra-Jewish difference and Jewish/non-Jewish difference are constantly and simultaneously being challenged and negotiated. In Montréal, where the definition of Québécois is also constantly being challenged and negotiated at the intersection of gender, race, language, and religion, Jewishness is constituted within a unique nexus of difference. Understanding Jewishness as difference-in-itself, rather than a necessarily coherent concept is most useful for considering the many different people gathered within this category, who experience Jewishness in a large variety of ways. The gender studies scholars Scheman and Crenshaw have created theoretical frameworks that allow feminist activists to take account of and respect people who experience the category of “woman”—and the consequences of women’s oppression—differently. I have tried to show in this essay that applying theories from gender, sexuality, and critical race studies to the examination of Jewish difference helps interrogate the concept of “Jew” (as it does the concept of “woman”). I hope that my insights help to expand the conversation on Jewish difference.

## Notes

- 1 Daniel Smith, “Gilles Deleuze,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, May 23, 2008; revised September 24, 2012, accessed January 14, 2018, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/deleuze/#Dif>; Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
- 2 Sephardic is the identity that Moroccan Jews in Montréal chose to organize around, despite the reality that many Moroccan Jews had roots in Morocco before the migration of Jews from Spain and Portugal. While the term Mizrahi is more commonly used today in Israel to refer to Jews who immigrated from Arab and Muslim countries, it is less often used in Montréal. When I refer to “Sephardic” in this paper, it should be understood that this is its own constructed and problematic category.
- 3 Brian O’Neal, “Distinct Society: Origins, Interpretations, Implications,” *Canada: Library of Parliament*, 1995, accessed January 14, 2018, <https://bdp.parl.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/bp408-e.htm>; Jocelyne Richer, “Quebec Plans to Reopen Constitutional Debate, Launch Coast-to-Coast Discussion,” *Globe and Mail*, May 31, 2017, accessed January 14, 2018 <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/quebec-plans-to-reopen-constitutional-debate-launch-coast-to-coast-discussion/article35172234/>.
- 4 Rebecca Margolis, “Sholem Shtern: Bridging the Gaps,” in *New Readings of Yiddish Montréal*, ed. Pierre Anctil, Norman Ravvin, Sherry Simon (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2007), 98. See also Gerald Tulchinsky, “The Third Solitude: A.M Klein’s Jewish Montréal, 1910–1950,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 19.2 (1984): 96–112, and Michael Brown, *Jew or Juif: Jews, French-Canadians and Anglo-Canadians, 1759–1914* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1987).
- 5 Gerald Tulchinsky, *Taking Root: The Origins of the Canadian Jewish Community* (Toronto: Lester Publishing Ltd., 1992), 10.
- 6 John Kalbfleish, “From the Archives: Synagogue Rose from Push Toward Reform Judaism,” *Montréal Gazette*, August 8, 2017, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://montrealgazette.com/sponsored/mtl-375th/from-the-archives-synagogue-rose-from-push-toward-reform-judaism>.
- 7 This example is from Tulchinsky, *Taking Root*, 138–139.
- 8 Roderick MacLeod and Mary Anne Poutanen, *A Meeting of the People: School Boards and Protestant Communities in Quebec, 1801–1998* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2004),

- 195–222. David Fraser, *“Honorary Protestants”: The Jewish School Question in Montréal, 1867–1997* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015).
- 9 This discussion of the Jewish School Question in the 1920s is derived from Gerald Tulchinsky, *Branching Out: The Transformations of the Canadian Jewish Community* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1998), 63–86.
  - 10 While the 1960s is often referred to as the beginning of the Quiet Revolution, Michael Gavreau argues that it began earlier, stemming from changes within Catholic culture rather than constituting a series of political breaks with Catholic institutions. Michael Gavreau, *The Catholic Origins of Quebec’s Quiet Revolution, 1931–1970* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005).
  - 11 The Front Liberation de Québec (FLQ) kidnapped the British Trade Commissioner James Cross and murdered Québec’s Minister of Labour and Vice-Premier Pierre Laporte on October 5, 1970. Canada’s Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau enacted the War Measures Act and indiscriminately started rounding up anyone suspected of links to the terrorist group. Sean Mills, *The Empire Within: Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s Press, 2010), 175–184.
  - 12 Canada omitted overt racial discrimination from its immigration policies in 1962. The development of the “points system” made skill, rather than race or national origin, the primary basis of determining acceptance into Canada. See Lindsay Van Dyk, “Canadian Immigration Acts and Legislation,” *Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21*, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://www.pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/canadian-immigration-acts-and-legislation>. For more on the construction of Québec’s ethno-cultural identity see Darryl Leroux, “The Many Paradoxes of Race in Québec: Civilization, Laïcité and Gender (In)Equality,” in *Critical Inquiries: A Reader in Studies of Canada*, ed. Lynn Caldwell, Darryl Leroux, and Carriane Leung (Black Point, NS: Fernwood, 2013), 53–70. On the migration of black Anglophone West Indians to Quebec, see David Austen, *Fear of a Black Nation: Race, Sex, and Security in Sixties Montréal* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2010), and on Francophone Haitians, see Sean Mills, *A Place in the Sun: Haiti, Haitians, and the Remaking of Quebec* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2016).
  - 13 Like Jewish communities across North America, Montréal developed a federation system to coordinate communal fundraising and allocations to various social agencies. At the time of Bensimon’s film this central organization was called Allied Jewish Community Services (AJCS). Today it is called Federation CJA (Combined Jewish Appeal).
  - 14 When Bensimon was first hired at the National Film Board, he worked on films such as *Occupation* (1970), produced under the NFB’s Challenge for Change Program that saw film production as a tool for enacting social change. I argue in another article that *20 ans après* is inspired by this activist tradition. Stephanie Tara Schwartz, “*Occupation* and *20 ans après*: Representing Jewish Activism in Montréal, 1968–1977,” *Canadian Jewish Studies* 25 (2017): 59–77. On the Challenge for Change Program see Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, eds., *Challenge for Change: Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010).
  - 15 *20 ans après*, directed by Jacques Bensimon, Canada: National Film Board, 1977. These organization are today respectively Federation CJA and Communauté sépharade unifiée de Québec.
  - 16 *20 ans après*, 7:00–8:00.
  - 17 John A. Dickinson and Brian Young, *A Short History of Quebec* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s Press, 2008), 307.
  - 18 While most of *20 ans après* was filmed in French, Batshaw’s interview was conducted in English with French subtitles.
  - 19 *20 ans après*, 17:17–18:12.
  - 20 *20 ans après*, 21:53
  - 21 Capitalized words are emphasized in the French subtitles of the film. *20 ans après*, 22:50–23:19.
  - 22 See Jack Lipinsky, *Imposing Their Will: An Organizational History of Jewish Toronto, 1933–1948* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011). Thank you to Antoine Burgard for this reminder.
  - 23 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 7.



- 24 Ibid., 8.
- 25 Ibid.
- 26 Robert Orsi, "Everyday Miracles: The Study of Lived Religion," in ed. David D. Hall, *Lived Religion in America: Toward a History of Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 7.
- 27 Daniel Boyarin and Jonathan Boyarin, "Diaspora: Generation and the Ground of Jewish Diaspora" in *Theorizing Diaspora*, ed. Jana Evans Braziel and Anita Mannur (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2003), 85–118.
- 28 Naomi Scheman, "Queering the Center by Centering the Queer: Reflections on Transsexuals and Secular Jews," in *Feminists Rethink the Self*, ed. Diana Tietjens Meyers (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997), 124–62; reprinted in Naomi Scheman. *Shifting Ground: Knowledge and Reality, Transgression and Trustworthiness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 120.
- 29 Ibid., 122.
- 30 Ibid., 131.
- 31 Ibid., 115.
- 32 Naomi Scheman, "Looking Back on "Queering the Centre," *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly* 3.1–2 (2016): 216–218.
- 33 "Charte affirmant les valeurs de laïcité et de neutralité religieuse de l'État ainsi que d'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes et encadrant les demandes d'accommodement," in its French original. Full text available here: "Read: Full text of Bill 60—Quebec's Charter of Values," *Global News*, November 2, 2013, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://globalnews.ca/news/952478/read-full-text-of-bill-60-quebecs-charter-of-values/>.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 Ibid., Chapter II, Division II, 5.
- 36 Ibid., Chapter III, 6.
- 37 "Violence against Muslim women on the rise, group says," *CBC News*, October 2, 2013, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/violence-against-muslim-women-on-the-rise-group-says-1.1876564>.
- 38 Darryl Leroux, "Québec Nationalism and the Production of Difference: The Bouchard-Taylor Commission, Québec Identity Act, and Québec's Immigrant Integration Policy," *Quebec Studies* 49 (2010): 107–126; Gada Mahrouse, "'Reasonable Accommodation' Debates in Quebec: The Limits of Participation and Dialogue," *Race and Class* 52. 1 (2010): 85–96; Sirma Bilge, "Mapping Québécois Sexual Nationalism in Times of 'Crisis of Reasonable Accommodations,'" *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 33.3 (2012): 307.
- 39 Bilge, "Mapping Québécois Sexual Nationalism," 304.
- 40 Ibid., 311.
- 41 Ibid., 313.
- 42 PQ leader Jacques Parizeau famously blamed "money and the ethnic vote" for the loss of the Québec sovereignty referendum in 1995. This wording was widely understood as referring to Jews and immigrants.
- 43 "Jewish General Hospital opposes Bill 60 as patently discriminatory," *jgh.ca.*, October 13, 2013, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://jgh.ca/en/news?id=421&year=2013>.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 Federation CJA and the Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs, *General consultation and public hearings on Bill 60* (Montréal: Federation CJA, 2013), 4, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://www.federationcja.org/media/mediaContent/EnglishBrief.pdf>.
- 46 Jean-François Venne, "The Québec government recruits students from France to attend university in Québec in the hope that the mostly young people will subsequently choose to settle in the province," *University Affairs*, June 7, 2017, accessed December 16, 2017, <http://www.universityaffairs.ca/news/news-article/quebec-government-attempts-woo-international-students/>.
- 47 Many French Jewish immigrants interviewed by Robert Aaron Kenedy cited fears of antisemitic attacks by "Arabs" as a reason for their emigration. Robert Aaron Kenedy, "The New Antisemitism and Diasporic Liminality: Jewish Identity from France to Montréal," *Canadian Jewish Studies* 25 (2017): 8–26.
- 48 Vali Fugulin and Jérémie Battaglia, *Toi, moi et la charte*, National Film Board, 2014, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://charte.onf.ca/>; "Toi, moi et la charte: c'est parti!" *Urbania.ca*, November 6, 2013, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://urbania.ca/4568/toi-moi-et-la-charte-cest-parti/>.

- For more information about DPT, see their website, accessed December 16, 2017, <http://dpt.co/en/about/>.
- 49 In the original: *Moi, mes valeurs et mes malaises*.
- 50 "Portrait Sonia Sarah," *Toi, moi et la charte*, January 14, 2018, <http://charte.onf.ca/#/portrait/sonia>; Aleph "Archives de l'auteur : Dr Sonia Sarah Lipsyc," accessed January 14, 2018, <http://alephetudesjuives.ca/author/sonia/>.
- 51 All French to English translations of *Toi, moi et la charte* are mine, with the help of Antoine Burgard. "Dire qu'on paye leur taxe kosher de merde avec notre cash . . . on a même pas moyen de les boycotter les osties, ils ont plus de 85% de nos produits d'épicerie!" The "kosher tax conspiracy" appeared regularly in the news during the Charter of Values debates, espoused as it was by PQ candidate and philosophy professor Louise Mailloux. Bernie M. Farber, "Parti Québécois Candidate Revives an Anti-Semitic Lie," *Toronto Star*, March 17, 2014, accessed December 16, 2017, [https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2014/03/17/parti\\_qubcois\\_candidate\\_revives\\_an\\_antisemitic\\_lie.html](https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2014/03/17/parti_qubcois_candidate_revives_an_antisemitic_lie.html). "Les osties" (the hosts) is a particular brand of curse word used in Quebec related to the rejection of Catholicism. Graeme Hamilton, "Can Quebec's Church-based curse words survive in a secular age?" *National Post*, September 9, 2011, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://nationalpost.com/news/canada/can-quebecs-church-based-curse-words-survive-in-a-secular-age>.
- 52 My translation from the French.
- 53 *Laïcité* is France's model of secularism that aims to *protect the population from religion* by maintaining a neutral state. Secularism in Anglophone North America is based on religious freedom as a political value, *to protect religion from the state*. Brent Bambury, Jackson Doughart, and Frédéric Bastien, Day 6 with Brent Bambury, "Secularism vs. Laïcité: The Quebec Charter of Values," *CBC*, September 13, 2013, December 16, 2017, <http://www.cbc.ca/radio/day6/episode-147-quebec-s-model-for-secularism-errol-morris-on-donald-rumsfeld-is-war-in-nate-and-more-1.2906280/secularism-vs-la%C3%AFcit%C3%A9-the-quebec-charter-of-values-1.2906289>.
- 54 Wendy Brown, *Regulating Aversion: Tolerance in the Age of Identity and Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 75.
- 55 See for instance, Talad Asad, *Formation of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003); Wendy Brown, "Civilizational Delusions: Secularism, Tolerance, Equality," *Theory and Event* 15.2 (2012), accessed January 14, 2018, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/478356>; Saba Mahmood, *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).
- 56 Joan W. Scott, "Sexualism," Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies Distinguished Lectures, Ursula Hirschmann Annual Lecture on Gender and Europe, Florence Italy, April 23, 2009, accessed January 14, 2018, [http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/11553/RSCAS\\_DL\\_2009\\_01.pdf?sequence=1](http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/11553/RSCAS_DL_2009_01.pdf?sequence=1).
- 57 Bilge, "Mapping Québécois Sexual Nationalism," 307.
- 58 The YMCA initially installed frosted glass in the four windows in question, but later replaced these with regular glass and blinds in reaction to outrage by their members and surrounding community, reflecting a broader tensions between the Hassidic Jews of Outremont and their (mostly) Québécois secular neighbors. Ingrid Peritz, "YMCA to Replace Frosted Windows," *Globe and Mail*, March 20, 2007, accessed January 14, 2018, <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ymca-to-replace-frosted-windows/article681477/>.
- 59 Michele Byers and Stephanie Tara Schwartz, "Theorizing Multicultural Jewish Identity in Canada," in *Critical Inquiries: A Reader in the Study of Canada*, Lynn Caldwell, Darryl Leroux and Carriane Leung, eds. (Black Point, NS: Fernwood, 2013), 71–83. Some exceptions include Kelly Amada Train's work on Sephardic and Indian Jews in Toronto and Treyf Podcast.
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- 61 The trope of blackness was often applied to Arab Jews. The Jewishness of Mizrahi Jews was never questioned whereas Ethiopian Jews faced questions about their authenticity. In Israel today, Ethiopian Jews (and non-Jewish African labor migrants) face issues similar to those faced by Black people in the United States and Canada: economic and social marginalization, racism, and higher rates of policing and incarceration.
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- Matters: Young Ethiopian Jews and Race in Israel* (PhD diss., McGill University, 2014), accessed January 14, 2018, [http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder\\_id=0&dvs=1500565832452~416](http://digitool.library.mcgill.ca/webclient/StreamGate?folder_id=0&dvs=1500565832452~416); "Israel's Ethiopian Jews Clash with Police at Race Rally," *Al Jazeera*, May 4, 2015, accessed January 14, 2018, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2015/05/israel-ethiopian-jews-rally-police-brutality-150503155817247.html>.
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