



PROJECT MUSE®

---

## Not Written in Stone

Elazar, Daniel J., Brown, Michael, Robinson, Ira

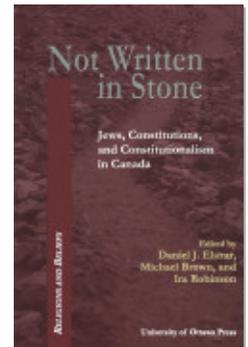
Published by University of Ottawa Press

Elazar, Daniel J., et al.

Not Written in Stone: Jews, Constitutions, and Constitutionalism in Canada.

University of Ottawa Press, 2003.

Project MUSE.[muse.jhu.edu/book/6581](https://muse.jhu.edu/book/6581).



➔ For additional information about this book

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/6581>

# Foreword: How This Book Came to Be

The constitutional documents of organized Canadian Jewry appear, on the surface, to be a very narrow focus for a book. In fact, however, the Canadian Jewish community is today the fourth largest in the Diaspora and a key player in world Jewish affairs. Studying Canadian Jewish organizations requires, moreover, an examination of the community in itself and as a part of several broader frameworks: Canadian and North American society; the contemporary Jewish world; the historical Jewish experience. As well, constitutions reflect the basic norms and values of institutions. This book was conceived as part of a wide-ranging research project under the aegis of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs designed to compare documents from all over the modern Jewish world. One purpose of the project was to gain a sense of the extent to which Jews have adhered to their own political traditions. Of equal interest was the degree to which Jewish political organization has been a product of particular times and places. A third question for study was what influence Jews have had on Canadian constitutional issues. The first published book to emerge from the macro-study presents evidence from the United States.<sup>1</sup> This book is the second volume. Studies of other communities are in progress.

Professor Daniel Elazar, the late president of the Jerusalem Center, asked the other two editors, Michael Brown and Ira Robinson, to assume responsibility for the Canadian aspects of the project, because they had been engaged in the study of the Canadian Jewish community and were associated with the work of the Jerusalem Center. They agreed to collaborate, because they believed in the intrinsic worth of the general project and saw in it an opportunity to readdress from this unique perspective the key issue of the institutional structure of Cana-

dian Jewry.<sup>2</sup> The editors began by assembling a wide variety of documents from different kinds of organizations across the country. Their work has been facilitated by a generous grant from the Ministry of Multiculturalism (now the Department of Canadian Heritage) of the Government of Canada, which enabled them to engage Miriam Eisen, Elisabeth Friedman, Paulana Layman, and Janine Muller as researchers.

The second step was to invite analytical essays which would provide a framework for understanding the documents. Elazar, the 'father' of the discipline of Jewish Political Studies, contributed a discussion of constitutions and constitutionalism in Jewish history and tradition and of the methodological framework of the book. Lorraine Weinrib, one of Canada's foremost constitutional scholars, provided a discussion of the nature of Jewish citizenship in Canada and, more broadly, the relationship of all non-Christian minorities to the Canadian state. Weinrib's essay illuminates the ways in which recent legal and constitutional trends reflect basic changes in the position of Jews and other religious and ethnic minorities in Canada over the past century. Robinson and Brown turned their attention to the constitutional documents of communal organizations and synagogues, respectively. Jay Eidelman took a comparative historical approach, looking at parallel institutions in Canada and the United States. Finally, the editors collaborated on a selection of excerpts of pertinent constitutional documents illustrating central points discussed in the interpretative essays. This volume is the result.

THE EDITORS

## Notes

- 1 Daniel J. Elazar, Jonathan Sarna, and Rela G. Monson, eds., *A Double Bond: The Constitutional Documents of American Jewry* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992).
- 2 Earlier studies include Daniel Elazar and Harold Waller, *Maintaining Consensus: The Canadian Jewish Polity in the Postwar World* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1990); and Harold Waller, "The Canadian Jewish Polity: Power and Leadership in the Jewish Community," in *The Jews in Canada*, Robert J. Brym, William Shaffir, and Morton Weinfeld, eds. (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 254–69.