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**Representations  
of  
Jewish  
people  
in  
Canadian  
literature of the  
1940s and 1950s**

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## Contents

Introduction .....	7
Historical background .....	9
The beginnings 1760–1850 .....	9
Development of the Canadian Jewish community 1850–1939 .....	10
The outbreak of World War II 1939–1945 .....	11
Post-war time 1945–1960 .....	11
Theory: literature of travel and exploration and life writing .....	13
Jewish life writing: Kreisel and Waddington .....	19
Novels: Graham and Wiseman .....	31
Conclusion .....	43
Selected bibliography .....	45
Archives .....	46

## Introduction

This dissertation will examine Jewish Diasporic experience in Canada during the 1940s and 1950s, through literature of travel and exploration and life writing as well as through fiction written by Jewish and non-Jewish writers. My project will involve Canadian Jewish cultural history, close textual analysis, comparative study and theoretical work, as I explore differences and similarities in these representations.

Henry Kreisel presents a horrific picture of the Jewish society affected by the pogroms, which cannot find its own place in the world. That is why all of the stories are representations of people who are in a constant search for their own home, culture, tradition and faith all set against a vibrant aspect of Jewish Diaspora. They are examples of both travel writing and life writing. His writing was profoundly based on his own life in which his main occupation became the investigation of notions of home and homelessness. Miriam Waddington also represents the life writing genre. In contrast to Kreisel her writing gives the reader an insight into her childhood, growing up and adulthood. Through readings of her essays we can notice the notion of cultural hybridity. Living in between cultures provoked her to find her own tiny space where she felt free to be herself and express her own identity. This private space gave her a different insight into the notions of her life, her background and helped her to accept and express her triple identity, as a Jewish, Russian and Canadian female poet-writer. Gwethalyn Graham based her novel on her observations of Anti-Semitism in Canada and Europe. Through irony she presents strong criticism of racial inequality in which Jewish people have to live. Thanks to different narrations the reader is introduced to various points of view on Jews in Canada and is able to make his own statement on stereotyping and labelling them. The plot also reflects some of the elements of the author's life, where in fact she had a relationship with a Polish Jew. We are also introduced to the novel by Adele Wiseman, in which she gives a realistic description of the life of a Jewish-Ukrainian family in Winnipeg. In her story we notice lack of social mobility of the characters due to their immigrant origin. Their lives are full of alienation, exile and displacement. The novel is a perfect example of how life writing and travel writing come together. All of the diasporic writers try to create their own space, in between cultures, where they can be themselves and be free to present their cultural hybridity.