



Malouf
Nous sommes tous des
femmes afghanes Page 3



Wajzman
Community activist wins
Vice-Presidency of Liberal
Party of Canada Page 4



Rand
L'apostasie : pas si
inutile que ça Page 14

Ensemble et libres Together and free

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



GALLANT WOMAN

Alan Hustak

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Mavis Gallant has spent a life time doing what many writers can only dream of – living in Paris and consistently crafting some of the finest short stories in the English language that have been published for six decades in the *New Yorker*. Reading *Going Ashore*, the thirty or so recently published short stories that Gallant wrote early in her remarkable career, not only demonstrates how durable her work has always been, but also serves as a reminder of just how important the art of the short story remains to those who make their living as writers. In a digital age that threatens the survival of newspapers and mass circulation magazines, renders the novel impotent and makes biography almost irrelevant, the short story might be the last salvation for those who care about literate expression.

As A. O. Scott wrote in the *New York Times* recently, good short stories haven't really been taken seriously. They've been dismissed as classroom fodder, something "to be appreciated as an interesting exercise.... an etude instead of a sonata or a symphony." The form, however, has been around since Chaucer shows no sign of disappearing.

Many of the stories in *Going Ashore*, assembled by her

publisher McLelland and Stewart, were cut from *The Selected Stories*, a book that came out 13 years ago. Although Gallant turns 87 in August, is diabetic and in failing health, these are not the last of her output. "I have a huge body of work, not all of it published. I am at work on a story now, and I'm editing my diaries," she said sounding up beat over the telephone from Paris. "My mind is all right, but it is more difficult for me to write now. I have been typing since I was 18, but my hands are stiff, and it's easier for me to write with a pen." Gallant doesn't own a computer, and refuses to use one. "I never got into the 21st century," she says matter-of-factly, "I don't have a computer, for perhaps the same reason, that even as child I refused to learn how to play the piano." Gallant lives in the heart of Paris in the stylish 6th arrondissement in the same apartment that she moved into almost 40 years ago, with a view of ironwork balconies on the handsome building across the street. Although she's made Paris her home for almost 6 decades, she writes in English as comfortably about North America as she does about Europe. Even her unvarnished work in this collection shines with descriptive detail and astute powers of observation. One story, *Wings Chips*, written in 1954 deals with what in today's Quebec would be called "reasonable accommodation." It is set in an un-named French Canadian town with "a curious atmosphere of harshness," and is almost autobiographical. It is about a young Protestant school girl, not unlike Gallant, who as a little girl

Continued on page 22

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A letter to Delara

On May 1st 2009, artist Delara Darabi was executed in the Islamic Republic of Iran after spending almost six years in prison for an alleged offence committed at age 17. She maintained her innocence up until the very end. I am at a loss for words. My heart is empty and my tears are flowing.

I have just finished reading the details by attorney Mohammad Mostafaei of the minutes leading up to Delara's execution. It is just too painful. This is my letter to Delara.

Delara, I have known you for almost three years. We tried our best to keep you alive. We informed and had the High Commission on Human Rights at the UN, the European Union and Parliaments worldwide act on your behalf. We spread awareness through the media, to human rights groups worldwide. We kept in touch with your family and your lawyers. We conducted speeches and rallies worldwide. We sent you art supplies in prison and letters from supporters to keep your spirits high. We tried our best to get in touch with the family of the deceased and convince them to understand the severity of taking a young life away. We tried Delara. We tried but we failed.

You are no longer with us in body, but your presence will live on forever, in the hearts of all the volunteers at Stop Child Executions, all the lawyers and human rights defenders fighting for justice, and millions of supporters around the world fighting for your life. If there is one thing I can promise you and your family, it is that your death will not have been in vain. Your departure from this temporary world we call Earth has emboldened and strengthened our fight not only to seek justice for the 140 children who remain on death row in Iran, but the 70 million captive citizens of Iran who are held hostage under a regime that stifles voices, represses rights and executes the most vulnerable.

The Islamic Republic of Iran must be held accountable for their violations against humanity. Clerical Judge Javid Nia, who approved your execution will be held to account one day. In your case Delara, Iran has violated much of civilization.

Iran is state party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Charter of the Rights

Continued on page 9

ALLARD: Sur quoi devrait être fondée l'identité canadienne? Page 5

SOLWAY: Why anti-semitism persists

Page 10

MILLES MOTS • THOUSAND WORDS



Westmount-Ville-Marie MP Marc Garneau speaks during the Israel Rally in downtown Montreal on April 29.

PHOTO ROBERT J. GALBRAITH

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Ex-dramaturge, romancier persévérant, essayiste et poète à ses heures, Pierre K. Malouf fréquente des fédéralistes et des indépendantistes, des gens de gauche et des gens de droite, des jeunes et des vieux, des écrivains et des ingénieurs. Gentil comme tout, il ne dit pas toujours tout ce qu'il pense, mais pense toujours ce qu'il écrit.

LA PATRIE

Nous sommes tous des femmes afghanes

Je l'ai dit dans un précédent article, Obama vient de le confirmer, on ne le répétera jamais assez : si les attentats du World Trade Center n'avaient eu lieu, ni les États-Unis, ni le Canada, ni aucun pays occidental ne seraient intervenus militairement en Afghanistan. Ce qui se passe actuellement, ce sont les Talibans qui l'ont provoqué naguère en s'alliant à Ben Laden. L'Afghanistan des Talibans était pour Al-Qaïda une base de lancement pour ses attentats. Mettons-nous ça dans la tête : ce qui se passe en 2009 est la conséquence directe de ce qui s'est passé en 2001.

Auparavant, quand les Talibans se contentaient d'exécuter des femmes dans les stades ou de démolir des statues de Bouddha dans quelque désert lointain, tout ce que nous savions faire, planqués derrière les molles barricades de notre confort établi, c'est de nous indigner pieusement des pratiques dites moyenâgeuses (injures faites à la civilisation raffinée des grands siècles du Moyen-Âge) d'une gang de barbus arriérés dans un pays que personne ne pouvait situer sur la carte. On ne le martèlera jamais assez : sans les attentats que vous savez, les Talibans auraient pu continuer pendant mille ans d'obliger les Afghanes à porter deux épaisseurs de burqa, les Afghans à se laisser pousser la barbe jusqu'aux métatarses. Fiers de notre ouverture sur le monde mais le regard fixé sur notre auguste nombril, gavés de poutine et de caviar, nous aurions continué jusqu'à la fin des temps de condamner, mais sans faire quoi que ce soit pour les combattre, la tyrannie et la bêtise de fanatiques aussi inaccessibles que méprisables.

Je crois donc qu'il faut poursuivre notre mission, mais pas à n'importe quelles conditions. Qu'est-ce qu'on attend pour équiper correctement nos soldats ? La réponse est simple : on attend que la population comprenne qu'il faut augmenter les dépenses militaires.

Ce que je viens de dire, tout le monde le sait, mais personne n'en tient compte quand il est question du maintien ou du retrait de nos troupes. Tous les autres arguments qu'on nous a servis depuis 2001 pour justifier notre présence là-bas : nous allions implanter la démocratie, construire des écoles et des hôpitaux, améliorer le sort des femmes, et le reste et le reste... n'avaient pour fonction que d'endormir les moumounes que nous sommes.

Ce sont tous là, comprenez-moi bien, des objectifs louables (montrez-moi le salaud qui s'oppose à ce qu'on permette aux petites

filles afghanes d'aller à l'école ?), mais secondaires, accessoires, entièrement tributaires du premier, qui est d'empêcher les Talibans de reprendre le pouvoir. Que les travailleurs humanitaires qui se dévouent en Afghanistan ne voient dans les vérités de La Palice que je viens d'énoncer aucun mépris pour leur travail éminemment méritoire. Ils sont les premiers à savoir qu'ils seraient totalement impuissants à améliorer de quelque façon le sort des Afghans et des Afghanes s'il n'y avait une armée dans les parages. Quand les soldats seront partis, les travailleurs humanitaires ne sauteront pas sur

des bombes artisanales, ils se feront égorger !

Hélas, le gouvernement d'Hamid Karzaï vient de voter un code de la famille chiite que les Talibans ne renieraient pas. Cette loi ouvre la porte au viol marital. Dans ces conditions, notre mission en Afghanistan a-t-elle encore un sens ? Eu égard à la raison principale de notre présence là-bas, oui. Le sort des femmes afghanes serait-il pire ou meilleur si les Talibans reprenaient le pouvoir ? Pourraient-elles manifester leur opposition comme viennent de le faire à Kaboul une cinquantaine de femmes ?

Je crois donc qu'il faut poursuivre notre mission, mais pas à n'importe quelles conditions. Qu'est-ce qu'on attend pour équiper correctement nos soldats ? La réponse est simple : on attend que la population comprenne qu'il faut augmenter les dépenses militaires. Aussi bien dire qu'on attend la fin du monde. Jamais la population canadienne, jamais les Québécois, qui, à l'exception notable des Hells Angels, sont des Canadiens plus pacifiques que les autres, n'accepteront que l'on dépense un sou de plus pour notre armée, notre marine, notre aviation. Que nos fils et nos filles continuent donc de crever dans de vieux chars rafistolés !

Comme dit si bien François Charbonneau dans le numéro automne 2008 - hiver 2009 de la revue Argument : « [...] ce sont souvent les mêmes personnes qui souhaitent à la fois que l'Occident intervienne pour empêcher des génocides, comme au Darfour, par exemple, mais qui protestent chaque fois que l'armée canadienne annonce l'achat de nouveaux équipements ».

...si le Gouvernement nous protège de tout,
qui donc nous protège du gouvernement ?

...if the Government protects us from everything
else, then who protects us from the government?

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Community activist wins Vice-Presidency of Liberal Party of Canada

Montreal community activist and Robinson, Sheppard, Shapiro family law specialist Brigitte Garceau won election last weekend as Vice-President (Francophone) of the Liberal Party of Canada at its Vancouver convention. The Beaconsfield resident organized a campaign worthy of leading political strategist Warren Kinsella. The title of one of his books, *Kicking Ass in Canadian Politics*, could well describe the successful run she made.

Garceau is well known to readers of *The Métropolitain* for her efforts in helping save the Maison du Partage d'Youville food bank and community kitchen, and for conceiving and organizing the "Cassandra's Lilacs" benefit concert through her Garceau Foundation in conjunction with the Institute for Public Affairs of Montreal. A long time Liberal activist, Garceau has had a powerful ascent over the past three years.

In addition to being President of the Westmount-Ville Marie Federal Liberal association, she was elected regional president of the Liberal Party of Canada's Quebec wing responsible for the nine ridings covering the western part of Montreal and became vice-president of the Quebec Regional Commission. She also sits on the board of directors of the LPC(Q), is the Quebec representative on the national membership rules working group and is a member of the national Council of Presidents.

She burst onto the national scene last fall as co-chair of the party's Change Commission with former party president Doug Ferguson and Ontario MP Carolyn Bennett. The trio held whirlwind coast-to-coast hearings this past March listening to grassroots members' hopes, frustrations and concerns. She co-authored the commission's report entitled "Advancing Change Together: A Time to Act".

Garceau proved herself to be a true rassembleur during her campaign, bringing together a national coalition of supporters from coast to coast. She was endorsed by over five dozen major figures in public and party life. They included local MPs Irwin Cotler, Marlene Jennings, Raymonde Folco, Lize Zarac and Bernard Patry; New Brunswick's Dominic LeBlanc, Ontario's Carolyn Bennett and Sen. Jerry Grafstein, Manitoba's Sen. Rod Zimmer, BC MPs Joyce Murray and Keith Martin, among many others. Four provincial presidents and a good part of the national executive endorsed Garceau as well, including newly elected national president Alfred Apps. National and



Part of Team Garceau in Vancouver: left to right Chris Karidogiannis, Ken Hechtman, Leanne Bourassa, Beryl Wajzman, Jason Kwaznik, Brigitte Garceau, Kerry Nelson, Roxanne Stanners, Kent Hovey-Smith, Carolina Gallo-Lafleche, Danielle Efrain and Nathalie Bock.

provincial women's, seniors and youth commission presidents also got on the Garceau bandwagon.

It was in a very real sense a national campaign as much as a campaign for national office rarely seen in races for party offices. It "kicked ass" in Kinsella's term.

But despite the "shock and awe" of the big names — something not lost on Garceau's opponents — the heart and soul of her race were the grassroots volunteers who made hundreds of calls, sent thousands of e-mails and worked Facebook like its never been worked before. Representing the broad membership that was the focus of Garceau's platform, the volunteer core started with the Montreal-based Liberal Renaissance reform group. But Garceau, and campaign director Leanne Bourassa, quickly built a national network of some four dozen seasoned workers.

Their shock and awe "up-from-the-ground" campaign was a wave that stopped Garceau's competitors cold. Almost 20 non-BC members of Team Garceau descended on Vancouver to savour the victory they had fought so hard for over the previous two months. The

personal dedication to Garceau was not lost on anyone at the convention.

Clearly gratified by her victory, Garceau did not forget her earlier pledges. "My seat will be your seat" she promised to the grassroots she wants to empower, and she intends to make that a reality. Running under the theme of "Changing Together", among her major platform proposals are the creation of a members secretariat as a rapid response group to grassroots concerns; regional priority agendas particularly for francophone rural areas; outreach programs to get riding members involved in community activism as well as party activism; seamless availability of data and documents in French and making the party's web pages not just promotional domains but a forum for all members' concerns. These are but some of the points from her detailed four-page three-sectioned platform.

But Brigitte Garceau's message is not limited to fine points of policy and platform. It is clearly proposed and candidly expressed. "Change," she said, "has become the major buzzword in politics across North America the past year. But change must be more than a word. After 25 years of service to this party as a grassroots volunteer from riding to regional levels, I came to understand what Canadians wanted and needed. Our hopes and concerns are not parochial or particular but are shared from coast to coast. What I have learned most of all is that change is more than a theory in a book or the tweaking of a website. Change is about making every person count!"



Garceau campaign button.



Ideas before identities.
Justice before orthodoxy.

THE MÉTROPOLITAIN



UN MALAISE ROYAL

Sur quoi devrait être fondée l'identité canadienne ?

Au Canada, comme on dit en anglais, there's an elephant in the room. Je parle ici d'une chose dont personne ne semble vouloir parler, mais dont la majorité subit la présence encombrante avec une indifférence résignée. Cette chose qui nous gêne, plutôt que d'être le symbole de liberté et d'autonomie qu'elle devrait être, nous empêche de bouger et de penser librement. Cette présence, plutôt que d'être le symbole d'unité nationale qu'elle devrait être, fut, est et sera toujours une source de division permanente.

Cette bête encombrante, c'est le régime de la monarchie constitutionnelle ; c'est la présence des symboles archaïques, colonialistes et foncièrement antidémocratiques de la couronne britannique dans notre pays. Cet importun quoique placide pachyderme qui nous fige dans une identité surannée et factice, c'est plutôt une absence : celle d'un chef d'état intrinsèquement, concrètement et symboliquement canadien, choisi et nommé par les citoyens canadiens, et n'entretenant aucune relation volontairement ambiguë avec une puissance étrangère.

Il faudra bien un jour que l'on se décide à renvoyer l'éléphant dans sa savane. Il faudra bien un jour ou l'autre que la rupture ultime avec la couronne britannique et ses symboles soit consommée.

Une proposition qui n'est pas dans l'air du temps

Une telle proposition, dans un contexte de crise économique, n'est pas dans l'air du temps. Dans un forum en ligne préparatoire en vue du congrès biennal du Parti libéral du Canada qui aura lieu à Vancouver en mai 2009, une proposition de résolution allant dans le sens de l'instauration d'un chef d'état exclusivement canadien a été défaite à près de 70% des votes. Il s'agissait d'une des résolutions ayant le plus suscité de commentaires, mais elle fut aussi l'une des rares à ne pas être majoritairement acceptées. Cet échantillon qui constitue les quelques centaines de membres du PLC à avoir voté pour ou contre la résolution n'est certes pas représentatif de ce que souhaitent les Canadiens. Toutefois, ce résultat laisse deviner tout le travail qu'il faudrait abattre pour en arriver à convaincre les Canadiens que l'abolition de la monarchie constitutionnelle serait une excellente chose pour le pays.

On peut relever une bonne dizaine d'arguments mis de l'avant par les tenants du statu quo. Ils vont des plus pragmatiques (« On a des problèmes plus urgents à régler »), à ceux que je qualifierais de plus substantiels (« La monarchie fait partie de l'identité et des

traditions canadiennes»). Les arguments substantiels sont les plus intéressants, parce qu'ils sont les plus révélateurs. Ce sont également ceux qui à mon avis sont les plus honnêtes.

Une question d'identité

Selon les monarchistes, les institutions et symboles représentant la couronne britannique, de la Gendarmerie royale du Canada à la Gouverneuse générale en passant par la figure de la reine sur les billets de 20\$, feraient partie de l'identité canadienne. Selon une variante de cet argument, les symboles monarchiques seraient des marques distinctives de l'identité canadienne vis-à-vis de l'identité américaine, et leur disparition contribuerait à brouiller les délicates frontières identitaires entre les Canadiens anglophones et les Américains.

Résistons pour l'instant à la tentation de contrecarrer cet argument par ce qu'il contient d'aliénant pour tous les Canadiens qui ne sont pas d'origine britannique. Voyons plutôt ce qu'ils révèlent.

Les arguments « symboliques » sont révélateurs de l'existence d'une forme de nationalisme identitaire culturaliste au Canada. Plutôt que d'être fondée avant toute chose sur une philosophie politique rationnelle ou sur un principe moral acceptable par tous, l'identité canadienne aurait pour base, selon cette conception, un attachement à des symboles contingents culturellement ancrés, exclusifs et étroitement liés, par surcroît, à un empire étranger. Plus important encore, ils laissent entrevoir un grand fossé, une mésentente de fond, sur ce qui constitue réellement, ou sur ce qui devrait constituer, l'identité canadienne et l'idéal canadien.

Un débat qui devrait pourtant avoir lieu

Cette ligne de démarcation bien enfouie dans le silence doit être révélée au grand jour. Une des premières vertus de tout débat autour d'enjeux fondamentaux est de faire émerger les lignes idéologiques implicites qui traversent la société. Tant qu'on ne discute pas de questions controversées, il est impossible de savoir ou loge son voisin sur ces questions. Quand il s'agit de questions importantes, comme celle concernant la légitimité et le caractère antidémocratique du processus par lequel notre chef d'état est désigné, alors ces débats doivent avoir lieu.

Les arguments symboliques sont donc les plus honnêtes. En effet, prendre pour prétexte l'existence de problèmes plus urgents pour

éviter d'aborder le sujet de l'abolition de la monarchie est une échappatoire qui mène à un cul-de-sac. Une fois les urgences réglées, le problème politique et philosophique qui consiste à avoir pour chef d'état un monarque héréditaire tirant son autorité de Dieu plutôt que des hommes demeurerait entier. Et les failles idéologiques continuent de traverser les fondations du pays. L'institution qu'est le chef de l'état n'a pas de raison d'être si elle n'est pas fondée sur un principe unificateur.

L'abandon des symboles liant le Canada à la monarchie britannique amènerait un recentrage démocratique, et non une disparition de l'identité canadienne. Une fois les institutions monarchiques disparues du paysage canadien, des symboles et traditions bien de chez nous et répondant à tous les critères d'une démocratie digne de ce nom (par et pour le peuple) continueront de définir l'identité canadienne. La Charte des droits et libertés, une culture politique favorisant

l'immigration et une histoire à l'avenant, le bilinguisme officiel dans un cadre nord-américain, une économie fondée sur l'innovation et la culture, la place enviable du Canada dans le monde : de telles institutions, dissociées des symboles passésistes et culturalistes de la monarchie britannique, pourraient au contraire renforcer l'identité et l'attachement des Canadiens de toutes origines à leur pays.

On pourrait choisir de laisser tomber le débat, de ne pas voir l'éléphant dans notre chambre, pour ne pas créer d'émoi au pays. Mais si les monarchistes tiennent aux symboles passésistes de la monarchie héréditaire, les Canadiens qui se disent libéraux ne devraient pas se priver d'espérer que les principes de rationalité, de liberté et d'autonomie, principes moraux universellement acceptables, soient réellement pris en compte dans la désignation du chef de l'état canadien.

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They don't even pretend anymore

Though we can't be surprised anymore, we still need to condemn. The World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, commonly called Durban 2, concluded recently in Geneva. Durban I, eight years ago, at least had the veneer of civility however quickly disabused by the contents. This year's incarnation didn't even pretend. How could it? Two gangster regimes — Iran and Libya — co-chaired and co-organized it. The result was as anticipated. But the date was filled with pathos.

Durban 2's first day was the eve of worldwide celebrations commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. On that day the Iranian president, this generation's leading Holocaust denier, gave the opening address to the conference. Ahmadinejad denies the first Holocaust while openly preparing a second against Israel. On that day. One wonders if the timing was coincidental. Or perhaps the haters are now so brazen that they don't even bother to hide.

Ahmadinejad did his usual act. Spewing words of nullification and interposition. The hate dripped from his lips like blood from the mouth of a savage beast that had just chewed its prey. Israel called him the new Hitler. With reason. Nobel-prize winning author and Holocaust survivor and witness Elie Wiesel once wrote that the critical lesson nations and peoples must take from the Holocaust is that when a leader threatens you with destruction, believe him. Evil men commit unspeakable evil acts. Don't try and rationalize them away. "He didn't mean to go that far." "He's just speaking for domestic consumption." Nonsense!

Policy makers and talking heads in the west have consistently dismissed hate. Why is inconceivable. Are they cowards, appeasers or simply delusional? As Irwin Cotler said so often in so many places the Holocaust did not begin with guns. It began with words! And so did what he labels "the first genocide of the 21st century — Darfur." The beat goes on. Does humanity learn anything?

The only glimmer of hope at Durban II was that the Iranian's



words against Israel were so hate-filled that western delegates walked out and even UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon reprimanded Ahmadinejad. Canada's Prime Minister Harper was the first western leader to fully recognize — and refused to contenance — this evil. He refused to let Canada's diplomats even participate in the preparatory conferences to Durban. America, the Netherlands, Australia, Italy and a few other countries followed. But the UN, and indeed the international community, will have to live with the guilt that they enabled a

Holocaust denier. They enabled a ruler who has made hate against Jews and persecution of minorities in his own country, the leitmotif of his life.

His inflammatory incitement and humiliating and intolerable appeal to racist hate constitute clear proof, for those who still require it, that the conference's agenda — and indeed the UN's own conscience — have been taken hostage and diverted from real and necessary racism-related deliberations — to an unabashed tirade against Israel and the Jews.

"I deplore the use of this platform by the Iranian president to accuse, divide and even incite," Ban Ki-moon said in a statement. "This is the opposite of what this conference seeks to achieve." European Parliament President Hans-Gert Poettering condemned Ahmadinejad's speech as "unacceptable" and also warned about Iran acquiring nuclear weapons.

He went on to say that neither the existence nor recognition of Israel could be called into question. He further added that nuclear weapons in the hands of the Iranian head of state would be a danger for the Middle East and the world.

Earlier, Ban and Ahmadinejad met on the sidelines of the conference during which the U.N. chief told the Iranian that the U.N. General Assembly had adopted the resolution to revoke the equation of Zionism with racism.

Finally world leaders are understanding the linkage between genocidal racism and a nuclear Iran. Finally they seem to be speaking out and walking out. One hopes that what we are witnessing is true. One wishes for courage. One yearns that the age of the appeasers is over. But we can never be sure of that. And we can never be sure it is not too late.

There is one thing we can be sure of. Appeasement has never worked. And it won't now. Churchill's words come back to us from the mists of a time not long ago. He said, "An appeaser is someone who feeds the crocodile hoping he will eat him last. But eat him he surely will." It's time to stop feeding the Iranian crocodile. He doesn't even pretend that he will eat us if he can.

"You can get anything you want in life if you help others get what they want."

- George F. Lengvari, Sr.





Canada vindicated at Durban II

We Canadians are often too polite to say, “I told you so.” But 16 months after we told the world that the Durban “anti-racism” conference was anything but, we have been vindicated. Canada was the first nation to pull out of the Durban II conference and to cut off funds for NGO participation. Countries like Italy, Australia, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Israel and the United States of America followed us. Many other nations later walked out of the conference when Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad poured verbal acid all over Israel, the United States and Europe.

As Ahmadinejad was speaking in Geneva, I too was giving a speech in the same city — at a true anti-racism conference organized to

protest against the Iranian president and Durban II in general. UN Watch, the invaluable NGO, helped to host the event, which included presentations by Harvard legal scholar Alan Dershowitz and legendary Soviet prison camp survivor Natan Sharansky. Everyone at the meeting praised Canada and Prime Minister Stephen Harper for leading the world in staying away from Durban II.

As a prescient lead-up to the conference, I joined the International March of the Living Mission in Poland, where we visited the remains of Auschwitz and Birkenau, two of the most infamous Nazi death camps. Thousands of students marched through the camps commemorating victims of the Holocaust and celebrating its survivors.

As the tyrant from Tehran took to the stage

at the United Nations, I was reminded of the importance of reading history so as not to repeat it. Our experience with Durban II can teach Canadians two lessons.

First, the best way to support the UN is to insist that it live up to its own ideals. The world body’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights offers basic standards of liberty that all its member states should and must achieve. That’s what makes Durban II so completely tragic. Here is a UN institution reduced to little more than a soapbox for those who would demonize the one state in the Middle East that practises what the declaration preaches.

As Professor Dershowitz told me in Geneva, millions have died because the obsession with Israel has distracted the world from real atroci-

ties — Cambodia, Rwanda and Darfur all come to mind. Imagine the lives we might have saved if the world had appropriated as much energy to these and other catastrophes as it has devoted to bashing Israel.

The second lesson is that leading can be lonely. When Canada first pulled out of Durban II, we were alone. When Canada first cut off aid to Hamas, we were alone. But others later followed, because we were right. Now would be the worst time for Canada to return to the mushy middle, where we follow the pack, as we did all too often in the past. “You have enemies? Good,” said Winston Churchill. “That means you’ve stood up for something in your life.”

We should continue to march in the right direction, at the front of a growing parade.



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Obama and the art of double speak

How does B.H. Obama get away with it? He directed his campaign against George W. Bush, accusing him of taking the United States into an unjust war in Iraq, but now plans to launch a renewed effort in Afghanistan. I'm confused. Aren't freedom, innocent people's lives and democracy all worth protecting in both of those countries?

Obama attempted to keep his promise of shutting down Guantanamo by keeping it open for at least 18 months more. Then he laughably tried to keep his promise to pull out of Iraq by promising to draw down some troops over the next 18 months; emphasis on "some," as we'll see.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, a Democrat, had it right when he detained prisoners of war until hostilities ceased. And hostilities didn't cease until the enemy was defeated.

Obama's soft-pedal approach by contrast – his willingness to release terrorists and to negotiate with them, along with totalitarian communists and holocaust deniers – will result in a new magnitude of innocent lives lost, and in the strengthening of the enemies of Western democracy.

Obama knows he's walking a fine line. That's why he eases everyone gradually into his "solutions" to the world's most protracted problems. Soon after taking office he let Democratic Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, and Democratic Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, believe that only 20,000 troops would be left behind in Iraq. And he let them quote that number in press conferences and in interviews without so much as an email from his BlackBerry informing them that they were way-y off.

Pelosi and Reid, and everyone else, were caught off guard when the new President revealed something a bit closer to the truth by saying 35,000 to 50,000 troops will stay in Iraq. Emphasis on "a bit closer."

Then things got interesting when the lower number was revealed to be wishful thinking. It turned out Obama had already informed senior government officials and his general in the field that at least 50,000 troops will actually be left to defend Iraq's fragile democracy.

Democrats happily swallowed their pride, or guilt, as the case may be, and backed their president. Then they focused on Obama's assurance that all remaining troops will be out by the end of 2011. Wait a minute... isn't "the end of 2011" really



To his credit, Obama's Secretary of Defence, Bush holdover Robert Gates, wants American forces to stay until the job is done. Imagine that... a Republican who thinks more like FDR than Obama.



just the same as 2012?

Why... that takes us almost to the end of Obama's term. Didn't he promise a much more immediate withdrawal from Iraq? Oh well... Smile for the camera everyone!

To his credit, Obama's Secretary of Defence, Bush holdover Robert Gates, wants American forces to stay until the job is done. Imagine that... a Republican who thinks more like FDR than Obama.

Whether Democrats are supportive, confused or just downright uncomfortable with their commander in chief's decision all depends on their level in the party hierarchy. The rank and file is extremely uncomfortable and completely confused, while those holding office are behind "the One" one-hundred-and-ten-percent!

Then there are people like domestic terrorist and education professor William Ayers, the man who, along with his domestic terrorist wife, launched Obama's political career in his living room. He's completely and vocally opposed to Obama's sleight of hand, and equally concerned with Obama's plan to put more troops in Afghanistan and to launch attacks into Pakistani territory; attacks which, by the way, are already well underway.

Meanwhile, many a friendly Canadian wonders how this will play out for us. One thing's certain: Liberals, New Democrats and Bloc-head Québécois don't have Bush to kick around anymore.

Obama's announcements on Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan clearly indicate that while there will perhaps be no more of W's swagger in dealing with the threat of terrorism, there will nonetheless continue to be a concerted and perhaps even protracted War on Terror (although to the Obama people it'll now be referred to by the less descriptive moniker: Overseas Contingency Operation... yeesh).

For everyone in Canada's Parliament, Harper and his Conservatives included, the choice now must be made: Either rebuild Canada's military – maybe start by putting the word "armed" back in between "Canadian" and "forces" – invest in air lift capabilities so our boys and girls don't get blown to pieces by roadside bombs, and quit pretending that those who want to bring Western democratic ideals to the Middle East are warmongers. Or... go against the most popular leader in the world.



A LETTER TO DELARA, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of the Child which forbids the execution of those who have committed an offence before the age of 18. You were 17 years old when charged with murder. To the bitter end you maintained your innocence.

The initial verdict that was issued, was based on a confession from you when you were still a child and did not understand your rights. You were not made aware of the consequences for taking the blame for a crime you did not commit.

Medical examination of the victim in an autopsy suggested that the crime was committed by a right-handed person. You were left handed. If a new trial had been accorded to present this new evidence, the death penalty verdict could have been reversed. Your lawyer Abdolsamad Khoramshahi tried for years to obtain a new trial and carry out a re-enactment of the crime in court, with no success. He is also convinced that due to your small frame and gentle nature, it was an impossibility for you to have committed the offence. A partnering lawyer who followed the case, Mohammad Mostafaei, said "I swear she is innocent".

Whereas the head of Judiciary Ayatollah Shahroudi accorded a 2 month stay of execution in order for the families to try and negotiate a pardon, you were executed less than ten days from this order.

Iran's Penal Code states that the family and lawyer of the accused are to be given 48 hours prior notice before execution. No such warning was given in your case. You were executed in secret, like Reza Hejazi and



Delara Darabi

Behnam Zare, with no mother, father or sister to be with you in your last frightening moments or to hear your final words.

In cases of "ghesas" crimes, the decision whether or not to execute the accused rests with the relatives of the victim. What kind of Justice system allows the biased opinion of the family who has lost a family member to decide ones fate?

Around this time two years ago, you wrote this beautiful letter to me. All who read it were

touched to the depths of their souls.

"Say hello to my true loving friends. Every night during my prayers I pray for all the people of this large and vast house. I pray that one day everyone becomes a lover and we all be the guests of Lord's vast feast.

I don't know if I will meet you my dear ones or we must leave the meeting to the unseen world.

Anyway, Delara is not alone, Delaras are trapped in prisons and in need of God's help

and in need of defenders of human right and humanity!!!"

One day we will meet Delara, in heaven. Meanwhile, we will continue with the good fight.

Delara, it is so sad and unfortunate that you had to depart like this without your family being able to say goodbye

My most heartfelt condolences go out to your family Delara. The loss of a child is painful enough. The loss of a child under unjust circumstances is a tragedy....a tragedy that could have been avoided.

That is the end of my letter to Delara. But dear readers the struggle does not end.

Stop Child Executions will be launching a full report on executions of juvenile offenders in Iran on June 17th in the UK Parliament via the Foreign Policy Center and I will also be addressing the issue in front of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva at that time.

To see Delara and her family in the documentary we made about her a year and a half ago, please visit:

<http://scenews.blog.com/4886013/>

To see her beautiful but haunting paintings she drew in prison, visit :

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59IprOXGTe0>

Delara lives on!

Nazanin Afshin-Jam is an International Human Rights Activist and President and Co Founder of Stop Child Executions
www.stopchildexecutions.com

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Why anti-semitism persists

In his 1995 book [1] *Assimilation and Its Discontents*, Israeli political historian and prolific author Barry Rubin speaks of a time when “anti-Semitism became too minimal to inspire fear or defiance.” Indeed, for both the Israeli sabra and the diaspora Jew, particularly in America, “anti-Semitism’s rout and the acquisition of equality ... raises the question of what to do next.”

Only a little more than a decade has passed since Rubin wrote those lines but the “question of what to do next” has taken on a completely different complexion. For once again anti-Semitism has returned with a vengeance.

I suspect that Rubin’s cheerful temperament may have clouded his view and caused him to forget that anti-Semitism is unlike other forms

of irrational hatred and operates under a different set of laws. One might put it this way: because it has happened before, it will happen again, which is not the tautology or unverifiable assumption that it appears to be. We need to recognize the mechanics that operate in this past-future homology.

Anti-Semitic sentiments, outbreaks, pogroms, and holocausts,

Anti-Semitic sentiments, outbreaks, pogroms, and holocausts, in virtue of their millennial repeatability, have become entrenched in human consciousness as a “natural” inevitability.

in virtue of their millennial repeatability, have become entrenched in human consciousness as a “natural” inevitability, as something that must happen again because it has consistently happened before. Anti-Semitism and its consequences, as they act themselves out in the social and historical realms, have gradually come to acquire the character of a deeply harbored expectation, a necessary effect of an immutable cause, as if it were a part of the phenomenal world, the prolonged absence of which dimly registers as a gap in the normal sequence of events. This gap or hiatus must be filled to restore the equilibrium of things, which is why anti-Semitism is felt as somehow legitimate. It is its recession that is intuited as unnatural.

The subsidence of anti-Semitism for an extended period is tantamount to the moon undergoing a protracted eclipse: something is wrong in the natural order, producing uncertainty and apprehension and requiring that the balance of nature be restored and reaffirmed. The moon has its familiar cycles because, according to the laws of the physical world, it must have them; an eclipse is a rare and temporary event. Anti-Semitism, too, will have its eclipses, but they are necessarily ephemeral. The primordial hatred of which we are speaking will continue to circle and shine and proceed through its phases because it has always done so — and therefore it always will. This remains the case whatever may have given it its original impetus.

True, a brief obscuring of this lunatic radiation may also be regarded as an aspect of natural process, but it is its brevity rather than its occurrence that is considered natural and which renders it acceptable. Hatred of the Jew has come to be understood across the great wave of time as a function of how the world works and, therefore, of how

the world is supposed to work. The colloquial mind thinks: it has gone on for so long, there must be something to it.

This constitutes its justification — an irrational hatred masking as a rational presumption. It is something that has occurred so often in the past, and has kept on happening wherever Jews have settled, that it is perceived in the depths of the psyche to have moved from the dimension of history over into the structure of nature. It is as if anti-Semitism has now become part of our synaptic equipment, which is why it will persist until the last Jew.

Rubin believes that the greatest threat to Jewish continuity is the specter of assimilation, whose “logical culmination will extinguish ... Jewish identity among millions of people.” He need not worry. In the final analysis, anti-Semitism will always trump assimilation, as untold numbers of perfectly assimilated, more-German-than-German Jews learned to their cost. It is sheer folly to assume that it can’t happen here.

The profound anxiety and sense of desolation that Jean Améry (a.k.a. Hans Meyer) records in *At Mind’s Limits* is real and ineluctable. This is a world, he declares, “whose still unresolved death sentence I acknowledge as a social reality.” And as George Steiner wrote in *Language & Silence*, “Somewhere the determination to kill Jews, to harass them from the earth simply because they are, is always alive.” Let no Gentile justifier or temporizing Jew take false comfort in mere denial, self-delusion, the bromides of pliable rhetoric, or the seductions of sweet reason. The Jew must remain alert, always ready to defend himself, and never submit to an unfounded belief in some eventual bucolic resolution.

In this sense, the past is larger than the future. And the proof is all around us in the present.

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China Targets Canada!

Canadian resource sovereignty is in play as energy-hungry China goes on a worldwide shopping spree

International Trade Minister Stockwell Day has returned from a goodwill trade tour of China making all the right gestures and remarks; a commitment to fight protectionism, two new Canadian trade offices to promote our goods and services in China, and kind words for Chinese officials in an effort to improve bilateral relations. There is even talk of a visit by Prime Minister Harper at a later date, a change of heart from his failure to attend the 2008 Olympics.

Truth is, the Chinese could care less about bilateral Chinese-Canadian trade. Compared with US and European volumes, Canada's purchasing of goods destined for the consumer market is of middling importance at best. What are truly captivating are Canada's riches in natural resources, which China would like to purchase in increasing quantities and would prefer to be able to control these resource companies outright.

China is the second largest consumer of energy in the world and is dependent on imports for half of its consumption. It will likely surpass the United States sometime in the next decade. Chinese companies have gone on a resource-company spending spree over the past five years, flush with cash and seeking strategic acquisitions wherever they can find them.

Consider the following examples of Chinese acquisition efforts:

April 2009: Chinese National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) seeks to acquire Syrian and Libyan oil assets likely to be sold by Suncor following its takeover by Petro-Canada;

A US\$10-billion investment in Brazil that secured 100,000 barrels of oil per day for the next 10 years;ⁱ

A US\$25-billion deal in Russia that will deliver 300,000 barrels per day for two decades.ⁱⁱ

In March, CNPC also made a takeover bid worth \$443 million for Alberta-based Verenex Energy, who controls more promising Libyan oil assets; Libya chose to block the deal in the end;

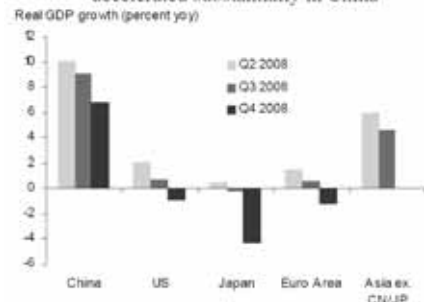
Total SA of France and Chinese petroleum company Sinopec have joined forces to each hold 50% of Northern Lights, an Alberta oil sands mine expected to cost over \$10 billion to develop;

Consolidated Thompson Iron Mines Ltd. Of Montreal has accepted a 19.9% stake from Chinese investor Wuhan Iron and Steel Corporation (WISCO) worth \$240 million to

help it develop its Bloom Lake iron ore project in Northern Quebec. Ironically, the co-chairman of Consolidated Thompson is Brian Tobin, formerly known as Captain Canada and defender of nationalist interests. Apparently when capital is in short supply, nationalism takes a back seat to expediency. WISCO has committed to take 25% of the mines production once it is available in 2009.

The above examples are a mere snippet of Chinese activity in the Canadian resource sector. They have been equally active around the world, particularly in the developing world and also in South Africa. As China is the only major world economy likely to enjoy positive growth in 2009, albeit at a reduced rate estimated at 6%, it will continue to produce the cash necessary to pursue the acquisition strategy as the capital-starved resource industry around the world will welcome the Chinese as willing and sophisticated investors.

Figure 1. Economic growth plunged worldwide, and decelerated substantially in China



Source: CEIC, staff estimates

Figure 1 from the latest World Bank Report on China clearly illustrates that China's growth, even during the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, will not slow its thirst for more natural resources to fuel its expansion. If China's international acquisitions continue apace today, imagine how those efforts are likely to accelerate when its GDP growth rate rises once again to 10% or more. In China's view, a 6% growth rate is about as much of a recession as it can tolerate.

Hey, what about the Americans?

If these were normal economic times, the Americans would be mounting a massive diplomatic offensive to encourage the Canadians to bring back the Trudeau-era FIRA (Foreign Investment Review Agency) to block these investments based on national security requirements. The US is too

distracted with its banking melt-down and multi-trillion dollar budget deficits to take on the Canadians at this point, Obama simply has too much on his plate. The Americans are also reluctant to annoy the Chinese who are expected to provide the lion's share of US deficit financing by continuing to purchase US Treasury bills. When the Chinese premier makes noises about seeking an alternative world currency to the US Dollar and simultaneously chides the US for its profligate spending, the message to the US is clear; don't rock our boat, and we won't pull the plug on your vicious cycle of consumption and debt.

That does not mean that the Americans are not watching developments in the Canadian resource sector with concern and dismay. It is ironic that US money developed the Canadian oil and gas sector at the beginning, only to see then pushed aside during the Trudeau era with the creation of Petro-Canada and FIRA, resulting in favoritism for Canadian capital. Now that Canadian resource sector companies have been devalued by the market melt-down and the Canadian dollar is back to 80 cents US, China is stepping in and filling the void that the Americans are unable to enter themselves. If US resource investors do not re-focus on Canada in short order, they will find that the best opportunities will already be gone. Canadian capital investment will eventually be revived and there will be fierce competition for compelling investments, which will drive prices up and profits down.

The Canadian reaction: What, me worry?

Up until the recent recession Canada was still a net investor abroad, meaning that Canadian corporations owned and invested more in foreign companies and assets than foreign entities held in Canada. Public perception was always the opposite; that Canada was easy prey for foreign investors who were going to scoop up our valuable assets on the cheap.

From the 1960's to the 1990's, this concern was primarily focused on our manufacturing and technology industries as candidates for vulture-like foreign takeovers. After all, the Americans had already assured domination of Canada's petrochemical industry long ago, as this was before Petro-Canada and FIRA. Mining always had a substantial foreign presence as well, and Canadians were concerned that they were losing control of their innovative manufacturing industries on top of their resource producers, and that there

would be little of value left in Canadian hands.

Now that manufacturing is below 25% of Canada's GDP, the risk of losing manufacturing companies and jobs to foreigners is less important than losing control of our natural resources, which have grown in exporting importance as the world beats a path to our door to purchase what Canada extracts from its lands. We should be far more concerned about our natural resources because once a mining deposit is sold to a foreign firm it is extremely expensive to find another one just like it. Indeed, when it comes to conventional oil, many experts believe that all the big fields have been found and that new discoveries cannot hope to replace their depletion, hence the theory that "peak oil" has been achieved. Alberta's oil sands take a lot more effort, and therefore money, to refine into useable products and therefore more capital investment is required to bring these fields into production.

But what of iron ore, copper, zinc, gold, silver, potash and the myriad of other resources found in Canada? Given that financing for new prospection and mine development is scarce in Canada, the government is under pressure from developers not to ratchet up the diatribe against foreign investors, including the cash-rich Chinese.

The Canadian government is unlikely to try to stop Chinese or any other non-Canadian investment in our resource sector as long as there is a lack of home-grown capital ready to replace it. The recent meeting of the G-20 major world economies placed particular emphasis on avoiding protectionism, be that in trade or investment, and Prime Minister Harper was one of the greatest proponents of avoiding a slide towards the trade wars of the 1930's. It would be diplomatic folly to turn around and begin limiting foreign investment in the resource sector at this point, which would result in serious damage to Canada's international credibility at a time when we are once again seeking to "punch above our weight" on the world stage.

Canada has grown used to being economically integrated with the United States. In the 21st century, we need to prepare ourselves for inter-dependence with an even larger elephant – China.

i,ii "China Eyeing Canadian Assets" Duncan Mavin, Financial Post, with files from Carrie Tait, Published: Tuesday, April 07, 2009

SOCIETY



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Taste of the Nation's Laurie Normand-Starr is gone

Laurie Normand-Starr, a community volunteer who died recently at her home in Westmount, threw lavish charitable fund-raising dinners where the rich were charged to feed the poor.

Mrs. Normand-Starr spearheaded Taste of the Nation, the annual event which collected more than \$2 million for three Montreal charities since the Montreal chapter was founded 16 years ago. The money raised by the event was divided among three charities: Share the Warmth, the Pointe St. Charles community organization, Dans le Rue, and Oxfam-Quebec.

"She had a great heart," said Herman Alves, who took over as organizing chair of the event when Normand-Starr became ill. "She persuaded 25 influential people to get behind the project, and then she moved heaven and earth to motivate everyone to feed the hungry. She was very determined, a great leader."

She persuaded celebrity chefs, major restaurants and hotels in the city to contribute samples of their culinary fare to an annual dinner at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel. Musicians and singers volunteered their services, and guests were then charged \$150 a plate to attend.

"She was a spectacular volunteer," said Judy Stevens, Share the Warmth's executive director. "She was energetic, compassionate, a very hard worker who was committed to getting the job done. The concept of Taste of the Nation was going on in 100 other cities before we started the Montreal chapter. Rather than ask people to donate money, she'd ask them to donate their services, then set up a free gourmet meal with wine." More than 1,000 people attended the last such event which raised \$154,000.

Laurie Starr was born in Windsor, Ont., Dec. 17, 1957. She was the eldest of two daughters in jazz musician Emile Cisco Normand's family. Her father was a drummer and composer who became a major figure in Montreal's burgeoning jazz scene after he moved here in 1963. After her graduation from

Marymount High School in 1975 she went into the fashion industry and eventually became vice-president of a small chain of women's clothing stores, J. Harrop and Co. In 1983 she

married media executive Peter Starr. They have a son, Paul.

In 1992 Mrs. Normand-Starr became one of the founding members of the local chapter of Taste the Nation. "She was outraged at the thought that children in a country as rich as Canada should go hungry," said her husband, Peter, "There was a great amount of disenfranchised youth, and she thought the easiest way of turning that around was to feed children. She focused on feeding children. She also wanted to create a charity where 100 percent of the money raised went to hunger relief. Not a single penny went to administrative costs."

She also got this paper's editor, Beryl Wajzman, and his Institute for Public Affairs of Montreal involved in helping both Share the Warmth and Moisson Montreal. Several years ago the freezers and cupboards were literally bare. Starr brought Wajzman into the picture and in a matter of weeks he brought together Montreal's Levinoff Meat Company and other suppliers and the alliance started shipping tons of meat and chicken to the food banks. The initiative helped feed so many that it was written up in The National Post by Elizabeth Nickson as a prime example of non-governmental citizen initiatives that outdo governments.

"She was a starburst of energy and commitment. Her passion and fun made involvement irresistible. She was as compelling a conscience for social advocacy as Montreal ever had. She was one of those people who was not supposed to die. She belongs to the ages now but lives within us all," said Wajzman.

Although efforts were made to have her receive the Order of Canada, Mrs. Normand Starr died before her nomination could be processed. She did, however, receive the Helen prize for humanitarian works, the Share our Strength Humanitarian of the Year Award, and the certificate de reconnaissance Oxfam-Quebec.

Her funeral was held at St. Matthias Anglican Church in Westmount.

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“Enemies of equality”

Author warns of Islamist interference in politics

A Syrian national is warning fellow Canadians to stand up for secular values and not make unreasonable accommodations for Islamists.

Djemila Benhabib, author of *Ma vie à contre-Coran*, spoke to a group of roughly 50 last week at a Côte des Neiges bookstore. Describing herself as an ordinary woman having experienced extraordinary hardships, she told the audience of her family's persecution in Syria and the constant threats that came from religious fanatics that forced them to leave the country in the early 1990s. The title of her book refers to the battle she fought as a child and teenager against Islamist indoctrination in her homeland and the threat it now poses to the West.

“From my first year of school, I was learning the Koran. There were recitations daily, without understanding most of it,” said Benhabib, who left Syria shortly before her eighteenth birthday. “What we recited were angry, violent words: Hell, punishment...I felt uneasy with this objective. I didn't understand why they would teach this to children.”

Although her grandmother was a practicing Muslim, her parents were devout Atheists and her father was a militant activist with the Parti de l'Avant-Garde Socialiste (PAGS), a left-wing political movement that operated mostly underground in Algeria and fought Islamist interference in politics. There was never a Koran in her home, she recalled, and was taught at a very young age that women deserved the same rights as men.

“I had to become a feminist. Never again did I want men to use religion for political gain,” she said. “[Islamists] would imprison people and torture them. To create an Islamic republic, they had to eliminate all embarrassments. During that process, the assassinations began. People in our entourage were killed. We were getting phone calls regularly reminding us that we would die. Given that atmosphere, we decided to leave.”

Benhabib questions the Islamist

obsession with headscarves for women; she said she grew up around many observant Muslims who did not wear them. It is sometimes a symbol of modesty, sometimes one of repression, she explained.

“Islamists say it's part of their culture and tradition,” she said, “but I've lived in Algeria and only saw the veil as of the early 1980s. It's a political statement that aims to ‘Islamicize’ the political system. I don't accept the wearing of the veil in public institutions.”

Describing Islamists as “enemies of equality,” she was inspired to write the book after watching the Bouchard-Taylor commission on “reasonable accommodation” and being disappointed with the final report. She saw many Quebecers

sharing concerns over the integration of immigrants and wanted to share her perspectives as an Algerian native who seeks no accommodation.

“These unreasonable demands don't come from immigrants. They come from Islamist groups,” she said. “They are a minority of shit-disturbers that would have us think that all Muslims need to be accommodated. It's false. Offer immigrants space, offer them hope and you'll live up to their dreams.”

“Society is more advanced than our politicians and our laws,” she added, defending a secular public sphere, “so, it's up to each of us to explain to them clearly what values to stand up for. We don't want to see our leaders on their knees.”



Djemila Benhabib, left, author of *Ma vie à contre-Coran*, speaking at Librairie Olivieri last week.



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L'apostasie : pas si inutile que ça

Depuis plusieurs semaines, les médias nous parlent de la vague d'apostasie suscitée par un sentiment généralisé de dégoût face à l'opposition réactionnaire de l'Église catholique à l'avortement et à l'utilisation du condom. Dans sa chronique du dernier numéro du Métropolitain, intitulée « Les apostats de la dernière pluie », Pierre Malouf ne saisit pas la pertinence de ce phénomène, et va même jusqu'à contester la réalité des dommages causés par l'interdiction catholique du condom.

« Si on apostasie le 1er avril, c'est qu'on était encore catholique le 31 mars... », écrit Malouf. En effet : pourquoi apostasier en 2009 quand on aurait dû le faire en 1970, en 1760 ou même en 400 ? La réponse est évidente : mieux vaut tard que jamais. Tout acte public d'apostasie est utile car il s'agit de dénoncer les abus commis par les églises (non seulement la catholique), d'encourager d'autres gens à se retirer de ces institutions obscurantistes et, éventuellement, de réduire leur influence en réduisant le nombre d'adhérents. Moins ceux-ci seront nombreux, moins l'Église sera influente.

Car l'Église catholique joue allègrement le jeu des chiffres. Ainsi, elle se targue volontiers d'avoir X

millions d'adhérents en tel pays ou tel continent, quoique en réalité la plupart sont ainsi classés parce que baptisés de force bien avant d'avoir l'âge de raison. Nous devons refuser d'entrer dans ce genre de manipulation statistique et ne reconnaître que les membres qui, à l'âge adulte, auraient décidé d'adhérer librement ou de renouveler leur adhésion à une quelconque religion. Ainsi, le nombre d'adhérents chuterait sensiblement.

En attendant que l'Église nous fournisse des statistiques honnêtes – ce pour quoi nous risquons d'attendre fort longtemps – il y a l'apostasie. Plus il y aura d'apostats visibles, moins les chiffres gonflés seront crédibles. La religion se propage principalement par l'endocritinement des enfants. Il est courant chez les croyants baptisés à la petite enfance d'accepter de se définir comme catholiques à vie, acquiesçant ainsi au jeu trompeur de l'Église. En apostasiant, le baptisé brise explicitement ce lien factice et il se responsabilise.

Il ne faut pas sous-estimer – comme le fait Malouf – l'influence morale (ou plutôt immorale) du pape, surtout en Afrique et en Amérique latine, où ce chef de faux État a récemment été accueilli en vedette. La prestigieuse revue

En attendant que l'Église nous fournisse des statistiques honnêtes – ce pour quoi nous risquons d'attendre fort longtemps – il y a l'apostasie. Plus il y aura d'apostats visibles, moins les chiffres gonflés seront crédibles.

médicale britannique The Lancet accuse le pape de fausser les faits scientifiques afin d'imposer la doctrine catholique. La condamnation par Benoît XVI de l'usage du condom entraîne un effet synergique dans un contexte où plusieurs autres religions s'opposent elles aussi au condom comme moyen de lutte au Sida. Les opposants au condom se défendent en citant des statistiques qui suggéreraient que le condom seul, quoique efficace au niveau de l'individu, s'avérerait moins efficace à plus grande échelle comme mesure de santé publique. Mais cela ne justifie aucunement l'abandon du condom. C'est comme si, en constatant que la ceinture de sécurité à elle seule n'est pas une garantie absolue de sécurité routière, on décidait d'enlever les ceintures des automobiles existantes et de ne plus en installer dans les neuves.

Il faut se rappeler que l'opposition

du Vatican au condom se base sur la doctrine telle qu'exprimée dans l'encyclique Humanae Vitae (1968), qui interdit tout obstacle à la procréation. Présentement, il est techniquement impossible de fabriquer un condom-catholique, qui laisserait passer le spermatozoïde mais pas le virus. Le pape attend peut-être un « download » du Saint Esprit à ce sujet. En attendant, l'Église sacrifie la santé, voire la vie des gens à l'autel de la natalité à tout crin. L'interdiction de la contraception est d'ailleurs indissociable de l'interdiction de l'avortement. Il s'agit, en fait, de contrôle clérical de la reproduction. Or, une étude importante, publiée en octobre 2007 dans The Lancet (Sedgh et al.) sur l'incidence des interruptions volontaires de grossesse (IVG) à travers le monde, révèle que la santé maternelle est grandement améliorée dans les pays où la contraception et

l'avortement sont légalement disponibles. D'ailleurs, la décriminalisation de l'avortement en réduit le nombre à long terme. De plus, il y a une forte corrélation positive entre la ferveur religieuse et le taux d'avortement. Rappelons aussi qu'une excellente façon de lutter contre la pauvreté est de laisser aux femmes le contrôle de leur propre fertilité.

En matière de prévention des MTS, de contraception, de droit à l'avortement, de lutte au Sida, sans compter le surpeuplement de la planète et l'opposition de l'Église aux droits des homosexuels, il y aurait bien assez pour que Benny XVI et sa gang soient traînés devant la Cour internationale de Justice et accusés de crimes contre l'humanité. Bien sûr, je rêve peut-être en couleur. Mais une amende d'un trillion d'euros, versés à des programmes de santé publique, n'est-ce pas un beau rêve ? Serait-il possible d'assembler des preuves suffisamment rigoureuses pour qu'elles puissent tenir devant les tribunaux ? Cela n'arrivera probablement jamais. Mais, selon l'excellente suggestion d'un ami, cela ferait un sacré bon sujet pour une pièce de théâtre ! Alors, dramaturges, à vos plumes... ou claviers !

Quant aux apostats récents, ils viennent de poser un petit geste qui, en plus d'exprimer concrètement leur attachement à la liberté de conscience, s'avère fort bénéfique non seulement pour eux-mêmes, mais aussi pour notre humanité qui, en posant un geste après l'autre, s'efforce encore de se libérer du poids mortifère de la superstition religieuse.

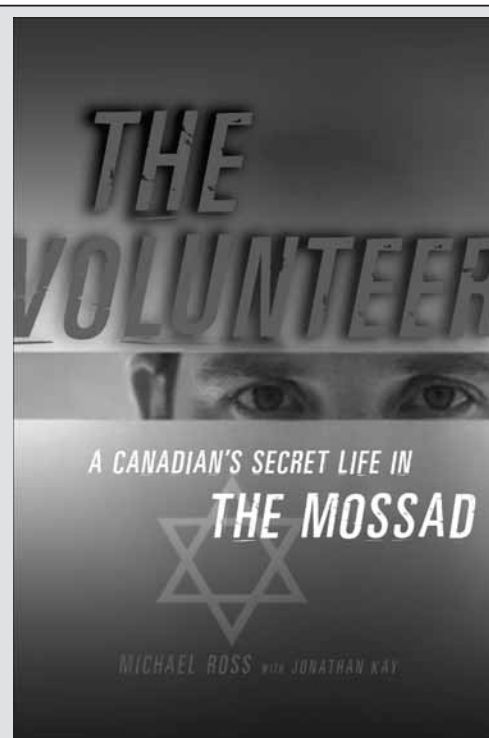
Pour plus d'information sur l'apostasie : www.mlq.qc.ca/sexprimer/apostasie

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City's red light district moves to the 'Net



Police officials report street prostitution for both genders has nearly been eliminated and swept off the streets in both the downtown core and the east-end's Hochelaga-Maisonneuve districts.

"There's always a market for sex," said one downtown police officer, "...but now it's off the streets and on the web which is fine with us."

In 2002, police officials began the 'Cyclops' project after spontaneous riots broke out in the city's. Unable to tolerate the petty and sordid crime which was taking over their streets, local residents began to beat up and abuse local dope dealers and street prostitutes after which they set fire and burned down a number of buildings known to be the local district's 'crack' houses-apartments where drugs were both sold and used by local dope addicts. After embarrassed police officials heard local residents describe how prostitutes of both genders were selling sex in local parks and playgrounds, the SPVM knew the district was desperate and they had to do

something about it. Only a few years later, police officials admit sex in the city is still as big and lucrative a business as it ever was but now it's "off the street out of sight and out of mind" which solves at least a bit of the problem.

While the Cyclops in Virgil's Iliad only had one eye, the SPVM's Cyclops has thousands of eyes and ears close to the ground in any one of the city's known 'hot' spots. Once local residents see any kind of suspicious or illicit behavior going on in their neighborhood, all they have to do is to describe the situation, a car, its color and especially its license plate numbers for the police to follow up upon their information. Previously, residents had to go down to the local police station to make their report but the program is such a success that police believe a useful link on the SPVM's website might encourage any citizens to file their complaints about illicit and illegal activity going on in the back streets of their neighborhood.

"We rarely have to lay charges,"

"All these guys are middle-aged married guys who live in the suburbs or on the west island and they don't want any trouble.

said the SPVM officer who runs the Cyclops program. "All these guys are middle-aged married guys who live in the suburbs or on the west island and they don't want any trouble. Usually a phone call does the trick and we never see them again."

He asked *The Metropolitan* not to publish his name because of several ongoing investigations as

well as to avoid any complications due to curious wives and girlfriends who might wonder why he wants to talk to their husband. Out of 2730 separate investigations sparked by a Cyclops report, he said the police report a miniscule recidivism rate of only 1.6 % per cent.

While soaring taxes and a sick economy are carving a serious slice out of the city's reputation as the

"Casablanca of North America", the city's market for illicit sex is still doing well even if it's off the streets and back in the closet.

"We don't care if people want to get a bit on the side," said The Metropolitan's source. "We just don't want to see them picking it up and paying for it on the streets near the schools or near the parks in front of the kids."

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Two theatres: Two kinds of family portraits

Family values are at the heart of *Over the River and Through the Woods*, Joe DiPietro's heartwarming intergenerational comedy at the The Segal Centre for the Performing Arts until May 10. It's a slight play, normally dinner theatre fare, but, like a plate of delicious pasta, the Segal's production is hugely satisfying. It appeals to anyone who has ever found themselves caught between the demands of their increasingly dependent childish parents and grandparents, and their own, ever demanding professional obligations. The play is narrated by Nick Cristano, (Gianpaolo Venuta), a New York advertising agency executive who has grown up in a tight-knit Italian family ruled by the three F'S – "Family, faith and food." He is the apple of his grandparents eyes, and dutifully visits them in Hoboken every Sunday for family. But he's received a job promotion that means a move across the country to Seattle. When he breaks the news of his impending move to the geriatric foursome, they plot to keep him from leaving. In the words of his paternal grandmother, Emma, "People don't move away from their families because they don't like the weather, they move away because they are afraid." Convinced that all that Nick needs to stay in New York is a woman in his life, they arrange a blind dinner date for him with Catlin O'Hare (Diana Donnelly), in the naïve hope that love will keep him at home. He charms her; he gets on her nerves. Clean cut and good looking, Gianpaolo Venuta conveys appealing but frustrated affection for his relatives, and Donnelly is all coy sweetness and solid strength as the date who isn't easily bamboozled. The Segal's production truly blessed with a strong quartet of solid veteran actors. Frank Savino is endearing as the cantankerous maternal grandfather, Frank Gianelli, and, Deann Mears, and his wife in real life is delightfully upbeat as Nick's grandmother, Aida, who is forever in the kitchen. The paternal grandparents, Nunzio and Emma Cristano (Bernie Passeltiner and Doreen Brownstone) are also wonderfully wise, young old souls. Some of the evenings biggest laughs come when the delightfully clueless, but never stupid, geriatric foursome play *Trivial Pursuit* using their own rules and convoluted logic to score points. Although some of the actors deliver their lines in cadences that often seem more Yiddish than Italian, it doesn't matter. In the end we are moved by these octenegarians and their acceptance of the inevitable. Steven Schipper directed with a sure, understated hand, and Michael Gianfrancesco's set is handsome, if a little too antiseptic, devoid of much of the religious kitsch one would expect to find in an Italian immigrant family's house.

...

Values of another sort, those in a so called extended-family of social outcasts are examined in *The Centaur's* production of *With Bated Breath* running until May 24. If your idea of a night out at the theatre is waiting ninety minutes for an actor to put a bag over his head and drop his pants, it is just the ticket. Bryden MacDonald's dark play is disappointingly overrated. Macdonald writes dialogue well, but whatever the virtues of the script, the show is unfocussed, self indulgent, contrived and pointless. The play's title, taken from a Dolly Parton's country tune evokes the cast of 'hurtin' characters



PHOTO: YANICK MACDONALD

who lead double lives and survive by their animal instinct. Told in a series of elliptical flash backs, it's the story of a sensitive - read gay - Nova Scotia farm boy named Willy, (Michael Sutherland-Young). Driven out of town by gossip about his sexuality, he flees to Montreal in search of love and acceptance but ends up in a world of sleaze, as a stripper in a third-rate gay club, before disappearing without a trace. His life experience is told by those closest to him: Bernie, his first lover (Neil Napier) who we are told is "not gay, just fucked up", Bernie's hard-drinking wife, Ricotta, named for her father's favourite cheese, (Danette Mackay) who is "a well adjusted fag hag," Camilla (Felicia Shulman), the local vicious gossip, and Esta (Sarah C. Carlsen), Willy's soul mate, Then there's Float, (Eloi Archambaudoin), the buff, emotionally hardened "sex machine," who teaches Willy how to hustle customers. Archambaudoin packs a wallop in the role. He dances well, and is so convincing as a stripper, its him you

expect to bare all. He doesn't, even though his dance number is the one scene in the play that calls for nudity, Sutherland-Young is beautifully vulnerable as the inaptly named Willy. He makes the play seem deeper than it is. Neil Napier is terrific as a conflicted human lost in alcoholic anguish. The women, especially Shulman as an embittered she-man, are strong in their roles, but none of the hard-edged performances add up to much. The characters aren't the beautiful losers the author would have you believe they are, just losers. They don't rouse themselves from their pathetic existence enough to make us really care. Sound designer Peter Cerone has added to the dramatic tension with yelping dogs and country music nicely underscores the simulated sex scenes. James Lavoie's weather beaten set fits in well as both the dingy strip club and a rustic Cape Breton farm. Author Macdonald and Roy Surette who shared directing duties are to be commended for their restrained approach.



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On n'entre pas au désert avec le goût du chaos

Salah Benlabed, *De quelques défauts qui font les humains*, Éditions de la Pleine Lune, 2009, 178 p.

Dans les vingt nouvelles constituant ce livre, on constate un écrivain qui n'écrit pas pour s'éloigner des gens, mais au contraire pour essayer de s'en rapprocher. Salah Benlabed nous révèle que s'il n'a jamais eu besoin de certitude et que, selon lui, tout est une entreprise à perte, c'est là qu'il veut tout de même travailler, c'est-à-dire dans une entreprise qui est humaine avant d'être littéraire.

D'après Salah Benlabed, nous

sommes tous liés. De manière fortuite, nos chemins s'entrecroisent, nous sommes tous là, dans la ville, à regarder le même soleil, parfois à nous croiser aux coins des rues, regardant passer le même avion dans le ciel, avec, au fond, des rêves et des espoirs identiques. N'est-ce pas étrange que tout cela ? Est-ce la littérature qui nous tient à distance, ou le livre en lui-même qui nous propose une sorte d'énigme ? Et si nous étions tous des personnages vivants ?

Mais pour cela, il faudrait être apte à aller faire un détour sur le rapport au lecteur. C'est, en un sens, ce que nous propose l'auteur, dans une extrême

économie de moyens pour un maximum d'effets. Ces récits, assez inégaux, m'ont tout de même accrochée dès la toute première nouvelle, intitulée « Le Couple ». En effet, le dessin artistique de l'expression est audacieux, et il en va de même dans son écho qui se répercute dans les autres nouvelles de l'ouvrage, dont « La Traîtrise », « Le Froid », « Le Malentendu », « La Naïveté », « Le Mensonge », « Le Viol », « Le Désespoir », « Le Rêve », « La Maladie », « L'Orgueil », « La Folie », « L'Amnésie », « La Jalousie », « La Guerre », bref, que des choses positives et inspirantes ! J'aurais sans doute

aimé lire sur : « Le Renouveau », « L'Acceptation », « La Découverte », « La Complicité », « La Durée », « La force », « Le Courage », « L'Espoir », « La Chaleur », « La Beauté », bref, ce début prometteur, auquel j'ai accroché tout de suite, m'a fait vite déchanter tant le négativisme est à l'honneur, comme un pathétique fatalisme indécrottable.

En effet, ce qui, au départ, réussit à séduire par un renouveau littéraire riche et humain, risque ensuite et à tout moment de jeter quelques suspensions sur tout le reste de l'ouvrage. En somme, au-delà du couple, du lecteur, des gens et de la ville (de son pays ?),



on assiste au déchirement pénible et sans fin de l'écrivain qui se torture pour essayer de trouver un peu d'humanisme à la moyenne des gens, dans des lieux publics et des situations exigeantes.

Toutefois, une grâce indéniable traverse chacune des nouvelles de ce recueil, d'abord par le talent d'écrivain de l'auteur. Je parle ici d'un ton unique, d'une aptitude naturelle au récit, avec quelques relâchements stylistiques permettant aux dialogues de devenir de véritables petites scènes de tragédies, tantôt comiques, tantôt dramatiques.

En effet, par la nouvelle, on assiste à un genre littéraire où l'imaginaire fait merveille, avec, souvent, un brin d'esprit potinier, et beaucoup d'inventions fabulatrices, le temps de varier les angles de vues, et la dose de tendresse, dans l'observation de l'amour en mouvement, dans une humanité enclose, mais qui, néanmoins, console de quelques atrocités, barbaries, et autres réalités inquiétantes.

L'auteur l'écrit purement et sans ambages: il y a un seul lieu pour la souffrance. Et c'est le cœur humain. Il aurait pu construire une cathédrale en partant de cette idée. Il a écrit ce livre. Dans la vie, tout est une question de choix. Résultat : me voici avec un livre entre les mains. Je le recommande chaleureusement à tous. Bonne lecture.

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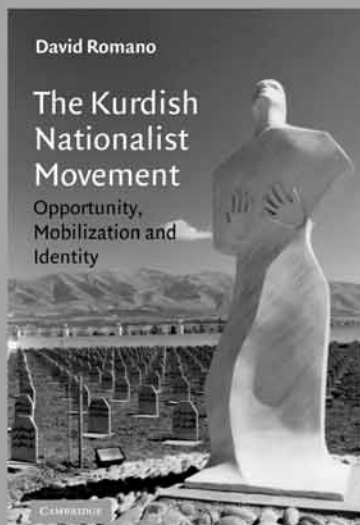
Benoit McGinnis fait une impression inoubliable sous les traits de Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart dans la brillante adaptation qu'a faite René Richard Cyr de la pièce Amadeus, de Peter Shaffer. La pièce est à l'affiche du Théâtre Jean Duceppe jusqu'au 21 mai prochain. Quiconque connaît la version filmée de la pièce sait que malgré son titre, l'œuvre ne traite pas vraiment de Mozart et qu'elle est plutôt une comédie noire sur la foi. La principale interrogation de la pièce est de savoir pourquoi Dieu donne souvent d'immenses talents à des gens qui les méritent le moins. Benoit McGinnis est extraordinaire dans le rôle de Mozart, vulgaire oiseau exotique aux cris perçants enfermé parmi une basse-cour de dindes gavées. Et il est suivi pas à pas par Michel Dumont qui joue le rôle épique de Salieri, tragique compositeur de la cour au 18e siècle, qui est le narrateur de la pièce. Michel Dumont donne une performance de maître, remplie d'introspection et de tension dramatique. Peter Shaffer, l'auteur, manipule les faits pour suggérer que le pieux mais médiocre Salieri, sous l'emprise d'une rage qu'il croyait justifiée, avait conspiré pour détruire la carrière de Mozart. En proie à une envie mal dissimulée, Salieri sombra dans la folie. Mozart, sous les griffes de talents moins remarquables, mourut brisé. Cette soirée ne tourne pas autour de la musique mais autour de la confrontation entre la médiocrité et le génie, et autour de la question de savoir qui, des deux musiciens, représentait le mieux l'image de Dieu. La troupe entière fait de l'excellent travail avec les contributions dignes de mention de Frederick Paquet, en monarque abruti, sous les traits de l'empereur Joseph II; Pascale Montreuil, qui joue le rôle de Constance, la femme de Mozart, et Denis Roy qui représente le baron Gottfried van Swieten. Grâce aux décors magnifiques, d'un noir d'onyx, illuminés à la chandelle d'Olivier Landreville et aux costumes scintillants de François Barbeau, la production atteint un niveau quasi mystique.



Benoit McGinnis.

PHOTO MARIE-CLAUDE HAMEL

Cambridge Middle East Studies



David Romano focuses on the Kurdish case to generally try and make sense of ethnic nationalist resurgence. In a world rent by a growing number of such conflicts, the questions posed about why, how and when such challenges to the state arise are becoming increasingly urgent.

Throughout the author analyzes these questions through the lens of social movement theory, considering in particular politico-social structures, resource mobilization strategies and cultural identity. His conclusions offer some thought-provoking insights into Kurdish nationalism, as well as into the strengths and weaknesses of various social movement theories.



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GALLANT WOMAN, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

named Mavis de Trafford Young, spent her summers in Chateauguay with her father, a furniture salesman and Sunday painter. "My father was an amateur artist, but he was so devoted I thought he was a professional," she said.

Gallant, who lent her name to the Quebec Writers Federation's annual literary prize for non-fiction, was educated by nuns after her father died when she was 10, then finished school in New York. She worked briefly for the National Film Board before being hired as a reporter for the *Montreal Standard*, where she was paid "half the salary men were earning." Journalism, she has said, "can keep a writer from getting bored, but it can also result in a writer forming bad habits." Married briefly to a musician, she was a feminist before the word was invented. After she sold her first short story, *Madeline's Birthday*, to *The New Yorker* in 1950, she quit Montreal and moved to Paris. Since then she's turned out

thousands of stories of yearning - tales peopled with characters who are adrift, emotionally insecure and often disconnected. "Happiness," as she once said, "is for pigs and cows."

In this collection, she writes of abandoned children, examines cultural clashes and tells of Bernadette, a naive unmarried French-Canadian house maid who is pregnant, and skewers a racist American tourist footloose on the Riviera. Like Munro, Annie Proulx, those other revered practitioners of the short story, Gallant's condensed literary portraits examine the finer nuances of human relations. Consider this spare description of the married couple, who employ Bernadette as their housemaid. "The Knights had been married for nearly sixteen years. They considered themselves solidly united. Like many people no longer in love, they cemented their relationship with opinions, pet prejudices, secret meanings, a private vocabulary that



PHOTO ALISON HARRIS

enabled them to exchange amused glances over a dinner table and made them feel a shade superior to the world outside their house."

Some of the chapters in the book, such as *A Revised Guide to Paris* and *On With the New France*, aren't so much short stories as they are opinion pieces. Gallant has never been shy to express an opinion.

"One doesn't go after a literary form, the form finds you," Gallant says. "I have started novels, but then broken them up into short stories. They teach you how to write short stories in university. It is considered something adolescents can do," she quips wryly. "Publishers will consider publishing a collection of short stories, but only if you've written a novel, or if you've produced a New Yorkerish collection of stories. But you have to work a long time to have a collection. They don't come out of the ground like earthworms."

Why doesn't she write in French? "Because English comes to me," she says. Nothing she claims can stop a real writer from writing. "I detest amateurs. Anyone who is an authentic writer and has an authentic voice doesn't need help from anyone."

Gallant has donated her personal papers to the Thomas Fisher Library at the University of Toronto where they will become available to researchers 25 years after she dies. In the meantime, she's busy editing her highly anticipated diaries. "Unless you have a million dollar endowment, you can't publish everything you have written. It is just too much," she says. "It was suggested that I pare the diaries to five volumes. If you are going to have 10 years in each volume, I don't want a big thing of a book, I want a book people can carry around." She denies suggestions made in *The Globe and Mail* that editing out the dirty bits from her diaries. She says she's revising some of the material so as not to embarrass people who are still alive, or their families. "I'll give you an example, I wrote that 'so and so' was in Paris this week looking more than ever than a child molester. If I gave my publishers raw copy like that, some people will be offended or hurt. I don't want to do that...25 years after everyone's dead it won't matter, but I don't want to go out of my way to hurt people who are still alive."

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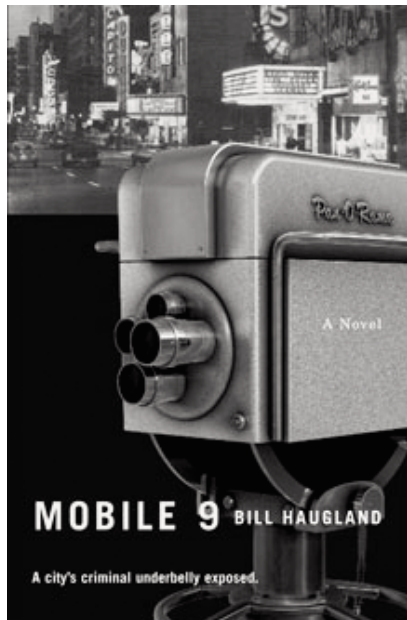
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Anchor turned author

Former Pulse News anchorman Bill Haugland, who retired three years ago as one of Montreal's most familiar and trusted faces on television will undoubtedly add to his considerable fan base with his first novel, *Mobile 9*. Even before the official book launch on May 19 it's already on the local best-seller list. Haugland draws on his time as a CFCF television reporter working for Pulse News in the 1960s to tell the intriguing tale of a television news cameraman, Greg Peterson, who is framed for an assault he did not commit. Like the author, the book is direct, uncomplicated and refreshing. It's a slender 215 page read designed to capture what it was like to work in television in Montreal during the tumultuous years after Expo 67, when it seemed, everything in the city was coming apart. Quebec terrorists were setting bombs, separatism was on the rise, and the mafia was under investigation. Anyone who worked at CFCF at the time - and, in the interest of full disclosure, I was there as a line-up editor and CTV correspondent - will recognize some of the larger-than-life characters Haugland has created, especially Bert Cannings, who appears as the cigar-chomping always politically incorrect news director, Clyde Bertram. The story is based in a real-life incident in which a CFCF employee was actually assaulted in one of the station's mobile units. But Haugland denies *Mobile 9* is a roman à clef. "In order to come up with one- three dimensional character," he says "I'd draw upon five different people I met. The people in the book are based on a composite of a whole variety of people." Although *Mobile 9* sometimes reads as if it's being scripted for a teleprompter with lines that sound better intoned than read,



such as "The city of Westmount nestles against Mount Royal, the once volcanic heart of the Island of Montreal" or "Snow came down like a theatre curtain," Haugland's tells his tale in cinematic fashion and avoids the pitfall of over plotting that usually infects first-time novels. His description of the 1969 Grey Cup in Montreal is perhaps a little too over-enthusiastic and slows the pace of the read. But overall, it's a commendable first book and effectively captures the linguistic, political and professional tensions that were at work at the time. One hopes that the book's main character, the intrepid reporter Ty Davis, who might easily be a Haugland stand-in, will be back in a second novel. Haugland, who lives in Vermont, will be at Paragraphe Books, 2220 McGill College Ave. 7:00 P.M. Tues. May. 19 for the book launch.



Correction Regurgitating the 60s

In the story *Regurgitating the 60s*, which appeared in the April 9 edition, the photographer for the photo of John Lennon and Yoko Ono was not identified. The photo credit should have read:
PHOTO BY GERRY DEITER
The Métropolitain apologizes for the omission.



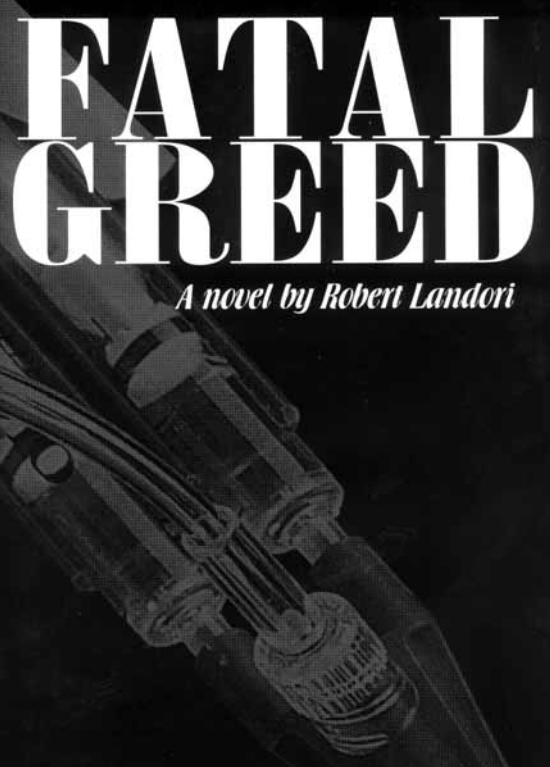
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