This conference will look at the tragic history of the “Blood Libel,” in which Jews were accused across the millennia of killing Christian children to use their blood in the Passover ritual.

One of the most infamous of these libels was the Mendel Beilis case, which occurred in the waning days of Tsarist Russia. The 100th anniversary of the near-miraculous acquittal of Beilis is the cause for this conference. The discussions will focus on Hannah R. Johnson’s influential recent book Blood Libel, a complex history of the phenomenon, as well as Bernard Malamud’s The Fixer, a fictional rendering of the Beilis case.

Panelists include Beilis’ grandson and attorney Jeremy Garber; Professor Vivian Curran, University of Pittsburgh Law School; Professor David Fraser, University of Nottingham; Professor Hannah R. Johnson, University of Pittsburgh, Department of English; Professor Jeffrey Mehlman, Boston University; Professor Sanford Levinson, University of Texas Law School; Professor Richard Weisberg, Cardozo School of Law; and Professor Thane Rosenbaum, Fordham Law School.

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