“J’y suis. Pour de Bon.”:

Montreal Jewish Education and the Social Construcion of Diaspora Identity

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This work examines the meaning of the State of Israel in diaspora Jewish education in contemporary Montreal, Canada. It does so by asking three central questions: "Is there a common idea of the nation?" "How is the idea of the nation made compelling and transferred from one generation to the next in a diaspora context?" and "Does the local context of a given diaspora community affect how the idea of the nation is taught?" The first part of this study draws on Anthony Smith's theory of ethnosymbolism to investigate how symbols and myths provide the cultural foundations necessary for the social construction of modern national consciousness. Particularly, it reveals the process through which the political myth of the State of Israel expanded on pre-modern religious narrative frameworks in order to elicit communal will and emotion and unify highly divergent Jewish communities around the idea of the nation.

Taking Montreal Jewish day schools as a site of inquiry, the second dimension of this research analyzes how the process of nation building occurs in a diaspora setting. It investigates how specific elements common to nations - the myth of election, territorialisation, shared ethnohistory, and communal destiny - are interwoven and actively cultivated in Israel education curricula and programming developed for mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools. This case study reveals how the absence of territorialisation creates certain challenges when cultivating diaspora nationalism and highlights how Montreal Jewish educators systematically attempt to overcome those challenges.

A final aspect of this work develops the idea that Jewish education is influenced by local social forces and that attachment to a national homeland increases when a diaspora community experiences social isolation. Specifically, it argues that fostering a common idea about the State of Israel in mainstream Montreal Jewish education is made possible due to the near institutional completeness of the Montreal Jewish community (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992); isolation from other local communities, namely the francophone community of Quebec (Jedwab 2008); and intensive Hebrew language and Jewish Studies curricula and the placement of Israeli teachers in Jewish day schools.

This study offers new insight into the affects of the socio-linguistic and local context on the process of diaspora identity formation in Jewish day schools. Equally, by emphasizing the foundational role religion holds in the social construction of national identity, this dissertation reveals how religion and nationalism can reinforce national cohesion in a diaspora context.

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Chapter 1: Defining the Terrain: Israel Education in Montreal Jewish Day Schools

> In our preoccupation with "systems" we tend to lose sight of the fact that political systems are made and unmade by people, and that the focus of our attention should therefore be on education, on changing human beings who, in the final analysis, will change the systems. (Horowitz 1979:26)

Questions

A glance at the Montreal Jewish Federation building on Cote Sainte Catherine Street and the flags billowing in the wind in front of it, offers insight into the place of Israel in Montreal diaspora Jewish identity. To the right of the entrance stand three flag poles bearing the flags of Canada, Quebec, and Montreal. To the left of the entrance is a single flagpole bearing the flag of the State of Israel. The placement of these state symbols reflects the story of Jewish immigration, integration, and identity into the province of Quebec and the nation of Canada as both part of, and apart from, the local, provincial, and federal communities. To most people who regularly enter and exit the building this symbolic separation, which places Canada, Quebec and Montreal on one side, and Israel on the other, is largely unnoticed. Ambivalence toward national symbols is often connected to passive dismissal, neutrality, or non-recognition. When state symbols - the main expression of national identity - become commonplace they are normalized, overlooked, even mundane. The ordinariness of national symbols in daily life is a means of assessing the place and power of the nation in identity formation (Mock 2012:44).

The "Montreal Jewish community" is by no means monolithic - and, as Knight and Alkallay (1988) write, it is a "misnomer in that the term encompasses many communities, slicing across religious, social and cultural barriers" (1988:3). It is a generalization that refers to people involved in the institutional life of Jewish Montreal - namely Federation CJA, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), or, as in this case the institutions that support Montreal Jewish education (BJEC, Association of Jewish Day Schools, etc). The central place of Israel in the life of the Montreal Jewish community is expressed and reinforced by the community's institutional structures, housed within the Federation building. Among them are the Bronfman Jewish Education Centre (BJEC) and the Bronfman Israel Experience Center (BIEC), Hillel Montreal,

and Camp B'nai Brith. Montreal Jewish education offers a strategic site to examine the place of Israel in diaspora Jewish identity by looking at how identity is formed, unformed, and reformed in the day school setting. These underlying questions inform the work that follows: Is there a common idea of the nation? How is the idea of the nation[1] made compelling and transferred from one generation to the next in a diaspora location? and Does the local context of a given diaspora community affect how the idea of the nation is taught?

To address these questions, I began to map out the study of nations and nationalism as presented within the field of sociology and the sociology of religion. The reliance on a sociological theory of nations developed from my assumption that schools and nations are forms of human relationships. More pointedly, schools reflect the social realties of the local society in which they are located. Given this, my focus on curriculum study and teacher interviews stemmed from the desire to understand how Israel was being presented in mainstream Jewish day schools,[2] and how it was interconnected with, or distanced from, other subjects. I wondered whether Jewish day schools might provide the discursive space to discuss the meaning of Israel and exemplify the constant debate, dialogue, and disagreement that inform the history of Jewish thought.

Rational

The focus on curricula in the field was stimulated by a desire to understand how the idea of Israel is taught and presented to day school students. The initial inspiration for this study derived from a number of experiences I had as a student on various university campuses,[3] and later - still a

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[1] In using the term "idea of the nation", I am referring to a common "political myth". As Bottici writes, a political myth is less an analytic category than a process, one that "responds to a need for significance that changes over time. It is precisely because in order to be a myth it has to provide significance within changing circumstances that a myth is best understood as a process, as a 'work on myth', rather than as an object" (Bottici 2011:38). This work highlights the relationship between religious and political myths.

[2] The term "mainstream Jewish day schools", commonly found in literature referring to both Ashkenazi and Sephardic non-ultra Orthodox schools (Mary Maguire 2010; Charles Shahar 2006, 2011, 2014; Helena Miller 2014) is used here to refer to local day schools that define themselves as Zionist in their mission statements, yet differ in their religious orientation.

[3] My time as an undergraduate student at Concordia University coincided with the invitation of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to Concordia. The student conflict surrounding that event literally took over campus life and many students were compelled to take a public stance either in support or against Israel or Israeli policies on the issue of Palestinians. As a witness to this student conflict, I experienced a strong personal discord, and resistance to "perform" my identity in siding with one community or the other. I went on to complete a Masters thesis, which

graduate student - as a mother committed to raising my two children as Jews who are conscious of their connection to Israel.[4]

This study offers a picture of the idea of the nation of Israel and current pedagogic approaches to Israel education that shores up mainstream Jewish day schools in Montreal. Given the high level of enrolment of Montreal Jews in Jewish day schools (Shahar 2014:2), the theoretical and pedagogic approaches to the teaching of Israel in mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools offer a window into the triumphs and challenges of maintaining a normative idea of Israel within the classroom. Using the term "normative" here, I am referring to a shared communal value that is constitutive of, and regulated through, Montreal Jewish communal institutions. In Montreal Jewish education, this regulation occurs through positioning the State of Israel in a religious political framework that simultaneously describes the nation-state and prescribes the meaning the State of Israel holds in national identity. As one Montreal Jewish day school teacher explains: "This big pride of Jewish identity, you cannot separate it from *Eretz Yisrael.*[5] That land is still

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focused on people who were equally uncomfortable with the either/or stance. I believe that Jews should be able to live in a sovereign state of Israel, and I believe that Palestinians have this same right of national self-determination. While I understand the historical and spiritual role the land of Israel plays in daily liturgy and Jewish identity, I viewed Israel as a contemporary political nation-state, rife with political, economic, and demographic problems. Not unlike my Canadian friends, the Israelis I knew criticised their government's policies, rallied against rent increases, and made jokes about other Israelis and about themselves. Unlike my Canadian friends, my Israeli friends by-and-large participated in army service, were acutely aware of world politics, and had bomb shelters in their home. When I traveled to the West Bank to interview Palestinians engaged in dialogue with Jewish Israelis – my MA was an ethnography of communities based in Israel and the West Bank – a few of my Jewish Israeli acquaintances stated I was naïve; one was completely outraged. Most Israelis I knew were interested and intrigued to hear about Ramallah, Nablus, and Jenin, cities they could not enter due to military and legal jurisdictions, which impede civilian interaction between Jewish Israelis living in Israel and Palestinians living in the West Bank.

[4] As a graduate student then in my mid-thirties the systemic and implicit norms on which a system of education is built came to the fore. As Endacott writes, "the university environment is an unforgiving place. It is very much built on a male model of performance" (2014:53). For me, this was made most clear after becoming a mother. I became pregnant with my first child while enrolled in a graduate program. When I chose to have a second child, and was still enrolled in a graduate program, the Graduate Coordinator summoned me to his office to ask why I was not taking birth control. These memories stuck with me as I sought to understand how cultural, religious and educational institutions were impacting and constraining who I was, and who my children would be. As a result I began to examine the system of Jewish education in Montreal, the city in which my second child was born. Though we moved from Montreal while my children were still pre-schoolers, this study is in part a result of that exploration. While this work does not attempt to connect my home and academic life, these personal and professional experiences germinated ideas about the intersection of education, religion, and diasporic national identity.

[5] The Land of Israel.

there and we always go back to it. Always. [...] Jewish people, Hebrew, *Eretz Yisrael*. You can't break the connection" (Zach Yurkovich, Personal Interview, February 26, 2013).[6]

This teacher expresses numerous forms of group identity: the confluence of national allegiance and religious observance; the framing of the relationship between diaspora and homeland around the centrality of the idea of the nation; and the role of symbols in collective identity. As will be evidenced, the teaching of Israel and Israeli nationalism is largely undifferentiated from Judaism, Jewish peoplehood, Jewish history, or geography. State symbols are so commonplace within Montreal mainstream Jewish education that they blend into every aspect of group identity.

Therefore, due to various communal structures and socio-linguistic contextual factors, I argue that mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools maintain a normative idea of the State of Israel, wherein Judaic sources and Jewish history are taught as intrinsically compatible with diasporic Jewish-Israeli nationalism. It is only when one attempts to dislodge the national attachment to Israel from the religious, ethnic and cultural forms of identity that their interconnection is revealed. The purpose of this study is to reveal a process in which leaders, teachers, and educators in the community who feel a meaningful connection to Israel have an influence. Notably, this study focuses on the theoretical underpinnings and pedagogical methods practiced within Montreal mainstream Jewish day schools and does not attempt to assess the legitimacy of their objectives. Montreal Jewish students experience and express identity in numerous ways, and Israel is only one of many social forces influencing their identity. Like any other diaspora community, Montreal Jews have multifaceted identities as well.

The first rationale for this study is to understand how collective expressions of Jewish identity are being socially constructed. Various researchers who study the sociology of Jewish identity understand Jewish identity as an ethnic identity (Elias and Blanton 1987; Elizur 1984). An ethnic identity is changeable, depending on the social context in which an individual is located, and is made and remade by an individual throughout their lifetime (Nagle 1994). Eugene Borowitz states that Jewish ethnic identity has become a form of "creative alienation," a means of

[6] In order to grant interviewees anonymity, the names of all individuals who participated in this research appear as pseudonyms.

remaining a critical outsider and observer of North American society, while equally attempting to align North American society with Jewish social values (Borowitz 1973:209). Recent studies indicate that expression of Jewish identity has been largely affected by post-modern personalism, in which cultural identity is selected, even constructed, by the individual (Berger and Luckman 1967). The continuum of communal values remains a challenge in the age of the privatization of religion, where faith and religious living are lived in the private sphere (Berger 1967). Cohen and Eisen argue that many collective expressions of Jewish identity has diminished greatly, and they point to the increasing focus on personal or private identity among Jewish Americans (Cohen and Eisen 2000). Lisa Grant and Michael Marmur write of:

> […] a well-documented decline in a sense of ethnic connections among Jews in North America, this is particularly salient among younger Jews who are emblematic of an ethos that allows for and even celebrates the individual freedom and the constructed nature of identity in a post-ethnic world. (Grant and Marmur 2007:102)

The decline in Jewish collective identity expression, and ethnic sense of connection and continuity, has occurred simultaneously as an increase of religious identity among diaspora Jews – most often as privatized form of spiritual expression. As Alon Gal writes,

> During the last three decades or so, the conspicuous ethnic element of Jewish identity has weakened, while the religious one has grown stronger. This trend of increasing religiosity at the expense of ethnicity can also be associated with a greater emphasis on individualism, soul-searching and the quest for personal self-realization. These tendencies have partly replaced collective/community orientations in general and attachment to Israel in particular. (Gal 2010:67)

These critics reveal a significant shift in the way collective Jewish identity is conceived of and expressed, particularly in regard to the State of Israel.

Twists and turns in the sociology of Jewish identity have recently come to an uncharted area, namely Jewish day schools. While there are various social forces and institutions that influence, make, and unmake aspects of identity, the Jewish day school requires consideration as a site to assess how Jewish identity is developed and articulated (Pomson & Schnoor 2008).

During the past two decades, the number of parents enrolling their children in Jewish day schools across North America has increased significantly (Berkerman and Kopelowitz 2008). The proliferation of separate Jewish day schools has been noted as one of the most significant forces of organized Jewish life and as Walter Ackerman writes: "it is the growth of the Jewish day school movement which is surely a distinguishing character of American Jewish life in our generation" (Ackerman 1989:86). The rise and impact of mainstream Jewish day schools have grown rapidly since the 1960s; whereas 60,000 students attended day schools during the 1960s in the United States (Della Pergola and Schmelz 1989), by 2008, nearly 230,000 students were enrolled in Jewish day schools (Schick 2010). By 2008 enrolment increased by 25 percent since 1998-1999, and 11 percent since 2003-2004 (Schick 2010). Day school education has surprisingly found its greatest popularity among liberal Jews.

One-fifth of American Jewish school-aged children are enrolled in non-Orthodox mainstream day schools (Schick 2010). Scholars have explained the increased enrolment of religiously liberal Jews in Jewish day schools as a result of the presumed diminished quality of public schools (Zeldin 1998), and the dissatisfaction with public education (Shapiro 1996). However, other commentators interpret the increase in liberal, middle-class families choosing Jewish day schools for their children in terms of a new understanding of the social construction of Jewish identity in North America (Sarna 1998). As Alex Pomson and Randal Schnoor write:

> In recent years, it seems as if there has been a changed assessment of what it means to be Jewish in America. Increasing numbers of liberal Jews have abandoned the public school system and have signed up their children for a parochial model of education in which they study a dual curriculum of Jewish and general studies in an all-day setting separate from non-Jewish students. (Pomson and Schnoor 2008:305)

According to Pomson and Schnoor, the reason so many liberal Jews have abandoned public education is cultural survival. Even so, this fear of cultural extinction is not resulting in increased synagogue attendance or home ritual. Consequently, the role of religious and cultural education, teaching for values, has largely been relegated to the schools. This proliferation of separate Jewish day schools across North America has been noted by commentators as one of the most significant changes in contemporary organized Jewish communal life (Ackerman 1989). As

Steven Cohen concludes, "the effects of Jewish (day school) education persist beyond marriage. It increases the chances that Jews will marry Jews; and if they marry Jews (but not Gentiles), Jewish education elevates the likelihood that as adults, they will be more involved in Jewish life" (Cohen 1995:92). Many scholars agree that Jewish education has a direct impact on the personal practice of individuals (Fishman 1999); participation in Jewish education leads to Jewish practice, and low participation leads to low practice.

A second rationale for this study is that Jewish day school education affects not only the students involved but also the entire family. This concept of educating the whole family appears to be the trend throughout the North American Jewish diasporas (Bekerman and Kopelowitz 2008). In the Canadian context, it is certainly a prominent phenomenon. In their book *Back to School: Jewish Day School in the Lives of Adults,* Pomson and Schnoor write extensively about the effect of Toronto Jewish day schools on the entire family. In their case study of a downtown Jewish day school, they state that parents select a Jewish day school to suit their own spiritual needs as much as those of their children. More and more, Jewish families look to the school as the center of Jewish life. They call this the "school as *shul*" phenomena (*Shul* meaning synagogue in Yiddish), wherein the school not the synagogue is the central institution in Jewish communal life (Pomson and Schnoor 2008). In the following passage, Zeldin explains the breadth of this dilemma:

> As the institutional forms of Jewish education have multiplied, so too have the tasks assigned to Jewish education. Whereas in earlier times, Jewish schools could focus on the study of the Jewish textual tradition, by the latter half of the twentieth-century schools took on many of the functions previously fulfilled by families, neighbourhoods, and other community agencies. The main focus of Jewish education—even in schools but certainly in informal programs—shifted from content learning to the development of Jewish identity. Since the family often did not have the tools to support what children were learning and how they were developing in Jewish schools, schools began to re-envision themselves as places for Jewish learning and growing for the whole family. (2011:viii)

The issues at stake in Jewish education are individual identity and communal continuity. Jewish education endeavours to bridge these two elements through bridging the family/school divide. A successful strategy has been to understand the culture of the home and use the classroom

curricula to build on familial values. As Professor Alvin Schiff describes: "We cannot deal with students if we disregard their family background, since school is, at best, a reinforcer of attitudes, behavior patterns, and even skills acquired in the home environment" (Schiff 1999:151). In previous times, the home was concurrently the school. Jewish parents were obliged to teach their children through moral, ethical, and literary teachings located in the living traditions of Judaism. Now, it is the school that must work with the home to educate the student. Schiff writes:

> The singular focus of schooling – including the Jewish school – has been the education of the child. It is clear, now, that the current challenge of continuity requires that the school broaden its scope to include the whole family. (Schiff 1999:152)

In his report on Montreal Jewish day schools, Morton Weinfeld concurs with Schiff on the influence of the home on reinforcing school learning. In a report on the Jewish day school system of Montreal, Weinfeld indicates a preference by parents for more intensive Hebrew language and Judaic curricula; even so, the parents' own insufficient learning disables proper continuity of knowledge between home and school environments. "Given the range of Judaic backgrounds of parents or children, it is often the case that by grades 2 or 3 parents can no longer help children with Hebrew homework, as their knowledge is insufficient" (Weinfeld 1985:53). One antidote to this problem has been the school-linked adult education program as advocated and researched by Pomson and Schnoor. This need for adult education in Jewish day schools reflects the factors involved in parents choosing a Jewish day school for their children. They write: "Literally and metaphorically, parents are looking for a school that *speaks to them* […] Speaking to them means that parents want to readily understand what a school stands for and whether they can see themselves standing with it" (Pomson and Schnoor 2008:157). For this reason, bridging the gap between home and school heightens the possibility of integrating knowledge. In sum, Jewish day schools have become a central institution affecting Jewish identity formation of students and families alike.

A third rational driving this case study is the impetus to understand how collective Jewish identity is conceived of in relation to the State of Israel. The particular focus on the centrality of Israel in diaspora Jewish education derives from the fact that in the diaspora context there are more teaching resources on Israel than any other subject in Jewish education (Chazan 1999).

However, it remains the most problematic subject to teach in the contemporary setting. One of the often-stated goals of teaching about Israel in Jewish day schools is to infuse students with an emotional attachment to the State of Israel. This is generally referred to as teaching a "love of Israel" (Pomson, Deitcher and Rose 2009:9). Students enrolled in a Jewish day school may have cousins living in Israel or may have visited Israel, but for the most part, the understanding of Israel is constructed out of imaginings solicited from the classroom setting, family home life, the media, camps, and synagogue. The vast and conflicting mosaic of images creating a student's view of Israel is both complex and, often, contradictory. As commentators in a recent report on Israel education in North American Jewish day schools note: "Israel education in North America is a congested and contested field" (Pomson, Deitcher and Rose 2009:3). Due to these reasons, the centrality of teaching about Israel in a diaspora context has come into question. Alick Isaacs writes:

> As much of the recent sociological research shows, the firm and central place of Israel in the future of Jewish education should not be taken for granted. Many feel alienated and distant from Israel – if not even put off by it – and choose to avoid teaching about it in both formal and informal Jewish educational settings. It is in these circumstances that the lack of rich theoretical conversation about the purposes of Israel education is starting to show. (Isaacs 2011:479)

Isaac's observation about the uncertain role of Israel in diaspora Jewish education reflects an active distancing between Jewish communities in North America -particularly in the U.S. - and Israel. This distancing hypothesis, which has been the focus of various studies (Chazan and Cohen 2000: 76-82; Cohen and Kelman 2007), argues that Israel no longer plays a defining role in American Jewish identity. This has generally been presented as a "crisis" in diaspora Jewish education (Grant 2011; Isaacs 2011). Indeed, this "crisis" surrounding the place of Israel in diaspora Jewish identity equally reflects a crisis in the national identity of Israelis living in Israel around the meaning of the nation (Ben-Moshe and Segev 2007:2), and the breakdown of a binding national ethos in Israel (Shavit 2013).

Given that the centrality of Israel education in diaspora Jewish day schools has been placed in question, and that the absence of a common idea behind teaching Israel in Jewish diaspora day

schools has come to light (Isaacs 2011:480), the purpose of Israel education has been rendered unclear. Isaacs argues that a major flaw in the teaching of Israel in the diaspora is the lack of communication of a clear meaning of the nation. He asks: What does Israel *mean*? How can we make Israel *meaningful*? His response is to return to the idea of Israel, and to investigate what, if any, theoretical strategies are currently in place, and assess the various ideological approaches to Israel education. Isaacs concludes that in terms of ideology, Zionism remains the prominent narrative from which the meaning of the State of Israel is derived (Isaacs 2011).

Isaacs begins his investigation into the ideology of Israel education in the Jewish diasporas by presenting six categories into which Israel education may fit. These include: the classical Zionist model, wherein Israel is presented as the apex and culmination of Jewish history; the Israel engagement model, which presents experiencing Israel as a central part of Jewish identity; the Jewish peoplehood model, where the study of Israel leads to a wider discussion of community and communal responsibility; the romantic/realist model, which analyzes the effects of Zionism as an ideology; the classical Jewish text model, which applies the meaning of the study of the State of Israel to classical Jewish texts; and the visionary model, wherein the contemporary events within the State of Israel are studied as a means of expanding on and learning from traditional Jewish texts (Isaacs 2011:480). These categories can be further distilled into two overarching orientations: the classical Zionist model and the Israel engagement model (Pomson, Deitcher and Rose 2009). Pomson, Deitcher and Rose write that the classical Zionist orientation predominated curriculum content in North American Jewish day schools, until the year 2000.[7]

> It is not surprising that a higher proportion of curriculum produced before the year 2000 was of the *classical Zionist* orientation, while after that year the *Israel engagement* and *Jewish peoplehood* models have appeared more frequently. This change in emphasis reflects a fundamental shift in the way in which Israel's relationship to the Diaspora has been conceived both by Israelis and by Diaspora Jews: Israel education no longer seeks to demonstrate the exceptionality of the State of Israel, but rather aims to relate to Israel in

[7] The 1990s "culture war" in Israel, wherein religious and secular factions fought to define Israeli Jewish identity, resulted in the proliferation of American-Jewish liberal organization which promoted civil society and religious pluralism within and outside the State Israel (Shain 2007:70).

> ways that strengthen an argument for being Jewish wherever one is in the world. (Pomson, Deitcher and Rose 2009:18)

This shift in the philosophical orientation of curricula speaks directly to Isaac's concern to reassess the meaning of the State of Israel in diaspora Jewish education.

Developing Isaac's typology of Israel education further, Alex Pomson, Howard Deitcher and Daniel Rose include two under-assessed Israel education programs: Israel advocacy model, and Hebrew language model. The Israel advocacy model focuses on preparing students to advocate on behalf of the State of Israel in the public sphere, and the Hebrew language model in which the State of Israel is integrated into the study of Hebrew language, Jewish studies, and Jewish history (Pomson, Deitcher and Rose 2009). Due to the fact that an analysis of the meaning of the state of Israel in these two final categories remains under assessed, the Israel advocacy model and the Hebrew language model will be the focus of the curriculum analysis within this dissertation. In order to address what Israel means in these models of Israel education, I will first situate this case study in a particular local context.

A final reason for this study is that despite the increasing recognition of the impact of Jewish education on communal Jewish identity, studies rarely explore how increased enrolment, and collective attachment to the State of Israel in Jewish day schools is influenced by location. Given the context of local social forces, the Montreal Jewish community population is distinctive in North America. Montreal continues to hold the highest percentage of students enrolled in Jewish education in Canada (Shahar 2014), and within North America, it is second only to New York City (Sheskin 2013:2).

Still, studies comparing diaspora communities of Canada and the United States reveal significant differences in terms of Jewish identity, which inevitably effect how the subject of Israel is taught. Previously, Zionism was seen as the unifying factor of both Canadian and US Jewish diaspora identity. For example, in 1974, Neusner wrote, "Zionism lies at the foundation of American Jewry's capacity to affirm its Jewishness" (1974:232). The emotional allegiance to the Jewish homeland, the ultimate achievement of the creation of the State of Israel, and the response to the horror of the death camps, united Jews once again on a single platform. However,

according to recent studies, support of the State of Israel is no longer the unifying factor in American Jewry.

> With the tensions over the competing visions of Israel virtually irreconcilable, Israel's attractiveness as a symbol of identity and unity – particularly among the younger generation of secularized US Jewry – is set to virtually vanish. (Seliktar 2007:135)

Notably, both political Zionism, which emerged as a response to external threats faced by Jews in the modern world, and cultural Zionism, a response to internal threats to the continuation of a meaningful Jewish communal identity in an era of individuality, choice, and assimilation, arose in response to modern social forces (Livni 2007:87). Political Zionism sought to establish and continue a secular Jewish state; cultural Zionism is concerned with the continuation and revival of Jewish culture. That said political Zionism is equally psychological in its motivation is cultural survival (Orr 1994:120). While political Zionism was in some measure completed through the establishment of the State of Israel, cultural Zionism, which aimed to "ensure the continued creative existence of the Jewish people, wherever they may be," had an objective that was "infinite" (Livni 2007:87). Given this distinction, it is "the propagation of norms rooted in cultural Zionist ideology of what the state should be" which continues to influence the idea of Israel (Livni 2007:88). In contemporary terms, maintaining an active Jewish- Zionist commitment while living in the diaspora means identifying with a particular idea of Israel and what the state "should be".[8]

One objective of this study is to offer insight into the influence of a particular location on teaching about Israel and counterbalance existing literature about Israel education and the role of national identity in Jewish diaspora education, which overwhelmingly focuses on the current situation of U.S. Jewry. Canadian Jews are more Zionist and knowledgeable about the State of Israel than American Jews (Horowitz 2002). Goldberg asserts, "Identification with the State of Israel always has been and will continue to be a major factor contributing to the vitality and viability of the Canadian Jewish community" (Goldberg 2007:215). Shahar and Karpman (2006)

[8] While I agree with Ari Shavit (2013) that any real examination of Israel must account for the nexus of "intimidation and occupation" it faces as a contemporary nation-state, in this work the focus is on the idea of Israel as taught in a given diaspora locale.

observe that Canadian Jews were more religiously traditional than American Jews. Compared with American Jews, Montreal Jews are significantly more connected with Israelis and the State of Israel, have more developed knowledge about the State of Israel, and remain more politically pro-Israel (Shahar 2006: 3). Moreover, the Montreal Jewish community is more religiously adherent and communally active than other Canadian communities (Shahar & Karpman 2006:3). "Major surveys have suggested that Montreal's Jews consistently have among the highest levels of Jewish education, ritual observance, synagogue affiliation, volunteerism, and ties to Israel of any Jewish community on the continent" (Shahar 2014:1). While the story of Montreal Jewish education may be unique, in other respects it speaks to wider phenomenon appearing throughout North American Jewish life, wherein the Jewish day school has become a central institution in Jewish communal life. Equally, as communal institutions, Jewish day schools – and the Jewish education bureaus that support them - have the capacity to regulate and disseminate normative ideas about the State of Israel and its role in diaspora Jewish identity. It is the idea of the nation of Israel as presented in the curricula and classrooms of Montreal Jewish day schools that is the focus of the work that follows.

The Idea of the Nation

The study of nations, nationality and nationalism became prominent during the 1970s; theorists of nationalism disagree on the question of when the nation became an organizing form of social order. In this dissertation, I adopt the theoretical framework of Anthony Smith, who argues that nations, as forms of collective order, require repositories of symbols that signify the values and ideals of the collective; pre-modern affects of belonging are drawn on by modern nations to form the will and emotion of individuals and effectively mobilize national solidarity. The reserve of symbols is structured, and this structure is what organizes and socializes individuals to hold appropriate attitudes toward the nation. In order to hold a normative function, the idea of the nation must be structured in myth patterns familiar to the nation, which Smith calls the *ethnosymbolism* of the pre-modern *ethnie* (Smith 2009).

Using ethnosymbolism as a means of understanding nationalism, I analyze what pedagogical practices the Montreal Jewish day school community has developed in order to teach about the State of Israel in the context of the diaspora. More broadly, I examine the inter-connectedness of

religious and national identity, symbolism, and education. This case study examines how the curriculum (textbooks, workbooks, etc.) and teachers attempt to instil in students a sense of diasporic national identity based on collective memory, religious traditions, and symbols derived from a common idea of the nation. I do not claim that all education programs require a cohesive set of symbols to elicit communal identity, given that many forms of education place limited emphasis on state symbols or mythology. Rather, in this case of diaspora national education, pre-modern symbols and myths work to relate the modern state to a religious past. Particularly, this work reveals the distinct location of Jewish day school education in Quebec, precariously located as it is between a Quebec-centred nationalism and the national ethos of multiculturalism in Canada.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter two focuses on established theories of nations and nationalism, concentrating on the theory and methodology of ethnosymbolism as a model to explain how symbols and myths contribute to collective identity and social cohesion. The second part of the chapter traces the idea of the nation espoused by political Zionists back through the symbolic discourse of Judaism to demonstrate the structural influence of the pre-modern *ethnie* on the modern nation. Chapter three offers a detailed account of the historical, sociological, and socio-linguistic factors that have shaped Jewish education in Montreal and that have resulted in Montreal holding such a high percentage of students enrolled in Jewish day schools, and provides the context for this case study. Chapter four describes the methodologies employed within this study, including curricula analyses, ethnographic observations, and semi-structured interviews.

Chapter five analyzes a Hebrew Language model of Israel education created and used by the local Jewish school system. This chapter also includes perspectives of Montreal's educators working in the day schools to reveal how the teaching of Jewish Studies and Hebrew language by a single Israeli teacher reinforces the link between religious and national modes of identification. Chapter six investigates the pedagogical practices used to foster attachment to the idea of the nation in students attending Jewish high schools. These practices include positioning Israeli teachers in the classrooms, school-twinning between Montreal and Beersheba, and Israel Experience trips. This chapter includes a curriculum analysis of an Israel advocacy curriculum

developed within BJEC and offers insight into the practice of teaching Israel advocacy as a separate subject. This chapter also holds an ethnographic component and includes interviews with Montreal Jewish teachers and educators employed in Jewish high schools. Chapter seven provides concluding remarks on the role of religion and idea of Israel in the social construction of Montreal Jewish identity, and indicates future avenues of research that may derive from this case study.

The focus of this study on what is being taught, and teacher's perspectives on it, offers new insight into the place of Israel in diaspora Jewish education. Much research on the impact of Israel education often focuses on the success of a particular curriculum, without taking into consideration the local context in which that curriculum has developed, or the presence of Israel and Israelis within the Jewish day school community. This study seeks to partially fill that void. In the work that follows, I investigate the possibility that the location of a diaspora Jewish community impacts both how diaspora nationalism is taught and the role Israel plays in the life of the school.

Taking Montreal Jewish day schools as a site of inquiry, I investigate the pedagogical practices used to cultivate diaspora national identity within the classroom. Drawing on Israel education curricula, supplemented by a number of interviews with Israeli educators working in Montreal Jewish day schools, I conclude that Israel education curricula and programming fostered in mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools upholds a normative idea of the nation while simultaneously drawing on the symbolic discourse of Judaic sources to instil particular attitudes and behaviour in students about the State of Israel. From this study, one will not discover whether the diaspora nationalist program of Montreal Jewish day school education is successful, that is, whether students integrate the ethnosymbolism that is to ignite in them a passion for Israel as a "homeland." That is a topic for future research. Here we will discuss what the teachers teach, rather than what the learners learn.

I conclude that explanations for the strong attachment to Israel in the Montreal Jewish community are numerous. First, the near institutional completeness of the Montreal Jewish community and the social isolation from other local communities has increased the diaspora-homeland link. Second, the communal isolation and institutional separatism, which has allowed

for an understanding of the State of Israel as a fundamental aspect of Jewish identity, impacts the way in which Jewish identity is taught. In Jewish day schools, religion, ethnicity, language, and nationalism are interwoven through separate pedagogical practices. This socialization process, in which religion and nationalism reinforce national cohesion, leads students to identify with the State of Israel as a fundamental part of Jewish identity. Third, Israel education remains a central aspect of mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools due to the widespread teaching of the Hebrew language and Jewish Studies, the placement of Israeli teachers, and innovative Israel experience programs. For these reasons, Montreal Jewish day schools provide a unique site to analyze the process of transmitting the idea of the nation from one generation to the next. These conclusions offer a more detailed understanding of the function of the nation in diaspora Jewish identity. They also remind us that a nation is a site of social bonds, informed by a diverse range of emotional attachments to a shared symbolic discourse.

Chapter 2: Ethnosymbolism and the Idea of the Nation

Summary

This chapter locates this study's focus on the idea of the nation in Montreal Jewish day schools in the broader field of theories of nations and nationalism, and, more specifically, on the theory of ethnosymbolism as a model to explain how the traditions, values, symbols and myths of pre-modern *ethnies* continue to structure the social relations of modern nations. Integrating into communities throughout the world by adopting localized languages and adapting to regional cultures, Jews are a heterogeneous group holding to a highly diverse set of traditions (Berger, Lapointe, and Najman 2012:124). The formal acceptance of the State of Israel by the United Nations in 1948 resulted in mass immigration from Jewish diasporas the world over.[9] Between 1945 and 1951 over 750,000 Jewish refugees settled in the State of Israel (Shavit 2013:148). In the first three and a half years after the State of Israel was established the number of new immigrants (685,000) was more than the number of citizens (655,000) (Shavit 2013:148).[10] These newly immigrated citizens of Israel were primarily European survivors of the Holocaust as well as Jewish emigrants from North African and Muslim countries (Shokeid 2012:131). Among others, these new immigrants would inform the structure and cultural identity of Israeli society (Shokeid 2012:138). The foundation of this nation was rooted in an idea – a common political myth. To assess how this idea of the nation continues to influence and determine Jewish identity throughout the world, I will first locate this study within the theoretical context of nations and nationalism.

[9] The establishment of the State of Israel did not occur in a vacuum. The concurrent rise of Palestinian national consciousness cannot be adequately addressed here. While these two national movements are often placed in opposition to one another, they are equally distinct stories of a community of people holding a collective identity and seeking self-determination and sovereignty over a geographic territory. For a more in-depth analysis of the rise of Palestinian nationalism see Michael Broning. (2013). *Political Parties in Palestine: Leadership & Thought.* London: Palgrave MacMillan, and Rashid Khalidi (2009). *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*. NY: Columbia University Press.

[10] Ari Shavit's writes, "In it's first decade of existence, the Jewish state experience a wave of immigration never experienced by any other state in modern times" (Shavit 2013:148).

Theories of the Nation and Nationalism

Many scholars conflate the terms ethnicity and nation into *ethnonationalism;* this term refers simultaneously to the allegiance to an ethnic group, which holds or does not hold a bordered state, and an ideology of nationalism, that is the common idea that a people or nation should in some way have its own state (Conversi 2004). An ethnic community (from the Greek *ethnos*) and a nation (from the Latin *nasci*) are generally seen as synonyms. Yet, Anthony Smith's work explores the connection, and distinction, between an *ethnie* and nation. Smith defines *ethnies*, or ethnic communities, as "named human populations with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory, and a sense of solidarity" (Smith 1998:191). *Ethnies* are the pre-modern antecedents of nations. While an *ethnie* is quite similar in definition to a nation, the distinction can be found in historical processes of modernity, which offered the ethnic community sovereignty over a bordered territory as well as economic unity (Smith 1998:196). Both *ethnies* and nations are forms of social relations based on a shared symbolic system. Notably, modern nation-states - even though they have larger populations - are more ethnically homogeneous than pre-modern forms of political rule (Miller 1997). Following the American and French revolutions, nationalism as an ideological movement became one of the most potent forces in the modern world (Smith and Hutchinson 1994:3). Today, despite globalization and internal challenges to established states, we still live in an international order of nation-states.

Initially the study of nations was the subject of historians such as Carleton Hayes, Hans Kohn, and E. H. Carr. These scholars held "perennialist" notions of nations as transhistorical phenomena. Perennialists, also known as essentialists, generally share a common understanding that nations are the modern manifestation of pre-modern forms of ethnic identity. In the perennialist view, nations are based on the "natural" communal bond of biological and kinship ties, i.e., ties that spread from the family to the clan to the nation (Armstrong 1982). This presentation of nations as an inevitable form of collective organization was challenged by the work of social constructionists such as Elie Kedorie, Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson, and Karl Deutsch. They shifted from perennialism toward sociologically grounded theories that saw nations as socially constructed and unique to modernity. From this viewpoint, nations are the products of collective interaction rather than human nature. Social constructionists generally

agree on the processes through which nations are formed, but differ in their ideas of which social interactions are most important in imbuing an individual with this collective identity.

Ernest Gellner writes that nationalism is a purely political project. In his view, nations are understood as units of political sovereignty, and nationalism as the extension of political order (Gellner 1983:123). Gellner's claim that nationalism is based on a principle (a political concept) that takes form in sentiment and movement[11] built upon Kedourie's earlier claims that nationalism precedes the nation, and that both are indeed constructs of modernity (Kedourie 1966:9). In this view, modernity is conceived of as a "rupture" from pre-industrial society and is at odds with the continuity of history. Adding to the social constructionist understanding of nations and nationalism, Benedict Anderson writes that belonging to a nation resides in the realm of human imagination; by sharing a system of communication (including language, history, and customs), people imagine themselves to form a community (Anderson 1983). While one of Anderson's primary arguments is the use of "print capitalism" (books and newspapers) to represent and create this imagined community, his hypothesis is rooted in other significant factors. For example, communities bond when there is a fear of death through extinction or annihilation; exposure to linguistic diversity; waning of sacred monarchies; and integration of linear time through the clock and calendar. It is the combined nature of these elements that leads a community beyond its locality to bond with a larger "imagined" national community.

Additionally, according to Karl Deutsch people bond together as a nation, despite their socio-economic and political divisions, through an established system of social communication, which includes social practices (Deutsch 1966). In this way, a nation may be understood as a site of social relations (Deutsch 1966). Deutsch argues that the goal of national movements is to expand and edify communication networks, which in turn unify the population through a uniform system of symbols, habits and practices (Deutsch 1966:96). A nation's system of communication is based on shared attachment to group symbols learned over long periods of time, often a lifespan, which may only be expressed in the context of community members (Deutsch 1966:101).

[11] Gellner writes that nationalism is a "political principle, which holds that the political and national unit should be congruent" (Gellner 1983:123).

Moreover, according to Deutch, language alone does not offer enough of a common symbolic system; symbols, cultural and historical references, as well as social and cultural memories, enable a person to relate to someone of their own nation even if they do not share a language. To demonstrate this, Deutsch offers the experience of a German-Swiss speaker: “The French-Swiss and I were using different words for the same concepts, but we understood each other. The man from Vienna and I were using the same words for different concepts, and thus we did not understand each other in the least” (Deutsch 1966:101). In this way, the social relations that bind individuals together as a nation are based on communal concepts expressed in the everyday conduct of individuals, not in the structure of language. These concepts situate a person in relation to other people. That is, they provide both continuity and structure, which orient an individual in relation to the world.

In general, social constructionists believe that nations and nationalisms were born of the rupture associated with modernization, that is, democratization, industrialization (Gellner 1983), modern means of communication, and the rise and power of vernacular languages (Anderson 1983). Theorists who hold this perspective also argue that nations and nationalisms are maintained through social structures such as universal, compulsory, national education. The growth of educational institutions, and the creation of common textbooks within the educational institutions, resulted in a growing number of educated people holding a shared language of expression, ideas, and values (Gellner 1983). In short, national education transmits the collective system of symbols from one generation to the next. This transmission of shared knowledge is also known as cultural literacy (Hirsch 1988). Cultural literacy is central in “holding together the social fabric of the nation” (Hirsch 1988:xi). Schools have become a location for reproducing and transmitting this shared knowledge. Gellner terms these process "school-transmitted cultures" (quoted in Hirsch 1988:xiv).

Yet this theory cannot explain what this shared knowledge that holds the nation in place is? How is a nation’s continuity transmitted? The issue of continuity, how a modern nation relates to its past, remains a point of contention among social constructionists. Gellner, who continues Kedorie’s claim that nations are a result of the rupture of modernity, states that history provides the raw materials for nationalism, and national movements claim cultural remnants as evidence of national continuity. He writes, “Admittedly, nationalism uses the pre-existing, historically

inherited proliferation of cultures or cultural wealth, though it uses them very selectively, and it most often transforms them radically" (Gellner 1983:55). Gellner continues this line of thinking by stating that nationalism could be constructed from "any shard or patch" of pre-modern culture (Gellner 1983:56). While Gellner asserts that the inherited past was easily manipulated by elites, others further state that evidence of national continuity is completely "manufactured" (Hobsbawm 1999). While Gellner concedes that nations have historical antecedents, his theory focuses on the processes that gave rise to the nation as a political principle and ignores the symbolic matrix that binds the individual to the collective.

In contrast, Anthony Smith believes that the symbolic ties to the past are more determinative than Gellner and Hobsbawm allow for. Smith argues that the raw materials of cultural wealth are not selected at random, as they must be affirmed and reaffirmed by each generation. That is, the symbols, historical events, myths, and language must continue to have relevance for the current community. Steven Mock puts it this way, "These elements have popular resonance only because they are founded in living and continuous traditions authentic to most, if not all, of the community in question, which unites the group and differentiates it from outsiders" (2012:23). In other words, nations function as codified forms of social relations structured on shared elements, which are not random or indiscriminate.

Smith's approach acknowledges both the impact of modernity in creating the nation as an organizing force in society as well as the continuity of the pre-modern ethnic sense of community and communal destiny. He argues that nationalism, while a social construct, was not easily manipulated by elites, because it is shaped by a pre-modern ethnic symbolic system. In a way, Smith's claim expands Deutsch's theory that the nation is a network of social relations based on a collective system of symbols by stating that this system of communication, based on attachment to symbols, finds its roots in a pre-modern ethnic community.

To arrive at this conclusion, Smith first defines a nation as a "named and self-defining human community, whose members cultivate shared myths, memories, symbols, values and disseminate a distinctive public culture, and observe shared customs and common laws" (Smith 2009:184). He also distinguishes the modern nation from the pre-modern ethnic community by using both the terms nation and *ethnie* respectively. The first distinction is that, when Smith argues that the

members of a nation "cultivate" the shared system of symbols, myths and values, he implies an active, willed activity on the part of community members. Furthermore, just as a nation is an ethnic group that attained collective self-awareness, Smith explains, an individual must hold a conscious awareness of him or herself as part of a communal group. The development of group awareness is pivotal to the transformation of an *ethnie* into a nation. This communal self-awareness is evidenced through the use of pronouns: *my* nation or *my* people. In this way, the individual and the group are intertwined, to the point that the health of the nation reflects the health of the individual. Smith writes, "Just as 'the nation' is felt and willed and acted out, as well as imagined, so many of the members of today's nations feel that their own interests, needs and welfare are bound up with the welfare and destiny of 'their' nation (Smith 2009:14). Thus, the well-being of a nation itself is seen as an extension or expression of the individual's well-being.

While nations often form around a dominant *ethnie* that shares language, tradition, and religion, even nations not formed by a single ethnic group may require some type of ethnic correlation and employ a commonality of symbols to do so (Miller 1997). As Smith explains: "a coherent mythology and symbolism of a community of history and culture became everywhere paramount as a condition of national survival and unity. Without some ethnic lineage, the nation-to-be could fall apart" (Smith 1991:42)—as evidenced by the growing number of failed or failing multi-ethnic states around the world today. Ethnic identity thus remained a binding element of a nation. While ethnicity was a major factor in uniting a nation, not all ethnic groups emerged as nations.

In order for an *ethnie* to develop into a nation, Smith states that certain religious and cultural materials must be present. Smith argues that, while the structures of modernity are important to the formation of the modern nation, the crucial elements are cultural. According to Smith's theory, these cultural elements include: the ethnic concept of being chosen; attachment to land; longing for a past "golden era"; and, the belief in mass sacrifice for communal good (Smith 2000:256). These elements informed the structural cultural foundations of nations and remain pivotal to the idea of the nation (Smith 2000:258). The social conditions that affect if and when a nation will demand or assert national self-determination are multiple. According to Walker Connor, two factors are essential for an ethnic group to move toward civil self-determination: national consciousness (as discussed above) and the principle of popular sovereignty (2004:29).

When these two aspects of national determination are present, the nation acquires—or aspires toward — state-legitimacy (Connor 2004:32). Connor writes, "Since national consciousness is one of the two necessary preconditions of the linkage of ethnicity and legitimacy, it follows that group appreciation of that linkage has also emerged somewhat sporadically" (Connor 2004:32). To understand why certain pre-modern *ethnies* emerged as nations while others did not, Connor and Smith focus on how the symbolic organizes the institutions of nations.

For Smith and Connor, continuity, will, and emotion, are central to the emergence of the nation (Conversi 2004). All the while the national symbols themselves, which include the state flag, state emblem, currency, and shared language, remain entrenched in a historical shadow that presupposes a commonalty of a bond including religion and origin. For this reason, "One cannot become French Canadian. One is born French Canadian. But one can become a Quebecker" (Marceau 2011:207). This example shows how nations are not only rooted in ethnic and linguistic origins but also endure due to their formation around collective beliefs comprised of sacred symbols, rituals, and religion. As Smith writes, "It is in the sphere of 'religion' that we must seek primarily the sources of national attachments. Behind and beyond ethnicity, language, and the state, albeit entwined with all three, lie the fundamental sacred sources of national identity" (Smith 2000:5). In this view, nations manage but do not replace religion; religion and nationalism form a reciprocal relationship, which reinforces national cohesion. "In this sense," says Smith, "modern nationalisms, starting with the French Revolution, are best viewed as forms of a secular religion of the people, alongside or in opposition to traditional religions" (Smith 2000:187). In his analysis the nation represents the ultimate good – worthy of self-sacrifice, even to the point of death. Nationalism was a reinterpretation and use of religious traditions as a form of unifying power, wherein the "idea of the nation becomes the sacred communion of the people" (Smith 2000:7). Nationalism, then, is distinct from patriotism, which may be understood as loyalty to the state. Smith writes that patriotism is "the love of the territorial state," while nationalism is "the love of the ethnic nation" (Smith 2000:53). He goes on to state that,

> The power of nationalism is not only a matter of ideology. Perhaps even more potent than nationalist principles have been national symbols. These give concrete meaning and visibility to the abstractions of nationalism. The representations and images of the nation exert a profound influence over large numbers of people, exactly because they can be

> very widely disseminated by the media. In each of these media, specific images of the nation and its liberation, its heroic past and its glorious future can be created and purveyed, so that the nation ceases to be the abstract property of intellectuals and becomes the immemorial imagined community of all those designated as its members and citizens. (Smith 2000:73)

National symbols and the idea of the nation they convey are unparalleled in structuring social relations and maintaining boundaries between societies (Armstrong 1982). A nation's distinct symbolic system, consisting of its rituals, memories, and traditions, is what separates and defines it from other nations. It is through the use of these unique symbols that a shared social bond may occur as a national identity. These representative resources become the framework for transmitting the idea of the nation and socializing the next generation as members of a national community. To understand how pre-modern *ethnies* provide the figurative structure for modern nations, Smith proposes a new form of methodological inquiry, one he terms "ethnosymbolism".

The Theory of Ethnosymbolism

The theory of ethnosymbolism focuses on symbols of national identity and the behaviors and attitudes they generate. Smith explains ethnosymbolism this way:

> As the name implies, ethnosymbolism regards the central components of ethnic and national phenomena as sociocultural and symbolical, rather than demographic or political. Including various symbols, like language, dress, emblems, rituals, and artefacts, these elements consist in memories, myths, values, and traditions and in the institutionalized practices that derive from them…Such symbolic clusters are both subjective, in their reference to individual perceptions and beliefs, and objective because their patterning produces a structure of social relations and cultural institutions that persist across the generations, independent of any individual beliefs and perceptions. (Smith 2009:66)

In this context, a nation is understood as a deposit of cultural and representative resources as well as the site of collective bonds (Smith 2009). The function of symbolic resources is to structure social relations. Ethnosymbolism expands the scope of the study of nations to consider and

evaluate the instructive character of religion, memory, myth and tradition, particularly as this influences the relationship between people and their homeland (Smith 2000). This view of nations differs dramatically from other social constructionist conceptions of nations, which rely heavily on rational actor theory (also known as radical choice theory), that is, the idea that people are motivated to form nations because it increases their personal power and material wealth (Gellner 1983, Hobsbawm 1999). Material gain and power maximization, while influential, may not adequately explain the type of individual sacrifice, which national allegiance engenders.

Even so, as any single theory, ethnosymbolism as a methodology cannot fully explain the depth, breadth, or complexity of social relations that underlie a nation. Indeed, even Smith understands the limitation of this theory when he writes that it may "illuminate a corner of the broader canvas only to leave the rest of it in untraversed darkness" (Smith 1998:220). Viewing the nation as a symbolic resource, one which structures and maintains social relations, sheds light on the normative function symbols and myths have. The work that follows will show how the national movement of Zionism drew, and continues to draw, on the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern Jewish *ethnie* to generate communal will and emotion. As will be shown, Zionism is one reading, among several, of Jewish history.

Ethnosymbolism and the Nation of Israel

In pre-modern ethnic communities, ideas, memories, and myths were transmitted from one generation to another through organized religion. Ancient and medieval Jewish identities were primarily religious; collective memory was based on the festival calendar, liturgy, commemorative days, and rituals (Gelber 2011:218).[12] Religious texts and rituals taught the traditions particular to the *ethnie*, and perpetuated the social boundaries of an ethnic community (Smith 1998). This was the function of Judaism in the pre-modern Jewish *ethnie*. In his text *Symbol and Theology in Early Judaism,* Jacob Neusner describes Judaism as a system of

[12] Many argue that contemporary Jewish ethnicity is based in religion. For example, Akiva Orr writes, "The Jewish culture is a religious culture. Religion rather than language, territory, biological origin, economic activity or shared historical experience, binds Jews into an ethnic group" (Orr 1994:12). Continuing his line of thought, he writes non-religious, secular Jews "have never produced a total philosophical critique of Jewish religion. They remain dependent on religion to sustain their secular Jewish identity" (Orr 1994:13).

communication (Neusner 1991). Judaic architecture and texts hold what has been called a "symbolic discourse" expressing collective religious attitudes and sentiments (Neusner 2005:109). As early as the 5th century CE, this symbolic discourse was established and reflected a distinctly Judaic repertoire. Between 400 and 450 CE, "Judaism's principal and indicative doctrines, symbols, and beliefs came to full and complete expressions" (Neusner 1991b:212). While this repertoire of symbols was standardized as a discourse, the divergent meaning of the symbols as understood by various Jewish communities makes it difficult to discern any universal meaning of the symbols in and of themselves.

This symbolic discourse found meaning only in relation to the written (Hebrew Bible) and oral (Talmud) systems, known as the dual Torah. With the establishment of Rabbinic Judaism a set of interpretations were derived from the dual Torah; these interpretations were based on the lived experience of exile and return (Neusner 1991b:291). Rabbinic Judaism, as derived from a re-reading of the Torah, offered an authoritative reinterpretation of Jewish texts and ritual practice, and remained the common denominator among the symbols used by various Jewish communities (Satlow 2006:135).[13] Because the dual Torah constrained the varying meanings and interpretations of Rabbinic Judaism, this symbolic discourse functioned as a form of theology, which held as its end the communal elicitation of accepted or permitted attitudes (Neusner 1991:200). This theology, in Neusner's words, was "not so many ideas that we are to affirm but attitudes that we are to nurture in our hearts" (1991:xiv). The power of symbolic discourse was found in its ability to draw on the will and heart, rather than simply on reason. While the meaning of the symbols varied depending on time and location, the dual Torah offered an interpretive structure common to all forms of Judaism.[14] Judaism, as an expression of the dual Torah, functions as a narrative pattern that is timeless in its application (Neusner 2005:115). In Judaism, history is dialogical, not linear. In this way, Judaism is ahistorical:

[13] Rabbinic Judaism continues to set the parameters of Jewish religious practice today, and in Israel Rabbinic Judaism continues to govern all mattes of life, including, birth (who is a Jew), marriage, and death (who is buried where).

[14] It is noteworthy that what is being termed Judaism encompasses a variety of different religious systems holding to Judaic traditions. While there are overriding theological doctrines within Judaism – such as the unity of God, creation, covenant, prophetic revelation, and redemption – these are interpreted and adapted by various Jewish communities in different ways. Judaism is an umbrella term that includes a diversity of ritual practices.

> The concept of history as we know it, and as Scripture knows it, surrenders to an altogether different way of conceiving time [...] With distinctions between past, present and future time found to make no difference [...] so that past, present, and future meet in the here and now. (Neusner 2005:196)

This experience of Judaism as ahistorical offers greater understanding of how symbols transcend time. Moreover, this way of reading symbols, as concrete elements of a timeless narrative, reveals how collective memory is embodied in a nation's ethnosymbolism. The symbols themselves act as a bridge between time and space; nevertheless, they performed another function: that of transmitting and representing reality. In this way, symbols are both descriptive and prescriptive in nature (Geertz 1963). Moreover, when framed in a narrative, symbols offer both order and meaning to the world (Frankel and Teutsch 1995). As Yerushalmi writes: "[…] even individual memory is structured through social frameworks, and all the more, that collective memory is not a metaphor but a social reality transmitted and sustained through the conscious efforts and institutions of the group" (Yerushalmi 1996:xxxiv). While the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern Jewish *ethnie* has been maintained, and remains a relevant resource for transmitting and sustaining ethnic, religious and national identity, its totality as a single ideological system did not pass into the modern age (Neusner 1974:227).[15] Yerushalmi continues:

> The communal memories were a function of the shared faith, cohesiveness, and will of the group itself, transmitting and recreating its past through an entire complex of interlocking social and religious institutions that functioned organically to achieve this. The decline of Jewish collective memory in modern times is a symptom of the unraveling of that common network of belief and praxis through whose mechanisms […] the past was once made present. (Yerushalmi 1996:94)

Under the pressure of modern social forces, the symbolic discourse was reinterpreted to suit the needs of the community. As Robinson writes: "Contending religious, social, and political

[15] While industrialization and differentiation are the primary movers of modernization, for Jews the modern age is equally characterized by emancipation. In 1791 Jews attained citizenship of France under the rule of Napoleon. In Canada Jews attained the rights of citizenship in 1832, this was followed by England in 1858, Hungary in 1867, and Germany in 1871.

ideologies, a consequence of the Jewish confrontation with the modern world, opened fissures within the once unified belief system, causing profound disruptions within the traditional societies" (Robinson 1995:13). Modernity would require not only a reinterpretation of the representative system but also a new conception of Jewish history, namely historiography, which presented time as one long chronological narrative. By using historiography, historians reinterpreted or reimagined what the past had to say to the Jewish present.

Zionism and the Jewish Symbolic Discourse

When analyzing the historical links made between the political project of Zionism, which resulted in the establishment of the State of Israel, and the symbolic matrix of Judaism, what one inevitably finds is the selective configuration of Jewish history. It is important to note that while history is selected, this selection is not arbitrary; instead the reserve of historical materials drawn on by modern nations is structured by nationalists. In order for pre-modern symbols and myths to elicit the will and emotion of individuals, they must maintain a legitimate cultural and historical connection. As discussed earlier, Smith identifies four elements of a nation, which include: chosenness, territory, ethnohistory, and martyrdom (Smith 2008,2010). In the context of Judaism, these four elements are located in religious myths derived directly from the Torah. As Jacob Neusner writes,

> Zionism…did recapitulate what was essential in the texts in which they searched for validation…(it) took as the given precisely the pattern of the original Torah: Israel is special, the Land is held on condition, Israel's suffering bears meaning, and its salvation is promised and awaits fulfillment on account of what Israel will do. (Neusner 199b:311).

In order to reintegrate the secular and religious elements of communal life, split apart by the *Haskalah* - the Jewish enlightenment of the eighteenth century – 2,000 years of diaspora existence were bypassed.[16] Neusner writes: "Zionism found for itself links to a remote past,

[16] Major events in Jewish history dating as late as the 12th century forward include the expulsion of Jews from England (1290), Italian and German metropolises (1400-1500), and the Iberian Peninsula (1490). These expulsions resulted in the mass migration of European Jews (Ashkenazi) into Eastern Europe (modern day Poland, Hungary and Russia), while Jews from the Iberian Peninsula (Sephardim) emigrated to the Mediterranean (North Africa, Palestine), the Americas (North and South America) and the Middle East (Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey).

leaping over distasteful (and contradictory) facts near at hand. History would supply the two things that Zionism required, first, acceptable models for a Jewish politics, second a powerful link to the chosen land" (Neusner 2005:1366). In other words, according to the classical Zionist account, history stopped after the second-century CE and began again in the nineteenth century.[17] Much of Jewish historiography places the nation at the center of Jewish history. Historians such as Graetz write that the history of Judaism only began with its formation of a nation and the "totality of Jewish history is the national homeland" (Graetz 1975:72). The appropriation of Jewish tragedy into a narrative of Jewish heroism would become the primary model of historiography taken up by early Zionist historians.

In Zionism, the idea of the nation of Israel remained immersed in an enduring pattern of Jewish existence based on exile and return. In doing so, it expanded the religious myth – exile and return - to explain the establishment of political nation-state. The religious mythical patterns, which were derived from the Torah were employed by Zionists to answer political and economic circumstances. As Jacob Neusner writes, "Zionism and American Judaism constitute political movements, focused upon political programs. They address an essentially political agenda, although both evoke myths, attitudes, and convictions commonly categorized as religious" (Neusner 1991b:311). Through its reliance on pre-modern ethnosymbolism, Zionism continued to elicit particular attitudes toward the nation. The structure remained the same, but the question of how to establish collective attachment to territory, which was the basis of the modern nation, required attention. The answer to this question required a rewriting of history. The main function of this rewriting would be to reinterpret the relationship between the Jewish *ethnie* and the land of Israel. Yet, the pre-modern reserve of symbols and myths is structured, and it is this structure that organizes and socializes individuals to hold certain attitudes toward the nation. Therefore, in order to effectively mobilize national solidarity, Zionist historians would need to understand how land factored into the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie.*

[17] For examples of classical Zionist writings see Adelman, J. *The Rise of Israel: A History of a Revolutionary State* (London: Routledge, 2008); Kaplan, E and Penslar, D. *The Origins of Israel, 1882-1948* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2011); Shapira, A. *Israel: A History* (Boston: Brandeis University Press, 2012); Shimoni, G. *The Zionist Ideology* (Boston: Brandeis University Press, 1995).

Three elements create and maintain the naturalness of nations, wherein land itself is imbued with a divine quality and the union of people and "their" land becomes a holy bond (Smith 2000:37). This reciprocal relationship between people and land is established on the principles of an emotional construct of landscape, or homeland, as in an ancestral or inherited land and the veneration of the peasant living on the land. As Smith writes,

> Since its origins in the eighteenth-century ideal of a "return to nature," the notion of a national homeland and of the nation as the possessor of a unique and particular land, has been central to nationalist ideologies... only in the modern world has this older collective attachment to the homeland come to serve as another sacred foundation and cultural resource for the maintenance, and reinterpretation, of national identities. (Smith 2000:131)

Smith is stating that the *ethnie* equally held an attachment to land. Nevertheless, it is only in the modern period that nations have upheld land itself as sacred and central to the social bond. In this assertion, the difference between pre-modern *ethnie* and nations is sacralisation of the land. The lasting consequence of this spiritualization of the land of Israel in the social memory of Jewish communities is important in connection to nation building. While the predominant religious belief amoung Jews was that a return to the land of Israel would occur only as a result of "universal effect of good deeds", these good deeds would result in the coming of the Messiah and the redemption of the Jewish people (Rabin 2006:67). Thus religious attachment to the Land of Israel was well developed in Jewish liturgies. As Smith argues,

> Just as traditions can live within us even if they do not assume physical shape, so the Land, even though it was unattainable for so many centuries, constituted a reservoir of shared memories and myths and traditions that in turn created an equally real 'inward society', a network of exclusive intimacy in which Jews lived in the spirit more intensely and more profoundly than in their scattered enclaves in the profane physical world. (2010:16)

The Land of Israel was not solely symbolic but the reservoir of shared myths –accessed through the daily prayers of Jews living in the diasporas. Zionism would reformulate an original myth to suit modern political needs.

In order to reconcile the pre-modern Jewish *ethnie* with the modern form of politically sovereign nations, a historical rewriting was required. Authors looked back for a pre-modern precedent for Jewish nationalism and located it in the Second Temple era. As Shelef asserts, "changes in nationalism do not have to be intentional. Even so, they clearly can be" (Shelef 2010:17). The chronicled account of the Jewish past in Zionism was based on three distinct periods: antiquity, exile, and national regeneration (Zerubavel 1995). Historical moments of Jewish sovereignty were contrasted by epochs of defeat and persecution, which would be overcome by a renewed sovereignty. The writers of this revision were primarily members of the secular Jewish intelligentsia (Smith 1998). The symbolic discourse of the pre-modern *ethnie*, largely under the authority of the religious elites, had to be reinterpreted to suit the modern nation. Smith writes:

> This meant that the intellectuals had to undercut earlier definitions of the community by re-presenting their novel conceptions through ancient symbols and formats. These were in no sense mere manipulations… There is no need to unmask what are so patently selective readings of an ethnic past. Yet selection can take place only within strict limits, limits set by the pre-existing myths, symbols, customs and memories. (Smith 1998:355)

Continuity is established through the linking of contemporary events to the historical chain of events. Present day events are only made significant through their reliance on recorded precedents. The Zionist chronicled narrative did not sever the past from the present or completely break with the religious tradition. Indeed, Zerubavel, an Israeli historian, argues that the cornerstone events around which the Zionist narrative pivots are stories of failure and national defeat. According to Zerubavel, the heroic "new Jew" was part of an "imagined" tradition that valued the Zealots of Masada and the admiration of Tel Hai in unprecedented ways (Zerubavel 1995). It was the introduction of the human subject into Jewish history, not a new symbolic discourse, which made the Zionist movement so compelling. Ari Shavit describes the emergence of the human subject into Jewish history in the following passage. "And as the plows begin to do their work, the Jews return to history and regain their masculinity: as they take on the physical labour of tilling the earth, they transform themselves from object to subject, from passive to active, from victims to sovereigns" (Shavit 2013:35).

Yet, interpretations of Judaism as offering precedents for a national movement met with weighty criticism from both traditional and reform rabbis. For this reason, "Virtually all nineteenth-century Jewish ideologies, from Reform to Zionism, would feel the need to appeal to history for validation" (Yerushalmi 1996:86). Indeed, the initial rejection of the nationalist movement was so consequential that the Union of German Rabbis would not allow the First Zionist Congress of 1897 to be held in Munich. Instead, the First World Zionist Congress was held in Switzerland on August 29, 1897. Four days after the 197 delegates had convened, the Congress published the Basel Program, which declared "the aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine secured by public law" (Bregman 2003:1). The First World Zionist Congress resulted in a unified credo of Zionism – the return from life in the diaspora to establish a Jewish homeland. Still, religious and secular European Jews expressed deep loyalty to the nations into which they were born. As Moses Aberbach writes, "To the end, the European Jews (including Zionists) kept faith with culture and the nation even as they abandoned their faith and traditional education" (Aberbach 2009:86). In Western Europe the early Zionist movements met with serious criticism from within the Jewish communities, which were rooted in their countries of birth.

It was the systematic murder of one-third of the Jewish people under Nazi Germany that moved Zionism and the State of Israel to a central position in Jewish identity (Ben-Moshe 2007:9). As Philip Mendes writes, "following the Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, organized Jewish opposition of Zionism largely vanished... Jews increasingly came to see support of Zionism and Israel as a fundamental component of their Jewish identity" (Mendes 2007:105). Once the state was achieved, the national aspirations of the Jewish nation settled into various roles to govern, rule, patrol, and maintain the national territory. As the country of Israel was established, the Zionist idea of the nation, which was structured in the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie,* framed and structured the state institutions. As Neusner writes:

> The astonishing achievements of Zionism are the result of the capacity of Zionism to reintegrate the tradition with contemporary reality, to do so in an entirely factual, matter-of-fact framework, thus to eschew faith and to elicit credence. Zionism speaks in terms of Judaic myth, indeed so profoundly that myth and reality coincide. (Neusner 1974:234)

While the story remains framed in the religious narrative of exile and redemption that was basic to the pre-modern *ethnie*, the meaning of the symbolic system was reinterpreted to suit the needs and challenges of the modern nation. In this way, "what is retrieved is also metamorphosed" (Yerushalmi 1996:112). To turn the symbol of the land of Israel into an active settlement of the land of Israel equally required modification and a new interpretation of Jewish historical texts.

Symbols surface at a particular point in history, and in many ways the work of Anthony Smith and ethnosymbolists maps the longevity of the symbols, which form and reflect the meaning-structure of a nation and can even survive the rise and fall of national institutions. To better understand how the Zionist idea of the nation draws on the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie*, the next section delves into the past to locate the source of the symbols of the state and understand their function in the transformation of the pre-modern *ethnie* into the modern nation.

The Idea of the Land of Israel over la Longue Durée

While the concept of Israel as the land of the Jewish people is introduced in the Mishnah, the Talmud, and the Midrash,[18] Isaiah Gafni writes, the term "Land of Israel" gained prominence only after the Bar Kokba revolt in 135 CE (an event which greatly depolulated Judean Jewish communities and led the Romans to ban Jews from Jerusalem). Gafni writes:

> The degree to which these issues surrounding the Land were even taken up in statements attributed to the early *tannaim*,[19] up to and including the Bar-Kokba war (132-135 CE), is minimal. A review of hundreds of statements attributed to sages such as Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakai, R. Joshua, R. Eliezer, R. Eliezer b. Azariah, and even R. Akiva, reveals a striking paucity of allusions to the *character* and supernatural attributes of the Land, and similarly there is minimal allusion to the Land's centrality vis-à-vis the diaspora and the consequently required commitment of Jews toward the Land. (Gafni 1997:62)

[18] Mishnah refers to the redaction of the oral Torah (Jewish oral traditions) categorized by subject, the Talmuds (Babylonian Talmud and Jerusalem Talmud) to the rabbinical interpretations (known as the Gemara) of the Mishnah, and the Midrash (Midrashim) to the stories derived from, or developed out of, the Hebrew Bible (the Tanakh).
[19] *Tannaim* refers to the Rabbis who contributed to the writing of the Mishnah.

Jerusalem was the chosen dwelling place for the name of God, and through organized sacrifice at a single location, Jerusalem functioned as a unifying element of Jewish life. The physical and spiritual centrality of Jerusalem, along with the cycle of exile and redemption, came to inform a universal social memory within Jewish communities after the Bar Kokba revolt. Moshe Weinfeld writes:

> Towards the end of the Second Temple period, the concept of the land underwent a process of spiritualization, as did Jerusalem. Jerusalem was interpreted in the ideal sense as "the kingdom of heaven" and the "celestial Jerusalem," and inheriting the land was similarly interpreted as receiving a place in the world to come. (Weinfeld 1993:221)

With the spiritualization of the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem, the significance of the land to the Jewish people grew stronger. As Jewish communities spread out over the globe, the spiritualization of Jerusalem and the land of Israel grew, and the land of Israel functioned as a symbol in the social memory of Jewish communities the world over.

As rabbinic Judaism was based in the concept of Torah as eternal, the study and interpretation of Temple life allowed for the continuation of an authentic narrative as the basis for what was seen as an unbroken chain of authority. As rabbinic Judaism reinterpreted the Temple as holding a symbolic function, the early Zionists had to reinterpret the recorded narrative to re-centralize land and account for national sovereignty. The eventual result would be an inclusion into the collective memory of land as central to the Jewish nation. The focus on land was pivotal to the Zionist understanding of Israel as the birthright of the Jewish people; even so, the symbolic discourse did not change. Rather, the meanings of the symbols were reinterpreted to present the Zionist idea of the nation of Israel. For example, in Zionist historiography the symbol of the destroyed Temple functions to elevate the idea of the Jewish nation rather than establish religious authority of Judaism in the land of Israel (Mock 2012:132). If the Temple is rebuilt, the function and meaning of the symbol are lost.[20] In other words, a distinction existed between the meaning

[20] For Israelis, the Temple Mount, a location central to the dual Torah system of Judaism, remains inaccessible on account of an Israel-issued military decision. Authority over the Temple Mount itself was returned to the guard of Muslims directly after the 1967 war, despite the victory of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) over the territory of the Old City of Jerusalem. The political reality faced by the State of Israel requires concession and compromise. Yet, as a religious symbol, the Temple Mount remains relevant to the idea of the nation. Thus the meanings made of

of the Temple Mount as a religious symbol and the meaning it had as a national symbol. Moreover, there is little to no evidence that Zionists intended to rebuild the Temple, already twice destroyed in 586 B.C.E. and 70 C.E. What held the Zionist idea of the nation together was political autonomy, not religious authority.

In a related way, the meaning of the symbol of the *menorah*[21] flagged by olive branches has transformed dramatically since the advent of the State of Israel. Like the example of the Temple, Zionist historiographers reinterpret the meaning of this symbol without changing its structure. The menorah is the principal symbol associated with the *mishkan* - the movable Temple - and later with the Temple proper. The original description of the menorah, detailed in Exodus 25:31-40 and 37:17-24, was of a seven-branched oil lamp crafted from a solid piece of pure gold. It stood as the sole source of light in the *mishkan,* and later in the Temple.[22] Antiochus Epiphanes is said to have removed the menorah from the Temple, and while a new menorah was reinstated following the Maccabean revolt, this duplicate was also removed when the Romans destroyed the second Temple. The menorah was then placed in Rome at the Vespasian Temple. Following the destruction of the second Temple, the symbolic meaning of the menorah as an emblem of the exile of the Jewish people spread (Frankel and Teutsch 1995).

The specific image of the menorah hemmed in by olive trees is found in the writings of the prophet Zechariah, who describes a future menorah, which will be in place after the rebuilding of the Temple. Zechariah (4:1-3, 11-14) describes the image in detail: "all of gold, with a bowl on its top, seven lamps, and seven pipes leading to the seven lamps... by it are two olive trees, one on the right of the bowl and one on the left" (Zechariah 4: 2-3). Zechariah's prophesies date to 520-518 B.C.E., and, as this passage reveals, they tell of the rebuilding of the Temple, which did occur around 516 B.C.E. In the chapters that follow this passage, specifically chapters eight and fourteen, one reads of the imminent reuniting of the people of Israel with their land; this reunion was to be preceded by a catastrophic destruction of "evil doers." The prophecies of Zechariah

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symbols through religious and national interpretations buttress and resist each other in odd and complex ways (Mock 2012:132).

[21] *Menorah* meaning a seven or nine branched oil lamp.

[22] According to tradition, there were ten other menorahs placed close by (I Kings 7:47-49; II Chronicles 13).

have been used repeatedly by messianic movements to express the return of the people of Israel to the land of Israel, and the incumbent rebuilding of the Temple as an act of God in history.

This symbol of the menorah was pivotal to the Zionist reinterpretation of the political and national aspirations of the Jewish people. Most interesting is the transformation of the meaning of the menorah and olive branches as a symbol of defeat to one of rebirth and triumph. Freund understands the use of the menorah, as both the Israel state emblem and inscribed on the Israeli currency – the shekel, as symbolic of the power of the State of Israel (Freund 2004). Yet, this power is not without irony, for the menorah depicted on the state emblem and shekel is a replica of the Menorah as it is found on Arch or Titus, and not the one described in the Torah. Not only the symbol, but its depiction is controversial.[23] As Freund explains:

> The symbol of the Menorah in the story of the Maccabean revolt in the second-century B.C.E. brings these meanings together and plays an important part in the modern Zionist musings on the new nation of Israel. First, the original menorah was destroyed, and another was rebuilt much the same way that the new nation was to be resurrected and rebuilt. Second, the Maccabees were a very small group and were able to defeat a much larger force of Greeks by their cunning and zeal. Finally, the Menorah was made not like the original of gold, but different. (Freund 2004:292)

The menorah, as an actual artefact and a symbolic resource, has been remade in a variety of ways. Freund concludes that the menorah of the Maccabees was different from the original menorah,[24] and the menorah of the state emblem varies from the menorah described in the prophets. Just as the function the symbol played in the pre-modern *ethnie* differs from the function the menorah held in the Zionist national movement, it is the structure that the symbol refers to that offers both continuity and confidence to the modern nation. It is simultaneously a symbol of defeat and triumph. The controversy of using the menorah of the Arch of Titus as a

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[23] In fact following the destruction of the second Temple, any replication of the Menorah was prohibited. "A person may not make…a menorah after the design of the menorah. One may however, make one with five, six or eight branches, but with seven he may not make it even though it be made of other metals" (Babylonian Talmud *Avodah Zarah* 43a).

[24] This is supported by various documents including tractates from the Babylonian Talmud *Rosh Hashanah* 24b and *Avodah Zarah* 43b, both of which describe how the Maccabees remade the Menorah.

template for the design of the state emblem is due not only to its historical significance as a symbol of Jewish defeat; in its current depiction, the base of the menorah includes images not readily affiliated with the Jewish nation, but with the Greek and Roman nations (Hachlili 1988). Therefore, the menorah selected to depict the State of Israel retains the symbolism of this powerlessness as the basis of its design. The menorah as depicted on the state emblem is, as we have established, drawn directly from the Arch of Titus, which is itself a replica of the original Arch of Titus, as the original is no longer in existence (Strauss 1960).

The use of this emblem to represent the State of Israel exemplifies Smith's concept that concrete symbols give concrete meaning to nations. The state symbol tells people that the State of Israel is an expression of Jewish continuity as well as the fulfillment of God's promises to the people of Israel.[25] The use of the menorah and olive branches as a state symbol reveals the trajectory of Jewish continuity from the past to the present and into the future. This historical trajectory serves a unifying purpose for Zionists, who sought to align an ethnically diverse Jewish population. The selection of the menorah as the state emblem reveals how symbols are transformed in their transmission from one generation to the next, while remaining part of a structured system of communication (Turner 1967). Drawing on common myths and symbols, Zionists naturalize the State of Israel as an extension of the historical narrative of the nation. In an attempt to unpack the function of the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie* expressions of national aspirations, Smith asks:

> Are we to view the Maccabees and Zealots as early examples of latter-day nationalist guerrillas and freedom fighters? The difficulty in arriving at a clear answer lies in the near-identity in Jewish thought and practice of what we consider to be separate, namely the religious community and the nation with religious messianism and nationalism. For the Zealots, in particular, the land of Israel belonged to God and was therefore inalienable. It was the duty of every Jew to recover it from the Romans as a prelude to the end of days. Such eschatological hopes were focused on the realization of the Covenant

[25] It is notable that the Shamir brothers, the designers of the state emblem, indicate the emblem was not a direct reference to the prophecies of Zechariah ("How the Emblem of the State of Israel was Born," interview with the Shamir brothers, *Ma'ariv*, February 16, 1949).

> between Israel and the Lord. The messianic promise of God's kingdom on earth would be fulfilled in a Jewish theocracy in the land of Israel. In this conception, no distinction was possible between a Jewish nation and the religious community of Israel, or between Jewish messianism and the aspiration of the Jewish people. (Smith 1991:48-49)

These symbols, which are part of the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie*, are maintained within the national mythology, yet their meaning is changed. This illustrates the diverse, multiple, and even contradictory meanings a symbol simultaneously holds. Such elasticity of meaning may equally be used to express who belongs to a nation and who is excluded from it because symbols function to create social boundaries between insiders and outsiders (Mock 2012:254). However, the use of symbols, to prescribe who belongs to and who is outside the nation, does not automatically lead to violent behavior or the dehumanization of the outsider. As Steven Mock writes,

> They (symbols) could also serve as a force for effecting in-group solidarity and restraining civil conflict, unifying a diversity of cultural and political groups within the nation by distinguishing them collectively from an abstract external Other too distant geographically or historically to pose a credible threat, or, more significant, to be threatened by the persistence of the myth. (Mock 2012:256)

The selection of the symbol on the flag of the State of Israel - the Shield of David - further exemplifies the process through which the idea of the nation is located within a symbolic structure of the past. While both the menorah and the Shield of David are found in the archaeological and architectural Jewish communal spaces of ancient Israel, the meaning of these symbols as signifiers of hope, restoration, and Jewish particularity have flourished in the modern period (Freund 2004). The earliest appearance of the Shield of David as affiliated with the Jewish people occurred prior to the destruction of the second temple in 70 C.E (Liungman 1991). Yet, up until the nineteenth century, the Shield of David was associated with the mystical strain of Judaism known as the Kabbalah and was only demarcated as a particularly Jewish symbol beginning in the 12th century (Scholem 1971,1974). For example, by 1354, Charles IV allowed the Jewish community of Prague to display a red flag bearing a Shield of David. By the early part of the 17th century, the Shield of David began to appear on the coat of arms of prominent

Jewish families, such as the Rothchilds. It was also used to symbolize the messianic movement of the Shabtai Tzvi. Notably, the Shield of David was selected as the symbol to differentiate the Venetian ghetto from the rest of the Christian city, and it was at this time that the symbol began to represent the Jewish community in its entirety (Frankel and Teutsch 1995). It was not until the nineteenth century that the Shield of David began to appear regularly on the architecture of synagogues even though it appeared in a synagogue of Capernaum alongside a five pointed star and a swastika as early as 1,800 years ago (Kolatch 2006:511). Yet, its placement on Herzl's text *Die Welt* (1924) may indeed reveal why this particular symbol became associated primarily with the national movement of Zionism. Gershom Scholem writes,

> In the first place, it was known to everyone because of its general dissemination through the centuries, its appearance on every new synagogue, on the seals of the communities, the philanthropic societies, and the like. Secondly, in contemporary consciousness it lacked any clear connections with religious conceptions and associations. (Scholem 1971:257)

Here Scholem argues the symbol held no direct affiliation with religion; Freund disagrees, stating it was precisely due to its association with the religious concept of redemption that it became the nation's symbol.[26]

As Scholem argues, the selection of the menorah and the Shield of David as national symbols may have indeed been due to their being less explicitly religious. Nevertheless, due to the symbolic structure of exile and redemption that these symbols represent, their historical use as signs of degradation and discrimination are intertwined in their current depiction of redemption and triumph. As Freund writes:

> It is perhaps a greater irony that the very symbol of Jewish messianism, mystical speculation and superstitious amulets (the star) and the symbol of Jewish servitude under

[26] Freund makes reference to Franz Rosenzweig's seminal work *The Star of Redemption* (1919), in which Rosenzweig posits that the geometrical shape represents six points of connection in interaction. The first triangle represents the relationship between human, the universe, and God; the second triad of interaction is: creation, revelation, and redemption. Rosenzweig's magnum opus reinterprets Jewish mysticism of the Middle Ages for a twentieth century audience through this symbol (Freund 2004).

> the Romans (the menorah of Titus) became the national symbols of the redemption of the Jewish people in the 20th century. (Freund 2004:303)

These symbols represent social solidarity and the collective identity of the Jewish nation; they also obscure highly divergent views of members of the Jewish community. As the historical trajectory of these symbols indicates, the relationship a nation has to its representative matrix is one of perpetuation and innovation. A nation is in an ongoing relationship with its symbolic discourse, both preserving and renewing its ethnic heritage (Mock 2012:44).

Questioning the theory that nations are exclusively modern phenomena, Smith agrees with the Zionist historiography account, by claiming that Jews of the late second Temple period closely resembled the modern nation. He writes,

> With the rise of the synagogue and the Pharisees, local religious education became a reality for everyone, though it was perhaps only in the subsequent Mishnaic period that the common man (*Am Ha-Aretz)* came into his own in terms of legal rights and duties [...] This suggests a closer approximation to the ideal type of the nation among the Jews of the late Second Temple period than perhaps anywhere else in the ancient world, and must make us wary of pronouncing too readily against the possibility of the nation, even a form of religious nationalism, before the onset of modernity. (Smith 1991:50)

Indeed, the Zionist revision of Jewish history relied heavily on the concept upheld here by Smith, that the Jewish past held the precedent for Jewish national sovereignty and nationhood.

Modernity, coupled with the rise of national movements during the nineteenth century, impacted the way in which Jews understood Jewish history. In the process of modernization, ethnocentric forms of nationalism abounded in Europe, and Jews were generally excluded on religious or biological terms (Sand 2012:185). Yet, as noted by Smith, Herzl explained the *Judenstaat*[27] was required for Jewish communities, which could not assimilate or be assimilated into any other nation. For Smith this exposes a dilemma in explaining nations as an entirely modern phenomenon. Smith writes:

[27] Herzl's text *Der Judenstaat* (The Jewish State) was initially published in 1896 in Vienna.

> It was this ultimately religious and political vision, rather than the needs of modernity, that inspired and mobilized many diaspora Jews to become Zionists and take the arduous road to Palestine; and it was a vision that assumed a genealogy and an ancient pedigree and name for a nation-to-be, one that addressed, as does every nationalism, a designated and particular "people." (Smith 2004:68)

While Smith's theory of ethnosymbolism is useful in the context of Judaism and Zionism, other social constructionists and post-modernists remain at odds with Smith and view Zionism as a direct reflection of the rupture introduced by modernity. For example, Ilan Pappe writes that Zionism was the quintessence of modernization, and the best example of how a traditional society transitions to a modern nation. He writes, "In other words, if you were a Zionist you could confidently participate in the best modernisation project in existence; and if you were a student of modernisation, Zionism was your best case study" (Pappe 2014:19). Like Pappe, many scholars disagree with Smith's insistence on locating precedence for nations in their pre-modern origins, and with Zionist historians who link the State of Israel with the Second Temple era. Instead, they focus on the "unwillingness to absorb and to be absorbed" into nations as the starting point of the State of Israel (Bregman 2003: xviii). As historian Ahron Bregman writes: "Rather than the fulfillment of a biblical prophecy of the rebirth of a nation, it was *harsh reality* that led to the birth and development of Israel on the land of Palestine" (Bregman 2003: xviii, emphasis in the original). Many assert that it was only after Theodor Herzl witnessed the Dreyfus trial in 1894 and experienced exclusion from the intellectual elite of Vienna in 1895, that he penned the solution of political Zionism. As Danny Ben-Moshe writes, "from the outset of Zionism, a very strong nexus existed between anti-Semitism and the development of a Zionist identity" (Ben-Moshe 2007:9). Herzl was one of many assimilated European Jews who faced the emergence of anti-Semitic, racial ideologies within European governments.

Although it is often said that Theordor Herzl is the father and purveyor of political Zionism, this idea obscures the significant contributions of Moses Hess, and his book *Rome and Jerusalem* (1862); Leo Pinsker, and his text *Auto-Emancipation* (1882); Asher Ginsberg (Achad Ha'am) with his cultivation of cultural Zionism through the establishment of *Brit Shalom* and his influence on Chaim Weizmann; Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook and Judah Alkalai, and their iterations of Religious Zionism in which the establishment of the State of Israel was understood

as a preparatory act for the coming Messiah. Each of these people developed ideas and movements that were formative in the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. While Herzl was instrumental in galvanizing a political Zionist movement there were others that preceded him in calls for the reestablishment of a Jewish state for reasons beyond simply anti-Semitism. Yet, Herzl's contributions to the establishment of the Jewish state are most notable when considering the "institutional and organizational structure which helped to bring the idea of a Jewish state to the attention of world leaders and international public opinion" (Avineri 2013:xix). Herzl's vision of the Jewish state was secular in nature. He believed that religion was a private concern and politically immaterial. He wrote: "We shall therefore prevent any theocratic tendencies from coming to the fore on the part of our priesthood [...] army and priesthood shall receive honours [...] But they must not interfere in the administration of the State" (Herzl 1896:146, as quoted in Elboim-Dror 1999:259). This statement could be termed ideological in its search for collective meaning but not religious. Yet Herzl himself, not his secular notion of Zionism, became a symbol of the nation. His role as the Zionist icon is well documented:

> As an icon, he has lost his singular personal features and become an archetype, representing not his own self but the Zionist consensus. He is a symbol that tells us more about the society that created it than about the exceptional person that Herzl was in his lifetime [...] for the public as a whole he has become a picture on the wall, a symbol of identity, an emblem expressing what they believe. (Elboim-Dror 1999:240)

Despite Herzl's secularism, the religious corpus symbolically remained relevant within the national movement, as the selection of the flag of Israel based on the *tallit*[28] exemplifies. Akiva Orr writes,

> […] The fact that 'Zion' is the religious name for Palestine, and that the Zionist flag is based on the Jewish prayer-shawl, reveals once again that the secular Zionists cannot sever the link between Jewish ethnicity and Jewish religion. Secular Jewish nationalism is culturally dependent on the Jewish religion. (Orr 1994:15)

[28] Prayer shawl

The continuity between the symbolic discourse of Judaism and state symbols abounds (Smith 1999). Even if Zionism, according to Herzl, was a secular project, the religious resources of the pre-modern *ethnie*, that is the ethnosymbolism of Judaism, are still alive in Israel's national symbols. Thus, as Smith contends, the common binding ethnosymbolism of an *ethnie* is not abandoned but transformed by and within the modern construct of the nation. Through the use of ethnosymbolism allegiance to the modern nation becomes binding. Smith writes,

> Zionism and Arabism are really religions: they substitute the "nation" for the deity, but in all other respects, mutatis mutandis, conform to the religious mould. At the same time, they oppose traditional Judaism and Islam, and like millennial movements demand a transfer of allegiance to a new kind of faith. (Smith 1973:25)

In this way, symbols that once held religious connotations became vessels of political or national meaning. As Hayes explains:

> Supernatural historic Judaism remains a potent force in the lives of many Jews, but a large number of them now express their "religious sense" in a "higher" nationalism, either that of the people among whom they live or that of Zionism and the new national State of Israel. (Hayes 1960:177)

In this way, we can see how the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie* continue to structure the modern nation. Through its reliance on the pre-modern ethnosymbolism, which was previously imbued with religious meaning, Zionism was effective in eliciting the will and emotion of the people and prescribing common attitudes towards the nation.

National symbols, drawn out of the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie,* continue to prescribe the accepted attitudes about the nation. Moreover, developing particular attitudes towards the nation requires a common idea of the nation. The Zionist idea of the nation functioned to elicit the communal will and emotion of the Jewish people due to its reliance on structured symbolic discourse, which was already in place within the pre-modern *ethnie.* This common idea of the nation, immersed in inherited cultural myths and collective memories, must then be passed on to the next generation in order to initiate a "chain of generations of those who share a historic and quasi-family bond" (Smith 2004:204). Smith says little about how these

myths and memories are passed from generation to generation, and which institutions connect individuals to the chain of generations. Even less is said about *how* this transmission occurs within a diaspora context, or what communal institutions are in place to connect individuals and generations with a shared commitment to the nation.

Diasporic Nationalism

Despite these shortcomings, Smith's theory provides us with guidance on the social processes that are critical in order for an ethnic group to emerge as a nation. These include: 1) self definition; 2) the cultivation of a shared symbolic system; 3) territorialisation; 4) construction of a distinct public culture, symbolic codes and common education; and 5) evolution of common laws and customs (Smith 2010:5). Diaspora communities must equally take a number of steps to create a disaporic nation. Smith outlines these steps, and states the community must: 1) restate the nature and reclaim the unity of the community; 2) link that community to the "age-long claim to an ancestral homeland, preserved as a symbol and shared memory and to give it practical shape through processes of liberation and colonisation"; 3) construct an ethnohistory; and 4) define a common destiny (Smith 2010:7). Doubtless, the territorialization, the attachment to land, is here replaced by the preservation of an age-old claim to an ancestral homeland as it appears in collective memory. As Smith writes, "In the case of the classic diaspora (Jews, Armenians, Greeks), there is no need to invent the cultural and social resources" (Smith 2010:9) –just to mine the rich cultural resources already in place.

Classical theories of nationalism and diaspora nationalism assumed that national identity was singular and totalizing. One was either a member of a nation or a citizen of a nation-state or not. They also assumed that national identity was more foundational and all-encompassing than other forms of identity and solidarity, e.g., those rooted in gender, religion, occupation, or socio-economic status. This premise has been challenged in four main ways.

First, national identity is but one of many social forces at work on an individual. An individual may be Canadian, but she is also a woman, a Buddhist, a factory worker, and a mother. Each pole of identity will have an impact on national identity and solidarity and vice versa. Postmodern scholars tend to see nationalism as one pole of identity among many. This is because

the identity of a nation is realized in relation to other nations; national identity is challenged from within the nation (by loyalty to regions, individuals, family-ties, and ethnic or religious communities) and from outside the nation (by internationalism, cosmopolitanism, and transnationalism) (Horowitz 1975).

Second, this view of a totalizing national identity has been countered by ideas of competing nationalisms, which coexist, bolster, or compete within the individual identity (McRoberts 1995; Feuchtwang 2014). For example, a Montreal Jew must navigate between Canadian, Quebecois, and Israeli nationalism. Third, the assumption that national identity is totalizing has been contended by cosmopolitanism: the commitment to global society over and above the national society (Ulrich 2006; Gilroy 2005). Finally, post-modernist scholarship tends to focus on the diffusion of national identity and solidarity in the global context and emphasizes transnational identities (Mayall 1990). Postmodern scholarship reveals that national identity is fluid, contested and constantly being re-constructed. These four main challenges to the view of national identity as static and totalizing have significantly altered the way in which national identity has been understood. While this work will comment on each of these contestations, the focus will be on the role of transnationalism and diaspora-based nationalism.[29]

During the past two decades, the scholarship on diaspora-homeland relations - the process through which individuals and communities remain devoted to ancestral homelands - has broadened in scope. The focus on concurrent allegiances to the nation of origin (individual or ancestral) and the nation of habitation has resulted in a widespread debate. The terms employed to discuss this subject include transnationalism or transnational migration (Levitt 2004), long distance nationalism (Glick, Shiller and Fouron 2001), and diasporas (Cohen 1997). Each of these terms attempts to elucidate the processes by which newly immigrated or long-standing minority communities maintain social and political relations with nations they no longer inhabit. Diasporas are generally used to describe minority communities that have been settled for an extended period of time in their receiving nation but maintain active political and social engagement with their homeland (Sheffer 1986). This term is applicable to the Montreal Jewish

[29] Various scholars have contended the term "diaspora". For a fuller description of the debate surrounding this term see James Clifford's *Routes* (1997). I am using "diaspora" to refer to a group of people, sharing a common ancestry, which was dispersed, yet whose national relation to another homeland is characterized by longing.

community. Even so, the static term “diaspora” may not fully illuminate the process of identity formation that the word reflects (Lasensky 2007:140).

Moreover, in the case of the Jewish diaspora, or diasporas, this devotion to a national homeland is paradoxical, as the end of the Jewish diaspora, and the ingathering of the exiles, was central to the Zionist idea of the nation. However, as Scott Lasensky writes, “Zionism, which originally rejected exile and Diaspora, has ironically become a well-spring of identity for Diaspora Jews,” most of whom have no intention of moving to Israel (Lasensky 2007:141). Given the long-standing nature of the Jewish diaspora, Zionist movements have had to rearticulate the narrative of exile and return at the foundation of the idea of the nation. This can be seen most clearly in the Labour Zionist movement, which originally focused on the “ingathering of the exiles” and the end of the diaspora, and eventually came to acknowledge and accept the ongoing existence of the diaspora. According to Shelef, this shift in political perspective of the Labor movement is evidenced as early as the 1950s, when David Ben Gurion began speaking of the “ingathering of *the* exile” (Shelef 2010:148). Shelef writes, “[…] the shift to individuals from the Jewish collectivity minimized the mission of eradicating the Diaspora” (Shelef 2010:148). This notion of returning to the land of Israel is now presented as a choice granted to each individual, not a communal, inevitable obligation.

And yet, for diaspora communities the terms "obligation," and even "responsibility," to express the relationship to homeland could not be emphasized enough. Anthropologist Pnina Werbner considers this diaspora-homeland interconnection as a web of obligations. She understands such diaspora populations as:

> […] communities of co-responsibility, recognizing not simply their loyalty but their existential connection to co-disaporians elsewhere or in a home country [...] This sense of co-responsibility is expressed in tangible material gestures of charitable giving and complex forms of political mobilization. (Werbner 1998:12)

In other words, co-responsibility for, or mutual obligation to one another, becomes a means of connecting diaspora communities in a way that transcends their location, wherein national unity surpasses local forms of identity and solidarity. As MacKay Smith writes, “Zionist theory today

is that Jewish identity is essentially national and that Israel is the guarantee for the continuance of Judaism" (Smith 1997:80). Through acts of political unity, diaspora communities both take part in the nation, and transform the idea of the nation.

Diaspora communities simultaneously maintain and transform the idea of the nation through imagining it. With technology and advancements in Internet communication and satellite television, this imagining of a national community is no longer based on proximity to homeland. As Shavit explains: "a person living abroad uses advanced media technologies to consume images from the homeland in a manner that obliterates the geographical gap between home and away" (Shavit 2009:8). The idea of a nation is refined, reified, and changed depending on local historical and social forces. The idea of the nation is imagined by and for an individual. Elan Ezrachi writes,

> A diasporic identity must assume integration of Jewish symbols and experiences from other locales as part of its self-definition. Socialization to the Jewish collective has to be broader than the sum total of the local symbols and experiences. Most Jews, and particularly the younger generation, lack such images: their ability to imagine themselves as global Jews is therefore limited. (Ezrachi 2012:206)

Ezrachi identifies three overarching themes that connect the individual or local narratives of Jewish diasporas: immigration, the Holocaust, and the State of Israel. For the vast majority of diaspora Jews, Israel remains a symbolic, not actual, homeland. As such, relating to Israel relies on representative expressions of commitment, and the imagined Israel reflects more about the idealization of Israel within the diaspora than a living public reality of the State of Israel (Sarna 1996:41).

Diaspora sentiment shows the limitations of imagining a nation in relation to territorial location and reveals the usefulness of defining nations as sites of social relations. Jasmin Habib writes, "Diaspora must be understood as a location […] that is, not as a geographical location but rather as a practised relationship to homeland" (Habib 2004:10). Thus the "locations" in which diaspora Jews reside are the practices of their relation to Israel. Habib articulates how this relationship to a homeland is a practice by stating:

> Diaspora Jews live in the multicultural milieu that is North America, and they creatively imagine their relations to Israel by poaching, consuming, and interpreting the national narratives of Israel presented to them during tours and at cultural and community events. Although they do not live within the geographic borders of Israel, the narratives of that nation-state have become their narratives of belonging as a nation (as Jews). This form of Diaspora nationalism is based on a sense of obligation and responsibility to preserve the collective, in memory, tradition, and practice. (Habib 2004:25)

Thus, diaspora nationalism is one process through which Jewish continuity is maintained. Moreover, this process not only involves a variety of practices (political donations or community mobilization), but a way of relating to the world as Jews. Others have described this location in which diaspora Jews reside as "transnational social spaces, where their outlooks and values are influenced by information, norms and social resources brought in from other continents of deterritorialized collectives" (Gold 2007:198). Most salient to this discussion is the idea of diaspora links to a homeland as being both relational and reciprocal. Just as what goes on in the homeland affects those living in the diaspora, what goes on in the diaspora may have an influence on Israelis who choose to emigrate out of Israel. In recent years, this way of viewing diaspora-homeland relations as a one-way exchange has been deeply challenged.

As the number of ex-patriot Israelis living in the US and Canada is now in the hundreds of thousands, Scott Lasensky writes, the "'Israel-Diaspora' paradigm itself has become less relevant. Not only do cross-cutting cleavages (Ultra-Orthodox, Sephardi, etc.) increasingly straddle the traditional Israel-Diaspora divide, but population shifts are also blurring the picture" (Lasensky 2007:141). The emigration of Israelis out of Israel was initially perceived as a threat to the diaspora-homeland paradigm. Jews were supposed to move out of the diaspora to Israel, not the other way around. Why were Israel-born Jews choosing to return to the diaspora and what did this mean for Zionist ideology and the State of Israel? In his study of Israeli ex-patriots in North America, Steven Gold writes,

> During the 1970s and 1980s, and in the 1990s to a lesser degree, Israeli emigrants have been viewed by most Israelis and Diaspora Jews alike as violators of Zionist ideology and a potential threat – demographically, militarily, economically and ideologically – to the

> survival of the Jewish state. As a consequence, they have been referred to as *yordim* – a stigmatizing Hebrew term which describes those who "descend" from the "higher" place of Israel to the Diaspora, as opposed to immigrants, the *olim* - who "ascend" from the Diaspora to Israel. However, in recent years, both Israel and many host Jewish communities have taken a more conciliatory approach towards Israeli expatriates. Local Jews provide Israelis with communal assistance, while Israel offers its overseas citizens a package of services and benefits, including outreach, assistance and financial incentives to encourage their return home. (Gold 2007:188)

Thus, the diaspora-Israel link is becoming less of a one-way bridge and more of a multi-lane highway, with people traveling and migrating from one side of the sea to the other. Israelis living in the diaspora now support the State of Israel from the far shores of the diaspora and maintain practices that attach them to their homeland in a manner similar to, but also different from, other Jews residing in the diaspora. While these religious, social, cultural, national and traditional practices provide a structure or network through which communities remain connected to the homeland, diaspora communities are equally immersed in a given geo-political location, which inevitably effects when, how, and the degree to which relationships to the homeland are maintained.

In the context of the Jewish community of Quebec, various forms of internal and external nationalisms are present and at play, including both a federal nationalism and a provincial Quebec nationalism. Quebec Jews generally identify with Canadian (federalist) nationalism against Quebec nationalism. The federal context of Canadian multiculturalism states there is no authoritative national culture; Canada is multicultural and bilingual. Quebec has no special place and is "one province like the others."[30] French Quebecois nationalism defines Canada as a confederation of two founding nations (French and English) and sees Quebec as the only state in which francophones exercise political power as a majority. Interculturalism, the Quebec model

[30] In 1971 Pierre Eliot Trudeau, then Prime Minister of Canada, introduced a policy on multiculturalism, and publicly stated there was no official culture of Canada. Prime Minister Brian Mulroney passed this policy in 1988 as the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. Quebec has officially rejected both multicultural and bilingual policies put forward by the federal government and opted for a third way called interculturalism. Quebec's rejection of the bilingual policy enabled it to maintain French as the only official language.

of managing diversity, acknowledges the dominant historical identity of the Francophone community, while it simultaneously seeks to integrate the voices and opinions of newcomers into Francophone society (McRoberts 1997).[31]

Both multiculturalism and interculturalism are attempts to govern ethnic diversity in a liberal democracy. Both govern and manage minority populations. Raymond Breton argues that the state is occupied with organizing the "symbolic system" of various ethnic groups residing in Canada through the policies it implements, primarily through the allocation of status to given ethnic communities (Breton 1984:123). The way the state is structured creates a pattern for certain ethnic groups to "emerge"; state structures influence how an ethnic group may organize itself, even how its ethnosymbolic resources are positioned or maintained (Barth 1969). What Breton is pointing out is how the symbolical resources of a group are as pivotal to eliciting the will and emotion of people just as the material resources. In terms of ethnic minorities, it is primarily the public legitimation or recognition of representative resources that motivates social action, above and beyond material resources. He writes:

> Minorities frequently face these kinds of situations: they pursue recognition and the development of their symbolic-cultural resources frequently at the cost of considerable material sacrifices, either individually or collectively. (Breton 1984:137)

Thus the state is in a position to "manage" the symbolic structures of varying ethnic groups through the shaping of public institutions, and institutionalized practices, particularly through a school curriculum (Breton 1984:125). For this reason, schools offer a locus of investigation into the relevance of a given nation's ethnosymbolism; schools are sites of living reality in which diverse national forces are at play. Given this situation, the processes that resulted in the proliferation of separate Jewish day schools in Montreal require attention. That is the subject to which we now turn.

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[31] Charles Taylor differentiates between these two terms in the following manner: "So the contrast is clear: the 'multi' story decentres the traditional ethno-historical identity and refuses to put any other in its place. All such identities coexist in society, but none is officialised. The 'inter' story starts from the reigning historical identity but sees it evolving in a process in which all citizens, of whatever identity, have a voice, and no-one's input has a privileged status." (Taylor 2012:418)

Chapter 3: Education and the Jewish Community of Quebec: A Brief History

Summary

In Canada, the Jewish education systems reflect the local structures and institutions in which they develop (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992). In the context of Montreal, Jewish education was shaped by a linguistically and religiously divided society (Glickman 1981). While the Jewish community of Montreal has contributed significantly in the social, political, and economic spheres of Quebec life (Anctil 2006), it remains largely unknown to the other local communities, particularly the Francophone population of Quebec (Jedwab 2008). The following chapter offers a historical context of the religious, national, and social factors that have resulted in Montreal holding the highest percentage of students enrolled in separate Jewish day schools across Canada. It is a story of diaspora Jewish education under the influence of local social forces.

Introduction: *The Montreal Jewish Community today*

Jewish residents of Quebec are 93,620 in number and represent 1.2 percent of the population of the province.[32] While there are small Jewish communities in Gatineau-Hull and Quebec City, 97% of Quebec Jews reside in greater Montreal. For this reason, the story of Quebec Jewry is really the story of the Jews of Montreal (Sigal & Weinfeld 1989:8). According to the 2011 Canadian National Household Survey, the Jewish community makes up 2.4 percent (90,780) of the greater Montreal population (3,752,475). Montreal is home to 23 percent of the total Jewish population of Canada, making it the second largest Jewish community in the country, next to Toronto.

Place of Montreal Jews in Quebec Society

Montreal is an island within the province of Quebec. It is a divided city, an "island state", which may not reflect either provincial or federal norms (Blum 2014:19). As an island state, Montreal

[32] I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Charles Shahar for his help retrieving data about the Montreal Jewish community.

does not share the historical character of the remainder of the province (Sigal & Weinfeld 1989:8). As Michael Blum writes,

> In Montreal, you don't have to be a Marxist to understand history as a dialectical sport. The atmosphere is relaxed, but sensitivities are easily set off. The city is split by a visible border ("The Main") as well as invisible ones (the complex urban micro-geography of its diverse communities and allegiances). It's a kind of soft segregation: the city is duplicated and symmetrical, as each of the two dominant groups seeks a city in its image and in its language. Anywhere else, the people would kill each other; here, they ignore each other respectfully – amicably, even – so as to minimize friction and live in the illusion that the other doesn't exist. (Blum 2014:9)

Blum's observation here, of the eclipsing of the other through visible and invisible boundaries echoes the work of Hugh MacLennan and his novel *Two Solitudes* (1945). MacLennan's novel depicts the English/French social divide in Montreal, in which Francophone Quebecers are described as living as a minority in a nation they considered their own (MacLennan 1945).

Caught in the middle of these subtle tensions and invisible borders dividing Francophones from Anglophones is Montreal's Jewish community, known as the "third solitude" (Tulchinsky 1984; Troper 2010). While this phrase describes the Jewish community of Montreal replete with its own schools, hospitals, and clubs, it has also been called "a world between" (Desbarats 1965). The precariousness felt by many members of the Montreal Jewish community was the result of numerous historical factors, including emergence of Quebec nationalism, the ambient attitudinal anti-Semitism in Quebec (Weinfeld 2008), and the historical demographic separation of the city of Montreal into ethnic enclaves. As this separation is both physical and institutional, Sigal and Weinfeld characterize the life of Montreal Jews as a living paradox. They write,

> On the one hand, Jews prosper economically and enjoy full religious freedom and state support for Jewish schools and other institutions. They are among the most bilingual of Quebec's English-speaking groups. On the other hand, except for the French-speaking Moroccan Jews, Quebec Jews have lived for decades in nearly total isolation from French Canadians, the majority in the province, with few social or political contacts. This Jewish

> residential and social isolation approximates conditions existing in Europe prior to World War II. (Sigal & Weinfeld 1989:9)

While according to the 2011 National Household Survey 21% of Quebec Jews are French first language, 33% are allophones, and 84% are bilingual in the official languages (GOV 2014), the Jewish community has been largely associated with the English minority in the province.

The continued perception of the Jewish community as Anglophone, and not integrated into the larger Quebec society has been a result of various historical factors, including the division of the population of Montreal into ethnic enclaves. In Montreal the Jewish population is tightly grouped in particular neighbourhoods; Jews generally reside in neighbourhoods west of "the Main" officially known as Boulevard Saint-Laurent. Paraphrasing Montreal-based Hebrew-language reporter Yosef Bernstein, Michael Brown writes of the historical position of Jews in Montreal, "the city was divided into parties: French, English, Scottish, Irish, Protestants, and Catholics. The only thing they agreed on…was hatred of the Jews" (Brown 2007:3).[33] Be that as it may, Jews in Quebec had a significant role to play in the creation of a pluralistic understanding of what it meant to be Canadian. As Ira Robinson writes, "In Canadian society, and particularly in Quebec, Jews were especially important as testers of the limits of social acceptance of 'others' in a climate of opinion which tended to take the nexus between Christianity and civilization for granted" (Robinson 1995:10). Nowhere would Jews test the limits of social acceptance than in the classrooms of Quebec schools (Corcos 1997).

The Place of Education in the Jewish Community

For reasons that will be described in this chapter, the social and political context of Quebec society informed and created a Jewish community – and a system of Jewish schools -- that differs significantly from the communities in Toronto and Winnipeg (Elazar and Waller 1990). Education in Montreal has been considerably impacted by the Catholic-French/Protestant-English divide and has been structured through religious and linguistic concentration (Hubert

[33] Anti-Semitism was not limited to the Francophone population of Quebec. The Anglophone elite equally impeded Jews from residing outside their ethnic enclaves. English residential areas of Montreal, such as Town of Mount Royal and Hampstead, were largely inaccessible to Jews as the deeds of sale of properties stated that houses in these areas could not be sold to Jews (Smith 1997:34).

1967).[34] For example, the long-standing religious orientation of the two school boards in Quebec and the popularity and public financing of private schools (Magnuson 1993), lead to the establishment of publicly-funded distinct Jewish day schools (Corcos 1997). As a result of these various factors, Quebec currently holds the highest rate of students enrolled in Jewish day schools across Canada (Shahar 2014; Goldberg 2007).

In 2011 the percentage of Jewish students enrolled in Jewish elementary schools (K-6) was 66%; in other words 5508 of the 8270 Jewish school age children attended Jewish day schools. In that same year 45% of the student population base attended Jewish high school (7-11); the total number attending Jewish high schools was 2795 of the 6135 Jewish students of high school age. Of the 201 private elementary and secondary schools in Montreal, 23 (approximately 11 percent) are Jewish day schools. These twenty-three schools represent the full spectrum of Jewish identity -- from Liberal and Zionist schools to ultra-Orthodox *haredi* schools. The variety and diversity of Jewish communities in Montreal is evident in the multiplicity of day schools, all of which offer some balance of religious and general studies.

Education and the Social Construction of Jewish Identity

In the case of mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools, the inter-connectedness of religious and national identity reflects a common stance on Israel within the institutional life of Jewish Montreal. As Pierre Anctil writes, "Of major importance in this context is the stated attachment of Montreal Jews to Israel or the willingness to defend Zionism morally and support it financially" (Anctil 2011: 234). The social construction of Jewish identity in mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools relies on the effective mixing of religious and national sentiment through curricula and pedagogy. As discussed in the previous chapter, the Zionist movement and establishment of the state of Israel resulted in the merger of religious and national forms of Jewish identity within the diaspora (Fernheimer 2014:21). Drawing on the ethnosymbolism of

[34] While this religious and linguistic division is helpful in understanding the formation of Quebec society it is far from perfect. Historically there was a significant minority of English speaking Catholics and a small minority of French speaking Protestants.

the pre-modern *ethnie* the Zionist movement linked the religious myths of the pre-modern past with establishment and development of the modern nation (Nygren 1998). As Mira Moshe and Nicoleta Corbu write, "myth represents a form of interpretation, a point of view that possesses internal cohesion and spiritual topography. It constitutes a firm, permanent basis for culture and identity" (Moshe and Corbu 2014:9). Since national identity rests on historical ethnic symbols, the history of any given community is important. In order to understand Montreal's Jewish community today we must understand the community's experience in the context of the province of Quebec. In the case of Montreal, Jewish identity construction occurs within a broader context of various national movements of Quebec, Canada and Israel. We will now turn our focus to the historical processes in which Jewish education in Quebec emerged.

History: The Creation of the Jewish School System in Quebec

Origins: Jewish Presence from New France to Confederation

Jews had been part of Montreal history for centuries. While individual Jews took part in trade and visited New France during the seventeenth century, Anglo-Sephardic Jewish life in Canada began with the British takeover of Quebec in 1759 (Robinson & Butovsky 1995:11).[35] The first Jewish congregation in Canada was formed in Montreal in 1768; by 1777, this growing Sephardic[36] community had built Shearith Israel, also known as the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue.[37] This synagogue remained the only Jewish communal space in Montreal for nearly 80 years. In 1831, there was a total of 107 Jews living in Upper and Lower Canada, and 50 living in Montreal (Robinson 2007). In 1846 Shearith Israel was joined by another synagogue Shaar

[35] While there are a few exceptional stories of Jews living in New France, the first wave of Sephardic Jews came to Canada with the British Conquest (Abella 1990). While their reasons for coming were possibly more diverse than history allows for, they were generally merchants (some were ship owners) following the paths of trade and establishing communities in port cities (NY, Philadelphia, Boston, Montreal, Halifax etc). While this community may have held common roots in Spain and Portugal (though they had relocated during the Inquisition), some of these soon to be Canadians migrated north from the US, while others arrived from London, England, Brazil, or the Netherlands. Sephardic Jews had come to "America" (present day New York) as early as the 1650s.

[36] *Sephard* means Spain in Modern Hebrew. *Sepharadic,* in it's narrow sense, is a category used to identify Jews of Spain and Portugal who – after fleeing forced conversion by the Catholic Monarchy - relocated in North Africa and throughout the Ottoman Empire. More broadly, the term refers to a difference between the *Sephardic* and *Ashkenazi* ritual traditions and liturgy (*minhag)* (Medding 2007:vii).

Hashomayim, also known as the Congregation of English, German, and Polish Jews, which was established by the growing Ashkenazi[38] community (Linteau, et al. 1989).[39] These Jewish institutions predate the establishment of synagogues in Quebec City (1852), Hamilton (1856), Toronto (1856), Victoria (1863), Winnipeg (1890), Vancouver (1890), and Saskatchewan (1892).

19th Century Immigration and Jewish Montreal

The relationship that developed between the Montreal Jewish community and the Quebec education systems would come to impact the social relations of the Francophone, Anglophone, and Jewish communities of Quebec for over a century.[40] After the Upper Canada rebellion of 1837, school commissioners in both Upper and Lower Canada administered a single educational plan. After much resistance by the population, which was to be taxed for the school commissioners' pay, this act was finalized by the government in 1846 (Crouteau 2012).[41] Unlike the rest of Lower Canada, in which school commissioners were elected, in Quebec religious authorities selected the commissioners (Crouteau 2012). Except for Montreal and Quebec City, each school board raised enough funds to support its schools through taxing the local population. This sum was then matched equally by funds from the government. For the cities of Montreal and Quebec, two separate school boards - one Catholic and one Protestant - were created, and their administrators were appointed by City Council. In the Protestant School Board Commission of the City of Montreal (PSBCCM) and the Montreal Catholic School Commission (MCSC), religious instruction was inseparable from secular or general studies (Gagnon 1996). Taxes levied annually for the city schools, which derived from both rent-payers and property owners,

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[38] *Ashkenaz* - a term from Hebrew language which designates the area around the Rhin, including the historical territories of Germany, Poland and Lithuania. Following the expulsion of Jewish communities from Britain, France and Germany, Ashkenazi Jewish communities migrated to central and eastern Europe. The common language of Ashkenazi Jews is Yiddish (Vital 1999).

[39] Starting in the 1840s Jews from Germany began migrating to Canada in large numbers. Unlike the merchant class of Sephardic Jews, these were Ashkenazi Jews fleeing local persecution. With their arrival, Montreal Jewish communal institutional life - the social support structures like orphanages, schools, and homes for the impoverished - was first established. At this time the majority of Jewish Canadians lived in Montreal.

[40] In the province of Quebec, public education became compulsory only in 1943 (Magnuson 1980), and until then the state continued to assert that access to public education for Jewish students was a privilege in accordance with article 93 of the British North American Act.

[41] Notably, according to section 93 of the British North America Act education remained the responsibility of the individual provinces.

were allocated to one of the two school board commissions. However, the Jewish ratepayers remained a special case, as their properties were taxed, but their children did not fall under the jurisdiction of either denominationally-based school board. This categorization of Jewish ratepayers, as distinct from Protestants and Catholics, would remain a challenge in the education of Jewish students in Quebec.

In 1874, the PBSCCM proposed the public financing of a separate Jewish day school, if the Jewish ratepayers allocated their school tax to the Protestant Board (Croteau 2009:65).[42] The Protestant Board would pay a Rabbi and provide a teacher for general studies. In 1874, Shearith Israel and Shaar Hashomayim formed a joint synagogue committee to establish the Jewish Free School, where no school fees would be charged, and classes would be open to both genders. According to the historian B.G. Sacks, this crucial opportunity in the history of Montreal Jewish education was frustrated by the disagreements among members of the joint synagogue committee, and the inability of the two congregations to agree on the teaching of a common Jewish liturgy. Sacks wrote: "In the light of later events, it is clear that Montreal Jews in the 1870s had a rare opportunity to establish their own school system. If the congregations had been able to proceed in harmony, this arrangement could have become permanent" (Sacks 1965:269-270). This failure to establish a separate Jewish day school exacerbated the division within the Montreal Jewish community. As non-Catholic students were barred from Catholic schools by law, during the 1880s, the PSBCCM proposed a solution that all ratepayers not professing Roman Catholic orientation were to be considered "Protestant" for the purposes of education.[43] Moreover, the Jewish ratepayers portion of the property tax was to be allocated to the PSBCCM. After the failure of the joint synagogue committee to establish a separate Jewish day school, in 1892 Rabbi Meldola de Sola directed members of Shearith Israel to withdraw their taxes from the Protestant board and contribute them to the MCSC. In 1892, the school tax dollars of the

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[43] "Society is divided into two classes, the one Roman Catholic, the other all persons who will not accept Roman Catholic doctrine. Amongst these latter there is neither uniformity of religious opinions nor uniformity as to worship. The class embraces every phase of belief, and includes agnostics and atheists, if such there is, and these require education quite as much as do the Roman Catholics. The word Protestant has been used as a term of convenience, and should be defined as Non-Roman Catholic in order to meet the full requirements of the case" ("Proposed Consolidation of the Acts Relating to Public Instruction, Province of Quebec," *Educational Record* 1.4 (Nov. 1881): 461 as cited in Rosenberg 1962).

members of the Shearith Israel synagogue represented $2,200.00 of the total $2,800.00 paid by Jewish ratepayers, in other words, 84 percent (Rome 1991:76). This allocation of property taxes by Shearith Israel to the MCSC left the PSBCCM with the task of educating 80 percent of the Jewish students in Montreal, with only 20 percent of the original tax base.

During this period, Montreal witnessed a massive influx of Jewish immigration from Eastern and Central Europe, comprised primarily of Ashkenazi Jews.[44] Immigration to Canada by Ashkenazi Jews exploded between 1891 and 1921, increasing the Jewish population of Canada from 6,501 in 1891, to 126,196 in 1921. In the province of Quebec, the Jewish population in 1891 was 2,700, which increased to 47,700 in 1921, and 60,000 by 1931 (Rosenberg 1939:10). In the words of one historian, the influx of Jewish immigrants to Montreal was "staggering" (Tulchinsky 2008:94). Prior to this mass immigration of the early 1900's Michael Brown describes Jewish Canadian life as "a time of largely automomous life on the margins and in-between the cracks" (Brown 2007:1). In 1900 the Montreal Jewish population was 7000; at that time Jews gerernally resided in the downtown and south-central sectors of the city (Smith 1997: 30). As Jewish newcomers continued to arrive, the established Jewish community scrambled to support new immigrants through the creation of community organizations, schools, and synagogues. It was this crisis presented by Jewish immigration in the 1880s and 1890s that instigated the Young Hebrew Benevolent Society, established in 1864 and incorporated in 1870, to appeal to the Baron and Baroness de Hirsch of Vienna for a grant of $20,000 to start a free elementary school in Montreal for the Jewish children of its members (Rome 1991).

The Baron de Hirsch Institute, later known as the Institute School, was established in 1890. This building was to become the first Jewish community building in Canada that was not a synagogue (Rome 1992). The Hirsch Institute relieved the Protestant public schools from the burden of educating Jewish students, even though it did not receive any portion of the property taxes drawn from the Jewish ratepayers of Montreal. Consequently, one year after opening, the Hirsch Institute faced bankruptcy.

[44] Jewish mass-migration from Eastern Europe (namely Russia, Hungary and Romania) to Canada started in the 1880's.These Jewish migrants were fleeing intense persecution (pogroms) and arrived to Canada - by and large - destitute. This wave of migration was cut off by the change in Canada's immigration laws (1930s Order-in-Council) which barred immigrants from Continental Europe. By the 1900s the vast majority of Jewish Canadians were Ashkenazi.

Table 1: Jewish Students and School Tax Allocation in 1892 (Rome 1991:84)

School	Number of Jewish children in attendance	Total annual taxes allotted	Annual payment per Jewish child
Protestant Schools	249	$500	$2
Baron de Hirsch	221	$0	$0
Spanish/Portuguese School	60	$1840	$30
Roman Catholic Schools	30	$460	$15

Given this situation, the contention surrounding the allocation of property taxes by members of Shearith Israel to the MCSC became highly problematic, and in 1893 articles XIII and XIV of the PSBCCM regulation stated the Protestant schools were open to all Jews save members of Shearith Israel. After extreme pressure from the other factions of the Jewish community and the government, members of Shearith Israel returned their property taxes to the PSBCCM. In exchange, Meldola de Sola would become the Hebrew teacher for the Protestant schools in which a high number of Jewish children were enrolled (Tulchinsky 2008:101). Despite the fact that the taxes had been returned to the PSBCCM, a major rift in the social relations of these three communities of Montreal had occurred. As Montreal historian David Rome writes: "Protestant teachers' hostility to their Jewish charges began, and all the trustees did not always seek to heal this breach in morality. These same trustees began to encourage discrimination against Jewish prize-winning pupils" (Rome 1991:61).

Early 20th Century 1900-1930s

Growing public resentment against educating Jewish students in Protestant schools came to a head in 1901, when Jacob Pinsler won the Frothingham medal as the top of his class, exempting

him from paying high school fees for four years (Rome 1983a). The PSBCCM would not grant him the scholarship because he was Jewish and because his father rented rather than owned property. Given the law of 1832, when Jews attained rights of citizenship, the parents of Jacob Pinsler took the case to court; it was placed before Mr. Justice Davidson, who declared that the Board was within its rights to withhold the scholarship. As a result of Mr. Justice Davidson's decision, the provincial Legislature passed a ruling, which stated:

> A resident of the Jewish religion... who does not own real estate cannot claim as of right, to have his children admitted to the public schools. If such admission is given, it is by grace and is subject to whatever conditions the commissioners chose to impose, inclusive non-eligibility for the scholarship in question. (Statutes of Quebec Superior Court 1903: 365)

Given this ruling, that admission to Protestant schools for Jewish students in Quebec was granted only by the grace of the school commissioners, members of the Jewish community lobbied the government for the educational rights of their children. In February of 1903, an agreement was created between the Jewish community and the PBSCCM. Once again, it stipulated that Jewish students were to be considered as Protestants for the purposes of education. Max Goldstein, representing members of the Montreal Jewish community, who sought to acquire equal rights to education for the Jewish community within the PSBCCM, stated that Jewish ratepayers would even accept an increased taxation with the stipulation that Jewish pupils be exempt from devotional exercises, including study of Christian scripture, with no loss of marks. The taxes were accepted, and the resolution drafted by Rev Dr. Shaw in March of 1903 contained the following stipulations: Jewish pupils would be considered members of the Protestant system; the Protestant system would remain Christian in character; and Jewish pupils not wishing to participate in Christian devotional practice would be exempt (Rome 1975).

Immediately after this resolution was passed, the de Hirsch Institute handed the control of its school over to the PSBCCM. Yet, the Institute continued not only to pay for its own heat, lights, and books, but also a janitor and Hebrew teacher (Rome 1992). By 1904, the Institute was teaching 600 Jewish students, and the overall cost was $4,800, $2,000 of which was covered by the Protestant commission (Rome 1991:116). In order to obtain the property taxes from the

PSBCCM, pupils of the de Hirsch Institute were examined in French, English, writing, reading, spelling and arithmetic. Principal Barker of the de Hirsch Institute reported, "Examinations in scripture studies to the 605 pupils in the Baron de Hirsch School in 1904 were based entirely on the New Testament, the standard for all Protestant schools" (Rome 1991:116). While the property taxes of the Jewish community were allocated to the PBSCCM and Jewish students could attend Protestant schools, during this time Jews were not allowed by law to teach in Protestant schools or serve as commissioners in the PBSCCM. In the small number of schools where Jews formed the majority, Jewish teachers were employed if they agreed to teach according to the Protestant religion (Tulchinsky 2008:284). The relations between the Jewish community and Protestant and Catholic communities of Quebec surrounding the issue of education were damaged. The isolation of the Jewish community, and the ongoing ambiguous place of Jewish pupils in Quebec schools were considerable factors in the establishment of separate Jewish day schools in Montreal.

Jewish Day Schools and Jewish Students in Protestant Schools

In the late nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century a significant ideological movement was rising throughout the Jewish diaspora, including Montreal. The intersections between ideologies of socialism and nationalism were materializing in Zionist Labour movements. In 1898 the Zionist Organization of Canada[45] was founded in Montreal by Clarence de Sola. De Sola, a Zionist and British Loyalist, embodied the compatibility of Zionism and loyalty to Canada. As Gerald Tulchinsky writes, "Loyalty to Zionism and to the British Empire, and to Canada was an attractive 'package deal' for Canadian Jews, with no apparent drawbacks" (Tulchinsky 1998: 148). Then, the Poalei Zion movement, which advocated for a sovereign homeland for the Jewish people in the land of Israel, established its headquarters in Montreal in 1905 (Margolis 2011:30). Poalei Zion activists created "National Radical Schools" throughout the North American Jewish diaspora that offered secular studies and Jewish culture in both Hebrew and Yiddish languages (Margolis 2011:30). This movement promoted Jewish

[45] The Zionist Organization of Canada, originally called the Federation of Zionist Societies of Canada, is now known as the Zionist Federation of Canada.

bilingualism - through the teaching of Yiddish and Hebrew in Jewish schools - as a means of combating Jewish assimilation. As Roskies writes, "adopting this bilingual scheme to the exigencies of the New World, the lay Jewish revolutionaries of Poalei Zion discovered a special place for Yiddish….a bulwark against assimilation…Yiddish would be the bridge to Loshn-koydesh (holy language) and to modern Hebrew" (Roskies 1991:155). The members of Poalei Zion were successful in establishing the Montreal as home to the first Yiddish day school in North America (Roskies 1991:156).[46] These schools supplemented Montreal's network of Talmud Torah schools, which had been established in the late 1890s under the direction of Rabbi Ashinsky.[47]

The Talmud Torahs were innovative in their modernization of Jewish education from a traditional *heder*.[48] Between 1905 and 1916 five additional Talmud Torahs emerged throughout the city, and by 1917, through the initiative of local philanthropist Sir Mortimer Davis, these schools amalgamated and became known as the United Talmud Torahs (Talmud Torahs 2015). As early as 1908, the translation of religious texts from Hebrew to English or Yiddish ceased as the common pedagogical practice, and religious instruction for students was, by and large, taught exclusively in Hebrew (Corcos 1997:163). By 1917, the official language of instruction changed from Yiddish to Hebrew. In a city that would become a center of Yiddish culture in North America (Margolis 2011:31), this shift in language was significant. Language of instruction established a clear division between the Talmud Torahs and the National Radical School. Ideological disputes and fractionalization within the Montreal Jewish community regarding questions of language of instruction, liturgy, and ideology would only continue.

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[46] As Roskies and other sociologists suggest the establishment of Yiddish day schools in Montreal was due in part to external social factors, including the French/English divide and the denominationally-based school system of Quebec.

[47] The founder of the Talmud Torah school in Montreal, Rabbi Aaron Ashinsky was born in Poland in 1866, he emigrated to the United States in 1886, and acted as rabbi of a synagogue in Syracuse, New York (Robinson 2007). In 1896 Rabbi Ashinsky was asked by the Congregation of Bnai Jacob of Montreal to reside with them as Rabbi. Rabbi Ashinsky was the orginator of the Montreal *Mizrahi* (Religious-Zionists) association in Canada. In 1901 Rabbi Ashinsky returned to the United States leaving vacant a large role, which Rabbi Hirsch Cohen would come to inhabit. In 1901 Rabbi Hirsch Cohen replaced Rabbi Ashinsky as head of Talmud Torah, and by 1906 he was head Rabbi at Beth Israel and Beth David (Robinson 2007).

[48] *Heder, or cheder,* refers to a traditional school, often affiliated with a synagogue, where children are taught Torah, Talmud and Hebrew.

In 1914 organizers of the National Radical School disagreed on the ideological orientation of the school's pedagogy and established a separate school called the Jewish People's School. The Jewish People's school offered instruction in both Hebrew and Yiddish languages; Zionism was central to its pedagogy. By 1928, the Jewish People's School established itself as an all-day Jewish school, teaching English, Hebrew, and Yiddish to students at the cost of ten cents per week (King 2001:141). In 1923 the National Radical School changed its name to the Jewish Peretz School and included Hebrew instruction alongside Yiddish; it became a full Jewish day school in 1942. The division into various ideological offshoots, including socialist, communist, Yiddishist, Hebraist, etc. would establish the complete spectrum of Jewish day schools in Montreal (Robinson 2007:101) and play an instrumental role in creating academic autonomy from the PBSCMM. However, the entire Jewish community did not share this aim to achieve academic autonomy and distinct Jewish day schools.

For example, the "nationalist" labour Zionist movement, which developed Jewish day schools in the formative years of the community (Belkin 1999), was often in conflict with the more established "uptown" or west-end Jewish communities of Shearith Israel and Shaar Hashamyim. While nationalists sought separate Jewish day schools for Jewish students, many "uptown" Montreal Jews continued to support the idea of Jewish students in public schools and sought alliances with the Protestant school board. As Ira Robinson writes of the Montreal Jewish "uptown" community:

> For the elite, Jewish education was not a pressing issue. There was not much worry about how to make Jewish children Jewish in these circles at this time. It was fairly well assumed that living in Jewish neighbourhoods and being exposed to the services of the synagogue would take care of the Jewishness of the children, as though it could be absorbed by a sort of osmosis. Jewish education, moreover, was felt to be the domain of the individual congregations, rather than the community as a whole [...] Insofar as Jewish education was controlled either by Orthodox Jews, or by Jews of radical political and social inclinations, it was not really attractive to them [...] On the other hand, for the Eastern European immigrant community, Jewish education for its children was considered of vital importance from the very beginning. (Robinson 2007:101)

Given the opposing positions of the Jewish community of Montreal, the education of Jewish students, and the inclusion of Jewish students and Jewish educators in public schools and school boards became a pressing issue.

In 1907, Dr. J.T. Finnie proposed a bill stating that members of the PBSCCM should be elected rather than appointed. This was met with much resistance by the larger Protestant public, which feared that such a proposal could eventually lead to the election of a Jewish person to the school board commission (Rosenberg 1972). The Finnie proposal failed, and Jews remained ineligible to serve as teachers or school board commissioners. Regardless, by 1914 Abraham Blumenthal sought a seat as commissioner on the Protestant School Board. Though rejected, he again sought to secure an appointment in 1916. Blumenthal was noted by the press as stating, "I am looking forward to a greater Canada when we shall all be one; no matter whether we go to church on Saturday or Sunday, we shall be regarded as men" (Rome 1991:137). That same year, Harold N. Laski, a student at McGill University wrote:

> Nothing is more unfortunate in the politics of Quebec than the attempt to make education the handmaid of a religious sect. Nothing is more certain that the intellectual future of the province must largely depend upon the establishment of an education system in which religious control is replaced by intellectual freedom. That at any rate is the lesson of European experience. (Laski 1916)

While the Finnie debate ended with no concrete change, it once again opened the doors for an idea of a separate Jewish school system in Montreal. The Jewish community was divided on the idea (Tulchinsky 2008:283). The possibility of a separate school board for Montreal Jews sparked the interest of Jews from London to New York.[49] The concept of a Jewish school board as distinct from the Protestant and Roman Catholic ones was actually supported by the French-language Quebec press of the time and the PSBCCM (Rome 1991:132). By 1920, Quebec courts ruled that the Jewish community could establish a Jewish school commission as a separate board. The Jewish community, largely due to the desire to integrate into Quebec society, rejected this

[49] Prior to 1900, communication between Canadian Jewish communities was fragmented and limited (Smith 1997: 17). In 1919 the Canadian Jewish Congress was formed, offering the possibility of a unified Canadian Jewish population. Also in 1919 the Federation of Zionist Societies was created in Canada.

possibility (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992). For now at least, many Montreal Jews remained committed to the idea of a single non-denominational public school system.

Yet, the project to create a separate Jewish school system continued to draw support. Then in 1924 lawyers Louis Fitch and Michael Garber organized a community council to legally support the creation of a Jewish school system in Montreal. They argued, "The school problem to Jews is essentially one of the preservation of national culture, language and those elements most dear to a self-respecting people" (Tulchinsky 2008:290). Interestingly, the division within the Jewish community on matters of education was drawn along local lines. The well-established west-end Jewish community of Shearith Israel and Shaar Hashamyim, were opposed to the idea, while the newly immigrated, downtown "nationalist" Jewish community members supported the creation of a separate Jewish school board (Roskies 1990).

In 1924, the question of keeping Jewish students in increasingly hostile Protestant schools or creating a Jewish separate school board was brought to the attention of Quebec's Premier, Alexandre Tascherau, who developed a "Committee of Nine", comprised of members of the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish communities to address the Jewish school question (Pinsky 2011). In March of 1925, Taschereau stated that the 1903 ruling by the Quebec Court of Appeal, which decreed that admission to Protestant schools for Jewish students remained a "matter of grace", was in violation of the British North American Act that granted equal rights to all citizens (Pinsky 2011). Then in 1928, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London ruled on the issue. This ruling stated that the education of Jewish pupils in Protestant schools remained "a matter of grace" but also that a Jewish school panel could indeed be established in accordance with Quebec legislature (Tulchinsky 2008:294).

At this time, Shloime Wiseman, director of the Jewish People's day school, requested that the PBSCCM accept graduates from the Jewish People's School, whose own education followed closely that of the Protestant general education, without requiring they take high school entrance exams. To his surprise, Wiseman's request was not only refused but an increased hostility toward the Jewish day schools became evident. Wiseman reports:

> I got a call from the Protestant Board, that they had considered it seriously but that they do not see any way of giving us recognition […] the Head of the Board said to me 'You know Mr. Wiseman […] see I am a Scotch, I am not insisting on having Scottish schools, I am insisting on having Protestant schools, not necessarily connected with Scotland […] and instead of joining forces and becoming part of the general community, you are breaching, you are working for separation, separate Jewish schools, separate Hebrew schools. It's wrong, it is not good for Canada, it is not good for you'. (Corcos 1997:177)

During the 1930s nearly a third of all Montreal Jewish children were enrolled in Talmud Torah schools, the Jewish People's School, or the Peretz School (Tulchinsky 2008:213). While the Talmud Torah differed significantly from the Jewish People and Peretz schools in the language of instruction and religious orientation, each held the end view of preparing students to enrol in Protestant high schools. Then, in 1946, Talmud Torah established its own high school, Herziliah, which taught students in grades eight and nine (Corcos 1997:183). The establishment of the Talmud Torah high school set a precedent, and Montreal Jewish day schools grew to include Hebrew Academy, Jewish People, Jewish Peretz, and Shaar Zion, also known as Solomon Schechter.

By 1946, a variety of Jewish day schools at the elementary and secondary level had been established, along with a Jewish teacher-training program called the Canadian Jewish Teachers' Seminary. The Jewish community was generally residing in a single area of the city, which spanned the length of rue St-Laurent and divided the city's French and English populations in half. The central location of this enclave is noteworthy. Tulchinsky writes, "[…] the fact that this 'Jewish quarter' was at the geographical center of the city and divided the French and the English sections of Montreal was symbolic of the precarious marginality of the Jewish presence to both [populations]" (Tulchinsky 2008:212). This continued marginality of the Jewish community in Montreal had a significant impact on the way it structured its organizations and institutions. Due to its precarious position, the Jewish community of Montreal established separate institutions for nearly all of its social and cultural needs, including hospitals, orphanages, newspapers, schools, libraries, and aid societies. In this way, the creation of separate institutional structures by the Jewish community of Montreal was reflective of the local and national structures and institutions in the context in which they developed (Jedwab and

Rosenberg 1992). The growing alienation of the highly organized Jewish community would eventually result in the steadily rising level of day school enrolment in Montreal. This sentiment would equally inform the central role the State of Israel would hold in the social construction of Jewish identity in Montreal Jewish day schools (Kohn 1948).

WWII and the Post-War Period

The 1940s brought major changes to Jewish communities throughout Eastern and Western Europe. The systematic murder of European Jews by the Nazi regime had a devastating impact on the future of Jewry throughout the diaspora (Abella and Troper 1982). One major impact of the Holocaust on Montreal Jewry was on the demographic makeup of the community. During the 1940s and 1950s Canada became home to 46,000 Jewish Holocaust survivors (Tulchinsky 2008:422).[50] In 1947 alone, the Canadian Jewish Congress brought over 1,000 child survivors of the Holocaust to Canada; 525 of these children were relocated to Montreal (Montreal Holocaust Museum 2012). Holocaust survivors make up approximately one quarter of the Montreal Jewish population over the age of 56, roughly 6,800 persons (Anctil 2011:229). Montreal holds the third largest population of Holocaust survivors, preceded by New York and Israel (Anne Frank Guide 2005). By 1990, Holocaust survivors made up roughly eight percent of the US Jewish population, while in Canada they formed 30 to 40 percent of Canadian Jews (Tulchinsky 2008: 422**).** By one estimation, one in 18 Canadian Jews is a Holocaust survivor (Goldberg 2007:220). Most notably, Holocaust survivors and their descendants have taken leading roles in Jewish communities throughout Canada. As Goldberg writes:

> Holocaust survivors and their families have tended to take on a disproportionate leadership role in Canadian Jewry, thereby increasing the likelihood that their strong identification with, and commitment to Israel will remain among the community's top priorities for the foreseeable future. (Goldberg 2007:220)

[50] According to Abella & Tropper (2002), Canada holds the worst record of all Western countries of providing refuge to European Jews condemned to death by the Nazi regime. It was only after the Holocaust that Canada once again allowed Jewish immigrants from Central and Eastern Europe.

The large migration of Holocaust survivors to the city of Montreal resulted in a significant Lubavtich ultra-Orthodox and non-Hassidic ultra-Orthodox population within Montreal. The inclusion of these communities into the already established Montreal Jewish community increased the institutional diversity within the Jewish community, as each sect created its own synagogues and schools. Until 1941, the ultra-Orthodox communities of Montreal did not have separate community institutions or schools and were generally included in the local Talmud Torah schools (Corcos 1997:42). Then, in 1941 the Tomche Tmimim Loubavitch, the first Lubavitch Yeshiva of Montreal, opened as a full day school under the supervision of Rabbi Israel Jacobson (Corcos 1997:186). The establishment of various strains of ultra-Orthodox communities, each of which would create their own localized synagogues and schools, followed the creation of what would become the Rabbinical College. This included the establishment of the non-Hassidic ultra-Orthodox Yeshiva Merkaz HaTorah in 1941; Beth Rivka, a Jewish day school for girls, in 1946; and Beth Jacob in 1950. While Beth Rivka closed two years later due to low enrolment, it reopened as a full day school in 1956. New communities would include the Satmar movement and the Belz community, which went on to establish the Jewish day schools Beth Ester (1952) and B'noth Jerusalem, respectively. Thus by 1951, the ultra-Orthodox communities of Montreal were, by and large, established and complete with their own institutional structures. This massive influx of Hassidim to Montreal between 1941 and 1951 had a momentous impact on the Jewish community of Montreal. The high rate of survivors of the Holocaust into Montreal is noted by Corcos as a consequential factor in establishing the Montreal Jewish community as particular in North America (Corcos 1997:50).

Equally, the rise of Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel had a significant impact on the lives of the Jewish community of Montreal, and "by 1948, Zionism had become as close to being the universal credo and the normative identity of growing numbers of Canadian Jewry as any belief could" (Tulchinsky 2008:366). Certainly, this was due in part to the large number of Holocaust survivors found in the Canadian Jewish community. Yet even before the onset of WWI Canada was one of three countries holding the highest per capita membership in Zionist organizations (Brown 2007: 2-3).[51] Brown writes, "If, then, Jews were neither British nor French

[51] The other two countries were Belguim and South Africa. As Brown aptly points out: "All were binational states where, during the frequent periods of strife between the two official nationalities when each group revved up the

and neither Protestant nor Catholic in binational, bicultural Canada, they were intensely Jewish" (Brown 2007:5-6). Notably, Canadian Zionists did not face the question of dual loyalty as their American counterparts did, and unlike the situation in the U.S., few Jews opposed Zionism in Canada.[52]

Indeed, the opposition to, or division over, the idea of Zionism that preceded the Holocaust had largely disappeared within organized Jewish life after WWII (Mendes 2007:105). Smith writes, "With the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, dissent became inadmissible" (Smith 1997: 83). Throughout the Jewish diaspora, "Jews increasingly came to see support for Zionism and Israel as a fundamental component of their Jewish identity" (Mendes 2007:105). The centrality of Israel to the Canadian Jewish identity is evidenced through such organizations as the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC). Ira Robinson describes the CIC as "a group that stands at the peak of the Canadian-Jewish organizational structure" (Robinson 2003:132).

> The committee was set up by the most powerful national Jewish organizations in order to coordinate their positions on Israel and to serve as the community's voice to government and the media on Canada-Israel relations…The desire to speak with one voice indicates both Israel's importance to the Canadian Jewish community and the delicacy of issues relating to the Middle East. (Robinson 2003:132)

Monetary assistance to the State of Israel and the Zionist cause became a vital and central part of the identity of Jewish communities across Canada, especially Montreal. In Montreal, Jewish support for Zionism resulted in community relationship-building with the State of Israel (Tulchinsky 2008:367). Jewish Montrealers, such as Samuel Bronfman were instrumental in creating a coalition between the Canadian and Israeli governments by establishing the Canada-Israel Development Corporation in 1961, and initiating the Canada-Israel Chamber of Commerce (Goldberg 2007).

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nationalist engines, Jews got squeezed. They were neither French nor English in Canada, neither French nor Flemish in Belguim, neither Afrikaners nor English in South Africa" (Brown 2007: 3).

[52] For more see David Bercuson, *Canada and the Birth of Israel: A Study in Canadian Foreign Policy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.

The 1960s and Quebec's Quiet Revolution – Restructuring the Political Myth of Quebec

While the nationalist movement of Zionism manifested in the establishment of the State of Israel, a local sovereignty movement was emerging within the Francophone community of Quebec.[53] The 1960s propelled mass changes in Canadian society, and these social and political changes mirrored similar shifts in Quebec society. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, the Quebec sovereignty movement emerged as a force. Quebec's "Quiet Revolution" saw the rise of a new Quebec nationalism, which was distinct from traditional expressions of French Canadian nationalism. Francois Rocher writes that a new form of nationalism – one focused on territory and state rather than ethnicity – emergered during the Quiet Revolution. Previous to this French Canadian nationalism was rooted in Roman Catholicism, French language, and the myth of the *habitants*; in contrast, this new nationalism promoted "democracy, statism and modernity" alongside the issue of language (Rocher 2002:3). The political, social and intellectual life of Quebec society underwent significant changes following the death of provincial premier Maurice Duplessis, leader of the Union Nationale party. As Harold Troper writes, "If not greeted with dancing in the streets, there were likely few Jews who shed a tear at the premier's passing" (2010:39). The population of Quebec witnessed the rise and election of new political parties who increasingly adopted independendist sentiments. Among them were the Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale and the Mouvement Souveraineté-Association, the latter of which became the Parti Quebecios, Quebec's most important independentist party. The Quiet Revoloution was less an event in time than a shift in the social reality. As historian Kenneth McRoberts writes, it was the social beliefs themselves, not only political structures, which underwent a revolution:

> Here there was indeed change so profound and far-reaching that we can see how so many would have found it 'revolutionary.' In the early 1960's the beliefs and assumptions that had guided most French-Canadian intellectuals for over a century were being uncompromisingly examined and, to a very large extent abandoned. This reformulation was taking place within the mainstream of French-Canadian thought. It was not confined

[53] The long historical tradition of Quebec nationalism, beginning before Confederation, may not be adequately dealt with here. For a more thorough examination of the Quebec independentist movement, see Kenneth McRoberts' book *Misconceiving Canada: The Struggle for National Unity* (1997).

> just to 'fringe' groups among the French-Canadian nationalist intelligentsia, nor did it deny the importance of the French-Canadian collectivity. It is this process of liberation from long-dominant ideology that most clearly distinguishes these first few years of the 1960's and gives them such an extraordinary quality. (McRoberts 1993:128-129)

The Quiet Revolution affected changes in all forms of social and civic life. A newly rising intellectual class within Quebec publicly denounced the power of the Roman Catholic Church, which controlled healthcare, social services and education for francophone Quebecers.

In terms of culture, this revolution was primarly as a movement away from religious and ethnic belonging to political (i.e., national) and linguistic belonging (Endress 2014:60). Language became the key to a continued national existence in Quebec (Hayday 2011:419). A new sense of what it meant to be Quebecois was derived from such economic feats as the construction of the Manicouagan Dam, or 'Manic', built exclusively by French Canadians (McRoberts 1993:130). Political and economic modernization in Quebec was accompanied by a process of secularlization. No longer was the cultural myth of the nation of Quebec defined and rooted in Roman Catholicism; yet, this new secular Quebecois nationalism did not entirely eclipse the religious heritage of Quebec. Rather, a new national imagination was formed that accepted the historic role of Catholicism as one element of the common bond of the nation of Quebec.[54] As Gregory Baum writes,

> A new political imagination can only be successful in a people if it ties into the great movements of their history and in some way corresponds to their ancient dreams. It may indeed be derived from the scriptures or some other distant source, but unless it is understood as revealing the significant moments and conflicts of a country's past and presents itself as having been endorsed by previous experience, it will appear an alien insertion, appealing at best to an elite, and remain powerless in people's minds. What counts in any reform movement – or any revolution, for that matter – is to reinterpret the significant images and symbols that people inherited and thus to regain them and reclaim

[54] Michael Lincoln writes that in Quebec nationalism "there exists a clear framework for a congruence of nation and state." This is contrasted by the federal nationalism of English Canada where "the state is seen as a managerial tool, with little effort toward creating a pan-Canadian identity" (Lincoln 2014:47).

> them as sources for a new social imagination and guides for a new kind of social commitment. (Baum 1975:223)

This dynamic interaction between the past religious culture and the present secular one was retained in the social imaginary of contemporary Quebec.[55] New religious principles arising from the Second Vatican Council, especially the spread of ecumenism and interfaith dialogue, deeply affected the religious identity of the Francophone community of Quebec. Moreover, these theological changes aided the Francophone Catholics in Quebec to re-examine their own religious history and to become critical of traditional Catholicism and its chauvinistic attitude to other minority communities (Rome and Langlais 2010). The dialogue between Jews and French Canadians, established in the 1950s with the Cercle Juif de Langue Francaise, became increasingly possible (Jedwab 1995:42).

Yet, the Jewish community of Quebec was troubled by the nationalist tone of the Quiet Revolution. Moreover, the 1967 Six Day War engendered fear in individual Jews and Jewish communities throughout the world, as Jews living in diasporas volunteered time and resources to ensure the protection of the State of Israel. This urgency, uncertainty, and sense of precariousness, which was felt by all Jews, was exacerbated for Montreal Jews who were facing the rise of Quebec nationalism in the late 1960s. Some believed the rise of nationalism in Quebec would lead to further exclusion based on language and ethnicity (Troper 2010). Historically, French Canadian nationalism in Quebec was associated with anti-Semitism, a sentiment that became more acute in the 1930s. For this reason many Jewish Montrealers felt vulnerable in the face the increasingly confident independentist movement of the 1960s (Anctil 2011: 235). Yet, as a minority community working to preserve a specific cultural identity, Jews of Quebec could relate to the national ambitions of the Quebecois people. In fact, in a statement in 1969, the Canadian Jewish Congress, the political voice of the Montreal Jewish community, publicly identified with the struggle of French Quebecers to protect their culture and language.

[55] For example, even today, an illuminated cross still stands on top of Mont Royal in Montreal, a cross still hangs in the Quebec National Assembly, the names of towns and streets retain religious connotations, and many schools remain housed in buildings that once served as convents.

> We say without hesitancy or equivocation that the aspirations of the French speaking people of the Province of Quebec to maintain a linguistic and cultural integrity find understanding in the hearts and minds of the Jewish people. We know what it means to preserve institutions, cultural legacies, customs and languages (Canadian Jewish Congress 1969:6 as quoted in Anctil 2011:236)

These cultural and political changes would have a profound impact on the Jewish community in Quebec, particularly in the field of education where language played a key role in defining Quebec's national movement (Rosenberg 1972).

In 1961 the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education launched an investigation into the educational system of the province, which was widely seen as outdated. The Commission's report, known as the Parent Report, advocated for a unified system of education, universal accessibility to education throughout the province, more generous public funding for schools, and the creation of a Ministry of Education. The creation of a Ministry of Education in Quebec is a key event in understanding the character of a new form of nationalism in Quebec (Lincoln 2014:59). Prior to the Quiet Revolution, education, healthcare and social services for francophones in the province of Quebec were run by the Catholic Church. In the case of education, the state allowed the Catholic Church and its Protestant counterparts to administer two separate systems of schools, one in French and one in English. The creation of the Ministry of Education announced a new era of state interventionism in Quebec, one in which the institutional structures promoted the surivival and flourishing of French Quebec culture and fostered Quebecois nationalism (Lincoln 2014:60). Lincoln writes "Consider that Quebec does not specifically target anglophones or allophones (immigrants whose mother tonuge is neither English nor French) but instead it utilzes the state as a promoter of the French language to help unify a nation" (Lincoln 2014:61). Following the Quiet Revolution, the reforms in the field of education came to symbolize and institutionalize the state's role in a modern Quebec society and its nationalism. The reform of the education system came to symbolize the hopes and dreams of French Quebecers to modernize the province and ameliorate the socio-economic position of French Quebecers.

These dramatic times of social and political upheaval were bound to have a significant impact on the question of a Jewish school system. In 1962, Stanley Yetnikoff presented his recommendation for the creation of a Jewish school panel to the Quebec Royal Commission of Inquiry on Education. The creation of a Jewish school panel, he wrote, was the only way to ensure equal rights to civic education, as well as the cultural survival of the Jewish community of Quebec.

> Equal civic rights for the Quebec Jewish Community can be obtained in two ways: either through the creation of a Jewish school panel, or through the total reorganization of the school system to one of entirely neutral schools. Only the panel solution is realistic; any attempt to change the Quebec system of education to one of neutral schools would harm relations with the Catholic majority in Quebec and, moreover, be a negative approach to Jewish cultural and religious education. (Yetnikoff 1962: 23)

This proposal garnered serious attention. Then, in 1964 Quebec established its first Ministry of Education (SQ 1964) and the formerly independent religious school boards (Protestant and Catholic) fell under government jurisdiction. In November of 1966, Jewish community members formed the "Committee for Tax Supported Jewish Schools" and proposed, "to obtain tax support and grants for Jewish day schools and students equal to the tax support and grants given to Catholic and Protestant schools" (CTSJS 1968:2). In this brief, the committee argued, "Jewish day schools are unjustly classified as private schools even though Quebec has a confessional system of education" (CTSJS 1968:4). Moreover, their argument held financial implications, as the brief reported that during the 1964 school year alone, tax dollars paid by Jewish ratepayers exceeded the cost of education for Jewish students enrolled in Protestant schools by three million dollars (CTSJS 1968:6).

The newly established Ministry of Education approved limited funding of private schools in 1968 (SQ 1968). The Ministry of Education took significant control of the curriculum content, language of instruction, and structure of private schools in exchange for per-pupil funding at a rate of 60-80 percent that public schools received. When matters of curriculum content and school finances came under the control of the Ministry of Education, the Jewish, Greek, and Italian communities of Montreal lobbied the government to obtain financial assistance to cover

the cost of general or "secular" studies in their own respective private schools. Since all "public" schools were either Protestant or Catholic, and secular studies were shored up by religious curricula, the Jewish community at large reasoned that Jewish day schools would be "community" schools, similar or equivalent in structure to the established Protestant schools (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992). This community-wide initiative toward Jewish education began in the 1960s. As Robinson writes: "Indeed, by and large, the Jewish federations would not seriously support Jewish education until the 1960s, when the process of acculturation to North America had fully run its course, and there began to be generally a percieved need to educate children Jewishly" (Robinson 2007:91).

According to the Quebec Ministry of Culture, Jewish schools, an Armenian school, and a Greek Orthodox school,[56] were established "to allow new Quebecers a less brutal transition from their culture of origin to the Quebec culture" (MEDC 1978:81).[57] The new Quebecers (les Néo-Québécois) were described as "those that are neither assimilated to the French majority, nor to the English minority" (MEDC 1978:71). The Private School Act (1968), and the subsequent "associate status" of the Jewish day schools, constituted a new "social contract" between the province of Quebec and the resident Jewish community (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992: 265).

This new social contract, and the establishment of Jewish day schools under the auspices of "new Quebecers," had a significant effect on how the Jewish community organized its institutions and the level of impact and influence Quebec had on these institutions through public policy and regulation (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992). Jewish day schools first received public funds in 1968, simultaneously alleviating the financial strain on the Jewish community while creating a situation of dependence on the Ministry of Education. By June of 1968, all eight established

[56] The Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities are unique in their particular fulfilment of national distinctiveness. In his description of these three groups Smith states the following: "The projected 'group' presents sufficient common cultural features to entitle it to the status of a 'nation', but its membership is scattered over a number of political units in varying degree and proportions, as with the Greeks, Armenians and Jews. Its developed cultural consciousness, coupled with the demands of the rulers of the repective polities, make large-scale assimiliation to the 'host' community difficult." (Smith 1983: 219)

[57] In French this reads : « Comme mesure indirecte d'intégration, on a permis la création d'écoles ethniques subventionnées par l'État, à condition qu'on y enseigne un certain nombre d'heures de français; ces écoles, peu nombreuses au demeurant, devaient ménager aux Néo-Québécois une transition moins brutale de leur culture d'origine à celle du Québec et favoriser leur insertion en leur donnant le sentiment d'être accueillis selon leurs différences. Elles étaient d'ailleurs fortement demandées par certains groupes ethniques."

Montreal Jewish day schools would receive an "associate status" and $300 annually per student enrolled (Corcos 1997:197). These eight schools included the United Talmud Torah, Solomon Schechter, Beth Jacob, Hebrew Academy, Jewish People's School, Jewish Peretz School, Merkaz HaTorah, and the Rabbinical College. The number of Jewish day schools would grow to include Akiva day school, established in 1968; Hebrew Foundation School, created in 1969; and École Maimonide in 1969. The religious and ideological orientation of these schools differed significantly, establishing Montreal as a home to a flourishing Jewish pluralism.

Since Jewish day schools would now be classified as government approved private schools, we should turn our attention to the characteristics of a private school. A private school is owned and managed by a non-governmental organization or group. It charges a set tuition for full-time education at the primary and secondary levels and is, by and large, autonomous in setting its own admission standards or criteria, which may include ethnic or religious factors. Despite the religious orientation of many of these schools, the Quebec Ministry of Education data does not chart the denominational character of private schools as part of their annual statistics (Magnuson 1993:3); rather, school data is sub-categorized by language of instruction, gender of student, ethnicity, and special facilities. Many French-language schools, where the majority of private school students are enrolled, still employ members of the Catholic clergy as mentors and teachers (Magnuson 1993:3). During the 1960s many non-Catholic private schools were established; however, between 1977 and 1987, the Quebec Ministry of Education imposed a moratorium on the creation of new subsidized private schools.

Jewish Parallel Institutions

Historically, accessibility to social services in Quebec was granted or denied based on the religious and ethnic background of the indiviudal. When the provincial social services became the resposibility of civic agencies, the local Jewish social services reflected this transition (Robinson 2003:130). As Robinson writes,

> In 1971, the Quebec government takeover of social services led to considerable change within Montreal's Jewish organizational structure…Health and welfare organizations now typically make no overt mention of Jews and Judaism in their mission statements.

> They do, however, refer to such things as 'the basic Jewish values of social justice and assisting one's fellow man. (Robinson 2003:130)

As the province of Quebec took control over the system of education in Quebec, institutional centralization occurred in the Jewish day schools. First, the Association of Jewish Day Schools (AJDS) was established as an intermediary body between the individual schools and the Ministry of Education. The AJDS represented the individual schools to all levels (federal, provincial and municipal) of government. For this reason only the Jewish day schools that have been granted an operating permit under Private Education Act of Quebec might be a member of the AJDS (Robinson 2003:130). Second, the Jewish Education Council (JEC)[58] was created in 1975 to provide curriculum resources to all Jewish day schools and act as a centralized agency, a kind of advisory board of decision-makers that collectively plan and coordinate educational services for the Jewish day schools. The JEC is defined as "educational arm" of Federation CJA (Robinson 2003:135).

Founded on the premise that every Jewish child has a right to Jewish education, the JEC acted as a centralized hub of curriculum and educational resources development. According to its mission statement, the JEC was "a communal forum dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of Jewish Education" (JEC 1983: 19). In effect, the ADJS and the JEC functioned as bureaucratic bodies with which the province could negotiate or regulate the curriculum content and infrastructure of Jewish schools (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992). The Allied Jewish Community Services, the main institutional structure in the Montreal Jewish Community, financially supported the JEC. Thus Jewish schools were under the jurisdiction of the Jewish community organizations (Glickman 1981). In this way, the state had the ability to prescribe educational policy, curriculum changes, or language regulations in ethno-cultural and ethno-religious schools without ever dealing with the schools themselves; instead, the governmental bodies dealt directly with the corresponding ethno-cultural or ethno-religious association. These parallel structures would indeed remain central to Jewish community life in Montreal. Harold Waller and Morton Weinfeld write, "the Montreal Jews' greatest resource in this time of the dilemma is probably their capacity for self-government and self-financing" (1981:439). The establishment of separate

[58] The JEC is now know as the Bronfman Jewish Education Centre (BJEC).

community institutions was especially important given the coming changes in Quebec's system of education.

In 1969, language became the central issue in the French-Canadian nationalist movement (Rosenberg 1972). In response, the Quebec Government passed Bill 63, which established the Office de la Langue Française and required that students receive instruction in French-language schools. The Act, which reads in French, "qu'elles (parents) fassent instruire leurs enfants" in French schools, was translated to English as "and they (parents) *may have* their children educated" in French schools. This translation became a point of contention and dispute between the Jewish community and the Quebec Ministry of Education (Rosenberg 1972:422). In French there is no option: "that they have their children educated" in French schools. This does not translate directly to "that they *may* have their children educated" in French schools. As early as 1971, the newly established Quebec Ministry of Education prepared the ground for a law, which would regulate education on the issue of language, stating that any child in Quebec whose parents did not receive instruction in English would be taught in French (Rosenberg 1972:425). In 1972, Rabbi Rosenberg predicted that for the Jewish community in Quebec, "the road ahead is uncertain, fearful, even fraught with unknowable dangers" (Tulchinsky 2008:442). This sentiment of precariousness in the face of Quebec nationalism would only increase as the 1967 Six Day War and 1973 Yom Kippur War placed the safety and longevity of the State of Israel in question.

The emergence of nationalist movements developing in Quebec convinced many Jews in Montreal that there was no place for them in the changing province. The question of home and displacement became a central theme. One Jewish Montrealer asked: "[...] is the Montreal experience now being revealed as just another piece of evidence corroborating the old Zionist contention that the Diaspora can never provide a wholly comfortable home for Jews?" (Wisse and Cotler 1977:55). Others proposed that this equation was too sensationalist, and that this insinuation of renewed displacement was unfounded. Moreover, they argued that it was the Jewish community of Quebec who failed to "understand the language, the context, where the nationalists were coming from" (Lisee 1992:53). Yet, this lack of assurance regarding the place of belonging in the nation of Quebec would continue to be felt by the Montreal Jewish community for decades.

While the political landscape of Quebec was transforming and the Jewish community was reassessing its place in the province, many Jewish Montrealers found hope in political vision of Pierre Elliott Trudeau elected to the office of Prime Minister in 1968. As Harold Troper writes,

> "For Jews in Montreal, uneasy at growing nationalist and separatist sentiment in Quebec, at threats to the status of the English language, and at the seeming inability of Lester Pearson's Ottawa to comprehend, let alone get a handle on, what was going on in Quebec, Trudeau's progressive image, his bilingualism, and especially his determined federalism were reassuring. (Troper 2010:205)

Trudeau's uncompromising federalism and commitment to multiculturalism secured an unprecedented place for Canadian Jews in politics (Troper 2010:217). During his tenure as Prime Minister from 1968 to 1984, Trudeau opened the door to Jews in at all levels of government including cabinet members,[59] chief justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, and Canada's ambassador in Washington (Troper 2010:217). This erosion of ethnic and religious barriers, both social and political, allowed - at least in theory - for full inclusion and participation in Canada for all people. Meanwhile, living in the newly transformed Quebec many Montreal Jews remained uneasy about their future (Waller & Weinfeld 1981). With newly arising economic opportunities in Toronto (Langlais & Rome 2010), and unprecedented access to social and political arenas (Troper 2010), the rest of Canada had a growing appeal to many Jewish Montrealers.

As a result, a steady migration of Jews moving out of Quebec into neighbouring provinces (mostly Ontario) continues to this day. At the beginning of the Quiet Revolution, the Jewish population of Montreal was 115,000; in 2014 it is approximately 92,000, despite an overall growth in the city's population. Between 1970 and 1995 almost 25,000 Jews left the province of Quebec. Observers cite the rise of Quebec nationalism, language legislation in education, and economic instability as the primary reasons for this migration (Smith 1997:182). While the PQ independentist movement was not, for the most part, anti-Semitic, the movement toward national sovereignty and the issue of language were seen as the greatest challenge facing Canadian Jewry

[59] This marked the first time in Canadian history that a Jewish Canadian served as a member of a federal cabinet (Troper 2010:217).

at that time. In December of 1971, Parti Quebecois leader Rene Levesque told a Toronto audience:

> I know that eighty to ninety percent of the Jews of Quebec are nervous about the effects of separatism. I know that history shows that the rise of nationalism means Jews get it in the neck. But what can I do about it? I can't change your history. But I know that anti-Semitism is not a significant French-Canadian characteristic. The more serious problem for Jews is that Jews in Quebec are closely related to the English community. If they choose to put in with them, what can I do? (Rosenberg 1972:409)

Despite these assurances, the fact that prior to the 1960s Quebec nationalism had a long history of anti-Semitism meant that the Montreal Jewish community would remain wary towards the sovereignty movement in Quebec (Rome and Langlais 2010).

French Jews in English Schools

An interesting twist in the educational life of Quebec Jews came with the influx of French-speaking Sephardic Jews from North Africa (namely Morocco) and Europe in the 1960s. As mentioned earlier, Anglo-Sephardic immigration to Quebec began in the late eighteenth century, followed by Ashkenazim in the nineteenth century. The 1950s saw the beginning of a new wave of French-speaking Sephardim immigrating to Quebec, a wave that peaked between 1965 and 1967. Between 1957 and 1965 over 3000 Sephardim immigrated to Montreal.[60] This influx was due in part to the political conflicts in the countries in which these communities were located, which included struggles for independence in Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria. The influx of French-speaking Jewish immigrants challenged the Quebec system of education, which categorized students on the basis of religion and language. Jewish Sephardim were fluent in French, but had no place in the French-language, Catholic school system. Francophone Jews were faced with either enrolling in English-language, Protestant schools or English-language, Jewish day schools (Rosenberg 1972:420). The Francophone community of Quebec was unable to overcome the religious divide and support these Francophone Jews as French speakers (Bennet and Hertz 1970). The Jewish community was equally unprepared for a French-speaking

[60] This included 2951 Jews from Morocco, 57 from Algeria, and 222 Persian Jews (Kage 1968:2)

Jewish community and offered services that were geared to integrate Jews into Anglophone society.

By May of 1968, over a decade after the flood of French-speaking Jews to Montreal began, the Anglophone Jewish community sought to respond to the need for a French-language Jewish school. According to the fifteenth plenary session of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) in 1968:

> The Canadian Jewish Congress, through representation from the eastern region, shall assist the ASF (Association Sefarade Francophone) in creating a school that will enable children whose mother tongue is French to receive an education which respects the following criteria: 1) Education in the Jewish culture and its traditional values; 2) Education in the French language and preservation of cultural heritage. (Cohen-Scali, Bouzaglou, Levy, and Ouaknine 1968:31)

One year later, the CJC and the Association Sefarade Francophone met with Yves Martin, then acting Deputy of the Ministry of Education, and Martin approved the allocation of a part of Saint-Antoine school to become the location of Montreal's first French first-language Jewish day school, École Maimonide. Jewish historian and long-time Montrealer David Rome called the establishment of this school "a minor miracle in the history of Quebec intercultural relations" (Rome and Langlais 2010:135). Not only was this a bridge between the Francophone community of Quebec and the Jewish community, but between the Jewish Anglophone community and the newly immigrated Jewish Francophone community. In December of 1968, the Canadian Jewish News editorial reported:

> The assistance which the Ashkenazi's are giving us in terms of money", the school's principal commented, "amazed me...This spirit of '*Kol Yisrael chaverim*' is a heart-warming thing and will do much to cement the ties of brother-hood and friendship between the two sections of our people. (Tulchinsky 2008:450)

This alliance eventually saw the creation of two Francophone Jewish day schools in Montreal, École Maimonide and École Sepharade.

1976-1995: Parti Quebecois and the French Language

With the 1976 election of the Parti Quebecois, the Jewish community returned to its pre-WWII sentiments of insecurity regarding its place in Quebec society (Troper 2010:291). With the election of an independentist PQ, the population growth of Montreal Jewry ended. As Smith writes "The P.Q.'s continuous changes in education, involved revisionist teachings via prescribed textbooks and increased hours of French in the classroom, and in language legislation, such as the arguments over Bill 22, Bill 101, and Bill 178, traumatized the Jewish community" (Smith 1997: 31). In 1977, the newly elected party approved Bill 101, making enrolment in French-language schools compulsory for any child whose parents did not attend an English-language school in Quebec. The goal of the legislation was a complete reversal of the pre-1977 situation in Quebec in which 80 percent of the students whose parents immigrated to Quebec went to English language schools (Lamarre 2008). The Catholic school board was unprepared to integrate the volume and diversity of students who were affected by this law.

The election of the PQ to power, the passing of the French Language Charter (Bill 101), and preparation for a referendum on independence, sped the migration of Montreal Jews out of the province. Within two decades of the Quiet Revolution, some thirty thousand Jews from Montreal relocated to the rest of Canada. These alarm bells convinced a portion of the Jewish community that political actions taken to restore the French face of Quebec were indeed anti-Semitic in tone (Perel and Srebrenik 1982; Balikci 1982). In retrospect, many Jews now acknowledge that, in fact, the PQ distanced itself from the historical anti-Semitism of Quebec nationalism and facilitated the continuation of Jewish identity in Jewish Quebecers by financing Jewish schools, and partially funding Jewish social services.

In line with their electoral platform, in 1980 the Parti Quebecois mandated a public referendum on whether to initiate steps toward a "sovereignty-association" relationship between the province of Quebec and the federal government of Canada. This referendum was not successful, with 40% of the population voting for the PQ's proposal of sovereignty-association and 60% voting against it. When the Parti Quebecois was re-elected in the 1981 provincial elections, Jews continued to migrate out of province. As Pierre Anctil writes, "The appearance of new Francophone political elites, the confident reaffirmation of Montreal's role as a powerhouse for French culture and the

rise of a new Quebecois identity all contributed to destabilizing a Jewish population suddenly put on the defensive" (Anctil 2011:239). Yet, as the newly arrived French-speaking Jews settled into life in Montreal and a generation of bilingual Jewish Montrealers graduated from Quebec schools, within two decades of the Quiet Revolution the Jewish community of Quebec began to re-identify itself as a permanent feature of Quebec society.

After the 1980 referendum relations between the Jewish community and the provincial government stabilized. For example, as early as 1979 the constitution of the JEC officially recognized four languages: English, Hebrew, Yiddish, and French; and by 1982 bilingualism in the official languages (French and English) was required of all presidents, vice-presidents and directors of the Association of Jewish Day Schools (Robinson 2003:125). A decade after the first provincial referendum constitutional documents of the Montreal Jewish community were written in both French and English (Robinson 2003:125). Language politics would continue to change the landscape of Montreal Jewish education For example, in 1994, Jacques Chagnon, then Liberal Minister of Education approved a coalition between the Association of Jewish Day Schools (AJDS) and the Montreal Catholic School Commission (MCSC), allowing the AJDS to receive 12 million dollars a year in addition to the annual 30 million dollars, which covered 60 percent of the cost per pupil general curriculum instruction. At that time, there were 33 Jewish day schools associated with AJDS, 20 elementary schools and 13 high schools, and approximately 7,000 students. Chagnon had agreed to this increase, which would eventually cover 100 percent of non-religious instruction per pupil, by allowing the AJDS an associate status within the MCSC. Joe Rabinovitch, acting head of the AJDS, stated that the move to make a coalition with the MCSC, rather than the PSBCCM, was politically symbolic. Prior to 1994, the AJDS relied exclusively on its relation with the Protestant and English-speaking school board. In an interview with the English-language newspaper, *The Gazette,* Rabinovitch said, "We want to demonstrate that we're here to stay in Quebec, that we want our children to integrate into the larger Quebec society." (Well 1994:A7). What is notable is that this coalition took place shortly after Bill 107,[61] which provided the structural division of the school boards along

[61] In 1988 the National Assembly (NA) of Quebec passed Bill 107, also know as the New Education Act. This act reorganized the Quebec school boards along linguistic lines. While this act was passed by the NA in 1988, due to resistance from various Catholic organizations, the restructuring of the school boards along the lines of language of

linguistic rather than religious lines. The PSBCCM would become the English School Commission, and the MCSC would become the French School Commission. This restructuring of the school boards would eventually affect the role of religion in the public schools themselves, but these changes would only come into effect a decade later.

Quebec's Second Referendum

In 1995 a second provincial referendum on the question of national sovereignty took place in the province of Quebec. This referendum on Quebec independence was also rejected; the "no" side won by a slight margin when it secured 50.58% of the vote. The Jewish community of Quebec was significantly more divided in the 1995 Quebec referendum on the question of independence. The immigration of Sephardim, French-speaking Jews from North Africa, during the 1950s and 1960s had changed the Jewish demographic of Montreal considerably. Many French-speaking Jews felt more sympathy towards the national cause and the people of Quebec than with Anglophone Canadians. As one French-speaking Jewish Montrealer aptly said, "I have nothing in common with people in other parts of Canada. The Jewish community has gained from the Parti Quebecois…There is no reason for us to act so zealously for the 'no' side of the referendum" (George 1995:11). The 1995 referendum revealed that the Montreal Jewish community was significantly divided on the issue of Quebec independence and Canadian federalism. The support of the Quebec independentist movement by sectors of the Montreal Jewish community communicated how substantially Quebec society had changed since the turn of the twentieth century.

Current Trends: 1995 to the Present

Quebec society and political culture continued to evolve after the second referendum—as did its approach to education. The restructuring of the political culture of Quebec to include a more diverse population was reflected in the education system through three main events. These included: the restructuring of the school boards, deconfessionalizing the schools, and introducing new compulsory curricula including a world religions course in public and private schools. Each

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instruction (French or English) rather than religious denomination (Protestant or Catholic) did not actually occur until 1997.

of these events and their implications for the Jewish community of Montreal will be addressed in order.

Restructuring the School Boards

In 1996, the Commission for the Estates General on Education (CEGE) published a detailed report explaining how the transition from a denominational system of education to a language-based system of education would occur within the schools themselves. As Bill 107 (1988) had restructured the school boards from a religious orientation to a linguistic one, another policy was required to allow for individual schools to retain their religious orientation. In order to divide the school boards linguistically a constitutional amendment was required. In 1997 the PQ provincial government passed Bill 109, the bill was an official request to the federal government to Canada to amend the Canada Constitution Act (SQ 1997:Ch.98). As a result, in 1997 the federal government of Canada added the following clause to section 93 of the 1867 Constitution Act: "93A. Paragraphs (1) to (4) of section 93 do not apply to Quebec" (Smith, Foster, and Donahue 1999:211). This additional clause exempted the province of Quebec from its denominational restrictions around education (GC 1997: 97/141), and resulted in the cessation of privileges to education by particular denominations, namely Catholics and Protestants (HOC 1997). Then in 1998, 60 French language school boards took the place of the previous 137 Roman Catholic school boards, and nine English language school boards replaced the 18 Protestant school boards (Smith, Foster, and Donahue 1999:2). These language-based school boards continued to offer religious instruction, and students were at liberty to select from Protestant, Catholic, or moral education classes.

Deconfessionalizing the Schools

In light of the restructuring of the school boards along linguistic lines, the confessional identity of the schools themselves and the question of the role of religion in schools remained unresolved. During the debates in the National Assembly on how to deal with religion in education, it was decided that religion still had a role to play. Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) who supported a changing role of religious education within the public school system argued:

> All schools must teach students to respect different allegiances. However, our schools must not altogether dismiss religious education. They must show that they are open and able to recognize, regardless of specific convictions and from a critical point of view, the contribution made by the different religions in terms of culture, values and humanism. (NA 1997:5993)

In an attempt to assess the role religion would play in the reformed education system, the government established the Task Force on the Place of Religion in Schools in Quebec (MELS 1999), which would be chaired by Jean-Pierre Proulx of the Université de Montréal. The task force decided that religious studies could indeed remain in the Quebec curriculum, but the pedagogical approach would shift from theology to cultural studies in recognition of the secularization of Quebec schools and the new religious pluralism in the province (SQ 2000: Ch.24). The debate resulted in the commission of a 300-plus-page report by the Task Force on the Place of Religion in Schools in Quebec, commonly known as the Proulx Report, which examined the Quebec religious school system and proposed structural and curricular changes.

The Proulx Report stated explicitly that the study of religions from a cultural perspective be compulsory for all students. The significant changes and accommodations requiring the MCSC and PSBCMM to shift from a denominational base to a linguistic base were overshadowed by a public examination of the role of religion in schools (Smith, Foster and Donahue 1999:219). Thus in 2000, all Quebec public schools were deconfesionalized; yet, Catholic, Protestant, and moral education classes continued as part of the compulsory curriculum. Concurrently, the 1997 amendment to the Education Act, which allotted class time and public resources to the teaching of the religious traditions of minority communities in Quebec, was revoked.

Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) and History and Citizenship Education

In 2005, the Quebec government passed Bill 95, which removed the option for students enrolled in Quebec schools to choose between Catholic, Protestant, or moral education classes and authorized a mandatory course in Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) in grades one through eleven in all public and private schools. In his text, *Éthique, culture religieuse, dialogue. Arguments pour un programme*, which describes the ERC course philosophy in detail, course

creator George Leroux asserts that the state should be the "sole actor" in education (Leroux 2007:20). The inductive method used by the ERC is a comparative one; it reduces large amounts of data into a summative form, then highlights the links between the data. The term "religious culture," derived from the course title, frames religions as cultural facts. It emphasizes the historical and cultural importance of the Protestant and Catholic communities, alongside other religious traditions, in Quebec's "religious heritage."[62]

This new religious curriculum was part of larger changes and reflected a reformed Quebec curriculum (Jadoulle 2005). Quebecers are divided on the significance of the new curriculum. Many Francophone commentators have lamented that these pedagogical shifts in Quebec education ignore the culture, history, religion, and identity of the Francophone nation of Quebec (Bock-Côté 2008; Courtois 2009; Quérin 2008).[63] Others disagree. For example, Stonebank and Stonebank (2008) understand the ERC as an extension of Quebec's Christian norms, and Carr and Lund (2007) state that the ERC does not disrupt the continuity of national educational goals, previously upheld by Catholic and Protestant moral courses, to assimilate children into Christian norms of Quebec society. While the pedagogical method of the ERC appears to foster a neutral or inclusive approach to the study of religion, many commentators suggest it reifies a regional or national identity (Andreassen 2011:269). As we have noted above, one of the most important goals of public education is to produce a unified populace. Most often this form of national edification or cohesion occurs in the presentation of historical narratives, artefacts, and national

[62] Course creator Leroux writes: **"**Instruction in religious culture, for its part, is aimed at fostering an understanding of several religious traditions whose influence has been felt and is still felt in our society today. In this regard, emphasis will be placed on Québec's religious heritage. The historical and cultural importance of Catholicism and Protestantism will be given particular prominence (Leroux 2007:16).

[63] Specifically critiquing the ERC program in relation to Quebec national education, Joelle Quérin writes, «Cet enseignement est préconisé pour une seule raison : passer par les élèves pour transformer la société. Justifié au nom de la « mission de socialisation » de l'école, le cours d'ÉCR s'appuie sur le constat suivant : l'idéologie multiculturaliste ne peut pas recueillir l'adhésion d'une population qui a déjà été socialisée dans un cadre national. À défaut de convaincre les adultes, socialisons les enfants avant qu'ils ne soient imprégnés d'une conscience nationale toxique» (Quérin 2008:23).

symbols in history and social science curricula (Nash, Crabtree & Dunn: 1998). The new curriculum performs this role.[64]

The depiction of Jewish communities within Quebec's mandatory history and social science curricula is noteworthy. The religious practices, history, and culture of the Jewish community appear in two subject areas in these new curricula: Ethics and Religious Culture (ERC) course and in History and Citizenship Education (HCE). Given the low rates of social interaction between francophone Quebec students and Jews, these course sections are likely to be the only form of encounter many students have with the local or global Jewish communities (Hirsch & Mc Andrew 2012). [65] According to Hirsch and McAndrew's study on the representation of the Jewish community in the ERC (grades 1-11) and the HEC (grades 9-10), these texts focus only on historical representations of the local Jewish community and justify the fears expressed by many Francophone Quebecois that Jews are not active participants in Quebec society (Hirsch & McAndrew 2012:58).[66] According to their analysis, these new Quebec curricula reinforce an image of the Jewish community as culturally distinct, distant, and separate from the Quebec majority, and inseparable from the Anglophone community. They write, "Le portrait de la communauté que tracent les manuels est celui d'une communauté immigrante, religieuse et anglophone" (Hirsch & McAndrew 2012:57).[67] By anaylzing what is included and what is left out of these sections, Hirsch and McAndrew offer a clearer image of how the Jewish community is understood by and represented in Quebec society. For example, they note that Quebec's history of anti-Semitism, as well as Canada's barring of Jewish immigrants into Canada from the 1930s until after WWII is not included in either curriculum (Hirsch & McAndrew 2012:42, 50). Notably, their analysis of these texts reveals no mention of the Jewish day school system in Quebec. They write,

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[64] In March 2015 the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that private religious schools in Quebec may replace the compulsory ERC curriculum with an educational program of their own to teach about other religious traditions and cultures.

[65] According to a recent study on inter-group relations and integration in Canada, 23 percent of francophone respondents surveyed had regular or occasional contact with Jews, while the majority - 76 percent - had no contact with Jews (Friedman and Jebwab 2014).

[66] "En effect, non seulement la communauté d'aujourd'hui n'est pas décrite, mais son portrait dans les manuels justifie presque les craintes des autres Québécois face a ses membres."

[67] "The portrait of the community the textbooks draw is that of an immigrant, religious and Anglophone community."

> L'absence de toute référence aux école juives qui font pourtant souvent les manchettes des journaux québécois reste sans doubte l'exemple le plus flagrant. Plutôt, que le traiter comme un suject conflictuel, les manuels d'HEC auraient pu expliquer le contexte historique qui amène la communauté juive à inaugurer un système d'éducation indépendant. (Hirsch & McAndrew 2012:56)[68]

As Jewish schools are frequently presented in the French-language Quebec media as contrary to the values of Quebec and a misuse of public funds (Bauer 2011:10), these texts could have illuminated the unique and complex system of education in Quebec. Bauer writes, "When the Jewish schools are not attacked as a group, the most religious ones are accused of deviating from the Department of Education's regulations, particularly regarding the time allotted to secular studies. The repetitiveness and focus of these attacks give a hint of anti-Semitism" (Bauer 2011: 11). Given the possibility that text books may be the only point of contact between Francophone students and the Jewish community, these curricula do not adequately reflect the contemporary Montreal Jewish community which is diverse, bilingual, and actively participating in many sectors of Quebec society.

Moreover, the resurfacing of Quebec nationalism, the historical ambience of attitudinal anti-Semitism in Quebec (Weinfeld 2008), and the seemingly intractable conflicts faced by the State of Israel, amplified in Jewish Montrealers a sense of precariousness. The 2004 fire-bombing of Montreal's United Talmud Torah Jewish day school only increased this sentiment. The fact that the fire, which resulted in the loss of nearly 15,000 school library books, was set by two local Muslim youth, who alerted a local news station to report the act of arson was in response to the death of Hamas leader Sheikh Ahmad Yassin by the IDF (Hamilton 2004), revealed just how interconnected the Montreal Jewish diaspora was to the State of Israel. As a result, many local Jewish day schools increased security measures, including gated entrances to school property, placing the flag of the State of Israel inside the school building, and installing bullet-proof glass in classrooms (Ariel Rabinowitz, personal interview, February 28, 2013). While such acts of

[68] "The absence of any reference to Jewish schools, which nevertheless often make headlines in Quebec newspapers, remains the most obvious example. Rather than treat it as a subject of conflict, the HEC manual could have explained the historical context that allowed for the Jewish community to create an independent education system."

violence against Jews or Jewish establishments located in Montreal are rare, the culmination of these historical factors continues to contribute to feelings of uncertainty.

Where we are now: The Jewish Community in Montreal Today

Montreal was home to the first organized Jewish community in Canada, and until the 1960s Quebec remained the hub of Canadian Jewish institutional life (Bauer 2011). Since the 1970s the Jewish population of Montreal has been in a state of steady decline with the greatest population losses occurring between 1971 and 1981 (-7.4%) and 1991-2001 (-7.9%).[69] Prior to the Quiet Revolution, the Jewish community of Montreal numbered at 115,000; in 2014 it is approximately 92,000. Yet, as Anctil writes, "Numbers do not serve to entirely explain the mood today within the Montreal community, but the loss incurred in the last thirty years has left gaps and prompted serious reflection especially in the Ashkenazi Anglophone segment, forcing numerous reassessments and a serious reorientation of community policy" (Anctil 2011:230-231). The migration of Jews out of the province of Quebec continues to be a major issue facing Quebec Jewry.

Today the Jewish population of Canada is approximately 350,000 people, or 1% of the national population, half of which currently live in Toronto, and a quarter of which live in Montreal.[70] Smaller Canadian Jewish communities can be found in the Canadian cities of Winnipeg, Ottawa, Vancouver, Calgary, and Edmonton. Among these communities, Montreal remains unique in Canada and the US. Particular features include the high rate of Holocaust survivors, the historical and contemporary use of Yiddish, and the high religious affiliation in Montreal, particularly in Orthodox synagogues (Bauer 2011:2). Lower affiliation within the Reform and Conservative communities makes it markedly different from U.S. Jewish communities, as well as Toronto (Bauer 2011:2). As evidenced by the 2010 Montreal-wide community survey, 22 percent of the non-Ultra Orthodox population identifies as Orthodox, while 24 percent identify as traditional (Shahar 2010). The following table represents the proportions of Montreal Jewish affiliation:

[69] The Montreal Jewish population in 1971 was 111,020 and by 1981 it was 103,765. In 1991 the Jewish population of Montreal had decreased further to 101, 560 and in 2001 the population numbered 93,540.
[70] During the 1990s and early 2000s there was a wave of Soviet Jews immigrating to Canada and today Jews from various countries - including Argentina, Israel and France- choose to relocate to Canada.

Table 3: The Montreal Jewish Community by Religious Affiliation 2010 (Shahar 2010:17)[71]

Affiliation	Total Population Surveyed	Ultra-Orthodox Excluded
Orthodox	534 (24.3 %)	460 (22 %)
Traditional	575 (26.1%)	560 (24 %)
Just Jewish	346 (15.7 %)	335 (20.55 %)
Conservative	335 (15.2 %)	329 (12.5 %)
Secular	173 (7.9 %)	169 (22.5 %)
Reform	114 (5.2 %)	111 (5%)
Reconstructionist	83 (3.8 %)	82 (8.2 %)
Humanist	25 (1.1%)	24 (1.2 %)
Jewish New Age	15 (0.7 %)	14 (0.7 %)

Place of Montreal Jews in Quebec Society

As noted in the introduction to this chapter, the Montreal Jewish community was shaped by a deeply linguistically and religiously divided society (Glickman 1981). Reflecting the divided society in which it emerged, the Montreal Jewish community is nearly institutionally complete -- replete with its own schools, hospitals, clubs and social services. As Michael Brown writes, "like French and Anglo-Canadians, Jews in Canada organized themselves as an ethnic group, a nationality, unlike American Jews, who organized as a religious group" (Brown 2007:3). Due in part to this institutional completeness, and for reasons that have been described in this chapter, the Jewish community of Montreal remains largely unknown to the other local communities, especially the Francophone population of Quebec (Jedwab 2008).

According to a recent study on inter-group relations and integration in Canada, 23 percent of francophone respondents surveyed had regular or occasional contact with Jews, while the majority -- 76 percent -- had no contact with Jews (Friedman & Jebwab 2014). According to the

[71] This table reveals that even when one excludes the ultra-Orthodox population, Montreal holds a distinctly high Orthodox affiliation.

same national study 57 percent of English Canadians, 47 percent of Muslim Canadians, and 39 percent of Aboriginal Canadians have regular or occasional contact with Jews (Friedman & Jedwab 2014).[72] The physical and intuitional divisions that characterize the city of Montreal foster this lack of contact. As noted earlier, Jews generally reside in tightly grouped neighbourhoods west of "the Main". The boroughs and municipalities where Jews make up a sizable percentage of the total population include: Cote Saint Luc, where 62 percent of the residents are Jewish; Hampstead, where 75% of residents are Jewish; Westmount with 23%; Outremont with 20%; and Snowdon where 18% of residents are Jewish. Due in part to this residential density, in Montreal Jews interact with each other Jews more frequently and "systematically" than in other Canadian Jewish communities (Anctil 2011:227).

Despite the vast changes in Quebec's politics and culture, other members of Quebec society remain unaware of the social, political, and cultural realities of Jewish Montrealers. Julien Bauer, professor of Political Science at Université du Québec à Montréal, concludes that Montreal Jews continue to be perceived as eternal outsiders, constantly in transition, but never entering the larger culture of Quebec (Bauer 1984: 400). Francophone Quebecers, Bauer contends, have long held this view of ethnic exclusion. Bauer writes,

> In Quebec the welfare state is stronger than elsewhere in Canada, the civil service is treated as a basic component of the province's singularity, and civil servants based in Quebec City have no link with Jews--be it at the school level (no Jews in French Catholic schools), socially (the number of Jews living there is minimal), or professionally (hardly any Jews in public administration). It is not, then, surprising that these civil servants are totally unaware of Jewish reality. (Bauer 2011:10-11)

This lack of awareness may be understandable; at first glance, one may see two very different peoples holding different world-views, speaking different languages, and holding different national aspirations. Yet, both are minorities living in the same territory, and both share a sense that their cultural survival is threatened. As Langlais and Rome argue:

[72] According to a similar study conducted in March 2015 the numbers are slightly different with 27 percent of francophone respondents having regular or occasional contact with Jews and 60 percent of English Canadians having regular or occasional contact with Jews (Jebwab 2015).

> If there is one other nation especially well placed to understand the strength of the Jewish community, it is undoubtedly the French-speaking people of Québec. Not only does their religion share a spiritual heritage with Judaism, but the history of their survival and the occupation of their lands offer analogies with the history of the Jews in America. (Rome & Langlais 2010:8)

Given the dramatic changes in the demographic makeup and bilingualism (French and English) of the Montreal Jewish community since the 1960s the possibility of forging common ground between the francophone and Jewish communities of Quebec remains possible (Anctil 2011:230-231).

The Place of Education in the Jewish Community

In 2011 a total of 57 percent of Montreal Jewish students were enrolled in Jewish day schools. The total number of students was 8303. Divided between elementary and high schools 66 percent of Jewish school-age children attend Jewish elementary day schools, while 45 percent are enrolled in Jewish high schools. When compared with other major Canadian Jewish communities, the percentage of students enrolled in Montreal Jewish day schools is higher than any other major Canadian Jewish community. This is particularly true in the high school years. The following table presents the total number of Jewish school-age children enrolled in Jewish day schools yearly in relation to the Jewish population of Montreal. Most notably, enrolment in Jewish day schools steadily increased between 1971 and 2011, while the entire Jewish population of Montreal has been in a state of gradual decline.

Table 2: Jewish Students Enrolled in Montreal Jewish Day Schools 1971-2011 (Shahar 2006; Shahar 2014)

Year	Jewish Population of Montreal	Enrolled in Jewish Day Schools	Number of school-aged children	Percentage of Jewish Students Enrolled in Jewish Day Schools
1971	112, 020	3824	N/A	N/A
1981	103, 765	6704	N/A	N/A
1991	101, 405	7551	14,498	54%
2001	93, 940	8310	14,785	56%
2011	90, 780	8303	14,405	57%

In comparison to other Canadian Jewish communities, Montreal retains a significantly higher percentage of day school enrolment, particularly in the high school years. By comparison, Winnipeg has 47 percent of the population attending Jewish elementary day schools and 20 percent attending Jewish high schools. In Toronto, 36 percent of the Jewish population attends Jewish elementary schools, and 22 percent attend Jewish high schools (Shahar and Karpman 2006:29). In raw numbers the Toronto Jewish community has more students attending all day Jewish elementary day schools (8, 046) than Montreal (5, 677), and more Jewish day schools (there are currently 18 Jewish day schools and seven Jewish high schools), the attendance of students in Jewish high schools in Montreal as a proportion of the local population far surpasses other Canadian cities, including Toronto. Part of the reason for this is that private education is simply more widespread in Quebec than any other province.

For example, Quebec invests more money in private education than any other Canadian province (Magnuson 1993) and continues to hold the highest percentage of school-age-children enrolled in

private schools in Canada (MELS 2013b).[73] Of the 363 private secondary and primary schools in Quebec, 201 are located in Montreal (MELS 2013a: 3).[74] Another part of the reason is that, in Montreal, parents who are unable to pay the annual tuition fees for Jewish day schools may receive financial assistance from various sources in the Jewish community. Approximately 45 percent of students enrolled in Montreal Jewish day schools received scholarships or financial support from the Montreal Bronfman Jewish Education Centre (Shahar and Karpman 2006:26). As noted earlier, the funding of Jewish day school education comes from the Jewish community, with subsidies from the Provincial government. The primary vehcile for financial support of the day schools is the Montreal Federation Combined Jewish Appeal (CJA).

The variety and diversity of Jewish communities present in Montreal is evident in the multiplicity of day schools, all of which offer some balance of religious and general studies. All Quebec private schools[75] are required to teach the regional curriculum (called the *régimes pédagogiques*) and abide by the French-language laws. As a result, Jewish day schools have increased their total school hours to 35 hours per week, in contrast with the public schools' 25 hour week, in order to comply with the increased hours of the provincial curriculum and still teach Jewish studies and Hebrew language. Currently, the majority of Jewish day schools affiliated with the English language school board teach a minimum of fourteen hours of French per week (Evelyn Ride, personal communication, June 13, 2013).

[73] In the 2009-2010 school year 13 percent (32 136 out of 429 948) of students living in Canadian provinces other than Quebec were enrolled in private primary schools, while 24 percent (88 777 out of 369 727) of Quebec students attended private secondary schools (MELS 2013b).
[74] There are currently 275 private primary and secondary school corporations in Quebec; 183 of those school corporations receive subsidies, while 92 do not (MELS 2013: 3).
[75] A Private School is defined as one owned and operated by a non-governmental body.

Table 4: Percentage of Jewish Students Enrolled in Jewish Elementary Schools in Canada, 2001 (Shahar 2006:29)

City	2001 Census Base Population	Enrolled in Jewish Day Schools	Percentage of Base Enrolled	Total in Non-Jewish Schools
Montreal	8,550	5,677	66.4	2,873
Toronto	22,020	8,046	36.5	13,974
Ottawa	1,715	505	29.4	1,210
Winnipeg	1,335	632	47.3	703
Calgary	730	221	30.3	509
Vancouver	2,120	704	33.2	1,416
Total	36,470	15,785	43.3	20,685

Interestingly, Pomson and Schnoor indicate that the rising rate of Jewish day school enrolment in Toronto since the 1980s is due in part to the migration of Montreal Jews to Toronto, many of whom continued the Montreal trend of sending children to Jewish schools (Pomson and Schnoor 2008:20). As Charles Shahar writes: "The continuity of the Jewish day school system seems linked to those who themselves pass through it" (Shahar 1998:i). According to Shahar's study on the impact of the Jewish high school on Montreal, Jewish identity formation indicates that graduates of Jewish high schools were significantly more likely to have left the province of Quebec than Jewish graduates of public schools. In 1998 35 percent of recent graduates from Jewish high schools left the province in comparison to 29 percent of graduates from public high schools. It is important to note that, if the graduates of École Maimonide, the French-language Jewish high school, were removed from the pool of comparison, 43 percent of graduates from Jewish high schools had relocated out of the province of Quebec since 1998 (Shahar 1998:17). Of the number (that had moved out of Quebec), 38 percent surveyed indicated they had left to pursue their studies, while 35 percent surveyed had moved for economic factors (Shahar 1998:17). Only 3.6 percent surveyed noted they had moved due to not being able to speak French

adequately (Shahar 1998:17). The significance of the local context in which Montreal Jewish day schools are immersed should not be underestimated. In Montreal, the percentage of Jewish school-age children in Jewish elementary day schools is more than 50 percent higher than the average attendance of Jewish school-age children in the USA.

Jewish Education and Social Construction of Identity

The Federation CJA building houses over 22 Jewish organizations, which include the Canadian Jewish Congress, which supports Jews in Canada; the Canadian Zionist Federation, which promotes Israel and unites the Zionist movements and collectives within Canada; Canada-Israel Committee, a group that supports the connection between Israel and Canada through financial contributions and social contact; the Bronfman Jewish Education Center; and various other offices. The agencies housed within Federation CJA may be categorized into five separate branches: Jewish education and culture; local community organizations; social services for Jewish Montreal; organizations focused on Israel; and Jewish advocacy.

The near complete institutional structure of the Montreal Jewish community has had a profound effect on the social construction of Jewish identity through education, particularly regarding national attachment to the State of Israel. According to recent data on Montreal Jewish immigration, migrants from Israel make up about 3.5% of the total Jewish population of Montreal (Anctil 2011: 230). However, Pierre Anctil writes, "the strong attachment to Israel which Montreal Jews constantly demonstrate in all aspects of community life has little to do with the in migration of Israelis, or the use of Modern Hebrew as a language of daily significance" (Anctil 2011: 230). As the new, secular, state-centred nationalism of French Quebecers took shape, members of the Jewish community became more focused on the development of their own identity (Troper 2010) and adopted a diaspora nationalist attachment to the State of Israel. The historical segregation of the Jewish community from other local communities equally bolstered the communal attachment to the State of Israel as a homeland. In Montreal, institutional structures created and reinforced the separation of the Jewish community from other local communities and Israel became a defining aspect of Jewish identity.

As Canada embraced a more multicultural self-image, and the province of Quebec shifted from an ethno-religious to a state-centered nationalism, Jewish Canadians retained strong national attachments to the state of Israel. As Daniel Elazar, Michael Brown and Ira Robinson write,

> As the country became more inclusive and the two-peoples concept eroded, it became more appropriate and less self-effacing for Jews to embrace Canadian nationalism. But they remained much more attached to Zionism than did American Jews, a disparity which would seem to indicate that the Americans continued to feel more 'at home' and less separate in the New World domicile than did their cousins north of the border. (Elazar, Brown & Robinson 2003:7)

Historically, exclusion and tension may have undermined the feeling among Montreal Jews that Quebec is home. Recent attempts to forge stronger ties between the Jewish and Francophone communities of Quebec – both institutionally and socially – have helped to overcome a rocky historical relationship. Yet this has required a concerted effort on the part of the Jewish community to construct a multidimensional identity. As Anctil continues, "this meant essentially embracing a complex and multilayered identity as North Americans, as Canadians, as Quebecois and as Montrealers, while still juggling with the many-faceted aspects of Judaism, itself a combination of many languages, traditions and origins" (Anctil 2011:240). The sphere of education remained the primary means through which to shape and maintain this multilayered Jewish Quebec identity.

Conclusions

Significant and complex historical factors have influenced how the Jewish community of Quebec has been organized and preserved through institutions (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992). Quebec has the highest concentration of Jews residing in a single area, a Jewish bureaucratic system that functions in many ways as a parallel system to the provincial system, and the highest rate of Jewish day school enrolment in Canada. Reviewing a historical account of the education of Jews in Quebec reveals how the Jewish community remains somewhat isolated from other Quebecois - especially Francophone populations (Jedwab 2008). This exclusion was historically actualized through a system of education based on the religious orientation of the child. Bauer writes:

"[Jews] were not given the choice between a general school system and a private one but between a permanent status as a minority within the Christian schools or as a minority within an institutional separatism" (Bauer 1984:402). This chapter shows how the Montreal Jewish community now holds greater autonomy in regard to the education of Jewish students then it did historically in Quebec. Even so, this situation does not always contribute to better relations between Jewish and other local communities. As one author notes, "It is not just bureaucratic contracts between the P.Q. and the Jewish Community that are needed, but an increase of understanding between the French of Quebec and the Jews of Quebec" (Smith 1997:167). Be that as it may, the institutional completeness and social insularity of Montreal Jewry has resulted in a burgeoning and vibrant Jewish day school system, in which national attachment to the State of Israel retains a central role.

The focus of this work is on the role of ethnosymbolism in structuring the idea of the nation, and education in transferring the idea of the nation from one generation to the next. The term ethnosymbolism might equally be called original stories, or myths, which indirectly transmit ideological messages – messages that may only be recognized in subtexts (Gertz 2000:1). While the Montreal Jewish community was in a sense created by the structure of Quebec, it created its own culture in which ethnosymbolism played an important role. As the ethnocultural space for Jewishness was historically confined to a bordered and distinct enclave in the city of Montreal, the identification with Israel as an outlet for positive identity and sense of belonging flourished. In mainstream Jewish day schools Judaism and the State of Israel are taught as integral elements of Jewish identity. While the State of Israel remains a central element in the social construction of diaspora Jewish identity, the interpretations of Zionism by a given diaspora community or by Israelis living in Israel differs significantly. As Charles Shahar writes, "For Israeli Jews, Zionism signifies the actual living or a strong aspiration to live in Israel; whereas for the North American Jews, it signifies a strong commitment to Israel, as a central characteristic of one's Jewish identity" (Shahar 2011:47). In Montreal, the significant number of people who have visited Israel demonstrates the centrality of Israel in Jewish identity construction – even among secular[76] Jews.

[76] Notably, in Shahar's study of the Jewish Montrealers who identify as secular – and are therefore often unaffiliated with mainstream Jewish communal life – 94.9% attend Passover Seder while 86.7% light Hanukkah candles (Shahar 2011:53)

According to Shahar's analysis "the local (Montreal) community has the highest level of having been to Israel, of any Jewish centre in North America" (Shahar 2011:47). While loyalty to and concern for Israel remain central elements of Canadian Jewish identity, the future for Jews in Quebec remains in question (Troper 2010:295).

While institutional separatism serves many functions, the Jewish community is constantly reminded of its minority status and forced to accommodate the political will of provincial governments, including changes in compulsory curriculum.[77] Until recently full inclusion in the social, political, and cultural life of Quebec was not a real option for Montreal Jews. When a community finds a limited sense of belonging within a local context links to a real or imagined homeland blossom. The following chapters, which analyze two curricula that teach about Israel and were created within Bronfman Jewish Education Centre, will demonstrate how a normative stance on Israel is fostered in mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools. These chapters also give voice to a number of educators within the Montreal Jewish day schools who comment on their experience of teaching about a national homeland within the diaspora context of Quebec.

[77] "Jewish Day Schools were to be reminded of their precarious situation. They depend on the good will of the Quebec Governement not only for subsides – considered as obvious for Protestants or Catholics but as a privilege for Jews, Greek Orthodox and Armenians – but for their mere existence: to operate they need a permit. A moratorium was imposed on the opening of new Jewish and other ethnic schools" (Bauer 1984:402).

Chapter 4: Methodology

Summary

In this study I apply the general principles of ethnosymbolism to a specific case of diaspora national identity. To do so, I focus on how formal and experiential curricula - specifically created to teach about the State of Israel and developed within the system of Montreal Jewish education – rely on religious myths particular to the dual Torah, the religious festival calendar (annual cycle of religious holidays), and religious symbols familiar to the ethnic group over *la longue durée* to express national identity. Developing an ethnosymbolic approach to the study of nations, I highlight how the pre-modern symbolic repertoire is employed to construct a modern social identity, i.e., a national identity.

This chapter describes the mixed methodology of curricula analysis, archival research, and semi-structured interviews, which inform the work. Data for this study was gathered through the following procedure: First, I undertook a review of Israel education resources created within the system of Montreal Jewish education, including textbooks, workbooks, and experiential learning programs. Second, I mapped out the Israel studies curricula and programing in their entirety, and identified the reoccurring national myths, symbols, and traditions. I then traced the reoccurring national symbols to their classical and biblical origins. Third, I conducted semi-structured interviews with local principals, teachers, and curriculum builders involved in Israel education in order to glean insights into the culture and nature of Jewish day schools; highlight themes and symbols found in the curriculum analysis; give insights into how the symbols of the curriculum are used in schools; and confirm my analysis and conclusions.

Introduction

As demonstrated in this work, the strong institutional character (represented by BJEC and Federation CJA) of the Montreal Jewish education system affects how Israel is taught and represented in the individual day schools (Margolis and Shimon 1997). In fact, Margolis and Shimon attribute the success of the Montreal Jewish community's Israel education programs to the role played by BJEC – the institutional wing of Montreal Jewish education. They write:

“Bureaus can and should serve as the brokers of the Israel connection to their local communities and institutions - an interstitial, catalytic, political, and curricular role that they perform extremely well” (Margolis and Shimon 1997:10). Because Jewish Education bureaus can function as “brokers” of the connection to Israel, they are well equipped to understand the function of the symbols in national identity formation and to integrate the study of Israel into various forms of educational programing. In this way Jewish education bureaus act as “producing agents” that equally organize and structure cultural meanings (Swidler 2014:308). As Griswold writes, “the producing agent has some idea of what genre he is working in; that is, he intends his cultural object to fit into, to refer to, one or more known classifications having particular characteristics” (Griswold 2014:293). For this reason, I interpreted BJEC as a kind of “producing agent” (Griswold 2014:293) of the idea and subject of Israel in Montreal Jewish education. As I wanted curricula that reflected the local context, I constrained my analysis to pedagogical programs created or financed by the BJEC for a Montreal audience that had the objective of teaching about the subject of Israel. I set out to garner an understanding of how the subject of Israel was taught, what function it served in the construction of a local diasporic identity, and what effects the location of the diaspora community had on the teaching of the subject and its role in transnational identity formation.

As each school has developed its own individual curriculum for teaching Jewish history, Jewish Studies, and Israel education, I have selected to analyze curricula and pedagogical initiatives that were initiated by BJEC and are therefore commonly taught in mainstream Jewish day schools. The term "mainstream Jewish day schools", commonly found in literature referring to both Ashkenazi and Sephardic non-ultra Orthodox schools (Mary Maguire 2010; Charles Shahar 2006, 2011, 2014; Helena Miller 2014) refers to local day schools that define themselves as Zionist in their mission statements, yet differ in their religious orientation. Initially, the United Talmud Torah, which characterized mainstream Jewish day schools, was religious (orthodox) and Zionist in orientation. Then the Jewish People School and Peretz schools, which were originally secular and Zionist, were also described as mainstream. Today, while each school differs in its religious orientation, as well as its ideological approach to the teaching of Zionism (Cultural Zionist, Religious Zionist, etc.)- if the school self-defines as Zionist in its mission statement it is clumped together in a category which sets it apart from the *Haredi,* Chabad, and

other ultra-Orthodox schools. In fact "mainstream" (a term which includes the gamut from Modern Orthodox to Reform) could equally be called non-ultra Orthodox. The contribution of this study is found in its analysis of the integrated approach to Israel education taken by Jewish schools in Montreal. While the twenty-three Jewish day schools differ in philosophy, level of religious observance, and vision, they are equally part of the system of Montreal Jewish education. This investigation seeks to understand how Montreal's communal structures and social context have resulted in a coordinated approach to teaching Israel and Zionism as essential elements of diaspora Jewish identity.

To begin my research, I first amassed curricula on Israel education developed for Montreal Jewish day schools. With the help of the director of BJEC, I identified curricula and programming that dealt particularly with the State of Israel as a subject. My research was drawn from text based formal curricula (*TaL AM* and *Making the Connection*), and experiential programing (March of the Living, school twinning, connecting with Israelis as teachers and young visiting educators *shlichlim*, and celebrating festivals such as Israel Independence Day). After mapping out the curricula and programing about Israel, I then traced the religious myths, symbols, and memories back to their place in pre-modern Jewish culture and religion. I charted how each program used religious myths, symbols and memories to inspire, maintain, and develop a sense of identity and solidarity around the land of Israel. In this way I was able to assess how the affects attached to pre-modern cultural elements were used to imbue the idea of Israel with the values of communal destiny, ethnic continuity, and religious obligation that are inherent in the symbols and memories. The intention was not to test the hypothesis of ethnosymbolism as a total theory, but to illuminate one way in which it allows us to understand the use of religion in the social construction of national identity.

Curricula Analysis

I selected two text-based curricula to examine: *Tal AM*, and *Making the Connection: A Curriculum for Teaching Israel Advocacy in Jewish Day Schools.* Initially financed by the

Jewish Education Council and the Canadian government, *TaL AM*[78] is a combined Hebrew language and Jewish Studies heritage curriculum for diaspora Jewish day schools in grades one through five. Created by Tova Shimon, a Montreal-based Jewish educator, it is currently used by the majority of Montreal Jewish elementary day schools, except for the Hardedi, or Ultra-Orthodox.[79] It is also used in over some 350 schools around the world.[80] In this analysis I investigate curriculum resources in the Israel unit, including workbooks, textbooks, songs, supplementary classroom posters, teacher manuals, and teacher resources.

The second curriculum I analyze is *Making the Connection: A Curriculum for Teaching Israel Advocacy in Jewish Day Schools*, a curriculum for the advocacy of the State of Israel, that is taught in Montreal Jewish high schools in grades 10 and 11. This curriculum, written by Neil Lazarus, was commissioned by the Jewish Education Center. This curriculum attempts to inform, explain, and develop in students an understanding of Jewish identity in relation to the State of Israel, anti-Semitism, and the Palestinian national project. It is the first program generated by the JEC that attempts to teach the complexity of issues of pluralism in the State of Israel while maintaining advocacy for the state.

My initial analysis began by reading the texts; taking notes throughout this process enabled me to develop a perspective of how the idea of Israel was presented and integrated into various subjects. After reading through specific curricula, I pulled out dominant and recurring national symbols. From this initial analysis I identified four specific symbols within the curricula that were used to link the pre-modern *ethnie* with the State of Israel. These included: the flag of Israel; the map of the State of Israel; the menorah; and the dove and olive branch. I then identified themes that relied on a religious ritual structure to reproduce social memory. These themes included: the *seder* practice (participatory remembering through the reading of the *Hagadah)*; the festival calendar (religious holidays); kinship relations (school twinning, *schilim,* and Israelis in the classroom); Hebrew language and Jewish Studies (acquisition of modern Hebrew combined with the study of Torah and Talmud). My reasons for selecting these specific

[78] *TaL AM* – Hebrew acronym for Hebrew Language and Heritage Curriculum
[79] Of the eleven Jewish elementary schools affiliated with BJEC, eight currently use *TaL AM* in the classroom.
[80] According to the *TaL AM* website the curriculum is currently used in an estimated 347 schools around the world, taught in six different continents, to approximately 30,580 Jewish day school students (Shimon 2000a).

symbols, festivals and traditions were based on the premise that a nation's sense of continuity is, as Smith writes,

> - a sentiment greatly enhanced by the widespread acceptance of collective symbols such as the flag, anthem or national holiday whose meanings may change over time but whose forms remain relatively fixed. Such symbols are particularly important in the rites and ceremonies of public culture, which help to create and sustain communal bonds and a sense of national identity. (Smith 2009:25)

In line with the principles of ethnosymbolism, I then traced the reoccurring national symbols back to their classical and biblical origins (Grosby 2007). These patterns of reoccurring symbols become the sites of meaning onto which the idea of Israel was integrated. By identifying these specific myths and symbols –as they appear within Israel education curricula - and then tracing these same symbols over *la longue duree* I sought to reveal how national identity is partly constituted by shared myths, values, symbols and memories. Moreover, I sought to demonstrate how these shared myths, symbols, and values, which collectively make up the symbolic repertoire of a nation, equally provide the organizing structure for educating successive generations (Smith 2009:30).

The underlying assumption of this analysis is that pre-modern ethnic resources such as myths, symbols, and memories hold inherent values. While the pre-modern affects are solicited for nationalist ends, these affects are imbued with particular meanings – meanings that historians, be they curriculum creators or scholars - may not dismiss or ignore. As Conversi writes, "there is no value-free history" (Conversi 1995:74). For this reason particular myth, symbols and memories are selected with the determination to build up and edify the nation. As Conversi continues, "even though identities are often constructed rather than given, they must rely on the pre-existing diffusion of shared symbols and cultural elements as well as on memories of a shared past and myths of a common destiny" (Conversi 1995:82; Smith 1986,1991). To facilitate the idea that individuals are part of a nation, the values inherent in the symbols, memories and myths must be relevant and familiar to each successive generation.

While my analysis approaches the dominant and recurring symbols of the curricula and traces them back through time to reveal historic and cultural continuity this is simply a convention, a "convenient fiction" of academic scholarship. As Wendy Griswold writes,

> Because they are multivocal, cultural objects are never fixed, and the analyst must be able to treat a cultural phenomenon in terms of its characteristics as a process, as movement through space and time. The dynamic nature of a culture object is perhaps most obvious in its reception, i.e., in its impact on a human agent. (Griswold 2014:291)

The reception of a symbolic repertoire by individual members of a community is much more difficult to track and trace than *la longe durée* of the myths and symbols themselves. For this reason, while curriculum analysis forms the largest part of the supporting data, this research also includes the voices of Jewish educators working in or developing curricula for the Montreal day schools.

Semi-Structured and Open-Ended Interviews

Over the course of the 2012-2013 school year I performed ten interviews with teachers, curriculum developers and principals of Montreal Jewish day schools. These ten interviews were not numerous enough to use as a firm foundation for independent conclusions. Instead, they serve to: give insights into the culture and nature of Jewish day schools; highlight themes and symbols found in the curriculum analysis; give insights into how the symbols of the curriculum are used in schools; and confirm my analysis and conclusions.

I sought out experts in their respective fields in an attempt to elicit valuable conversation, precise information, and relevant discussion. This strategy of selecting individuals with expertise on a given subject has been termed by Patton *purposeful sampling* (Patton 1990:169). The point of these interviews was to identify and fill gaps in my knowledge of the curriculum and how it might be used in the classroom. The first three interviews took place with members of the Jewish Education Council and Israel education curriculum developers. The following seven interviews

included Principals or Heads of School, Heads of Jewish Studies and Hebrew Language Departments, and teachers of Israel education.

For these interviews, I chose to include educators from the schools that defined themselves as Zionist in their mission statements, and therefore fell under the category of non-ultra Orthodox. While each of these schools differ in their religious orientation - as well as how they approach their approach to the teaching of Zionism[81] - they are categorized here as "mainstream" - a term which sets them apart from the Haredi Chabad and other ultra-Orthodox schools. As noted in the previous chapter on the history of Jewish education in Montreal, all Montreal Jewish day schools fall under the private sector of Quebec education. Equally, all accredited[82] Jewish day schools offer both French and English sectors.[83]

Each interview lasted approximately one hour, and focused on the daily presentation of Israel education in the day school. A second interview was arranged with four educators in order to follow up on themes discussed, or clarify questions. Interviews were conducted in English or French, depending on the interviewee's comfort, and, if in French, it was translated into English. All interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed by the researcher. In order to grant interviewees anonymity, the names used in this study are pseudonyms.

To recruit participants, I sent out information letters outlining the purpose of this study to each Head of School or Principal of ten randomly selected mainstream Zionist schools. I then followed up with telephone calls requesting their schools participation in this study. Participation in the interviews was completely voluntary. Each participant made their own independent decision as to whether or not they would like to be involved. This study was reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Office of Research Ethics at the University of Waterloo,

[81] While Montreal Jewish day schools may be separated into such orientations as Cultural Zionist or Religious Zionist, the focus of this work is on the binding and common pedagogies employed in the schools.
[82] In order to be obtain an operating permit, Jewish day schools must met the requirements of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS).
[83] Given the requirements of Bill 101, to qualify for enrollment in an English-language school the parents of the student must have received their education in English. In order to accommodate all students, Montreal accredited Jewish day schools offer both French and English sectors (AJDS 2014). Each of the mainstream Jewish day schools offer curriculum in a minimum of three languages (English, French, and Hebrew) and some include a fourth language (Yiddish).

and participant interviewees received an information letter including detailed information about this study, as well as informed consent forms. Principals who agreed to participate in this study were either interviewed directly or recommended a teacher or department head from their school to be interviewed. Quotations and excerpts from the interviews were labeled with pseudonyms to protect the identity of the participants and the identity of the school. Names of participants or school names do not appear in the body of this study. Participants are only described by gender and occupation. Interviewees were made aware that the interview may be audio recorded, and that excerpts from the interview may be included in this thesis or publications to come from this research. A list of interview questions that were asked of the participants appears in the appendix.

Additionally, I carried out twenty other short informal interviews with parents, teachers, and staff, which added perspective to the study. These observations occurred mainly within the schools themselves, at school assemblies, or at school-wide events recognizing or commemorating the State of Israel. These short informal interviews, which lasted only a few minutes, were not digitally recorded. While not included verbatim, they offered some insight into the mainstream Montreal day school culture and climate. While these informal interviews are not an official part of this study, the information gathered through these interactions allowed me to analyze data in a more constructive manner. Extracting it out of the abstract realm (textbooks and written curricula) and applying it to a given context (schools and classrooms), granted me insight into how the idea of Israel functions as a force of social cohesion, and how Israel education programs can support a group identity. In seeing what aspects of Israel education were well developed within the schools, and which elements were underdeveloped, I was able to ask clearer questions and develop preliminary conclusions about why some programs worked, while others did not. While this research would be improved by classroom observations and interviews with enrolled students and/or graduates of Jewish day schools, a project of that scope would have required more resources and a larger research team. Consequently, this dissertation focuses on what is taught in Jewish Day schools rather than what students actually learn – i.e., how they encounter, integrate, and interpret what is taught. This study focused on gathering insights from teachers and leaders, rather than students and parents, to better understand how the idea of Israel is narrated and taught.

One of the shortcomings of this approach is in the selection process of the interviewees. This dissertation focuses on the Heads of Jewish day schools, Jewish Studies and Hebrew language teachers, leaders in the Jewish day school community, and Israel education and Hebrew language curriculum developers. It does not include the ultra-Orthodox day school community, which does not teach Israel education in any systematic way. While I did conduct two interviews with Head Rabbis teaching at Montreal ultra-Orthodox day schools, their respective school missions would require a distinct framework to adequately analyze their viewpoints. While these are important voices, the ultra-Orthodox communities do not teach Israel education in a concerted way, and - unlike non-ultra Orthodox Jewish groups – nationalism is not a major factor influencing their identity formation. I am focusing on the role of religion in *national* identity formation. My project seeks to reveal the process through which religious and cultural myths are expanded on to explain the formation of the political nation state.[84]. In order to adequately integrate the ultra-Orthodox perspective – along with the concerted and conscious rejection of the idea of the nation – I would need to approach my study of identity construction exclusively from the perspective of religion. For this reason, while their voices are important, they are not part of *this* study.

As all forms of research, this mixed methodological approach holds both advantages and disadvantages. Due to the focused nature of the study, the data collected does not represent all viewpoints in the debates about the teaching of the nation and diaspora national allegiance in Montreal Jewish day schools. As well, these methods are constrained by the theoretical framework created by ethnosymbolism, which concentrates on the cultural elements of the social construction of national and diasporic identity, revealing how those elements are rooted in pre-modern symbols, stories, myths, and identity. Ethnosymbolism cannot speak to the structural forces that give rise to the emergence of national identity and solidarity. For example, Ernst Gellner (1983) ties the rise of nationalism to the role of universal education in the emergence of the modern state and industrial economy. There is, no doubt, something to be said for this

[84] Unlike non-ultra-Orthodox diaspora Jews, ultra-Orthodox Jews are – broadly speaking- non-Zionist; even *haredim* who live in Israel place little significance on the establishment of the State of Israel. This is a fact that separates them for the non-ultra Orthodox Jewish demographic both in Israel and outside of Israel. Again, as this work is about national identity formation, and the evolution of religious and cultural myths to grant significance to the nation– the ultra-Orthodox perspective - important as it is - is outside that framework.

approach, which understands nationalism as a purely political and economic project. However, following Smith, I am focusing the cultural antecedents that shape the formation of national and diasporic identity and solidarity. Ethnosymbolism is uniquely suited to the kind of study I wish to undertake as it lifts up the manner in which cultural resources of the pre-modern *ethnie* offer unity and continuity to modern identity in a diasporic community. Applying ethnosymbolism to education about Israel allows me to analyze the integrated approach to Israel education taken by the system of Montreal Jewish education.

CHAPTER 5: Hebrew Language, Biblical Symbols, and the Idea of the Nation

> Contrary to a theory widely held as late as the seventeenth century, a child left in the forest to its own linguistic devices would not speak Hebrew spontaneously, not even if it were a Jewish *enfant sauvage*, and neither would it "remember" that Abraham journeyed from Ur to Canaan. Only the group can bequeath both language and transpersonal memory. (Yerushalmi 1996:xxxiv)

> The role of Jewish education is to reconcile such varied traits, thereby emphasizing the historically tight relationship between the religious and national components of Jewish ethnic identity. (Glickman 1981:113)

Summary

This chapter analyzes how the Hebrew language curriculum TaL AM, created within the Montreal Jewish education community, presents the idea of Israel to Jewish day school students. Jewish Diaspora continuity with and connectedness to Israel is strengthened by the acquisition of a national language. In the TaL AM program, Modern Hebrew language acquisition, Jewish Studies, and Israel education are intertwined. This intermingling of subjects reveals how religion plays a significant role in the social construction of national identity wherein Hebrew language and Judaism are part of the socialization process that leads students to identify with the State of Israel. This chapter reveals how mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools foster an integrated Jewish identity, one in which religion, ethnicity, language, and nationalism are interwoven. The result is the transmission of a common idea of the nation despite the schools' varying levels of religious observance.

Introduction: Teaching Hebrew Language Takes More Than Words

To understand the place of Israel within mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools, attention must be given to Hebrew language acquisition. Language not only enables us to describe the world

around us, but also prescribes the way we view the world. As language constitutes our world, it is central to national cohesion.

> Language as understood by socio linguists is not simply a formal tool used to communicate ideas or practices; it is part of the very content of the cultural beliefs and practices, which are to be communicated… the choice of language is a statement about how we see ourselves and how we choose to present ourselves and our ideas to the world. (Zissenwine 1997:60)

Words invoke historical meaning; they incorporate and normalize ideas while simultaneously reinforcing concepts (Connolly 1983). Words are never neutral; instead they hold "[...] multiple channels of meaning traveling through the length of a language formed by the breadths and depths of culture and […] its politics" (Schoolman 2008:20). If symbols are deposits of cultural meaning, even more so are whole languages.

Instruction in Hebrew is integral to Jewish cultural and religious continuity (Fishman 1999; Avni 2012). Avni writes that in mainstream (i.e., in non-ultra-Orthodox) Jewish day schools "Hebrew language is explicitly taught as a means of passing on the rituals, traditions, and beliefs of Judaism" (Avni 2012:324). Biblical Hebrew, traditionally referred to as *lashon hakodesh,*[85] articulates a connection between holiness and language: "By relating to their language as holy, Jews transformed Hebrew into a kind of ritual object, parallel [...] to the Torah-scroll itself" (Aaron 2000:271). Yet, the function of Hebrew as a holy language, reserved for prayer, rite and ritual, underwent dramatic changes in the twentieth century. While Jews continued to relate to Hebrew through religious practices (*brit milah*,[86] passages of the *Haggadah*,[87] blessings recounted on the Sabbath), the advent of Modern Hebrew has been a uniting factor of contemporary Jewry in a national homeland.

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[85] The holy language
[86] Ceremony for circumcision
[87] The liturgical text, from the root "to tell", the *Hagaddah* recounts the story of the Exodus.

The Hebrew language is changed by the time and place in which it is used (Chomsky 1957). Biblical Hebrew differs from Mishnaic (or Rabbinic) Hebrew, which is not synonymous with medieval or modern Hebrew, and while each derivation of the language holds to core principles (such as words having a mostly three-letter root), the differences are significant. Nevertheless, Hebrew in all of its forms "indexes both antiquity and modernity that have transformed it into a locus where ideologies of religion, culture, and nationalism all converge, creating in that convergence a discursive space in which Jewishness is defined and practiced" (Avni 2012:325). While Avni's assertion that Hebrew, in all its varieties, offers a distinctly Jewish discursive space, speaking Modern Hebrew (also known as Israeli Hebrew) reflects a national affiliation above and beyond a religious observance.

> [...] we find that for one very large community of Jews (soon to become the largest), the Hebrew language is one aspect of a nationalist definition of Jewishness that is often blurred with the definition of citizenship in the State of Israel. For Jews outside Israel, too, the Hebrew language is often defined in large part by being identified with Israelis, for whom it is their primary language. (Rodman 2003:5)

Even so, the relationship between language and nationality is not as straightforward as it may be in other national situations. Rodman reveals the unavoidably problematic relation to language when he writes: "I am a Jew, and Hebrew is the Jewish language, but I don't know Hebrew" (Rodman 2003:6).

Consequently, the lack of knowledge of the Hebrew among Jews living in the Diaspora is both common and problematic in terms of education (Pomson 2002). Despite this, the Montreal Jewish day schools have proven highly adept at teaching Hebrew language to their student body. Graduates of Montreal Jewish high schools can directly enter the Hebrew University program in Jerusalem, requiring no qualifying year, a fact that differentiates Montreal graduates from most other Jewish day schools in the Diaspora (Hoffman and Gribetz 1985; Eveyln Ride, personal interview, January 24, 2013). The sociological factors that indicate why Montreal Jewish day schools have had so much success in student acquisition of the Hebrew language may be explained in part by the relation the Jewish community has with the province of Quebec. These factors include the marginalization of the Jewish community, seen as historically part of the

Anglophone minority and hence outside the dominant Quebec nationalist discourse (Tan and Lefebvre 2010); the near institutional completeness of the Montreal Jewish community (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992); and the requirements of French language acquisition for Jewish day schools receiving subsidies from the Quebec Ministry of Education. Together, these factors may in part explain why Hebrew language acquisition has been so successful in Montreal Jewish day schools. As Rodman writes:

> […] The more the Jews in a given community see themselves as an ethnic or national minority; especially one closely allied with Israel, the greater the extent to which importance is attributed to Hebrew language. This would help explain, for example, why the Antwerp Jewish community has a very high level of Hebrew language attainment in its premier day school, while in England and the United States, achievement is generally lower even among day school students. (Rodman 2003:8)

According to Rodman's line of thought, the highly effective teaching of Modern Hebrew language may partially be explained by how the Montreal Jewish community has been conceived of as a minority community marginal to the Quebec francophone majority. Among the entities dedicated to developing curricula for teaching Hebrew language is the Montreal-based initiative TaL AM.

The Curriculum

Structured and sold as a "Hebrew and Heritage Curricula for Jewish Schools," TaL AM is a Hebrew language and Jewish Studies program for grades one through five. The curriculum covers Jewish holidays and traditions, language acquisition, Israel education and everyday life. "The curriculum includes literature that Israeli children commonly read, which assists Canadian Jewish children in their understanding of both the life and language of Israel" (Azrieli 2008: 220). It is currently used in an estimated 347 schools around the world, taught in six different continents, to approximately 30,580 Jewish day school students (Shimon 2000a). Tal Sela is the predecessor program of Tal AM. Created by the same author, Tova Shimon, Tal Sela is also a Hebrew language and Jewish studies elementary curriculum, specifically for grades two to six, based on an integrative learning approach. There are some thematic overlaps within the two

curricula. As TaL AM is more contemporary, and the curriculum taught in mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools, it is the focus of this chapter. TaL AM was initially funded in part by the Jewish Federation of Montreal, along with the Department of Multiculturalism of the Federal Government of Canada. Jewish educators throughout North America have commented that TaL AM stands out among curricula created for Hebrew language acquisition and Jewish Studies (Goodman & Katzew 2011). This is due to the fact that there are few programs that integrate Hebrew as a communicative language with classical Hebrew, wherein Jewish history, Modern Hebrew, the state of Israel, and sacred texts are all taught in Hebrew (Goodman & Katzew 2011:276). Of course it has its critics. Some claim that the curriculum is overly religious; others argue that, even if it professes to be teaching "Jewish heritage," the expectations placed on the teacher to cover the given amount of materials are unreasonable; still other complain that the curriculum is costly (Schiff 1996; Rodman 2003). Despite these criticisms, TaL AM reflects and reinforces the most common stance on Israel taken by mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools. Tova Shimon, once Director of Curriculum Development at the Montreal Jewish Education Council (JEC), is the creator of TaL AM.[88]

TaL AM's mission statement describes its commitment to the enhancement of Jewish identity through the development of a love for the Jewish people, a love of Torah, and love of the land of Israel. The State of Israel is a focal point of the curriculum, and is described as "the land we came from and returned to"; one of the TaL AM goals is "recognizing the centrality of Israel in our lives" (Shimon 2000b). In this program, Judaic Studies, Israel education, everyday life, and Hebrew language are intrinsically linked. Equally, Modern Hebrew- the national language of Israel, is taught in connection Biblical Hebrew and Aramaic. Shimon's personal understanding of the significance of the Hebrew language in connecting Jews to their homeland is clear. In her own words, Shimon writes,

[88] Born in Romania, Shimon moved to Israel as a child, and then later immigrated to Montreal. She holds a B.A. in Geography and History from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, an M.A. in Judaic Studies from Sir George Williams University in Montreal, as well as an M.A. in Curriculum Development from Concordia University. She taught Hebrew and Jewish History at a Jewish high school in Montreal between 1972 and 1974, and from 1975 to 1983 worked at an elementary Jewish day school in Montreal teaching Hebrew in grades five and six (Covenant Foundation 2011). In 1979, she received the J. I. Segal Award and the Jack Zipper Award for Jewish Education; in 1989 she was awarded the Safra Authors Award for the advancement of Jewish Education; and in 1992 she was the recipient of the Covenant Foundation award for ongoing Jewish curriculum development, including the TaL AM program.

> Today I function well in several languages but the only language that I am at home with, the only language in which I sense a real bond between my soul and my mind and a congruency among my thoughts, feelings, and beliefs is Hebrew. (Covenant Foundation 2011)

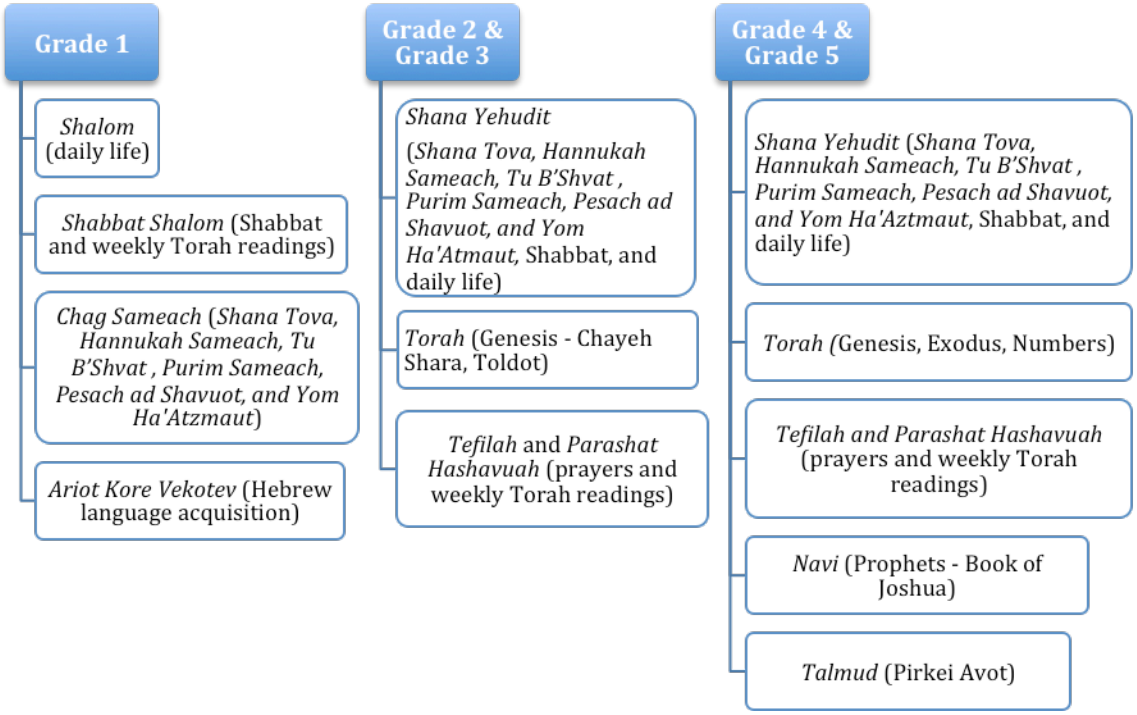
This connection between soul and home speaks to the relational bonds that the TaL AM curriculum seeks to engender in Jewish students living throughout the Jewish Diaspora.

TaL AM: An Overview

With over two hundred and fifty curricular items, including teaching manuals, student readers and workbooks, guided books, library books, classroom posters, flashcards, CDs, DVDs, project books and games, the TaL AM curriculum is immense. TaL AM has English- and Hebrew-language teacher instruction manuals, and the organization offers extensive training for teachers, including training institutes, workshops, school visits, and ongoing support through webinars.

This Jewish Studies and Hebrew language curriculum is categorized into various learning tracks, which change depending on the grade. For example, grade one has four learning tracks: track *Shalom*, which includes daily life; track *Shabbat Shalom*, which covers the weekly celebration of *Shabbat* and introduces students to the *Parashat Hashavuah* (the weekly Torah portion); track *Chag Sameach*, which focuses on the High Holidays, as well as *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* and *Yom Yerushalayim;* and *Ariot Kore Vekotev*, which is dedicated to the development of Hebrew language acquisition, including reading, writing and verbal communication. Grades two and three have three learning tracks: *Shana Yehudit*, which covers the Jewish year and includes everyday life, all the Jewish holidays and *Shabbat*; track *Torah*, which focuses on the study of the Torah; and *Tefilah and Parashat Hashavuah,* including the weekly Torah portion, prayers, and blessings. Grades four and five are organized into five learning tracks: *Shana Yehudit* - the Jewish year, which includes Jewish holidays and *Shabbat*; track *Torah*; *Tefilah and Parashat Hashavuah; Navi* - the study of the prophets; and *Torah SheBealPe,* the study of oral law (Talmud). Each of these thematic tracks integrates Jewish literature, Jewish values, prayers and blessings, and Judaic laws and customs (Shimon 2010b:9).

Each learning track further divides the content into various subheadings (units). For example, in grade one the *Chag Sameach* track includes six units: *Shana Tova, Hannukah Sameach, Tu B'Shvat, Purim Sameach, Pesach ad Shavuot, and Israel Sheli*. In sum, the subject material for each grade is divided into a set number of tracks (3, 4, or 5), and each track is composed of a given number of units. Teacher manuals and evaluation tools, student workbooks, interactive posters, audio CD's, supplementary readers, library books, flashcards, games, etc. are available for most units. The curriculum is comprehensive and thorough, and each grade is supplied with materials that cover the entire school year.



Throughout all five years of the curriculum students are introduced to the characters of the "virtual classroom" appearing in the workbooks, library books, and student readers. These illustrated characters are students learning in a virtual Diaspora Hebrew language classroom, and they age as the real students' age. Thus, the student characters - Sharona, David, Hillel, etc. -who appear as six years old in grade one, become seven years old in grade two and eight years old in grade three. These same virtual students become well-known characters that "accompany" the real students throughout their day school experience.

The virtual students act as guides to the real students, leading them through the weekly Torah readings, asking questions about the history of certain holidays, and discovering links between Judaism, Israel, Hebrew language and home life. Brand new students are occasionally introduced into the virtual classroom, as are fresh concepts and ideas. For example, in grade two Yehuda, who has emigrated from Israel with his family, joins the virtual class; in grade four Keren, who is in a wheelchair, is introduced to the virtual classroom in order to facilitate a discussion of special needs. The virtual classrooms depicted in student workbooks, library books, readers, and DVDs within each track are supplemented by audio-visuals for the classroom itself.

The audio-visuals are entirely in Hebrew and offer a visual recap of the lessons and learning content that students will encounter through the various learning tracks. Illustrated learning tools reflect key concepts and vocabulary and supply continuity between the ancient land of Israel and the modern State of Israel. This link is seen most explicitly in the two posters depicting the map of modern Israel and the map of ancient Israel, and the Jewish timeline. This timeline illustration is focal to the TaL AM teaching toolkit, as it appears in various teaching units, including the holidays of *Pesach*, the unit on Israel, and the teaching of the Torah. The use of the timeline poster throughout various learning tracks reflects the type of spiralled learning, repetition, and reinforcement that is central to the TaL AM curriculum. Posters like the timeline equally reiterate the connection between the past and the present, the ancient State of Israel and modern Israel, and Biblical Hebrew and Modern Hebrew.

The learning of Modern Hebrew vocabulary prepares students to identify key words in the Torah portions, which are written in Biblical Hebrew. Most particularly, the teaching of the weekly Torah portion, the weekly celebration of *Shabbat* in the classroom, and the celebration of Jewish holidays reinforce the value and centrality of Jewish time as based on the Jewish religious festival calendar. The posters, which illustrate the days, weeks, and months of the year; the vocabulary for weather; or prayers and blessings for *Shabbat*, not only reinforce words, concepts, and ideas being learned, they simultaneously normalize Hebrew language use and emphasize the centrality of Jewish time in the school. This socialization process, which emphasizes Hebrew language acquisition and initiates children into the traditions of Judaism, creates an integrated Jewish identity and eventually leads students to identify with the State of Israel.

As noted previously, the curriculum, developed for grades one through five,[89] is organized around thematic content and symbols, such as the map and timeline, which are introduced in grade one and reappear throughout various tracks and units within that grade and in subsequent grades. For example, the symbols of the state (the Israeli flag, the menorah with olive branches, the anthem, and the map of Israel), which are interwoven throughout the Israel units of grades one through five, also appear in the tracks dedicated to the weekly Torah portion, and the teaching of Jewish holidays. This type of integrated learning, termed "spiralled learning" (Shimon 2010a), is based on a communicative approach of repetition and integration for second- or third-language learning. Moreover, the curriculum integrates the heritage and communication functions of the Hebrew language by simultaneously teaching Biblical and Modern Hebrew. The differences that appear between Biblical and Modern Hebrew are linked through the workbook tables, which relate the two forms of language. As noted in the teacher manual for grade two on learning Torah: "It is important to note that we do not use the Torah to teach Hebrew vocabulary or grammar; rather, we teach the vocabulary and language skills necessary to learn Torah" (Shimon 2010b: 49). This speaks directly to the centrality of the role of religion in the formation of Jewish identity within the day school environment. The following chart, reproduced from the TaL AM website, represents the method through which the curriculum integrates Hebrew language acquisition with Jewish studies (TaL AM 2000c).

[89] While the TaL AM website indicates that the curriculum is geared to students in grades 1 through 6, the curriculum and training program is only available for grades 1 through 5.

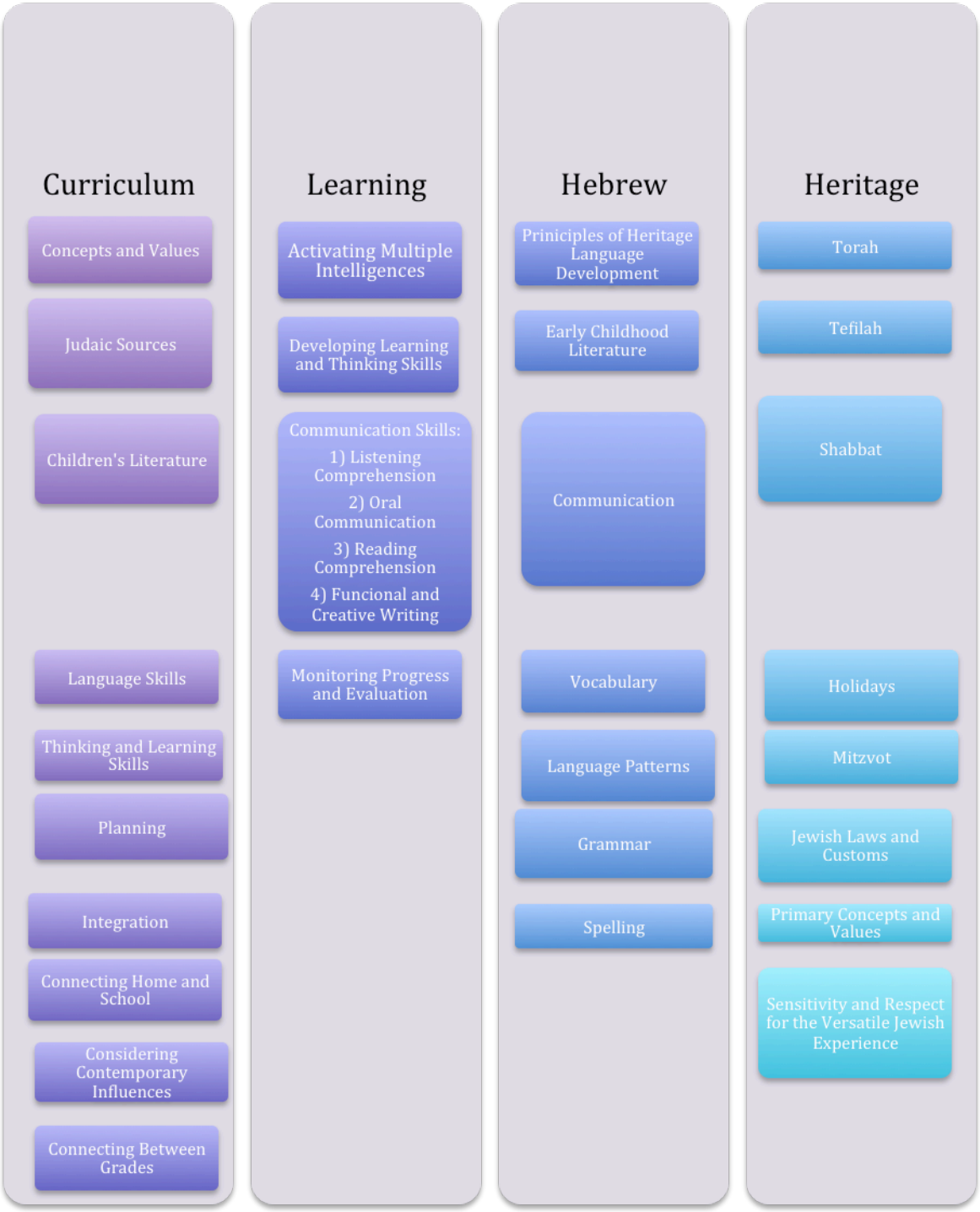


Figure 1: TaL AM Pedagogy (talam.org)

The following curriculum analysis will concentrate on how the idea of the nation, as the redemption of the Jewish people, is expressed in the study and celebration of Israel within the TaL AM curriculum. Particular focus will be placed on the use of recurring symbols within the TaL AM units on Israel: prayers, the map, the state emblem, the festival calendar, and the flag.

Each of these symbols derives from the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie* as interpreted by the classical Zionist idea of the nation. A brief overview of the TaL AM curriculum content, and the objectives for each grade, will be followed by an analysis of the workbooks and select student exercises pertaining to the presentation of the idea of Israel. The focus here is on how the teaching of Israel and Israeli nationalism is integrated into the broader content of Hebrew language acquisition and the study of Judaism.

Grade 1: Jewish Time and Jewish Holidays

The Jewish festival calendar and Jewish time structure the TaL AM curriculum. The study and celebration of the State of Israel are integrated into the Jewish festival calendar,[90] and are taught in a manner similar to other Jewish holidays such as Passover (*Pesach)* and *Hanukkah.* Since the establishment of the State of Israel, Israel's Independence Day has been celebrated in ways that correspond to the Jewish religious framework, including prayers said in the synagogue. As the study of Jewish time and the Jewish holidays is central to the curriculum, grade one students are taught to recognize all of the Jewish holidays. Each Jewish holiday is identified with a given symbol. For example: the Jewish New Year, *Rosh HaShanah,* is symbolized as a *shofar* (a ram's horn)*; Hanukkah* as a menorah; *Tu B'Shvat,* the festival of trees, as a tree; *Purim* as the Book of Esther; and *Pessach* as Matza, etc. The religious holidays structure the Jewish calendar, and the Jewish calendar shapes Jewish time. The study of the holidays informs and orients the students' learning about various Jewish customs observed on a given festival. It is significant that TaL AM uses the Jewish calendar to structure classroom time. Students become conscious of a separate construct -Jewish time - which is distinguished from the date system used by secular society around them. Moreover, the study and celebration of the holidays in the classroom reinforce observances that students may experience in the home and in their synagogue.

[90] By the fourth-century CE the Jewish calendar, that was both lunar and solar, was fixed and became authoritative over Jewish communities throughout the world (Fishman 1973:2).

Figure 2: Festival Calendar (Shimon 2008d:11)

The celebration of the High Holidays marks the beginning of the school year. *Rosh HaShanah Yom Kippur, Sukkot,* and *Simchat Torah,* are generally understood as a set of festivals termed the High Holidays. The celebration the New Year, *Rosh HaShanah,* is followed by the fast of *Yom Kippur,* which focuses on self-examination, repentance, and asking of forgiveness. *Sukkot,* which follows *Yom Kippur,* is a weeklong festival commemorating the time when Jews lived in tents while making the passage from Egypt to Canaan, is known as the "season of rejoicing." *Sukkot* is followed by *Simchat Torah*, which marks the beginning of the annual cycle of Torah reading. In preparation for these holidays, grade one TaL AM students are introduced to the Jewish months of the year and days of the week. Through the student readers entitled *Shana Tova* (Good New Year), *Slicha* (Sorry), and *Anachnu Tovim* (We Are Good), students are introduced to the central themes expressed in these holidays, namely *Tshuvah* (Repentance), *Tfilah* (Prayer), and *Tzdaka* (Giving).

Following the celebration of the High Holidays, students begin their unit on *Hanukkah,* the festival that commemorates the miracle of lights in the rededication of the Second Temple. The TaL AM *Hanukkah* unit of grade one revolves around two principle themes: the preservation of Jewish identity throughout the ages and the commemoration of the miracle of lights. Within the TaL AM curriculum the celebration of *Hanukkah* holds the primary function of conveying to students the necessity of a strong and committed Jewish identity. This is explained to teachers in the following manner:

> The content and language of the Chanuka story reverberate and emphasize its central concept: We are committed to being Jewish! The re-enactment of the story in song and

> prayer, and the practice of the holiday's mitzvoth[91] and customs, offer a practical means of developing Jewish identity and creating a bond with Israel. (Shimon 2010a: 35)

As students celebrate this festival, they recognize the days of the week through the observance of lighting a candle each day for eight consecutive days. Students are introduced to the story, foods, customs, and observances of this weeklong holiday.

After the winter festival of *Hanukkah* comes *Tu B'Shvat,* the celebration of the new year of the trees, which originally marked the annual cycle of tithing first fruits. This is a minor holiday in the festival calendar, yet, as will be demonstrated later in this section, its place in the school curriculum offers a tangential connection between Israel and the Diaspora. In the TaL AM curriculum, *Tu B'Shvat* offers a direct comparison between the seasons of Israel and the student's local country by studying what types of trees live and grow in the State of Israel. Students learn the blessings affiliated with the eating fruits of a tree, and the differences between types of species.

This is followed by the festive celebration of *Purim*, which describes the deliverance of the Jewish people from near annihilation during the latter part of the second Commonwealth period (486-465 B.C.E.). This festival is marked by the reading of the Scroll of Esther, known as the *Megillah.* In grade one, students are introduced to the story of Esther, including its four main characters: Esther, Mordechai, Haman, and King Ahasuerus. In the Book of Esther, the king of Persia (King Ahasuerus) marries Esther (not-knowing she is Jewish). Esther's cousin Mordechai uncovers a plot of the king's advisor, Haman, to murder the Jews of Persia. Esther appeals to the king for the life of her people, Haman's plot fails, and he and his family are killed.

The next unit is the celebration of *Pesach* (Passover). *Pesach* holds the symbolic meaning of establishing the freedom of the Jewish people. In this unit, students are introduced to the major events of the story of Passover through the *Haggadah,* which establishes the narrative structure of exile and return. In this grade one unit students learn the customary practices of the *Seder* (the ritual feast), including the blessings to say over the *matzath*[92] and the song *Ma Nishtana,* which

[91] Good deeds
[92] unleavened bread

asks four questions regarding why the night of the Seder is different from all other nights and is customarily sung by the youngest member of the family. The celebration of *Pesach* heralds the festival of *Shavuot* that commemorates the receiving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. These two holidays are contained in the same TaL AM unit, thereby linking the liberation of the Jewish people with the receiving of the Torah. The final celebration of Israel and Jerusalem mark the end of the festival calendar during the school year.

Prayers for the State of Israel

Israel and Jerusalem are folded into the festival calendar through the celebrations of Israel's Independence Day, *Yom Ha'Atzmaut,* and the reunification of Jerusalem, *Yom Yerushalayim.* In this unit, students are taught the connection between the Jewish people - *Am Israel* - and the land of Israel, *Eretz Israel*. As the teacher manual for grade 1 reads:

> The identification with *Am Israel* on *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* [the nation of Israel on Israel's Independence Day] is acquired and internalized through the day's celebration; through the country's symbols: the flag and the anthem; and through the prayer for the safety of Israel – common to the students and all of *Am Israel*. The children also learn about the connection each and every Jew has with Jerusalem – the Holy City and the capital of Israel. (Shimon 2010a:47)

The stated objective, to teach the student to identify Israel and the city of Jerusalem as the homeland and city of all Jews, is readily seen in this unit's grade one workbook *Israel Sheli* (My Israel), which familiarizes students with the symbols of the state: the Israeli flag and its colors; the menorah with olive branches (crest of Israel); and the lion of Judah with olive branches (crest of the city of Jerusalem). This unit *Israel Sheli* (My Israel) is taught in connection to *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*,[93] and *Yom Yerushalayim*.[94] The goal of the unit - to establish a connection between the student and the State of Israel - is attained by drawing on the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie*.

[93] Israel Independence Day of 1948, celebrated on the 5th of Iyar.
[94] The reunification of the city of Jerusalem of 1967, celebrated on the 28th of Iyar.

An analysis of these symbols reveals an integrated conception of an ethno-religious-national Jewish identity. The grade one workbook (My Israel) opens with a song that familiarizes students with basic vocabulary of colours and personal pronouns. This song enables children to identify with the State of Israel as their homeland by reinforcing the link between the colours of the State of Israel, represented in the flag, and all Jews living throughout the world. This song, entitled "*Blue and White*," reads as follows: "Blue and white are my colours. Blue and white are the colors of my flag. Blue and white are the colours of my flag and the colours of every Jew" (Shimon 2008a: 4). Alongside the words of the song are illustrations of students smiling and dancing; a group of students is shown gathered around a large flag of Israel. Each student character is shown holding an individual flag of Israel. The identification with the national flag of the State of Israel as the communal flag of all Jews, the love of the flag as expressed through the drawing of the children as joyful and happy, and the inclusive elements of national identification are all expressed in this one exercise.

Figure 3: My Flag (Shimon 2008a:8)

Here students are encouraged to identify with the nation through the use of pronouns. The text reads: "blue and white are *my* colours." As noted by Smith, the establishment of this interrelation

between the individual and the nation is central to transforming an ethnic identity into a national identity. In the opening pages of the grade one workbook, students are depicted wearing blue and white clothing and holding individual flags of Israel. In the second student exercise, students are shown hoisting their individual flags of Israel into the air, while the text displays the song entitled "The Flag of the State of Israel." The opening lines of the song reinforce the social relations between the individual and the nation by use of repetition. The song reads:

> On the flag of the State of Israel, there are stripes in the colors blue and white. And what is in the middle? The Shield of David in blue and white. (Shimon 2008a: 6)

The second verse repeats but with a slight alteration, wherein the individual is included in the national identity. It reads:

> On *my* flag, and the flag of all Jews, there are stripes in the colors blue and white. And what is in the middle? The Shield of David in blue and white. (Shimon 2008a: 6; my emphasis)

Here the collective self-awareness is established. The flag of the State of Israel is described and then related directly to the individual as *his* or *her* flag as well as the flag of *all* Jews.

A subsequent exercise familiarizes students with *HaTikva,*[95] the Israeli national anthem. In these exercises, characters in the workbook are depicted looking up at a drawn map of the State of Israel. The map is of "greater Israel" and includes the West Bank and Gaza Strip. On the map are the words "land" and "our land" (Shimon 2008a: 8). The children in the workbook are depicted as pointing to their eye and covering their heart. Three words and symbols are drawn next to the children. The Hebrew words are for eye, love, and Jew, while the symbols are of an eye, a heart, and a Shield of David. Given that the Shield of David was affiliated with the State of Israel in the previous exercise and that the children are depicted looking up to a map of the State of Israel, the word "Jew" could easily be substituted for "State of Israel." In effect, by reading the presentation of the symbols, the text signifies that the children see and love Israel. Here Smith's notion of

[95] The English words of HaTikvah are as follows: "As long as the Jewish spirit is yearning deep in the heart, with eyes turned toward the East, looking toward Zion, then our hope - the two-thousand-year-old hope - will not be lost: To be a free people in our land, The land of Zion and Jerusalem."

Figure 4: Our Country (Shimon 2008a:16)

patriotism (love of territory) and nationalism (love of ethnic nation) are depicted as synonyms (Smith 2003:18).

Unbeknownst to the student readers, these colours, blue and white, trace back to the symbolic discourse of Judaism in significant ways. In nature, blue is the color of the sky and sea, and Jewish commentators throughout the ages have built on this connection. In the Torah, the Jewish people were instructed to put fringes, known as *tzitzit,* on the four corners of their garments.[96] These *tzitzit* were to be interwoven with light blue threads known as *tekhelet.*[97] According to the *Mishneh Torah*, Rashi states that *tzitzit* are to be the colour of sky in the evening (*Mishneh Torah, Tzitzit* 2:1). In the Rabbinic tradition, blue is considered the hue reflecting the glory of God (*Hullin* 89a). Rabbi Meir, as quoted in *Sotah* (17a), explains why: "Blue resembles the color of the sea, and the sea resembles the color of heaven, and heaven resembles the color of the Throne of Glory." According to Numbers (4:6-12) the Ark of the Covenant was protected by a blue cloth during times of transportation. Equally, the color white and its symbolic meaning are derived from the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie*. In *Midrash Tehillim,* one reads that the Torah was written with black fire on white fire (*Midrash Tehillim* 90:12). This complex imagery eventually settles into a more prominent interpretation of the color white as associated with purity, exemplified by the wearing of white linen on Yom Kippur. One may derive that blue represents glory and holiness, while white represents purity and atonement. The symbolic discourse of the pre-modern *ethnie*, which remains relevant to the modern nation, is infused with national meaning.

[96] This commandment is found in Numbers 15:37-41, where God says to Moses "Speak to the Children of Israel and bid them to affix fringes (*tzitzit)* to the corners of the garments... that ye may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the Lord." This commandment is also noted in Deuteronomy 22:12.

[97] This color is specified in Numbers 15:38: "attach to the fringe of each corner of the garment a thread of blue."

The role of the flag, as well as its symbolic significance, will be explored further in a following section of the grade five curriculum. That the symbol itself appears in grade one, and the student's relation to the flag is explained clearly in the form of a song, shows how repeated exposure to religious and national symbols works to build upon a student's knowledge base throughout their elementary day school education.

More explicitly, in the grade one unit on Israel, which celebrates the national holidays *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* and *Yom Yerushalayim*, students are taught to pray for the safety of the State of Israel and for Israeli soldiers (Shimon 2008a: 17). The prayer for the safety of the State of Israel reads as follows: "Our Lord in heaven, the Rock of Israel and its Redeemer, bless the State of Israel, the beginning of our redemption."[98] By placing the State of Israel as the subject of prayer, while simultaneously locating it in the biblical narrative of exile and return, the State of Israel becomes the symbol of redemption. In this way, the political idea of Zionism, and the establishment of the State of Israel, is framed as the fulfilment of a narrative pattern derived from the dual Torah. This narrative pattern not only supports and reinforces diaspora nationalism; it allows the establishment of the State of Israel to be read as one event in a continuum of Jewish history. In this way the religious political myth is expanded to incorporate current events. Situating the celebration of Israel's Independence Day as part of the Jewish festival calendar establishes the State of Israel as part of a common Jewish ethnohistory. In doing so, the establishment of State of Israel becomes part of the pre-modern myth of a "golden era" (Smith 2010), and in this process suffering (exile) becomes meaningful (redemption).

Prayers for the Soldiers of Israel

In a similar manner, the spiritual significance of the state is extended to the military. Following the prayer for the state is the prayer for the safety of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) soldiers. It reads: "He who blessed our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, shall bless the soldiers of the

[98] In its complete form this prayer reads as follows: "Our Father in Heaven, Rock and Redeemer of the people of Israel; Bless the State of Israel with its promise of redemption. Shield it with Your love; spread over it the shelter of Your peace. Guide its leaders and advisors with Your light and Your truth. Help them with Your good counsel. Strengthen the hands of those who defend our Holy Land. Deliver them; crown their efforts with triumph. Bless the land with peace, and its inhabitants with lasting joy. And let us say: Amen" (translation from *Siddur Sim Shalom* used in the Conservative synagogue).

Israeli Defence Forces" (Shimon 2008a: 17). Through these two exercises, the state and the military are folded into the pre-existing symbolic structure of the pre-modern *ethnie*. The State of Israel is presented as the redemption and as the end of the cycle of exile, and its safety is beseeched through the covenant of the patriarchs. The prayer exercise has a two-fold function. First, it teaches students that within Judaism, prayer is a communal obligation.[99] This joint obligation is to affirm God's actions in history (Neusner 2005). Indeed, the imperative aspect of this concept is that affirming God's action in history becomes the central means of affirming one's identity as a Jew.

Established liturgies frame the encounter between an individual and God and enable particular and distinct events in history to function as paradigms. The prayers included in a set liturgy become timeless reminders of God's presence in history. Including these prayers for the safety of the State of Israel and for the safety of the IDF soldiers in the TaL AM liturgy establishes them as a fixed communal obligation. They serve the same function as various other aspects of the liturgy, which is the iteration of the theological principle to affirm God's action in history. As these prayers serve to reinforce the link between students living in the Diaspora and Israel as their homeland, students may come to understand that their act of prayer helps to enable and maintain the State of Israel and the safety of its military. This type of prayer, which includes a benediction for the state through the use of the narrative of exile and redemption, is a direct example of how the "idea of the nation becomes the sacred communion of the people" (Smith 2003:7). The prayers for state and military are expressions of the sacredness of the community and communal destiny. As Daniel Gordis writes:

> The inclusion of Israel Independence Day in a cluster alongside Hanukkah and Purim makes an undeniable statement that the creation of the State of Israel is accorded much significance. The inclusion of Torah and *Haftarah* (prophetic) readings for *Yom Ha-Atzmaut* in the same prayer book only strengthens this perspective. (Gordis 2007:69)

[99] While personal or private spirituality is encouraged within Judaism, public prayer three times a day is a fixed communal obligation.

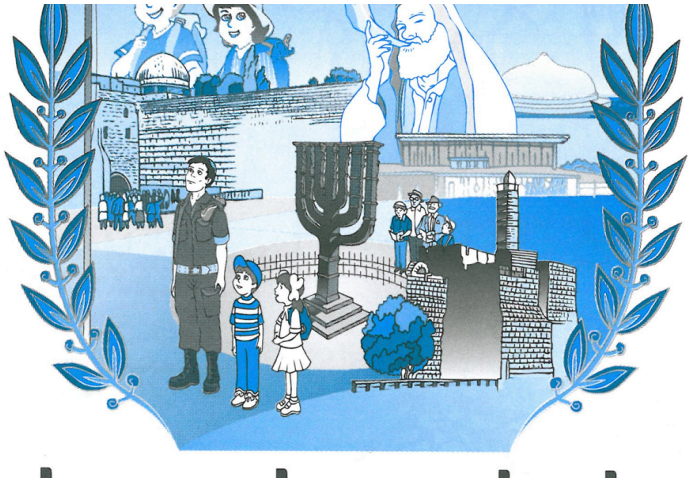
This exercise reinforces the traditional values (prayer, mitzvoth) while normalizing national identification as an extension of religious obligation. Religion remains a fixed point to examine the role of Israel in the Diaspora. As David Ellenson writes prayers and liturgy are

> […] ideal sources for examining how the State of Israel is envisioned by many modern American Jews. As religious documents, they incorporate the religious myths and symbolic language that provide the framework for how most American Jewish view and understand Israel. (Ellenson 1966:121)

In this way, the longevity and safety of the State of Israel are portrayed as contingent on the practices of Judaism. Past (represented through the structure of prayer), present (the State of Israel) and future (the safety of state) are interwoven. As we have noted, Smith understands nations as symbolic resources, rather than merely demographic and political realities. Through this type of prayer, the nation state becomes an object of sanctification worthy of death and sacrifice (Smith 2003), and sayings such as *tov lemut b'ad arzenu* (it's good to die for our country) become common place. While prayer for the state is used within the curriculum to unify religious and national obligations, such a prayer for the benefit of human concerns is contested within Jewish communities and indeed presents a point of division.[100] Moreover, prayers for the Israeli soldiers reveal how the myth of martyrdom functions as a crucial element of national consciousness. The elevation of the Israeli soldier as both a subject of prayer, and model for communal sacrifice reveals how pre-modern religious myths frame the national bond. Israeli soldiers become the contemporary examples of Jewish martyrdom (Sivan 2000); while communal martyrdom is portrayed as a necessary element of nation existence. Here, national identity and religious practice are fused together as they cohabit a single religious political myth.

[100] An example of the critique which this type of prayer illicit is expressed by Yeshayahu Leibowitz, who writes: "This construction of 'prayer for the welfare of the state,' 'a prayer for the parachutists,' 'a prayer for the submarine crews'- are ludicrous and insipid. All these are either national-religious play-acting or expression of fears, which have nothing to do with religious consciousness. By the nature of things as implanted in them by their Creator, if the girls assigned to folding the parachutes perform their work conscientiously and the parachutist follows his instructions carefully and skilfully, he will land safely. If not, the special prayer will be of no avail" (Leibowitz 1992:34). Leibowitz's critique centres on what he sees as the use of Judaism "as a cover for the nakedness of nationalism" (Leibowitz 1992:73), in which Judaism is reduced to Zionsim.

Figure 6: Figure 5: Prayers for Soldiers (Shimon 2008a:17)



The pictorial account of these prayers in the workbook illustrates how both the state and religion continue to hold authority over every sector of life. At the center of the picture, over which the prayers are written, stands the menorah. In front of it are a soldier and two young children looking up at the state flag of Israel. Behind them, a man with a full beard and head covered in a *tallit* (prayer shawl) is blowing the *shofar* (ram's horn). To his right people are gathered at the *Kotel* (Western Wall). All of these images are framed within two olive branches in a shape duplicating the Israel state emblem. Two students from the virtual classroom stand by the Israeli soldier looking up toward an unidentified focal point. These students in the virtual classroom are actively imagining themselves as participants in the nation, bridging the gap between the diaspora and national homeland.

Given Smith's theory, this exercise exemplifies a reformist point of view. A "reformist" overcomes what Smith refers to as the "dual legitimation" impasse (i.e., authority of the state and authority of the religion) by reconciling the authority of the state with the authority of religion (Smith 1983). In this way, the reformist reconciles these two forms of authority by reasoning that God works through the state. The very attempt to resolve the problem of dual legitimation acts as the "ideological spark of the nationalist movement" and forms the basis of the classical Zionist narrative, which places contemporary events as part of a historical religious narrative (Smith 1983:255). Similarly, by framing of the idea of the State of Israel in a myth derived from the dual Torah the TaL AM curriculum does not differentiate between political and religious myths – instead, it expands the religious myth to express a national (political) idea. The religious myth structure remains the same, while the content is reoriented toward constructing a national identity. Prayers for the State of Israel and the soldiers of Israel reinforce the familiar pattern of the religious myth; equally, the state and the soldiers become part of the myth in that they hold are particular symbolic function in that myth – namely, as sources of protection.

As noted in the exercise of the prayer for the State of Israel, the symbolic ritual of prayer becomes a structure for social relations. That the prayer for the State of Israel remains contended as an institutionalized religious practice reveals how the ethnosymbolism of a nation functions on both the subjective, or individual, level and the objective, or institutional, level (Smith 2000:66). The function of these prayers within an educational curriculum created for a Diaspora student body reveals the instructive character of religious ritual and tradition in transmitting an understanding of *how* one belongs to a nation while remaining in another location. Students connect to the State of Israel by their acts of prayer.

As students in the Diaspora belong to the nation of Israel through their interaction with religious and national narratives, the idea of the nation of Israel depends on the narratives and prayers they are exposed to (Habib 2004). Notably, the prayers included in the grade one TaL AM workbooks represent only the first line of a prayer customarily said at the end of morning daily service, known as *Shaharit*. This particular translation of the first line is closely linked to the version of the prayer found in the *Siddur* of the Conservative stream of Judaism. As noted, the inclusion of these prayers as part of the daily ritual has been a source of tension within Jewish communities, as they are said to reflect the messianic vision of religious Zionism toward the State of Israel. This prayer was first published in the newspaper *Hatzofeh* in September 1948, and then in *Ha'artez* the following day. It was established by the chief Rabbis of Israel at the time, yet it remains a point of contention within the Jewish community. The ultra-orthodox do not say this prayer in their synagogues; as a result, the recitation of this prayer has become one of the main distinctions between ultra-Orthodox and non-ultra-Orthodox Judaism.

The intimacy between the social-nationalist movement of political Zionism and the religious foundations of Judaism is largely due to the use of the biblical narrative of inheritance. The ordinariness of national symbols and national celebrations mutes the internal divisions and contentions within a nation. The national symbols and celebrations are reinforced through repetition within the TaL AM curriculum, rendering them ordinary and even mundane. Due to the presentation of the independence of Israel and the reunification of Jerusalem as part of the established Jewish festival calendar, any dialogue around the contended or contested nature of presenting a civic or national holiday as a religious holiday is rendered invisible.

Just as prayer for the state is used in the workbook to unify religious and national identity, songs equally serve to reinforce the links between Diaspora and homeland. The use of prayers, stories, and songs within the workbook reveals how ethnosymbolism frames social relations to convey an idea of the nation, while informing the relationship between the individual and the nation. A gender analysis of Israel education curricula would reveal a discord between the ultra-Orthodox religious authoritative body of State of Israel (Chief Rabbinate) and the divergent views on gender equality that inform Judaism (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, ultra-Orthodox) as practiced in Israel and throughout the Jewish diasporas. The religious practices of women in Israel, and the ongoing struggle against the male hegemonic authority of the ultra-Orthodox community is a subject of intense debate both within and outside the State of Israel.[101]

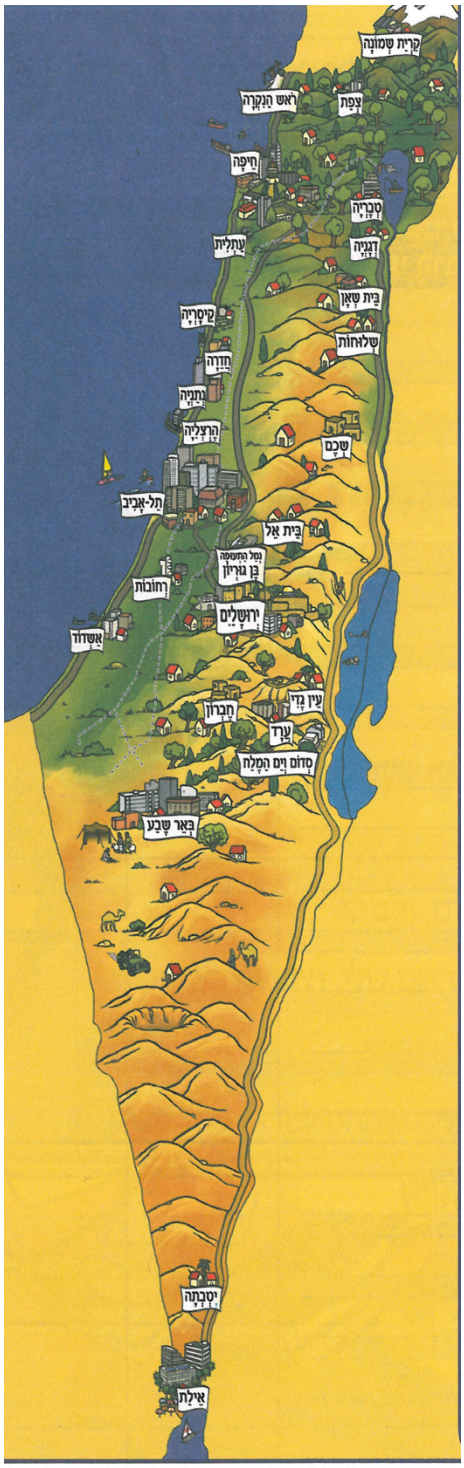
Grade 2: The Living Map

By grade two students have developed a vocabulary of approximately five hundred words in Hebrew and are familiar with the "virtual class" developed in the TaL AM curriculum. Students read the weekly Torah portion, *Parashat HaShavuah,* and are encouraged to discuss the reading with their families at home (Shimon 2010b: 22). Building on the grade one track *Chag Sameach,* which established the Jewish religious calendar as the basis of Jewish time, grade two continues this theme in the track *Shana Yehudit,* the Jewish Year. This track contains six units on the holidays, all of which build on the visual symbols and concepts introduced to students in the previous year. For example, the symbols representing the High Holidays, which were introduced in grade one, are reintroduced in grade two. The major themes of these holidays - *Tshuvah* (Repentance), *Tfilah* (Prayer), and *Tzdaka* (Giving) - are reinforced and developed within the student guided readers. These stories deal with breaking another child's toy or harming animals and learning to say Sorry. This unit also reintroduces the Jewish calendar, the months of the year, and locates the High Holidays within the calendar. Major themes include introducing students to the biblical sources of each holiday and its subsequent practices.

[101] For a more in depth understanding of religious jurisdiction of the ultra-Orthodox and the impact on women's religious practice in Israel see Ruth Halperin-Kaddari. (2004). *Women in Israel: A State of Their Own.* Philadelphia; and Frances Raday (1983) "Equality of Women under Israeli Law." *Jerusalem Quarterly* 27: 81–108.

Similarly, the grade two TaL AM celebration of *Hanukkah,* reintroduces students to the historical events surrounding the miracle of the oil in the Temple. In the celebration of *Tu B'Shvat* students are once again taught about the seven species, and learn the subsequent blessings, which are said over the various fruits and produce. This holiday links students directly to Israel by explaining how the celebration is practiced in Israel, namely through the planting and growth of the almond tree. In the unit on *Purim*, grade two students go over the major themes of the story of the Book of Esther, and focus on the emotions experienced by the four main characters in the story. In the grade two unit on *Pesach,* students are introduced to the ahistorical framework of the recounting of the *Haggadah,* which is not a recounting of past events but as a lived narrative; through the communal act of remembering, the historical liberation from slavery becomes a personal and contemporary experience. The structural and liturgical framework found in the *Seder* practice of Passover (*Pesach)* instructs Jews to read the *Haggadah* as if each person was personally a slave liberated from Egypt (Neusner 2005). This liturgical precedence is further explained through the concept of "generation to generation," in which the people of every generation must feel that they were personally freed from Egypt. This annual celebration is *the* act of Jewish remembrance (Yerushalmi 1996). Within TaL AM, the use of the *Haggadah* as a practice of continuity explains how Jews have continued to preserve collective identity throughout the ages. This continuity is linked to the establishment of the State of Israel, which is presented as the redemption of the Jewish people (Shimon 2010b: 26).

Figure 7: Map of Israel (Shimon 2008c:7)



In a manner similar to the teaching of the other holidays, grade two students are reintroduced to the symbols of the State of Israel taught in the previous year. In the grade two workbook *Israel Sheli vShelanu* (My Israel and Our Israel) the symbols of the State of Israel introduced in grade one - including the flag, the anthem, and the map of Israel - are here reinforced. Each of these symbols is interwoven from the past to the present representing the continuous bond between the Jewish people and the State of Israel. This unit also introduces the role of praying at the *Kotel*[102] as a way of celebrating the national civic holiday of *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*.

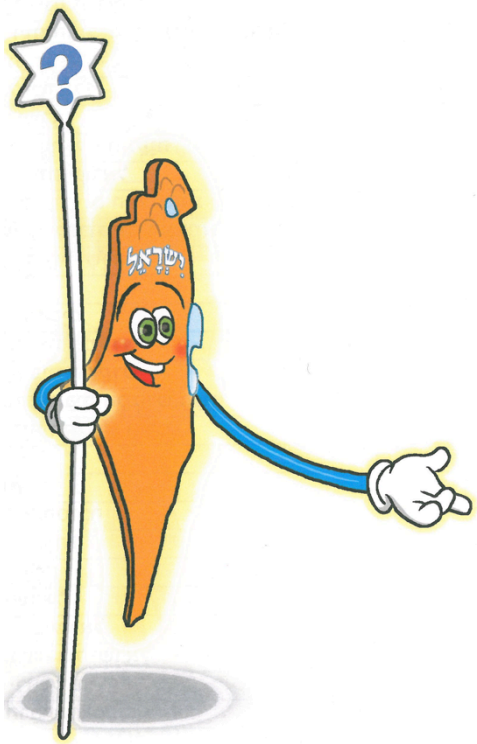
In the grade two unit on Israel, the map plays a central role. The map of Israel created by TaL AM and appearing throughout the curriculum depicts "greater Israel." Clusters of houses and trees are located throughout the entire territory, including the West Bank and Gaza. Below the billowing flag of Israel are the words of *HaTikvah*, the Israeli national anthem.

The grade two workbooks present an animated map of Israel extending one hand out to the reader, while the other hand holds a sceptre. On top of the sceptre is the outline of the Shield of David with a question mark in its center. In this exercise, the lively map of Israel leans out of its two-dimensional space into the drawn classroom to interact with the students of the virtual class within the workbook. The animated map of Israel familiarizes students with major events in

[102] Western Wall/Wailing Wall

Jewish history, while asking them to identify whether the land of Israel and the Jewish people were happy or sad during a given event. Students are asked to identify one of two emotions, and then write their answer in two large red hearts, one of which is being held by the animated map of Israel, and the other by dynamic human character extracted from the timeline. Depending on the event being described, the animated map of Israel is drawn either smiling or weeping. This use of two opposing emotions reflects the narrative structure of exile and return, or defeat and redemption, which may be traced throughout the system of Judaism, and are the basis of the classical Zionist idea of the nation.

Figure 8: Animated Map (Shimon 2008b:1)



The workbook presents eight events from a timeline representing the history of the Jewish people, and then instructs students to identify the feelings of the land of Israel and the people of Israel, and fill in the blanks in the story. In the first example of the timeline exercise the animated map of Israel is holding a red heart with the word "happy" written in it. Beside it is written: "My name is the land of Canaan. I was happy because God gave me to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and ever since my name has also been the land of the fathers" (Shimon 2008b: 19). Below these words is a picture of Abraham drawn as a white-haired man with a beard, wearing a cloak and carrying a staff. In the distance are people sojourning; among them is a woman riding a donkey and a man carrying a satchel attached to a wooden staff. To the right of the picture is the following passage: "The land of Canaan I give to you, your children and to your children's children! Happy because God gave Canaan to my children" (Shimon 2008b:19).[103] In the second set of pictures, the animated map of Israel is holding a red heart with a blank spot for the student to write in the emotion. In addition to the picture are the words: "I was happy, happy, because I

[103] The beginning of this sentence is drawn from the passage in Genesis 17:8. The entire verse reads: "and I will give to you and your offspring after you the land of your sojourns – the whole of the land of Canaan - as an everlasting possession; and I shall be a God to them."

heard that the Israelites left Egypt and slavery and on Mount Sinai, Moses will give them God's Torah" (Shimon 2008b:21). Below the animated map of Israel is a picture of Moses. He is drawn with a white beard; his head is covered, and he is holding the Torah. Adjacent to the picture of Moses, the following words are written: "We were happy, happy because God created miracles for us and took us out of Egypt and slavery, and we received the Torah" (Shimon 2008b:21). The third part of the exercise is a drawing of a young King David next to a man with white hair and beard holding a lamb. Behind them is drawn the Temple with musical notes rising up to the sky. The Jewish people have returned to the land of Israel, there is singing and celebration, and the map of Israel is shown smiling.

The fourth example in the exercise shows the animated map of Israel weeping; below it the Temple is burning while a soldier holds a spear close to two bearded men. This is the burning of the Temple (586 B.C.E.) and the beginning of the Babylonian exile of the Jewish people. The map of Israel is shown weeping as the Jewish people are exiled from the land. The fifth drawing is of a man holding a spear and a woman holding a blanket; both are drawn smiling. It depicts the return of the Jewish people to the land of Israel during the Second Temple era, reuniting the Jewish people in the land of Israel. The map of Israel is shown as happy. The sixth example shows the animated map of Israel weeping; the Temple is on fire and two bearded men dressed in white and carrying musical instruments look anxiously out toward the reader. It depicts the destruction of the second Temple and the exile of Jews from Jerusalem. The map of Israel is shown weeping. The seventh event shows the character map of Israel weeping once again. The following words are written beside it: "The Nazis made a war in the world. I cried terribly because six million Jews died in the Shoah, they died in the terrible fire" (Shimon 2008b:31). Below the map a group of men with gaunt faces are dressed in concentration camp uniforms bearing yellow stars, marked "Jude." To the left of the group of men are women and children, all are emaciated. Next to the image these words are written: "We cried a great bitter cry, because in Europe there was a terrible fire. The Nazis made a war in the world, and six million Jews were killed" (Shimon 2008b:31). A row of memorial candles[104] lines the bottom of the page.

[104] Ner Neshama, literally "soul candle", or Yahrzeit candles

The eighth and final event in the historical timeline shows the animated map of Israel smiling. Near it is written, "Happy, very happy because the Jews have a state here in the land of the fathers" (Shimon 2008b:33). Below these words is an illustration of a group of people smiling and extending their hands toward the reader. Everyone in the group has their head covered with a hat or *kippa*. Behind the group of people is the historical photo of Ben Gurion[105] addressing the Knesset.[106] The words to the right of the picture are as follows: "We were happy, happy because on the fifth of Iyar, in Tel Aviv, David Ben Gurion said: Finally, after two thousand years, the State of Israel has been established" (Shimon 2008b: 33). This exercise depicts the people of Israel and the land of Israel as being emotionally aligned throughout their historical trajectory. The timeline exercise begins by establishing the land of Israel as given to the descendants of Abraham, then leads students through moments in Jewish history, all of which reinforce the narrative of exile and return. The final scene depicted in the timeline is the establishment of the State of Israel, which represents the culmination of Jewish history.

Here the map of Israel takes on an individual persona. Israel, the national bordered state, is presented as an interactive, animate character, which experiences emotions, memory, and preference. The animated map is the personification of the unpartitioned geographical land of Israel (or "greater Israel"). The workbook presents the people of Israel and the land of Israel in a constant relationship. Israel, the land, becomes an animate, living entity, with a deep-seated longing to be united with Israel, the people. Through this exercise, students using the workbook are taught that the land and the people are one. The final drawing of the exercise, in which the state has been established and the animated map of Israel self-describes as happy, renders the abstract idea of a land in communion with a people concrete for young readers. While the emotional swings of the land of Israel (happy when united with the people of Israel and sad when the people of Israel are in exile) reflect the myth structure of exile and return, or defeat and redemption, it equally relies on the pre-modern myth of a single common Jewish ethnohistory. In fact, this historical narrative reveals how a common ethnohistory is developed - by muting large swathes of historical events while reiterating particular moments in Jewish history.

[105] David Ben Gurion was the first Prime Minister of Israel.
[106] The house of parliament.

Thus, the establishment of the State of Israel fits into the narrative structure of exile and return, one which reiterates a common Jewish history. The chosen historical events present a seamless link between the Temple era of 70 CE and the 20th century. The Diaspora existence of 2,000 years is neither acknowledged nor accounted for in this exercise—a common feature of Zionism as we noted in the last chapter. Moreover, while the local contexts of Jewish communities throughout the Diasporas were multiple and highly divergent, the Holocaust and the foundation of the State of Israel are presented as universal aspects of Jewish history. Indeed, the events of the Holocaust and the actualization of Zionism in the establishment of the State of Israel are presented as one element in a long trajectory of events in which a nation seeks to establish its nationhood. This link or connection between people, state, and sanctuary is central to the Zionist narrative of nationhood, employed throughout Israel education, including the TaL AM curriculum (Schiff 1999). The coalition of Zionism and Judaism is readily seen in the closing of the timeline exercise. After familiarizing students with the eight selected events in Jewish history, which culminate in the establishment of the State of Israel, the workbook closes the exercise with the presentation of a song called the "Song of Thanks." The song reads as follows:

> We sing a song of thanks because God gave us a gift, the good land. Who do we sing to? Who do we thank? We thank the creator of the world - the king of the universe, God...We sing a song of thanks because the people returned from the Diaspora to the good land of Israel. We sing a song of thanks because we have a country after 2,000 years. We sing a song of prayer; we sing a song of hope: Make peace in the good land. (Shimon 2008b:34)

The song is then followed by a recap of the timeline exercise. In the recap, the final phase of the timeline brings the students up to the present. After the eighth event - the creation of the State of Israel - a new image appears, in which a man and boy wrapped in a single *tallit* hold a Torah scroll. Beside them, a woman wearing a hat sits at a table with three children; one child is writing, one is reading, and the third is holding a

flag of Israel. Next to the table of children stand two soldiers. Above them, the following words are written: "And to the Arab neighbours we say today: We want to live in peace with you" (Shimon 2008b:35).

This final picture offers insight into how TaL AM reconciles religious and national forms of communal life, while equally relying on the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie* to convey and maintain boundaries between social groups. Because a nation's symbolic resources are what separate it from other nations, symbols can be employed to edify the national bond and socialize the next generation; equally they can be used to demarcate who belongs and who doesn't. The picture shows a father and son united under a single *tallit;* here continuity of prayer (represented by the shared *tallit)*, and the protection of the Jewish people, extends from one generation to the next without interruption. The three children sitting at the table equally express values within Judaism - study and writing - while including a third central tenet, support of the State of Israel, symbolized by the state flag. The strategy of combining religious symbols (prayer and Torah study) with modern realities of the state (flag and soldiers) again supports Smith's assertion that nations endure due to their formation around their collective symbols, drawn from pre-modern origins. Yet, the statement "And to the Arab neighbours we say today: We want to live in peace with you"[107] hovering above the picture seems ominous. Without articulating fear or conflict the texts calls for peace; it performs the delicate balancing act of speaking to something while simultaneously avoiding it.

This promotion of national cohesion through a singular authentic narrative by use of traditional symbols is common to the educational practices of contemporary nations (Nash, Crabtree, and Dunn 1998). Repetitive chronicled narratives are used to solidify national solidarity. Reliance on history to explain national attachments and edify collective national solidarity is predominantly found in the school curriculum of nations in which conflict plays a central role (Bar-Tal 1999). According to some commentators, the centrality of the historical narrative additionally serves to

[107] In an interview with Ari Shavit's, Israeli novelist Amos Oz speaks about the importance of acknowledging Israel's existential fear of survival as a "cognitive wall separating Israelis and Palestinians". He says "I made one big mistake. I underestimated the importance of fear. The Right's strongest argument is fear. They don't say it out loud because they are too ashamed to, but their most compelling argument is that we are afraid. It's a legitimate argument. I, too, am afraid of the Arabs. So if I were to start the peace movement all over again, that's the one change I would make. I would address our fear of the Arabs. I would have a genuine dialogue about the Israeli fear of extinction" (Shavit 2013:260).

strengthen the national bond, while simultaneously reinforcing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Bar-Tal 1999). The grade two timeline exercise equally serves to enforce, or reinforce, the national values of democracy and democratic citizenship that students then encounter in grade three.

Grade Three: Declaration of Independence

By grade three, the curriculum expands on previously-learned vocabulary and introduces students to thinking skills that aim to enable them to distinguish assumptions from facts, assess priorities, and consider alternate points of view. As in previous years, grade three starts with the celebration of the High Holidays. The grade three TaL AM studies of the High Holidays link the students to Israel through the four species celebrated in the holiday of *Sukkot.* The unit on *Hanukkah* emphasises the symbols and customs learned in previous years, while deepening the learning content to include the teachings of two Jewish schools of thought, *Beit Hillel* and *Beit Shamai.* The celebration of *Tu B'Shvat* in grade three focuses on the four seasons, and the blessings affiliated with each season. Building on previous knowledge the unit of *Hanukkah,* students are further introduced into the dialogue and debate of the Jewish sages Hillel and Shamai regarding when the new year of the trees began.

The unit on *Purim* focuses on the interconnectedness and inter-reliance of Jews, as reflected in the Book of Esther. By re-enacting the story of Esther in a class play, students become familiarized with what they may encounter in a synagogue. The grade three units on *Pesach* and *Shavuot* focus on the theme of bondage and freedom. In this unit students are reintroduced to the pictorial timeline they encountered in the grade two units on Israel, which begins with a depiction of the seven days of creation, followed by a drawing of Adam and Eve in Eden. A faded drawing representing the passage of 1,000 years ends with a picture of the ark of Noah. This is followed by a drawing of the patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; and the matriarchs Sarah, Rebecca, Leah, and Rachel, under the year marked 2,000. This period of history, from 2,000 to 4,000 represents the most concentrated section of the timeline and includes the following events: the enslavement of the Jewish people in Egypt; the establishment of the first Temple; the destruction of the first Temple; *Purim*, the Book of Esther; the establishment of the second temple; *Hanukkah*; and the destruction of the second Temple. The destruction of the

Second Temple marks the year 4,000, after which a gap in time, depicted by a faded drawing of a long line of people facing the direction of the coming event, represents the 2,000 year-long diaspora existence which followed the destruction of the Second Temple. This period ends with the Holocaust, illustrated by the yellow star marked *Jude* and three burning candles. In the final picture of the timeline, representing the establishment of the State of Israel, one sees the state flag and the menorah. The focus of the grade three units on *Pesach* is to instil in students an understanding of the bitterness of past life under slavery, and an understanding of the freedom of the present.

The thrust of the grade three units on Israel is to instil an emotional connection and relationship of love between the student and the State of Israel as well as an identification with the places in Israel that connect the past to the present. The workbook, entitled *Israel*, familiarizes students with various cities and sites within Israel through the use of the game *Kef Letayel BeIsrael* (It's Fun to Travel Israel), in which a talking bus guides the students across a map of Israel. The map used in the game is the same unpartitioned map encountered in previous grades and is in line with the message of earlier grades; the State of Israel is presented as the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In this game, the students travel and encounter cities that stretch from the Golan Heights in the north, to Beit Shean and Shechem (Nablus) in the East, to Tel Aviv and Ashdod in the West, to Ein Gedi, Hebron and Eilat in the south. The map does not indicate or differentiate the territories of the West Bank and Gaza. The territories of the surrounding countries, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, are unnamed, constituting empty spaces around the populated map.

Continuing to focus on the map encountered by students in the game "It's Fun to Travel Israel," the workbook proceeds with an exercise of identifying cities in Israel by name, this time linking these cities back to their description in Genesis. In the grade three workbook exercise, the map with the list of modern cities is placed beside two drawings. The first depicts three men in the foreground, one of whom represents Abraham, who is depicted passing a sack of coins to the other two. In the background, the word Hebron is written over the doorway of a building. The second image is divided into two; in the first section men in the foreground are arguing, while two men in the distance are digging a well. In the additional section of this picture, a king is extending his hands to Abraham, who stands beside the well, marked Beersheba. In the adjoining

exercise, students read chosen passages from Genesis and circle the person, or persons to whom God gave the land. The selected passages and correct answer options are as follows:

Q1) "And the Lord appeared to Abram, and He said, 'To your seed, I will give this land'" (Genesis 12: 7).

A1) to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to Abraham's seed

Q2) "And the Lord appeared to him, and said, 'Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land that I will tell you. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and I will bless you, for to you and to your seed will I give all these lands, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham, your father'" (Genesis 26: 2-3).

A2) to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to his seed

Q3) "And Jacob left Beersheba, and he went to Haran…And behold; the Lord was standing over him, and He said, 'I am the Lord, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac; the land upon which you are lying, to you I will give it, and to your seed'" (Genesis 28: 10-13).

A3) to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to his seed

Q4) "God said to him, 'Your name is Jacob. Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name.' And He named him Israel. And God said to him, 'I am the Almighty God; be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a multitude of nations shall come into existence from you, and kings shall come forth from your loins. And the land that I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, I will give to you and to your seed after you will I give the land'" (Genesis 35: 9- 12).

A4) to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to his seed.

Q5) "And the Lord said to Abram… 'Please raise your eyes and see, from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward. Rise, walk in the land, to its length and to its breadth, for I will give it to you'" (Genesis 13: 14, 17).

A5) to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to his seed. (Shimon 2008c:11)

The passages in the *Israel* workbook are written in ancient Hebrew and drawn directly from the *Torah.* This exercise links the study of the *Torah* and the names and places of ancient Israel to the city names of modern Israel by literally positioning the modern map of Israel alongside the drawings of Abraham in the ancient land, which God promised to his descendants.

Immediately following this exercise on the purchase of Hebron and Beersheba by Abraham is a section introducing Zionist leader Theodor Herzl and his book *Der Judenstaat*, and to the first Prime Minister of Israel, David Ben Gurion. In the exercise that familiarizes students with David Ben Gurion, students are asked to read a brief excerpt, and then answer the questions: "Who said this?" and "To whom?" In this exercise, four excerpts form a conversation between David Ben Gurion and Lord Peel. From 1936 to 1937, Lord Peel functioned as the chairman of the Peel Commission, which presented a bordered partition of the Jewish state that would follow the dissolve of the British Mandate of Palestine. In their conversation, David Ben Gurion tells Lord Peel that the Jewish people need a country; making a hand gesture toward the Bible, he notes that God gave the land of Israel to the Jewish people. Lord Peel agrees that it is necessary to have a home for the Jews, but asks: "Why do you think that Israel is the only place that's suitable?" to which Ben Gurion replies, "The Bible has an answer to your question. This is the land that was the home of my people, and this is the land that every Jew prays for." Lord Peel responds by stating: "We've all learned important things from the Bible, and the Bible said that God promised Israel to the Jews. We agree that a home should be built in Israel for the Jews too" (Shimon 2008c:19).

David Ben Gurion, co-founder of the Labor-Zionist group, emigrated from Poland to Palestine in 1906 (Hertzberg 1959). By 1915, he moved to the USA and immediately began organizing Zionist meetings and pressing for all members of the Jewish community to make *aliyah*.[108] Ben Gurion's use of religious symbolism to forward the Zionist national movement is apparent throughout his writings and political career. For example, he wrote,

[108] *Aliyah,* a Hebrew term which means "to ascend" or "ascension" is also used to refer to the act of relocating from the Diaspora to Israel.

> We are sons of the Homeland, disciples of the Bible, and bearers of the vision of the great redemption of the Jewish people and of humanity – and the expression of that idea in the original, in the ancient original which has been renewed and rejuvenated in our time, is to be found in the prophets of Israel. (Ben Guiron quoted in Hertzberg 1959:93)

In describing Israel's first Prime Minister, Gal writes: "The ethno-symbols associated with his (Ben Gurion's) life and work reflected both the pursuit of a vigorous nationalist restoration and the urge for an ethical-spiritual renewal for and by the Jews" (Gal 2007:222). Ben Gurion offers a concrete amalgamation of religious inclinations and national motivations.

It is significant that in the TaL AM workbook includes Lord Peel's specific response that the homeland of the Jewish people is shared. The words "a home should be built in Israel for the Jews too" (Shimon 2008c:19), reveal a particular understanding of the Peel Commission (1937) and its effect on Zionist ideology. Lord Peel proposed a two-state solution, which included a "transfer" of Palestinians living in the Jewish State and of Jews living in the Arab state. As Ari Shavit writes, "from this moment on (1937) the idea of 'transfer' - the removal of the Arab population – became part of mainstream Zionist thinking" (Shavit 2013:74). While TaL AM acknowledges the impact of the Peel Commission, it does not explicitly address the idea of "transfer" or the political solution of two independent states.

Figure 10: Israel (Shimon 2008c:32)

In a subsequent exercise, the Grade three *Israel* workbook familiarizes students with the content of Israel's Declaration of Independence and the rules that govern the citizens of Israel. Students read that the State of Israel was established on the democratic principles of equality and religious impartiality. "The State of Israel will have complete social and political equality for all its citizens, regardless of religion, race and sex" (Shimon 2008c:32), as quoted directly from the declaration. Below

these words is a picture of the city of Nazareth. In the forefront is a boy wearing a *kippa* with the words "Jewish boy," written beside him. On the other side of the drawing is a woman wearing a hijab with the words "Arab woman" written beside her. The illustration seeks to exemplify the principles of equality and religious freedom established in the Declaration of Independence. It is noteworthy that Israel does not have a Charter of Rights and Freedoms. There is a series of "Basic Laws" that protect citizens' rights, but freedom of assembly and freedom of expression are not among them.

The theme of the State of Israel as the redemption of the Jewish people is evident in its Declaration of Independence. Relaying the story of continuity, this declaration recounts the recorded attachment to the land of Israel throughout the various dispersions of the Jewish people, followed by the immediate events that lead-up to the establishment of the state, including the events of the Holocaust, the First Zionist Congress, and the Balfour Declaration. The conclusion of this summary includes the recognition of a Jewish state in the land of Israel by the UN in the following: "…by virtue of our natural and historic right, and the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations."

In the grade three Israel workbook, students read that the Declaration of Independence sought not only to retain religious equality among citizens but to treat all religious sites with equal value: "The State of Israel will preserve all the Holy sites of all religions" (Shimon 2008c:34). Furthermore, students learn that the ongoing posture of the citizens of the State of Israel toward the surrounding states is one of peace. The workbook reads: "We extend our hand in peace in good neighborliness to all the neighboring states" (Shimon 2008c:36). The narrative reiterated by Ben Gurion and Lord Peel, constructs a biblical promise of inheritance that is compatible with the goals of a liberal democracy, which values equality, impartiality and diversity, as exemplified by the pictorial representation of Nazareth. Palestinian citizens of Israel primarily inhabit Nazareth, a city in the northern part of Israel. (The city is not named in the Torah and does appear in the previous game "It's fun to travel in Israel", therefore it doesn't have historical significance for the Jewish people.) Even so, as it is within the borders of Israel, and populated by non-Jews, it represents the values of the Declaration, namely equality and religious freedom. In this way, students are taught that the position of Israel toward its neighboring communities is one of peace, while the complex issue of minority rights of Arab citizens of Israel is not

addressed. In order to frame the idea of the nation in the myth of a common ethnohistory, and the myth of election, the demographic realities of the State of Israel are by and large ignored. This is not surprising given that even in the State of Israel the subject of minority rights for Palestinian citizens of Israel remains a contentious issue. As Shavit's writes, "The State of Israel refuses to see its Arab citizens. It has not yet found a way to integrate properly one-fifth of its population…to this day there is no definition of the commitments of the Jewish democratic state to its Arab minority, and that of the Arab minority to the Jewish democratic state" (Shavit 2013: 402). He continues, "Although they are a minority within the Jewish state, they are an integral part of the overwhelming regional majority that makes the Jews of Israel a regional minority. This complexity has never been dealt with, and majority-minority relationships within Israel were never defined." (Shavit 2013:402) Moreover, in order to present a religious political myth, in which the State of Israel holds a symbolic function in the pre-modern myth, the tenets of the state and the values of Judaism are here shown as compatible. Thus, by interrelating modern and ancient forms of the Hebrew language, as well as ancient and modern locations in the land of Israel, students are taught that the sources of ownership over the land of Israel derive from Judaism. This continuous link, between the past and the present, is expressed in all aspects of the unit, from the game in which students travel across the map of Israel, to the exploration of biblical passages drawn from Genesis, to the visionaries of the modern State of Israel. Continuity is used as the theme through which students develop connections to the State of Israel.

Grade Four: Yom Ha'Aztmaut

By grade four, students have acquired a sufficient language base in Hebrew to communicate about daily life and Jewish holidays; exercises challenge students to think, reflect, and generate ideas before taking action. In the *Parashat HaShavua* (weekly Torah readings) track, students are taught proper conduct in relation to the proverbs, stories, and customs of Judaism (Shimon 2010d:9). They are introduced to the sages' commentary on the *parasha,* weekly Torah portion, and encouraged to ask questions about the text. Students are taught the core message of the *parasha* and encouraged to talk about it with their families (Shimon 2010d: 22). In the study of the High Holidays, grade four students are introduced to Maimondes' *Hilchot Tshuva* (the laws of repentance), and the *Succa* tractate of the *Mishna.* In the celebration of *Hanukkah,* students learn about the miracle of the lights from the perspective of the Maccabees. The focus is on

finding the solution to difficult problems, such as continuity and preserving strong Jewish identity. The grade four unit on *Tu B'Shvat* (the New Year for Trees) focuses on enjoying, being responsible for, and protecting the environment through caring for trees. The unit on *Purim* introduces the theme of jokes into the study of the Book of Esther, and explores the concept of harmful versus benign types of joking. The unit on *Pesach and Shavout* compares the ancient and modern maps of Israel in a series of exercises which compare and contrast the present with the past. This comparison theme carries into the grade four unit on Israel and Jerusalem. In this unit, which focuses on the celebration of Israel's Independence Day, students learn about the elements of a sovereign nation state, including land, language, anthem, currency, flag, and army (Shimon 2010d:47).

Figure 11: Festival Calendar (Shimon 2008d:1)

The focus of the grade four unit on Israel is intended to present the connection between *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* (Israel Independence Day) and various other Jewish religious holidays. This connection between a national celebration and established religious holidays is made explicit in the following exercise. The workbook provides an overview of each holiday celebrated throughout the Jewish calendar, before teaching students the traditional source each given holiday was originally derived from, that is, Torah, *Gemara, Mishnah* etc. This information is presented through dynamic symbols representing each holiday. For example, *Hanukkah* is represented by a menorah; *Pesach* by a piece of *matzath* dressed as a shepherd; and *Rosh HaShanah* is an animated *shofar* (ram's horn) with a face and glasses. The new holiday, *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*, is represented by the animated map of Israel, previously encountered in the grade two and subsequently grade three workbook, which is drawn in the blue and white colors of the flag of the State of Israel with a Shield of David at its center.

In the opening exercise, the animated symbol of each of the established holidays pops out of the Jewish festival calendar to offer a blessing to the new holiday. The pretext for the exercise establishes the idea that the new holiday, *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*, is worried it will not be remembered or celebrated, and by extension, that it is not fully recognized and does not have its rightful place among the other holidays. The exercise emphasizes the character of each holiday by relating the blessing that it bestows on *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* as a symbolic presentation of the established holiday. These blessings read as follows:

> Pesach blessed Yom Ha'Atzmaut with the promise that the new state should have wise leaders, who will lead Israel with wisdom and do good deeds, like Moses the leader, who took the Israelites out of slavery.
>
> Shavuot gave Yom Ha'Atzmaut a Torah, and blessed it with the establishment of good laws for all people, and with the blessing to bestow wisdom to the whole world.
>
> Rosh HaShanah blessed Yom Ha'Atzmaut that all people in the State will hear only good things about it, and that people will live a life as sweet as honey.
>
> Yom Kippur spoke quietly, and blessed Yom Ha'Atzmaut that the people should speak good things to one another, do good deeds, give tzedakah, know how to ask for forgiveness if they make a mistake.
>
> Sukkot stood next to Yom Ha'Atzmaut just like a good friend, and blessed it that all Jews should be together in joy, just like the four species in Sukkot are united.
>
> Tu B'Shvat, the new year of the trees, came out of the calendar and blessed the new holiday that all people in Israel build homes and plant trees so that Israel has a good environment with fruit trees baring good fruit.
>
> Purim blessed the new holiday, "May there always be peace in Israel and no war. And if the enemies of Israel wish to do it harm, that God reverses the bad into good, like in the Book of Esther".

> Tisha B'Av[109] blessed Yom Ha'Atzmaut: May the city of Jerusalem be united and whole, may there be peace in the land and no war, and may there be no weeping, only joy.
>
> Hanukkah blessed Yom Ha'Atzmaut: May all people in the country in this time be strong and heroic, just like the Maccabees were in those days.
>
> Lag Ba'Omer[110] blessed Yom Ha'Atzmaut: May Jews not fight with one another and respect one another in order to maintain a united, good country.
>
> Simchat Torah blessed Yom Ha'Atzmaut: May all people in the State of Israel love their country and be happy in it, and also love the Torah and study it. (Shimon 2008d: 8-10)

In this exercise, all the holidays work together to assure *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* of its rightful place in the Jewish festival calendar. The placement of the new national holiday in the Jewish calendar of religious celebrations informs the students of the proper ritual practices that should accompany the establishment of the state, namely spiritual blessing and celebration through the recitation of praise. By positioning the national holiday in the trajectory of religious celebrations, the workbook implies that the establishment of the State of Israel holds a theological value. Through this exercise *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*, a civic holiday, becomes by extension a religious celebration. Smith writes about this kind of phenomenon:

> Whereas religion is often the preserve of the most exclusive ethnicism in ethno-religious communities, when it is translated into a form of national regeneration, it tends to become a "civic religion" based on the cult of self-sacrifice. Both phenomena can be seen side by side in Israel. On the one hand, there is the strong Orthodox presence with its insistence on creating a Jewish state, one that is ruled according to the precepts of the Torah and its rabbinic guardians. On the other hand, the Israeli state sponsors a set of public rituals on the Day of the Holocaust, the Day of Memorial for the fallen soldiers, and Independence Day, apart from the ancient Jewish festivals that have also acquired a state meaning. (Smith 2000:334)

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[109] Tisha B'Av is a minor festival commemorating
[110] Lag Ba'Omer is a minor festival celebrating

The powers of the blessings bestowed on *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* by the other religious holidays in the TaL AM curriculum reveals the interconnectedness of religious and national identity as manifested in the celebration of the founding of the State of Israel. *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* then fits together as a piece in the puzzle forming the larger picture of the contemporary religious practices informing Jewish identity within the Diaspora.

Interestingly, including the celebration of Israel's Independence Day as part of the Jewish calendar also reveals to students that Judaism as a religion is not confined to the past; rather, Judaism is presented as living tradition. Moreover, this exercise reveals that religion is malleable and reconstructed to include and reflect current reality. In this way, the TaL AM workbook exercise encourages the student to see how religion and nation are united in the symbolic discourse of Judaism. Within the exercise, it is the "established facts" of Judaism, the celebrations of *Pesach*, *Sukkot*, etc., that extend the boundaries of tradition to include a new practice (the celebration of *Yom Ha'Aztmaut*), making the celebration of the national holiday becomes a religious obligation. This exercise illustrates how religion, and the canon of traditional practice, may serve as a means of national legitimation. This legitimation of the state, as a religious or miraculous phenomenon, is then granted through the blessings of the established Jewish holidays.

The festival calendar of a religion reveals the enduring character of collective meaning held by a given religious community. Moreover, the festival calendar does not simply refer to specific events in Jewish history, which must be remembered and commemorated, but acts as a normative aspect of Judaism.[111] In this way the holidays of *Pesach, Shavuot, Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Tu B'Shvat, Purim,* and *Hanukkah* have been established as a coherent whole, important to Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jews alike. The inclusion of *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* into the festival calendar recasts the establishment of State of Israel as a religious phenomenon. Once imbued with spiritual significance, the idea of the nation becomes part of the religious narrative, indeed

[111] According to Neusner, "...there is a normative Judaism. Based on their acceptance of revelation, a hundred generations of Jews have enacted the same basic structure of festivals...These observances have articulated a clear vision of Israel's identity and purpose" (Neusner 2005: 324).

the fulfillment of the narrative of exile and return. From this vantage point, the State of Israel is presented as a fulfilment of biblical prophecies.

The TaL AM workbook exercise presents the State of Israel not merely as a political nation but a concrete expression of a religious orientation. According to Smith's view, such a reinterpretation and alteration of core myths is the sign of a healthy nation.

> We should interpret these narratives not as inventions or fabrications, but as selective political understandings of aspects of ethnic pasts that may be supported by documentary or other evidence. What distinguishes them from other more "objective" historical readings is their avowed moral import and ideological focus. They link history to destiny through exemplary heroes and authentic tales, and thereby reveal the "one true path" for reversing the nation's lamentable present decline. (Smith 2009:36)

In this way, the past offers a framework or structure to the present situation. Depending on the nature of the needs of the national community, different symbols will be utilized or "rediscovered" and introduced into the nation's narrative. This concept of the State of Israel as the manifestation of a prophetic promise is established in the presentation of the historical narrative of the TaL AM curriculum. The exercise concludes with *Yom Ha'Aztmaut* assuming its rightful place in the Jewish festival calendar.

The religious significance of *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* is debated within Jewish communities inside and outside of the State of Israel. The festival calendar is marked by celebrations, which honoring God through psalms of praise - often including a recital of *Hallel* (Psalm collections). The singing of these Psalms is believed to allow Jews to appeal to God. The recitation of *Hallel* is not simply a matter of beseeching God through joyful song, but about an acknowledgement of God's action in history. Those who accept the practice that *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* should be celebrated in a manner similar to *Hanukkah* and *Purim* recite a *Haftarah* (additional reading from the Prophets) and the *Hallel* (psalms of praise) in celebration of the national holiday. While the Chief Rabbinate of Israel has approved the recital of *Hallel* in the celebration of *Yom Ha'Aztmaut*, some ultra-Orthodox communities do not include it in their festival calendars. In addition to reciting the *Hallel*, the Conservative movement started the practice of reading Deuteronomy

7:12–8:18 on *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*. Much debate remains about which Torah reading should occur on *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*; the main point drawn out of the debate is the reiteration of the importance of Torah reading in celebration of Israel's Independence Day. As early as 1949, the Chief Rabbinate of Israel instituted an evening service (*Ma'ariv*) to celebrate *Yom Ha'Atzmaut,* which began with the recitation of Psalms 107, 97, and 98, and ended with the sounding of the *shofar* (ram's horn). In connection with this, the grade four TaL AM unit on Israel conveys a unified idea of the nation in which the establishment of the State of Israel is an act of God in history. In this way, the State of Israel becomes an extension of the religious practices of Judaism, illustrating the structural role which the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie* holds in framing social relations and prescribing particular attitudes of the nation.

Grade Five: The Flag

By grade five, TaL AM students have acquired the life language skills necessary to identify the causes and effects of their actions, make decisions, and think critically about texts or situations – all in Modern Hebrew. As in every grade, the grade five Jewish Year track starts with the celebration of the High Holidays, which builds on the students' knowledge acquired in previous years. Students are reintroduced to the laws of repentance (*Hilchot Tshuva)* written by Maimonides, and learn how to unpack and interpret a situation or text by consulting a broader variety of commentaries. The unit on *Hanukkah* reinforces previously learned customs and rituals associated with the festival, and the workbook and reading books reiterate the necessity of remembering the miraculous acts of God in history as a means of maintaining Jewish identity and continuity. In the unit on *Tu B'Shvat* students are taught the biblical passage from Deuteronomy (20:19-20) that forbids the cutting down of fruit trees. This ethical principle (*Bal Tashcit)* is used to sensitize students to the subject of recycling, caring for the environment, and the imperative to plant trees in the land of Israel where trees are scarce.

In the following unit, which celebrates the festival of *Purim*, grade five students further examine the implications of this holiday and the concept of reversal (*VeNahafoch Hu*), in which everything is turned upside down. In studying the events of the Book of Esther, students learn about the survival of the Jewish Diaspora. In the unit on *Pesach* the opening passages from the

Haggadah, which invite those in need whoever is hungry to come and eat (*Ha Lachma Anya*), are used to acknowledge ongoing forms of oppression.

In the grade five unit on Israel develops a more in depth look at Holocaust and the historical events leading up to the establishment of the State of Israel. Emphasis is placed on the symbol of the flag and its correlation with the *tallit,* through the guided reader *HaTallit Shel Sabba* (Grandfather's Prayer Shawl). In this guided book a grandfather recounts the story of his survival of the Holocaust and his eventual *aliya* to the State of Israel. Through this story and the correlating exercise in the student workbook, students learn the imperative to remember (*Zachor)* (Shimon 2010e:28). This unit emphasises the link between the *tallit* and the flag of Israel by presenting a historical timeline of the evolution of the flag of the State of Israel. The workbook introduces the students to the major figures involved in establishing the State of Israel, including Chaim Weitzman, Yitzak HaLevi Hertzog, Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uziel, and Theodore Herzl.

In an exercise entitled "What is a flag?" students read a passage from Herzl's letter to the Baron de Hirsch, written prior to the first World Zionist Congress on June 12, 1895. The excerpt reads as follows:

> What is a flag? A pole and on it a piece of colorful cloth? No! A flag is more than that. The flag leads the people along the path they chose to take because the flag symbolizes identity, opinions and beliefs of a group. Human beings live for the flag and are willing to die for it if that's how they were educated. (Shimon 2008e:26)

The First World Zionist Congress in 1897 marks the beginning of the historical timeline in the life of the flag of Israel. Included in this timeline is the debate around which symbol would best represent the ideology of Zionism and be illustrative of the State of Israel. To illustrate this element of debate, the Israel unit workbook displays a drawing of a boy named Hillel wearing glasses and a *kippa;* he is pointing to the state's flag. Below the state flag is Herzl's suggested flag, one, which holds seven yellow stars, six of which form the points of the Shield of David, while a seventh yellow star hovers above them. Herzl's own suggested state symbol to represent the idea of the nation common to Zionism was ultimately unsuccessful. However, TaL AM includes Herzl's suggested symbol of the seven yellow stars, which was to represent the seven

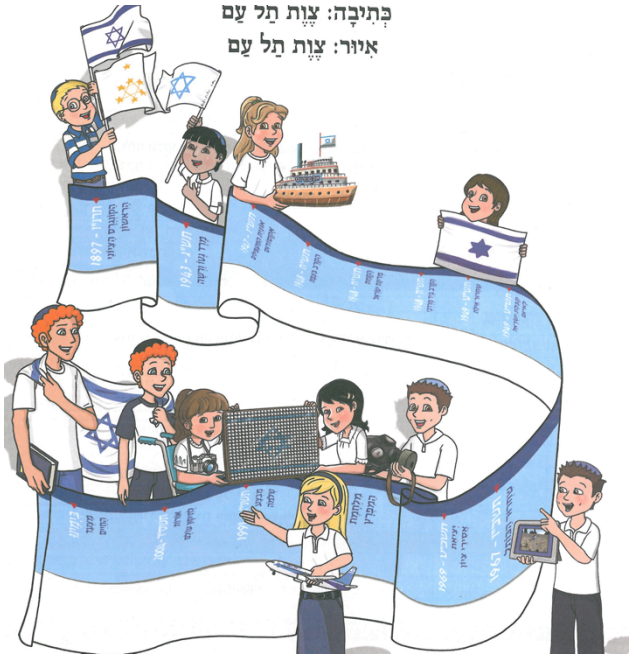

Figure 12: Timeline of Flag (Shimon 2008e:1)

working hours of the new social state. Interestingly, as noted earlier, Herzl himself, not his flag, became a symbol of the nation. The symbolic importance of Herzl is exemplified throughout the workbooks. Particularly, the placement of an enlarged picture of Herzl staring down on the shoulders of David Ben Guiron as he reads out the Declaration of Independence is reprinted throughout the curriculum, as are references to Herzl's work, and places named after him in Israel.

The TaL AM timeline exercise devoted to the creation of the flag of Israel identifies various other events in the historical narrative of the flag. The timeline exercise ends with a date marked today, with the event the March of the Living (MOL is an annual high school trip in which students from around the Diaspora commemorate the events of the Holocaust by visiting Poland and Israel).[112] In the pictorial depiction of this event, two male student characters are drawn looking out at the reader. The older boy on the right is wearing a *kippa* and holding a book. Behind him is an enlarged photograph of participants on the March of the Living who have converged along the steps of a building. The participants have their back facing the reader; many of them are wearing a shirt with the Shield of David insignia on it. Some have wrapped the flag of Israel around them as one would a traditional *tallit.* To the right of the photograph is a much younger boy; he is looking up at the same photograph on a laptop in front of him. He, too, is wearing a *kippa* and has turned his head to look at the reader.

The song that thematically correlates with the March of the Living reads as follows: "Each year Jews from all over the world come to Poland to hoist our flag to signal and state: 'We are alive, and we remember!'" (Shimon 2008e:39). The bookends of the timeline are significant. Beginning with the establishment of the *tallit* with the Shield of David as the chosen symbol of

[112] The March of the Living will be discussed in Chapter 6.

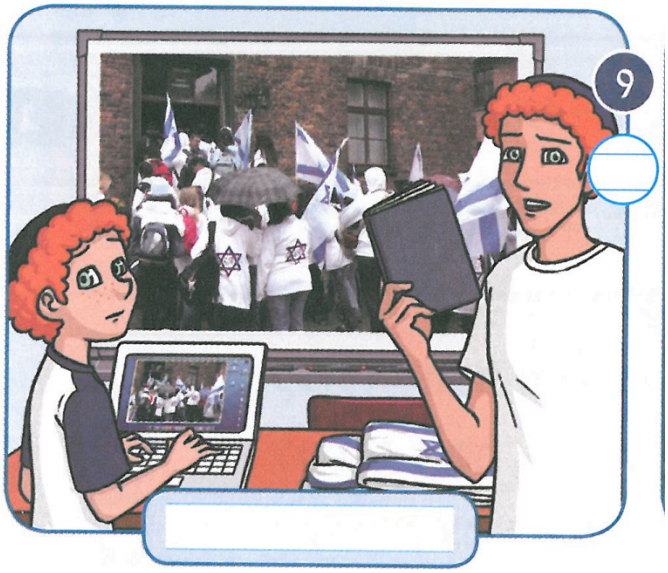

Figure 13: TaL AM March of the Living (TaL AM 2008e:30)

Zionism, and subsequently the flag of the State of Israel, and ending with the flag of Israel draped around the shoulders of Jewish youth on the March of the Living as one would wear a traditional *tallit*. Thus, the narrative of the timeline establishes that the protection of the people has been transferred from a prayer shawl (*tallit*) to a state flag. This conception the State of Israel as a source of communal protection orients the students in their study of the nation.

By the end of grade five, Jewish day school students have learned the idea of the nation through a historical representation of the Jewish people in relation to the land of Israel. This has been achieved by building - in a spiralling fashion - a complex network of symbols and ideas involving the land, the flag and the people, all linked through the common language of Hebrew. The discourse of Israel, this shared ethos between Diaspora and homeland, is formed and sustained through the religious symbols employed throughout the TaL AM curricula for the Jewish day school. By locating it in the pre-modern ethnosymbolism of exile and return, the state becomes the ultimate protector of the Jewish people.

Teaching Israel in Montreal Jewish Day Schools

While the conclusions of this dissertation rest upon my analysis of the curriculum as it appears in school materials, I attempted to corroborate my findings by observing Jewish Day schools and interviewing a number of Jewish Studies and Hebrew language instructors. I found that the majority of such instructors were Israeli expatriates,[113] and so the final section of this chapter presents the voices of some Israeli teachers currently teaching the TaL AM curriculum in Montreal Jewish day schools. Throughout the 2012-2013 school year, I observed five Jewish day

[113] In the Montreal Jewish day schools "...the majority of Hebrew teachers, and for sure many Judaic Studies teachers, are themselves Israelis" (Eveyln Ride, personal interview, January 24, 2013).

schools in their interaction and presentation of the State of Israel through art, performance, commemoration, and public acts of national allegiance. It is there that I conducted semi-structured interviews with Montreal Jewish educators. While too few to use to draw hard and fast conclusions, these interviews confirmed the central role of symbolic discourse in conveying the idea of the nation. A more extensive and rigorous interview project is clearly suggested by this dissertation. Thus, the interviews that follow do not represent a thorough ethnographic study but offer a glimpse into the affective learning process in strengthening Diaspora Jewish identity. The following interviews represent a particular viewpoint on the meaning and place of Israel in Jewish education, which may not be representative of all Jewish educators within the Montreal Jewish day school community. Each of the interviewees is fluent in Hebrew or is a native Hebrew speaker, but the interviews were conducted in English. These educators are not impartial toward the State of Israel, and their passion for the subject is evident. In order to grant interviewees anonymity, the following names are pseudonyms.

Israelis in the Classroom

The influence of Israeli teachers on Jewish education in Montreal is significant; most influential are the emigrants from Israel, who have become permanent residents or citizens of Canada. Zach Yurkovich is one such example. Born in a village on the outskirts of Jerusalem, Yurkovich immigrated to Montreal with his family in the mid-1990s. The year after his arrival, he started working as a Jewish Studies and Hebrew language teacher for grades three, four and five at a mainstream Jewish day school in the centre of Montreal. I met with him in his classroom throughout the spring of 2013. The Jewish day school where he worked proudly maintained a solid connection to the State of Israel. The mission statement of the school proclaims the centrality of the State of Israel to Jewish identity, and its commitment to the state was visibly present within the school environment. The time of one of our meetings coincided with the celebration of *Yom Ha'Atzmaut,* Israel Independence Day, and the classrooms and hallways were posted with hand-drawn Israeli flags. Students had been prepared to attend the celebratory assembly and had created crowns and hand-made flags. The school's connection to the State of Israel was obviously more than symbolic (Kopelowitz 2005).

Love of the State of Israel is instilled in part through the teacher's personal connection, and for Yurkovich, there is a noticeable satisfaction in conveying the central place of the land of Israel in Jewish identity. "Because I have that love of the land, the children feel it and absorb it" (Zach Yurkovich, personal interview, February 26, 2013). As he explains:

> This big pride of Jewish identity, you cannot separate it from *Eretz* Israel. That land is still there, and we always go back to it. Always... In any teaching *Eretz* Israel will be mentioned a little bit more, a little bit less. And that's how you build a strong identity and connection so that the kids want to see it in actuality, want to learn about it in actuality [...] Jewish people, Hebrew, *Eretz* Israel. You can't break the connection. So *Eretz* Israel will always come through the front door, back door, front window, back window. Always, always, always. You cannot teach Judaism, Hebrew, holidays, songs, without *Eretz* Israel. It is the center of the teaching - anyway, my teaching. (ZachYurkovich, personal interview, February 26, 2013)

As Yurkovich describes, his own intention as a teacher is to relate Jewish Studies to the State of Israel. In doing so, Israel the state is undifferentiated from Judaism, the Jewish people, Jewish history, or geography. Instead, his teaching about the State of Israel is subsumed in the traditional religious canon and festival calendar.

By teaching Jewish Studies combined with modern political events, Yurkovich simultaneously renews interest in Torah study as the birthplace of the nation's chronology, while presenting the chronicled biblical narrative as a single, unbroken line from the past to the present. Thus, the prophets and localities described in the Torah find new significance when situated alongside the political events of the State of Israel. While explaining how this takes shape in the classroom, Yurkovich shared an example of how teaching students the biblical names of places names seamlessly leads to a discussion of the establishment of the state and current political events:

> Again, everything is combined. You can't disconnect Israel. You have to see the places, so I take the globe, the map. I show them how there were no trees, how they had to sit and break rocks, by hand: and here the Arabs, every time the land produced something, the Arabs burned it. They're still burning! That's what the kids in grade five said:

> "*HaMoreh!*[114] They're still burning our forests!" *Our forests*. They know. We showed them the fire. We showed them what happened. A few years ago, they burned a huge stretch between Jerusalem all the way to the south. You see. Israel is the heart; each family paid to plant five to ten trees that year. Back then the economy was a little better. (Zach Yurkovich, personal interview, April 11, 2013)

The reliance on symbols to transfer the significance of the State of Israel to Jewish students residing in the Diaspora remains a powerful tool. The symbol of the tree in both Judaism and classical Zionism holds particular weight. Yurkovich's example of the student body reaction, in which they expressed ownership of the forests of Israel despite their physical location in Montreal, conveys how the concept of homeland and ownership is symbolically expressed through the tree.[115]

The theme of planting trees aligns precisely with Zionist social-national values of tilling the soil and making the desert bloom. Zionist writings often reiterate the Saying of the Fathers: "If the Messiah comes when you are planting a tree, first finish planting, and only then go out to receive him" (*Avot d'Ravi Natan* 31, as quoted in Gal 2007:224). This statement, drawn from the religious texts by Zionists, was used to foster a commitment to labour for the land. *Tu B'Shvat* equally came to represent civil achievements and was chosen as the date to celebrate the anniversary of the Israeli Knesset, a strictly state establishment. This link between religious festival days and civic allegiance are, at times, consciously created. As Azrieli writes,

> Festivals observed in day schools and afternoon schools, in places of worship and at home have consciously been used to create a bond, a sense of kinship. On some levels the link is simple and clear, as in *Tu B'Shvat*, the Jewish nature festival known as the New Year for Trees, an occasion which successive generations of children have sold "tags" for

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[114] Teacher

[115] In the context of Judaism, the symbol of the tree works on various levels. The Torah itself is termed the "tree of life". The planting of trees appears in the Mishnah as one (of four options) celebration of the new year. Within the festival calander of Judaism, planting trees is most readily apparent in the celebration of *Tu B'Shvat*, the celebration of the new year of the trees. The symbol is equally represented in the national myth of Israel in which, by the hands of the Jewish settlers, the desert bloomed. Indeed, as the founding Zionist movement understood that the Jewish people in exile had become disconnected from land and nature; the myths of working the land became a major theme in Zionism, and became a symbolic resource to draw on. The celebration of *Tu B'Shvat* dates back to the Second Temple period.

> the Jewish National Fund. Similarly, the ties flourish during the religious-based national festivals such as Jerusalem Day or Israel Independence Day. (Azrieli 2008:227)

These "tags", which are like button-pins, represent trees to be purchased and planted in Israel through the Jewish National Fund (JNF).[116] Each of the schools involved in this study held an annual fundraising event on *Tu B'Shvat* in which students (or families) purchased and donated trees ($18 per tree) to be planted in Israel. Yurkovich refers to this communal action in his commentary on how students reacted to the burning of forests in Israel. Here, a symbolic expression takes on material expectation of monetary donation and reiterates the link between Diaspora and homeland as one of economic aid. More importantly, the students' response to Yurkovich's story about the burning of trees reveals an emotional link between the student body and the national symbol. His exclamation, "Our forests" reveals an internalized connection to the land ownership by Diaspora students.

I asked Evelyn Ride, a Montreal Jewish educator, if Yurkovich's desire that his students conceive of and understand the land as their own, and if the annual purchasing of trees, indeed reflect this understanding. Born and raised in Montreal, Evelyn Ride has been working in Montreal Jewish education for the past ten years. Her expertise on Jewish education and curricula development makes her a crucial player in the Montreal Jewish day school community. Regarding Yurkovich's comment she replied:

> I think we still need to make the practice of "we give money to causes" into "we give money to people". So even if I give to a cause, if I'm giving money to plant a tree in Israel, who am I helping? Right, I'm helping "Israel". "*Israel".* You know...we're not there yet. It has to be made a lot more tangible...to belong means to help. It means to connect: it means to help right? A major part of being Jewish is making the world a better place. It has to be tangible. (Evelyn Ride, personal interview, January 24, 2013)

[116] The JNF initiative of planting trees relies on the biblical command found in Leviticus 19:23, which states "when you come into the land you shall plant all manner of trees." The intention behind this JNF initiative has come under question by Israelis and Palestinians alike, particularly the planting of non-native pine tree forests over destroyed Palestinian villages (see A.B Yehoshua. 1970. *Facing the Forest,* London: Esquire). Recently the JNF initiative to plant "Miles of Trees" has partnered with Israel's Ministry of Defense, to camouflage the "security fence" between Israel and the Gaza Strip (see http://manitoba.jnf.ca/index.php/events/previous-events/).

As Ride's comment suggests, the tangibility of the act may be lacking. The students themselves do not see the trees being planted. Instead, they bring in money to contribute to a cause, which develops the forests of Israel. Yet, the concept of ownership of the land of the State of Israel by the Jewish Diaspora and the teaching practices that create this emotional link, require attention.

Despite the use of a traditionally religious canon and classical Zionist narrative as foundational to the pedagogy of Israel education in Montreal, teachers like Yurkovich are aware of the need to address Israel as a political state and part of the collective of nation states. He explains:

> Kids today are very, very smart. You can't always say "what a wonderful thing". You have to be candid and honest and compare it to the country they live in, and worldwide... For me, through all the teaching, critical thinking is very important. You need to teach the students that, to be an individual to be responsible, to be *ani* [me], and this way, they don't have to follow. They have their own mind. (Zach Yurkovich, personal interview, April 11, 2013)

Yurkovich understands that Israel education must be practical and engaging; even so, this does not counter the idea of the nation upheld by classical Zionism. His approach to teaching the reality of Israel as a political nation is logical, as he places the nation of Israel in the context of a global governmental world; however, his intention to convey a love of the nation is never exhausted.

> There are many, many, many difficult things that are going on in the country. I would never bad-mouth *Eretz* Israel, or the people, or the country to anybody that I don't know. Especially if they are not from Israel, I mean a non-Jewish person. I will not argue about Israel. I will not discuss it in any manner; but, I don't approve of many things that are happening in Israel and we read the news. There are certain things that I have to share with the kids, because they have to be open-minded. (Zach Yurkovich, personal interview April 11, 2013)

For Yurkovich, teaching love for the land of Israel requires including the difficult political realities that surround the nation state.

Like Yurkovich, many teachers focus on building up the bond between students and Israel, presenting it as both a crucial and central aspect of Jewish identity. This teaching approach requires conviction by the teachers themselves. Israel must be a central referent of the teacher's own identity. As fellow teacher Ariel Rabinowitz explains, "What comes out from the heart goes to the heart. If you have a teacher who has the love of Israel, it goes straight to the kids" (Ariel Rabinowitz, personal interview, February 28, 2013). For many Hebrew and Jewish Studies teachers, Israel remains the central Jewish communal bond.

Ariel Rabinowitz is a Jewish Studies and Hebrew language teacher at a Jewish elementary school in the centre of Montreal. The school, which teaches to a mixed Sephardic and Ashkenazi demographic, is "orthodox and Zionist at the same time" (Ariel Rabinowitz, personal interview, February 28, 2013). At the time of one of our meetings, the school hallways were decorated for *Yom Hazikaron*, Israel's Memorial Day. While only the higher two grades would attend that day's assembly commemorating the fallen soldiers of Israel, the school's interior reflected a school-wide commitment to acknowledging Israel's Memorial Day. In the hallway outside of Rabinowitz's office were various children's illustrations depicting students drawn in military uniforms. On one large poster board the photos of students' faces were cut out and pasted onto uniformed soldiers' bodies. The poster rendered the children as military soldiers, dressed in fatigues and carrying weapons. Next to this was a painting of an EL AL airplane. Through the windows of the airplane, one could see the faces of school children, now traveling to Israel. As Rabinowitz gave me a tour of the school, I noted various other art displays that had been created for the event, including a handmade mountain representing Masada[117] with plastic toy soldiers glued to the top plateau.

As a young child, Rabinowitz moved from Morocco to Israel with her family. In the 1980s she immigrated to Montreal and for the past twenty years has been working as a Hebrew and Jewish Studies teacher in grades four, five and six. As Rabinowitz explains, the school's focus on

[117] An ancient fortress originally built by Herod the Great, Masada has come to symbolize Jewish resistance. In Zionism, Masada became the concrete symbol of a new mythology. It represented the Jewish "suicidal zealots" as the heroic archetype of total sacrifice and national mobilization necessary to the development of the Jewish State. (Shavit 2013:80). According to Ari Shavit, the symbol of Masada represents a paradox wherein "only the young Hebrews willing to die will be able to ensure for themselves a secure and sovereign life. Only their willingness to fight to the end will prevent their end" (Shavit 2013:88). In this way Masada represents the conscious transformation of a symbol from one of defeat to one of victory (Mock 2012).

current events in Israel, which both the English and French teachers teach, conveys to students the centrality of the State of Israel in their Jewish identity. Moreover, the symbolic links materialize in the Montreal classroom through technology and economic support. Rabinowitz said:

> Build them up as Jewish human beings, as good Canadians, and Israel is our country. We have Israel, Thank God; we have Israel no matter what happens. And they know all the good things that come from Israel, all the technology, and the medicine. They learn a lot about Israel. We explain everything that happens in Israel; the English teacher explains it and the French teacher explains it. We get stories from the Israeli perspective on what happened and present it to the students. We explain what we have to do to survive. We have to survive too, and there is a cost to survival [...] now, we have so much security in the school. Next year we will have bulletproof windows put in; it's technology from Israel. We have to." (Ariel Rabinowitz, personal interview, April 10, 2013)

In this way, students living in the Diaspora with bulletproof windows are exposed to similar security issues faced by schools in Israel. It is notable that since the 2004 firebombing of a Jewish school library, all Montreal Jewish day schools hung their flag of Israel inside, rather than outside, the school building. In this school, the Israeli flag is located inside the front lobby and hangs in the gymnasium, as to "not bring unwanted attention" from passers-by (Ariel Rabinowitz, personal interview, February 28, 2013). Teachers such as Rabinowitz and Yurkovich are far from indifferent towards the realities of Israel, and their placement in the schools allows for the possibility of presenting students with subjective relationships with individuals in Israel, in addition to a love of a country. Rabinowitz shared her view on both the schools and the students' relation to Israel, illustrating how an emotional link, rooted in relationships, creates a sense of national belonging:

> Our affiliation with Israel is very strong. In line with the TaL AM program, we have a lot of things that link us to Israel. Our kids want to know about Israel. If you go to any class, and you ask them "what is our country?" "What is our homeland?" and they will say "Israel, but we were born in Canada". So they have the feeling that they belong [...] and

> they sing and talk about Israel as though they live in Israel. The students in our school are very close to Israel. (Ariel Rabinowitz, personal interview, April 10, 2013)

The perspectives held by Rabinowitz and Yurkovich are not an anomaly. Aviva Applebaum was born in Hungary and moved to Israel as a child. She immigrated to Montreal with her husband and two children in the early 1980s, and started working as a Hebrew and Jewish Studies teacher. She is currently the Head of School at the central Montreal Jewish day school where Yurkovich teaches. Like Yurkovich, Applebaum shares an understanding of the need to instil the relevance and centrality of the State of Israel in the lives of Jews living in the Diaspora.

During the spring of 2013 Applebaum ushered me through her school's classrooms and hallways, which were decorated for the celebration of *Purim*. Outside the door of a grade two classroom, I stopped to look at a hand-drawn picture depicting Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus seated before a feast. The child artist carefully decorated the upper corners of the picture with flags of the State of Israel. Without waiting for me to pose the question, she offered:

> I'm trying to tell you that it's like a circle; you come back to the same cornerstone that is Israel, often through the holidays. There are holidays that are not directly related, but even then we are saying that they relate. For example, *Purim*; in the Book of Esther, Israel is not mentioned and God is not mentioned, but we're celebrating Israel. It doesn't matter [...] no matter what subject you take, you're brought back to Israel. Whatever you do, you come back to Israel. All the Jewish holidays, no matter which one you celebrate – there, at the center, is Israel. (Aviva Applebaum, personal interview, February 21, 2013)

Like Yurkovich and Rabinowitz, Applebaum identifies the State of Israel as a central axis of the school's curricular narrative. The relevance of the state is integrated into every celebration of the religious festival calendar. Applebaum's statement reflects the observation that Israel is a fundamental theme of Montreal Jewish day schools:

> Israeli songs are commonly heard filtering out of the classrooms into the corridors of the schools, and the walls are usually adorned with the Israeli flag and portraits of prominent Israelis. The day schools celebrate all the Jewish holidays that fall within the school year,

> as well as *Tu B'Shvat*, *Yom Hazikaron*, *Yom Ha'Aztmaut*, and *Yom Yerushalayim* – all holidays reflecting Israel and its centrality to Jewish existence. (Azrieli 2008:220)

Such integration does not rely solely on the synthesis of the nation's religious and national symbols. The engagement with the real and symbolic nation is framed and contained in the narrative of unconditional support. As Applebaum explains:

> The grade fives and sixes come to a memorial, *Yom HaShoah,* just before *Yom Ha'Atzmaut,* and that way they understand that we're celebrating something that came with a price. Not in detail, but they understand what the Israelis are going through. What are they commemorating? Every family was affected, and still is affected, by what is going on. So we don't criticize with commentary whether it is right or wrong, that is not our place. (Aviva Applebaum, personal interview, February 21, 2013)

Applebaum's comment reveals her school's mission to promote student commitment to, and support of, the State of Israel, not critique it.

The success of Jewish day school education depends in part on the continuity between home and school life.[118] As the following comments by Jewish educators reiterate, in order to teach the idea of the nation to the next generation, Montreal Jewish day schools must equally attempt to educate families. Yet, as third and fourth generation Canadians, Montreal Jewish parents may not uphold the same acute attachment to the idea of the nation that is being fostered in day schools. One principal of a Jewish elementary school shared with me the changing views on the State of Israel in the Montreal Jewish community.

> Now you have a generation that came into the world when Israel is a given, so it's a different approach that comes from home. So we have to educate much more in school than we used to do. For the older generation, because of the Holocaust and then the creation of the state, Israel became the jewel in the crown. It's not the same approach

[118] Such an argument reminds readers of the claims on educational reform first put forward by John Dewey. In his text *The School and Society: The Child and the Curriculum* (1902), Dewey explains that not only content but context are central to effective teaching. If a student is to fully integrate the curriculum, it must reiterate prior knowledge, values or behaviour. In other words, what is learned in the classroom must build upon what is taught in the home, or experienced in life outside the school.

> with parents now; they know, but they criticize the state much more now than they used to. So we have to re-educate, or put the children on the right path. (Aviva Applebaum, personal interview, February 21, 2013)

This principal has articulated a concern voiced by other heads of Jewish day schools: the need to educate the entire family, or in this case to "re-educate" the family, about the significance and role of Israel in the Diaspora Jewish community (Pomson and Schnoor 2008). This is often done through schools emphasizing the concept that Jewish education is a family education. At another Jewish elementary school, the Head of Jewish Studies explained to me that parents were very involved in school culture, and participated in the daily functioning of the school through lunch programs, *Kabbalat Shabbat* programs (preparation for Shabbat), school fund raising, and afterschool programing. Jewish education needs to be as much about teaching families as it is about teaching children:

> It's not just kids that go to this school; it's families that go to this school. Parents are entering into a journey with their children to celebrate Judaism, Hebrew, and Israel. Judaism is commitment – it's a central part of our life – it's who we are. (Susan Bosick, personal interview, Febrauary 25, 2013)

This statement is reiterated by the school policy of partnering with parents to ensure that each child succeeds, and reinforces to students and parents alike that the school is their second home. Many of the Jewish day schools have a committee for parent education. An example of one Montreal school parents' committee's mission is "identify and implement dynamic, relevant and accessible educational initiatives that promote adult education and link what is learned (at school) to the home" (Susan Bosick, personal interview, February 25, 2013). For this reason, a curriculum like TaL AM - which teaches that the State of Israel is central to Diaspora Jewish identity - has the possibility to affect more than the students enrolled in Jewish day schools.

Chapter Conclusions

The description in TaL AM's mission statement of the central place of the State of Israel in Diaspora Jewish identity relies on the concept of loss and recovery of the homeland as an extension of a biblical narrative, even if it often sees that narrative in historical rather than

religious terms. It utilizes the Judaic structure of exile and return to support national consciousness. The idea of the nation, espoused by classical Zionism, presents the State of Israel in a meta-narrative of Jewish history based in exile and redemption, which finds its completion in the establishment of the state. This knowledge production of the nation is presented in a classical Zionist way. The successes of TaL AM are due in part to its reliance on foundational myths that structure nations and national institutions, and provide the legitimation to the nation (Althusser 1984).

The TaL AM mission statement reveals that a primary concern for students is "emphasizing the affective exploration of, and identification with, their Jewishness" (Shimon 2000b). This explicit connection between affect and identification is helpful in developing a deeper understanding of how a nation's symbols function. In other words, the successes of the TaL AM curriculum is due not only to its presentation of the State of Israel in a meta-narrative of Jewish history of exile and redemption, which finds its completion in the establishment of the state, but in its recognition of the connection between emotion and language.

Emotions are the basic foundation of social memory and meaning; emotions, which are interwoven with comprehension, can equally aid or disable the learning process (Freedman Dhority and Jensen 1998). The conscious focus on emotion and language throughout the TaL AM curriculum cements the link between the individual and the nation. The idea of the nation comes to represent the symbolic continuity of the Jewish people and is implicitly linked to the language of the nation. Moreover, when the teaching of Jewish Studies and Hebrew language is mostly taught by a single Israeli teacher, it reinforces the link between religious and national modes of identification. Israel education, which teaches the Hebrew language by drawing on the symbolic discourse of Judaism and classical Zionism, instils correct attitudes in the individual student about the nation.

Given the high level of Hebrew language acquisition by Montreal Jewish day school students and the fact that TaL AM was born of the Montreal JEC, one cannot overstate the influence of this central agency in advancing a cogent idea of the nation through curriculum development. In describing the bureaucratic context of Montreal Jewish education, Daniel Margolis and Shlomo

Shimon describe the pedagogy of teaching Israel as a focal element of Diaposra Jewish identity as a conscious and concerted effort on the part of the JEC. They write,

> For educators, Israel represents a potential integrative force and the locus and occasion for integrating Jewish and/or educational experiences: school, youth group, camp, family experience, trips, tefilla (prayer), Shabbat, ethnicity, etc. Our need to consciously integrate these experiences and the integrative power that Israel represents must be treated as an ideal and a value, one of many core values that can provide integrative meaning for the people with whom we work. (Margolis and Shimon 1997:8)

More specifically, the purposeful use of religious language to describe the State of Israel within the Montreal Jewish day school curriculum is developed through the central education hub, the JEC:

> We maintain that any approach must also be rooted in Judaic texts or sources. For example, when talking about what we want our clients to experience of Israel, it should relate to the history and historical texts of our people…again, we ought to emend several of the points by adding religious language that would further the understanding of Israel within the core religious values of *ahavat tzion* and *shivat tzion* (love of and return to Zion) and *reshit tzmihat geulateynu* (the dawn of our redemption) as reflected in our texts and liturgy. (Margolis and Shimon 1997:6-7)

The fact that TaL AM was created in Montreal is significant, as it reflects the communal stance on Israel upheld by the local Jewish communal structures. I suggest that TaL AM transmits both language, social memory, and the shared idea of the nation to Jewish day school students, while fostering an integrated Jewish identity. Moreover, the teaching of the TaL AM program relies heavily on Israeli ex-patriots. These teachers bring with them their own experience of Israel, one which is further developed through their placement in the diaspora context. The fact that this curriculum is currently taught in all mainstream Jewish day schools in Montreal suggests a common stance on the centrality of Israel in Montreal Jewish identity—at least on the institutional level.

CHAPTER 6: Israel Experience and Israel Advocacy in Montreal Jewish High Schools

"We live here as *if* we lived there – but choose not to migrate" (Neusner 1974:220).

Tourists / Yehuda Amichai

Visits of condolence is all we get from them
They squat at the Holocaust Memorial,
They put on grave faces at the Wailing Wall
And they laugh behind heavy curtains
In their hotels.
They have their pictures taken
Together with our famous dead
At Rachel's Tomb and Herzl's Tomb
And on Ammunition Hill.
They weep over our sweet boys
And lust after our tough girls
And hang up their underwear
To dry quickly
In cool, blue bathrooms.

Once I sat on the steps by a gate at David's Tower,
I placed my two heavy baskets at my side. A group of tourists
Was standing around their guide and I became their target marker. "You see
That man with the baskets? Just right of his head there's an arch
From the Roman period. Just right of his head." "But he's moving, he's moving!"
I said to myself: redemption will come only if their guide tells them,
"You see that arch from the Roman period? It's not important: but next to it,
left and down a bit, there's a man who's bought fruit and vegetables for his family."

Summary

As shown in the previous chapter, due to local social factors, Montreal's mainstream Jewish day schools maintain a common stance on the centrality of Israel in Jewish diaspora identity. This chapter will address the challenges of upholding this stance in the high school years. Particular focus will be placed on practices linking students to Israel through contact with teachers from Israel, exchanges and trips to Israel, and school "twinning". In order to address these issues in their complexity, this chapter includes an analysis of an Israel advocacy curriculum developed for Montreal Jewish high schools. I argue that this curriculum relies on the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern ethnie. Nevertheless, the idea of the nation differs from other pedagogical practices currently used within the Montreal Jewish day school community and exemplifies the challenges of creating emotional links to Israel given the reality of Israeli politics and the ambivalence towards political decisions made by any particular Israeli government. As in previous chapters, the concepts of nation, diaspora nationalism, and diaspora national identity are framed by Anthony Smith's theory of ethnosymbolism. While the focus again is on the curriculum, this chapter includes interviews with Montreal Jewish educators, teachers, curriculum developers and community board members. Significantly, as addressed in the above poem by Yehuda Amichai, this chapter highlights how fostering a normative idea of Israel in Jewish day schools may eclipse Israelis' experience of Israel.

Introduction: Securing a Jewish Identity in the High School Years

In assessing the impact of Jewish education on Jewish identity, commentators often focus on the number of years of Jewish education, which hold a lasting impact on Jewish identity in the student (Himmelfarb 1974; Fishman and Goldstein 1993). According to Himmelfarb (1975), "at least 3000 hours of religious instruction are needed before Jewish schooling has any lasting impact" (1975:3). Attendance in Jewish high school is noted by Schiff and Schneider (1994) as necessary in securing a firm Jewish identity, which includes high levels of religious observance, a sturdy connection to the State of Israel, community involvement and low rates of

intermarriage.[119] As Lehmann writes: "A new chapter in the history of Jewish day school education in America is now being written. The twenty-first century will be one in which Jewish day high schools will become a major force in building a vibrant, literate, and committed Jewish community" (Lehmann1998:614). In another study on the correlation between Jewish high school and Jewish identity Shapiro and Dashefsky (1974) write, "In sum, our data indicate that Jewish education is one childhood and adolescent experience that is a significant factor in Jewish identification independent of other socialization variables" (Shapiro and Dashefsky 1974:97). As Alex Pomson writes, since the 1990s Jewish day schools have increasingly retained students through the elementary level and into the high school years (2002:390). While attendance in Jewish high school has become a communal goal, the impact on Jewish identity has proven contradictory results.

In 1981 John Sigal, David August and Joseph Beltempo published a study of 108 Montreal Jewish high school students who had graduated from the Jewish People's and Peretz Schools (JPPS), 65 of whom were attending a Jewish high school (Bialik) and 45 of whom were enrolled in public high schools. Their conclusions revealed that a) "only full-time attendance at a Jewish school through to high school has a measurable effect on the Jewish identification of the graduates; for others the impact of home predominates" (Sigal, August, and Beltempo, 1981:234); and b) "the philosophical or religious orientation of the secondary-level school can determine the specific impact it will have on the attitudes of the students" (Sigal, August, and Beltempo 1981:234). In other words, teachers' attitudes, or *how* knowledge is presented, curriculum content, and school atmosphere have a quantifiably different impact on students' Jewish identity, their religious commitment, and their national sentiments.

In a study on the implications of Jewish high school experience on the Jewish identity of Montrealers, Charles Shahar (1998) compared Jewish graduates from Jewish high schools with Jewish graduates from public high schools to measure the impact of Jewish high school on Jewish behaviours and identity. The study was conducted on Jewish graduates who had graduated in 1981, 1984, and 1987. The study reveals various differences between the two

[119] According to the 2011 National Household survey the Montreal Jewish population continues to hold the lowest rate of Jewish intermarriage across Canada. The rate of intermarriage within the Montreal Jewish community is 16%, while in Toronto it is 18%, in Winnipeg it is 25%, Ottawa 40%, and Vancouver it is 43% (Shahar 2014:27).

groups; the impact of graduates' connection to the State of Israel, the impact of a Jewish high school was significant. According to this survey, 61 percent of graduates of Jewish high schools had been to Israel while enrolled in school, compared with 25 percent of Jewish graduates from public high schools (Shahar 1998:61). Sixty-one percent of graduates of Jewish high schools reported "feeling close" to Israel, in comparison to 29 percent of Jewish graduates from public high schools (Shahar 1998:63). As to identifying as Zionists, 50 percent of graduates of Jewish high schools stated they were "very much" Zionists, in comparison to 21 percent of Jewish graduates from public high schools. Moreover, "graduates from Jewish high schools were significantly more likely to have ever (now or in the past) considered making *aliya* than those who attended non-Jewish high schools" (Sharar 1998:64-65). More broadly, according to the 2010 Montreal Jewish community study by Federation CJA, when asked the question "If you look back at your life, what experience would you say had the most impact on you Jewishly?" (Shahar 2010:112), visiting Israel ranked the highest at 16.4 percent, seconded by a Jewish education at 14.7 percent, followed by history of the Holocaust or child of a Holocaust survivor at 8.2 percent, and family relations at 8.1 percent (Shahar 2010:122). Notably, visiting Israel was highlighted more often by Jews 18-25 years old than any other age category (Shahar 2014:9). The fact that visiting Israel, and receiving a Jewish high school education – over and above family relations, is attributed as having the most impact on people identifying "Jewishly" is intriguing but beyond the scope of this study.

Currently in Montreal, approximately 42 percent of the high school population attends Jewish high schools. This is significant when compared to other Canadian cities. Winnipeg has 20 percent enrolled in Jewish high schools, and Toronto has 22 percent (Shahar and Karpman 2006: 29). While the Toronto Jewish community has a larger Jewish population and more students attending all day Jewish day schools than Montreal, the proportion of students enrolled in Jewish high schools in Montreal far surpasses other Canadian cities.

Table 5: Percentage of Jewish Students Enrolled in Jewish High Schools in Canada 2001 (Shahar 2006)

City	2001 Census Base Population	Enrolled in Jewish Day Schools	Percentage of Base Enrolled	Total in Non-Jewish Schools
Montreal	6,235	2,633	42.2	3,602
Toronto	10,560	2,305	21.8	8,255
Ottawa	1,080	68	6.3	1,012
Winnipeg	1,175	243	20.7	932
Calgary	675	75	11.1	600
Vancouver	1,545	68	4.4	1,477
Total	21,270	5,392	25.4	15,878

The Social Construction of Jewish Identity through Identification with Israel

Students enrolled in Montreal Jewish high schools follow a curriculum set by the Quebec Ministry of Education, which includes French, English, Math, Science, History and Geography, and Ethics and Religious Culture. Students also take courses in Jewish Studies, which may have up to five distinct areas: Hebrew language and literature, Torah, Prophets, Talmud, and Jewish history. Since the same teacher often teaches these subjects, Montreal's students commonly refer to all five separate subjects as "Hebrew" (Burt Katz, personal interview, June 10, 2013). In his critical response to this conflation of Jewish culture, Jewish history, Judaism, and Hebrew, Alan Hoffman, then Assistant Director of the Melton Center for Jewish Education in the Diaspora, noted the problem this lack of distinction poses.

> The students refer to all of the above as "Hebrew" all the time. In our opinion this is a serious mistake... the syllogism in the mind of the student works in the following way: "All these subjects are Hebrew/Religion. I am not personally religious (=observant).

> Therefore, all of these subjects have no meaning to me". The message being given should be exactly the opposite. (Hoffman and Gribetz 1985:3)

As Hoffman concludes, this lack of differentiation may deny students a meaningful connection with the cultural, historical, and literary richness of the Jewish people. Even so, it may equally reveal the "glue" holding the idea of the nation in place. The interconnection between Israel and other modes of Jewish identity is an outcome of a centralized system of Jewish education. This link is consciously developed through a concerted effort by the central organizational structures of the Montreal Jewish community.

The Bronfman Jewish Education Council (BJEC) is the central agency for Montreal Jewish education, and it is engaged in all pedagogic activities concerning the teaching of Israel. The role played by BJEC is vital in promoting a common stance on Israel and securing the place of Israel in mainstream Jewish education. BJEC is the hub that connects the various Israel educational programs, including the Bronfman Israel Experience Centre (BIEC) and the March of the Living program, the Association of Jewish Day Schools (ADJS), and other Canadian Jewish education organizations such as the Jewish Cultural Association. The institutional structure of BJEC, and its collaboration with Federation CJA's Israel Affairs Department, reflects how integral diaspora national identity is to Jewish education (Margolis and Shimon 1997). In their assessment of the success of the Montreal Jewish community's Israel education programs, Margolis and Shimon point to the crucial role played by the BJEC. They write: "Bureaus can and should serve as the brokers of the Israel connection to their local communities and institutions - an interstitial, catalytic, political, and curricular role that they perform extremely well" (Margolis and Shimon 1997:10). The centrality of the BJEC as an institutional component of Montreal Jewish education is unparalleled in transmitting the idea of the nation within Montreal Jewish day schools.

As a "broker of the Israel connection", the BJEC has adapted its pedagogical programs significantly in recent decades. In the early twenty-first century, the reliance on text-based curricula to elicit will and emotion in students and stimulate particular behaviours in students has expanded. Consider what Walter Ackerman wrote in 1966:

> Jewish schools, the medium that more than any other exposes Jewish children to Zionism and Israel, do not generally elicit behaviours nurtured by youth movements. Learning is rarely experiential and almost always mediated by textbooks. (Ackerman 1966:174-175)

In the twenty-first century this is no longer the case. While textbooks remain an important educational tool, they are not the sole mediating factor. As Sigal, August, and Beltempo have shown, the influence of the teacher's perspective and the atmosphere of the school have a definitive effect on how students learn and unconsciously set strict parameters for student discussion (Sigal, August, and Beltempo 1981). Moreover, the teacher resources included in the Israel Advocacy curriculum inform teachers on the subject. For example, teachers are explicitly directed to identify plausible or implausible solutions offered by the student body (Lazarus 2003). In this way the transmission of the idea of the nation relies not only on curricula but also on teachers to guide and develop certain attitudes about the nation in students.

Hebrew Language and Jewish Studies

As Hebrew language and Jewish Studies are often taught by the same teacher in Montreal Jewish day schools (Eveyln Ride, personal interview, January 24, 2013), qualified teachers who are competent in both Jewish Studies and fluent in Hebrew are constantly in demand (Goodman, Bloomberg, Schaap and David, 2009; Kelner, Rabkin, Saxe and Sheingold, 2005). In response to this need for qualified Jewish teachers, two teacher-training initiatives for Jewish day school teachers have been established in Canada, one at York University and the other at McGill University. In Morton Weinfeld's report on Montreal Jewish day schools, he states that the Jewish Teacher Training Program at McGill fails to produce teachers who are adequately proficient in Hebrew language. This criticism reflects a general shortage of teachers trained in Jewish Studies and fluent in Hebrew within Diaspora Jewish education (Wienfeld 1985). In response to this shortage, Julien Bauer writes that Quebec Jewry requires "educational and professional help from the U.S. and Israel" (Bauer 1984:407). Such qualified help has generally come in the form of Israeli teachers involved in Jewish education.

Canada has a sizable ex-patriot Israeli community. Israeli ex-patriots maintain a vibrant sub-culture centered on cultural and national events and are largely responsible for the organization

of civic commemorations such as *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* and *Yom HaZikaron* (Goldberg 2007). Goldberg writes: "The presence of this Israeli sub-culture, while not necessarily unique to Canada, helps to explain Canadian Jewry's continuing strong identification with the State of Israel" (2007:221). In the context of Jewish education, Israeli teachers can generally fall into two distinct categories: *shlichim*, i.e. emissary teachers from Israel who teach abroad for a set time frame and immigrants to Canada who have permanently moved out of Israel.

Due to the fact that the majority of Hebrew and Judaic Studies teachers in non-Orthodox Jewish day schools are Israeli, the meaning of Israel is expressed in a particular way. The feelings about leaving Israel for the Diaspora inevitably affect how emigrants from Israel teach about their homeland. One educator wonders if they can be at all critical of Israel:

> The majority of Hebrew teachers, and for sure many Judaic Studies teachers, are themselves Israelis. So they're Israelis who left Israel, and now they're living in the Diaspora, and it's always been very, very hard for them to look at Israel in any kind of negative light... It's very difficult for teachers, and the school in general, to present Israel's complexity, and it tends not to be done. (Evelyn Ride, personal interview, June 13, 2013)

In mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools Hebrew language training and the education of children into Judaism are part of the socialization process that leads them to identify with the State of Israel. This results in the transmission of a common idea of the nation despite the schools' varying levels of religious observance. In terms of education, the idea of the nation holds a normative function. That is, the symbolic discourse is used to both describe the idea of Israel as well as prescribe how the idea of Israel may be conceived of and related to.

More than simply learning words and acquiring language skills, Hebrew language instruction in Jewish day schools draws directly on the representative discourse of the pre-modern *ethnie* to link students to a national homeland. Learning Hebrew as a second or third language may not adequately prepare teachers to present Hebrew as a symbolical resource. The difficulty rests in the powerful role of language acquisition in ethnic identity formation. As Anzaldua writes,

"ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity – I am my language" (Anzaldua 1987:59). In the case of Hebrew, Avni writes,

> Hebrew functions as a "semiotic system," in which its use may be conceived as a sensibility engaged at the symbolic level of meaning and as a preformative, and not just as a means of communication and transmitting culture. (Avni 2012:332)

In other words, when Israeli teachers teach the Hebrew language, they engage students in more than simply language acquisition.

Smith would argue that Israeli teachers provide students with the opportunity to engage imaginatively with the "homeland" while remaining rooted in the diaspora. Returning to Smith's idea that territorialism remains an essential element of national identity,[120] the presence of Israelis in the school setting functions as a mechanism to attach students to the territory of the state of Israel and activate a national sentiment in students living in the diaspora. In part, this is due to the increasingly communal forms of identity expression among ex-patriot Israelis living in Canada and the United States (Gal 2010:72).

In their discussion of American Jewry, Cohen and Eisen (2000) reveal a shift toward individualization and an increasing focus on personal and private forms of Jewish identity expression. While this is true, Israelis living in North America are increasingly moving toward more collective expressions of Jewish identity. As Allon Gal writes,

> In past years, Israelis abroad were somewhat ashamed of their 'defection' and acted as if they were staying in the Diaspora (*golah)* only temporarily. Today, however more and more Israeli are collectively organized, with reassuring media of their own. Furthermore, an increasing number of Israeli abroad belong to social networks, maintain active connections with their Motherland and often visit Israel. In an age of globalization, one can see more and more Israeli businessmen commuting between countries. At times of dire need a significant number of Israelis return from abroad to fight in defense of the

[120] As discussed in Chapter two, Smith identifies four elements of nationalism, which include: chosenness, territory, ethnohistory, and martyrdom (Smith 2008;2010).

> Homeland. All in all, the impact of this sub-community is to provide a tangible U.S.A/Israel cultural interface for the greater Jewish community and to intensify the Diaspora's commitment to the welfare of Israel. (Gal 2010:72)

The sub-community of ex-patriot Israelis living in North America equally functions as an educational resource for American and Canadian Jews who are seeking to access to the homeland from the within the diaspora classroom. In effect, the collectivist Israeli sub-community brings the homeland symbolically to the diaspora. It does so by staging national Israeli events – such as *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* and *Yom HaZikaron*, providing Israeli cultural materials – like folk dancing and cultural foods, and establishing social media networks that literally bring the "homeland" to the diaspora. Clearly, Israeli ex-patriot sub-communities can and do function as human bridges connecting Jews located in the diaspora to Israel.

School Twinning

The connection to homeland is not only developed through employing ex-patriot Israelis, curricular activities, or monetary giving, but in relationship building between students in Israel and students in Montreal. The connection to Israel is intimately sustained through the development of relationships between Montreal schools and schools in Beersheba, Israel, its twin city. The program of school twinning, wherein a school in the Diaspora is connected with a school in Israel, is a relatively new initiative, which the Montreal Jewish day school community has adopted. Since 1988 Montreal classrooms are being paired with classrooms located in Beersheba, Israel in a program originally called Partnership 2000 Beersheba Bnei Shimon and now known as Partnership2Gether. This program fosters direct encounters between Israelis and Jews living throughout the Diasporas. This program holds the following vision:

> A global and united Jewish People – a rich tapestry of strong vital, flourishing, and interconnected Jewish individuals, families, and communities – which enriches Jewish continuity and identity, with Israel at its heart. (Jewish Agency for Israel 2000b)

Through this program Montreal students participate in class trips to visit their twin schools, and teachers keep the students connected through online platforms such as Skype. The

Partnership2Gether conference call model offers teachers suggested approaches and exercises to opening the dialogue between the twinned classes. Included into the classroom digital conversation is the closing exercises in which students are encouraged to ask questions about their own interests, to which students from their twin school respond (Jewish Agency for Israel 2000b). An individual may find a new friend in the twin class as preferences and interests are shared. As Ariel Rabinowitz notes, "... kids understand that they have friends in Israel, friends in Beersheba" (Ariel Rabinowitz, personal interview, April 10, 2013). As the logistical challenges of school twinning are significant, the program reflects the commitment of the Montreal Jewish day schools to the State of Israel. Initially, seventeen Jewish educators from Montreal visited Beersheba to arrange common activities that their respective students could share (Margolis and Shimon 1997).

School twinning and pedagogical technology allows students in Montreal to experience Israel with their own eyes, without actually going there. These pedagogic practices of school twinning and live contact blur the political and geographical borders between students living in Montreal and the residents of their counterparts in Beersheba. This blurring is an intentional program to have students identify with the biblical land of Israel with the contemporary borders of the State of Israel. As Rabinowitz posits, "Even if they don't understand, we need to make them understand. It's not an invented story, our country. This land was promised to Abraham. 'All this will be yours'. The map explains this well" (Ariel Rabinowitz, personal interview, April 10, 2013). Rabinowitz's articulation of the ancient claim to the territory of Israel reveals how a symbol accumulates power through its longevity. Its mythical nature is more powerful and influential than its current geo-political reality. In other words, the idea of the nation holds that Israel is the redemption and that the historical continuity of the Jewish people is embodied in the creation of the state.

In order for the idea of the nation to become communal, the map of the State of Israel must be stabilized. Smith (2009) explains that this stabilization is required before a nation can become conscious of itself as a national entity. As Grosby explains, "When territorial designations become stable, having been firmly embedded in the collective self-consciousness of a society through religious, historiographical, and legal traditions, then there may exist a nation" (Grosby

2007:110). This is indeed the criterion that Smith uses to identify the difference between a nation and an ethnic group (Smith 2004).

According to Smith, in order for an ethnic group to emerge as a nation, it needs to undergo certain critical social processes: 1) self definition; 2) the cultivation of a shared symbolic system; 3) territorialisation; 4) a distinct public culture, symbolic codes and common education; and 5) common laws and customs (Smith 2010:5). Diaspora communities must equally take a number of steps to create a disaporic nation. In diasporic nationalism territorialization, the attachment to land, is replaced by the preservation of an age-old claim to an ancestral homeland. Consequently, in diasporic nationalism the stabilization of territorial borders - created symbolically through the production and dissemination of the map of the State of Israel – is an essential mechanism to ensure a national sentiment. As Smith writes, "In the case of the classic diaspora (Jews, Armenians, Greeks), there is no need to invent the cultural and social resources" (2010:9) – simply to draw on the resources which are already available. .

Besides defining the territorial boundaries of the homeland, nation-building is based on building relationships. Susan Bosick, a Jewish Studies and a Hebrew teacher in a Montreal Jewish day school situated in an affluent neighborhood of Montreal, explains how relationship building is a core avenue for teaching national belonging. The school's mission envisions Israel as a central element of Jewish identity. As Bosick shared,

> From grade two to grade six, they have conferences with Israel, with a school class in Israel, in Beersheba. We went to visit them; they came to visit us. We've visited each other five or six times. It is a relationship. Over the holidays, they send letters, projects. They just have done winter in Israel and in Canada, so it's a common project on how we have the winter in Israel and Canada connected through *Tu'Bishvat* [New Year of the Trees]... it's a real connection to the children, because they don't necessarily have relatives in Israel, so they have a face-to-face connection. Otherwise, they would not know another person in Israel if they don't have family. (Susan Bosick, personal interview, February 25, 2013)

As in elementary schools, high schools in Montreal are twinned with schools in Beersheba, and love of Israel is taught through ongoing correspondence with these Israeli twin schools. Burt Katz is a Jewish Studies at a Jewish high school located in a predominantly Jewish suburb of Montreal. At the time of our interviews, Katz had been teaching Jewish Studies for eight years. The high school he teaches at caters to a liberal, religiously non-observant, Jewish population. For example, he told me that, of 500 students, only 25 attend morning prayers (Burt Katz, personal interview, June 10, 2013). An Israel flag hangs from a pole located inside the school front entrance. The school created and teaches an intensive program of Jewish Studies, Hebrew language, and Jewish history. It participates in the school-twinning program with Israel, and offers various annual trips to Israel.

> We have a twin school that we correspond with regularly. We take three days of the grade ten trips [to Israel] and spend it in Beersheba. We have a great relationship with them. They [Israeli students] come here [to Montreal] on *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* and *Yom HaZikaron* to help our students learn about celebrating Israel. So we go there, and they come here... *Yom HaZikaron* and *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* are back to back [day after day], and for this reason it's a very solemn assembly that we have here. There are Israelis that we have here to talk about fallen soldiers. It's a very solemn day, and our students are prepped for it. The following day, on *Yom Ha'Atzmaut*, that's obviously more upbeat, and we bus them over to the community rally. (Burt Katz, personal interview, June 10, 2013)[121]

Thus the celebration of Israel's national holidays in the Montreal Jewish day schools provides an opportunity for hosting Israeli students from their twin classroom in Beersheba. The school's mission of commitment to the State of Israel is reflected in this practice of mutuality and relationship building.

[121] The Montreal Israel Day Rally, which celebrates Israel's Independence Day (*Yom Ha'Atzmaut),* draws an estimated 12,000 participants. For more information see (http://www.israelrallymontreal.com/).

"Heavy on Israel"

This dedication to developing student attachment to a national homeland is evidenced in both Jewish elementary and high schools. Jewish high school educator Burt Katz states this clearly: "Montreal does a good job. We're heavy on Israel and heavy on Holocaust education. Generally, our teachers like to teach about Israel, and students are prepped to be able to advocate on behalf of Israel" (Burt Katz, personal interview June 10, 2013). Katz's statement that Montreal is "heavy" on Israel indicates that Jewish educators draw on all available pedagogical tools including school twinning, course curriculum, Israeli teachers, and Israel experience to impress upon students the central and integral place the State of Israel holds in Jewish identity. According to Katz, instilling a love of Israel remains a primary goal of the school's mission:

> We teach a commitment to Jewish values: to God, Torah, and Israel. We are committed to making sure Israel can survive. We know there's always a safe place for us to go, where all Jews are accepted. (Burt Katz, personal interview, June 10, 2013)

The idea of Israel as articulated by Katz reflects staunch support of Israel as a refuge, but not relocation to Israel. This is what Ben-Moshe calls the "just in case" syndrome.

> What I dub the "just in case syndrome" is for many Diaspora Jews the fundamental way in which Israel features in their identity; because of, and in response to, anti-Semitism – including the most personally successful Diaspora Jews in the most successful Diasporas, such as America. The "just in case" syndrome runs deep in the Jewish psyche, including those not known for their affinity to Israel. (Ben-Moshe 2007:16)

For many Jews, Israel acts as a "security check", a sanctuary for Jewish existence. This sanctuary goes deeper than an expression of political allegiance. For this reason relationship building between students located in the Jewish diaspora and Israelis is a central focus of Montreal Jewish educators.

Israel Experience

Another instrument for reinforcing the role of Israel as central to Jewish identity in Montreal consist of high school and young adult trips to Israel, such as Taglit-Birthright and the March of the Living (MOL), which have had a significant impact on participants (Shapiro 2006; Saxe et al. 2004). Annual trips to Israel are primarily organized through the Bronfman Israel Experience Center (BIEC), the Israel Experience wing of the BJEC offered to Montreal Jewish high school students. These trips to Israel allow students to experience Israel first hand.

Jewish Montrealer Charles Bronfman, co-chairman of the Seagram Corporation and one of the wealthiest Canadians in business, is the cofounder of Taglit-Birthright, notably one of the more successful programs to bond diaspora Jewish youth to the State of Israel. Birthright is a program that offers young adults a free ten-day trip to Israel. As Goldman writes,

> [....] perhaps only someone with the experience of growing up as a Jew in Canada, and even more so, as a member of an "identifiable minority" in the province of Quebec, could appreciate the importance of young people having the opportunity to broaden their identity as Jews by experiencing Israel, and to express this identity in three inter-related ways: as proud and confident citizens of their home country; as proud and confident Jews, and as members of a Diaspora Jewish community that is deeply committed to the welfare of the State of Israel. (Goldberg 2007:217)

Taglit-Birthright, launched in 1999 by Montreal's Charles Bronfman and Michael Stienhardt[122] of New York, sends approximately 40,000 participant Jews (aged 18-26) on a free ten-day trip across Israel per year. It is considered by many Jewish scholars to be the most effective program in connecting diasporic Jews with Israel (Shapiro 2006; Bard & Dawson 2013). The trip is fully funded by private donors, Jewish Federations, and the government of Israel. The trip guides espouse three "master narratives", which include the idea of Jewish continuity in the land – called the "Land of Israel" narrative; the post-Holocaust/Zionist narrative termed "ashes to redemption"; and the "besieged Israel" narrative, which outlines historical wars Israel has fought

[122] Micheal Stienhardt, founder of the Stienhardt Partners, is a wealthy hedge-fund manager and the author of the book *No Bull: My Life In and Out of Markets* (2004).

and ongoing threats to the state (Sasson, Shain, Hecht, Wright & Saxe 2014:439). According the Sasson *et al.* participants of Birthright were three times as likely to express feeling connected to Israel twice as likely to pursue news about Israel than peers who had not participated on the trip (Sasson, Shain, Hecht, Wright & Saxe 2014:449).

The fact that participants of the Birthright/Taglit program become vocal advocates of the State of Israel on returning to their local country is well documented (Shapiro 2006; Chazan & Cohen 2000). All leaders are instructed to carefully uphold the single major "narrative" that by and large shapes this trip. Drawing directly from the program leaders guidebook, Saxe and Cohen explain,

> Birthright Israel young adults are brought to sites that have stories, narratives, and meanings that are framed by someone: a tradition, a guidebook, or a tour leader. The book, tradition or person gives 'meaning' and makes sense out of stones, buildings, and earth. The sites and sights can and do have multiple meanings and interpretations, but they are brought to the site by educator-guides who carefully weave the narratives. Moreover, major 'narratives' of the Birthright Israel trip are stated as required standards. For example
> -Israel is a contemporary modern society;
> -Israel is connected to main themes in Jewish history;
> -Key sites in Israel explain the origins of Zionism, the struggle for statehood, and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict;
> -There are core Jewish values reflected within the context of places visited.
> -There is a connection between Israel, the Holocaust, contemporary Jewish life, and your personal identity;
> -Visiting and learning about these sites should evoke deep positive individual emotion, and pride in each Birthright Israel participant for being Jewish.
> (Saxe & Cohen 2008:39; quoted in Gal 2010:75)

In discussions of the Birthright–Taglit program, controversy has swirled around the promotion of a single major narrative. Here Saxe and Cohen articulate their particular concern about the framing of historical narratives to elicit a singular meaning of history in lieu of more nuanced

and multiple understandings of national, religious, and historical sites. Other scholars suggest the trip participants experience Israel in a "bubble", criticize it for giving a distorted impression of the State of Israel, and express that the trip is biased toward the agenda of political right (Beinart 2012; Feldman 2011; Landau 2012). David Landau, previously the editor of *Haartez*, writes that the program could "shore up an aggressive pro-Israel loyalism that denies the only feasible future for a Jewish, democratic Israel" (Landau 2012). Taglit-Birthright participants are young adults, many of whom are already university students. While imagining the political State of Israel as homeland is emphasized in curricula throughout elementary and high school, the motivation behind instituting Israel-experience trips like Taglit-Birthright and the March of the Living (MOL) is to establish the emotional bond through the power of suffering and elation – the narrative of "ashes to redemption" - as students experience Auschwitz and Israel as a single continuum. The hope is that students are no longer imagining community, but are feeling themselves as part of a living history. In this way, the experience of Israel will become the lynch pin of Jewish day school education. In developing this sentiment of community, the program hopes that the individual will becomes aligned with the greater will of the nation as individual memory and collective memory merge.

To understand this further, let us consider the solicitation to join the annual March of the Living, trip. The video promotion on the Montreal MOL web page concisely captures the various national influences on Jewish identity formation. The image - three students walking toward a crematorium - is framed by the barbed-wire fences that kept Jews and other "undesirables" inside the death camp of Auschwitz. The person on the left has wrapped a Canadian flag around his shoulders, which blows in the wind behind him. The person in the middle wears a shirt bearing a single word: Montreal. The person on the right has wrapped himself in a flag of Israel, like a traditional *tallit*; he is wearing a *kippa*. All three students walk in stride, arms linked, steadfast toward the death camp. The poster simultaneously engenders notions of diaspora, as well as national and religious forms of belonging.

The picture is part of a solicitation for chaperones for the annual student trip, which corresponds with Holocaust Remembrance day -*Yom HaShoah,* and Israel's Memorial Day -*Yom HaZikaron.* The national, ethnic, and religious identity expressed in the photo functions on various levels. First, the photo speaks of the complex nature of national belonging within the Jewish Montreal

student body. Canada - the country of birth, Montreal - the city of residence, and Israel - the spiritual homeland, are equally acknowledged. The students walk in remembrance of the six million Jews murdered by the Nazi regime. The photo depicts their walk as defiance of the attempt to annihilate the Jewish people, and yet they walk with the full knowledge that the State of Israel is a living reality, a safe haven, a known and accessible homeland, which they visit but do not relocate to.

The students of Montreal Jewish high schools experience Israel in a highly emotional context, in which collective memory is consciously conveyed to them as personal memory. The personalization of these events is evident by the students' responses. Consider the following excerpt from Montreal Jewish day school participants on their return to Montreal after experiencing the March of the Living. As one student wrote on the MOL website,

> This trip gave us a new purpose, allowing us to understand what our people died for. Although our trip may be over, our journey has just begun. All that we have witnessed in these last two weeks might be seen as part of our history, yet every single Marcher knows that this is our biography – this is who we are. (BIEC 2004)

Within this form of participatory remembering, the present is submersed in the past, for it is only through experiencing the past that the present idea of the nation can find meaning. This type of remembering is rooted in a mythic, cyclical time, and harkens back to the ahistorical pre-modern focus of Jewish history. One reason that Israel Experience trips, such as The March of the Living, consistently deepen participants' attachment to Israel is that they are based on the structural and liturgical framework found in the *Seder* practice of Passover, in which Jews are instructed to read the *Haggadah* personally, as if they were slaves liberated from Egypt (Neusner 2005). Here, attachment to homeland is reinforced through a known framework – a liturgical structure. The annual reading of the *Haggadah* reinforces the notion that the covenant of God is made not with Moses, but with the people Israel. In Exodus 19:8 the entire people of Israel reply "All that the Lord hath spoken, we will do." Deuteronomy 29:14-15 explains the perpetual nature of the covenant by stating it is as if every Jew – in every generation – stood at Sinai. This liturgical framework reinforces the idea that the covenant is simultaneously a communal and individual bond– one that must be confirmed by each individual in the annual retelling of the

story of Exodus at Passover. Just as the annual celebration of Passover is *the* act of Jewish remembrance (Yerushalmi 1996) of the salvation of Jews recorded in the Torah, the MOL allows Jewish students to personally "remember" the devastation of the Holocaust and the redemption that the State of Israel represents.

This is the power of the annual recounting of liberation, for it is through communal remembering that liberation from slavery becomes a personal and present experience. In this same way, the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel, as two points in the narrative of exile and redemption, are commemorated through individual experience of the present based in a collective recounting of a past event. Communal remembering has a transformative effect on the individual participant. This form of remembering, in which student "imagine they are someone else" (Neusner 2005:1875) is actualized in the March of the Living as students from various countries are coupled with living survivors of the death camps. The final words of the promotional video for The March of the Living express this sentiment even more concisely: "We are strong; We are united; We are a community; because of MOL" (BIEC 2004). According to this statement, the narrative of exile and redemption, which structures the idea of the nation, is embodied and internalized by student participants whose pledge to support the state prescribes the public form of commitment to the nation. In this program emphasis is placed on the transmission – from one generation to the next – of symbols, myths, and social memories.

This form of Israel education – the Israel experience trips – utilizes cultural resources drawn directly from historical events as an opportunity to develop the sentiment of diaspora nationalism in student participants. Clearly in Israel experience trips like MOL the sentiment of diasporic nationalism is framed by the traditions of Judaism (Davies 1982; Aberbach 2006). Theologically this attachment is derived from the long tradition and consistent reiteration of the idea of exile and return as a single trajectory of events (Shimoni 1995:335). Here, the Holocaust is framed in a historical trajectory of Jewish collective struggle that integrates Jewish ethnicity, religion, and nationalism into a single continuum. One can see how Israel experience trips use a religious narrative framework as a mechanism to develop diasporic nationalism - the sentiment of attachment to the historic territory – in student participants; yet, nationalism does not simply replicate the pre-modern religious ethnosymbolism. Instead, it recreates the symbolic resources

in a new and meaningful way. By analyzing this type of experiential programming one can see how Israel education frames nationalist claims in religious myths derived from the Torah. As Smith writes,

> …the idea of collective struggle and sacrifice as inherent in Jewish *national destiny* – as opposed to the older religious framework of fulfillment of the Torah, and the theodicy of sin and punishment, repentance and return – was a relatively novel concept, particularly as it came to be applied to the martyrs of the Holocaust, the heroism of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and the soldiers who fell in defense of the national state of Israel in her wars since 1948. (Smith 2010:21)

Through Israel-experience trips, not only is the establishment of the State of Israel connected to major themes in Jewish history, Israel, the Holocaust and the personal identity of individual participants are framed as a single, meaningful, continuum (Saxe & Cohen 2008:39). It is through this process of transmission that nation-building occurs (Smith 2009). Nevertheless, how that emotional connection will be integrated by each student is individual and often unpredictable.

Experiencing Israel first hand remains a major part of the Montreal Jewish high school year. For Katz, the MOL trip is an annual highlight. As he attests, "it's one of my passions" (Burt Katz, personal interview, June 10, 2013). Katz explains how visiting Israel often transforms his students: "You never know what is going to happen to kids when they go to Israel. We had a kid who at the wall[123] started crying, and today he wears a *kippa*. You never know how it's going to turn out"[124] (Burt Katz, personal interview, June 10, 2013). This performative remembering

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[123] The *Kotel Ha –Ma'aravi*/Western Wall/ Wailing Wall

[124] Unlike in some Canadian and American synagogues - where Jewish women are ordained as Rabbis (Reform and Conservative) and many Jewish women wear traditional prayer shawls (*tallit),* women's religious experience in Israel is regulated through gender segregation practices enforced by the Orthodox community – the official religious authority in Israel. Experience at the Kotel, which remains under the jurisdiction of the Chief Rabbinate (Orthodox Rabbinical Authority) of Israel, is mediated by a complete separation of men and women. A metal dividing wall at the Kotel, as well as security police barriers before the Kotel, enforce this gender division. This division of space based on gender has significantly impacted women's religious experience, most specifically in their ability to access the last remnant of the Second Temple (The Kotel spans about 60 meters, 12 of which are allocated for the women's section; also, there are no Torahs in the women's section). Such clearly defined gender segregation contrasts with the gender equality espoused by secular Zionists who founded the state. For more on gender equality and the Zionist

allows individual students to participate in the collective memory of the Holocaust before experiencing the redemption of the established State of Israel. The students' experience in Israel cements the bond between Diaspora and homeland. This experience is not only a highlight for students, but also for Jewish educators. Katz's sentiment was echoed by Asaf Levi, a Jewish Studies teacher in a Jewish high school located in central Montreal, which serves both Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews.

Like Katz, Levi has a passion for Israel Experience and leads his students on the annual high school MOL trip. The school where Levi was teaching at the time of our interview provides a substantial Jewish Studies and Hebrew Language program, and consistently participates in conversation and activities with Israeli students located in Beersheba. It holds regular assemblies celebrating each of the Jewish holidays and Israeli national days. *HaTivka*, the Israeli state anthem, is sung at every school assembly. Trips to Israel are a regular part of the grade 10 and 11 annual program, including MOL. Sharing his experiences of one of the MOL trips, Levi stated:

> On the day of *Yom HaShoah* you walk from Auschwitz to Birkenau and you see thousands of kids and flags. And you walk and you see the trains, and you are between the train tracks. That's a big part of our history. I will not say "Thank God that we had the Holocaust, for now we have Israel" No! But it becomes part of our whole procedure through history. Our kids are mixed with kids from other schools, and in every group they are matched with a survivor. When you go to Israel, it's *Yom Ha'Atzmaut* right away. Everyone who goes has the best time of their lives, everyone. Our kids today, with all that they have, need to know that some kids had nothing. For them, everything is taken for granted. We need to open their eyes. (Asaf Levi, personal interview, April 11, 2013)

Levi's positive view of the March of the Living high school trip comes across in his words. Perhaps the most profound aspect of his statement is his articulation of the nation's narrative as one of the triumphs over exile and near annihilation. His presentation of the nation's narrative

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idea see David Baile (1992). How the experience of this gender segregation impacts the experience of young Canadian students who travel to Israel and its influence on the success of the social construction of a nationalist identity is an intriguing question that warrants future research.

conveys both a sense of continuity and progression. For Levi, as for many educators and teachers in Diaspora Jewish education, the March of the Living trip is a highlight, as it solidifies the emotional link between students in the Diaspora and the State of Israel. Moreover, it fosters a love for Israel in the student, which remains the raison d'etre of many Jewish educators (Grant 2011).

Shlichim in the Classroom

Another means of edifying the centrality of Israel in diasporic Jewish identity is to increase the presence of Israel in the classroom by bringing young Israelis, *shlichim* or emissaries, into Montreal schools to speak with, and teach the students about the realities of living in Israel. Thus, the meaning of the commitment to the State of Israel as part of the mission declaration of the schools is not threatened, but the complexities of the current politics of the state can be discussed. Montreal Jewish educator Evelyn Ride explains:

> That's the area we're exploring now: bringing in Israeli emissaries, *shlichim*, who are around twenty-five to be thirty years old. They're in the best position. They come for two years; they are knowledgeable; they love Israel but they are knowledgeable about the situation; and they live in Israel. So it's not as difficult for them to say, "Hey let's talk about the complexities," because they're Israeli and they're going back to Israel and they don't have that compounded guilt reflected in a statement like, "I left Israel and how can I speak badly about it?" So that's the model that we're looking for. To bring in the people who have the expertise even though they're young, because they've studied this. You know they live there and they could present the political complications, Israeli music, Israeli culture, you know, Israeli songs. Just bring it to them in a more current way that really relates to who these students are. (Eveyln Ride, personal interview, January 24, 2013)

This type of initiative is part of the new developments of the Zionist organizations in North America to address issues of the twenty-first century. According to Azrieli, *Shlichim* are pivotal in representing Zionism to Jewish youth throughout the Diaspora:

> These dynamic, interactive educational programs led by young Israeli *shlichim* are designed to strengthen a sense of Jewish identity and heritage among Canadian Jewish youth and encourage Zionist activity in the Jewish community in Canada. (Azrieli 2008:210)

As noted earlier, drawing more explicitly on s*hlichim* to bring Israel to the Montreal classroom is a mechanism to develop a sentiment of diasporic nationalism in students. As Smith writes, a central difference between nationalism and diasporic nationalism is territorialisation, the "intimacy of feeling" with the territory itself (Smith 2010:6). As in the case of ex-patriot Israelis, *shlichim* – who hold a secure attachment to the land of Israel – function as symbolic representatives or embodiments of the land of Israel. Their role is one of a human bridge – bringing the homeland to the diaspora. Territorial occupation (living in the homeland) is *the* main difference between nationalism and diasporic nationalism. *Shlichim* represent one educational mechanism for overcoming that lack of intimacy with the territory of Israel.

While these education programs signal the importance of creating mechanism that teach attachment to the territory of Israel – the location of a given diaspora community remains a significant factor. In Quebec, the challenge to maintaining a sense of common heritage comes from the multiplicity and variety of customs, cultures, and languages that make up Jewish Montreal. Religious, cultural, and linguistic multiplicity is overcome through the support and attachment to a national homeland. In the diaspora, the problems of plurality (e.g., Sephardi/Ashkenazi, Orthodox/Secular, French-speaking/English speaking) are overcome through the unity of diaspora nationalism in which support for the state of Israel becomes the galvanizing force of the community. According the Gal, Leoussi, and Smith (2010) within any given community the level to which diaspora nationalism is expressed depends on numerous historical circumstances, which include: the similarities (or differences) between the homeland and the host community;[125] how and why people immigrated; and the social structures in place in the host country (2010:xv). They write:

[125] They write: "frequently, the greater the contrast between the modernity of the host country of origin and relative backwardness and conservatism of the country of origin, the weaker the attachment. By the same token, when the

> In host-lands that are emphatically democratic and pluralistic, the welcomed diaspora often tends to develop a moderate, open-ended, civil-values oriented kind of nationalism, while in countries where the diaspora is considered a barely tolerable minority, the latter tends to develop a more passionate, offensive kind of nationalism. (2010:xvi)

For this reason, the focus on teaching attachment to the homeland depends on the historical experience of the diaspora community in the host country (2010:xv). In other words, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, the historical marginalization of Montreal Jews within Quebec society increased the intensity of attachment to the homeland. Yet, even the high level of institutional autonomy of the Montreal Jewish community cannot stop the larger local social forces at play in Quebec from effecting Montreal Jews. Given this, many students graduating from Jewish day schools may be unprepared to handle how complex the State of Israel really is, and how its policies are perceived by and portrayed in the larger local community of Quebec. As Eveyln Ride says:

> […] Once they [Jewish students] leave [the day schools], and they go to CEGEP and they go to University, and suddenly they're made aware of these complications, they feel like, "Well, nobody told me this", "why didn't I learn?"...So really the schools, they all know this, and they're trying to find the best way to do it, but there has to be a more balanced approach to the teaching of Israel. There's no question, we love it, we're committed to it, all of that, but you know it's messy. And teaching the messiness and to teach the complexity has been difficult. And students get angry when they leave and they're like... nobody told me. (Eveyln Ride, personal interview, January 24, 2013)

In an attempt to prepare the graduating student body for anti-Israel sentiment they may encounter on university campuses, the BJEC initiated the teaching of Israel Advocacy in Jewish high schools (Eveyln Ride, personal interview, January 24, 2013). The following section will focus on

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homeland is relatively developed and dynamic, and somehow attuned to the emigrants' destination, the diaspora tends to consistently sustain the homeland and cherish its call." (2010:xv)

the events that lead BJEC to commission the writing of an Israel Advocacy curriculum for Montreal Jewish high schools.

Israel Advocacy in Montreal Jewish High Schools

Produced and taught entirely in English, the Israel Advocacy curriculum written for Montreal Jewish high schools, *Making the Connection: A Curriculum for Teaching Israel Advocacy in Jewish Day Schools,* distinguishes Israel advocacy from Hebrew language instruction and religious education in order to instil in students the notion that the State of Israel is of fundamental importance to the identity of Jews living in the Diaspora. This curriculum acts as a guide for teachers to engage students in *hasbara*. The meaning of the Hebrew term *hasbara* has been contested; though it generally refers to advocacy for the state, it also translates as "explaining". Before engaging in an analysis of the curriculum itself, the following section will offer a broader political context, which prompted the Montreal Bronfman Jewish Education Council and Bronfman Israel Center to commission the writing of *Making the Connection: Israel Advocacy for Montreal Jewish High Schools.*

As the curriculum was partially funded by the US-based David Project, an organization dedicated to Israel advocacy and outreach on university campuses,[126] the influence of American Jewish communities, and American Judaism, on the curriculum requires consideration. Sociologists of Jewish identity who focus on the connection between American Jewish youth and the State of Israel report a considerable distancing occurring between younger generations and the State of Israel. According to the Jewish Agency for Israel:

> Some 2.5 million young people are losing their connection to Judaism as they gradually distance themselves from their communities, their heritage and our people. Around the world, this connection literally hangs in the balance. And if they are at risk, so is the

[126] According to their website, "The David Project positively shapes campus opinion on Israel by educating, training, and empowering student leaders to be thoughtful, strategic and persuasive advocates." (The David Project 2002)

> Jewish future. But this is not just about Jewish young adults living around the world; the challenge of transforming "Am Echad" from words on paper into tangible, enduring connections and a sense of responsibility for the Jewish future is as profoundly vital for young people in Israel. (Jewish Agency for Israel 2000)

The commissioning of this curriculum occurred during a pivotal point in the history of the State of Israel, yet its appearance speaks to an internal divide within the American Jewish population, which reaches back to the achievement of statehood and the fulfilment of the Zionist goal (Wertheimer 2008). As Jack Wertheimer writes: "Ever since Israel's founding, American Jews have contended with the freighted symbolism and complex realities of the Jewish State. How could it be otherwise?" (Wertheimer 2008:1). The 2000 Camp David II talks between Yasser Arafat and then Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, resulted in a particularly bleak period for Israeli-Palestinian relations and created an unprecedented turn in American Jewish unity on the subject of Israel. Traditionally identified with progressive politics, American Jewry was divided in its support of the State of Israel since the 1977 election of Menachem Begin to the position of Israeli Prime Minister and the subsequent re-inclusion of the religious right into the political arena of power. This schism within the American Jewish population resulted in two divergent agendas - one for the peace process, including the financial support of the Palestinian Authority,[127] and one against any Palestinian-Israeli peace accord.[128]

The violence that followed then Prime Minster Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount in 2000, which saw an upsurge in Jewish Israeli civilian deaths as well as escalated Israeli military presence in the West Bank and Gaza strip, had a unifying effect on American Jewry. "The unprecedented savagery of the Palestinians' suicide bombings brought the community together in ways not seen since the Six-Day War" (Seliktar 2007:128). Yet, this was not enough to reconcile the major divisions between competing Jewish American agendas. Shortly after the rise of the second intifada, American Jews began publicly identifying themselves as Zionists or anti-Zionists, pro-Israel or anti-Israel (Seliktar 2007). These highly politicized community agendas, which ranged from left-wing groups such as Americans for Peace Now, The Jewish Alliance For

[127] This group of lobbyists included such organizations as America for Peace Now (APN) and Israel Policy Forum (IPF).
[128] Notably the Jewish Institute for National Security (JINSA) and Americans for a Safe Israel (AFSI).

Justice and Peace, the Foundation of Middle East Peace, and the New Israel fund, to right-wing organizations such as the Jewish Institute for National Security, utilize university campuses as a forum to promote specific political programmes (Wisse 2008).

During this time the Boycott and Divestment Sanctions (BDS) campaign, commonly called "Against Israel Apartheid," began to appear in small collectives on university campuses around the globe.[129] Initiated by a group of Palestinian professors, the call for a cultural, academic, and economic boycott of the State of Israel was originally issued in a declaration in August of 2002 (PCACBI 2005). This was preceded by the UN conference in Durban, South Africa, which promoted "a policy of complete and total isolation of Israel…the imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions and embargoes, and the full cessation of all links (diplomatic, economic, social, aid, military cooperation and training) between all states and Israel" (quoted in Bard & Dawson 2013:16). In 2002, a group of British professors sought to establish a European-wide moratorium on academic and cultural collaboration with Israelis. By April 2004, the Palestinian Campaign for the Academic and Cultural Boycott of Israel appeared on university campuses around the world. Canada was no exception. Indeed, Goldberg (2007) notes that Canadian Jews experienced criticism of Israel well before the coalition that developed into the BDS movement appeared as a collective on university campuses. Goldberg writes:

> Since the mid-1990's, pro-Israel students (and Jewish students expressing no particular concern about Israel) are being aggressively challenged by campus coalitions comprised of Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims and extreme left-wing groups. (Goldberg 2007:222)

The 2002 riot at Concordia University in Montreal, which started with students protesting the invitation of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and ended in student violence and arrests, revealed the presence of an anti-Israel or anti-Israeli policy (vis-à vis Palestinians) sentiment among some in Montreal.

[129] For more information on this movement see Omar Barghouti. 2011. *Boycott, Divestment, Sanction: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights*. New York: Haymarket Books.

Criticism of Israel is not new to American or Canadian universities, and has been seen on university campuses throughout the 1960s, 70s, and 80s.[130] According to Bard and Dawson (2013) in Canada and the US, "anti-Israel" student groups – groups opposed to Israel or to Israeli policies towards Palestinians -- are organized at 330 universities, while Hillel student groups are present at 363 universities. Hillel, a group for university students, became the major vehicle for diseminating Israel education on campuses. Highly Zionist in orientation, Hillel was originally organized in 1950 at the Hebrew Univeristy of Jerusalem; its current motto: "Wherever We Stand, We Stand With Israel", reveals a kinship orientation to the State of Israel, and a loyalty which surpasses political or demoninational differences. Through the generosity of the Shusterman Family Foundation, Hillel created a orgainization called the Center for Israel Affairs (also known as the Center for Israel and Jewish Affairs), which acts as a advocacy training, and education center with local offices throughout North America including Montreal. Hillel student groups also have on-campus representatives from pro-Israel groups such as the American-Israeli Cooperative Enterprise (AICE,) the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), Scholars for Peace in the Middle East (SPME), The David Project, StandWithUS, Christains United for Israel (UFI), or Hasbara Fellowships (Bard & Dawson 2013:8). In his review of all Hillel-related activities on 200 North American university campuses, where more than 500 Jewish students were enrolled, Jay Rubin reveals that three out of 200 university campuses had become the focal point of a "crisis" of anti-Israel sentiment (Rubin 2003:113). Montreal's Concordia University was one of those three.[131] As a result of the 2002-2003 student riots at Concordia, the student government revoked funding for Hillel and denied the student group access to the campus student space the student government controlled. Moreover, clearly unprepared for the events, the university administration prohibited any pro-Israel and anti-Israel activities or discussion on campus. Given that three out of 200 campuses does not represent a wave of anti-Israel sentiment across North American university campuses, these periodic episodes of conflict cannot be interpreted as a sign of broad hostility to Israel on Canadian campuses (Rubin 2003).

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[130] According to the Executive Vice President of Hillel, Jay Rubin, the quantity of Muslim-Jewish on-campus dialogue groups surpasses the number of students involved in the anti-Israel movement or Israel-Palestine conflict (Rubin 2003: 112).

[131] The other two were the University of California-Berkeley and San Francisco State University.

In contrast to pro-Israel student groups, anti-Israeli policy student groups – namely the Muslim Students Association (MSA) and Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) – lack professional support and funds (Bard & Dawson 2012:3).[132] SJP has many Jewish members and some Jewish leaders. According to Bard and Dawson,

> The role of Jews in the SJPs is not surprising. Jewish students are often among the vocal critics of Israel on campus, but they generally operated in the past within Jewish organizations that occasionally collaborated with the other detractors. Today, there are some anti-Israel Jewish organizations, notably Jewish Voices for Peace, but anti-Israel Jews are more likely to join with other detractors in the SJP. (Bard & Dawson 2013:8).

According to Rubin, the broader reason why Jewish students were joining organizations that espoused anti-Israeli policy regarding Palestinians was the Jewish youths' disconnectedness from the State of Israel. This disconnectedness may equally stem from student experience of Israel education curricula that does not actively integrate or reflect on "anti-Israeli-policy" arguments. Rubin writes:

> The problem is that North American Jewish students, by and large, are less knowledgeable and less visibly passionate about Middle East issues than their Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim counterparts. Jewish students are primarily second- and third-generation Americans and Canadians, unlike Muslim students who are often immigrants or the children of immigrants […] A majority of Jewish students entering colleges and universities in North America are unprepared intellectually or emotionally to encounter any level of anti-Israel tension on campus. (Rubin 2003:114)

The response by Jewish communities throughout North America has been to educate. Given the local context of the Concordia crisis, the BJEC sought to prepare students to speak out on behalf of the State of Israel by presenting arguments in the defence of the actions and policy choices of

[132] According to Michael Bard and Jeff Dawson student organizations that promote an anti-Israel sentiments on campus are less well organized then in previous decades. They write, "if anything, the detractors have less money and are more disorganized than the pro-Arab groups of past decades, which were organized on a national basis and had the financial and political backing of the Arab League" (Bard & Dawson 2012:6). That said, BDS supporters have influenced student governments to accept an Israel boycott and divestment resolution on certain university campuses in Canada, including Carleton University and the University of Regina (Bard & Dawson 2012:17).

the Israeli government. In 2002, in collaboration with the Jewish Agency and the Israel Foreign Ministry, the BJEC commissioned Neil Lazarus to write a curriculum for Jewish high school students in grades 10 and 11, which would focus exclusively on Israel advocacy (Frucht 2002). Holding an M.A. in Political Science from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Lazarus hosts online instructional seminars on how to be a vocal advocate for Israel at AwesomeSeminars.com, Lazarus, who relocated to Israel from Wales in 1988, is also the author of the book *The Five Rules of Effective Israel Advocacy* and has been called "Mr. Israel Advocacy" by *The Times of Israel* Jewish World editor Borschel-Dan. Despite this title, Lazarus himself steers away from using the word "advocacy" to describe what he does.

> I don't like the word advocacy: I prefer saying 'fighting the delegitimization of Israel.' I teach people how to get a fair image of Israel. You don't have to agree with everything Israel does, far from it. You can have a legitimate criticism, but still fight the campaign of delegitimization. (Borschel-Dan 2012)

According to Lazarus, the BJEC-sponsored curriculum was a direct response to Jewish students being subjected to targeted violence on Canadian university campuses (Lazurus 2003:6). The curriculum's objectives are as follows. First,

> [...] we will examine the relevance of Israel to our own Jewish identity, our personal connection to Israel and what Israel means to us [...] Even if the connection between ourselves as Jews and Israel is weak, we shall seek to see why it is so important. (Lazurus 2003:5)

The nationalist assumptions are evident here. The emphasis is placed on the "relevance" of Israel to Jewish identity and the aim of the curriculum to reveal "why it is so important". In contrast a "weak" connection to Israel is defined as a problem to be overcome. The second aim of the program is described as follows:

> We shall seek to reinforce this connection by examining the biblical foundation of Israel and to reiterate that Judaism is a nation, not just a religion. (Lazurus 2003:5)

The connection between Jews and Israel is addressed through investigation of the biblical (i.e., religious) origins of Israel. Here Israel is understood as the State of Israel, not the people of Israel or the land of Israel. It is the foundation of the state itself, which is examined in relation to the biblical texts. Second, the author will "reiterate" that "Judaism" is a "nation" above and beyond being a "religion." Through the use of this term, Lazarus highlights a connection between the modern State of Israel and the pre-modern *ethnie,* which is rooted in an explicitly religious orientation of the nation, one that finds its roots and origins in the biblical decrees of the Jewish religion.

Finally, the third aim of the curriculum is:

> These classes are taught with the underlying belief that Israel should not be taught just as any other academic subject, as it raises many questions about our Jewish identity. (Lazurus 2003:6)

The expressed assumption of the text is that "Israel," the state, should be treated as an exception. Thus the stated aims of the program include creating or sustaining the student's personal connection to Israel, legitimating the State of Israel through Judaism and biblical narratives, and affirming the central place of the State of Israel in the identity of people living in the Jewish Diaspora.

The *Making the Connection* curriculum is comprised of four units, each of which addresses a particular theme: *Jewish People and Israel among the Nations; Understanding the Arab Palestinian Perspective; Understanding Israel Policy;* and *Understanding the Conflict*. Each unit has a list of recommended background readings for teachers, in-class teaching strategies, including individual and group exercises, and references to other sources of research. Units focus on the political events that occurred in Israel and its neighbouring countries between 1994 and 2003. The curriculum provides lesson plans to discuss these events and familiarize students with key political players and governmental organizations present in the region. Discussion and role-play are the dominant pedagogical tools employed by the curriculum. The following examples, drawn directly from the text, embody the tone and course content found throughout the curriculum.

Broken Peace: The Idea of the Nation

Each of these four units are subdivided thematically. Within the unit *Understanding the Arab Palestinian Perspective* is a section titled *The Dilemmas of Two People in One Land.* The opening page of this section is a cartoon of the symbol of the dove and olive branch (Lazarus 2003:93). The cartoonist has split the dove in two. The smaller tail end of the bird has the word "Israel" written on it, while the upper chest and head of the bird has the word "Palestine" written on it. The two sections of the bird are cut as puzzle pieces that do not fit together. In the dove's mouth is a wilted olive branch. The purpose of this unit is to familiarize Jewish high day school students with the history of these movements, including the PLO and Hamas, review the rhetorical themes and arguments presented within the Palestinian national movements, and develop an understanding of the difference between a national movement and a religion.

The underlying principle of this unit is to expose students to the complexity of the current debate on the conflict surrounding the land claims of Israelis and Palestinians. Lazarus writes, "This class will break stereotypes. Students will discover that there is not only a Palestinian side and an Israeli side of the conflict, but rather Israeli and Palestinian *sides*" (Lazarus 2003:98). Teachers are then asked to identify issues important to both Palestinians and Israelis, including Jerusalem, state borders, refugees, and settlements. In this section, territorial claims and access to natural resources are expressed as the central issues perpetuating the conflict (Lazarus 2003:99).

In an introductory exercise on the topic, students are divided into five groups, representing five proposed solutions to the conflict. These groups include: Hamas, Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen), the National Unity Party of Israel, Ariel Sharon, and Peace Now. Students are divided into five groups. Each group is provided with a fact sheet regarding their given political position; students are to introduce their party to the class and present their party's position, or proposed solution to the conflict. Students are to be reminded that the point of the exercise is to play their role realistically. The curriculum guide warns teachers that the solutions provided by the students will be at times unrealistic and directs teachers to identify plausible and implausible solutions (Lazarus 2003:98). Following are excerpts from each group's fact sheet. The first group is to represent Hamas, which is described by the curriculum in the following manner:

> You represent the terrorist organization Hamas. You are committed to employing violent means, including terrorism, to pursue the goal of establishing an Islamic Palestinian state in place of Israel. You are against any form of negotiation with the "Zionist Enemy", and you also reject the Palestinian Authority as the sole representatives of the Palestinian People. (Lazarus 2003:93)

This excerpt is followed by two brief quotations both of which present *shaheed* (martyr) as a highest form of action. The author has placed "Zionist Enemy" in quotations, a term which includes Diaspora Jews not located in the State of Israel.

The curriculum then presents the leader of the Palestinian Authority, Abu Mazen. Using only the leader's name to describe the political party of the PA, the Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) fact sheet reads as follows:

> You are the Palestinian Prime Minister. You are committed to the concept of a two-state solution – Israel and Palestine side by side as two sovereign states. You are willing to find a mutually acceptable answer to the 'right of return' for Palestinian refugees to return to Israel, but you are adamant that Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza must be dismantled and that Israel recognize the pre-1967 border. You demand Jerusalem as the capital of the new Palestinian State. (Lazarus 2003:94)

A lengthy excerpt follows this statement from a speech made by Mahmoud Abbas at the Aqaba Summit on June 4th of 2003. It includes a reiteration of the possibility of peace and security in the region based on the "road map" solution constructed by the administration of then American President George W. Bush. In this speech, Abbas calls for the end of the armed intifada and the creation of a democratic state of Palestine. Abbas reiterates the ongoing role of the U.S.A. and the international community in effectively resolving this conflict.

A third fact sheet provided for the class describes the Israeli National Unity Party. It reads as follows:

> You are a member of the National Unity Party, and you advocate the voluntary "transfer" of Palestinians to Arab countries. You believe that a Jewish State needs to exist between

> the Jordan River and the Mediterranean and that ‘resettlement’ of the Palestinians must be implemented. You believe that both stances are prescribed in the Bible. (Lazarus 2003:96)

This introduction is followed by a quotation excerpted from a web page, which is no longer available online, in which the National Unity Party is quoted as stating that peace between Israelis and Palestinians will be resolved by a transfer of the Palestinian population to the surrounding Arab countries in place of Jews who immigrated to Israel from Arab countries. The author has placed quotation marks around the words “transfer” and "resettlement," in regard to Palestinians and Palestinian refugees. Through the use of quotation marks the author both draws attention to these words, and brings these terms into question.

In a manner similar to the description provided for Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, in which the author refers to a single leader by name, and not his political party, is the fact sheet on Ariel Sharon. It reads as follows:

> You are the Prime Minister of Israel. You support a two-state solution and believe that only the small isolated, unauthorized settlements should be dismantled. You believe that your overarching responsibility is the security of the people of Israel and of the State of Israel and therefore, believe that there can be no compromise with terror. You believe that building a security fence will help stem terror attacks. (Lazarus 2003:98)

The preceding quotation is followed by a longer passage extracted from Sharon’s speech following the Aqaba Summit in June of 2003. Sharon’s remarks reiterate that violence will only perpetuate conflict, and that the establishment of an independent self-governed and democratic Palestinian state relies on the aid of the international community, particularly the USA.

The final group represented in the course exercise is that of Peace Now. Their fact sheet reads as follows:

> Peace Now is a movement of Israeli citizens who view peace, compromise and reconciliation with the Palestinian people and the Arab states as the only guarantee for the future, the security, and the character of the State of Israel. Peace Now maintains that

> the continuation of the military and civil rule over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and over three million Palestinians, endangers the security, the economy, and the democratic nature of Israel as the state of the Jewish people. (Lazarus 2003:100)

Unlike the fact sheets provided for the previous four groups, this one does not use a second person subject to describe the group. Instead, the preceding excerpt, and the proclamations regarding key issues in the conflict, which follow this excerpt, are direct quotations from the Peace Now website. The author's own words are not present in this fact sheet. Peace Now is described as a "movement of Israeli citizens," not a political campaign.

After students have read and familiarized themselves with the statements provided, they are asked to present their group's solution to the conflict in front of the class, and engage in a class debate regarding the proposed solutions. After each group has identified its position to the class, students are asked to discuss their own personal views on the presented solutions to the conflict. The teacher is encouraged to refer to the "road map," as proposed by the US President, as a potential compromise and model of resolution. This exercise, which familiarizes students with the varied political parties and groups involved in the conflict, and hones student-debating skills, is emblematic of the type of assignment present in this curriculum and is extended in a subsequent exercise entitled "Terrorism."

In the class exercise on terrorism students are divided into two groups, identified by stickers of different colors. One person in the class is informed he or she is a terrorist, and must "murder" people from the other group as the two groups mingle about the class. After a murder has occurred, each group retreats to discuss what it will do to protect its group members. A suggestion in the curriculum is to place a "wall of chairs" between themselves and the opposing group. Members of the group with the murderer may choose to join the murderer in his or her act of killing. In the discussion that follows the exercise, the teacher is instructed to:

> […] Discuss with the group how they decided to defend themselves. Can we make an analogy with Israel? If a physical barrier was made between the groups, you may compare this to Israel's plans to build a fence between Israel and the West Bank. (Lazarus 2003:132)

Each exercise begins with the class rationale, in which the teacher may read a preliminary paragraph on the background of the class theme. In the exercise on terrorism, the intention behind the lesson reads as follows:

> To enable students to internalize the suffering caused by terrorism to Israeli society; to consider problems of cross-cultural communication in racial conflicts and how terrorism has accentuated the rift between Arab and Jew; to provide a framework to discuss the effect of terrorism on Israeli society; to consider the factors which help define security and the sense of security in society. (Lazarus 2003:130)

The author's use of the term "racial conflicts" to describe what he previously called a land-based conflict reveals an inconsistency in the curriculum's message. Moreover, the rift that is portrayed as being between "Arab" and "Jew," two global communities, rather than between the governments of two nations, namely the Israeli and Palestinian nations. By broadening the scope of the conflict to include a racially charged schism between Jews and Arabs throughout the world is one means by which the exercise narrates the rootedness of the conflict as a conflict between communities or peoples.

Each class exercise holds a recommended reading list for the teacher. In the previous exercise, this list includes: *The Arab-Israeli Conflict* by Craig Kauffman and Christopher Brown, which informs the teacher of the main political events which followed the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1993; and *The Arabs in Palestine* by Mitchell Bard, which presents British Palestine as a "neglected desert", that is "sparsely populated" of "uncultivated land". Bard's text states that Palestinians left their homes in the 1948 war at the request of Arab leaders (Lazarus 2003:128). The Palestinian national movement is introduced as a reactionary movement stimulated by the proximity of Zionists in the British Mandate of Palestine, and no reference is made to a Palestinian culture or to the literature and myths unique to the Palestinian people.

Concurrently, Zionist perspectives are presented alongside anti-Zionist and Palestinian nationalist perspectives. For example, in one exercise students are instructed to read an excerpt from Montreal author and professor Gil Troy's book *Why I am a Zionist,* followed by a counter perspective entitled *Why Zionism is Racism,* written by Rabee Sahyoun. This article is "a direct

response, using the same format, on a line by line basis, to an editorial that appeared in *The Montreal Gazette* on April 26, 2001, written by Gil Troy, a Professor of History at McGill University" (Sahyoun 2001). Students are next instructed to complete a worksheet entitled "Zionism is Racism?" in which they are asked to draw on the two excerpts provided, and write down five reasons why Palestinians understand Zionism to be racism, followed by five examples of how an Israeli could dispute these claims. The worksheet subsequently prompts students to prepare a minute-long speech on the Palestinian claims, and a one-minute opposing argument from an Israeli perspective.

Through this type of exercise students become equipped to engage in debates being versed in both Palestinian claims and Israeli counter arguments. The curriculum is in accordance with the predominant Zionist narrative, which makes reference to the longevity of the Jewish *Yishuv* (the longstanding presence of a Jewish community in the land of Israel) and the effective pioneering skills of the various *olim* (Jews from the Diaspora, who have made *aliya,* and moved to Israel permanently) in a desert land. In contrast, when explaining the origins of Palestinian nationalism, the author writes:

> It basically took the establishment of Israel and the experience of Israeli rule on the land conquered in the six-day-war (1967) to give birth to a genuine Palestinian nationalism and spur on the Palestinians to embark on the long course of trying to catch up. (Lazarus 2003:17)

The dominant symbols within the Palestinian national narrative, namely the cactus, the orange tree, and the olive tree, which indicate a land-based attachment and are featured in Palestinian culture, literature, and memory (Abufarha 2008), are not discussed here. According to the author, the land of Israel remains important to various other religions, including Islam (Lazarus 2003:108), the Jewish claim to the land is framed through scriptural history. The author establishes this religious claim through a section of the curriculum entitled "Bible Surfing - Discovering the Biblical Foundations of Israel."

"Bible Surfing": Legitimating the Idea of the Nation

In the unit *Jewish People and Israel among the Nations* the teacher is instructed to aid students in constructing a link between the State of Israel and the scriptural foundations of Judaism. In an exercise entitled "Bible Surfing – Discovering the Biblical Foundations of Israel," teachers are equipped with texts that seek to establish the State of Israel as the fulfillment of ancient prophecy to present to their students (Lazarus 2003:23). The stated goal of the "Bible Surfing" exercise is to use biblical sources to legitimate the nation's claim to the land. To do so, Lazarus draws on Genesis 17:8, which reads: "and I will give to you [Abraham] and to your offspring after you the land of your sojourns – the whole of the land of Canaan – as an everlasting possession; and I shall be a God to them." This passage introduces the concept of the land of Canaan as the inheritance of all Jews; God gifts this land to the offspring of Abraham as an "everlasting possession," and the eternal link between the Jewish people and the land is God's command.

Similarly, Deuteronomy (30: 3-5) is referenced as evidence that the State of Israel and the ingathering of the Jewish people are a direct fulfillment of the biblical promise that God will return the Jewish people to the land of Israel. It reads,

> Then *Hashem*, your God, will bring back your captivity and have mercy upon you, and He will return and gather you in from all the peoples to which *Hashem*, your God, has scattered you. If your dispersed will be at the ends of heaven, from there *Hashem*, your God, will gather you in and from there He will take you. *Hashem*, your God, will bring you to the Land that your forefathers possessed and you shall possess it; He will do good to you and make you more numerous than your forefathers.

The curriculum uses this passage to legitimate the Zionist project. However, Rashi's commentary on this passage has generally been used to explain that God is with the Jewish people even in exile (*Megillah* 29a), and legitimates life in the Diaspora. It reads "the return from exile will be as difficult as if God had to take each Jew by the hand and bring him back to *Eretz Yisrael"*. This commentary, which could easily stimulate a relevant discussion on the longstanding nature of the Diaspora despite the creation of the State of Israel, is not included in the curriculum.

In addition to the previous scriptures, Lazarus also refers to an excerpt from Zechariah (8:3-5)[133], which describes the ingathering of the Jewish people from east to west. This passage speaks directly of the end of the Babylonian exile and is a message of comfort. Following this quote, Lazarus comments "come to Jerusalem to see for yourself this prophecy has come true!" (Lazarus 2003: 27). Here, Lazarus creates a direct bridge between the words of the prophet Zechariah and the establishment of the State of Israel. The use of this prophecy to portray contemporary reality instructs students how to relate the ethno-religious and national events as a single, uninterrupted narrative. The thread of continuity between the narrative of Judaism and the State of Israel is expressed explicitly. Lazarus concludes this unit with the following statement:

> God promised the Land of Israel to Abraham and his descendants. Jews have always maintained a presence there, despite the enemies and the hardships. Biblical prophecies of the ingathering of exiles and the flourishing of the Land are coming true in modern times. No political agreement or military conquest can change this reality. (Lazarus 2003: 29)

According to this curriculum, the State of Israel stands outside national or parliamentary constraints, armed invasions or surrenders, due to its function as the fulfillment of biblical narrative. This establishes the thematic motif that Israel the state is sacrosanct. Furthermore, it reveals the redemptive value of the idea of Israel.

Following the "Bible Surfing" exercise, the curriculum addresses the theme of territorial land claims with a historical recap, which begins with the British Mandate. In this section, the author relies on the academic resources forwarded by the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI).

The Dilemma

In the unit *The Dilemma of Two People in One Land,* the author refers teachers and students to the section of the JAFI website called *Israel and Zionism,* and its subsection *The Arab Israel*

[133] "Thus said *Hashem*, I have returned to Zion, and have made my dwelling in the midst of Jerusalem; Jerusalem shall be called 'The City of Truth' and the mountain of the *Hashem*, Master of Legions, 'The Holy Mountain'. Thus said *Hashem*, Master of Legions: Old men and old women will once again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with his staff in his hand because of advanced age; and the streets of the city will be filled with boys and girls playing in the streets." (Zechariah 8:3-5)

Conflict in Maps. Teachers are instructed to familiarize their students with JAFI's presentation of the following subjects: "The U.N. Partition Plan 1947," "The Arab Invasion," and "The Arab Refugees." The author's reference to the "The Arab Refugees" begins with the 1948 War of Independence[134] of which he writes: "the Arabs fled" their homes (Lazarus 2003: 180). This presentation may signal to students to adopt the notion that the government of Israel holds no responsibility for the future of Palestinian refugees (Podeh 2000). Finally, the author presents the emigration of the Jewish refugees from neighbouring Arab nations by comparing the numbers of Jewish refugees to the number of Palestinian refugees before drawing a conclusion of what he calls a "population exchange." This "exchange" reflects the political platform of the National Unity Party, presented in a preceding exercise in which the author used quotation marks around the terms "transfer" and "resettlement." In this section, the author reflects the stance of the National Unity Party by stating that the "population exchange" has indeed already occurred. He writes,

> In 1945, there were more than 870,000[135] Jews living in the various Arab states (neighbouring Israel). Many of their communities dated back 2,500 years. Throughout 1947 and 1948 these Jews were persecuted. Their property and belongings were confiscated. There were anti-Jewish riots in Aden, Egypt, Libya, Syria, and Iraq. In Iraq, Zionism was made a capital crime. Approximately 600,000 Jews sought refuge in the State of Israel. They arrived destitute, but they were absorbed into the society and became an integral part of the state. In effect, then a veritable exchange of populations took place between Arab and Jewish refugees. Thus the Jewish refugees became full Israeli citizens while the Arab refugees remained refugees according to the wishes of the Arab leaders. (Lazarus 2003:184)

It is relevant that the author presents the refugee problem as already resolved. According to the curriculum, Jewish populations from neighbouring Arab states were absorbed into the population of Israel, and became viable citizens, whereas Arab "refugees" were refused citizenship in the

[134] Also known as the *Nakba*
[135] Jewish refugees from Morocco (260,000); Algeria (14,000); Libya (35,666); Egypt (89,525); Yemen (50,552); Syria (4,500); Iraq (129,290); Lebanon (6,000); Tunisia (5,6000) (Lazarus 2003:184).

neighbouring Arab states. The author presents the responsibility of kinship relations as the basic logic of this type of population exchange. He uses the terms "Arab refugees" and "Arab leaders" to imply an obligation based on kinship. This exercise resolves the issue of Palestinian refugees, central to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which may lead students to ask why the conflict remains intractable.

This looming question leads to a subsequent class exercise, where students "explore the roots of Palestinian incitement against Israel and the Jews" (Lazarus 2003:121). This exercise opens with a brief reference to a maxim taken from the *Talmud,* which reads, "The Talmudic sage, Samuel, observed that '*Kol haposel b'mumo posel'* – ' One sees his own flaws in others'" (Lazarus 2003:123). This statement directly follows the adage:

> So long as the Palestinian leadership continues to charge Israel with racism, (and) ethnic cleansing... we need to examine how and why these charges entered into their lexicon of anti-Israel accusations. To do this, we need to look at the life and times of the man whom Yasser Arafat once referred to as his "hero", Hajj Mohammed Amin al-Husseini, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem. (Lazarus 2003:123)

The class exercise that follows is entitled "The Mufti of Jerusalem: A Legacy of Hatred." The rationale of this exercise is to establish the rhetorical link between Nazi ideology and radical Islam, which targets Israel and the Jewish people "and, ultimately, America and its allies" (Lazarus 2003:121). Hajj Mohammed Amin al-Husseini is shown to link the Palestinian national program with the Nazi regime.

To begin the class, the teacher is asked to have students read extracts from various historical accounts of the 1929 riots in Jerusalem. Students are then asked to engage in a discussion, which leads with the following question: "Discussion: Haj Amin al-Husseini and the roots of anti-Zionism/anti-Semitism?" (Lazarus 2003:123). Students are instructed to look for parallels between Hajj Mohammed Amin al-Husseini and Yasser Arafat by comparing the 1929 riots with the 2000 Al Aksa Intifada. This is an introductory exercise on the "new anti-Semitism." The term "new anti-Semitism" is described by Danny Ben Moshe (2007) as follows: "Anti-Semitism has gone through many guises and the Jew hatred that was unleashed with the Palestinian response to

Ariel Sharon's walk on the Temple Mount in September is known as the 'new anti-Semitism', which has also been described as 'Judeophobia'" (Ben-Moshe 2007:10). One should note that the charge of a new anti-Semitism is controversial and is contested even in Israel. Some see it as a means of silencing legitimate discussions about current Israeli policies, especially those directed at its policies towards Palestinians.

The New Anti-Semitism

The unit *Jewish People and Israel Among the Nations*, contains a subsection entitled "The new anti-Semitism," in which students are asked to discuss major forms of anti-Semitism, including anti-Israel sentiment, the rise of the racist right in Europe, Arab anti-Semitism, and left-wing anti-Semitism. In order to unpack this further, the author writes: "You should realize that criticism of Israel per se is not anti-Semitic, but rather when anti-Zionism uses anti-Semitic caricatures or singles out Israel for unwarranted criticism" (Lazarus 2003:22). In a comparative exercise, the author presents images drawn from Nazi German paper *Sturmer* cartoons, depicting a black spider biting into human bodies that have been trapped in the spider web. The black spider has a six-pointed star, the Shield of David, drawn on its back.

This cartoon is placed beside two images drawn from the Palestinian Arabic language papers *Al-Ayyam* and *Al-Hayat Al Jadida*. The first image, entitled "Security Wall," is of a spider web, in the center of which sits the image of the six-pointed star, the Shield of David. The second image is of a large black spider with a white six-pointed Shield of David on its back walking across a *Keffiyeh*[136]. The students are then prompted to compare the two cartoons. The exercise offers the following explanation:

> Whilst not comparing the Holocaust with events in the Middle East, we can see similar anti-Semitic themes reoccurring in Palestinian propaganda. Compare the examples of Nazi propaganda and Palestinian/Arab propaganda below: What are the similar themes you see? How are Jews depicted? What themes of anti-Semitism can you see? (Lazarus 2003:23)

[136] This traditional headscarf has become largely affiliated with the Palestinian national movement.

The new anti-Semitism is largely understood as a form of hatred and obsessive criticism directed at the Jewish State of Israel and Zionism, as a substitute for hatred directed toward the Jewish people (Aizenberg 2013:212). Here the author is differentiating what he calls "legitimate" criticism of Israel from new anti-Semitism. According to the author, this distinction between legitimate and illegitimate criticism of Israel proves to be an arduous task. Most particularly, the adoption of Resolution 3379 by the UN General Assembly in 1975, which stated, "Zionism is a form of racism and racial discrimination" is seen as the beginning of this new anti-Semitic discourse (Aizenberg 2013:212). This assignment is followed by a selection of exercises, which place the political and military decisions taken by the State of Israel alongside actions taken by other nation-states in a type of corresponding analysis.

Violence, War, and Terrorism

The actions of the Israel Defense Forces in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are then contextualized in a comparative analysis of actions taken by other countries. For example, in the section entitled *Like All Other Countries,* the author contrasts the policy choices of the Israeli government with those taken by the governments in the student's country of birth. Lazarus writes:

> [...] the purpose of this class is to compare actions taken by Israel at a time of national emergency with actions taken by other countries. You will examine historical situations in which Canada, and the United States have perceived themselves under threat. You will study the action taken during these periods and will be able to conclude that Israel's present reaction to Palestinian terrorism is far from draconian. (Lazarus 2003:122)

This is followed by an overview of the Japanese internment camps in Canada, The War Measure Act invoked in Canada (FLQ crisis) and the US Patriot Act. The section that follows this comparison offers a synopsis of each of the "Israel Policy Cards" in which targeted killings, the "security fence," and demolitions of Palestinian homes are all presented with arguments for and against these acts.

Drawing on selected images, the curriculum stimulates a close identification with the sufferings of Jewish Israelis through images of the aftermath of suicide bombings on a bus (Lazarus 2003:217), a bombed cafe with a partially burned stroller (Lazarus 2003:219), or shot-up cars on the tunnel road between Jerusalem and Bethlehem (Lazarus 2003:202). These images all have people in their frame, triggering empathy for the victims, which one may assume are Jewish Israelis.

The photos which appear under the titles "targeted killings," "the security fence," and "house demolitions" are not peopled. Instead, the images of the force and impact of the Israeli military presence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are primarily of inanimate objects such as a bulldozer and pile of rubble (house demolition), a high cement wall (security fence), and a flying helicopter over a street (targeted killings). The lack of human presence in these photos inhibits the same type of emotional response of empathy. The unit concludes with the following statements:

> As you know, Israel has faced for the last three years wave after wave of terrorist attacks. On an average day in Israel there were over 45 warnings of planned terrorist activity. There have also been periods where Israel has faced five attempted suicide bombings a day. How do you think Canada or America would react to such a situation? At the beginning of this class, we began with the question, whether you thought Israel's policy was too violent. Has your opinion changed during this class? If so, why? What did you learn about Canadian and American policy? Can we conclude that Israel is really like any other democratic country, which has to weigh the problem of democracy with defending its civilian population? (Lazarus 2003:224)

It is worth mentioning that Lazarus begins the subsection *The Dilemmas of Two Peoples in One Land* with an understanding of the diversity of perspectives and solutions for the problem of land sharing or land division in Israel/Palestine. As the preceding analysis reveals the curriculum performs the difficult task of reconciling the idealized homeland with the realities of the State of Israel.

Despite the efforts of the Israel Advocacy curriculum to prepare Jewish high schools students for the new anti-Semitism and equip students to defend the State of Israel in public debate, the curriculum was not widely used.[137] The BJEC originally commissioned the Israel Advocacy curriculum in 2003, and trained teachers who would enter the schools and teach the course. This initiative, of training teachers specifically for Israel advocacy, lasted two years. After this time, the curriculum remains a resource available to Jewish high schools, and while the schools continued to have access to the texts, it was not included in the high school curriculum as a course in its entirety. One reason for its declining popularity is the rapidly changing political situation in Israel; in contrast a text-based curriculum is by nature static. In addition, the author relied heavily on web-based resources to link teachers to class discussion questions, maps as well as other resources. Many of these links are no longer active.

Equally, Israel advocacy – taught as a distinct subject – targets students with little foundational knowledge. As Michael Bard and Jeff Dawson write, Israel advocacy is primarily an opportunity to engage Jewish students with limited Jewish knowledge. They write,

> Most students are inclined to support Israel but have little knowledge – we have an opportunity to fill empty heads…There is no need to respond to a lot of specific issues; students need very basic information about Israel, especially relating to Israeli democracy and the treatment of its citizens…We need to show how the relationship with Israel benefits the United States…Settlements are a non-issue. (Bard & Dawson 2012:33)

Given the centrality of Israel in Montreal mainstream Jewish day schools by grade eleven Jewish students are well acquainted with the ethnosymoblic structure and shared meaning of the State of Israel. Moreover, the by this time in their education high school students may not only be familiar with this shared meaning they may have internalized attachment to the State of Israel as an intrinsic element of their identity, which in turn may influence how they act and behave. This

[137] In fact, this may be similar to the situation in the US. According to Michael Bard "no matter what size the campus, or how many Jewish students; you rarely get more than 20 students to become Israel advocates. Very few students have the time, energy and passion to devote their scarce college time to advocacy for Israel. Those who do get involved are often the best and the brightest, and will become community leaders at some point, but no one has found the silver bullet to motivate larger numbers of students to become involved" (Bard & Dawson 2012:28)

is significantly different from a student population holding limited knowledge of the symbolic system.

In his article entitled "The Jewish Addiction," Lazarus writes Israel advocacy, is a means of fostering Jewish identity, particularly for unaffiliated or secular people within the Jewish Diasporas.

> Indeed, it would be fair to speculate that for many secular Jews, the practice of Israel advocacy provides a means of Jewish identification. Advocating for Israel provides an attractive alternative to praying at synagogue. Others, if not many, see Israel as a security check against an exaggerated threat of anti-Semitism (Lazarus 2007:23).

In Montreal Jewish day schools Israel is already an intrinsic force for Jewish identification. Yet, reflecting on two studies on the current practices of Israel education in Jewish day schools conducted by the Melton Center for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University, Pomson writes that advocacy for Israel has "disappointingly" become the prime focus of education about Israel. He writes: "this task is increasingly focused on preparation for a singular, similarly limited performance: advocacy for Israel during the few years that students spend on university campuses" (Pomson 2010:264). More than ever, one singular approach to teaching Israel predominates, that of Israel advocacy (Pomson 2010). Moreover,

> The advocacy bandwagon betrays not only a decline in attachment but also a loss of self-confidence. Ostensibly concerned with preparing students to persuade others of the case for Israel, curriculum analysis and site-based interviews reveal that these efforts seem no less intended to convince day school students themselves of Israel's merits. (Pomson 2010:265)

Given this context, American writer Peter Beinart (2012) points out the need to establish foundational instructions of Judaism before training for Israel advocacy. Beinhart writes:

> […] Israel advocacy generally fails. For one thing, it is difficult to teach Jewish students to defend the Jewish state when they have not been taught to care much about Judaism itself. Second, it is intellectually insulting to tell young Jews who have been raised to

> think for themselves that they should start with the assumption that Israeli policy is justified and then work backward to figure out why. Third, since young American Jews – more than their elders - take Jewish power for granted, the victimhood narrative simply doesn't conform to what they see in their own lives or in the Middle East. (Beinart 2012:7)

Beinart concludes that caring about Israel, and the liberal-democratic values inherent in Israel's Declaration of Independence, must derive from a solid knowledge of the texts and traditions of Judaism (Beinart 2012:183).

Citing Montreal as one of the successful sites of Jewish day school education, Beinart calls on U.S. Jewry to re-engage Jewish youth in Judaism. The relevance of the distancing hypothesis put forward by Kelman and Cohen (2009) may not only bring into question pedagogy or curriculum, but the ability of Israel education curricula developers and day school educators to reckon Israel as an intrinsic element to Jewish identity without first building up Jewish identity - through the use of ethnosymbolism of destruction and redemption - to frame the idea of the nation. Ethno-national continuity is expressed as a major legitimating factor within the State of Israel and the Jewish Diaspora. A crucial link in this narrative of continuity is the use of the symbolic repertoire of Judaism by the national movement of Zionism.

This returns us to the question of how the context in which the Diaspora population is situated effects the teaching of the idea of the nation? Could it be that Lazarus misinterprets how members of the Montreal Jewish Diaspora broadly imagine the State of Israel? Support and defense for the State of Israel are already a commonly held attachment within the Montreal Jewish community; however, allegiance to the state is not expressed through political attachment, but through attachment to people. This is accomplished through fostering relationships, personal experience in Israel, and emotional closeness with Israel. For this reason, programs such as school twinning, in which students living in Montreal have access to peers their age living in Israel, is crucial in preparing students to face the multifaceted and complex realities of life in Israel.

According to the 2010 Montreal Jewish Community study by the Federation CJA, 56 percent of Montreal Jews surveyed did not engage in rallies to support Israel (Table 7); yet, when asked if feeling close to Israel was important, 63 percent of people surveyed said it was very important, and 25 percent responded that it was somewhat important.

Table 7: "During the past year did you attend rallies or engage in activities in support of Israel?" (Shahar 2010)

	Total	Orthodox	Traditional	Conservative	Reform/ Recon.	Secular
Yes	42%	53%	50%	41%	35%	27%
No	56%	46%	48%	58%	62%	72%
Not sure	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%

Only 4 percent of Montreal Jews surveyed said that feeling close to Israel was not important at all (Table 8). Moreover, 74 percent of Jewish Montrealers surveyed had visited Israel; 24 percent had been once; 32 percent had been 2-4 times; and 23 percent had visited 5 times or more (Shahar 2010:80). These numbers reveal a well-developed common stance on the centrality of Israel within the Montreal Jewish community.

Table 8: "How important to you is feeling close to the State of Israel?" (Shahar 2010)

	Total	Orthodox	Traditional	Conservative	Reform/ Recon.	Secular
Very Important	63%	78%	73%	61%	50%	43%
Somewhat Important	25%	17%	23%	30%	35%	30%
A little Important	6%	2%	2%	5%	9%	12%
Not at all important	4%	2%	1%	3%	5%	12%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%

Despite low attendance at political rallies, taken as a whole, Israel holds a central place in Montreal Jewish identity. As these tables reiterate, the link to Israel for the Montreal Jewish community is based on emotionality and will, not necessarily political advocacy or activity. Lazarus, the author of the Israel Advocacy, speaks to this fact:

> What is important is to deepen the connection between the Jewish people and Israel, to relate that it is a family relationship. I tell the participants, "If you find Israel annoying, it's because we're family. Also, the pride you feel is a family pride." Sometimes Israel can be like the family member no one knows at the wedding, but if people buy into the family *relationship,* we've done our job. (Borschel-Dan 2012)

Lazarus's statement clearly identifies his view that the most effective way to "sell" Israel, is to draw on the emotional linkage of kinship relations. In other words, co-responsibility, or reciprocal obligation, becomes the means of connecting diaspora communities in a way that transcends their location, wherein political unity surpasses locality (Werbner 1998). It is this mutual obligation, not relocating to the Jewish homeland, which shores up the idea of the nation as taught in mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools.

Challenges to the Social Construction of Jewish Identity through Identification with Israel

The main challenge to the project of constructing a diasporic national identity - rooted in an attachment to the territory of Israel - is the fact that is a project of the imagination (future) and memory (history) rather than rooted in daily life (present day-to-day reality). Montreal students are disconnected from daily life in Israel, and consequently they do not experience directly the institutions, behaviours, ideas, etc. that led to the formation of Israeli national consciousness. For them it is a leap of the imagination and the cultivation of historical memory. For this reason, the development of diaposra nationalism in Montreal day school students – particularly as a central and integral element to Jewish identity - faces crucial challenges. These challenges are due to the fact that :1) Israel remains an abstraction of memory and imagination; 2), that the ex-patriot Israelis and *schlihim* who teach them are in many ways alien to them; and, 3), there are many more immediate sources of competing forms of identity and solidarity in Canadian society.

Consequently, Jewish educators who seek to ensure that diaspora nationalism remains an integral part of the identity of Montreal Jewish day school students must face the challenges of teaching a national identity to students who are physically removed from the homeland. Montreal students experience Israel as a symbol more than a reality. In diaspora nationalism, attachment to a symbolic Israel may lead Jewish students living in the diaspora to become attached to an *idea* of Israel instead of the *reality* of the state as experienced by Israelis. This problem is seen most acutely in the development of diaspora-based "Armchair Zionists". Educators stress the need to balance curriculum with experience reveals a potential disconnection between the imagined Israel that students' encounter in the classroom and the real complexities of a nation state.

Armchair Zionists

As the following interview indicates, some Jewish educators would like to see a more nuanced approach to national attachment. Karen Schonberg is one such example. Having grown up in Jerusalem with a Quebec-born Jewish mother and Israeli father, Schonberg immigrated to Montreal permanently in the early 2000s. She holds and BA in History, and an MA in Literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Schonberg has been working as a curriculum developer in Montreal Jewish education for the past five years. She attributes the success of student Hebrew language acquisition and attachment to the State of Israel as homeland to the incorporation of Israeli teachers into Jewish day schools. Schonberg said,

> Teachers from Israel have a passion for what they teach. They convey the love they have to their students... Israel advocacy is an unintentional by-product of any of our curricula; it's more a priority to foster love and a sense of belonging to Israel. The focus is on an emotional linkage. (Karen Schonberg, personal interview, April 10, 2013)

Schonberg explains that the sentimental linkage, while conveyed by a teacher's own love for Israel, also requires that the student experience Israel first hand. During our interviews, Schonberg made reference to an often quoted Israeli author as he articulates how seeing and experiencing are acts of fostering mutuality. The novelist she referred to was Amos Oz, and the poem was "Leaving a Mark." In it, Oz writes:

> I know: It is impossible to "educate to love"—
> you cannot "educate someone to love the land,"
> nor can you "educate someone to love the scenery."
> With love, you can "infect" someone else.
> Sometimes love can be awakened,
> sometimes, but not with a strong hand,
> not with an outstretched arm, and not with burning anger—
> rather through an approach of mutuality.

Here, Oz expresses the relation of reciprocity between people and land. As Oz writes, land itself effects an individual, changes an individual, and marks an individual as it is touched and changed by that individual. After reading this poem, one may understand that if there is no actual encounter, there is no mutuality; there is no love, no commitment. However, in her reference to it, Schonberg speaks of the real difficulty that Oz's poem brushes past.

An Israeli living in the Diaspora, Schonberg is careful to explain what may happen without the actual experience of living in, and not just visiting or learning about, the land of Israel. Schonberg identifies the difference between Jews in the diaspora who love the land of Israel held and those who live there. As Schonberg herself explains:

> We need to balance curriculum about Israel with Israel experience, otherwise we get armchair Zionists who say: "don't give away the Golan Heights, don't give away Sinai," without ever seeing the wall that goes right through Jerusalem or being in Beersheba when the rockets are falling. They don't get a sense of what it feels like to stop your car and get out and stand in remembrance at *Yom HaZikaron*, or *Yom HaShoah*. (Karen Schonberg, personal interview, April 10, 2013)

Her comment supports the notion that a curriculum, while effective in conveying a common idea of the nation and creating emotional allegiance to the Jewish people, does little to show the daily reality of Israelis or impress upon students the political issues of compromise and power-sharing required of a nation state. Jewish students located in Montreal may, then, form an attachment to the symbol of the land of Israel, the map, and remain unable to understand or consent to the

territorial compromises faced by Israelis. In this way, attachment to the land of Israel becomes representative rather than real, because in the idea of the nation land itself comes to represent the longevity of the nation.

This may reveal why pedagogy that draws on ethnosymbolism may be effective in the project of nation-building. Abstracted from the difficult realities of daily life, the State of Israel may become an idealized place instead of a nation-state like others, living with ambiguity, moral failures and success, self-interest and noble aspirations. In this way the diaspora support for Israel as a homeland may actually come to inhibit political processes. As Lasensky writes,

> The conventional wisdom is that Diaspora [Jews] are more conservative and more strident than their co-nationalists back in the homeland. Therefore, Diasporic communities are often assumed to represent obstacles to conflict resolution, rather than serving as instruments of peacemaking. (Lasensky 2007:142)

Schonberg's concerns about "armchair-Zionists" clearly points to the difficulty of balancing commitment to the nation while fostering student engagement in the complex realities faced by the State of Israel and its actual inhabitants. The phenomenon of "armchair-Zionists" points to *the* central difference between nationalism and diasporic nationalism, which is territorial occupation—and the personal risks and stakes of living in Israel today.

Equally, when students living in the diaspora encounter fundamental criticisms (delegitimation) of the state of Israel in Canadian society, educators may seek to reinforce the centrality of diaspora nationalism through Israel advocacy programs. Yet, as Israel advocacy programs are criticized for pushing the merits of the state of Israel at the cost of obfuscating the reality of Israel (Pomson 2010; Beinart 2012), this type of curricula may increase the disconnect between the diaspora national identity cultivated in day school students and the national identity of Israelis living in the homeland.

Israeli Ex-patriots and Schlihim

Similarly, due to the fact that Montreal students are not living in the State of Israel, they do not share the same cultural horizon as the Israeli ex-patriots and *schlihim* who come to teach in

Montreal day schools. Conversely, Israeli teachers are often disconnected from the experience of children growing up in Montreal the Jewish diaspora. This issue of cultural differences between Israeli teachers and Canadian students is demonstrated in one of the first surveys conducted on Montreal Jewish Education. In it, Jewish Montrealer Herbert Zvi Berger writes:

> The Canadian child is not like the Israeli child; his value systems, his life style, his priorities, are not those of his Israeli counterpart. There is a vast societal difference with which the Israeli teacher is often unable to cope…The Israeli is often bewildered by the religious focus of Canadian Jewry's identity, by the emphasis on ritual and by the view of Israel as a spiritual center and not necessarily as a personal national homeland. (Berger 1972:148)

This distinction between Israel as a spiritual center and not a personal homeland for the Diaspora student may continue to pose a problem for Israeli teachers' intent on fostering a love of Israel in their students. Their pedagogical approach may not prove the most effective solution. As Rodman explains:

> Israelis resident in the local communities fill the large majority of teaching posts. Numerous informants expressed, along with the anticipated reservations about the appropriateness of those teachers, a sanguine outlook about the ability of many of them, especially those with pedagogic training, to adapt well to meeting the challenges of their task. (Rodman 2003:16)

As Jewish day schools are often religious in orientation, Israeli teachers are called upon to model traditional Jewish values as part of their job description as a teacher of Jewish Studies and Hebrew language. This expectation is not consistently imposed or felt by teachers of the general curriculum (Pomson 2000). The implicit moral expectation imposed on Jewish Studies and Hebrew language teachers places an additional burden on Israeli teachers.

Moreover, for many Jewish educators, teaching the love of Israel becomes more challenging as the students age and are exposed to media and social influences, which do not reflect the loyalty and sympathy toward the plight of Israel that they may encounter in their classrooms.

> The realities of Israeli politics and culture, the clash of religious and secular Jews, and the seemingly endless cycle of violence of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict all contribute to an intricate landscape that is difficult to teach, and resisted by many educators because they lack the knowledge base to teach it – and more importantly perhaps, in their view it threatens to undermine their underlying goal of cultivating love. (Grant 2011:5)

The development of a student's capacity to approach the realities of the State of Israel may work against teachers and educators who hold a certain disposition toward Israel, and seek to infuse students with a love of Israel (Grant 2011). This view of Israel as a triumph, and "living achievement" may not allow, or push, educators to engage in the multiple meanings of Israel discursively or candidly. There is simply too much at stake.

Teachers may downplay relevant questions or criticisms from students for fear of cultivating ambivalence, or worse - alienation, in the students (Israel 2008). Many Jewish day school teachers and educators seek initially to instil a love of Israel before inviting students to assess Israel critically. The intention here is best described by Meyer, who writes that students must first be taught to love Israel before they are taught to question its complexities: "Choice [...] follows after commitment" (Meyer 2003: 154). In other words, students must first be rooted in their understanding of the vital place Israel has in the life of the Diaspora Jew. Although I have shown that through the cultivation of diasporic nationalism, Israel remains an integral component of Montreal Jewish education, I still need to address the issue of the continued existence of the diaspora despite the establishment of a territorial Jewish homeland. Classical diasporic nationalism, after all, was built upon the premise that return to the homeland—however desirable—was impossible. As Smith writes,

> Unlike homeland ethnic communities or nations, diaspora ethnies lack physical unity, being scattered across the borders of several states, and have or had little or no recognition for their claim to return to an historic homeland. Moreover, long years of political subjection in host states had made them unaccustomed to the exercise of autonomy. (Smith 2010:6)

Montreal Jews, however, can return to the homeland (make *aliya)* but, with very few exceptions, they do not. Consequently, we must now examine the unresolved issue of cultivating a form of diasporic nationalism that is disconnected from making *aliya.*

Making Aliya

Despite the reliance on classical Zionist ideas of Israel as the homeland of all Jews, making *aliya* - relocating from the Diaspora to Israel - is not considered an aim of mainstream Jewish education in Montreal (Eveyln Ride, personal interview, June 13, 2013). During our interviews, teachers and educators in Montreal Jewish day schools were asked about the place of *aliya* in their teaching. Only one educator identified making *aliya* a probable outcome of Jewish day school education. Overwhelmingly, the teachers stated that making *aliya* is not an intentional outcome.

> It's not taught... You see, if you were to teach it as a goal, you're saying, "You should go to Israel. You should go to Israel. All Jews should move to Israel." And in that case, it becomes a very judgmental type of curriculum. It's not presented in that way. It's presented as, "we should love Israel. We should be committed to Israel. We should be connected to Israel." But it's not, "Everybody should live in Israel." That's really not a part of the curriculum. (Eveyln Ride, personal interview, January 24, 2013)

Developing a deeper connection with the State of Israel does not include moving there. As Burt Katz says, "Making *aliya* is not one of our goals. There are some kids who go. We encourage them if they want to go" (Burt Katz, personal interview, June 10, 2013). While obviously invested in teaching attachment to the nation, there remains ambivalence toward the end goal of Zionism, namely the ingathering of Jews from the Diaspora. In this way, teaching the idea of the nation is separate from teaching the end of the Diaspora. As Rabinowitz shares,

> I don't think making *aliya* is an aim of education. Many kids, when they are finished here, they love to do a year in Israel. Some stay and some come back. *Aliya* will not come out from Jewish education - that's for sure, but the love of Israel? Yes. We do the best we can do to build that fire up. (Ariel Rabinowitz, personal interview, April 10, 2013)

Here, the value rests on fostering attachment to the idea of Israel but not relocating to it. As Levi shares, "My goal with the kids is to have the pride in that land, to protect it. Not to go there and join the army or anything, but to be advocates of Israel" (Levi 2013).

Yurkovich expresses that his own conviction about the importance of making *aliya* is in contrast to the parental expectations of the students in his class. He said:

> For me yes [it is a important], but I don't bring it to the children. It depends on the house they're coming from. Don't forget, maybe they are third generation here... I cannot go into that because I don't know what background the kids are coming from. I do not want confrontation, because I had an experience a few years ago where a father said, "Do you think I'm going to let my son make *aliya*?" I said, "I never said to your son to make *aliya*. Apparently he's loving what I'm teaching him." [...] *Aliya*, if I would be allowed, I would have all the kids begging their parents to go, at least to go visit there [...] I don't even know how to tell them how important it is to make *aliya*, but one thing is certain: how important it is to support that land. If you can, with money; if you can, with visits; if you can, through buying products from there [...] that, for sure, is instilled in them, for sure. They will tell me many times that, "I went to shop with my mother. I told her to go to the section where we can buy Israeli wine." So you see, something is getting in there; something is set in there. We have to support that land. We have no choice. This I say: *Eretz* Israel is our backbone and it cannot be broken. History has showed us that if that backbone is broken, there is no safety for the Jewish people: nowhere. Nowhere, nowhere, nowhere. It's a fact. We know that. (Zach Yurkovich, personal interview, February, 26, 2013)

Yurokovich's recount of the clash of interests between the parent of his student and his personal understanding reveals a potential disconnection between the values held by Israeli teachers and the parents of Jewish day school students, and moreover – with his private conviction that making *aliya* is both important and central to Jewish identity. Yurkovich relies on the concept of supporting the state from abroad.

This type of economic state support has been termed the New *Chalutziut.*[138] Originally, the Zionist "...*halutz* (pioneer) was portrayed as the bearer of the national mission, paving the way for national redemption" (Liebman and Don-Yehiya 1983). When speaking of the *new chalutziut*[139]*,* one is referring to a Diaspora-based economic Zionist pioneer. As Azieli writes:

> It is still possible to be a Zionist pioneer in Israel, a *chalutz,* but the new *chalutziut* is economic in nature. Israel's new *chalutz*, for example, is a pioneer in advanced technology and design, or the salesman of Israeli products who allows Israel to compete on world markets. (Azrieli 2008:177)

Thus the new *chalutz* may live in Montreal and purchase Israeli products or make financial contributions to the state while still identifying as Zionist. Yet, when pressed about the complexity of teaching Zionism as part of the curriculum without addressing the concept that the establishment of the State of Israel is to be the end of the Diaspora, Ride said:

> It's complicated. It is. Because you can say, "you're hypocritical." Do you have to live in Israel to be a Zionist? I think not, but others could make a very good argument that it is hypocritical. But you also can't say to the kids, "You should live in Israel." Parents have entrusted their kids to you; who are you to say, "Your kids should live in Israel"? So it's dicey, and it's really not something that's [...] I wouldn't say it's a goal. (Evelyn Ride, January 24, 2013)

The difficulties of teaching a classical Zionist idea of the nation in the Diaspora may be downplayed by the fact that Canada, and by extension Quebec, is an ally of Israel. As it stands, there is no tension between supporting Israel by buying Israeli goods, traveling to Israel, or making contributions to the State of Israel and being a resident of Canada or Quebec. Moreover, the Jewish population has had a longstanding presence in Quebec, and families are deeply rooted and committed to developing local Jewish community life.

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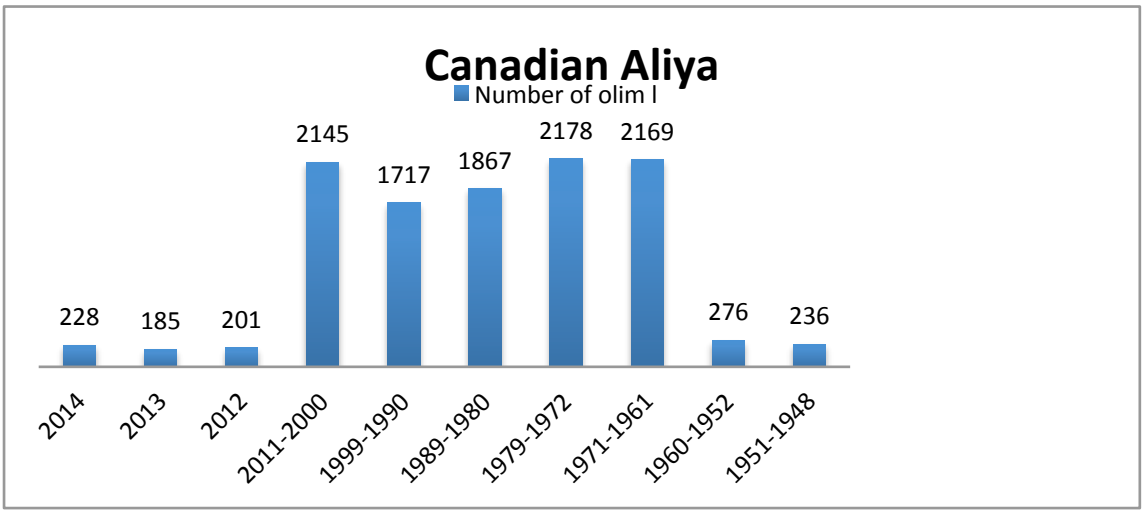
[138] The term *chalutzuit* means "pioneering" or "pioneering spirit", originally used by Zionists in the first and second aliya movements, has been self-referentially appropriated by the West Bank Jewish settlers, and entered into the political rhetoric of the Religious Zionist party Gush Emunim.

[139] *Chalutzuit* is not restricted to economic support. Canadians still immigrate to Israel, which is called making *aliya*, or becoming *olim*. Over eight thousand Canadians have moved to Israel since its establishment in 1948.

In the case of Zionism, the Labour, Religious Zionists, and Revisionist Zionist movements have equally embraced the idea of an end of the Disapora. This can be seen most clearly in the Labour Zionist movement, which originally focused on the "ingathering of the exiles" and the end of the Diaspora, and eventually came to acknowledge and accept the ongoing existence of the Diaspora. According to Shelef, this shift in political perspective of the Labour movement is evidenced as early as the 1950s, when David Ben Gurion began speaking of the "ingathering of *the* exile" (Shelef 2010:148). Shelef writes, "[…] the shift to individuals from the Jewish collectivity minimized the mission of eradicating the Diaspora" (Shelef 2010:148). According to Smith's theory, territorialism – living in the territory – is a central element of nationalism. In the case of diasporic nationalism, the assumption is that one is not going to live in the territory.

This notion of returning to the land of Israel, as a choice granted to everyone, is pivotal to the idea of diaspora nationalism as taught in Montreal Jewish day schools. In this case, making *aliya* not only runs into parental objections, from the view point of Jewish educators it may not be seen as "realistic" or compelling. As demonstrated, moving to the State of Israel - making *aliya* - is neither an intended nor desired outcome of teaching Hebrew language and Israel education in Montreal Jewish day schools. Nor is making *aliya* a general trend among Canadian Jews. According to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics, roughly 200 Canadian Jews move to Israel every year, a statistic that has been relatively stable since the founding of the state.

TABLE 9: Canadian Immigrants to Israel 1948-2014 Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2014)



Competing Forms of Identity Construction

As noted previously, Montreal Jewish students hold multifaceted identities; they experience and express identity in numerous ways, and Israel education is only one social force influencing them. Consequently, even when they have been exposed to those fundamental social processes that Smith identifies for creating diasporic nationalism and the problem of missing territorialisation has been addressed, the cultivation of diaspora nationalism may still be challenged by competing sources of identity construction. For example, by living in the province of Quebec, Montreal Jews face competing nationalisms, competing horizons, competing identities and solidarities. Graduating Jewish day school students may be compelled to enter a more religiously orthodox life, and live within the confines of a distinctly autonomous religious community. Other graduates of Jewish day schools may encounter the plurality and diversity of greater Montreal and marry outside the Jewish community. This may result in a more divided, nuanced, or muted Jewish identity as a result of intermarriage or distance from the residential density of "Jewish" Montreal (Anctil 2011). Even in Montreal, where Jews interact with each other Jews more frequently and "systematically" than in other Canadian Jewish communities (Anctil 2011:227), the draws of a culturally diverse, vibrant metropolis may lead students to

allocate more importance to other forms of identity. This may be particularly true of students who seek to overcome a sense of separateness and find a sense of belonging in the business, arts, or technology outside the confines of the local Jewish community. As Montreal Jews have historically been perceived as outsiders, constantly in transition, but never entering the larger culture of Quebec (Bauer 1984: 400), Montreal Jewish youth may actively distance themselves from collective forms of Jewish identity in order to integrate and be accepted into the larger society.

Moreover, specific challenges to the formation of diasporic nationalism that are found in Montreal today may include more general trends facing a variety of Jewish communities - such as the weakening of Jewish collective identity and the strengthening of individualism. As Alon Gal writes,

> During the last three decades or so, the conspicuous ethnic element of Jewish identity has weakened, while the religious one has grown stronger. This trend of increasing religiosity at the expense of ethnicity can also be associated with a greater emphasis on individualism, soul-searching and the quest for personal self-realization. These tendencies have partly replaced collective/community orientations in general and attachment to Israel in particular. (2010:67)

Thus the focus on individuality challenges collective forms of identity formation, including diaspora nationalism. Equally, if ethnic identity is changeable, depending on the social context in which an individual is located (Nagle 1994), the out migration of Montreal Jews to surrounding provinces, namely Ontario, or to the US (where the community ethos among Jews is weaker), could increase the focus on individualism. Moreover, the centrality of diaspora nationalism as an integral element of Jewish identity may be challenged simply through the act of relocation. As noted in Chapter 3, institutional completeness of the Montreal Jewish community (Jedwab and Rosenberg 1992), isolation from other local communities, namely the francophone community of Quebec (Jedwab 2008),), and high ritual observance (Shahar 2014) have all led to a strong attachment of Montreal Jews to Israel (Anctil 2011:234). The high rates of affiliation, diaspora nationalism and day school attendance in Montreal may be construed as a byproduct of the historical marginalization of Jews in Quebec society. As Chaim Waxman writes, “the stronger

the ties to Israel, the stronger the collective identity" (Waxman 2010:81), once outside the confines of Montreal, this collective sense of identity may be eroded through the processes of assimilation.

Equally challenging is the fact that contemporary identities are more and more defined by networks rather than traditional boundaries of territory, religion, family, clan, and nation. Given the revolutionary effects of technology on global interconnectedness - evidenced by the creation of Internet based "virtual communities" - the social construction of identity is no longer secured through traditional processes (Conversi 2012). As Conversi writes, "Just as globalisation erodes and destroys older and traditional boundaries, new boundaries are created almost instantly in response" (Conversi 2012: 1358). In many ways Montreal Jewish educators have integrated technology – such as broadband teleconferencing and social media– as a way to compete with other social processes and reinforce diaspora nationalism in the digital age. While technology can be used to increase the link between the diaspora and homeland – in what Eriksen (2007) calls "Internet nationalism", it is equally a source for connecting students with various other forums for identity construction. Jewish day school students located in Montreal may more readily affiliate with a variety of sub-cultures – as gamers, graphic designers, or environmental activists – over and above a diaspora national identity. While, as Conversi states, "no 'virtual' community can ever replace the density and effectiveness of daily face-to-face interaction" (2012:1364), there are many distractors and competitors – both virtual and local - in terms of the construction of identity.

Conclusion

The focus of this chapter on the pedagogical practices initiated by the BJEC and Montreal Jewish educators reveals a concerted effort to prioritize Israel education and sustain and communicate a common stance on the idea of the nation. The educational pedagogies rely on the pre-modern ethnosymbolic structure - the system of symbols, myths, and memories – to organize and convey a shared meaning of the nation. Programs like school twinning, Israel experience, positioning Israelis in the diaspora classroom, and Israel Advocacy contribute to the achievement of maintaining the central role of Israel in Montreal Jewish education.

As Israelis predominantly teach Jewish Studies and Hebrew language, they are positioned as symbolic bridges between Jews living Montreal and Jews living in Israel, and between religious and national forms of identity. Equally, the project of school twinning allows students living in the diaspora to forge relationships with peers living in Israel. These types of programing build up kinship relations while overcoming geographical and cultural barriers. The building up of relationships around a shared semiotic system creates a further attachment to the idea of the nation. As Gabriella Elgenius explains not only symbols but people (real or found in myths) can become objects imbued with symbolic meanings. This happens when the "collective sentiments" (myths, social memory, social values) become "incarnate" in the people themselves (Elgenius 2005:104). In Elgenius's reading, people may come to symbolically represent a nation – Israeli students and teachers may represent the state of Israel for students living in the Diaspora. In this way attachment to Israelis builds up a national sentiment for the state of Israel. This process of transmission is how nation-building occurs (Smith 2009).

Similarly, in Israel Experience programs like the MOL emphasis is placed on the transmission – from one generation to the next – of symbols, myths, and social memories. When the narrative of exile and redemption, which structures the idea of the nation, is embodied and internalized by student participants it reflects the structure of the *seder – the* Jewish act of remembrance. By uncovering an underlying structure in these pedagogies we can discern how ethnosymbolism functions. More particularly, "the way in which the various cultural legacies and traditions of previous generations of ethnic and national communities provide essential frames of reference for subsequent generations whose members adapt them to changing conditions and new challenges" (Smith 2009:134). In this way the central principle of ethnosymbolism – the continuance and transformation of the nation – is demonstrated in these educational programs. As evidenced many of the Israel educational programs initiated and fostered in Montreal Jewish day schools contain each of the necessary elements for the construction of diaspora national identity, and even include strategies to overcome the issue of missing territorialisation. Yet, diaspora nationalism is by and large a defensive position (Conversi 2012:1358) and the narrative constructs of the State of Israel as the redemption, a victorious end to exile, often overshadows the stark and challenging realities faced by Israelis.

In cases where the nation-state has already been established diaspora nationalism is often positioned in a defensive position, asserting legitimacy of state boundaries. As Conversi writes,

> "…nationalism within the diasporas is largely conceptualised as a defensive project: its rational claim is that cross-boundary support for ethno-national mobilisation is needed in order to maintain ethnic boundaries perceived to be under threat. On the other hand, long-distance processes tend to involve political actors who are acting a safe distance and who, therefore, do not put their safety at risk, while being eager to promote risky strategies in their homeland. (2012:1359)

An example of curricula that demonstrates Conversi's assertion that diaspora nationalism is a project of defense, one that often involves "risky strategies" to secure or protect the established nation-state boundaries is the Israel Advocacy program.

As this chapter points out, students graduating from day schools may be unprepared for the complex criticism levelled at the State of Israel, which has the potential to counteract the idealization of the homeland that is often typical of Israel education. As discussed in this chapter, programs like Israel Advocacy perform the difficult task of addressing the political reality of Israel in relation to Palestinians and the Palestinian national movement to a Jewish student enrolled in an all-day Jewish high school located in the diaspora. In this Israel Advocacy curriculum, Lazarus sets out to explain military and political actions within the ethnosymbolism of the pre-modern *ethnie*, and to do so, relies, in a perfunctory way, on the narrative of biblical inheritance, as well as the relevant symbols that signify the continuity and longevity of the relationship between the Jewish people and the land of Israel. Students are acquainted with core questions they may encounter in the Palestinian-Israeli debate and are equipped with the key facts to respond to these concerns. However, knowledge about the "other" is presented in the curriculum only for the purposes of political defense. This account simplifies the plight of the Palestinians and the creation of the refugee problem, and reiterates a neo-Zionist narrative (Podeh 2000). Moreover, important divisions within Israel, including internal unrest between non-religious and devout Israelis, or the hierarchy of ethnicity in Israel, are not addressed. The presentation of the social rifts current in Israeli society is absent from the text. There is no mention of small-scale citizen groups forging relationships between Israelis and Palestinians,

cities in which Palestinian citizens and Jewish Israelis coexist, or the demographic changes and developments undergirding much of Israeli policy. Due to the fact that diaspora nationalism holds, by and large, a defensive stance, it may obfuscate the realities that are central to the social construction of Israeli - as opposed to a diasporic - national identity.

Returning to Anthony Smith's theory of nations and nationalism, this chapter has shown the noticeable difference between ethnosymbolism as the root of nationalism and ethnosymbolism as the root of diasporic nationalism. A brief review of Smith's theory reminds us that in order for an ethnie to emerge as a nation certain fundamental social processes must be in place. These include: 1) self definition; 2) the cultivation of a shared symbolic system; 3) territorialisation; 4) a distinct public culture, symbolic codes and common education; and 5) common laws and customs (Smith 2010:5). In the case of diasporic nationalism he writes "With the obvious partial difference of territorialisation, diaspora nations too are dependent on the development of these social processes" (Smith 2001:5). The three mechanisms developed within Montreal Jewish education to overcome the lack of territorialisation covered in this chapter are school twinning programs, Israel experience trips, and relying on the local Israeli ex-patriot community.

Given the uniqueness and newness of the school-twinning program, it is too soon to assess the long-term impact of relationship building between Montreal students and Israeli students. This type of relationship-based programming may link Montreal's students to their Israeli peers through positive shared experiences, and offer students living in the diaspora a more holistic view of life in the State of Israel. This could prove crucial in the coming years, as criticism of the Israel experience trips, such as MOL, increase. Critics of these programs highlight the fact the participants bond over negative experiences of anti-Semitism or holding a familiar enemy (Bar-Shalom 2003). As Israeli professor of Education Yehuda Bar-Shalom argues:

> Interestingly, of the totality of the Jewish culture and experience, what unites young people most is the unfair treatment of the Jew by the Other, all over the world... It seems as if we need a common enemy in order to bring together different Jewish population groups. Programs like "March of the Living" use a negative historical experience as the primary root of the curriculum. (Bar-Shalom 2003:12)

Among others, Bar-Shalom is calling for the creation of alternative mechanisms for attaching students located in the diaspora to the territory of Israel. The most salient mechanism for overcoming the issue of territorialisation in Montreal Jewish education remains bringing Israelis into the day school classrooms.

In effect, Jewish day schools depend on Israelis to function as symbolic representatives of the territory of Israel. As Smith continues, "diaspora nationalisms, like other nationalist movements, can hasten, and even help to forge, the sense of common nationhood, but they cannot create the basic social processes and cultural resources necessary for the realization of nations" (2010:6). Smith writes that this is due to the fact that diaspora nationalism lack "that intimacy of feeling with the landscapes and that sense of secure attachment to the land that is so often manifested among homeland nations" (2010:6). This intimacy of feeling, this attachment to landscape, is embodied in the memories, experiences and expressions of Israelis teaching in the Jewish day school classroom. While recognizing that Israeli ex-patriots are employed as teachers of Hebrew language and Jewish Studies, they equally function as a mechanism for overcoming a central problem of diasporic nationalism – namely, attachment to territory. The reliance on ex-patriot Israelis and *schlihim* to transmit the meaning of the nation to students living in the diaspora may contribute to an idealization of what the nation represents rather than reveal the complex and difficult realities of daily life in Israel. This concern was articulated through the critique of diaspora-based "armchair Zionists" whose attachment to the symbolic Israel may counter efforts to maintain and govern the state. This critique reveals how learning about Israel is not the same as living there. Another limitation to the construction of Jewish identity through identification with Israel can be seen in the parental objections to teaching the end goal of a Zionist narrative – namely, making *aliya.* Montreal Jewish educators largely agree that *aliya* is neither a goal nor intended outcome of Jewish education; yet, the topic of *aliya* reveals the possible contradictions, limitations, and distinctive drawbacks of teaching a Zionist narrative in a diaspora setting. This chapter has revealed how the absence of territorialisation creates certain challenges when cultivating diaspora nationalism and highlighted how Montreal Jewish educators have systematically attempted to overcome those challenges.

In conclusion, Montreal Jewish high schools continue to transmit the idea of the nation to students through intensive Hebrew language acquisition and Jewish Studies, school twinning

initiatives, visit to and exchanges with Israel, the use of Israeli teachers in the classroom, and Israel advocacy. As noted in the introduction, this chapter reveals how this symbolic discourse is the "glue" holding the idea of the nation in place. Furthermore, it demonstrates how the interconnection between Israel and other modes of Jewish identity is a result of a centralized, highly institutional, system of Jewish education.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Rooted in the Diaspora

In the fall of 2013, with Quebec's sovereignty party - the Parti Québécois - elected into office, Jewish Montreal's CJA[140] annual campaign adopted the slogan,"J'y suis. Pour de bon" (in English, "I'm Here. For Good"), which was posted on billboards and banners around the city. While the CJA campaign may or may not have been a direct response to the resurfacing of Quebec nationalism, it did declare that the Montreal Jewish community was both present and home for good. Yet, being rooted in Quebec does not immediately reflect an assimilated, or weak, Jewish identity. Indeed, as this case study has shown, Jewish identity in Montreal is strong, relying as it does on the idea of Israel. As noted in the introduction, this work has been largely formed in an attempt to answer specific questions regarding the role of Israel education in Montreal Jewish education. The discussion has been less about the political reality of the State of Israel, and more about the idea of Israel as taught in a contemporary diaspora context.

While the timing of the CJA advertising campaign may have been inspired by specific political events, the message of rootedness was clear: for Montreal Jewry, Montreal is home. The hoped-for result of a Jewish day school education is that Jews will marry other Jews, participate in synagogue life, visit Israel, and engage in Jewish communities throughout the diaspora (Evans and Lapin 2014). Relocating to Israel is not an intended outcome of fostering diasporic nationalism. What then does the State of Israel symbolize in mainstream Montreal Jewish education?

Ethnosymbolism and Diaspora Nationalism

Social constructionist theorists of nationalism generally view national education as a process of transmitting the collective system of symbols from one generation to the next, a process that Gellner terms "school-transmitted cultures" (quoted in Hirsch 1988:xiv). This study brings new evidence of how this process of transmission functions in a diaspora context. It does so by identifying the essential cultural foundations of nations - the ethnic concept of being chosen;

[140] Combined Jewish Appeal

attachment to land; longing for a past "golden era"; and, the belief in mass sacrifice for communal good (Smith 2000:256) – that frame Israel education curricula and programing. By adopting Smith's argument here, this work reveals the important function of stories, myths, and symbols in diaspora nationalism. From this perspective I argue that, just like territorial nationalism, diaspora nationalism must cultivate political myths that *speak to* the community. A necessary aspect of nation-building is a development of group awareness and identification with the nation. Once the individual's identity is interwoven with that of the nation, the interests and welfare of the nation by extension inform the interests and welfare of the individual (Smith 2009:14). Identity leads to solidarity.

This case study of the Israel education curricula and programs fostered in mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools demonstrates how language, myth, and memory inform a national bond. As Katherine Verdery's writes,

> Instead of seeing nationalism, for instance, in the usual way – as a matter of territorial borders, state-making, 'constructionism,' or resource competition – I see it as part of kinship, spirits, ancestor worship, and the circulation of cultural treasures. (1999:26).

When nationalism is conceived of in terms of kinship relations, religious traditions, and shared attachment to material and symbolic "treasures," the focus moves from the mechanics of modern society (industrialization, urbanization, etc.) to the social bonds and meaning structures that shape and guide the imagination of individuals and organize and inform national groups, both locally and transnationally. In this way ethnosymbology can act as a corrective to the mainline sociological theories of nationalism, in which the ideas, stories, symbols and values of various nationalisms are seen as arbitrary, interchangeable, and even "manufactured". Smith shows that the content of nationalist claims is not arbitrary and provides people with a collective story through which they define their identities and solidarities. These stories—as much as the social structures of modernization—shape nation-states and the modern world; they equally provide the organizing structure for educating successive generations in a diaspora setting.

In using Smith's theory throughout this work, I have attempted to reveal the usefulness of ethnosymbolism as a conceptual tool. I have equally sought to reveal how diaspora nations are

structured along the same principal elements as nations, even though they cannot – in and of themselves – generate all of these elements (Smith 2010:6). Yet, diaspora nationalism equally presses up against the limitations of the idea that national identities evolve from a fixed set of social processes. Diaspora nationalism is dynamic, to a certain extent inherited, and to some extent created (Habib 2004:25). While the creative or "imagined" element of nationalism explains how national myths change over time, the "inherited" element explains why they change so slowly and repeat certain motifs, symbols, and characteristics.

Of course, every analysis –and theoretical framework remains abstract and does not fully reflect reality nor do they allow for the variety and particularity of processes that are constantly combining to shape, and influence the social construction of human identity. That said, ethnosymbolism remains a useful tool. While it cannot determine the outcome – the particular shape, form, and content that will be passed from one generation to the next in a given diaspora setting - ethnosymbolism as it is applied to diaspora communities at least grants insight into the rudimentary dimensions of nations as a force of social organization operating outside the territorial boundaries of the nation-state.

The Role of Religion in Diaspora Identity Construction

This work identifies particular processes through which religion affects the social construction of national identity. Specifically it charts how the cultural heritage of the Jewish pre-modern *ethnie* was transformed by Zionists to generate and elicit communal will and emotion and unify highly divergent Jewish communities around the idea of belonging to a nation-state. This occurred by linking the religious myths of the pre-modern past with the establishment and development of the modern nation (Nygren 1998). In this case, religious ritual, myth, and symbols provide the "internal cohesion and spiritual topography" necessary to national identity (Moshe and Corbu 2014:9). Locating the national symbols of Israel in the pre-modern religious symbolic structure reveals how nations manage, but do not replace, religion; moreover, by tracing how religious myths are used in the social construction of modern national identity demonstrates how religion

and nationalism reinforce national cohesion. Hence, sacred concepts of community and communal destiny remain central to the idea of the nation (Smith 2000:258).

In Jewish day schools, religion, ethnicity, language, and nationalism are interwoven through separate pedagogical practices. This socialization process, in which religion and nationalism reinforce national cohesion, leads students to identify with the State of Israel as a fundamental part of Jewish identity. This study offers a more detailed understanding of the function of religion in the social construction of diaspora national identity. It also reminds us that a nation is a site of social bonds, informed by a diverse range of emotional attachments to a shared symbolic discourse.

While Smith's theory of ethnosymbolism offers a general guide to the dynamics of the social construction of nationalism, it does not explain why nationalisms vary so greatly. We can agree that national identity is constructed by references from the symbols and stories of the past, but it does not explain which symbols or stories are chosen, how they are retold, and why people feel compelled to construct a national identity in the first place. After all, the Jews of Montreal could have created separate, cosmopolitan schools that formed "citizens of the world," or they could have integrated into the public school system allowing their children to become simply "Canadian" or "Québécois." Consequently, in this study we have situated Smith's general theory of the social construction of nationalism in the particular historical, cultural, and social context of Montreal. Three underlying questions inform this study: Is there a common idea of the nation, and if so, what are its defining characteristics? How is the idea of the nation made compelling and transferred from one generation to the next in a diaspora context? and Does the local context of a given diaspora community affect how the idea of the nation is taught?

While the transmission of national identity relies on a historically grounded symbolic discourse, diaspora national identity is also shaped by the current social context of the community. In the case of Montreal, Jewish identity construction occurred within the larger context of various national movements of Quebec, Canada, and Israel. Given the community's social isolation over time and the insecurity that this isolation has engendered, a large number of Montreal Jews have maintained a strong community affiliation, and, despite an ever-decreasing Jewish population, Montreal continues to have the highest percentage of students enrolled in Jewish day schools

across Canada. Through a cultural historical analysis, I then demonstrate how the near institutional autonomy of the Jewish community of Quebec allowed for the bureaucratization of Montreal Jewish education as evidenced through BJEC.

I argue that the Montreal Jewish education bureau – or BJEC – functions as a broker of the idea of the nation and is pivotal in integrating Israel education into all aspects of Jewish day school life (Margolis & Shimon 1997:10). Moreover, due to the interstitial nature of BJEC in the bureaucracy of Jewish education, BJEC works as a "producing agent" (Swidler 2014:308) of the idea of Israel.[141] As a producing agent, BJEC holds the capacity to promote Israel education curricula and programing that uphold a normative idea of the nation in mainstream Jewish day schools. It does so by developing curricula and programing that interweave religion, ethnicity, language, and nationalism. Because the study of the State of Israel is interconnected with other modes of Jewish identity, the idea of the nation can become an integral element of diaspora Jewish identity.

In accordance with Smith, I identify how the four dimensions of a nation: myth of election (chosenness); attachment to homeland (territorialisation); ethnohistory (ethno historical narrative); and, communal destiny (martyrdom and communal sacrifice to obtain national sovereignty) are interwoven into specific Israel education curricula and programs nurtured by BJEC. Therefore, by highlighting the foundational role religion holds in the social construction of national identity, I attend to what Smith terms the "sacred foundations for the modern nationalisms of the classic diasporas" (Smith 2010:22). I argue that these four elements are employed in Israel educational programing with the intention of attaching students living in the diaspora to the State of Israel with the goal of activating diaspora nationalism. Through curricula analysis I demonstrate that in Montreal Jewish day schools, teaching Israel education is not just about territorialisation. Territorialisation is only one of the four identified mechanisms of diaspora nationalism. However, Israel education is equally connected to the myth of election (you are my people and this is the land I give you); ethnohistory (we came from this land, we

[141] As noted in chapter four, while institutions organize and grant coherence to communal life, they also act as agents that spread and manage shared symbolic systems and national narratives (Swindler 2014:301). The social context in which institutions develop influences the way in which the symbolic system – around which a given community bonds - is organized (Swindler 2014:305).

were exiled from it, we are destined to return to it), and communal destiny (we belong to this land—via the right of return and, if we remain in the diaspora, via support for the State of Israel).

I then show how Israel education developed for mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools – that is curricula and programing that teach about the subject of the State of Israel – expand pre-modern myths drawn directly from Judaic sources and Jewish history to promote identification with the State of Israel. In this case, Israel education is a pedagogical process of framing the national narrative (the idea of how/why the nation-state came to be) in pre-modern cultural and religious structures (myths). Because the study of the State of Israel is integrated with Jewish Studies, the State of Israel then takes on a symbolic function – it becomes symbolic of shared values and represents social cohesion. In this way the modern nation-state of Israel comes to represent something beyond itself (a geographical territory) – it becomes a symbol of protection and redemption. The symbolic role it plays as protector of and refuge for the Jewish people is demonstrated in the Israel education curricula and programming analyzed herein. Presenting the flag of the state of Israel as a *tallit* (prayer shawl), stabilizing the territorial borders through the map of "greater Israel", and including prayers for the Israeli military (IDF) as part of a common liturgy, are but a few examples of how the State of Israel in diaspora nationalism functions on a symbolic level - one that exceeds the confines of its physical (territorial) reality. In this way, I demonstrate how in the context of a diaspora, attachment to the homeland is not solely attachment to a territory but an active cultivation of a reservoir of shared myths – a reservoir that can equally be accessed through the daily prayers and actions of Jews living in the diasporas. As Smith argues,

> Just as traditions can live within us even if they do not assume physical shape, so the Land, even though it was unattainable for so many centuries, constituted a reservoir of shared memories and myths and traditions that in turn created an equally real 'inward society', a network of exclusive intimacy in which Jews lived in the spirit more intensely and more profoundly than in their scattered enclaves in the profane physical world. (Smith 2010:16)

Because attachment to homeland is not exclusively territorial – i.e., being on the land -- but equally symbolic, the complex realities faced by Israelis living in the State of Israel may be

obfuscated due to the symbolic function the nation-state holds in diaspora national identity. In this way the social mechanisms employed by Montreal Jewish educators to elicit in students an attachment to the territory of Israel -- a necessary element of diaspora nationalism – may in fact counter efforts to run and govern the state. This may challenge Israeli nationalists – expatriates or *schlihim* – who are employed to teach a form of diaspora nationalism that holds a symbolic function in the religious political myth and does not have an end goal of relocating to the territory of Israel (making *aliyah)*.

Moreover, this study demonstrates that while the Montreal Jewish community's historical social isolation - and the insecurity brought about by that isolation - may result in an increased emphasis on diaspora nationalism - it has not resulted in relocating to Israel (making *aliyah)*. Unlike the Jewish communities of France, from which 7,000 individuals relocated to the State of Israel in 2014 – an increase of 125 percent from 2013 (CBS 2014) – Montreal Jewry is at home in Quebec.[142]

Limitations on the Social Construction of Diasporic Identity

While this work reveals how Montreal Jewish educators have developed and disseminated a normative idea of the nation - at least on the institutional level - these concluding remarks also reveal the limitations of this study. This work cannot claim anything approaching a total view of Montreal Jewish education. An account of that nature would involve a detailed analysis of each individual school, including the school culture and individual curricula initiated and employed within each school. A more detailed investigation into the teaching of the subject of Israel in mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools would involve examining particular phenomena such as: the relationship between Hebrew language and Jewish studies teachers and general studies teachers; the religious orientation of each school and its effect on the idea of the nation; the

[142] The historical experiences of French Jewry, and the numerous terrorist acts against Jews and Jewish institutions there, differ greatly from those of Quebec Jewry. While French Jewry were the first to be emancipated (1791), high levels of anti-Semitism and persecution continued - cumulating in the pogroms of 1832 and 1848. In fact emigration to Israel from France was among the first waves of Jewish emigration escaping the rise of anti-Semitism which came to a head in the Dreyfus Affair (1890's).

relationship between students and Hebrew language teachers; and, the impact of Israel education on individual student national identity. This research project has been much narrower in scope and limited to demonstrating the development and deployment of a common idea of the nation in a particular diasporic context. While Israel may remain an integral and consistent element of the institutional life of Montreal Jewish education, this work does not attempt to demonstrate the extent to which this normative idea is integrated into the identity of individuals enrolled in Montreal Jewish day schools. It chronicles and analyzes what the teachers teach rather than what the students take home from that teaching.

While this study is limited to the institution of Montreal Jewish education, support for the idea that school norms are a preeminent factor influencing students' beliefs can be found in various educational studies focused on civic participation and national allegiance. As Mark Pancer explains, students are significantly affected by communal and school norms. He writes,

> Individuals who subscribe to normative beliefs will be accepted by their peers at school, while those who do not face the possibility of censure or rejection. Over time, these norms become internalized and the individual subscribes to the belief without the need for peer acceptance or the threat of rejection. This line of reasoning suggests that if a student attends a school with a strong norm of civic participation, in which the majority of the student body believes that civic engagement is important, then the student will endorse and then internalize that belief. (Pancer 2015:48)

As Israel remains an integrated subject in mainstream Montreal Jewish educational programming, and diasporic national identity is reinforced through religious studies and Hebrew language acquisition, support for the State of Israel remains a social norm at both the communal and school level. Yet, because transmission of the idea of the nation implies a cycle of cultivation (producing Israel education curricula) and integration (the reception by students), this one case study offers limited conclusions on the process of constructing diaspora nationalism. For this reason, subsequent studies on the affect of Israel education on student's identification and solidarity with the State of Israel are of fundamental importance.

Originality

This study offers two main contributions to scholarship on diaspora nationalism and religion. First, by emphasizing the structural role cultural and religious myths hold in the social construction of national identity, this dissertation reveals how religion and nationalism can reinforce national cohesion in a diaspora context. Second, by analyzing particular Israel education curricula, this work reveals how a normative idea of the nation may be transmitted from one generation to the next in a specific diasporic context.

The originality of this study is found in its investigation of previously underdeveloped categories of Israel education, the Hebrew Language model, and the Israel Advocacy model (Pomson, Deitcher and Rose 2009). In developing an analysis of the Montreal-based *TaL AM* Hebrew language and heritage curriculum, and BJEC's Israel Advocacy curriculum *Making the Connection*, this work demonstrates the process through which religious and cultural myths are elaborated on to include a national narrative. In mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools Israel education is taught as inseparable from religion, ethnicity, and language. For example the *TaL AM* curriculum actively expands the myth of election (choseness) by identifying locations in the State of Israel as the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Exercises like "It's Fun to Travel Israel" (*Kef Letayel BeIsrael)* link the study of the Torah (religion) with the study of the state of Israel (nation) by literally positioning the modern map of the State of Israel alongside drawings of Abraham in ancient Israel. By reiterating "And the land that I gave to Abraham and to Isaac, I will give to you and to your seed after you will I give the land'" (Genesis 35: 9- 12) – not only is the myth of election expanded to include the individual students living in the diaspora – it also links Abraham with the founding fathers of the State of Israel – namely, Herzl. Although the biblical patriarchal narratives may be myths, they are the myths that fuelled an actual geographic home for Jews and their cultic center. This exercise reveals that without Israel, the myth of election, the idea of choseness, and the common destiny represented by the return of

Jews to the homeland could not be realized.[143] The land of Israel is an essential element – one that gives sense to the other elements of this form of nationalism.

Equally, teaching Jewish Studies combined with modern political events, simultaneously renews interest in Torah study as the birthplace of the nation's chronology. In presenting a religious political myth as a single, unbroken line from the past to the present, the places and people described in the Torah find new significance when situated alongside the political events of the State of Israel. In this way the religious political myth is expanded to include current events. Including the celebration of Israel's Independence Day as part of the Jewish festival calendar reveals to students that Judaism as a religion is not confined to the past; rather, Judaism is presented as a living, dynamic tradition.

Making the Connection functions in a similar way. It frames the study of the State of Israel in the religious myth of election through relying on various Judaic sources. This is demonstrated in exercises like "Bible Surfing – Discovering the Biblical Foundations of Israel," in which teachers are equipped with texts that seek to establish the State of Israel as the fulfillment of ancient prophecy (Lazarus 2003:23). The use of Judaic sources to portray contemporary reality instructs students how to relate the ethno-religious and national events as a single, uninterrupted narrative. This study then demonstrates how an ethno historical narrative is expanded to include the creation of the state. This is exemplified most clearly by the *TaL AM* timeline exercise, which mutes large swathes of historical events and amplifies particular moments in Jewish history. Thus, the timeline presents a seamless link between the Temple era of 70 CE and the 20th century. The Diaspora existence of 2,000 years is neither acknowledged nor accounted for, and while the local contexts of Jewish communities throughout the diasporas were particular the Holocaust and the foundation of the State of Israel are presented as universal aspects of Jewish history. As Smith writes,

> Of course, diaspora Zionists reinterpreted these historic epochs and golden ages to fit into the ideological framework of nationalism, elevating certain episodes like the defense of

[143] Secular Zionists equally relied on the myth of election in order to create and justify a distinctly Jewish state (Smith 2003; Novak 1995).

> Masada or the revolt of Bar-Kochba, and passing over others in the history of the Galut [forced exile]. (Smith 2010:19)

While the ethnohistorical narrative focuses on the heroes of history –Moses, David, and the Maccabees - as the models of Jewish heroism – in *TaL AM* Jewish history expands to include national heroes like the Zionist founding fathers. In doing so, Herzl, Hertzog, and Weitzman become the models to emulate. In this way Jewish history and national destiny are linked in a single continuum (Smith 2009:36). This link between Judaic sources, Jewish history, and the establishment of the State of Israel frames the idea of the nation as taught in diaspora Jewish education. Similarly, in order for *Making the Connection* to establish a link between Judaic sources and the creation of the State of Israel large swaths of Jewish cultural history and current events are excluded. Thus social cohesion around the idea of Israel is established through highlighting a common ethnohistory and diminishing historical eras, which contain the variety, divergence and difference of Jewish historical experiences.

Equally, this research shows how the pre-modern myth of communal destiny - in which communal sacrifice is seen as necessary to obtain national sovereignty – provides the framework for the idea of national destiny. In Montreal Israel education, this myth of communal destiny is exemplified and embodied in the Israeli soldier. As Smith writes,

> …the idea of collective struggle and sacrifice as inherent in Jewish *national destiny* – as opposed to the older religious framework of fulfillment of the Torah, and the theodicy of sin and punishment, repentance and return – was a relatively novel concept, particularly as it came to be applied to the martyrs of the Holocaust, the heroism of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and the soldiers how fell in defense of the national state of Israel in her wars since 1948. (Smith 2010:21)

The elevation of the Israeli soldier as a model for communal sacrifice reveals how religious myths are transformed to suit the current needs of the community. Again, the framework of the myth is drawn directly from historical events such as the Zealots of Masada or the Maccabees, while the content is reoriented toward constructing a national identity. Here Israeli soldiers stand in as modern day examples of martyrdom (Sivan 2000). The remembrance of *Yom Hazikaron*

(Israel's Memorial Day) is an opportunity for teachers and students to discuss and replicate Masada and Bar-Kochba.

Moreover, as evidenced by the school-wide commemorations, Israel's Memorial Day provides an opportunity for students to "imagine" themselves as part of the communal sacrifice. This act of imagining is, for instance, demonstrated through Montreal day school artwork wherein photos of students' faces are cut out and pasted onto uniformed soldiers' bodies. In this way celebrations of national holidays become opportunities for students to "participate" in the communal sacrifice (martyrdom) necessary to national sovereignty. Equally, *TaL AM*'s integration of prayers for the IDF and soldiers into the early grades reveals another means of integrating the State of Israel into the myth of communal sacrifice. In other words, the State of Israel *becomes* significant due to its inclusion in pre-modern frameworks. These prayers equally reinforce the religious myth in which the state is situated as an ultimate symbol of protection; for example, "He who blessed our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, shall bless the soldiers of the Israeli Defence Forces" (Shimon 2008a: 17). In this way, as a Hebrew language model, *TaL AM* expands religious myths to explain a national history. This not only exemplifies the role of religion in the construction of national identity, it highlights one process through which the idea of the nation is transmitted from one generation to the next.

Equally *Making the Connection* frames the study of the State of Israel in the myth of communal sacrifice as the basis of communal destiny. Exercises like "Terrorism" and "Like All Other Countries" rely on the myth of martyrdom – communal sacrifice for national destiny - while reiterating that State of Israel stands outside national or parliamentary constraints, due to its function as the fulfillment of biblical narrative. For example, in *Making the Connection* Lazarus writes,

> God promised the Land of Israel to Abraham and his descendants. Jews have always maintained a presence there, despite the enemies and the hardships. Biblical prophecies of the ingathering of exiles and the flourishing of the Land are coming true in modern times. No political agreement or military conquest can change this reality. (Lazarus 2003:29)

This establishes the motif that Israel the state is in some ways sacrosanct. In this case, the driving force of the program is a defensive form of diaspora nationalism, which advocates for the legitimacy of the state. The Israel Advocacy curriculum relies on the myth of communal destiny - in which oppression, dispersion, exile, and return create a framework (Smith 2010:8); yet, because diaspora nationalism functions as a defensive position, it can develop more "risky" strategies to legitimate state borders (Conversi 2012). This is demonstrated through the Israel advocacy program, in which arguments to support the stabilized territorial borders, as well as justifications for particular political policies regarding the governing of Palestinians, Palestinian citizens of Israel, and land in the West Bank are regulated through pre-modern religious and cultural myths. In this way, identifying the historical facts that have been integrated or omitted becomes less relevant than revealing the common myth framework on which the curriculum content is structured. Thus, Judaic sources and Jewish history are drawn on in the curriculum to reiterate the symbolic function that the idea of the nation has in the myth of election (choseness), ethnohistory, and martyrdom. In this way, any discussion about the land of Israel is connected to other major themes in Jewish history, and the establishment of the state is integrated into a familiar framework of exile and return, one that offers both meaning and continuity (Shimoni 1995:335). Yet, the program itself lacks a mechanism to overcome the issue of the missing territorialization – that is, a means to ensure attachment to the land occurs.

Given that Hebrew language, Jewish Studies, Jewish history, and the State of Israel are taught within a single curriculum - often by the same teacher – *TaL AM* has integrated the territory of Israel through language acquisition and the employment of Israelis in the classroom. As Israeli expatriates most often teach Jewish Studies and Hebrew language, they are positioned as symbolic bridges between Jews living Montreal and Jews living in Israel, and between religious and national forms of identity. As *TaL AM* transmits language, religious traditions, social memory, and the collective idea of the nation to Jewish day school students, it simultaneously presents Israel as an integral aspect of diasporic Jewish identity, thus overcoming the problem faced by diasporic nations – namely, the sentiment of attachment to territory. In contrast, while the Israel Advocacy curriculum expands religious and cultural resources to frame the idea of the nation, it lacks the necessary element of territorialisation – the sentiment of attachment to land. Equally, as the curriculum is preparing students for the public defense of the state of Israel, it

does not edify the other modes of Jewish identity. This contrasts sharply the Hebrew language model where Israel education is integrated with Jewish Studies and the acquisition of Modern Hebrew becomes a means of learning Torah,[144] religious myths are interwoven as a single tapestry. This equally reveals the problem of equating the meaning of the State of Israel exclusively with Zionism, without reflecting on the religious and cultural structures that frame the content of Zionism. Only when the symbols and myths are investigated over la longue durée are the shared attachment and social cohesion – necessary elements of the development of a national identity – present.

By revealing how Israel education curricula build on concepts of community and communal destiny, this work expands the scope of the study of diaspora nationalism to consider and evaluate the instructive character of religion, memory, myth and tradition. It demonstrates how nations – be they territorial or diasporic - are the product of processes of social construction. It is this process - the ongoing expansion of pre-modern narratives to include new social facts and community needs – by which members of a community actively "cultivate" the nation and thus bring it into being (Smith 2009). Through this analysis, one can see how religion functions as a resource for diaspora national identity construction.

Second, this case study highlights how an idea of the nation can become normative.[145] In his article on Israel education, Alick Isaacs argues that diaspora education about Israel has a major flaw, i.e., the lack of clear meaning and a lack of grounding in ideology. He asks, What does Israel *mean*? How can we make Israel *meaningful*? The problem of locating the meaning of Israel is not remedied by looking only at curricula or pedagogy, but in examining the idea of the nation, one that is transformed and transmitted from one generation to the next. As this study demonstrates, the meaning of a nation depends on the myth or story in which it is situated. While other studies highlight the lack of direction and purpose of Israel education (Isaacs 2010; Pomson, Deitcher and Rose 2009; Grant 2011), this study demonstrates that mainstream Montreal Jewish day schools foster a common idea of the nation through symbols.

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[144] For a specific example of this see the *TAL AM* – Chapter 5

[145] As noted in the introduction to this work, in using the term normative here, I am referring to a shared communal value that is constitutive of, and regulated through, Montreal Jewish communal institutions.

This study equally reveals a limitation of basing the diasporic identity of Montreal Jews on the State of Israel, in which Israel takes on a symbolic function. Israel in its symbolic function (Israel-as-symbol) can cause cognitive dissonance among diasporic Jews who are exposed at the same time or later in life to the political realities of the State of Israel (Israel-as-fact). In this way Israel-as-symbol may come in conflict with Israel-as-fact. The awakening to Israel-as-fact (complex, morally ambiguous, dynamic, disunited, etc.) challenges the Israel-as-symbol (simple, morally good, traditional/historical, united—to the point of being monolithic). This means it also challenges the identity of the students, which is based on Israel-as-symbol.

By presenting an analysis of the distinct historical context in which Montreal Jewish day schools developed (which included the distinct school systems of Quebec, the historical marginalization of Jewish pupils in Protestant schools, the rise and popularity of the Jewish day school system in Montreal, the Quebec independantist movements, and - above all - the near institutional completeness of Montreal Jewish community), this work shows how communal isolation and the institutional nature of Jewish Montreal created the motivation and mechanism for the construction and dissemination of a common idea of the nation, based on Israel-as-symbol. This common idea was then circulated in the form of Israel education programing to Jewish day schools through the interstitial Jewish education bureau – BJEC. In other words, because the Montreal Jewish community was historically marginalized and highly organized institutionally, Israel education blossomed. This is evidenced by the significant resources for Israel education– including *TaL AM* and Birthright – that came out of the system of Montreal Jewish education and have been used internationally.

As this study demonstrates, Montreal Jewish educators have developed specific educational tools to bring the homeland to the diaspora and develop a sentiment of attachment to the land of Israel in students. These educational tools include developing Israel experience trips in which students experience the homeland first hand; placing a strong emphasis on developing students capacity in Modern Hebrew – the national language, and employing expatriate Israelis and *shlichim* who function as human bridges connecting the diaspora to the homeland.

While expatriate Israelis teaching in Montreal Jewish day schools may uphold the common idea of Israel-as-symbol, and teach its symbolic function in diaspora nationalism, Israelis inevitably

bring their own complex emotional relationships to Israel into the classroom. In an in-depth case study exploring Israel education in the United States, Gerber and Mazor (2003) point out the short sightedness of employing Israelis as the solution to the challenge of teaching the Hebrew language, Jewish Studies, and Israel education. Their observations of teachers in the field demonstrate that "...rather than grapple with current Israel in all its complexities, educators and institutions prefer to relate to the Israel they remember prior to their ambivalence and conflicted feelings" (Gerber and Mazor 2003: 14). While expatriate Israelis may teach the common idea of Israel-as-symbol to the next generation, their personal relationship to Israel-as-fact might result in an idealization rather than reveal the complex and difficult realities of daily life in the State of Israel. Idealization of the State of Israel may be exacerbated by the fact that diaspora nationalism by and large is a defensive position asserting legitimacy of state boundaries (Conversi 2012:1359).

Furthermore, in this specific context of Jewish diaspora education, the State of Israel is meaningful because it holds a symbolic function as protector of and refuge for the Jewish diaspora (signified through the wearing of the flag of the state of Israel as a traditional *tallit)*. As demonstrated, the meaning of the idea of the nation depends on the framework in which it is situated. Only when situated in a myth – one that provides a framework for the significance of changing circumstances – can the idea of the nation become normative. Israel education programs select *specific* symbols from Judaic sources and history – these symbols are not indiscriminate but are rooted in myths particular to the ethnie. As Kobi Kabalek writes,

> The use of familiar patterns allows stabilization and normalization, and acts to direct a certain set of selections. At the same time, changes in the forms, conditions, and relations within society may initiate adjustments and innovations of concepts and contents. Hence, the relationship between terms, their meanings and utilizations, and the specific social reality as it is experienced and practiced, must been seen as reciprocal projections and interactions. (Kabalek 2006:143)

Removing the State of Israel from the myth in which it is placed disallows it from providing significance to the diaspora. Instead, when looked at as an object – that is a political territory or nation-state – its meaning is lost. As an object it may be seen as a contended territory with

unstable borders. As a symbol in a myth, it offers meaning and stability to a diaspora community, particularly to a diaspora community unsure of its future in the local community in which it is situated. When taught as an idea in the diaspora, the State of Israel is removed from the mundane realities faced by Israelis. This is also why Israel-as-fact experienced by Israelis may differ dramatically from the Israel-as-symbol as taught in Montreal Jewish day schools.

For this reason, as Israeli immigration to Canada continues to rise, the symbol of the State of Israel as protector and refuge, and the religious political myth in which it functions, may collide with the experience of expatriate Israelis. As Gerald Tulchinsky writes, "While these rapidly rising numbers were a concern and an embarrassment to both the Israeli government and the Canadian Jewish community, which was so strongly committed to the Zionist endeavour, this emigration continue apace" (Tulchinsky 2008:481).[146] Emigration from Israel is understood as conflicting with the movement of Zionism (Meyer 1990). As being Israeli informs both the national, ethnic and religious forms of identity, the dilemma for many Israelis in the diaspora remains that they do not attach themselves to the term Zionist, which is the main ideological form in which diaspora Jews relate to the state of Israel (Meyer 1990). Native Montrealer, and Professor of Yiddish Litterature at Harvard University, Ruth Wisse writes that students involved in university Israel advocacy groups face the inherent contradiction between diaspora Jewish nationalism and the dilemma of Israeli emigration. "The moral confidence that Israel once exported to American Jews these students feel they must export to Israel" (Wisse 2008:30).[147] While Montreal Jewish educators have created adequate mechanisms to attach students in the diaspora with Israel-as-symbol it may remain difficult for Jewish educators to attend to political and socioeconomic realties that confine and regulate life in the state.

Yet, due to the fact that national identity offers a powerful sense of belonging to a historical collective identity, individuals who counter the idealization of the state are rare. As Smith writes, this is not unique to Israel, but a more general phenomenon.

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[146] More troubling than emigration is the continued application for asylum in Canada by Israelis, many of whom recently fled Russia and had been deemed non-Jewish by Israeli authorities (Kruitenbrower 1997).
[147] More pointedly she continues, "…how long can Jews elsewhere be expected to rally to its side, especially at moments when Israel's desperate hunger for peace leads it to seem weak or even pathetic?" (Wisse 2008:35).

> Though some brave souls may oppose particular national regimes, most citizens have shown themselves too wiling to participate in and celebrate the rites of the nation and accept the received narratives and myths of national identity. Defections have always been minimal and most members to this day continue to identify with the ideal version the nation portrayed by nationalism. (Smith 1995:156)

Unlike other immigrant communities to Canada, and in contrast to most Montreal Jews, Israeli expatriats genearlly hold onto an idea of returning to Israel (Linn and Barkan 1994:21). Within the context of North America, this notion of return is unique to Israelis (Neusner 1986). The term expatriats to define Israelis living in North America is used conciously as a means of expressing a state of "permanent impermanance" (Cohen 1977: 18). This sense of impermanance leads to both an ambivalence toward national symbols and a myth of returning home (Walzer 1988; Westwood and Lawrence 1990). While the idea of the nation developed in Israel education by the institution of Montreal Jewish education relies on Jewish history and is rooted in Judaic sources, it may do so by eclipsing and countering the reality of Israel as lived by Israelis.

The Idea of Israel in Montreal Jewish Education

Given the historical context of Montreal – where a sense of belonging has been limited – Israel offered a sentiment of national belonging, which was both real and imagined. Moreover, due to the historic marginalization of the community, and the continued sentiment of insecurity (seen most recently after the re-election of the PQ to power in 2013), the idea of Israel in Jewish education offered a source of identity and social cohesion to a largely diverse Jewish community that lived on the political and cultural margins of Quebec society. The dissemination of a normative idea of Israel was made possible by the highly bureaucratic nature of the institutional Montreal community and the interstitial nature of the Jewish bureau of education (BJEC) in that bureaucracy. Yet, the idea of the nation (Israel-as-symbol) only functioned within the confines of the Jewish day schools themselves. Once students graduated and entered university, they were bombarded by the diversity of meanings that Israel-as-fact holds. The ordinariness of diaspora national expression, so commonplace within the Montreal Jewish community institutions, was

suddenly placed in question. Yet, the idea of Israel as a symbol has changed with the changing generations. As Jack Wertheimer writes:

> At different times, Israel symbolized very different aspects of Jewish civilization – liberation from exile, David fighting Goliath, Jewish cultural renaissance, concern for fellow Jews, and religious renewal. And alas, at other times it has come to represent, for some, religious intolerance, Goliath fighting the Palestinian David, chauvinism, and arrogance. (Wertheimer 2008:79)

In this way Israel signifies something different to people at different times. As this study shows - symbols and stories interact with a particular social context to create a distinct diasporic nationalism.

Jewish Day Schools and Diaspora Jewish Continuity

Jewish day school education has been widely conceived of as the guardian of Jewish identity. As Jack Wertheimer writes, "perhaps never before has a Jewish community pinned so much of its hopes for 'continuity' – for the transmission of a strong Jewish identity to the next generation – on programs of formal and informal education" (Wertheimer 1999:3) This idea, that Jewish day schools will secure Jewish continuity, is widely held by Jewish educators and scholars. As Jewish educator Susan Kardos writes,

> It is hard to provide what one might consider a 'full Jewish education' outside of an explicitly religious, political, and value-laden framework… Our most astute observers and our wisest historians, educators, rabbis, and professional and lay leaders affirm what the best research also shows: dollar for dollar, Jewish day schools are the single best investment for securing a literate and committed cadre of Jews to lead us into our vibrant future. (Kardos 2010:86)

Yet, the idea that Jewish day school education functions as a mechanism to ensure Jewish continuity and ward off assimilation is a better understood as normative claim. As Barry Chazan writes,

> The sentence 'Jewish education is the key to Jewish survival' is best translated as: 'I (or we) who are making this statement believe and want to convince you that if you really care about the continued Jewishness of your children or the future existence of the Jewish community we believe that you should seriously consider sending them to a day school or to a Jewish summer camp or an Israel trip and/or you should contribute hefty resources to institutions that implement such programs'. The slogan is actually a normative belief or expression of personal conviction probably aimed at rousing interest, emotion, and support under the guise of a verifiable historical or sociological statement. (Chazan 1998:24)

Placing the onus of diaspora Jewish continuity on Jewish education may simply be unrealistic. Especially given the reality that outside the State of Israel the possibility of Jewish assimilation remains high. Due to the nature of the Montreal Jewish near institutional completeness, and the historical isolation from other local communities, Montreal Jewish youth may be less threatened by the processes of assimilation.

Yet, even in Montreal Jewish education is expensive, and Jewish education bureaus are constantly seeking innovative ways to support Jewish day schools. One Jewish educator has proposed that the State of Israel could become a funding source for diaspora Jewish education. The State of Israel could offer free student loans to parents of day school students. In return, "if the recipient makes *aliyah* by a certain age and stays in Israel three years…then all or part of the loan would be forgiven" (Evans and Lapin 2014:2). As noted earlier, in the U.S. and Canada the number of Jews relocating to Israel, making *aliyah,* has remained relatively low, and the impact on the Jewish demographic of North America is nominal (Schick 2010).[148]

What makes the study of the social construction of Jewish national identity in a diaspora context so interesting is - as previously discussed - relocation to Israel is not the end goal of teaching the Zionist idea of the nation. Instead, the idea of the nation is taught to Jewish students living in the

[148] Notably, the one sector where *aliya* has increased is within Modern Orthodox communities. The major Jewish community organization dedicated to helping Jews in North America relocate to Israel is *Nefesh B'Nefesh*. Established in 2002, this organization says it has helped over 30,000 Jews relocate to Israel from Canada, the US, and the UK. Its mission statement reads: "Building a stronger Israel, one person at a time." For more information on this organization see www.nbn.org.il.

diaspora with the intention of eliciting a common will and emotion necessary to the creation and maintenance of a strong diasporic Jewish identity. The symbolic function of the idea of the nation is pivotal in this equation. As one Jewish educator writes, "Israel is a powerful factor, not necessarily in the teaching of a particular subject matter as in the mood that envelops the institution" (Schick 2010:4). Israel is powerful because of what it has come to symbolize – protection, refuge, safety. This symbol only functions effectively when placed in a religious political myth - one that does not require physical relocation.

New Avenues of Research

This study equally opens up new avenues of scholarly research. Specifically, subsequent research programmes could include an analysis of Israel education programs created within Montreal Jewish day schools that target grades 6, 7 and 8. Due to the fact that each school creates its own Israel education materials for those grades, subsequent studies could offer a comparative view of how Israel education curricula is adapted to fit the different respective school missions. Equally important is an assessment of the transmission of the idea of the nation to students enrolled in ultra-orthodox Jewish day schools in Montreal. To address the study of the State of Israel in ultra-orthodox schools would require a different theoretical framework, and alternate conceptual tools than the ones employed here. As this work has largely focused on the highly centralized institution of Jewish education, new areas of scholarship could address how teachers teach this material and how students respond to it. A study of that nature could include a qualitative analysis of teacher and student perspectives on the relevance of the State of Israel to their self-conception as Jews, and the resonance of specific Israel education materials discussed here. In this way, we could know what impact the Israel education promoted in Montreal's Jewish schools have on the identities and solidarities of Jewish students.

Subsequent research could equally address a question that comes out of this study - what will happen if relocating to the state of Israel becomes an incentive of Israel education? Israel-backed diaspora Jewish education programing is already in place. Acting as Prime Minster, Benjamin Netanyahu allocated $100 million dollars to fund the Taglit-Birthright program in 2011 (Evans and Lapin 2014:3). In effect, the State of Israel is literally paying Jews outside of Israel to visit.

Research on Israel-backed Israel education programing created for the diaspora could address the possible outcomes of such partnership on the longevity of the Jewish diaspora.

As this work focuses on the pivotal role a bureau of Jewish education plays in instituting a common idea of the nation in Jewish day schools, further research could include a comparative study on the function of the bureau in other local contexts. In 2009 Toronto's bureau of Jewish education, the Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education, closed its doors (Brown 2011); full time positions at the bureau were reduced from 14 to 10 (Kraft 2012). This closure was a result of institutional restructuring initiated by the Federation of Greater Toronto (UJA). As Michael Brown writes, "the closing came without consultation with the lay board of the Centre, without prior notice to the schools serviced by the Mercaz, and despite a record of superior service and research" (Brown 2011:1141). Professional development days for teachers working in Jewish day schools, as well as the Jewish teachers seminary are no longer offered (Kraft 2012). The resulting affects on a system of Jewish day schools operating with the limited help of a central bureau of education are unknown. As Brown continues, "Educators, school volunteers, and communal professionals have attested to the high quality of Mercaz services, although its guidance was seen by some as the usurpation of the autonomy of constituent schools" (Brown 2011:1142). Thus further research on the impact of Jewish Education bureaus functioning in other Canadian cities, particularly in Toronto, is warranted.

Moreover, while this case study on the Montreal Jewish community is particular, it may equally reflect larger trends occurring in the field of Jewish education. As such, subsequent case studies on the teaching of Israel education in a specific Jewish diaspora context could include an analysis of Jewish day schools in Toronto, Winnipeg, Chicago, London, or Paris. Research of this kind could either be constructed as single case studies, or offer a comparative analysis of the teaching of the subject of Israel in various Jewish communities. Such comparative studies would demonstrate the effect of local social and historical conditions on the nature, extent, and effectiveness of Jewish education in the social construction of diasporic identity. Another avenue of research could include a comparative analysis of educational materials developed by other ethno-religious groups with a diaspora focus. Research of this kind could focus on Muslim day schools, Greek Orthodox day schools, Sikh schools, or the Armenian day schools in Canada. Such studies would show how other diasporic groups negotiate the issue of constructing ethnic,

religious, and national identity. Case studies of the specific ethno-religious schools located in Montreal could be published together in a journal or as book chapters. Alternate research avenues could include comparative studies on how useful ethnosymbolism is in looking at diasporic nationalism or transnationalism in other contexts. These studies could act as a resource guide to local governments who are trying to assess the values and needs of local minority communities, and better address their needs in terms of education, social programing, and social integration.

This case study has offered an evaluative analysis on the role of religion in the social construction of diaspora national identity in mainstream Montreal Jewish education. This work demonstrates that the meaning of Israel in diaspora nationalism may be distinct from the meaning of the nation in Israeli nationalism. In spite of what has been reported as a lack of meaning, or direction, in Israel education programming, this research reveals that a common idea of nation continues to be taught in Montreal Jewish education through intensive Hebrew language acquisition and Jewish Studies, school twinning initiatives, visits to and exchanges with Israel, the use of Israeli teachers in the classroom, and Israel advocacy. A normative idea of the nation, made possible through interconnecting Israel and other modes of Jewish identity, is a result of a centralized, highly institutional, system of Jewish education. As noted in the introduction to this work, the symbolic discourse is the "glue" holding the idea of the nation in place.

The thrust of my argument - that the past shapes current group identities and social bonds are guided by shared cultural history – has been based on Smith's theory that while a modern nation is a social construct – one that has uniquely modern characteristics – it is sustained by reference to pre-modern myths and symbols. Particular pre-modern cultural and religious resources – the ethnic concept of being chosen, attachment to land, a particular ethnohistory and, the belief in mass sacrifice for the communal good – continue to inform the structural cultural foundations of modern nations (Smith 2000, 2010). Then, by locating the study of nations and nationalism in the context of the diaspora, I focus on how diaspora communities maintain and transform the idea of the nation. For many Jewish educators in Montreal, Israel serves a multi-faceted function. It is constructed as central to their sense of being a chosen people, it is presented as central to their particular ethnohistory, and it is defined as the most important object of community solidarity

and sacrifice, that is, their collective destiny. This analysis allows us to understand the system of Montreal Jewish education and the construction of its diasporic identity more clearly.

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