Adoptive Witness
The Transmission of Collective Memory and Identity in the Israeli History Curriculum

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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ABSTRACT

Discussions on formal education in Israel focus more on debating whether violent undertones, negation, othering and incitement exist in resources, and less on how curriculum fosters democracy and tolerance. This thesis study investigates how the adoptive witnessing of history embedded within mandated secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum may be used as a tool of political indoctrination, through its reinforcement of psycho-cultural narratives and dispositions that perpetuate an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ siege mentality.

This study analyzes one part of the Israeli Ministry of Education mandated history curriculum intended for use within Israeli state schools. Central topics within the examined Unit 5: Modern Israel’s teaching focus emphasize the birth of the “new-Jew” and a dominant narrative of Jews seeking to no longer be victims at the hands of oppressive Others. All data was coded according to four guiding themes, examining how the intended content may (or may not) legitimize and humanize the Other and their national aspirations, how it may be used to overcome suspicion of the Other, and whether the curriculum provides a balanced presentation of the Arab (Palestinian)– Jewish Israeli conflict.

Findings reveal that the curriculum appears explicitly intended to promote the acknowledgement, legitimization, and humanization of a Palestinian Other, an understanding of causes and effects of decisions made at the time, and an awareness of the Palestinian perspectives
during the events of 1948. Although findings show a shared responsibility perspective, the use of Jewish-Israeli force is presented as defensive security measures and aligned to similar perspectives on experiences Jews endured within Islamic countries in the same time period.

This thesis reveals that the creation and reinforcement of a dominant collective Jewish-Israeli identity through formal education depends on the selective nature of the Other’s narrative that is presented within the discussion of key episodic events. As of the time of writing this thesis, it is concluded that while the secular Jewish-Israeli official history curriculum has made efforts to acknowledge, legitimize and humanize the Palestinian Other, this can only happen so long as the curriculum explicitly exposes students to the interconnectivity between their accounts of history and those of the Other.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

“To educate is to take seriously both the quest for life’s meaning and the meaning of individual lives... Through telling, writing, reading, and listening to life stories – one’s own and others’ – those engaged in this work (teaching) can penetrate cultural barriers, discover the power of the self and the integrity of the other, and deepen their understanding of their respective histories and possibilities.”

Witherell and Noddin (1991)

1.1 – Introduction

The increasing scholarship regarding education in situations of conflict, and, specifically, regarding curriculum as a political tool has seemingly focused more on debates about whether violent undertones and incitement exist in educational resources, and less on how a formal curriculum may foster democracy and tolerance amongst its citizens (see Abu-Nimer, 2011; Baskin, 2009; Bernard, 2013; Moughrabi, 2001; Nicolai, 2007). While Israel is not absent from such studies, a discussion that refers to the Israeli educational system tends to focus on a lack of inclusive resources that discuss the role Others have played in the state’s history. There has also been attention to the lack of funding and political will for the production of inclusive resources and programs that enhance an inclusive narrative, and to the lack of educators trained in peace education. Educators may not pay particular attention to the inclusivity of resources, but these studies of the Israeli system may be used to give credence to detractors’ claims that the current Israeli educational policies put in place within formal, secular Jewish-Israeli schools are racist, colonial, and intended to indoctrinate. Such studies also may fuel claims that Israel’s educational policies mirror a hawkish political agenda and oppose the establishment of sustainable peace with Palestinians (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2010; Brown, 2001; Pinson, Levy, Gross and Soker, 2009).

Scholars in the field of social justice education appear to use Israel and the Palestinian Territories as a case study for development of an analysis about the role education plays in
situations of violent conflict (Murray, 2008; Lopes-Cardoza et. al., 2015; Shah et. al., 2015). Zakharia (2009, n.p.), whose work focuses on educational policy and research within conflict situations and post-war societies, and also on the role education plays in social and political change, notes that “this fast-growing scholarship appears to have followed several trends, at first paying attention to the impact of violent conflict on education and children, and then focusing on the role of education itself in perpetuating or mitigating violent conflict.” More recently, greater attention has been paid to “educational provision as an integral component of humanitarian response in complex emergencies, and post-war situations have seemingly accelerated the call for, funding of, and visibility of this research” (Zakharia, 2009, n.p.). In this shift, the focus of educational policy and research within conflict situations and post-war societies has turned to the challenges of educating students during intractable conflicts, as well as to the psychological conditions students grapple with during such conflicts.

As noted by both Bush and Saltarelli (2000) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] (2011a), formal educational policy and formal education itself can be part of the problem and/or part of the solution to both the conflict and conflict management in areas currently engaged in or emerging from violent armed conflict. This role is evident in the specific ways teachers teach (e.g., through the use of implicit messages) and in the intended content governments disseminate for use in the classroom (e.g., the explicit curriculum). The ways governments in conflict situations manage formal education (namely, in the creation and administration of the curriculum) is very important in the process of understanding how each conflict came about, how it has been shaped and reshaped over time, and how it is intended to be conveyed to students. While such a focus may be intended to promote knowledge acquisition in formal settings, the focus also shapes social behaviour and can fuel the conflict’s intractable nature
by reinforcing social divisions, prejudices, and mistrust among groups and people. This reality is described in UNESCO’s (2011a, p. 3) publication about the effects of armed conflict on education, which highlights that,

The wrong type of education can fuel violent conflict. Education has the potential to act as a force for peace — but too often schools are used to reinforce the social divisions, intolerance and prejudices that lead to war. No country can hope to live in peace and prosperity unless it builds mutual trust between its citizens, starting in the classroom.

What remains absent from the aforementioned educational critique is consideration of the collective identities of the students and of the socio-political implications of the knowledge that teachers are intended to disseminate. With these implications in mind, critics charge that the current, formal educational system in Israel and the Palestinian Territories incites violence by reinforcing a one-sided narrative focused on a history of collective (historical) oppression, religious persecution, and victimization. Critics also claim that, through such a myopic approach, the education system fails to create an inclusive and tolerant environment (Brown, 2001) where the Others, including their history and their place in the shared space, are acknowledged, legitimized, and humanized.

While this study initially set out to comparatively analyse how the aforementioned may be present within both the secular Jewish-Israeli as well as the Palestinian curriculum taught within the West Bank and Gaza, the project became too large, taking focus away from the studies initial intent of highlighting how collective memory and identity are being transmitted within history curriculum. At the same time, while similar studies had been conducted by Bar-On and Adwan (2003, 2006), this study did not want to focus on aligning narratives of the same events and assume then how each (Israelis and Palestinians) would interpret them, rather, I wanted to understand the underlying, deep seated psycho-cultural dynamics that foster notions of self and the Other.
Consciously, putting half my study aside, this thesis study sets out to investigate one half of the critics’ charge by examining how the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum, which is intended for teaching in state schools (*Mamlachti*) attended by the majority of Jewish-Israeli youth (refer to Appendix A), can be a tool of political indoctrination. This tool can shape identity politics, perpetuate Otherness, and foster an adoptive witnessing and “postmemory” of collective in-group persecution, victimization, and oppression. As discussed further in the next section, my focus solely on the secular Jewish-Israeli curriculum is based on a self-reflective analysis of understanding who I am as a secular Jew, my people’s (Jewish) history, and whether or not Israel is indoctrinating secular Jews and their dominant society into an identity that is suspicious of Other’s intent and perpetuating the larger Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Selected curricular content and intended methods of delivery are political acts; they are tools used by governments to instil and legitimate a particular ordering of society and a particular knowledge and practice through the reinforcement of a national narrative and the negation of the Other’s narrative. Building on factors such as collective identity, notions and constructs of Otherness, and the political, cultural, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of knowledge, this thesis study also provides a contextualized, localized case study about how key episodic events (i.e., the Aliyah process, land purchase and territory, the War of Independence, the *Haganah*’s Plan D, and the *Nakba*) within a larger history curriculum can shape the discourses of war and peace. By episodic, this study uses the term as an evolution of Endel Tulving’s (1984) work on episodic memory. As Tulving identified, episodic memories are those of autobiographical events situated in a specific time, place, or context of who, what, where, why, when and how, and are recalled to conjure an associated emotional meaning. While Tulving referred to such memories as a collection of past *personal* experiences, within this study the term is meant to serve as a bridge
the distinction between knowing and remembering. While knowing is more factual (semantic), remembering is a feeling that is located in the past (episodic) (Schacter, Gilbert, and Wegner, 2011).

With this definition and understanding, this thesis study reflects a political and personal struggle to conceptualize how secular Jewish-Israeli students are to be taught the narratives about and outcomes of the events of 1948 (known as the Israeli War of Independence [Yom Ha-atzmaut], which led to the Palestinian Nakba\(^1\)). Moreover, this conceptualization helps to uncover and understand how the intended formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum reinforces and transmits a sense of “witnessing by adoption” (Hartman, 1994, 1996).

This thesis study applies Hartman’s idea of *witnessing by adoption* in the sense of intergenerational “memory” (learned historical narrative that may feel like memory). Hartman (1996) references the transgenerational adoption or absorption of traumatic events by Holocaust survivors through secondary or tertiary experience and the fragility of their psyche, which the survivors in turn, inscribe into their own lives. By *fragility of the psyche*, this study believes that due to a history of, and emphasis on oppression, religious persecution, and victimization, the Jewish psyche is vulnerable, locked in a siege mentality, and therefore reactive to any situation which mirrors or appears to mimic the traumatic history which they or their ancestors endured – namely the Holocaust. Building on Hartman’s work, this thesis considers how the history curriculum can extend to Jewish-Israeli students’ identification of a Jewish-Israeli self and an Arab-Palestinian Other, and also the Otherness of the Other. Hirsch’s (2001, p. 11) work on postmemory identification develops this notion by suggesting that witnessing by adoption focuses

\(^1\) *al Nakba* or *al Naqba*, which can be translated as “disaster,” “catastrophe,” or “cataclysm,” refers to the 750,000 Palestinian Arabs who fled or were expelled from the territories that became Israel in 1948-1949. The circumstances of these events are still hotly debated among historians and commentators about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (Cleveland, 2004; Stern, 2008).
and creates an “intersubjective trans-generational space of remembrance, linked specifically to cultural or collective trauma. It is defined through an identification with the victim or witness of trauma, modulated by the unbridgeable distance that separates the participant from the one born after.” Hirsch and Hartman conceptualize both collective memories of historical events (trauma and, this thesis adds, triumph) and notions about how collectives come to psycho-culturally embody these memories that frame their dispositions and interpretations of the Other’s actions and reactions to the collective. Because these postmemories are intergenerational and transgenerational, they become absorbed into the collective narrative and adoptively witnessed through their institutionalization.

Both Hirsch and Hartman suggest that “postmemory” and “witnessing by adoption” mean an identification with families or groups that share an ethnic or national identity. This thesis does not focus on the individual application of these concepts. Instead, the focus is only on how a history curriculum may take a postmemory approach and intentionally use such memories to foster identification with the victims or witnesses of trauma and triumph. Furthermore, through the selective nature of a curriculum, the way curriculum structures history, the narratives it uses, and the outcomes it frames, the adoption of the traumatic experience and the projection of a traumatic history may be used as a political tool to build a shared sense of (needing) protection from the Other.

Still, this thesis examines only mandated curriculum content, not other educational structures, policies or practices of the Israeli Ministry of Education (IMO). In so doing, this research considers the political factors that may influence a government to emphasize particular historical narratives or beliefs (e.g., to endeavour to ensure society’s support for national
sovereignty an armed conflict against the Other, and to build support for policies in opposition to the Other as efforts to protect what is understood to be national security).

1.2 – Location of the Self in the Study

As much as this thesis study is political, it is also grounded in a personal struggle. It is imperative to note that I am the son of a former Israeli naval officer and that I am a Jewish educator. I have travelled extensively in the region and also spent a brief time teaching there. By the time of this thesis research project, I had been teaching high school Geography and History in Canada for 16 years. I have written curriculum and resources at the school board-level, contributed content to the Ontario Ministry of Education-level for both these disciplines, and I have mentored teachers entering the field and those already in it. My motivation for this project is not directly or merely based in critical self-reflection. My interest is in a larger intellectual project that examines how secular Jewish-Israelis may have come to see and define themselves in opposition to the Arab or Palestinian Other (Al-Haj, 2002; Bar-On, 1998; Bar-Siman-Tov, 2010; Benbassa, 2010; Hanafi, 2007; Pinson, 2008), and how that definition may be a factor in the political destabilization of the entire region.

The focus of this thesis is a critical analysis of the IMOE’s mandated, formal, secular Jewish- Israeli history curriculum. The study is cross-disciplinary, and it combines Humanities, Social Sciences, and Social Justice Education with Comparative, International, and Development Education. In so doing, this thesis study takes a critical dialogical approach to education and learning about differences, inequality, and social justice through its consideration of identity politics, postmemory, differences, and a personal engagement with the collective self. This thesis study is intended to begin a conversation about how formal schooling might better mitigate violent
conflict through increased peacebuilding, tolerance, and reconciliation efforts, and, at the same time, might not be used as a tool of political indoctrination and conflict perpetuation.

As both a personal and political undertaking, it is imperative to note that this conflict is more complex than simply a conflict over land and resources or two distinct political bodies bound in an intractable conflict. Rather this study, and my own position within it, is cognizant that the modern conflict spans beyond the borders of Israel, and is deeply ingrained in the policies of both neighboring countries and foreign allies of both parties. As such, thesis seeks to find a balance in a historical or political movement that has engendered a rise anti-Zionist campaigns that at times seem to encourage anti-Semitism.

The campaign for Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) against all of Israel aims to increase the economic and political pressure to end Israel’s “occupation” and “colonization” of Palestinian land, including the Golan Heights. The campaign also seeks to increase the pressure to grant full equality for Arab-Palestinian citizens of Israel and to acknowledge Palestinian refugees’ right of return to and citizenship in lands from which they were “expelled”. BDS has gathered steam in academic circles, the media, and youth movements. Thus, my larger intellectual project is to understand whether and how the Israeli government, through its mandated national history curriculum mandates, may influence the dominant Jewish-Israeli society to acknowledge, legitimize, and humanize the Palestinians as a people. This recognition includes Palestinians’ national aspirations, their rights and responsibilities to the land, and their history on it. This recognition is conceptualized through examination of whether and how the selective IMOE history content, emphasis, and use of positional language may foster and reinforce particular (political) narratives and dispositions that impede peacebuilding. There is no doubt that this is complex work.
Because the conflict is historically rooted, this thesis study does not attempt to present a solution to the political crisis.

As such, my position on the BDS movement, or on whether I see Israel as an occupier or settler colony, is irrelevant to this project. Because studies of Israeli-Palestinian relations are so contentious, it is important to distance myself as a researcher from such debate. The goal is to produce an authentic analysis of the IMOE’s intended history curriculum and to derive sound conclusions based solely on all collected data. An interpretation based on my cultural and religious background or on the larger geopolitical debate is not an objective.

In the process of this exploration, I bring my belief that no one is born racist. Rather, intolerant or prejudicial attitudes and dispositions are holistically learned through exposure to labels that societies and schools implicitly and explicitly attach to people of a dominated race, ethnicity, and culture. Overt glaring expressions of bigotry and hatred, as Margles and Margles (2010) note may appear to be absent from national narratives promulgated in formal education, but notions of oppression and subordination are deeply and implicitly embedded in the ways history may be constructed, interpreted, and presented in schools. In both political and personal terms, Israel is an ideal case that may be presented to challenge and critically analyse the ways long-term, intractable conflicts may reproduce old hostilities over countless generations through official curricular discourses.

1.3 – Statement of Problem

It is no doubt a truism that formal public schooling in both modern liberal democracies and non-democracies inculcates its students with dominant national worldviews. However, in modern liberal democracies of which Israeli is one, formal education also is presumably intended
to help students to develop a consciousness of freedom, a recognition of authoritarian tendencies, and an ability to connect knowledge to power in order to develop the ability to take constructive action. Through its “Applied International Educational Standards,” UNESCO (2011b) challenges the qualitative outcomes of education by asking the following questions:

- Do the curriculum and school books recognize the “Other”?
- Do they promote tolerance, understanding, and respect toward the “Other,” and toward the Other’s culture, achievements, values, and ways of life? Does the curriculum address the sources of intolerance?
- Do the curriculum and school books develop capabilities for nonviolent conflict resolution?
- Do the curriculum and school books promote peace and peace processes?
- Does the curriculum promote international understanding and cooperation?
- Does the curriculum help the pupil to understand and assume his or her responsibilities for the maintenance of peace?
- Are the curriculum and school books free of wording, imagery, and ideologies that would probably create prejudices, misconceptions, stereotypes, misunderstandings, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry, and national hatred, and also free of any sort of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples?
- Are all educational materials (textbooks, workbooks, teachers’ guides, maps, illustrations, aids) up-to-date, accurate, complete, balanced, and unprejudiced, and do they use equal standards in order to promote mutual knowledge and understanding among different peoples?
- Do the curriculum and school books include full, adequate, and objective data and critical analysis of the historical and contemporary factors underlying the contradictions, disputes,
conflicts, and tensions among countries and groups, together with the study of ways to overcome these contradictions?

This rubric, offered by UNESCO to assess the peacebuilding and peaceblocking potential of a curriculum, seeks to promote equity and social justice through the act of fostering unlearning, learning and relearning, reflecting on, evaluating, and acknowledging the dynamics of power. This rubric assesses the impact education may have on students, particularly those who historically have been disenfranchised by traditional schooling, by applying concepts and tools explained by Dei and Calliste (2000), Freire (1970), and Giroux (2010). In its application, this rubric may be used to examine whether formal public schooling in modern liberal democracies has been providing students with a multicultural curriculum that includes the historical narratives of those who have been oppressed and marginalized over the centuries (Benari, 2011; Hemmings, 2010; Kashti, 2011).

Since Israel is a liberal democracy, and the only liberal democracy in the Middle East, the assumption may be made that their Ministry of Education, too, grapples with the production of a curriculum that acknowledges, legitimizes, and humanizes the Other, and that includes the Other’s history and national aspirations. However, in so doing, the IMOE seems cautious and less tolerant of any pedagogy that would challenge the legitimacy of the current dominant national narrative. This thesis study is not an effort to apportion blame amongst Israelis and Palestinians, nor is it a rejection of the intensities of a particular historic injustice. Rather, the intention of this thesis study is to highlight the ways students may be taught (through IMOE intentions) a dichotomy between their identity and the identity of Others, a dichotomy that may be seen as embedded in the history of their land. But does this approach come at the expense of negation? Negation would mean that Israel and Jewish-Israelis either ignore the Palestinian Other as a distinct group (separate from the
Arab Other) or deny the Palestinians’ attachment to their particular land. For the IMOE, attempts to balance representation of the Other with reinforcement of Israelis’ own legitimacy have reinforced a polarizing “us” versus “them” siege mentality (Bar-Tal and Antebi, 1992). This siege mentality has put a strain on Israel’s relations with neighbours in the region and with international allies and does not bode well for the future of the Israeli-Palestinian relationship (Badil, 2010; Galili, 2009; Zonszein, 2011).

Schools serve, albeit imperfectly, as reproductive agents of society (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Sullivan, 2001, 2002) because of the very fact that they set out to process and distribute knowledge. According to Apple (1972, in Beyer and Apple, 1998, p. 6), whose educational research focuses on the uses and influences of power and politics in curriculum and education, “(schools) act as agents of cultural and ideological hegemony; as agents of selective tradition and of cultural incorporation.” In this process, the establishment and function of schools may be assumed to contribute to control the masses through the schools’ reproduction of memory and meaning, for instance, in the framing of history in the curriculum. A school’s preservation of a history that is entrenched in a national narrative, results in the distribution of what Apple calls “legitimate knowledge” – the knowledge needed by any individual to gain acceptance within his or her society and or cultural group (Apple, 1979, 2000; Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991).

Citizenship education is not the main focus of this thesis study, but it serves as a lens through which the history curriculum is read and interpreted. Notions about who gains access to citizenship help in conceptualizing how collective labels and identities are formed. This “must know” knowledge in Israel’s secular public schools encompasses a history of collective (historical) oppression, the religious persecution of Jews, not just Israelis (e.g., biblically and in modern times [i.e., during the Holocaust]), and a narrative regarding the struggle for national
security and sovereignty. This knowledge becomes the embodied cultural capital that governments intend to utilize to indoctrinate youth through formal education. Such cultural capital is bound up with both the formally transmitted and passively inherited properties of one’s self and how that sense of self-aligns with a collective national identity (e.g., Jewish-Israeli). Regarding content selection by curriculum designers, Apple (1993a, p. 222) explains that,

The curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge, somehow appearing in the texts and classrooms of a nation. It is always part of a selective tradition, someone’s selection, some group’s vision of legitimate knowledge. It is produced out of the cultural, political, and economic conflicts, tensions, and compromises that organize and disorganize a people.

Thus, because formal education is selective, education (including content, curriculum, resources, and instruction) can be a tool of political indoctrination that ensures that future generations carry on the fight for survival and protection from those who are believed to be destined and motivated to eradicate the people. Violent conflict is thereby perpetuated. Moreover, public education is a political agent, that is, the structures that are put in place to establish a new collective body. Political violence, the collective’s adoption of postmemory, and school-legitimized narratives coincide with the reintroduction and reinforcement of national, cultural, and political liberation and identification. “Indoctrination,” in this thesis study, is used pejoratively, referring to the imposition by governments of political opinions and ideologies. Indoctrination refers to the inculcation of ideas, attitudes, and cognitive strategies, including instructional approaches that emphasize the development of thinking skills and pedagogical processes such as repetition, an organization of vocabulary, summarization of meaning, critical thinking, and the interpretation of a context to support an extreme political doctrine. In Israel’s case, the doctrine is enmity against Palestinians and a siege mentality. In terms of development and socialization,
the sooner a government can attempt to inculcate these attitudes in young people, the easier it may be to ensure that these attitudes are learned.

1.4 – Research Questions

According to Khan (2000), cited in Bush and Saltarelli (2000, v.), there is a “widely held assumption that education is inevitably a force for good.” Yet education can have severe implications for a people’s narratives, dispositions, and interpretations of the Other’s actions within a conflict (Smith and Vaux, 2003; Buckland, 2004; Davies, 2004; Tawil and Harley, 2004). According to McCandless, Paulson, and Wheaton’s (2011, p. 19) study of the role of education in violent conflict and peacebuilding, such implications may range from the development of political and ideological views of the self and the Other to the inculcation of negative stereotypes and the encouragement of attitudes that “explicitly or implicitly condone violence or generate conflict.” This thesis study considers the ways formal education can be structured and manipulated to establish polarizing feelings, which in turn may lead to the creation and reinforcement of Otherness. Furthermore, it considers the level of the intractable nature of the conflict and of the oppression internalized by the collective. Moreover, the thesis looks at the role education may play as an important potential peace builder in the development of students’ identities and the promotion of national unity.

While many factors (e.g., geography, gender, race, history, nationality, language, religion, and ethnicity) contribute to the development of collective identity (Barzilai, 2003) and national unity, this thesis study focuses on one particular dimension of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, namely, history education. The critical research questions guiding this qualitative study are
grounded in a Relational Content Analysis of the mandated, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum. The first question asks:

1. How does the government-mandated, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum represent the Jewish and Israeli ‘self’ and the Palestinian and Arab ‘Other’ through narratives about particular events and emotionally significant symbols – in particular within Unit 5: Modern Israel?

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict itself encompasses factors such as sovereignty, territory and borders, security, water rights, Jerusalem, and the status of the Palestinian refugees, but this thesis study focuses only on curricular representation of the events that both led up to and followed the establishment of the State of Israel, not on actual teaching or on student practices of resistance or agency. Agency is key in understanding independence and the choices by which students come to accept any particular knowledge as authentic and valid. However, the curriculum’s structure of influence and students’ immersion from an early age in the school structure limit any deviation from the. This conceptualization draws on theories of cultural reproduction (Bernstein, 1975; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977) which call into question the construction of identity as resistance. Using the aforementioned studies, Burnett (2004, p. 2) argues that dominant bodies within society manipulate the culture and knowledge that schools are entrusted to disseminate. “By camouflaging specific forms of culture and distinctive accounts of knowledge to reflect neutrality, the ‘ruling elite’ was seen to legitimate its own account of what was natural, thus masking the subjugation of those less culturally fortified.”

From Burnett’s presentation on the neutrality of the elite, there is an understanding that schools do not merely mirror state policies and reproduce the functioning status quo. Schools provide a lens and voice to parties’ resistance. The curriculum, which is written by state officials,
becomes the mouthpiece that helps to reproduce these policies. Secondly, if the curriculum is intended to shape Jewish-Israeli identity and to ensure that the status quo and political positioning are upheld, then schools as transmitters of the mandated curriculum have a role to play as locations for conflict, as well as spaces to take up resistance to symbolic violence and create the “new-Jew.” The narrative about a “new-Jew” emphasizes concepts of “invasion” and “survival,” and frames conflict outcomes as David versus Goliath victories. Through such a narrative, this thesis research further explores the connections between ethno-political conflict and intergenerational memories in the nation-state’s efforts to manifest identity through the adoptive witnessing of historical trauma. In an effort to guide the analysis in this thesis, a second, more general guiding question is proposed:

2. What are the ramifications of an official curriculum’s representation of an armed inter-group conflict and of its parties for exacerbating or mitigating that conflict?

It is a sad testament to the political and societal state of affairs that any children at all are brought up in an educational system that shows little or no understanding of conflict narratives other than its own. If this trend of continually reproducing old hostilities within future generations continues, then the status quo approach to history may continue to foster prejudices and deepen the already growing rift between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians.

1.5 – Research Objective

The objective of this research study is to investigate how the mandated, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum may foster and reinforce notions of identity, oppression, and religious persecution through the adoptive witnessing of history. In this research, a distinction must be made in the sense that the adoptive witnessing of history is not historical memory. Rather, the concept
of witnessing, in this thesis study, is used to understand how contact with the Other is represented within the curricular narratives. While students themselves may not have been direct witnesses to the events presented in the curriculum, the students’ immersion in a formal school space that uses a narrative of postmemory may fashion a mindset amongst students that indicates that they (the students) are victims too. The act of fashioning calls into question the authenticity or validity of the knowledge presented and, as an artifact of identity politics, construct a lens that individuals within a collective may utilize as they (a) speak about the Other, (b) act towards the Other, and (c) come to understand their actions. These historical narratives are deeply embedded within the fabric and fragility of the Jewish-Israeli psyche through the educational use of key “trigger” content (specific episodic events and narratives).

The objective of this thesis study is also to examine how the historical narratives of key episodic events (outlined earlier) appear intended to sway the focus away from critical thinking about social injustice and inequity towards the Other. Instead, the narratives seem to foster a homogenized ethos amongst those within the nation-state, as understood by Gellner. Using Gellner’s (1983) understanding, mass education can be explained as a tool of cultural homogenization. By creating cultural homogenization, education fosters citizenship, and citizenship fosters loyalty to the state and the acceptance of the state’s monopoly of education. As a mouthpiece of the state, education models the national narrative and embeds that narrative through the selective nature of the curriculum.

Thus, in reaching this thesis study’s objective, and explored in greater depth in Chapter Two, Apple’s work (1979) on ideology and the formal educational curriculum is considered. Also reviewed is the work of Bourdieu (1977) on the role of education in society, of Luke (1998) on the uses of textbooks in promoting literacy and ideology, of Bekerman (2009a, 2009b, 2010c) on

1.6 – Significance of the Study

“We need to identify where memory and history intersect, and the way in which both become tangled as truth and authentic episodic outcomes.”

Orlowsky (2014)

Within the larger scholarship of curriculum studies, “the need for sound research on education and violent conflict has become increasingly urgent in order to better inform policy, programming and practice in the delivery of educational services, which, until now, has been conducted largely without critical engagement of research, history, or intention” (Zakharia, 2009). Without such critical engagement, governments may remain complacent in their reproduction of history, collective memory, and exclusive national identity through the use of single-sided narratives and discourses (as symbols, labels, as and more than stories) within the history curriculum. This thesis study, which locates itself within education policy, social action, cultural affairs, and politics, raises questions and exposes issues of broad cross-content significance by examining problems caused by the inclusion of such narratives within education during
escalating/entrenched intergroup conflict. In so doing, this study explores the possible uses and abuses of education as a political tool of peace and reconciliation, or as a tool of indoctrination.

In their look at the Israel’s mandated curriculum as a tool of social education, Hofman, Alpert, and Schnell (2007) cite Cuban’s (1992) work on curriculum stability and change to highlight three kinds of curriculum: intended, taught, and learned. Regarding intended curriculum, the focus of this thesis study is on any content that is expected (planned) for dissemination to students. “Expected” does not mean “taught,” but there is a notion that what is taught has been consciously selected, while other content may have (un)intentionally been omitted. Lastly, the learned curriculum refers to how knowledge is understood and absorbed by the intended recipient (learner). Each of the three types of curriculum differs in what it deals with, how it is presented, and how people cope with it. As previously stated, this thesis study is not an examination of teachers or students, and therefore the taught and the learned curricula are not discussed further in this thesis study. Rather, the findings and conclusions are drawn from the IMOE’s published, intended government-mandated curriculum, including the official guidelines. According to Schrag (1992), cited in Hofman et al. (2007, p. 310), within the intended curriculum, “ideas and notions of a given subject matter are conceptualized, topics and contents are selected and sorted from a large body of knowledge, and are then organized according to the conceptualization of ideas.” As Apple (1993) suggests, any curriculum is selective in nature and political in its implications.

If the IMOE history curriculum is selective and emphasizes a narrative of the Jewish-Israelis’ need for defence from the Palestinian and Arab Other, then such a narrative may also reinforce the “us” and “them” position. However, if the emphasis is different, then its framing, while it reinforces hierarchical societal positioning, may also provide an opportunity to be self-reflective. The framing may begin a conversation that questions the status quo in relation to notions
of power identity politics, and Otherness. If the intention is to teach students that the Arab or Palestinian is the “Other,” then the content may also be framed to question how the Others came to be, their (Palestinian) perceived opposition to the Jewish-Israeli collective, and provide a grounding of their (Palestinian) national aspirations.

Yet this thesis study presumes that many governments, including Israel’s, are knowingly educating students in a single-sided historical curriculum that still at times alienates and scapegoats the Other, even if it does not fully negate the Other. In this way, such a political focus may perpetuate conflicts or at least end up leaving them unchallenged under the false pretences of the status quo.

According to Davies’s (2004) work on education, conflict, and extremism, cited in Pinson et. al., (2009, p. 2), a curriculum that depicts conflict as “us versus them” and frames an educational narrative around othering “generates and reinforces a ‘negative approach to education and conflict,’ that is, negative in its contribution to peace.” This process includes reinforcement of negative stereotypes of the rival, encouragement of confrontational attitudes, and lack of attention to developments unrelated to or departing from the polarized conflict events (i.e., the war of independence and the Nakba) and the “hate” curriculum.

Challenges to these narratives are needed to provide an opportunity for all children to cope successfully with the political implications of intractable conflicts. I believe that neither party in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, presently or historically, wants to be seen as the aggressor, and governments would not want to teach their citizens such a viewpoint. However, although changes have been made to the history curricula throughout Israel’s existence, the current official curriculum portrays the dominant Jewish-Israeli society as a phoenix rising from the fires of
historical attempts at extermination and eradication. Arabs (later Palestinians) seem to be portrayed as the reincarnation of all past anti-Semitic oppressors.

This thesis study is significant because it sheds light on the way social structural factors (tangible interests such as resource distribution and relative status) and psycho-cultural factors (intangible, culturally-embedded interpretations of self and the Other wrapped up in fears, identities, narrative, etc.) are embedded within the Israeli official history school curriculum. So too, this thesis examines the ramifications of this official narrative in the reinforcement of an “adoptive witness” viewpoint of victimhood and, consequently, an adversarial approach to the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

1.7 – Definitions

The terms, concepts, and labels used throughout this thesis study are intended to create a distinct understanding about who is being spoken about and in what context. At the same time, labels and terms create limitations to the comprehension of the reality on the ground by forcing lived complexities into an abstract “box.” Categorizations of the self and the Other act in direct conflict with the goals of this thesis study, yet they remain tools for focusing an inquiry and discerning how identity groups interconnect with each other.

Keeping in mind this contradiction, it is important to stay aware that all labels are simplified generalizations about distinct ethnic groups, some of whose members actually share a religion, culture, and/or values. There needs to be a further acknowledgement that application of an encompassing label to differing groups can oversimplify their diversity, histories, and distinct identities. That said, this section cautiously sets out to define the terms’ usage in this thesis study in order to highlight how these labels are understood and intended for use.
Israelis

The term “Israeli” is used to denote a nationality; in this thesis study, the term refers only to Jews living in the State of Israel, even though, in a correct usage, the term refers to any and all of the state’s citizens of any ethnicity. Israel is identified as a Jewish state, but its multiethnic makeup encompasses Jews, Arabs (including both Arab Muslims and Arab Christians), non-Arab Christians, Druze, Circassians, and other, smaller ethnic groups, not all of whom recognize their own citizenship as Israeli.

Jewish-Israelis

The term “Jewish-Israelis” refers to legal Israeli citizens or residents of the Jewish faith or Jewish ethnicity living in the State of Israel. Within the State of Israel, Jewish ethnic divisions include Ashkenazi Jews (e.g., Jews from Central and Eastern Europe), Sephardi Jews (e.g., Jews from the Iberian Peninsula), Mizrahi Jews (e.g., Jews from West Asia), Beta Israel (e.g., Jews from Ethiopia), Bene Israel (e.g., Jews from India and Pakistan), and converts to Judaism. There are also Jewish immigrants residing in Israel who arrived voluntarily or as a result of rising anti-Semitism and religious persecution in their home countries. In this diverse cultural geography, the Jewish-Israeli community manifests a wide range of cultural traditions and encompasses a wide spectrum of religious observance, from the Haredi (e.g., strictly Orthodox or ultra-Orthodox Jews), to the Hilonim (e.g., secular Jews). The key here is that, while all Jewish-Israelis share Judaism in their cultural roots, not all share a strong adherence to the faith. Jews whose ancestors were living in the region before the establishment of the State of Israel are commonly referred to as Palestinian Jews.
Arabs

The term Arab is extremely contentious since it refers to a pan-ethnic group, not a distinct national identity. Within this thesis study, the term is used to identify people who share similar geographical, genealogical, linguistic, and/or cultural backgrounds, including tribal affiliations and intra-tribal relationships that can play an important part in Arab identity (Deng, 1995; Hopkins and Ibrahim, 1997). Unlike the term “Israeli,” which is, for Jews living in the state, seen as a nationality as well as an ethnicity, the label “Arab” may not be an identification of an individual’s primary identity (as compared with nationality or religion).

Arab Citizens in Israel

It is important to reiterate that not all Israeli citizens in Israel consider themselves Israeli, nor are they all practitioners of the state’s religion. Arab citizens of Israel are non-Jewish Israeli citizens of the state who identify themselves as Palestinian. Most Arab citizens of Israel are functionally bilingual and speak the Palestinian dialect of Arabic, with their second language being Hebrew. With regard to religion, most Arab citizens in Israel are Sunni Muslim, while others practice Christianity. A further distinction is that the Arab population in Israel may identify as Arab or Palestinian by nationality and Israeli by citizenship (Margalith, 1953; Peleg and Waxman, 2011).

Palestinians

The term “Palestinian” refers to those living in the Palestinian Territories (encompassing the West Bank and the Gaza Strip). Though these residents are predominantly Sunni Muslim by religion, the term “Palestinian” is a nationalistic label and not a religious one (e.g., there are Palestinian Christian, Druze, and Samaritan communities). As Bekerman (2009a, p. 2) notes, the
“Palestinian indigenous minority in Israel comprises approximately 19 percent of the population, and of this minority roughly 90 percent is Muslim and 10 percent Christian.” Moreover, the term “Palestinian” is used to denote an ethnic group that is culturally and linguistically Arab (Dowty, 2008; Lewis, 1999) and geographically situated within a small, contested piece of land over which they do not have sovereignty. When used in relation to a Palestinian national identity (Dowty, 2008), the term “Palestinian” is used to refer to a nationalist concept of a Palestinian people that includes a place of origin, a collective sense of a shared past, and hope for a future in the form of a Palestinian state (Likhovski, 2006).

The term “Palestinian” changes its meaning in relation to pre-1948 or post-1948 history. After 1948, the term took on the meaning outlined above; before 1948, the term referred to all Jews, Arabs, and others who inhabited the British Mandate Palestine prior to the establishment of the State of Israel.

The Other, Otherness, and Othering

As a tool used to formulate a sense and definition of a collective identity, the term “Other” or “them” is used to refer to a group or members of a group other than one’s own. This group is generally seen as violent and oppressive. I’Anson (2003, p.21) helps to conceptualize identity by explaining that “there is a source of meaning-giving activity, different from a mere object. The Other’s gaze is an assertion of the Other as a subject, which in turn serves to objectify.” Furthermore, the Other is essential to understanding the duality of societal positions or the hierarchy of the self and the Other. I’Anson (2003, p. 23) contends that “‘Otherness is a fundamental category of human thought.’ The dichotomy that leads to Otherness is implicit in legends, myths and the most mundane contrasts… Beauvoir says that establishing otherness is
quite automatic, and from the establishment of otherness springs valorized designations such as ‘inferior,’ ‘different,’ ‘foreign’ and ‘lower class.’”

A concept of Otherness – as a way of defining an individual, group, or society as separate, different, or unique – is used sociologically to focus on how societies exclude and polarize others through subordination or complete negation. Some approaches, like Booker T. Washington’s (1902) perspective on the struggle for equality, are based on a belief that the individual is responsible for his or her own status. This thesis study agrees, in contrast, with W.E.B. DuBois (1903): that the Other is a social construct and not conceptualized on an individual basis. Defining and applying the term “Other” as political, social, and psychological construct facilitate understanding of the crucial role of “Otherness” and “Othering” in reinforcing a national identity and defining the collective on the basis of a history of enmity, segregation, or subordination of the Other.

### 1.8 – Limitations

One of the key limitations of this study is that it only focusses on one party to the larger conflict (the Jewish-Israeli curriculum) as opposed to analysing the multiple players (Arab curriculum in Israel, Jewish-Orthodox curriculum, Palestinian curriculum [different aspects written by Fatah and Hamas, etc.]). As this thesis only considers how Israel intended for identity and memory to be transmitted and how each may have shaped the history in the region, as oppose to both them (Jewish-Israelis) and the Palestinians, it cannot fully comment on how key episodic events presented in the curriculum gave birth to actions, reactions and so on. Noting this limitation is of the utmost importance as all findings, analysis and drawing conclusions are solely based on a one-sided account of IMOE selected events. In efforts to mitigate this limitation, I draw on my
own background as a Social Science teacher and curricular author to delve beyond simply what is present in the curriculum, and consider how selectivity, omissions, and the framing of events and outcomes may lead to government intent and intended next steps (historical actions/reactions).

Secondly, given the exploratory nature of this thesis study, this research does not include an in-depth analysis of the ethno-political/cultural values of Israelis and Palestinians, a definitive genesis of the conflict, or a history of the evolution of and debates about the educational system currently in place in Israel. Moreover, this thesis study is not a prescription for what should be taught or learned. Rather, it is an examination of what is represented in official documents as intended by the Israeli nation-state to be taught. These documents may be used to explain why curricular representations of intergroup relationships have evolved and what role postmemory and adoptive witnessing of history may have played in such outcomes. The tenets of conflict theory are employed in an effort to facilitate understanding and to mitigate the challenge of drawing conclusions that overemphasize the IMOE’s intent.

Thirdly, this thesis study does not include human subjects. In the process of conducting documentary research in Israel, attempts were made to contact IMOE officials and to interview them about policy, curriculum development, and content selection, but to no avail. This thesis study is thus limited by the documents and resources made available by government officials and their approved representatives. These documents and resources may not include the full range of materials made available to teachers in the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli classroom (i.e., teachers may use third party supplementary sources). Since contact was not made with government officials, all curricular materials studied in this research have been produced and provided by the IMOE through its website.
A fourth limitation is this thesis study’s use of psycho-cultural conflict theory, as discussed in greater depth in Chapter Three: Conceptual Framework. A psycho-cultural analysis of an intended history curriculum cannot decipher the particular dispositions that steer behaviour in one direction versus another. This limitation presents a challenge to the development of sound conclusions based on general educational assumptions. Instead of conducting subject interviews or observing curricular construction or classroom dynamics, this thesis study applies theory in order to offer plausible explanations for group behaviour. This approach fails to verify which particular dispositions may be invoked at a given time.

A final limitation of the study is that its analysis cannot accurately predict the dispositions actually evoked in various situations. This study does not look at learning, but it does consider how students may be led to interpret or react in a certain manner. Still, there is no concrete way to document whether what the individual was to be taught in fact was learned and whether this learning actually shaped their behaviour. This limitation highlights an interpretive dimension of this project. It might be said that conflict reignites deeply held emotions in situations that are highly ambiguous and often unstructured. At the same time, an understanding of the process of knowledge selection and transmission via an intended curricular framework during times of conflict provides a vital grounding for depicting the connections between individual developmental processes and the psycho-cultural dimensions of a whole community. This limitation, though dire, is mitigated through the rigorous analysis and re-analysis process outlined in Chapter Four: Methodology. There is no doubt that conclusions in this thesis study will be based on assumptions; however, the assumptions will be informed closely by the specific (curricular) data collected and analysed below.
1.9 – Outline of Dissertation

This chapter serves as an introduction to the forthcoming discussion of the narrative approaches to conflict in the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum. The chapter has set forth the purpose of the study, a statement of the problem, the study’s significance to the field, and the study’s objectives, questions, and limitations. It is meant to serve as a guideline for readers’ expectations.

There has been an extensive amount of work done already in the field of education and conflict. In this regard, Chapter Two presents a thorough literature review of key scholars who have made significant contributions to the fields of conflict, memory and identity, subjugated knowledges, and education, schooling and conflict. The review relies primarily on Ross’s psycho-cultural conflict theory, but it also highlights Apple’s work on politics and ideologies embedded within curriculum, Jansen’s scholarship on curriculum and politics, Nora’s, Hirsch’s, and Rothberg’s studies on memory and the transmission of historical narratives to second and third generations, Fanon’s work on oppression, conflict, and identity, Bekerman’s theory and research on education, conflict, and identity, Dei’s, Spivak’s, and Gilroy’s work on anti-racist education, Hammack’s work on identity, narratives, and Israeli-Palestinian society, Bush and Saltarelli’s study on peacebuilding or anti-peace education during “ethnic” conflict, Tawil and Harley’s analysis of education and identity-based conflict within curriculum policy, and Kelman’s work on Otherness and the dehumanization of victims.

Chapter Three introduces the big ideas presented in this thesis study and discusses how these ideas frame the inquiry process. As such, it lays out how psycho-cultural conflict theory is applied to this thesis study’s investigation of the IMOE’s mandated history curriculum. Building on the theory and research presented in Chapter Two, this chapter draws from curriculum studies,
anti-racist education theory, and conflict theory to illuminate the interconnections between the social structural and psycho-cultural aspects of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and how notions of power, subjugation, and the institutionalization of knowledge are utilized. In so doing, this chapter connects psycho-cultural conflict theory with the theoretical prism of anti-racist education in its analysis of how the curriculum can constitute a tool of political indoctrination through the selective nature of the historical curricular content.

Chapter Four presents the methodology used to collect and analyse research findings. The chapter highlights the qualitative starting point for understanding the conflict, the procedures for sample selection, the methods for analysis, and the tools put in place to safeguard from bias and ensure the validity of this research’s findings. Here the study employs a Relational Content Analysis in the provision of evidence about where themes and key historical events are embedded within the history curriculum documents. Evidence is also provided about how these themes and key historical or episodic events are framed in order to shape intended knowledge dissemination.

Chapter Five applies the methodology outlined in Chapter Four to examine the structure of the Israeli education system and the framing, approach, and rationale behind the mandated history curriculum through an organization around four curricular themes. The analysis and discussion of data in light of the theory are then divided into two chapters. Chapter Five explores, analyses, and deconstructs key findings illustrated through translated curriculum and excerpts from both the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum and some IMOE-approved supplementary resources (ministry workbooks that correspond with curriculum guidelines). All curricular excerpts are adapted from the work of Groiss (2000) and the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace - CMIP (2000, 2002), and are intended to show a cross-section of the larger body of material (e.g., history curriculum and corresponding IMOE-approved supplemental texts). It is possible
that translations may be incorrect or may misrepresent facts, but each quote is read within the context of the larger document and not simply extracted and analysed as a singular, stand-alone excerpt.

Chapter Six discusses the pedagogical approaches and the role that history education’s use of historical narratives plays within the constructs of Jewish identity and adoptively witnessed memory. Though this thesis study does not prescribe how curriculum should change, the findings outlined in Chapter Five and Chapter Six consider how the Jewish-Israeli history curriculum reflects particular representations of the self, the Other, and the history of the conflict in a way that could reinforce and exacerbate tensions rather than help to build a foundation for peaceful relations.

This thesis concludes with Chapter Seven, which includes a discussion of the practical implications of my research theory and findings for dialogue, schooling, education, and possible revisions to history education. A summary of the study and next steps are set forth through this question: Why does the intractable conflict between Israelis and Palestinians persist?
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature brings an interesting dynamic into this thesis study, even though few studies focus solely on the role formal curriculum plays in shaping identity and Otherness within the secular Jewish-Israel schools. Though a plethora of literature has been written regarding concerns about youth indoctrination through Israeli and Palestinian textbooks, very few studies delve beyond basic concerns. Since the curriculum itself is the focus of this thesis study, the history curriculum is the appropriate point to start. That said, the history curriculum document does not provide sufficient details about IMOE’s intentions, and, thus, this thesis study also turns to secondary, explanatory sources to shed light on the dynamics of this curriculum as a tool of psycho-cultural conflict theory, on theories of anti-racist education, and on educational policy.

2.1 – Conflict, Memory, Identity

When the role that psycho-cultural dispositions and interpretations could play within the mandated, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum is considered, the application of psycho-cultural conflict theory gives context to the emotionally latent narratives and experiences (by the self and through adoptive witnessing of events) that allowed the interpretations’ development. In this thesis’s application of psycho-cultural conflict theory to the reading of the history curriculum, the thesis study looks for evidence about how students are intended to critically reflect on the events of 1948 and, in light of such evidence, how students are intended to witness the events. Though content reflection consists of a curricular mapping from student and faculty perspectives, this thesis study focuses solely on the literature-based indicators, as opposed to self-efficacy measures.
As a point of departure, this thesis study begins with the work of Ross (1993a; 1993b; 2007), who examines battles over diverse cultural expressions in proposals for a psycho-cultural framework for understanding ethnic conflict, and also the barriers to, and opportunities for the battles’ mitigation. His work lays the foundation for this thesis study’s understanding of the ineffable human dimensions of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and explores how individuals’ deep seated worldviews can be furthered through the development of psycho-cultural narratives that in turn shape their dispositions towards and interpretations of the Others and their actions.

In so doing, his analysis explores how culture frames interests, how it structures demand making, how its narratives shape the construct of social positioning, and how those engaged in protracted and/or intractable conflict move within this space. Ross explains that cultures (collectively, through their use of symbols, narratives, representations of the Other, etc.) reproduce, reinforce, and can sometimes transform conflictual social relations. Building on Ross’s contributions to conflict theory, this thesis study delves further to examine how students come to embody or adoptively witness others’ accounts of conflict (through a study of history). In efforts to situate Ross within education, Bickmore’s (2017) work is beneficial as it applied Ross’ theory to education through a study of education’s role in violent conflict and peacebuilding. While curriculum, per se, was not the focus of Bickmore’s study, Ross’s work here is used to consider how curriculum intends to have students come to identify the emotionally significant issues within the curriculum, and how, through repetition and reinforcement of these issues, students may come to shape their individual identities, their membership within the collective, and the ways both in turn are reflected in a student’s dispositions towards and interpretations of the Other.

The concept of identity, and early indoctrination into it, is of great importance within this thesis study because identity is what shapes and is shaped by the psycho-cultural aspects of
conflict in society. As Faleti (2006) suggests, identity (e.g., as Jewish-Israelis and as a Jewish state in this thesis study) is a motivating factor in violent conflict. This idea of early indoctrinating exposure is noted by Bekerman, Zembylas, and McGlynn (2009, p. 226), who suggests that, Studies in the field of identity development show that children develop a sense of uniqueness when differentiating self from parents and other adults (Erikson, 1966). Young children are aware of gender and racial differences as early as 4–6 years of age (Aboud, 1988; Katz and Kofkin, 1997) and recognize discrimination at an early age (Verkuyten et al., 1997; Theimer et al., 2001). Similarly, studies suggest that children as young as preschoolers regularly harbor negative attitudes toward members of ethnic or racial groups other than their own (Abbink, 1984; Aboud, 1987). Prejudice appears to be learned (Aboud 1988), and its development can be explained almost exclusively in environmental terms.

If polarizing notions of the self and the Other are presented and reinforced from an early age, immersion in such ideology will tend to guide interpretations of interactions (psycho-cultural dispositions) with the Other. Furthermore, as noted in Chapter One, because of the early exposure children have to content that may influence their early development through adulthood, this thesis study frames education as a political tool of indoctrination, that is, a system whose implicit processes of content knowledge acquisition and retrieval are meant to guide specific behaviour (Dei, 1996). I believe that identity is influenced by memory, and, since memory is the basis of history, the ways history is represented, intended to be taught, and used within the curriculum are contentious because they shape, reinforce, and exacerbate identity politics and the societal hierarchy of “us” and “them.” Thus ethnic, cultural, and religious conflicts cannot easily be resolved. Yet Ross does not address curriculum or formal education, yet by providing great commentary on collective identity, his ideas can be applied to this studies examination of collective identity, and within curriculum, how can it be shaped and transmitted. Bekerman’s work on the negotiation of cultural, ethnic, and national identities during intercultural encounters and informal/formal learning situates Ross in a discussion of formal education through the presentation
of a multidimensional picture of how contested narratives can be taught, and of how identity, memory, and reconciliation can be infused within the curriculum.

Ross’s lack of focus on education and Israeli-Palestinian relations is further compensated for by interconnecting his theories on the psycho-cultural dynamics of identity (e.g., how narratives shape dispositions towards and interpretations of the Other) with Bekerman’s (2009a, 2009b) theory on the limits of multiculturalism education and identity formation, Bekerman and Zembylas’s (2009, 2010) theory of contested narratives and the effects of perpetrator-victim narratives on education, and Bekerman, Zembylas, and McGlynn’s (2009) study on the de-essentialization of identity categories in post-conflict zones.

The control of collective memory, which defines the legitimate criteria for interpretation, can be a central element in building a national identity from diverse collectives with different histories, interests, and goals (Paulson, 2015). The control of the production and interpretation of historical memory has been used to create “the new-Jew.” This “new-Jew” collective identity is protected through the uniformity of the official dominant collective memory and the legitimization of particular interpretations of the nation-building project. Reconnection of this challenge with Hartman’s concept of witness by adoption leads to questions: how are Jewish-Israeli students taught to embody a particular narrative and feelings of victimization, and to keep this at the forefront of their interactions within society? How is formal history education in Israel intended to serve as an agent of such adoptive witnessing?

Bekerman’s work on Israeli and Palestinian identity is linked with Pinson’s (2008) and Pinson et. al.’s (2009) critical sociological work on education in endeavours to understand citizenship education, membership, identity, and the impact policy has on marginalized groups. The politics of Pinson’s work, in turn, reinforces Ross’s theory in conceptualizing the “us”
versus “them” dynamic and the ways identity politics and societal hierarchies may be emphasized within curricular narratives. Ross falls short for this study by not looking at the role of schooling in the transmission of psycho-cultural narratives and the dispositions that may arise from them, but Pinson does examine them.

Furthermore, Auerbach (2010, p. 127) sheds light on Ross’s work about how psycho-cultural dispositions play out within conflict and on the aforementioned studies presented by Bekerman and Pinson on the methods by which narratives can shape identities and mitigate group interaction during conflict by arguing that narratives are the “cornerstone of nations engaged in a conflict over identity. Fortification through these narratives provides the strength and endurance to survive the long-standing, bitter, and bloody conflict between them.” By drawing a distinction, as Ross does, between identity conflicts and social (interests) conflicts over material resources, Auerbach highlights the role played by narratives and dispositions in the process of shaping identity.

Focusing heavily on culture and contestation, Ross’s (1983) meta-analysis shows definitively that culture does not necessarily exacerbate conflict. Rather, the constructed nature of psycho-cultural narratives and dispositions can either facilitate successful conflict mitigation (through inclusive narratives and identities) or be used as a tool of a destructive conflict’s escalation or continuation. As such, this thesis study questions to what extent the government intends secular Jewish-Israeli students to be taught to interpret and adoptively witness unfolding historical and regional events and the core issues entangled within the conflict. This study also asks about whether students are provided with an outlet to appropriately express their fears. In said process, Ross’s psycho-cultural framework offers a valuable explanation of the ways
narratives and interpretations in cultural discourse frame conflict and identity by highlighting their multiple roots.

It is assumed that any curriculum document would selectively interpret the motives as well as the interests of an Other who may be framed antagonistically. The curriculum is not Ross’s focus; Ross (1993b) does offer the insight that, within an intractable conflict, identification of one’s own and modification of the Other’s interpretations of the group’s actions has to involve addressing the opposing interests. So too, Ross stresses the need for models of conflict management and suggests ways to expand constructive conflict management. When Ross’s insights are applied in an educational context, his work is understood here as offering a pathway to peacebuilding (Bickmore, 2017). Ross frames this path as needing to understand the Other and possibly questioning why there is opposition in the first place, a process that may foster empathy through an “in the other’s shoes” perspective. Then, building on this understanding, successful conflict management and peacebuilding may begin.

Connerton’s work on how memory can be transmitted is used throughout this thesis study to understand the process of memory and forgetting. While Connerton, like Ross, was not speaking about education or the history curriculum, his work can be used to examine the practice and process education uses to convey knowledge and transmit culture through its collection of images and recollected knowledge of the past, conveyed and sustained through immersion commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices. As Connerton notes, one’s experiences in the present world are contextualized within past event and objects, and vice versa, and we experience our present world in a context which is causally connected with past events. “We may say that our experiences of the present largely depend upon our knowledge of the past and that our images of the past commonly serve to legitimate a present social order” (Connerton, 1989, p. 2-3, cited in
Ross, 2008, p. 12). Through an emphasis on group membership, Connerton furthers that “individuals are able to acquire, to localize and to recall their memories” (1989, p. 36). Interpreting Connerton and situating him within this study would elicit an understanding as to how, as a tool of shaping group membership and collective identities, the intended learning of a shared history would assumingly transmit memories and have them provide students with frameworks within which their, or their adoptively witnessed memories, are localized by institutionalized (collectively contextualized) mapping.

Applied to formal education, explicit and (un)intentional use of images, stories, excerpts (as recollected knowledge), and/or postmemories, and their embodiment either through personal experiences or the process of adoptive witnessing, all shape how students come to understand themselves, the collective, their place within the collective, and others who live on the periphery. As such, memory is often shaped by a society’s selective or amnesic lens. In one’s literal and adoptive remembrance of events, there is a (un)conscious act of omission. In this thesis study, Connerton’s contribution is used in the proposal that people come to ascribe greater meaning to some details than to others in the process of shaping learners’ own narratives and motivations (e.g., we are the victims, they are the perpetrator of our suffering). Interconnecting Connerton with Bekerman’s theory, learners may often place less emphasis on details that may be seen to contradict their identity, their interpretation, or the relationship of the event. This interpretation, which bridges Ross’s work, shapes dispositions that play out in conflictual relationships.

While Connerton provides a significant analysis of the social constructs of memory by building on Halbwachs’s (1980, 1992) theory of collective memory and Durkheim’s (1933, 1938) studies of society, collective consciousness, and culture, his work is used in this thesis study in conjunction with that of Ross, Bekerman, and Pinson to shed light on the possible purpose of the
IMOÉ’s selection and omission of curricular material, and to develop an understanding of the narratives thereby transmitted. Still, his work is not without gaps in relation to this thesis study, namely, the fact that his emphasis is on the social processes (i.e., festivals, rituals, ceremonies) that draw connections to the past, as opposed to this thesis study’s examination of the institutionalization of memory. To attend to this gap, his focus on social group membership is coupled with Pinson’s work above to provide a further understanding about how the social constructs of memory are embodied within the larger collective. Additionally, the aforementioned studies by Connerton and Ross are used to make assumptions about the IMOÉ’s intentions.

Studies by Bar-On and Adwan (2003, 2006) on dual narratives attempt to create an alternate version of Israeli and Palestinian history and to provide commentary about challenges regarding the political nature of the conflict by critically examining the historical events that shape Israeli identity. The lack of broad political acceptance in Israel of Bar-On and Adwan’s project became a significant motivator for this thesis study—not in an attempt to recreate their study or findings but to illuminate why such dissent exists.

In his independent works, Bar-On takes a social-psychological perspective on the way individuals construct the Other’s identity. In this thesis study, the work of Bar-On contributes to understanding how Jewish-Israeli identities are defined (by the official curriculum examined) in relation to an enemy Other. While Bar-On’s work with Adwan led to the creation of a dual narrative of history educational resource, the issue currently facing the IMOÉ is how to present and rewrite history, not as a duality, but as one shared, interlocking narrative of both parties to the history. While this limit to the contribution of Bar-On’s work to this larger thesis study is noted, his representation of identity, based on the psychological and moral after-effects of the Holocaust on the children of the perpetrators, explains that, in order to preserve one’s own identity, the self
and the collective define themselves in opposition to the Other. Like Connerton, Bar-On reinforces and is reinforced by the theory of Pinson, cited above. Within conflict, Bar-On (1998, p. 4) explains that identification of Otherness shapes narratives and dispositions of conflict and,

Representations of “other” and “self” play a central role in the personal and collective biographical process and its changes. The “other” can be perceived as one, monolithic, constant element, as opposed to a constant, integrated “self.” The “other” can be perceived as a process undergoing changes in the same way that the “self” changes during its personal and collective life. The “other” can be perceived as indefinite within the framework of the “self’s” representation, since the “self” builds its representation as a closed, total structure, while the “otherness” of the “other” is infinite.

Speaking of the role and power of narratives in conflict and conflict transformation, Funk and Said (2004, p. 3) write that narratives are “frameworks for actions’ through which members of particular identity groups ‘understand the social and political worlds in which they live, and explain the conflicts in which they are involved.’” Within this framework, the dominant Jewish-Israeli narrative of history, embedded within the government’s official curriculum, is defined by a discrepancy in the power struggle (further discussed in the next subsection), sovereignty, security, and nationalism. In the context of 2,000 years of religious persecution, there is a perception that one rival nation is attempting to neutralize, injure, or eliminate the other (namely, the Jews, later Israel as the Jewish State against a Palestinian Other). Building on this, Irobi (2005) argues that these traumas and memories can often magnify personal anxiety. Moreover, since perceived threats by the Other may appear to mimic past transgressions and be expressed through similar narratives that reignite past trauma, Irobi posits that groups that endure constant stereotyping and discrimination often lash out in violent outbursts because their identity (perceived as threatened) remains a defining factor of their being. While the main concern seems to be for survival, factors such as the protection of the individual, the national identity, the religion, and the
culture may be playing out within this narrative. All of these factors often overwhelm reason and inflame conflict behaviour.

Thus far, it has been noted that collective memory, identity, and Otherness are motivating concerns for this thesis study. In an effort to understand how each interconnects, Otherness is positioned as a tenet of the collective Jewish-Israeli identity. The way the Other is framed and the narrative used to describe the Other are based in the duality of the group’s fears about a modern, perceived threat by the Other, and in the connection of such fears to past traumas committed by either the Other, or Others who possess traits similar to those of the current Other. Faleti (2006, p. 51) defines identity as “an unshakeable sense of self-worth, which makes life meaningful and includes the feeling that one is physically, socially, psychologically and spiritually safe.” When identity, either individually or nationally, is questioned and/or threatened (e.g., persecution or threats/attempts at extermination), Northrup (1989) suggests that such threats may lead to defensive reactions against the parties imposing or perceived to be imposing such threats. Such defensive reactions, which are attempts to protect faith, land, and recognition, can be exhibited through violence. Through such violent exhibitions, concerns regarding identity, sovereignty, and nationalism (stemming from the events of 1948) have contributed to and reshaped the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and, in so doing, have led to a growing centralization of state power to enforce Israeli borders and to ensure both national and individual security. This enforcement has further solidified an already escalating polarization between “us” and “them,” with politically dominant Jewish-Israelis refusing the Palestinian Other a “fair share” of the countries’ resources.

This “us” versus “them” metaphor, which I continue to use throughout this thesis study, is meant to highlight identity politics in terms of the (collective) self in relation to the Other. The Other is created through the use of negative (Othering) images. The fact that these polarizing
images are introduced both explicitly and implicitly to younger generations in and beyond formal school education is noted. It is their constant reinforcement and legitimization within formal education that can lead to the reproduction of hostilities founded in a fragmented and contentious history.

In relation to Otherness, this thesis study considers the construct of identity and societal positionality (as us or them), in both society and the psyche of the self, by applying the theory of Frantz Fanon. In particular, Black Skin, White Mask, in which Fanon (1952) witnesses his own Otherness, Fanon “describes the feelings of dependency that Black people sense in a White dominated world” (Shahinaj, n.d., p. 3). This thesis study situates Fanon’s conception of the Other (spoken about in greater detail in the following subsection) in relation to the work of Said (1978), whose theory of Orientalism helps in the process of understanding how Otherness is exacerbated by language and the manipulation or selection of knowledge. Like Ross and Connerton, Said and Fanon also do not look specifically at content selection within formal curriculum nor curriculum itself; yet both theorists help to interpret and unpack how language is used by the IMOE and thus how, in the reinforcement of identity and societal positionality through the presentation of key episodic events, the Other is represented.

Note that this thesis study does not deal with direct communication between secular Jewish- Israelis and Others; rather, I analyse curricular representations of the self (Jewish-Israelis) and of the way Jewish-Israeli history curriculum discourses present a perception of the Other (Arab Muslims, later called Palestinians). Maoz’s (2001, 2002, 2004, 2005) examination of interaction and communication in intergroup encounters between “Jews” and “Arabs” in Israel is extremely helpful in understanding obstacles that prevent or make difficult accurate interpretation of the Other’s dispositions. In her 2005 evaluation of the role of communication between disputing
groups, Maoz noted that “…intergroup contact can, under certain conditions, effectively reduce hostility and prejudice, and also create more positive attitudes between groups” (p. 132). However, in terms of dispositions during conflict, Maoz, drawing on McCauley (2002, p.133), also notes that “attitude change following inter-group contact does not necessarily indicate that a change in the behaviour of all members of one group toward the members of the other group will follow, but instead may simply be a reporting of more positive attitudes at an abstract and interpersonal level.” The crucial insight here is that, while learning of, encountering, and interacting with the Other may improve an individual’s feelings towards the Other, the replication of such occurrences could “serve to reinforce existing negative attitudes and relations in which one group dominates” (Maoz, 2005, p. 136).

Maoz’s studies set out to understand the psychological processes by which dispositions are intended for acquisition within an official curriculum. In so doing, the studies provide an alternative conception of identity within the region, and of how a manipulation of identity shaped through the history curriculum can be a tool for social and political change, and also be both a burden and benefit for youth learning about themselves and the Other.

This alternate conception of identity may be understood through the work of Jenkins (1996, p. 47) on resistance and agency in ghettoization, whereby: “identity is an aspect of the emotional and psychological constitution of individuals, correspondingly, bound up with the maintenance of personal integrity and security, and may be extremely resistant to change.” This thesis study does not intend to imply that Arabs or Palestinians are the cause of all historical persecution of Jewish people. Rather, a victory for Jewish-Israelis in their War of Independence linked the recent violence (by Arab ‘enemies’) with the earlier persecution of Jews, only indirectly and implicitly, solidifying Jewish-Israelis’ narrative that “never again” will “we” be victims. An
assumption is made in this thesis study that, in the wake of the genocide committed against the Jews in the Nazi Holocaust, and with the fragility of the Jewish psyche so prevalent at the time, Israel’s defeat of Arab neighbours in 1948 resulted in a shift from victim to victor status. Given continued outbreaks of violent conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, and emerging threats to Israel from surrounding countries (e.g. Syria, Lebanon, and Iran), the Jewish-Israeli siege mentality building on an already fragile Jewish psyche has taken hold and has been reinforced by past memories, past trauma, and past rhetoric.

There are many possible entrance points for an examination of the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and one of those is the set of events of (and surrounding) 1948. As Hammack (2006, p. 330) writes, the events of 1948 “offer an example of the polarizing historical discourse in the region. The Israelis refer to the 1948 war as the ‘War for Independence.’ It is, for obvious reasons, a celebratory event.” In contrast, Palestinians refer to the same event as the Nakba (Catastrophe). This thesis study’s focus is thus on these events since I view them as ground zero for the contemporary regional divide and the moment when regional clashes were framed narratively as a fight for survival. These were the events that solidified the divide between “us” and “them” (the “Jew” versus the “Arab,” the “victor” versus the “victim”). The events of 1948 constitute a moment in history when the land was to be partitioned. The ways students are to be taught these events and the way they transpired frame how this polarization between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians and each’s role in the conflict is perpetuated and understood. Such an approach to the curriculum may not always be successful at understanding difference but rather may perpetuate it.

While this thesis study is heavily based on Ross’s psycho-cultural conflict theory, introduced above, Hammack’s (2006, 2008, 2010a, 2010b) conceptualization of identities and
historical narratives in political conflict (namely within Israel and amongst Palestinians), provides some of the soundest explanations of the ways individuals may recall such cultural dispositions in efforts to engage with and interpret the actions and motives of the Other. Like Pinson and Maoz, Hammack investigates identity and politics, particularly the way in which social categorization places individuals in states of relative power and privilege in societies. Thus, Hammack demonstrates that the Jewish-Israeli “identity was characterized by polarization in which an in-group ideology is internalized with little understanding of the out-group’s ideological perspective” (2006, p. 323). His findings suggest that there are “significant challenges of identity intervention in the context of intractable conflict” (2006, p. 323), yet there are gaps in his research, and he does lay them out. To address the gaps, Hammack’s work is read in conjunction to Bar-Tal’s (1996) focus on social development and the psychology of identity. Also read are Bar-Tal’s co-authored works with Kruglanski (1988) and with Halperin and Nets-Zehngut (2010), who illustrate how the development of social categories and stereotypes in childhood can influence how identity is shaped both socio-culturally and politically.

Taking a social-psychological approach, Bar-Tal explores how shared beliefs are formed in groups and societies and within intractable conflicts, how these beliefs shape not just the dynamics of the group, but also the beliefs projected on and about the Other. Whereas Bar-On, Maoz, and Hammack speak to the role of narratives, Bar-Tal identifies what is known about how conflict works through an examination of the social-psychological infrastructure that shapes both the dispositions towards and interpretations of the Other. This infrastructure, including collective societal beliefs about the ethos of the conflict, collective memory, and emotional collective orientations, contributes to the self’s identity and is used to solidify cultural membership (see also Pinson) and the person’s repertoire for conflict resolution and reconciliation. Through his
theoretical framework for concepts like siege mentality, intractable conflict, delegitimization, ethos of conflict, changing collective memory and identity, and a broad-scale culture of conflict (which links him back to Ross), Bar-Tal lays a foundation for understanding the hidden curriculum (see Giroux, 2001), curricular inferences, and the rationale for IMOE omissions addressed later in the discussion of education, schooling, and conflict.

Kelman’s theories, which tie together various theorists’ work on conflict, identity, and memory, examine social influence and attitude change; these theories are a binding tool in the way identity is understood. While scholars like Ross, Bar-On, and Bar-Tal speak to identity, Kelman looks at its social roots. Through his research on the Arab-Israeli and Israeli-Palestinian conflict (1987), and, more broadly, on the social-psychological dimensions of international conflict (1973), Kelman provides a great commentary on the role of national narratives in conflict and their resolution, on the role national identity has in shaping the Other (2005), and on how images of the self and the Other affect intergroup conflicts. Kelman, who is referenced by Ross regarding the acknowledgement and legitimization of the Others, versus dehumanization or negation of them, looks at how collective selves may come to be defined in opposition to the Other. Kelman, cited in Ross (2003, p. 196), notes that “There are great fears that accepting even part of the other side’s position is a denial of one’s own rights.” Thus, the way the Other is presented is a defining element of the history curriculum. As outlined in Chapter Five, in the examination of the events of 1948, one key theme is the legitimization and humanization (or not) of the Others and of their national aspirations.
2.2 – Subjugated Knowledge

Psycho-cultural conflict theory (Ross, 2007) is a tool for predicting and explaining the emotional and identity-based resonance and overall level of intergroup conflict in a society. The theory focuses on the deeply embedded, less conscious, ambiguous dispositions and motives that individuals and the larger society hold and impose on others, within their collective group and outside. With this theory as the foundation of this thesis study, a second lens that may be used to understand and read the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum is that of subjugated knowledge, power structures, and narratives of Otherness (introduced previously).

In its reference to subjugated knowledge, this thesis study uses the term in a sense developed by Michel Foucault. For Foucault, subjugated knowledges are those that are both hidden behind more dominant knowledges and revealed only by critique. The term refers to knowledge that has been explicitly disqualifed or perceived by the dominant society as inadequate, insufficient, or naïve (1980, p. 82). Within this thesis study and in its application to the reading of the IMOE’s mandated history curriculum, I use Foucault’s framing of subjugated knowledges in two ways. Firstly, I am referring to the presence of the Other and to historical content intended to acknowledge, legitimize, and humanize them, and also to how their presence may be buried or masked within the dominate curricular narrative. Secondly, when the term “subjugated knowledges” is used, I am referring to the whole series of the Other’s knowledge that has been disqualified as insufficiently elaborated, naïve, hierarchically inferior, and/or below the required level of erudition for the dominant group (Foucault, 2003, p. 7).

This thesis study builds upon and also distances itself from Foucault’s framing of subjugated knowledges, through a contextualized theoretical prism of anti-racist education that is outlined in Chapter Three and that is mindful of Fanon. In dealing with many themes and drawing
from the multiple theories used in this thesis study, Fanon’s work is applied as an approach to understanding, and possibly preventing and/or intervening in, patterns of social violence. Fanon’s work, including studies on decolonization and ensuing violence (1959), is used here as a tool to analyse the socio-cultural power constructs of society. This thesis study does not directly use theories of anti-colonization or decolonization, in which Fanon is often situated, but Fanon illuminates a critique of the colonial racism mindset and the way it reinforces dominant and subaltern positions within a social structure (1952, 1961).

While Ross comments on the internalized worldview members of social identity groups may hold, Fanon zeroes in on how a myopic racist mindset can destroy a person’s mental well-being and deepen the emotional wounds of oppressed people. While the Israeli history curriculum does not explicitly label Jewish-Israelis as oppressed, it does infer, through the continual reinforcement of a history of religious persecution, that the Jewish people were a historically oppressed people. Fanon’s theoretical approach to the liberation of the oppressed people, and his inferences about psycho-cultural narratives that embody the conditions historically imposed by the Other and societal attitudes toward these conditions are often read as advocacy of violence (1964). His work, in turn, sheds a bright light on the IMOE’s history curriculum, Unit 5: Modern Israel, which has the underlying theme that “we will no longer be victims.”

Fanon viewed macro-systems (such as formal education, though he did not explicitly speak of it) as purveyors of violence. He argued for revolutionary political resistance and spoke to the inevitable uprising of oppressed people once they reach a point where they cannot take repression any longer. His belief is that subjection to, or life under oppressive regimes would undoubtedly influence how subjects view and come to understand their world, and how their identity, self- esteem, feelings of self-worth, and physical, mental, and spiritual well-being are
shaped. The institutionalization of such oppression, in turn, reproduces the racist *status quo*. As such, the process of educating others, using this oppressive lens, reinforces the racist belief that the Other is of a lesser status or has no right to agency and self-determination. As Mulder (2016, p. 1) notes, when a system positions one group in opposition to another, “people internalize racism and oppression, and as a result, racist ways of thinking become ‘common sense’ knowledge.”

Moreover, while Fanon does not explicitly comment on psycho-cultural conflict theory or Israeli-Palestinian relations, he develops and uses his own version of psycho-cultural conflict theory when he theorizes that problem arises, not only within the interrelations of objective historical conditions but also within human attitudes toward these conditions. Such attitudes reinforce emotions and motivate actions against the Other. In describing the inevitable uprising of the oppressed bodies, Fanon focuses on the psychology of political violence, on a mutual recognition, and on conceptualizing the uses and abuses of political violence in the struggle for national identity. While Fanon focuses on the process of decolonization and assumes that it would be a violent phenomenon, colonial oppression cannot end simply by replacing one body in power with another. The issue is in the humanization of a people and their history as having an important value in the struggle. For Fanon, recognition of the self through political resistance and violence was a key insight. Moreover, “Fanon points out that occupation of land is the true offence and thus the only real motivation for cultural rejection of imposed cultural values is to violently take back control of the land” (Oruh, 2011, n.p.). While the occupation of land is a social structural factor that furthers the position and interests of one group at the expense of another, so too do the occupation and the resistance to it have psycho-cultural implications. For the dominant Jewish-Israeli society, a history of persecution and the beliefs and fears that they (as a Jewish people in a
Jewish sovereign state) are still under threat (i.e., siege mentality) frame their need for security from an Other whose historical interactions with Jews have been violent.

Like Ross’ psycho-cultural conflict theory, Fanon’s theory and call to action draw on culturally rooted shared images, metaphors, significant events, and personalities that connect ingroup members across time and space. In-group members recall the trauma and oppression their own groups endured, and project these feelings onto the Other, at least partly through violent conflict and the reclamation of lost objects (e.g., land).

Much as the IMOE curriculum frames Jewish history in Israel, Fanon is relevant to this thesis study in the way he envisions narratives of people creating a new world by combatting (images, understandings, and positions in relation to) the Other. While neither Ross nor Fanon can be used to understand any particular individual’s behaviour, Fanon is used to understand the deep seated psychological effects of oppression, as well as its broader implications for building a movement towards the liberation of mind, body, and soul. Like Ross’s framing of psycho-cultural conflict theory, Fanon’s highlights internalized perceptions (why one group feels threatened) that would be unique to a given time and place.

Furthermore, Fanon’s theory contributes to this thesis study’s key insights about how mutual recognition and, more often, the rejection or distrust of the Other in the intended curriculum may lead to continual back and forth violent outbreaks, the reproduction of hostilities, and the persistence of violence. Yet Fanon’s theory of mutual recognition also “allows both self and the other to have freedom and agency in the development and attainment of their own self-consciousness, in other words, a cognitive awareness of the self and its relation to the other” (Villet, 2011, p. 40). With this insight, Fanon is understood to mean that, while mutual recognition or lack of recognition may be the implicit message of the IMOE’s intended curriculum, the
curriculum does not deterministically shape or force an individual (or group) to act a certain way. Rather, the curriculum can only present information to students; it is up to students to adoptively witness the events as presented.

In an effort to bring Fanon into a discussion on education and an examination of curriculum, Dei writes, “Fanon is too important not to have been seriously engaged within debates about schooling and education….“ A thorough critique of Fanon’s scholarship takes up the challenge by broaching the questions “… of identity, difference and belonging, and the implications of schooling and education” (Dei 2010, p. 1). Further reading reveals Fanon’s thorough critique of nationalism and its development, which encompasses areas such as mental health and the role of intellectuals in revolutionary situations. This process links psycho-cultural dynamics and the lived experience found in Fanon’s work and furthers this thesis study’s application of psycho-cultural conflict theory to help illustrate how identities are shaped through representations of key episodic events in the history curriculum.

Fanon, like W.E.B. DuBois (1903), speaks of the divided self-perception within the human subject who has lost his or her cultural originality and embraced the culture of the Other, leading to a sense of inferiority. As a result of the inferiority complex engendered in the mind of the subject, the subject may try to appropriate and imitate the cultural code of the higher status Other. In interconnecting the work of the two authors within the larger scholarship of anti-racist education, I situate both Fanon and Ross within the realm of perspective, identity, and power. Fanon adds a voice for the oppressed and colonized, and Ross speaks to how an in-group collective who may (or may not) have been oppressed, may interpret the actions of Others.

Notions of anti-racist education, oppression, power, and agency draw from various scholars, such as Collins (1990), Dei (1996, 2005, 2008, 2010), Dei and Asgharzadeh (2001), Dei
and Calliste (2000), Dei and Kempf (2006), Gilroy (1993, 2000a, 2000b, 2004), hooks (1992, 1994), Hall (1994), Lee (2009), Spivak (2007), and West (1993), who shape this thesis study’s understanding of the effects that power, race, and identity may have on the body as well as on the culture of conflict. The work of interconnecting and situating these studies within psycho-cultural conflict theory and subjugated knowledges highlights the many tensions and contradictions that structure power, privilege, and knowledge within society and formal education. To speak about power is to speak about how knowledge is socially constructed through power and privilege (Frankenberg, 1993; Frankenberg and Mani, 1992; West, 1993), and about how it thereby influences society. Because this thesis study focuses on curriculum, it is examining an instance of the “ordering of knowledge” (Giroux, 1984), “legitimate” knowledge (Apple, 1993), and “recognition and validation to the experiences and knowledge of some groups over others” (Dei, 1996). This research also looks at how such knowledge may be used to affirm or negate the Others or to (under)emphasize their experiences and history within the region.

Within the field of anti-racism, Dei (2005) provides a great benefit by framing how notions of difference – with specific consideration of race, gender, class, and sexuality – intersect within educational research. The larger conversation taking place within this thesis study revolves around notions of difference and positionality. Dei (2008) explores how one comes to understand, embody, and impose such notions in a society’s construct and understanding of (indigenous) epistemologies (worldviews, paradigms, standpoints, and philosophies) as they manifest themselves in people’s social and mental lives. The argument may be made that race and racism are continually embedded within the social fabric of a society. Some societies have taken steps to slowly shed the veil (see also W.E.B. DuBois) of racialization (Dei and Asgharzadeh, 2001). One explicit step within Israeli society is the seemingly intended approach taken by the IMOE to infuse
the Other’s narrative within Jewish history. This approach, in turn, may have begun to shift the dominant Jewish-Israeli narrative to one that acknowledges the Other in a shared space, and presumably, would begin to legitimize the Other’s national aspirations.

Coupling Dei’s work on engaging indigenous knowledge with the conceptual foundation of this thesis study makes it possible to address how the IMOE’s history curriculum may challenge the way Israeli cultural “knowledge” is positioned, both within the larger state and within the academy. This repositioning of knowledge expands on psycho-cultural conflict theory, which posits that altering the dominant metaphor surrounding a dispute can alter the interpretations of the parties to the conflict. Moreover, conflict behaviour and motives for action are rooted in culturally shaped images in and beliefs about the external world. As such, identity, especially one based on people’s ethnic origin, is one of the most important elements for understanding and explaining the intractable nature of violent conflict.

Fanon cautions that one set of knowledge should not simply be replaced with another. So too does Dei challenge groups to remain cognizant of how differences are framed and of the tools one uses to oppose, oppress, or subjugate another. However, with regard to this thesis study, Dei highlights these tools of oppression and subjugation, which are effectively powerful cultural symbols. Stories and perceptions of threats then become internalized and act as a formidable barrier to intercommunal conflict management. Still, his scholarship focuses more on racialized and colonized societies and not on nationalism, patriotism, and psycho-cultural dispositions used for interpretation.

As such, to mitigate these shortfalls in Dei’s application to this thesis study, Spivak, who echoes his theory, is used to highlight the methods by which linguistic racism permeates the vocabulary about race and equity. Spivak (2007) “hones in on the historical and ideological factors
that obstruct the possibility of being heard for those who inhabit the periphery” (Morris, 2010). As a tool to understand how the official, secular Jewish-Israeli curriculum frames the Other within key episodic events, Spivak offers insight by providing commentary on narratives of acknowledgement versus acceptance. This insight brings to light these questions: what barriers are put in place to keep the Other on the periphery? How do dominant societies subjugate the Others, their voices, and their history? Within this thesis study, Spivak is used in analysing the relationships between language and culture. Spivak situates her conversation within notions of identity and representation (of the self and the Other). Her approach facilitates understanding and adds to this thesis study a lens for viewing the Israeli-Palestinian identity dynamic and the self’s view of his or her body (identity) within the collective shared space. Moreover, Spivak furthers this thesis study’s focus on how curriculum reflects and reinforces a discursive position. The focus is bridged by Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985, p. 137) work on discursive theory through an understanding that all discourse embodies and enables power and control of social practices. Discourse is a social practice. Understanding the construction of knowledge and reality through language and other semiotic systems allows one to examine how such discourse constructs meaning in human interaction (Taylor, 2001). Building on previously cited works by Bekerman, Bar-Tal, and Pinson, which interconnects anti-racism with social justice education and Ross’ theory on conflict (Bickmore, 2008), Spivak’s theory is employed solely as a cultural lens to help examine the rhetorical underpinnings of the idea of nationalism, and the ways cultural, religious and historical narratives shape the dynamics of nationalistic movements.

Studies on linguistic racism and vocabulary aid in the analysis of the curricular narrative; Collins’s (1990) work on the concept of intersectionality, which builds on the work of Crenshaw (1989, 1996, 2012), becomes valuable in understanding the workings of intersectionality in
relation to key curricular topics such as human rights, identity politics, diversity, and violence. Within this thesis study, intersectionality is understood as a concept to describe the ways oppressive institutions (racism, xenophobia, etc.) are interconnected and thus inseparable for purposes of examination. Crenshaw uses the concept of intersectionality to understand the complex facets of discrimination and societal exclusion, and Collins builds on this work in her commentary on the conditions that simultaneously overlap multiple forms of oppression (Crenshaw, 1989). While Collins’s research focuses on women of colour, her discussion of unique histories at the intersections of systems of power is then applied to this thesis study as she lays out how such unique histories have fostered notions of self and of a collective group creating worldviews out of a need for self-definition.

Furthermore, this thesis study also considers Collins’s idea of “outsiders within.” With this idea, Collins examines how outsiders resist the majority’s perspective, simultaneously pushing for and creating new insights that emerge from existing social injustices. This approach challenges the *status quo* and schools as sites of resistance. While her view could possibly be seen as a contradiction to this thesis study, her view is apt, whereby the IMOE’s intended approach (i.e., in teaching the Others’ narrative, and to challenge the *status quo*) outlines a need to begin looking at the Other and examining the roots of the conflict and the societal divide.

Finally, Gilroy’s scholarship brings an understanding of the enormous complexity of racial politics. As a tool to bring together and intertwine the aforementioned studies in this subsection, Gilroy’s work explores the relationships among the evolving scholarship on race, class, and nation. He, like Dei, speaks to the narratives of racism still embedded in society. Building on discussions of race by Fanon and DuBois, Gilroy’s (2000a, 2000b) approach to understanding the role of race in politics goes beyond the idea of mere tolerance to propose that it is possible to celebrate the
“multiculture” of a shared space and to live with Otherness without becoming anxious, fearful, or violent. This idea, as a tool of education, brings in psycho-cultural conflict theory’s understanding of deep seated worldviews and the question about whether acknowledging, legitimizing, and humanizing the Other can be done without calling into question one’s own state’s legitimacy. Can the curriculum foster notions of social cohesion? Can it be a tool for forgiving but not forgetting? Can it address a collective’s siege mentality and allow peacebuilding, not peaceblocking?

While addressing some of these questions with respect to race and nation, Gilroy also provides insights about memory, identity, and the self through his adoption of the Freudian concept of *melancholia*. Gilroy (2004) speaks to the melancholic reactions that have obstructed the process of working through a history of oppression, negation, and persecution. Regarding the internalized feelings that are deeply embedded in those reactions, Gilroy suggests, echoing Ross, that these feelings and violence are projected onto the Other, who is seen to represent the embodiment of their former oppressor. On this matter, so too must his work question: how does one celebrate multiculturalism and at the same time balance melancholia?

In situating this thesis study within a larger field of anti-racist education and with a focus on subjugated knowledges, the examination of psycho-cultural narratives in the curriculum that may foster notions of power, identity, memory, and Otherness also shed light on the official curriculum’s possible implication to develop and reinforce particular deep seated views of the Other. The Other is viewed, not necessarily as the cause of the historical persecution, but as a representative of the persecution.
2.3 – Education, Schooling and Conflict

This final subsection of this chapter highlights some of the established critical literature on educational policy and the official school curriculum. While many studies are used throughout this research, the following all hold that education is a political act, and, as a political tool, this school curriculum “reflects the struggles of opposing groups to have their interests, values, histories and politics dominate” it (Jansen, 1995, p. 248). There is no doubt that educating students in both conflict and post-conflict settings have a range of benefits. However, so too can this education exacerbate tensions and deepen the divide between us and them (Bickmore, 2017). While, on one hand, schools often reinforce and recreate destructive conflict by reproducing a political agenda that is often at its root, on the other hand, schools are spaces where one can heal the wounds of a society (Jansen, 1991, 1995, 2008, 2009; World Bank 2005, xv; Murray, 2008). Many scholars, such as Bush and Saltarelli (2000), Benavot and Resh (2001), Tawil and Harley (2004), Cole (2007), Weinstein, Freedman, and Hughson (2007), and Freedman, Weinstein, Murphy, and Longman (2008), provide useful insights about the importance of education during and after violent intergroup conflict, as well as about the role formal education plays in identity-based conflict. While this thesis study considers the vast scholarship in the field of educational policy and curricular studies, only a few studies are read as foundational texts central to this thesis.

Benavot and Resh’s (2001) study of the social construction of curriculum within Israeli high schools is an important piece in this thesis study because it provides an understanding of how the official curriculum may be at the root of the conflict. Because curriculum defines “a select corpus of cultural knowledge” that is intended for transmission and internalization, it is an intrinsic part of the political system, ensuring that the status quo is abided by and that “history” lives on.
While the curricular document is political in nature, the official curricular policies are often adopted by the community where they are applied. When history teaching is presented as a matrix of suggestions, as opposed to formal and standardized lessons, the teaching and the allocation of instructional time to mandated subject areas may be altered. This idea is echoed in Jansen’s (1991) study of the state and the curriculum in Zimbabwe, whereby he writes that “the direct role of the state in formulating and implementing the school curriculum is not uniform… while there was a state-led curriculum change, it was accompanied by divergent if not contradictory, ideological motivations and consequences” (1991, p. 80).

As Benavot and Resh point out, schools adopt the curriculum and consider it as a list of content suggestions. From there they can “reduce the uniformity of intended curricular content,” blurring the lines among the official curriculum, the intended curriculum, and the actually implemented curriculum. This process may be detrimental to the intention of the IMOE’s introduction of the Other and the process by which secular Jewish-Israeli students come to acknowledge, legitimize, and humanize the Other and their national aspirations, but this situation is not endemic to Israel. As Benavot and Resh point out, “there are few comparative studies of the social construction of the implemented curriculum in local schools and classrooms in general, or in relation to students’ achievement” (2001, p. 505-506). As in Connerton, discussed earlier, Benavot and Resh’s work adds a social construct lens to this study, yet, in doing so through a focus on the Israeli curriculum, it looks more at implementation, at the uniformity and diversity within local school content choice, and at how curricular implementation is affected by local conditions. Their findings, while similar in focus to this thesis study, are more suggestive. The findings are based on assumptions affected by the teacher and school content choice, as opposed to IMOE intent as well as on the intersectionality of social forces with local conditions and educational
agents. That said, their study, which is suggestive and includes assumptions, provides a great starting point for taking up and reanalyzing their approach 17 years later. I am aware of the gaps and mindful of the studies’ successes and failures, and I draw on studies such as those of Bush and Saltarelli (2000), Tawil and Harley (2004), Cole (2007), Weinstein et. al. (2007), and Freedman et. al. (2008) to provide grounding insight and direction about the importance of Israeli education, in their cases and mine.

Though a precursor to Benavot and Resh, the work of Jansen is used to further understand the role education plays in rebuilding the nation and the influence the state has in shaping educational output. In an insight useful within this thesis study, Jansen (1991, p. 78-79) writes that “The curriculum is a crucial arena in which the ideology of the state is both projected and contested. The curriculum becomes a site of conflict and contestation because it embodies the values, norms, objectives, interests, priorities, and directions of the states and other powerful sectors of society.” As such, his examination of the racial and cultural divide faced by South African students is telling, and, through his case studies, he reveals the role pedagogical interventions played in confronting a contentious history of violence, racialization, marginalization, and oppression. In the work of Jansen, the role politics plays in education is further understood through his examination of narratives and the provocation they present in both the collective setting and in personal interpretation. Furthermore, his discussion of education, race, identity, and the role the state plays in such discussions examines the power of dialogue and the need to engage with others to reduce anxiety (1995), build trust (2008), and foster tolerance of the Other (2009). In this thesis study, Jansen’s work adds to the theoretical framework, whereby curriculum, compassion, transition, and politics in a post-racialized society provide a sound backdrop by which to examine
where Israel has been and the distance it must go. While Jansen at no time expresses the thought that South Africa is perfect, his model highlights the success that has happened.

As in the work of Jansen, Bush and Saltarelli’s (2000) central argument is that formal schooling can play an essential role in conflict reinforcement or transformation, and that peace education, as one approach to conflict transformation, can be implemented to support an educational process that allows students to articulate, accommodate, and accept differences between and within groups that can lead to conflict, is poignantly expressed. Bush and Saltarelli’s work adds to this thesis study through the notion of desegregating the minds of formally segregated peoples, linking back to the work of Fanon and of others presented in the previous subsection. Bush and Saltarelli comment that “formal education is often viewed as a neutral or technical process of information dissemination” (p. ix), implicitly without a political agenda. However, they recognize that education can have either a socially destructive impact (e.g., as a tool of oppression) or a constructive impact (e.g., as a tool for promoting freedom and peace) because it is not a neutral force; rather, it is inherently political (potentially positive or negative in its impact) – hence their use of the term the “two faces of education.”

In studying these two “faces,” Podeh’s (2000, 2002) work has examined many of the negating tactics of previous Israeli history curricula and supplementary textbooks. This thesis study is able to draw comparisons between what was and what is now selected and constructed within the current curriculum, in a way that makes the curriculum appear more open to acknowledging both the contributions the Other has made in the shared space, and the actions of the collective that may have led to the Others’ situation.

According to Bush and Saltarelli, there are situations in which education facilitates cultural repression, for instance by working to legitimize marginalization or to assimilate the Other into
the dominant group. This process, discussed as membership or citizenship by Pinson, ranges from a lack of emphasis on the language, land and resources, traditions, practices, cultural values, and other institutions of the Other. While the intention of the MOE may be to acknowledge, legitimize, and humanize the Other, the use of Benavot and Resh’s findings in conjunction with Bush and Saltarelli’s “two faces” lens leads to a belief that the knowledge that is intended, taught, and learned through formal curriculum may not have this impact, but rather may further the rift between both Israelis and Palestinians through implicit undertones and emphasis on past trauma’s as opposed to peacebuilding exercises.

Furthermore, previous studies (Firer, 1985, 2008; Ichilov, 1991, 1995, 2005), show that the Israeli history curriculum has also emphasized religious persecution and continual victimization (of the Jews by Others [i.e., not the Palestinians]). It describes events in detail to promote a notion of a victorious and empowered “new-Jew” in a modern era. Presenting and reinforcing 2,000 years of religious persecution can shape young Jewish-Israeli citizens’ perceptions about how an intractable conflict plays out, and about their own identities within the conflict and region. Thus, there is a need to delve deeper into how the MOE intends modern Jewish history to be taught. As such, in drawing from the aforementioned sources, the current curriculum can be seen as a shift from previous versions, as studied by Al-Haj (2002, 2005), Adwan and Firer (1997, 1999), Brown (2001), Firer (1998), and Firer and Adwan (2002). As much as there are shortfalls in the curriculum, students who bring with them a negative view of the Other can be immersed in a curricular narrative that challenges them to reflect on the roots of these stereotypes and those of the nation’s history.

Thus, the MOE’s contemporary intention may be to bring the Others’ narrative into the discussion of Israeli and regional history. Bar-On and Adwan (n.d.), consistent with the theories
of Jansen and others cited above, point out that the political nature of education makes it difficult for curriculum to value the Other’s history when it often defines in-group identity in opposition to the Other. Within formal education, imagery that is intertwined with poignant historical events may not explicitly speak to, highlight, or emphasize discrimination against the Other. However, the selection and omission of historical content, outcome goals, events, and key narratives implicitly present a single-sided narrative and approach to the conflict, and, at the same time, leave some people and perspectives out. The implicit presentation of a single-sided narrative of history may generate a widening inequality and lead to whole group persecution at the hands of both the dominant and the oppressed groups.

Manor (2007, p. 1) explains the value of examining curriculum and other educational resource documents: they “give a unique insight into the convictions, aspirations, ideas and perceptions that governments and public authorities look to instill into the younger generation, by virtue of their ability to direct, orientate or simply supervise the content of educational curricula.” As distinct from explicit forms of curriculum, whose content and intention may be clear and overt (for instance, through the use of simply equated terms such as Palestinian refugee or the Israeli occupier), indoctrination through curriculum discourses also may be implicit, presented through triggers (words, concepts, ideas or themes that trigger a particular disposition—what Ross calls cultural symbols) or through tasks in which students are intended to react in particular ways to visual cues presented in educational texts. Implicit probability structures (predicted or implied outcomes to a sequence of events) are examples of paradigms embedded in a curriculum that may challenge or reinforce stereotypes (Cleeremans, Destrebeoqz and Boyer, 1998; Cox, Abramson, Divine and Hollon, 2012; Dienes and Berry, 1997; Reber, 1993).
Speaking to narratives of Otherness and conflict, Funk and Said (2004, p. 3) explain that “such narratives provide authoritative, common sense understandings about the nature of perceived threats to the group and its values, and connect the fears, insecurities, and problems of the moment both with past tribulations and with a forward-looking political program.” Inferences possibly embedded throughout the history curriculum may seemingly identify the Jewish-Israeli society as an oppressed, persecuted body at the hands of the Other. If that is so, even while the Other may begin to receive curricular attention, (as Bush and Saltarelli, Davies, and Jansen theorize) the curricular presentation of key episodic events may consciously or unconsciously manipulate or omit content, perspectives, or narratives in order to ensure the continuation of the status quo. This emphasis on an unchallenged status quo is furthered again by identifying that schools are political sites that reinforce dominant narratives and values by presenting a curriculum that is intended to align students behind a political doctrine of nationalism, and, at the same time, to preserve and generate inequalities (Bourdieu, 1977; Willis, 1983; Apple, 1995). Since schools are agents of and mouthpieces for governments, the history curriculum often reinforces polarizing conflict narratives, as noted in Bush and Saltarelli’s (2000) work on peaceblocking and peacebuilding education, and Davies’ (2004) work on education and conflict. Hence, schools are sites for both power and resistance (Apple, 2004; Apple and Buras, 2006; Abu-Saad, 2006, 2008; Bar-Tal and Harel, 2002; Dei and Kempf, 2006; Jabareen, 2006; Mazawi; 2011; Moughrabi, 2001). As sites of power, schools institutionalize social practices that interconnect with institutions that control the production, distribution, and legitimation of cultural capital within the dominant society (Giroux, 2001). While schools remain sites of reproduction of dominance and similar values, so too can they be spaces of resistance, as sites for mobilization and challenging the status
quo, sites for evaluation and the exposure of inequality, and sites that, by acknowledging the
Others, begin to humanize them.

The likelihood of reinforcing violent conflict can also be lessened if the curriculum is
shifted to reflect on how the conflict came to be (that is, to the concerns and grievances of both/all
sides), not on why. As such, there have been some positive attempts at peace and reconsolidation
between Israelis and Palestinians. Such educational programming has been attempted by
Bekerman (2009a), by Bekerman and Zembylas (2009, 2010), as well as in the Jewish/Arab
“joint model village” of Neve Shalom/Wahat as-Salam studied by Feuerverger (2001). These
initiatives embody the understanding that inclusive education can promote peace, tolerance, and
human rights, and that conflict resolution education can increase the supply of social capital
amongst and between different groups, and also shape in just/pluralistic directions the identities of
citizens and their notions of citizenship.

While a number of studies offer suggestions about this approach, there is also the idea that
history is often taught as a subject of war and conflict, not of peace and tolerance. This idea is
evident in the IMOE’s intended curriculum, and, through the introduction and constant
reinforcement of similar situations and outcomes, the idea can affect feelings of self-worth and
project feelings of animosity or hate towards the other.

Deepening the implications of Bush and Saltarelli’s study about the multiple forms that
education takes in order to shape society and citizens are Tawil and Harley’s (2004) and Weinstein
et. al.’s (2007) studies about curriculum, education, and conflict. Within the field of educational
policy studies, Tawil and Harley and Weinstein et. al. focus on curriculum as a contributor to
national identity and conflict, and on the way, through the inclusion and omission of certain
content, the curriculum may worsen national divisions and inhibit the process of positive social
reconstruction. In their contributions to this thesis study, both are used for their approach and emphasis on the importance of curriculum as a political tool and on the provision of commentary about the political and social realities that may have contributed to both the conflict and its outcomes. Specifically, Tawil and Harley define curriculum within formal education as “the organization of sequences of learning experiences in view of producing desired learning outcomes” (Tawil and Harley, 2004, p. 17). This thesis examines the IMOE’s representation of the events of 1948 and considers how government-intended outcomes may act as a catalyst in defining both the national identity and the identity of the Other.

As Tawil and Harley argue, the education system, and specifically the official curriculum, may legitimate (or not) armed conflict because of the way it frames events to reflect a particular (dominant and/or pluralistic) national view. This point is contextualized by Gur-Ze’v (2000), Dalsheim (2004), Crowder (2009), and Rothberg (2011, 2014), who have suggested that the official school curriculum’s inculcation of a history of victimization and religious persecution has been one vital factor in the formation of the current collective Israeli consciousness. Furthermore, this framing may have a significantly divisive impact on the way society operates within the conflict space.

The curriculum may play an exacerbating or mitigating role in the social conflict, and revisions to the curriculum may help or hinder a society’s healing process. To tackle this challenge of either exacerbating the conflict or affecting the healing process, Tawil and Harley add that the curriculum development process needs to consider how curriculum may have contributed to violent conflict in the past, how it can incorporate reconciliation and peacebuilding approaches and practices, and how it can be a preventative tool in relation to further violent outbreaks through promotion of tolerance and an inclusive set of values.
Tawil and Harley’s work on changes in curriculum and textbooks to achieve social cohesion within conflict-affected societies, as cited by Bekerman (2009c, p. 135), explains that educational resources are selected by educators and governments. This selectivity seems to “stand in a dialectical relationship with schooling and violent conflict. In order to begin the process of post-conflict reconciliation and to prevent the replication of educational structures that might have contributed to the conflict, this dialectical relationship needs to be recognized and explored.” Given an understanding of the role curriculum may play in the reproduction or transportation of violent conflict, use of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict as a case study “provides a critical opportunity for educational authorities to examine the curriculum and revise it, or develop a broad curriculum doctrine in keeping with the country’s recent experiences” (Tawil and Harley, 2004, p. 26).

Tawil and Harley’s work considers the role education policy has in shaping social and civic identities and, in doing so, how education can contribute to national reconciliation and peacebuilding within identity-based conflicts through the redefinition of these identities. This thesis study takes up their research and applies to it the way the distinct role of a Jewish history, defined by oppression, religious persecution, and continued victimization (which they have not examined), has affected the transmission of the collective identity and memory that form the psycho-cultural narratives used to shape the collective.

This work is interconnected with Weinstein et. al.’s (2007) examination of the importance of curricular design, and of the changes that the study of key episodic events has brought to the country through the process of a once exclusionary, now partially inclusionary, Other. Both Tawil and Harley’s and Weinstein et. al.’s work acknowledges the selective nature of curriculum and the role formal schooling plays in the transmission of collective memory and identity, yet they do not
speak to the process of curricular selection, the way selection is made, or the axioms underlying such choice. Drawn from their work within the context of this thesis study, however, is the understanding that Jewish-Israeli students today generally are taught about past traumas and triumphs in a formal, trusted, and politically legitimized space, and this transmission of knowledge serves as a vehicle for the formation of their Jewish-Israeli identity.

What the two aforementioned studies have in common is an articulation of the need to introduce the Other’s narrative, in additional to the inclusion of the Other’s history, to highlight points of contention, and to provide a clear understanding of both the nature of the precipitating conflict and the importance of research in influencing curriculum policy. However, in the process of decreasing the gaps in the work of Tawil and Harley and Weinstein et. al., the works of Davies (2005a, 2005b, 2008), Adwan and Firer (1997, 1999), Firer and Adwan (2002), and Firer (2008) provide an understanding of curriculum development, noting that consideration of the Other is a difficult process, and, while an examination of such material may serve to strengthen the schooling process, it also challenges the national identity it is attempting to ingrain.

Using this idea, Davies’ (2004, 2005a) work is taken up in highlighting the role of education in international conflict, the way schooling shapes identity, and the dispositions citizens may project onto Others. Her contributions to this thesis study are situated in helping to illuminate how conflict may be defined and exacerbated or mitigated within the curriculum, how states may educate about war during war, how school policy and content may respond to conflict, and how the narratives embedded within a curriculum can both positively and negatively affect conflict relationships and intergroup building. Davies exposes the culpability of formal schooling in maintaining violent intergroup conflict and outlines points of contention that can then be highlighted for improvement and reflection.
In conjunction with Bush and Saltarelli, Davies too addresses the potential negative implications of education for and about intergroup conflict. In the light of her analysis, this thesis probes: (1) the ramifications of curriculum text for intergroup interaction (e.g., the widening us versus them polarization, while viewing others as fundamentally different from oneself, but similar to one another), including the cohesiveness and homogenization of the in-group in competition against a supposed “common enemy,” (2) negative perceptions of the Other transferred to incoming group members, and (3) the reality that conflict may create discrepancies between the goals of the group and the goals of the society or subculture. In so doing, these narratives may motivate the reactions (threats, vandalism, use of violence, etc.) of group members toward themselves (the in-group) and Others. Yet, while both Davies and Bush and Saltarelli highlight the negative effects education may have within conflict, they do not address the process of knowledge production within a siege mentality (see Bar-Tal) or within intractable conflicts.

To mitigate this gap, Apple’s theory is pivotal. Apple’s work on education (1972) and power (1995), cultural politics (1996), curriculum theory and research (1979, 1981, 1993a), critical teaching (2000, 2003), and the development of democratic schools (1993b, 1998, 2003, 2006, 2010) speaks to the problems, politics, and possible hindrances a curriculum may create for development, political hegemony, and the democratic systems within society. In this thesis study, Apple’s work is a critical resource for analysing the discourse found in the history curriculum, and for looking for the themes that arise in the divide between knowledge production and political indoctrination. In a way that is consistent with the work of both Ross and Fanon, Apple looks at the struggles for recognition from the state through curriculum reform, at how and why some knowledge is selected, at the motivating factors that lead to selective omissions (specifically with
a focus on Social Studies), and at the role of the government in both the planning of curriculum and the shaping of the hidden agenda.

Interlocking Apple’s (1993a) work on the selective nature of curriculum with Bekerman, Bekerman (2009c, p. 134) suggests that national narratives “justify the nations’ necessary existence,” due to their selectivity, biased perspectives, and incompleteness, and that they “explain the conflict from narrow, particularistic perspectives of truth and from a position of indisputable morality.” Referencing Cole’s (2007) edited volume on teaching violent conflict and the role of history education in the reconciliation process, Bekerman (2009c, p. 135) explains that “these narratives tend to exclude, dehumanize, and devalue the enemy and the accompanying narrative.” Apple (2000) brings to this thesis study a reinforced understanding that education is an inherently political act and, as such, in efforts to create an official curriculum, the political nature of official knowledge is solely a product of compromising among political agents. However, there are still gaps whereby Apple provides no direct link between his work and the specific curriculum being examined. Yet this cannot be read as a limitation since his ideas elaborate on and are to be applied with sound understanding to the larger hegemonic implications of this thesis study and to any other comparative educational research that may be undertaken during this time. All uses and conclusions drawn on the basis of Apple’s theories are solely theoretical in order to mitigate this gap, the narrative language, and the way narratives are structured. Language is the key in the curriculum that is examined. What is explicitly presented versus implicitly implied is open to examination and debate. Using Apple’s critical analysis of discourse, this thesis study examines whether the language used by the IMOE perpetuates a narrative of victimization and trauma. Does it marginalize, racialize, or oppress? Does it negate, or does it provide an opportunity to reflect?
However language is used, it is strategic, and it influences the cohesion of society and the way people define themselves and others.

Many studies serve to highlight the failures of the education system and attempt to prescribe how to fix it, but it must be noted that Israel is still in the early stages of educational reform, and, while its curriculum might contribute positively to the rebuilding of trust and peace in the region, the merely selective nature of curriculum may inhibit this development and force education to be a mouthpiece for political indoctrination.
CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

“Conflicts are often explained in terms of the interests of the groups involved, especially their competition for resources or gains. There is much merit in this approach. Theories of this type appear more realistic than those which take the legitimizing accounts of participants at face value. What people are fighting about is a fundamental question in conflict analysis, but there is another equally fundamental question that remains poorly understood, namely, who is fighting whom and why? How and why do people draw the distinction between friend and foe precisely where they do?”

Schlee (2004)

3.1 – Introduction

Theories are about big ideas; these ideas frame this study’s inquiry process explicitly to explain, predict, and understand situations and outcomes, and are used to challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limit of the critical bounding assumptions. As such, this chapter introduces and operationalizes the theoretical framework of the study. I argue that psycho-cultural conflict theory can explain how (polarized or mutually recognizing) social identities may be shaped through expressions of key episodic events embedded within the history curriculum. In so doing, “psycho-culture” is conceptualized as a tenet of identity politics that is deeply rooted in a collective shared past.

Secondly, the emphasis of this thesis study is on the history curriculum as a reinforcer of identity politics and collective memory; this thesis study is heavily influenced by an anthropological structural analysis that is utilized in theories of anti-racist and anti-colonial education. This approach proposes that the collective Jewish-Israeli identity is influenced by its relationship(s) to others within the larger, overarching environment, and that factors such as
proximity to the Other, the intractable nature of the conflict, and a siege mentality underlie their narratives, dispositions, and interpretations of and toward themselves and the Other. The use of these two theories is intended to shed light not only on the deep seated worldviews each group has and how such views are projected, but also on how these feelings are embedded and perpetuated through notions of power, dominance, security, and defence.

In laying out the process by which different variables of a conflict are extrapolated, this chapter begins by examining the interplay among the social structure, the psycho-cultural dimensions of intergroup conflict, and the way the psycho-cultural variables of conflict shape identity and one’s dispositions within violent conflict.

Before this thesis study ventures into a discussion of psycho-cultural theory, the thesis situates its theoretical framework through the notion that the dominant Jewish-Israeli society is engulfed in a culture of conflict. For Jewish-Israelis, their daily immersion is in a contested space, and their institutions reflect contested norms, narratives, and practices. This contestation affects the national narrative and the meta-narrative, the culturally shared methods of approaching and behaving in disputes, and the various institutional apparatuses used to shape the course and outcomes of the conflict (Ross, 1993a).

In general, groups may go to great lengths to protect their identities as expressions of their individuality, and of their national and cultural affiliation. With this understanding, this thesis study uses two theories (psycho-cultural conflict theory and theories of anti-racist education) that speak to each other through their focus on social identity as a perception of self as part of a larger national group, and on identity’s affiliation or attachment to territory, ethnicity, religion, nationalism, and culture. This focus on identity is linked to power and subjugation and embedded within the institutionalization of knowledge. This thesis study looks at the social structural
dimensions of conflict but applies only psycho-cultural conflict theory as articulated by Ross (1993a, 1993b) to curricular narratives. Theories of anti-racist education are also considered in order to understand how power is ascribed to the collective while the Other is subjugated.

According to Ross, the social structural dimensions of conflict refer to the concrete causes and grievances (human wants and needs, i.e., interests) of intergroup conflict rooted in access to resources through the social, economic, and political organization of society. Psycho-cultural dimensions, in contrast, refer to culture (identity group) and participants’ subjective and effective interpretations of the Other, and of the overall shape and threat level of conflict. Psycho-cultural dimensions point to who the enemies are and how they are perceived as dangerous. Many of these dynamics are represented in formal history education.

Conflict theory is appropriate to guide this thesis study because it addresses the social, political, and material inequality within a given society; thus the broad socio-political system is considered. Psycho-cultural (identity-related) conflict theory supplements these social structural dimensions. In speaking to this thesis study’s research question, Gil-Shuster (2008, n.p.) explains, Deep rooted conflict is about identity: the beliefs, values, culture, religion, meaning systems, history, and imagination that form the core of an individual and by extension, their group... Individuals cannot be socialized into behaviours that destroy their identity and therefore must react against social environments that threaten their identity. Deep rooted conflict occurs when values linked to specific identity needs of a group are violated. People and groups will threaten their own physical and mental well-being in order to combat a threat to their identity.

An interpretation of Gil-Shuster: conflicts remain protracted partly because they call into question the identity of the group and the legitimacy of the group’s memory, beliefs, and history. In exploring the representations of memory and identity within a piece of the formal, secular
Jewish-Israeli history curriculum, I begin with an examination of social structural conflict theory in order to lay the foundation for understanding how society is organized and how escalating intergroup conflicts are structured. Next, I probe the theory in order to explain the role that psychocultural variables play in the IMOES’s selection of historical content and the way the content is intended to be taught. I then apply a theoretical prism of anti-racist education to interlock power with feelings of oppression.

3.2 – Social Structural Conflict Theory

In his distinction between the social structural (positions and interests) and the psychocultural (beliefs and fears) dimensions of intergroup conflict, Ross (1993a, 1993b) indicates that each theoretical frame identifies particular variables causing and reinforcing destructive intergroup conflict. In his elaboration of social structural conflict theory, Ross explains that a prime motivator of social conflict is the competing positions of groups in relation to tangible human interests (such as resources, sovereignty, and political power), and to intergroup divisions, such as segregation or cross-cutting ties.

Social structural conflict theory looks at how a society is organized (structured) and the factors that make a society more or less prone to particular levels and forms of conflict. The theory highlights competing groups’ interests (needs and wants), relative advantages and disadvantages, and the methods used by groups to pursue their goals. In so doing, social structural conflict theory emphasizes politics and economic status in explanations about which groups may become particular targets of aggressive actions. As Ross (1993a, p. 35) lays out,

It [social structural conflict theory] uses the structure of society to understand who is likely to initiate conflict with whom and, focussed on such factors as how, where and with whom people spend their time and share common resources. Secondly, it submits that the social structure offers an explanation of how conflicts, once started,
develop. The relationship between both parties and the extent to which each reinforce societal divisions determine whether or not a dispute is likely to escalate, and how each group is likely to be aligned.

Social structural conflict theory does not speak to individual or group identity. The theory points to the social organization of society, the way groups are structured and positioned in relation to one another, to explain a group’s behaviour on the basis of its varying and competing interests. Social structural conflict theory considers the tangible interests of individuals and groups (e.g., concerns with security, material resources, or power), and focuses on those with whom a group may have common interests, or on the tangible objects that groups are fighting over (e.g., basic needs). Individuals often pursue membership within groups for two reasons: “because their own fate is tied to the fortune of the group and because a common position in the social structure builds shared perceptions and understandings which facilitate joint action in the name of the group” (Ross, 1993a, p. 36).

The motivation for joint action towards or on behalf of the social group emphasizes the pursuit of goals rooted in (real or perceived) social locations and tangible human needs. Yet social structural conflict theory fails to explain the causes of emotional and relational security concerns between groups, the role of consciousness in group action, or the ways potential conflicts may be translated into motivations, interpretations, fears, afflication, enmity, and consequential action. As such,

Structural factors alone, although clearly critical in understanding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, offer an incomplete explanation of the persistence of the conflict. They do not adequately explain how each side’s vital interests come to be decided, nor the intensity of hostility and collective insecurity, nor each community’s view of the other as threatening its self-esteem, indeed its very existence. (Ross, 1993a, p. 157)

This incomplete explanation of the persistence of the social conflict is crucial. Because structural factors do not account for how tangible interests may be learned or perceived, or how
fears, biases, beliefs, and prejudices are developed and reinforced, there is a need to delve beyond tangible structural factors and to examine what psycho-cultural conflict theory brings to this thesis study. This thesis focuses on the curricular narrative of history, and the way beliefs, biases, fears, and prejudices are infused within the curriculum, not on the structure of the curriculum, schooling, or the society itself. This thesis study acknowledges that the delivery of the curriculum plays an important role in the way content is framed. Yet delivery is based on the performance of teachers, and on their bias and objectives; the delivery may not reflect the state’s political position or future direction. As such, this thesis is based on the assumption that psycho-cultural factors are essential to an explanation of the persistence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict because they

…reinforce strong emotions that stake claims and mobilize actions in the name of the group. In such mobilization, cultural expressions and enactments are concrete actions that increase shared beliefs strengthening the emotional persuasiveness of political and social connectedness and requiring the defence of the group. Political claims are particularly compelling when they draw on culturally-rooted shared images, metaphors, significant events, and personalities that connect in-group members across time and space. Through familiar and emotionally salient expressions, connections within a community are created, strengthened, and differentiated from out-groups (Bowen 2007 in Ross, 2008, p. 15).

Although the social structural and psycho-cultural aspects of the conflict coexist and overlap, this thesis study examines the psycho-cultural conceptions and/or constructions of Otherness and the role of memory and identity (self and Other) in the violent conflict between Jewish-Israelis and Arab and Palestinian Others. This thesis study does not concentrate on whether the targets of conflict and aggression are located within a society and/or outside of it. Instead, this thesis study emphasizes the psycho-cultural aspects of conflict: the narratives, dispositions, and interpretations that contribute to shaping the overall level of conflict and the intensity of feelings involved.
3.3 – Psycho-cultural Conflict Theory

In conducting this thesis study, my approach is largely sociological. I use the term psycho-cultural as a “fusion of contemporary psychoanalytic ideas about human development with psychological anthropology’s emphasis on shared culture to explain the origin and development of shared worldviews which provide both shared accounts of and motivations for, social and political action” (Ross 1995, p. 524). The theory is a based on an analytical perspective that intersects with a contemporary critical sociological view of curriculum (articulated by Apple and others), whereby curricular documents are tools of (individual and collective) human development that lay out and scaffold knowledge and experiences. These documents are directed to the purposeful formation of membership within a collective identity in a given society or cultural group.

It is important to note that in understanding conflict, often the social structural and psycho-cultural aspects of conflict are inseparable. As Ross (2010, p.121) writes, one cannot pit an emphasis on “the casual role of norms, values, and identities on the one hand against those who stress the importance of interests and institutions on the other.” Because interest (i.e., social structural) and identity (i.e., psycho-cultural) theories are so different in how they understand conflict, it is not surprising that they lead us to very different conceptions of how to mitigate conflict and what peace education built around each approach should emphasize.

However, it is my belief that while both may be inseparable, psycho-cultural interests define and exacerbate the structural aspects of the conflict and become the overarching theme that defines the identities and shape the historical and adoptively witnessed memories of both Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians. In so doing, while conscious that both are present within the conflict, and that this conflict is as much about land and resources as it is about recognition and legitimacy of
the people on it, this study only focusses and emphasizes the psycho-cultural aspects as Ross (1993a, 1993b, 1995) presents them.

Similar to Salomon’s (2002) work on peace education, this study is interested in mindsets, how knowledge is intended to be constructed and scaffolded upon and focusses on the substantive concerns that feed into a culture of conflict as much as they do a culture of peace (Ross, 2010). While it would be a fallacy to think that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not about territory and resources (social structural – tangible interests), as this study focusses solely on the transmission of identity and memory, studying only half of Ross’s theory allows me to pay particular attention to how perceptions (in the form of deep seated worldviews) may determine behavior (psycho- cultural dispositions and interpretations). As Ross (2010, p. 125) continues, structural, interest based conflicts and theory are “rooted in the proposition that conflict is about interests that result from the social organization of a society so that in societies where ties among groups are cross-cutting, conflict is likely to be far less severe than in contexts where they are reinforcing or polarizing.” This increased severity and polarization, which I see as partly institutionalized with formal settings (i.e., schools), raises important questions concerning how interests are defined, contextualized, constructed, and subjectively perceived by those within a structural conflict (Ross, 2010, p. 127).

While the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is structural, I believe the issue of land is deeply rooted in a much larger psycho-cultural dynamic that uses land as an explanation of the deep seated history of victimization, oppression and religious persecution. As such, while a social structural focus would lead to what parties are fighting over, it would not help in understanding how interpersonal relationships and/or on relations with and between collectives influence and are influenced by their previous interactions, their interpretations of actions and subsequent reactions
by the Other, and how this history and the embedded emotions connected to such history may shape their narratives moving forward.

Ross, in discussing Salomon’s work explains that such narratives and a focus on such an educational approach (i.e., peace education) must consider and challenge the long-standing incompatibility of such narratives as they generate ongoing animosity between parties to the conflict. With a focus on the psycho-cultural, I would agree with Ross’s approach, when he says that “peace education must seek to alter how the communities understand themselves and their opponents as well as address the legacy of inequality in which one side has historically been the conqueror and the other side the conquered” (Ross, 2010, p. 122).

So too would I agree with Ross that it is important to view both social structural and psycho-cultural as partial theories of the larger conflict theory, and in moving to establishing peacebuilding, peacemaking, peacekeeping (see Bickmore, 2017), analysis of the larger conflict would do well to draw on both (Ross, 1993b), however, at the same time, I also agree that interests and identities, namely how one’s identity is connected to land and vice versa are not as distinct from each other in practice as they are conceptually. In shaping this dichotomy, Ross (2010, p. 129-130) suggests that,

This is because there are situations in which protecting an identity comes to be viewed as a vital interest—as vital as obtaining or holding on to material resources. Operationally, protecting a group’s identity often leads to concrete material demands that come to represent such phenomena as honor, respect, recognition, and even their existence. If the demands are dismissed or rejected, they represent far more than simply a material loss to the group. As a result, it is empirically difficult to tease out how much the material side of the demand means and how much is about the loss of identity that failure to achieve it represents.

Interpreting Ross, here and within the aforementioned, psycho-cultural conflict theory argues that resolution of persistent and escalating intergroup conflict is often difficult and tends to thwart any settlement mechanism. In areas prone to repeated group violence, the initiation of
peaceful dialogue is a challenge, since warring societies are often organized around distrust and denial of the Other’s legitimate self. The constant waves of violence make a sense of threat and distrust high, and any sense of peace fragile.

In practice, social structural conflict theory and psycho-cultural conflict theory have many similarities and differences: together they form a multi-layered picture of the social conflict. Social structural conflict theory looks at how the politics of intergroup equity and conflict are founded in the competing positions and power of groups, and psycho-cultural conflict theory focuses on effectively powerful cultural symbols, stories, and perceptions of threats. According to Ross (1993a), such deep seated, internalized or perceived threats to survival act as a formidable barrier to intercommunal conflict management – hence this thesis study’s consideration of memory and identity within the history curriculum.

Whereas social structural conflict theory highlights the competing interests and relative social structural positions from which groups pursue their goals, psycho-cultural conflict theory is a tool for predicting the emotional and identity-based resonance and the overall level of conflict. As Ross (1993b, p. 17) notes, the theory “focuses on interpretations that point to a deeper, less conscious, more ambiguous dispositions and motives of which parties often are only dimly aware, as people impose the structure of their inner worlds on external events.”

Social structural considerations are focused on factors such as how, where, and with whom people spend their time and share or compete for common resources. As previously stated, the Other’s actions pose a threat, which in turn fosters in-group solidarity to ward off that threat. A psycho-cultural examination considers collective in-group solidarity, and how the collective perceives the Other and projects perceptions on the Other.
Social structural conflict theory offers a partial explanation for how intergroup conflicts may begin and develop. The resources, power and status, relationships between parties, and the extent to which these reinforce societal divisions, strongly influence whether or not a dispute is likely to escalate, and how each group is likely to be aligned. In contrast, this thesis study focuses on the narratives, dispositions, and interpretations of the Other’s actions: psycho-cultural conflict theory views social behaviour in psycho-dynamic terms, views personality as a product of interaction within an environment, and views psychological needs as closely related to the characteristics of the external, behavioural environment. As such, grounding this thesis study in the psycho-cultural dynamics of conflict sheds light on the Israeli government’s intended development and reinforcement of particular deep seated views of the Other – not necessarily as the cause of their historical persecution, but as a representative of this persecution. Salawu (2009, p. 79) explains:

Psychocultural conflict theory points to the need to alter the dominant metaphor surrounding a dispute or the interpretations of the parties in conflict, and in so doing, accounts for conflict behaviour in terms of motives for action rooted in culturally shaped images and beliefs of the external world and posits that identity, especially the one that is based on people’s ethnic origin and the culture that is learned on the basis of that ethnic origin, is one of the most important ways of explaining violent conflict.

While dominant metaphors, symbols, and narrative, describing both the conflict and the Other are acquired informally within a social setting (e.g., at home, media, social settings), they are given legitimacy through continual implicit or explicit reinforcement within formal education (e.g., course curriculum, educational resources, teaching scenarios).

What needs attention in this thesis inquiry are these issues: (1) how content represents identity through selective narratives about history, and (2) what are the ramifications of this selection in terms of the intractable nature of the conflict? These two questions can be addressed
in the course of conducting this thesis study, and, using psycho-cultural conflict theory as a framework for understanding how the tenets of identity (metaphors, symbols, beliefs, memories, narratives) may be used within the curriculum to establish and reinforce a group’s humanity and legitimacy within a space, their identity, sovereignty over land, and oppositional or defensive security.

Though Cocodia (2010) is not exclusive in the use of psycho-cultural theory, Cocodia begins to tackle these questions by pointing out that psycho-cultural conflict theory interconnects with a series of different ideas (e.g., Maslow’s theory of motivation, Burton’s theory of human needs, Horowitz’s fear of extinction, Volkan’s fear of dying off, and Rothschild’s fear of the future) that aid in understanding how narratives, dispositions, and interpretations of the Other are understood. Cocodia (2010, p. 61-62) argues that, “conflicts, which are identity driven, grow out of feelings of powerlessness, memories of past persecution, a history of humiliation, oppression, victimization, feelings of inferiority and other experiences which wear away a people’s dignity and self-esteem, propelling them towards vengeance or makes them wary of other groups.”

Elaborating on this theoretical perspective, Lake and Rothschild (1996, p. 51) state that “actors form beliefs subjectively, largely on the basis of past interactions.” However, what if the individual and the Other have never formally interacted? Instead, what they know of each other is primarily “witnessed by adoption” indirectly, through formal and informal learning experiences. Over time, with a lack of contrasting positive images of the Other, subjective beliefs can become distorted or exaggerated, portraying one group as heroic and superior, while denigrating the Other. While this thesis study does not examine in general terms why humans hate, it does assume that the constant reinforcement of positive and/or negative imagery (within an educational context) can shape students’ perceptions. When such images and beliefs are (or are not) challenged, and
one group is made to feel superior (or inferior), this feeling becomes part of a group’s psycho-cultural disposition and thereby a motivator for future behaviour. As such, this psychological challenge may “induce the group to react by initiating violence” (Utterwulghe, 1999, p. 5), presumably as a defensive measure against perceived looming attacks.

The dynamics of inter-group relations provide frames of reference to interpret and evaluate the motives and the actions of others (Cohen, 1990, 1991; Ross, 1993a, 1993b). Psycho-cultural conflict theory highlights these internalized perceptions (why each group feels threatened), which are unique to a given time and place context.

**3.4 – The Theoretical Prism of Anti-racist Education**

Speaking of the social structural and psycho-cultural forms conflict and violence may take, this thesis study also benefits from theories of anti-racist education to provide an understanding of the emotions embedded within the curriculum and how said emotions may lead to the embodiments of psycho-cultural narratives, dispositions, and interpretations of the Other within a shared space. In her interview with Enid Lee, Nelson (2002) notes that approaching education through a multicultural or anti-racist lens is fundamentally a perspective, that is, a way of interpreting or seeing. This perspective addresses the histories and experiences of people who have traditionally been “left out” of existing formal curricula. Such a perspective allows teachers and students to critically examine why things are the way they are, to challenge the status quo, to use schooling as a site of resistance, and to question the dynamics of power as a tool of acceptance, oppression, and negation. In speaking about race and racialization, this thesis study delves beyond a simple discussion of marginalization based on skin colour or ethnicity and expands its focus to include “racialized” group identity factors such as culture, language, and religion. In the sphere of
marginalization, issues of power construct these differences. In this thesis study, the understanding is that race and racism are rooted in misunderstanding the Other, not particularly in terms of physical characteristics, but in terms of their lived cultural experiences and the way institutional systems can perpetuate differences. As Dei (2008, p. xiv) writes,

Anti-racism can be defined as a discursive and political practice to address the myriad forms of racisms and the intersections with other forms of oppression. Anti-racism addresses the systemic and institutional dimensions of racism as well as drawing attention to more than the overt forms of racist acts lodged in individual actions, practices and beliefs.

Using Dei’s understanding, anti-racism education theory is used to examine how Otherness is represented through the selected and constructed history curricular content. In terms of the intended teaching of key historical episodes (noted in Chapter One as the Aliyah process, land purchases and territory, the War of Independence, the Haganah’s Plan D, and the Nakba), an anti-racist lens would show how power and dominance within the secular Jewish-Israeli society are conveyed in relation to the Arab and Palestinian Other. How is this power intended to be used? Through what narrative elements (selection of events, the framing of perspectives, omissions) are the Other presented and discussed?

Because anti-racism deals with the dynamics of power and dominance, Dei (2000, p. 21) suggests that “Anti-racism shifts the talk away from tolerance of diversity to the pointed notion of difference and power. It sees race and racism as central to how we claim, occupy and defend spaces.” Therefore, as a tool to explore the psycho-cultural dynamics of narratives, dispositions, and interpretations, and to understand how both theories converge in this thesis study, a theoretical prism of anti-racist education identifies such psycho-cultural behaviours and how they may perpetuate systemic racism, othering, and negation. Terms like systemic racism or negation are used as critiques of the challenges faced by formal Jewish-Israeli schooling, and of the
institutionalization of history-based knowledge within a larger, dominant Jewish-Israeli society. The anti-racist approach questions how societal institutions, like formal schooling and its tools (e.g., curriculum), can reproduce inequalities and mutual negation or distrust. In so doing, this thesis works to establish a framework to confront such challenges and obstacles by identifying them and examining their apparent effects on the perpetuation of destructive and violent conflict. The thesis does not explicitly examine the various forms of racism which are often embedded within curriculum and discourse referencing the Other. Implicit racism is entrenched in a way that not only perpetuates alienation but can also create new enemies (Hall, 1978).

Moreover, systemic racism, othering, and negation are integral parts of the culture of conflict, and thus of the social order and narrative of Israeli existence and survival in the region. Theories of anti-racist education illuminate how the subjective identities within specific political locations may produce knowledge, transmit it, and use it to interpret the actions and reactions of others within the same space. This focus on identity through a lens of anti-racism (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1996, 2012; Crenshaw, Harris and Lipsitz, 2016; Hall, 1994; Gilroy 1993, 2000, 2004), and on identity’s subjectivity and fluidity (Bekerman, 2009b) recognizes that student identities affect and are affected by the educational context of the curricular structure (power and process). While “identity” typically refers to the individual self, this thesis study continues to use the term with reference to groups’ collective identity and a shared sense of history. Current engagement in an intergroup conflict increases a sense of membership within an in-group collective identity (see Pinson). The persistent (social structural) inequities between membership in the Jewish-Israeli in-group and the Palestinians out-group within society, and relations of domination, oppression, and subordination also contribute to psycho-cultural notions of the collective self and Otherness (Galtung, 1990). As Dei suggests and has been previously noted by
Bar-On (1998), and Kelman (2005), people cannot define their identity unless they align it in opposition to others (see Hall).

A collective Jewish-Israeli identity, framed by the aforementioned comparison between this identity and the identity of Others, acquires its meaning partly from what it is not. The group defines itself, not just in terms of religion or nationality, but in terms of the collective struggle for land and recognition in opposition to the Other. The practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures, and behaviours that perpetuate such systemic racism can be infused within the curriculum (Dei, 1996; Gilroy, 1993, 2000a; hooks, 1992, 1994; Hall, 1978, 1994), such that the curriculum may allow students to develop a critical consciousness that can challenge or resist the current situation and set the future political agenda, thus turning choices into action.

Because anti-racism is an action-oriented process that is used as a tool of educational and political change and that addresses the interlocking systems of social oppression, the theory highlights “the options, strategies, processes and structures through which individuals and communities/groups come to know and understand the world and act within it” (Freire, 1993, cited in Dei and Calliste, 2000, p. 13). In their convergence with psycho-cultural conflict theory, these dispositions towards Others are not simply a symptom of beliefs or attitudes of intolerance, but also of subjugated knowledge itself (see Foucault). Viewing the Other as “an Other” is an integral part of the social order in which secular Jewish-Israelis live. The manifestation and institutionalization of such feelings (victimization and siege mentality) and their constant recall in association with historical and contemporary episodic events allow students to blur the line between Others and oppressors. Thus, a situation is created where discursive racism becomes normalized. As Burnett (2013) writes, “Discursive racism is much more powerful than overt racial
discrimination, simply because it becomes normative, it becomes subconscious, it becomes indirect and manifest, which results in the racist defending themselves using the tired overused phrase ‘everything is not about race.’”

The use of two theories in this thesis study allows for provision of a deeper, more contextualized analysis about how knowledge may be politically and academically disseminated, and then shaped and solidified, in relation to fears, power, dominance, and lived experiences. While psycho-cultural narratives and dispositions shape and are shaped by one’s interpretations of the world, so too are one’s interpretations a consequence of those officially reinforced narratives embedded in social inequality (Ross, 2012). Dei (1996, p. 27) notes that “There are powerful social meanings to race which are anchored, particularly, in the lived experiences of minority groups.” While Jewish-Israelis make up the dominant society, as minorities within the Middle East, their disposition towards others within the region is reflected in this minority status and their resulting siege mentality (see Bar-Tal and Antebi, 1992; Bar-Tal, 1996, 2008; Bar-Tal et. al., 2009).

Yet these two theories are not without their interlocking challenges. Within this thesis’s study of memory, identity, and history as intentionally learned knowledge within the history curriculum, these theories diverge in their methods of illuminating how identity is understood, and how power is imposed. Furthermore, while psycho-cultural conflict theory’s usage in predicting and explaining the emotional and identity-based resonance and magnitude of conflict in a society, a theoretical prism of anti-racist education considers how power and dominance amongst one group are obtained and expressed, while another group is oppressed and subjugated. A theory of anti-racist education complements psycho-cultural conflict theory in examining the deeply embedded, less conscious, ambiguous dispositions and motives individuals and larger society hold and impose on the Other, but it cannot be used for resolving persistent and escalating intergroup conflict. Both
theories take into account the actions of Others (narratives, dispositions, and interpretations of their actions) as tools in the construction of collective solidarity, and also examine the intended reinforcement of deep seated views of Others, not as the cause of historical persecution, but as representatives of it, but theories of anti-racist education focus greater attention on power dynamics and cultural experiences, and not on how these experiences feed the intractable nature of conflict.

In the process of mitigating this divergence, use of a theory of anti-racist education shows an understanding that, because first hand and adoptively witnessed experiences both create and legitimize knowledge, governments and other educational stakeholders may balance their focus on topics of oppression and religious persecution with tools that promote meaningful change in their society, including reformulation of relations with the Other. As Dei (2000, p. 33) notes,

The anti-racism framework does not emerge simply from a knowledge of the racial atrocities in human history. Narratives of victimhood – victimologies – help us to understand social reality. Victims of racism resist in order to survive and tell their stories. Similarly, while theory can be created from a critical interrogation of individual and collective social experiences, the individual and collective identity of subjects cannot be reduced merely to a resistance to racism.

This survival and the retelling of history is key to the transformation of schools. However, when history is adoptively witnessed and often subject to selective amnesia, narratives of victimhood may trump discourses of recognition and humanization of the Other, their narratives, their experiences, and their history (Bekerman and Zembylas, 2009, 2010). In grappling with this internalization, Mason (1990, p. 1) writes,

Internalized oppression is not the cause of our mistreatment; it is the result of our mistreatment. It would not exist without the real external oppression that forms the social climate in which we exist. Once oppression has been internalized, little force is needed to keep us submissive. We harbour inside ourselves the pain and the memories, the fears and the confusions, the negative self-images and the low expectations, turning them into weapons with which to re-injure ourselves, every day of our lives.
The ways the events of 1948 are represented in the secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum introduce and give legitimacy to dominant perceptions about the Other and attempt to reinforce fears about looming extermination. As students are intended to learn about the conflict and have the conflict contextualized through a lens of historical oppression, religious persecution, and attempted eradication, and also intended to be taught to decode and critically apply that learning within their daily lives, emotional ties are established, and the future generation’s collective identity is rejuvenated. In this solidification of a collective identity, the legitimized emotions about the Other turn into fears of the Other. The narrative about the Others as previous oppressors and persecutors is reproduced. These perceived fears may encourage projection and then aggression to reclaim, re-establish, or re-secure a national identity.

3.5 – Psycho-cultural Conflict Theory and Dispositions of Conflict

Regarding the interconnections between the social structural and psycho-cultural components of intractable, escalating, and entrenched ethnic conflict, Horowitz (1985, p. 181-182) maintains that “the sources of ethnic conflict are not to be found solely in the psychology of group union, but they cannot be understood without a psychology, an explanation that takes account of emotional commitments of group traits and interactions.” The attachment to the land and the need for the protection noted above illustrates this point; how the land was acquired, by and from whom, and the need to protect it as a Jewish homeland are deeply rooted in the dominant Jewish-Israeli narrative. While land and control over it are social structural factors, the conflict cannot be understood without examining the underlining psycho-cultural attachment the collective, whether Israeli or Palestinian, has to the land.
Jewish-Israelis may not have been equally subject to the same threats from the Other and *vice versa* (threats to Palestinians). The creation of a single, unified curriculum that shows awareness of an anti-racist prism may attempt to bridge these divides under a collective conceptual umbrella. Yet, in drawing parallels between historical events and outcomes, both collectively shared and foreign outcomes, the analysis must be contextualized in time and space. As Cahis, cited in Mulder (2016, p. 4), suggests, what is lacking in the IMOE history curriculum is the transmission of the Other’s experiences and the drawing of parallels between the Other’s struggles, triumphs, achievements, and defeats and Jewish-Israelis’ own struggles.

The two kinds of theorizing about both the structural features of social and racialized political institutions (e.g., schools) and the reinforcement of psychological dispositions (e.g., curriculum content and the intended material) together explain the sources of intractable ethnic conflict better than either theory itself (Gyamfi, 2009, p. 6). At the same time, both the secular Jewish-Israeli identity and the identity of the Other are shaped through repeated representations of power and dominance, as well as through psycho-cultural interpretations about perceivably irresolvable claims that engage the central elements of a group’s historical experience as victor and victim.

Psycho-cultural narratives, interpretations, and dramas within the curriculum’s texts frame Jewish-Israeli action. Within the history curriculum, psycho-cultural dramas are operationalized through claims to land, key episodic events, religious attachments, historical symbols, and emotion-laden narratives of trauma and triumph, security and defence. Each claim is deeply embedded within the dimensions of the larger conflict, and the claims’ contemporary legitimacy is continually called into question by each new wave of violence. Feelings of animosity and insecurity are adoptively witnessed and transmitted informally from generation to generation and
given legitimacy through the state’s curriculum. It is through the state’s immersive indoctrination (through formal education) that future generations become adoptive witnesses to past events (Nora, 1989).

One way to bring such factors together in conflict analysis is the notion of psycho-cultural dispositions. Ross (1995, p. 529) explains that “psychocultural dispositions provide groups and individuals with the raw materials to develop interpretations about the actions and motives of opponents under the conditions of stress and ambiguity that conflicts produce.” As such, psycho-cultural dispositions refer to a group’s collective interpretation and evaluation of the actions of a group of Others, which become the benchmarks guiding the group’s own behaviour in response to perceived insults, physical aggression, and/or in decisions about whom to trust. They serve as fundamental social orientations that guide behaviour and provide examples of the role a polarizing us versus them opposition plays in both the groups’ conceptualization of Otherness and their interaction with the Other (Volkan, 1988). While these dispositions are often taught implicitly and informally and rooted in early developmental experiences, social and political meanings are infused in them through their reinforcement and contextualization within a selective curricular content. Furthermore, the dispositions are reinforced in modes of interpretation (e.g., how students are intended to be taught to critically think), and in the way such an interpretation comes to explain the origin and development of conflict (Ross, 1993a, 1993b). Once an interpretation is expressed, any provocative or vague actions by the Other may be perceived as further threats that produce social polarization and rhetorical and emotional escalation (Ross, 2001). These dispositions and interpretations are especially relevant during times of high anxiety, when cognitive and perceptual distortion may overshadow a person’s perceived need for accuracy. As Ross continues, “Psychocultural interpretations help groups explain action from particular cultural points of view,
and their emotional salience means that imposing external assumptions about interests or motives in an intense conflict is often fruitless.” Ross’s notion of emotional salience and awareness is understood as a tenet of psycho-cultural interpretation. Often, such interpretations are based on deep seated emotional awareness, perception, or cognition, as opposed to other external factors that could possibly be mitigated.

Images of the self and the Other are further operationalized within formal institutions, where they are embodied through regular reinforcement and grounded within curricular guidelines and supplementary course material (e.g., historical maps without the Other’s village names). In IMOE-approved supplementary resources (e.g., texts, maps, etc.) based on curriculum guidelines, these internalized images of the self and the Other become shared objects of identification and common frames of reference that facilitate the development of culturally sanctioned collective responses within the an ethnic community (Barnes, 1987; Ross, 1995, 2001). As Ross (1995, p. 530) suggests,

In the conflict domain, we want to know not only who are allies and who are enemies, but also something about each, how they can be expected to behave, and what is appropriate action toward them. Identifying psychocultural dispositions related to conflict and violence requires the specification of mechanisms linking early learning to personality formation and adult behaviour. The linkages emphasized here are central in object relations theory (Greenberg and Mitchell, 1983): attachment and individuation, identification, repression, projection, externalization, and displacement.

Within the curricular document itself, such identifications are situated within case studies, stories, and short activities, where students are asked to meander through given historical situations and outcomes. The direct learning process, direct instruction, and/or teacher-led modelling, all provide early indoctrination, where identity formation and polarizing ideologies are scaffolded on in order to lay the foundation, model, and evaluate the students’ social world (Ross, 1993b). If the history curriculum presents a (victimization at the hands of, and/or blame) narrative that the Other
has “always” acted in a particular way, then new violent conflict escalations may include, not only the previous Other, but also those perceived as having similar characteristics (e.g., equating all Arabs with Palestinians) (Bekerman et. al., 2009). This evolution of an all- encompassing Other may serve as a dispositional template for fashioning interpretations of particular groups, both inside and outside one’s society.

As Ross (1995, p. 525) explains, “When conflicts develop, these dispositions are invoked to construct interpretations of the world. In intransigent ethnic conflicts, deep seated threats to identity and security fears serve as powerful barriers which prevent groups from addressing the competing substantive interests which divide them.” Within education, the ways curriculum guides students to interpret psycho-cultural communications (reflecting narratives, dispositions, and beliefs) are thought to shape the ways they learn, act, or react to content and, in turn, project such interpretations onto external relations.

Under conditions of stress and ambiguity, the curricular representation of historical oppression and religious persecution through such dispositions may stress the current conflict. These dispositions can, once infused with the emotions of trauma, in turn, become the source of cognitive and perceptual distortions that individuals and collective groups use to interpret the actions and motives of the Other. If left unchecked, these psycho-cultural dispositions can become the catalysts for future and greater outbreaks of violence.

Israel is often seen, within the global community, as the aggressor in the conflict with Palestinians. Actions that the dominant Jewish-Israeli society may perceive as defensive may be interpreted as offensive by others. A militaristic political ideology that is tied to a history that recounts 2,000 years of religious persecution, that is rooted in the territory, sovereignty, and security, and that is embedded within a governmental document intended to teach such history
may not authentically capture reality. As Cohen (1990) notes, conflicts escalate when a group relies on a singular interpretation of events and reads unintended meaning into situations.

Through its contextualization of interpretations, psycho-cultural conflict theory helps to challenge the anti-psychological, structurally deterministic view of conflict by addressing the roots of the intensity of the conflicts, by viewing societies as dynamic and interconnected, and by highlighting interactions between personal and cultural frameworks, in contrast to focusing solely on the objective, social structural conditions, which also help to shape social action. People are predisposed to establish social bonds from birth. Strong social ties have important adaptive significance. The behavioural experiences an individual has with the Other or in the Other’s space provide a foundation for constructing the individual’s internal world. Such experiences often lead to the reinforcement of the legitimacy of the self and collective’s own interpretation.

While history content provides a context for the conflict and legitimizes the defensive relationship with the Other, the history curriculum itself presumably solidifies power relations and the control of the dominant Jewish-Israeli society over the Palestinians by linking itself to the context of such events (e.g., narratives about being victorious in war over the Other, or of sorrow at the hand of the Other). As an analytical tool regarding the mandated, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum, these “dispositions provide the basis for internal mental representations, which offer standards by which to judge actions, templates for the interpretation of the actions of others, and serve as a guide to one’s own behaviour” (Ross, 1993a, p. 175). As Ross illustrated and Dei furthered, these narratives and dispositions, used from an early age, become the building blocks with which individuals will create mental representations of themselves as a part of a collective and of the identity of the collective. The narratives are also a tool that may be used to interpret the actions of the Other.
3.6 – Psycho-cultural Conflict Theory and Official Curriculum

As a tool of political indoctrination, the official, intended history curriculum presents and legitimizes projected images of the world and also assumptions and perceptions about Others through content selection and emphasis. As such, the curriculum may lock students in a segregated narrative of history, positioning them against the Other, as opposed to depicting parallel histories (see Bar-On and Adwan) and intertwined belonging. For example, the way the Others are externalized and projected by the group may demonize them and legitimizes the need for continued Jewish-Israeli struggle. Hostile projection against the Other is a defence against inner fears and a history of persecution, both lived and adoptively witnessed. In such a defence, the individual develops a stronger identification with his or her own group and identity and projects further hostility toward the Other, who may then unconsciously be blamed for reciprocal violence (Volkan, 1988; Ross, 2001). Gunther (2004, p. 135) points out that “what people are negotiating or fighting about is a fundamental question in analysis of conflict.” However, equally important is the question about who is fighting whom and why. As will be shown in Chapter Five, the events of 1948 have led to and reflect the divide between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians, and, as such, have been used time and time again as an escalator in more recent outbreaks of conflict.

Similarly, the prescribed method of teaching these events may serve as a frame of reference to interpret and evaluate the actions of others (Cohen, 1991; Ross, 1993a, 1993b). The way a group is taught to interpret and evaluate the Others’ dispositional narrative can aid in understanding why one group may feel its interests are threatened and knowledge subjugated, whereas members of a group in another setting do not feel that way when they are exposed to the same or a similar situation. As Lal (2012) notes in Mulder (2016, p. 20), “An integrated history of one world, our world, sounds appealing, but we need to have a conception of many worlds, not
one world. There are many modes of comprehending the world outside history, and it is not sufficient to speak merely of diverse histories.” Applied to this curricular analysis, Lal’s work takes an anti-racist approach, whereby students need to be presented with multiple histories to help construct a single, inclusive account of how the event took place, and need to be taught to resist power structures by breaking down notions of dominance and subordination. It would be nice to think that the whole collective (including the Other) is taught the same inclusive and multi-dimensional factors that make up history as it unfolds. In fact, differing groups construct or oppose their version of history, which is infused with their adoptive memories and distortions. As Lal further notes, it is not sufficient to speak of these diverse accounts; historians and educators also need to identify and address specific moments where histories interlock. It would seem obvious that different parties to the conflict would have different accounts of how history unfolded. It is through an anti-racist lens that an examination of the diverse accounts of history and of historical narratives may be conducted and that a larger conversation about the intractability of the conflict can be understood.

Identification of diverse histories and moments of contention within the history curriculum and of the ensuing dispositions and interpretations related to conflict and violence is important because, as stated previously, early learning helps to shape personality formation and adult behaviour. Ross (1993a) contends that moments of social interaction with the Other also connect with the spiritual realm. To what lengths does the history curriculum focus its intended discussions on healing and strengthening dismembered bodies? In a post-conflict setting, strained bonds with the Other can result in decreased levels of trust in social and political circumstances and can lead to a reignition of hostilities as this strain creates a motivation for action against any new, perceived aggressive motives of the Other. As Mulder (2016, p. 18) notes,
When students attend school, they should gain knowledge, but not a Eurocentric version of it… ‘Knowledge is the arrival of meaning from information that is true’ (in Abdullah 2012, p. 4). Following this definition, we cannot gain knowledge when the information presented to us is not true or when the meanings arising from that information are predisposed to be favourable towards the West. If information is not true, we have only gained illusions.

As such, a biased and/or negative narrative may become socially accepted over time and gain legitimacy the more it is used and not challenged. If future political parties fail to review the methods (e.g., curriculum) through which such narratives are included, future generations may be taught the same feelings of animosity and hostility, which could be the sources of their behavioural benchmarks later in life when they come into contact with the Other.

3.7 –Perception of History

Much like their Palestinian neighbours, Jewish-Israelis have lived under the threat of attack and have been seen as aggressors and perpetrators of violent conflict. Since Jewish-Israelis often have an awareness of their history, any attempts to engage in a reading of the conflict must be done mindfully, in relation to the people as much as to the politics. The people, as well as their leaders, have a sense of historical continuity between those historical events and what is happening at the present time (Basta, 2000; Raviv, Oppenheimer and Bar-Tal, 1999). While a group’s understanding of and their narratives about the Other certainly can change, becoming more (or less) distrusting and damning, unless the structure that reinforces these narratives changes, the narratives will probably stay the same. Histories are constructed, and one’s perception of history is shaped by the selective nature of this construction. From an anti-racist perspective, mindful of how history is used to shape identity and societal positionality, I argue that the institutionalization and normalization of an “us” versus “them” divide is maintained through the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum, which sustains the status quo. The dichotomy between an
“authentic” history as it unfolded and a “perception” of history as one side sees it plays a key role in understanding how a group’s psycho-cultural interpretations shape its bias or distorted perception of history.

A consciousness of history affects how one group interprets its past, its understanding of the present, and its anticipation of the future. This awareness is closely connected to the group’s identity and its collective understanding of who the group members are, as well as to the group’s understanding of the Other. Within history education, this awareness is the foundation of self-reflection and is used to construct a historical picture about matters such as who is identified as in the group or who is the Other.

The lived experiences (at present and historically) of Jewish-Israelis have led to emotional responses tightly knit within the fragility of the Jewish psyche and the psycho-cultural fabric of the region. Lewis (2004, n.p.) explains that “history in the Middle East is still going on, as there seems to be a very acute and often very detailed awareness of the past events, consuming not just those events in a recent past, but of the very remote past as well.” Moreover, there needs to be an understanding of the difference between history “as what happened” and history “as that which is said to have happened” and of the lengths to which selection and amnesia shape this perception. Theorists such as Lewis (2004) and Allahar (2011) propose that history is a constructed story, which takes form only when facts are chosen and put into a (re)shaped context. In the selective process of a historical study and the institutionalization of a history curriculum, these narratives, whether intentionally or unintentionally, shape the political interpretations of such events.

The Israeli education system, like many other systems, is racialized, indoctrinating students within a hegemonic system that conveys the existing unequal and divided society as “normal.” This portrayal of the society that the students are part of frames the dominant Jewish-Israeli society
as just, and those who do not live like “us” as wrong. Through such framing, the curriculum may have students come to internalize this racism and to not consider reinventing the world. In contrast, the decolonization of the education system would be “a necessary prerequisite for developing a counter-hegemonic vision of how the world should be organized” (Mulder, 2016, pg. 6). A conflict is less a one-time thing than a fluid, changing phenomenon. Without the equal representation of all parties to contextualize curricular events, students may be left open to misinterpretations, distortions, or interpretive gaps that may lead to a fractured understanding and identification of the self and Other in this conflict and in other violent historical events.

Within history education, new instances of violence are presented as part of a larger historical conflict and not as stand-alone, isolated incidents. At the same time, if the curriculum provides an opportunity for teachers to teach history as cause and effect, leading students to contextualize new instances of violence within multiple perspectives may allow students an opportunity to positively contribute to future peaceful relations. Lomeland (2011, p. 39) proposes, “History consciousness should be developed through education in a way that is open to different interpretations according to each individual student’s self-understanding.”

For Jewish-Israelis and their Arab (especially Palestinian) neighbours, who share a long and interwoven history, it is within schools, not on battlefields, where people can tackle the long list of accumulated grievances. While some Jewish-Israelis believe they can pinpoint the initial and underlying issues of contention, this precision is often an illusion, since their diagnosis and analysis of the conflict are incompatible with the analyses of others. In attempting to isolate moments of contention, the history curriculum centres around specific dates and milestones in the history of the conflict and uses such events to shape identity, dispositions, and interpretations of the self and the Other, both in a historical context and within modern society. Over time, the
group’s identity becomes further intertwined with these historical narratives, and, in turn, serves as the basis for in-group solidarity and out-group hostility (Volkan, 1997, in Ross 2001).

It is assumed that such milestone events were chosen by the IMOE because they are situated at the core of the dominant group’s identity. Any perceived threat to the group’s identity may fuel the larger conflict. With contested accounts of history fueling both state policy and the creation of each other’s social structure, “there is a feeling of a historical continuity between those events within history, and what is happening at the present time” (Lewis, 2004). If the curriculum allows the opportunity for students to unlearn, learn, and relearn their own national narratives, and, in the process, students are introduced to the Others’ narrative, then the IMOE will have made the first step in acknowledging and respecting the Other.

Conflicts always have a context, and such contexts must be accounted for in any analysis of conflict narratives. Through this contextualization, one begins to unravel the dichotomy between history and a group’s perception of those events. The homogeneous nature of many cultural groups in conflict contexts may cause members to reinforce self-serving mistakes in the reproduction of historical memories (Gordon, Sharpley-Whiting, and White, 1996; Orlowsky, 2010).

Teaching and learning, and therefore curriculum construction, are emotionally exacting experiences, especially when the course content questions or reinforces the national sovereignty, identity, and the history of the Jewish people. From a pedagogical standpoint, learning is intended to foster cognitive and emotional connections with the content, in relation to both the self and the larger community. Subsequently, as Ross (2001, p. 161) notes,

the narratives used in the learning process transcend cognition and embody images and emotions …that link a child’s inner and outer worlds and are infused with high emotional significance. It is easy to extend this linkage process to social and cultural objects—significant symbols and rituals that are first encountered in safe,
within-group contexts (often in childhood) revisited in adolescence when peer
groups and wider social attachments are especially salient emotionally, and
embedded in daily practices and their culturally specific sights, smells, and sounds.

In this development, a child’s identity is linked to a group’s adoptive witnessing of history
(as trauma and triumph) and core symbols (e.g., the Holocaust, the destruction of the Second
Temple, the pogroms, the Maccabees, Bar Kochva, etc.) that are used to trigger emotion. Their
powerful emotional meaning and embodiment within the students’ spirits, and the way the
students, as part of a collective body, have come to associate meaning with the symbols, transcends
time and space and also stresses in-group solidarity and out-group hostility (Volkan, 1997 in Ross,
2001). The emotional tie Jewish-Israelis have to their history as a factor shaping their identity in
opposition to the Other is still fresh. The way the IMOE intends the curriculum to be taught and
the use of key episodic events within history have made it nearly impossible to truly accept the
Other as an equal.

3.8 – Conclusion

The strength of psycho-cultural conflict theory comes from anthropology’s emphasis on
shared culture, including, by extension, powerful cultural artifacts such as government curricular
documents, in explanations of the origin and development of shared worldviews (Ross, 1993a). If
such worldviews are a result of internalized oppression, as suggested by Fanon (1952; see Mason,
1990; Mulder, 2016), then it could be assumed that these worldviews would be embedded in the
collective’s psycho-cultural narratives, dispositions and interpretations of their world, their
actions, and the reaction of the Other. Accordingly, “the same factors which push actors to make
sense of a situation also lead to cognitive and perceptual distortion because the desire for certainty
often is greater than the capacity for accuracy” (Ross, 1995, p. 532). In an analysis of points of
origin and developments, the strength of using a psycho-cultural approach stems from its comparison to and contrast with the intensity of the conflict, beyond the simple tangible differences between disputants. In so doing, psycho-cultural conflict theory illuminates the development, maintenance, and use of particular political orientations in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As an interpretive tool, psycho-cultural conflict theory highlights intrapersonal and cultural frameworks, and how such frameworks shape social action by speaking to the causes and consequences of interpretation (Ross, 1993a).

Secondly, while psycho-cultural conflict theory is the lens used to conduct this research, its interconnections with the theory of anti-racist education add a great deal to the already enlightening fields of sociology, psychology, and anthropology. The strength of interconnecting both theories as a tool in analysis of this inquiry’s big ideas arises from the theories’ provision of an understanding of how group narratives and the group’s dispositions towards and interpretations of the Others’ action can evoke strong emotions that both mobilize action and reinforce claims in the name of the collective. Together they provide a lens through which to understand how power is situated within key episodic events and how that same power can be used to negate Others. In relation to Israel’s history curriculum, this study’s examination of these theories sheds light on how the introduction and repetition of key cultural expressions may increase shared beliefs, persuade a group, and instil or deepen emotional connections to specific political and social ideologies. Drawing on the political “attachment to culturally-rooted shared images, metaphors, significant events, and personalities that connect in-group members across time and space…” What is particularly important here is how convincing the imagined community becomes for people when they see themselves at risk” (Bowen, 2007 in Ross, 2008, p. 15). As such, psycho-cultural conflict theory, as one aspect of Ross’ theory of conflict, and its interconnections with theories of
anti-racist education, draws strength from its examination of people, in conjunction with the tangible social-interests and the structure they live within (social structural), and the social factors that shape their environment.

As an analytical tool to deconstruct the curricular narrative, the interconnection of these theories garners strength from their explanations about why some societies are more susceptible to escalating the violent conflict. This polarizing divide between “us” and “them” is institutionalized and formally reinforced through curricular narratives that further affect the development of a common worldview, and help Jewish-Israelis grapple with the conflict. As such, the narratives, in turn, may teach culturally accepted methods of organization and action imposed on the conflict and the Other that may be used later in life (Ross, 1993a).

This institutionalization of (destructive or polarized inter-group) conflict is of great importance since the way governments present their narrative is meant to create a direction that socio-cultural groups should follow. Thus, my analysis of the history curriculum not only examines the way the narrative about the self and the Other differs but also considers the extent to which the history curriculum is intended to teach students to critically analyse key historical events. The analysis asks whether prompts, triggers, or vocabulary are laid out in the curriculum in ways that reinforce politically motivated events, while students internalize and grapple with the successive waves of emotions, perceptions, and cognitions these violent episodes evoke (see Chapter Four). As Carlson (1998, p. 98) suggests, “The key principle underlying a critical assessment of curriculum is that linkages exist between abstract planning models and structures of domination in the socio-cultural and political spheres.” The dominance of the two spheres within the curriculum, and the mirroring effect they have in and of society are further examples of
the intended fusion between memory and emotion, and how both are internalized and projected within the group and toward the Other.

Schools are “often the only institution of which the society can make formal, intentional, and extensive use to change the psychological repertoire of society members…” and are key to “constructing the students’ worldview (i.e., their values, beliefs, attitudes, motivations, skills and patterns of behaviour) in a way that reflects the reality of the peace process and prepares them to live in an era of peace and reconciliation” (Nets-Zehngut and Bar-Tal, 2007, p. 9). Moreover, “in this psychological repertoire, narratives that pertain to the collective memory and to the ethos of conflict are of special importance. The narrative of the collective memory focuses on the remembered past of the society” (Bar-Tal and Salomon, 2006, p. 6). Yet for this shift to occur in formal education, from the institutionalization of conflict to the role of peace-builder, the process needs to be politically led, nationally accepted and understood as a factor in solidifying a lasting peace.
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

“The longer you can look back, the farther you can look forward.”

Churchill in Langworth (2008)

4.1 – Research Design

All curricula reflect curriculum designers’ (conscious or subconscious) intentions (e.g., what material to include and exclude, or what the political motivation of these choices is), key ideas in the content that students are exposed to, and ways this content is to be disseminated and transmitted. Though formal education plays a critical role in peacebuilding, Gallardo’s (2009, p. 15) work on early childhood education and the creation of sustainable peace suggests that formal education can also “contribute to the outbreak of conflict through a lack of adequate educational opportunities or through promulgation of stereotypes and militant ideologies in the curriculum.” So too the curriculum, whether as large-scale formal policy documents or supplemental resources, explicitly presents the intentions, aims, and aspirations of its designers in a way that frames content around political ideologies and a given society’s psycho-cultural narratives. As such, this thesis examines how the psycho-cultural narratives intended for transmission through the history curriculum can affect identity politics.

In deciphering the most appropriate design for this thesis study, I first considered the larger purpose of the research, which is to better understand how education (specifically the curriculum) can exacerbate or mitigate conflict. Because this research focuses on the curriculum content in which students are immersed, the content itself is of key importance and thus at the centre of the qualitative research process. To situate this process, this thesis study uses a Relational Content Analysis (explained further in subsection 4.2) in efforts to identify the presence of certain concepts
that recur within the data (i.e., curriculum documents). This method identifies concepts and also grapples with the challenges of finding meaningful relationships among the occurrences of multiple concepts.

In this thesis’s examination of the role of the intended history curriculum as a means of adoptive witnessing and as a tool in transmitting intergenerational memory and, in efforts to create a unified collective Jewish-Israeli group identity in opposition to a Palestinian Other, the term “history” itself is identified as contentious. History as a discipline lends itself to extensive scrutiny since it is very likely to formulate, enact, and impose a political doctrine by constituting a civil and national consciousness. While education is a political act, any act that revisits and scrutinizes the collective memory of the group is often taken up as a political platform in order to shape the intentions, ideas, and content that governments intend to expose to their society.

Yet there is a difference between the perception of history and the intentions of a curriculum. Examining the dichotomy between actual events as they transpired and the perception of how these events unfolded is crucial in deconstructing the interconnections between perceptions of history and their intended usage to shape narratives of conflict and their corresponding dispositions. As Rosen (2009, p. 135) explains,

These narratives of the conflict provide a common platform for the functioning under the conditions of protracted conflict (Bar-Tal and Salomon, 2006; Rouhana and Bar-Tal, 1998). The narratives provide information about the conflict, create a sense of differentiation and superiority, delegitimize the opponent, and play a crucial role in fueling and sustaining the conflict (Cairns and Hewstone, 2002). They become embedded into everyday life: media, culture, national and religious festivals, and educational systems. The role of these societal mechanisms is to ensure that these narratives will not change.

In this thesis study’s use of its Relational Content Analysis of the IMOE-mandated history curriculum, its application is intended to explore the role intended narratives have (within history education [e.g., presented content]) in framing perceptions of the self (as a group) and the Other
(as Arab or Palestinian) within the conflict (historically) and within the larger society. Secondly, this methodology is intended to decode what messages are presented for discussion; the methodology questions what knowledge may be omitted, and examines how curricular content is framed as a polarizing “us” versus “them” position through notions of victimization and heroic acts of triumph over the Other.

### 4.2 – Relational Content Analysis

In locating possible narratives of incitement, othering, or negation, which may be intended as areas of indoctrination, this thesis study conducts a Relational Content Analysis. In this thesis study’s usage of the Relational Content Analysis, it is seen as an approach that “focuses on the discursive conditions, components and consequences of power abuse by domination (elite) groups and institutions… it studies discourse and its function in society and the ways society, and especially forms of inequality, are expressed, represented, legitimated or reproduced in text and talk” (van Dijk, 1995, p. 24). Berelson (1952, p. 74), in his work on content analysis, explains that this technique is intended for the “objective, systematic, and quantitative description of manifest content of communication.”

Within this study of curricular narratives, the analysis serves as a guide in the process of determining whether there is the presence of certain words or concepts that can be intended or inferred to shape identity in one direction over another. The process also involves looking for meaningful relationships amongst key episodic events (previously identified) and the narrative used to describe them. Yet individual concepts, in and of themselves, are viewed as having no inherent meaning. Rather, the meaning is understood and approached in the analysis phase as a
product of the relationships amongst concepts in a text. As Palmquist (n.d.) suggests, these concepts are symbolic kernels that acquire meaning once they are connected to other symbols. Therefore this Relational Content Analysis is put into practice, first, by identifying the concepts that are present in the IMOE formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum. In attempting to draw meaning from the concepts, this thesis study seeks to go beyond the presence of such concepts by exploring the relationships they have with each other. In so doing, the curriculum and excerpts selected by myself from IMOE-approved supplementary texts (see subsection 4.5 for the selection process) are coded and broken down into four manageable categories (identified later as the four guiding themes and/or triggers) on the basis of the use of the terms (i.e., negative versus positive image association). Secondly, these themes are examined in terms of structure and in terms of the harm this use of key terms (e.g., contextual representation) may represent. From this coding, the analysis works to uncover the presence, meanings, and relationships of such words and concepts. This process then allows me, as the researcher, to make inferences about the messages intended for transmission.

In highlighting Berelson’s (1952) comment above, this thesis study analyses the intended representation of key episodic events in the formation of and transmission of collective memory and identity and considers the way concepts, patterns, triggers, and themes are presented in order to quantify their presence in an objective way. In assembling the findings (see subsection 4.6), this methodology approaches history as a means of possible indoctrination and identity formation based on ethnic and/or racial inequality. This assembly of findings questions the role of history or what history’s intended purpose may be. So too does it question whether the framing of history can be objective, or if there are always going to be elements of subjectivity. This questioning contributes to the knowledge base; most studies of this kind focus solely on ethnocentric and racist
representations in texts. While such findings may prove useful, the representations of the Israeli or Jewish self and the Palestinian or Arab Other must be critically analysed with an open mind, so as to understand if and how curricular meanings fluctuate, for instance, between an emphasis on difference, on one hand, and a supremacist derogation stressing moral or biological inferiority and/or victimization, on the other hand.

4.3 – Methodology Approach

In efforts to decipher which specific content and qualitative data are more useful than others, it is important to examine thoroughly the integral linkages of the reliable and the radical, in terms of their contributions to understanding the given events in the curriculum. This observation brings up the need to examine closely how the content of the history curriculum can contribute to course activities and the projects students complete, based on the events pre-during-post 1948. In this section, which discusses how my qualitative data was analysed, it is imperative, to begin with a discussion about how I attributed meaning to my findings and how that meaning contributed to the conclusions drawn. My analysis depends on my understanding of the structural form the curricular document takes and on my interpretative understanding of how curriculum scaffolds subject-specific knowledge (e.g., introduction, discussion, application, reflection, reinforcement, and reapplication to understand further topics).

According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), cited in Tate (2011, p. 30), “Qualitative data analysis involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data, in short making sense of data in terms of the participants’ definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities.” Yet this thesis study’s analysis of the history curriculum goes beyond a post-structural framework in recognizing the social and psycho-cultural structures that
play a role in constituting a subject, subjectivity, and reality. Whereas a post-structuralist framework would analyse descriptive concepts, themes, and triggers found within the history curriculum, this thesis study goes further in seeking to understand how each element is intended to be understood by students. Central to this approach, and reflecting my theory as presented in Chapter Three, is the argument that the history curriculum used within formal, secular Jewish-Israeli schools, the largest of the educational sectors in Israel, does not recognize authentic reality as the events transpired. Instead, the curriculum structures historical narratives in a way that students ought to understand them, and in a way that continues the pursuit and memory of past struggles with the Other. The understanding is that the history curriculum structures its approach to content (inclusive of omissions), and is intended to frame how groups create and impose their space on the Other.

Acknowledgement is needed that the curricular content is structured in a particular way to give or to yield a particular outcome. In fact, the curriculum offered to students does have the intended outcomes. The Relational Content Analysis offers the opportunity to provide valuable historical and cultural insights through an examination and coding of the methods (see subsection 4.6.1) used by the IMOE to present key episodic events. Moreover, the coding process allows a closeness to the text, which can alternate amongst specific concepts, patterns, triggers, and themes; these, in turn, could be used to interpret the intention of the texts beyond simple education. Since this method does not require the collection of quantitative data or the performance of interviews and surveys, it is a nonintrusive means of collecting and analysing evidence.

Due to the political nature of education, narratives about historical positions and framed outcomes are legitimized by being formally sanctioned and required by trusted government officials. While I quantify and analyse the presence, intended meanings, and relationships amongst
historical narratives and presentations of the Other, inferences are drawn solely from the official history curriculum documents and interpreted in relation to the effects their content could have on furthering a biased perception of historical events and the role the Other played in historical outcomes.

With such an understanding, I utilize this methodology in two ways. First, I use it in understanding “meaning-making exercises” (e.g., nationalism, Otherness, Jew, Israeli, Palestinian, Arab, victimization, oppression, persecution, etc.), and how the presented historical content (e.g., battles, interactions with the Other, United Nations Resolutions [namely, Resolution 181]) organizes this meaning as a whole. A central concern here is how such meaning is intended to be produced and how notions of Otherness are intended to be constructed and contextualized by the IMOE.

Secondly, this methodology is utilized to uncover where possible narratives of incitement or triggers are embedded and how they might as a whole be intended to be used. On the basis of how meaning is intended to be conveyed, the term “trigger” is used to identify key vocabulary and/or key situations (e.g., the use of bias-framed examples). These triggers could be used to highlight the group in a positive light and the Other in a negative fashion (e.g., terms like “occupier” or “terrorist”) in efforts to unconsciously combine or associate such triggers with nationalistic labels of the Other (e.g., terrorist, oppressor, tyrant, mob, etc.).

Since a history curriculum is also a representation of the dominant group’s psycho-cultural dispositions and interpretations of how the world is structured, the curriculum too is inherently part of and influenced by the socio-political climate in which it was created, namely, as a moment in political time. In my methodological approach, the Relational Content Analysis is used to focus on how psycho-cultural narratives might establish intended outcomes that involve creating a
spatial divide between “us” and “them.” It is assumed that this divide would reinforce the continuation or re-escalation of tensions between Israelis and Others (specifically Palestinians).

4.4 – Sampling

In the context of an increase in the multi-ethnic makeup within the State of Israel, this thesis study looks only at the mandated history curriculum used within the Mamlachti or state secular school system, the largest education system in Israel. This sample is not from the only socio-cultural or religious institution in Israel (e.g., it knowingly omits from this thesis study the educational system for most of Muslim and Non-Muslim Arabs, Christians, Druze [see Appendix A]). The documents analysed in this thesis have a particularly strong geographical and historical focus on the key episodic events that led to the creation of the State of Israel.

Secondly, this thesis study looks only at the mandated, secular Jewish-Israeli curriculum, not at Jewish Hassidic education. There needs to be an acknowledgement that leaving out these schools may create a vacuum in terms of “us” versus “them”. Hassidic Jews in Israel live to some extent in separate neighbourhoods within the country and attend separate schools maintained by a different educational system that places a heavier emphasis on religious studies (Lemish, 2003). Since the history curriculum taught from a religious (theological) standpoint is not the focus of this thesis study, the Hassidic state-religious schools are not examined.

Within the secular system, the selection of sampled texts was a struggle since this thesis study initially set out to review both the history curriculum and all corresponding IMOE history textbooks, and also to interview curricular designers and government officials who were party to content selection. As mentioned, while I was in Israel, I was unable to meet with IMOE representatives. A colleague of mine directed me to the IMOE website, where I was able to obtain
a copy of the mandated history curriculum. However, after examining their English-language web page, I concluded that, at the time this thesis study was conducted, the curricular materials on the IMOE website were outdated.

After returning to Toronto, I met with representatives from the Institute for Monitoring Peace and Cultural Tolerance in School Education (IMPACT-SE), formerly the Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CMIP), whose work examines school curricula in relation to international standards for teaching recognition and acceptance of the Other. During this time, I sat with then CMIP’s director of research, Dr. Arnon Groiss, whose work with CMIP, IMPACT-SE, and various other organizations led him to translate a number of curricula from Israel and surrounding countries. While I was meeting with Dr. Groiss, I pressed him on questions about whether the othering of Arabs and Palestinians was found in the mandated, secular Jewish-Israeli curriculum. Dr. Groiss provided me with a number of interesting avenues to explore and articles to examine, and also suggested that I review his publications and translations of passages about Arabs and Palestinians in secular Israeli school books (part of his studies also included analysis of books used within Hassidic education).

In conducting this work, I felt that the history curriculum’s Unit 5: Modern Israel (produced by the IMOE and found on their website) and the corresponding IMOE-approved supplementary texts could be seen as key representations of curriculum shaping and reinforcing parts of the Jewish-Israeli narrative and the siege mentality. Thus, moving forward, data-source documents consequently included (1) the IMOE history curriculum (Unit 5: Modern Israel), (2) the work of Groiss and IMPACT-SE, and (3) many of the IMOE-approved supplementary resources highlighted in Groiss’s studies.
While most of this thesis study’s consideration is given to the examination of Unit 5: Modern Israel, this study is based on a reading of the entire curricular document, not solely an independent study and attempt to contextualize Unit 5: Modern Israel as a stand-alone unit, absent from earlier history. Rather, Unit 5 was chosen purposefully, as I felt its content best represented the current socio-political narratives used by secular Jewish-Israelis, and the larger national narrative to frame the modern conflict. While this study continuously refers to the Jewish siege mentality being rooted in over 2000 years of religious persecution, oppression and victimization, informal discussions I had while in Israel with academics, educators and citizens focused more on the events leading up to 1948 as opposed to the Jews plight from Egypt under Pharaoh the Maccabees fight against King Antiochus. While some in conversation referred to the Palestinian as a modern Amalek (recalling Old Testament narratives), as a whole, it was only when topics around land rights did conversations take on a biblical lens, emphasizing divinity, the Israelites, and Jewish expulsion throughout history.

There is no doubt that Units 1 - 4 frame the outcome of Unit 5 and help understand the larger historical context of the siege mentality, however, with this in mind, while data collection was done only from content within the aforementioned Unit 5, all findings were understood as part of a larger history and body of work. Moreover, the extent of IMOE-approved secondary sources is significant and covers a vast array of political ideologies. With so much to choose from, only the IMOE-approved secondary sources that directly speak to topics presented in the curriculum’s Unit 5 were considered. Given the significant number of resources to sift through, subsection 4.6 – Data Analysis will discuss what was being looked for, and also how and why. Some of the challenge and methods of dealing with the resources will also be discussed.
4.5 – Data Collection

While I was collecting data, my objective was to remain reflexive. As Zakharia (2009) notes, “The issue of how data is collected, from whom and by whom, and how data is interpreted and (re)presented is always a concern for research, but even more so when the ‘researched’ are at the center of violent inter/national contests over power and resources.”

I am cognizant of the preconditions and bias that I bring to the collection process and understand that the selection of excerpts, translations, themes, and examples impacts the analysis of the data. While this thesis study has already made assumptions based on what could be the expected findings, the actual review of the data and the application of the literature shape the concrete conclusions and guide the research process, in contrast with a simple prescription of outcomes. As such, this thesis study’s framework is shaped by the incoming data, not vice versa; in so doing, where the collected data is gathered is a key to generating appropriate conclusions (Holloway and Wheeler, 2002; Tate, 2011).

There is growing ambiguity about the sources and content being analysed in making such judgments about the Other. This thesis study’s analysis is conducted ethically and effectively, given the contentious nature of and continual evolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In so doing, this thesis study begins with translated versions of the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli state-produced and mandated history curriculum, and uses the materials solely as the primary source of data collection for the analysis.

Noted here is the fact that the translated versions of the history curriculum were not completed by me. Instead, they are the work of Groiss and the IMPACT-SE. While his work and the Institute’s work have been used by members of the U.S. Congress and the E.U. Parliament, I am cognizant that reliance on a translated version can pose an issue. How do I know if the
translations are correct? How do I know if the words are interpreted correctly? Did the syntax change the meaning? As is discussed in subsection 4.6 – Data Analysis, further review and cross-referencing amongst Groiss and others who conducted similar studies of the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curricula allowed such obstacles to be overcome.

Awareness of the challenges that may arise in the collection and/or analysis of data is crucial to the design of and approaches to the thesis. The extent of personal biases that may affect the analysis and interpretation must also be considered (Weston et al., 2001). The work of Ellis and Barakat (1996) addresses the possibility of importing bias or myopic perspectives. Their work helps to retain the proper focus by speaking to the need to bring in or use a variety of data collection methods in the study of conflict zones, because information may not always be truthful and/or accessible.

It is because of this concern about bias that I read many different viewpoints and articles written on the conflict. There is so much to consider, and it is my experience, in 16 years of teaching the Social Sciences at both secondary and post-secondary institutions, that nearly all educational and curricular documents contain bias (see Brown, 2001; CMIP 2000, 2002; Peled-Elhanan, 2006, 2010). In my attempts to limit the bias possibly brought into this thesis study from the IMOE’s documents and the various sources written on the contested narratives of shared history, I have worked to be as inclusive as possible by bringing in both Israeli (not just Jewish) and Palestinian (not just Muslim) viewpoints on the issues, in both positive and negative interpretations.

There already is a lot of generated data that looks at education and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Still, networking with NGOs, schools, and academics at various Israeli universities proved extremely beneficial. From these interactions, I was able to refine my collection of data
into more appropriate primary and secondary sources, and then further break my collection down into reliable versus radical and politically slanted sources. Though these radical and politically charged sources are read with an understanding that they may prove more biased than useful, the possibility that they may introduce certain ideas or explain a given circumstance or scenario in a different light may bring to this thesis study insights about how the collective whole is understood from different perspectives.

Since I was conscious of the aforementioned factors, all the used and quoted data was collected via a review of translated formal, government-produced history curricula, a reading of supplementary resources, and the corresponding academic literature written on the subject of memory, identity, incitement, indoctrination, and education in conflict zones. The research was addressed by exploring the documents and looking at how the documents are intended to present key episodic events of history as possible moments or tools impacting and/or reproducing indoctrinating political ideologies and collective memories in an effort to reinforce psycho-cultural narratives about the Other in the conflict.

As curricular sections were read, each was then analysed for whether it identifies and accurately represents both the implicit and explicit intent and, in doing so, provides an inclusive or excluding representation of the Other. In highlighting the sampling and data collection process explained in Appendix C – Hierarchical Matrix of Coded Data, all content and excerpt selection used in the study were chosen and broken up as follows:

1. Given the focused and more general research questions, I needed to ask whether the collected data, including curricular and IMOE-approved supplementary resources, speak to or contradicts this thesis study’s focus and objective. Within this process, all data and
each of the following steps were then further broken up to aid in the analysis of both the research question and the second general question.

2. Once this data was identified, all excerpts were interrogated as to whether they spoke to this study’s focus on the form of the history curriculum and the intended messages transmitted through the history curriculum in relation to distinct psycho-cultural narratives, collective memories, and trauma. Also examined was the role the history curriculum could have in reproducing and redefining collective memories, trauma, and triumph during the events of 1948. This role may in turn further polarize the us-them divide. Another concern was the role the history curriculum might play in the socialization, transmission, and dissemination of societal and cultural knowledge, including its representations of one’s own socio-cultural group and those of other groups.

3. While reading through the entire IMOE-mandated history curriculum, four IMOE themes were identified. As such, the data that spoke to this thesis study’s research question and focus was considered in relation to whether the data fit into one or more of this studies’ guiding themes – later called “findings” and addressed in Chapter Five.

4. Acknowledging that the IMOE sets out a series of goals, aims, and intended outcomes, and interconnecting those goals with the previous “findings” step, the way each excerpt and data source might be used to demonstrate an understanding of both the Jewish-Israeli and the Arab culture was considered. Does the data source speak to or highlight the cause and effect of outcomes on the basis of nationalism and culture? Does it foster notions of intergroup cooperation? Does it develop or build upon the Jewish national culture and the culture’s place in history and in a modern context? Can these sources be used to highlight how the love of the Jewish people and the State of Israel are embedded in their content?
Does it demonstrate an awareness of the importance of the existence of the State of Israel and Jewish attachment to the land?

5. Further breaking down the data into usable primary pieces, versus secondary and more peripheral pieces, each piece of selected data was then looked at in terms of whether or not it fits into the main topics of instruction outlined in Unit 5: Modern Israel.

6. With all remaining data, each piece was considered on the basis of (a) how it represents the self, the Other, and the situation; (b) whether this selection best speaks to notions of acknowledgement, legitimization, and/or the humanization of the Other within the conflict or discussed historical event; (c) whether the excerpts represent a capacity to discuss violent and nonviolent outcomes; (d) whether these excerpts promote a dialogue for peace, understanding, and cooperation, not just amongst the dominant collective, but also amongst warring parties; (e) whether they promote critical self-reflection in both the responsibilities depicted in historical outcomes and the maintenance of current relations; (f) whether they are free of wording, imagery, and ideologies that would probably create a one-sided prejudice, a misconception, a stereotype, a misunderstanding, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry, national hatred, or any sort of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples; (g) whether selections work to promote new knowledge and understanding, and (h) whether the content presents objective data and critical analysis of the historical and contemporary factors underlying the contradictions, disputes, conflicts, and tensions amongst countries and groups. Is there also a presentation of ways of overcoming these contradictions?

There is no doubt that the collection and then, in turn, the analysis of data was a long process that spanned more than four years and included a careful dissection of the history curriculum.
There was an awareness that all the curricular content is intended to be used and built upon in sequence. The next subsection discusses how, once the data was collected, the data that remained was analysed.

4.6 – Data Analysis

The introduction, description, and contextualization of presented historical events could be extrapolated and analysed from my selection of data, noted above and done through the six step process, regarding the mandated history curriculum’s Unit 5: Modern Israel. Once all the data was vetted, the Relational Content Analysis was initiated in an examination beyond the relationships amongst the highlighted, identified concepts and themes; greater emphasis was focused on patterns and triggers that aid in the contextualizing how selected historical events supposedly transpired. The identification and analysis were used to understand how each element could shape further meaning, identity, and self-reflection, and how each could be contentious and contested.

In subjecting all collected data to a thorough and rigorous analysis, two key analytical strategies (Coding of Concepts, Patterns, Triggers and Themes, and Building a Logical Chain of Evidence) were applied, based on the Miles and Huberman’s (1994) twelve strategies for creating meaning from transcribed data and on Busch et. al.’s (2005) blog on methods of content analysis.

4.6.1 – Coding of Concepts, Patterns, Triggers, and Themes

While a Relational Content Analysis begins with the act of identifying concepts present in the text, data were subjected to an identification of:

1. Concepts – The amount of detail and intended timing allocated to similar/the same events; the way such events are framed in terms of pre-emptive, defensive, or aggressive action,
and/or victories and losses; the identities of the perpetrators of the conflict; and the lexicon used to describe each element;

2. Patterns – Words, word sense, phrases, sentences;

3. Triggers – The collection of words like Jew, Arab, Muslim, terrorist, occupier, victim;

4. Images – How the Other is portrayed and what descriptors are used to construct a picture of the self, the Other, and the area where interaction took place;

5. Situations – Used to establish and instil notions of positionality, which includes, but is not limited to, stereotypes and the negation of and/or towards the Other.

Each element plays an integral part in the process of understanding and examining the intent of its usage and allows for deducing how each can shape the collective psycho-cultural narratives, dispositions, and interpretations of the Other.

Secondly, in efforts to reduce the growing number of directions the coded data could take this thesis study, all findings were then further refined by amalgamating information into the four guiding themes and/or triggers identified as (1) Legitimization and humanization of the Other; (2) Overcoming suspicion, hatred, and prejudices about Islam and the Arabs; (3) Legitimizing the opposing national movement; (4) Providing a balanced presentation of the conflict. These themes were then examined in accordance with the Applied International Educational Standards as grounding axioms for analysis.

Thirdly, in an ongoing process intended to identify which specific theme fits and how the IMOE’s selection of key episodic events interrelates one with another, each theme was both explored inductively (because of its construction and the evolution of general propositions derived from specific examples and themes), and deductively (e.g., through the initial curriculum, the supplementary resources, this thesis’s research question, and various academic researchers who
have conducted studies similar to this one). The motivation for examining a deductive analysis was that such an analysis links premises with conclusions.

On the basis of the assumed findings and a psycho-cultural analysis of the narratives embedded within the curriculum, it is the supposition of this thesis study that, if the students are intended to be taught and reinforced with material that constructs themselves and the Other in a positive versus a negative light, there is reason to think that, with constant immersion in such an ideology, students see the Other in the perspective used to teach them when the students become adults and are presented with or interact with the Other. What becomes difficult to prove is whether intended exposure and immersion in a formal setting that uses a single-sided narrative then frames relationships with and feelings (e.g., positive and/or negative) about the Other.

Use of this coding method serves to extrapolate a positive presentation of the self as part of a collective and a negative presentation of the Other. A further assumption is that, both semantically and lexically, the Other is associated not simply with a difference, but with a threat to nationalism and sovereignty. While preliminary conclusions are drawn on the basis of where such relationships exist and on the positive or negative direction such relationships are intended to guide students towards, a greater focus is placed on the semantic relationship and created meaning, as opposed to the frequency of the appearance of triggers. Such coding establishes a guiding framework that uncovers the larger social conflict, which is cognitively represented and enhanced by polarization, and discursively sustained and reproduced by derogating, demonizing, and excluding the Other from the regional community.
4.6.2 – Building a logical chain of evidence

While preliminary conclusions were drawn, and efforts were made to remain impartial, the collection and analysis of data needed to be used as a scaffold in efforts to build a logical chain of evidence. At the same time, however, issues regarding the reliability and validity of findings, and, in turn, conclusions drawn based on my analysis must be addressed here. The reliability of conclusions refers to how stable my findings were, and to whether the same conclusions would be drawn if the findings were re-coded by another. Secondly, the validity of my conclusions raises questions about the correspondence amongst the four themes I coded data into, and about the conclusions and generalization drawn on the basis of the analysis.

This chain was built by making inferences and by intertwining the coded data, the overarching message within the larger curriculum, and the assumed intention of the IMOE based on Israel’s political position regionally and geopolitically, the intended audience, and the culture and time of all these elements. As Palmquist (n.d.) notes, “The overarching problem of concept analysis research is the challengeable nature of conclusions reached by its inferential procedures. The question lies in what level of implication is allowable, i.e. do the conclusions follow from the data or are they explainable due to some other phenomenon?”

Moreover, in order to push the analytical envelope beyond simply exploring the concepts and the corresponding relationship amongst only the themes identified, this process looked for key triggers organized within a hierarchy of identity formation. This hierarchy included consideration of whether these triggers may be seen as having a positive or negative influence on identity formation and how each trigger may affect the group’s relationship with the Other. While individual words or vocabulary are viewed as having no inherent meaning, it is understood that any “meaning is a product of the relationships among concepts in a text” (Busch et al., 2005). To
illustrate this relationship, within the curriculum, the terms “Palestinian” and/or “Arab” may be related to the concept of the enemy and may be used interchangeably, blurring the distinction between all Arabs as one collective body and as one specific group within a larger collective.

Scaffolding upon the positive or negative relationship amongst concepts, there is an analysis of themes and the key vocabulary used in the description of outlined events, and of questions about the kind of relationship, this information is intended to guide students to. Here, the study not only examines the curriculum as a single document, but also considers how isolated events laid the foundation for further relations with the Other, how these events are organized within the curriculum, how the Other is depicted, and how the state and its citizens played their roles in the subsequent outcomes. Are Jewish-Israelis seen as victims who must fight for survival at the hands of “Arabs” or have they created their own conflict? Is this a historical trend?

As Miles and Huberman (1994) highlight in the work of Tate (2011, p. 31), the drawing of inferences can be dangerous, and thus, the process requires a high degree of reflexivity. In order to avoid misinterpretations, the misrepresentation of findings, and incorrect judgments, I continuously cross-referenced notes and findings with the larger curricular document. In this way, I tried to keep data in context, to be cognizant of possible “cherry picking” of findings, and to question assumptions in attempts to challenge my own conclusions regarding the original data source. As Palmquist (n.d.) adds, “The combining of strategies like coding and the building of a logical chain through applying plausible inferences were helpful in grounding the analysis of data in an objective way, staying reflexive and ensuring the validity and the authenticity of all findings.”
4.7 – Strengths and Limitations

In his work on linguistics, Firth (1957) notes that words must be understood in context, that is, that it is in the company these words keep that they share meaning. With this in mind, the Relational Content Analysis builds on conceptual analysis by examining the relationship amongst words and concepts in a text (e.g., the formal curriculum and corresponding supplementary secondary sources) in order to understand key concepts (e.g., oppression, religious persecution, historical trauma and victimization, etc.) and their intended use with key discursive narratives. As such, this methodology is approached through two perspectives: pedagogically and on the basis of findings.

From a pedagogical perspective, the need for such a critical analysis stems from the influence history curriculum has on producing and shaping current Jewish-Israeli perceptions of the Other in public and foreign policy. Moreover, the suggestion has been made that, from the continuity of psycho-cultural narratives and the possible production of negative images about the Other, the persistence of dominant patterns of representation in contemporary discourse will continue.

In relation to findings, this Relational Content Analysis is utilized to attend to how the subjectivity of the self and the Other informs and is informed by a group’s engagement with and representation of the self and the Other in presented historical encounters. This thesis study includes the understanding that the Other is not simply a subject, but rather a subject within a critical discourse. The subjectivity of the Other therefore becomes an inherent part of the research; however, the subjectivity delves beyond simply an individual’s experience and builds on an adoptive witnessing of memory, identity, and history.
As an approach to methodology, a Relational Content Analysis poses a series of strengths. In its examination of the formal curriculum that all Jewish-Israeli students in secular schools are intended to be taught, it focuses the investigation solely on the texts as a form of social interaction. While it can help in the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, it allows for the collection of key quantitative findings and, in so doing, provides valuable historical/cultural insights through its coding into concepts and themes. As a method of coding, the Relational Content Analysis allows for the coding to be viewed in both specific categories and relationships and aids in the visual mapping and viewing of conceptual overlapping. In terms of the knowledge students are intended to obtain, and the methods for the delivery of this attainment, coded data can also be examined with reference to explicit statements about the relationships and also to the concepts laid out. What is more, coded data’s application can then be used to provide insight into complex models of human thought through the introduction, application, and repetition of key terminology; insights are also gained about how those terms are used in framing events and outcomes, and how those events are framed back as a narrative about societal positionality.

While a Relational Content Analysis poses many advantages, it is not without its limitations, the first of which is that it is extremely time-consuming. Eight years into this thesis study, this methodology has had me check, recheck and then try to disprove findings to ensure that interpretation and inferences drawn from the material were sound, educated, and free from personal bias. This limitation and the way it was addressed are discussed in detail in the next subsection.

A second limitation lies in the notion of consistency and reliability in relation to the nature of conclusions reached by inferential procedures. Such conclusions can be challenged. As Palmquist (n.d.) writes,
The generalizability of one’s conclusions, then, is very dependent on how one determines concept categories, as well as on how reliable those categories are. It is imperative that one defines categories that accurately measure the idea and/or items one is seeking to measure. Akin to this is the construction of rules. Developing rules that allow one, and others, to categorize and code the same data in the same way over a period of time, referred to as stability, and is essential to the success of a conceptual analysis.

Interpreting Palmquist, issues surrounding the “stability” of findings are addressed by having all coded concepts, patterns, triggers, and themes cross-referenced every time they are highlighted in order to ensure that their usage is not an anomaly or an isolated occurrence or phenomenon, but, rather, is given equal weighting throughout the work (Busha and Harter, 1980; de Sola Pool, 1959; Palmquist, Carley, and Dale, 1997).

Additional limitations can be grouped together, whereby the process itself is often subject to increased error, by (1) oversimplifying or miscoding data in efforts to interpret findings in a particular fashion, (2) being inherently reductive, and (3) often consisting of word counts that then disregard the context in which these words are used. Though limitations are important to note and are explained in greater detail in Chapter Five, to offset these three limitations, all coded data is (re)analysed on the basis of the four themes previously introduced.

Once coded as such, these manageable chunks allow for the examination of how each one builds a logical sequence or chain through deductive reasoning. It is worth noting that findings can be interpreted through a biased lens; however, every effort is made to avoid such bias. The intention of the use of a Relational Content Analysis is the provision of a focused structure that may be used to read the curriculum, and the use of that focus to merge an analysis of presented content. The application of this methodology distances itself from other content analyses in its venturing beyond the traditional analysis of “images” of the Others by probing more deeply into
the linguistic, semiotic, and other discursive properties of the history curriculum in shaping notions of self and Otherness.

4.8 – Reliability of Findings and Safeguarding of Personal Bias

In the works of Ellis and Barakat (1996) regarding considerations about data collection in war, Westin’s (1999) work on refugee movements, Weston et. al.’s (2001) work on analyzing interview data, and Wright’s (2010) work on refugee education, it is again noted that personal bias shapes perspective and such a perspective affects analysis and inferences drawn from the data. In this case, the analysis of data is directed to understanding and explaining concepts, patterns, triggers, and themes, as well as to understanding categories and regularities within the collected data. This section briefly highlights and discusses the way collected data, within this thesis study, may be subject to personal bias and the tools I have put in place to safeguard against bias.

One of the major constraints of using a Relational Content Analysis lies in understanding the politics of positionality. Since the Other is a spatial construct, the way I discuss my own positionality as a researcher, as opposed to or in relation to the Other, is central to understanding how the content within the history curriculum furthers this positionality. Within this thesis study, positionality is vital because it forces me to acknowledge and understand my own power, privilege, and bias. This understanding provides an opportunity to question where I come from (e.g., culturally and religiously), my own bias towards this project (e.g., being Jewish and of Israeli descent), and the projected outcomes I expect to find. This understanding also allows me to ask: what are my motivations for this thesis study, and what is the nature of my research? What I am going to do with the research, and who will ultimately benefit? Who gives me the authority to make claims about where I have been? How will my work make a difference in people’s
lives? As a Jewish academic of Israeli descent and the grandson of Holocaust survivors who was raised within a liberal democracy outside of the country I study, I am cognizant that my objectivity may border the subjective in the unconscious, value-laden classifications, meanings, and worldviews I employ and superimpose upon Jewish-Israelis interpretations. In other words, I may fall victim to both the Jewish-Israeli and Palestinian victimization I am trying to locate – understanding that both have been victims in different ways. I must keep in check my position and critique my own personal objectivity and subjectivity. I am further obliged not to put value judgments in place of facts and not to omit a demonstrable, cogent theoretical and empirical linkage.

This obligation may be easier to state than to do. What becomes problematic is that there are few analytical techniques or criteria for valid interpretation of texts; thus, while I am analyzing the content, I must remain conscious of my own bias in order to ensure the validity of my conclusion, because, if the findings of my study are unreliable, inaccurate, or invalid, questions may arise on many fronts, and doubts regarding the conclusions may, in turn, compromise this study’s credibility. I recognize how vital it is to illuminate my positionality, and I also understand that this Relational Content Analysis requires a deep and abiding dialogue with the self and the Other. Since there are many different intended recipients of the knowledge presented in the history curriculum (e.g., the government, the IMO, the school administration, teachers, students, the community, etc.), I interpret the intention of the content from the perspective of Social Science teachers, taking into account the political issues that teachers are faced with every day and the social forces that may lead these teachers to read history resources (curriculum, textbooks, supplementary resources, maps, etc.) in a particular way.
To limit any favouring of one stance and avoid the drawing of “convenient” findings – those based on what I had hoped to find or embedded to fit in a narrative that limits further thorough analysis – I acknowledge the shortcoming of the study and the collected data. To reduce the possibility of favouritism, I have collected and included a large number of sources and excerpts, which may minimize potential bias, misunderstandings, or misinterpretations.

Limitations have been set forth here and in Chapter One, and reference has been made to the cultural and political sensitivity of Jewish-Israeli history, the collective memory, and the identity politics of the region. All analysis is done and conclusions are drawn solely on the basis of the collected data, and attempts are made to remain politically neutral. In such attempts, all data was collected and analysed through the hierarchical matrix outlined in subsection 4.5 and Appendix C, and then interpreted based on the factors identified in both subsections 4.6.1 and 4.6.2 above. Still, Lomeland’s (2011, p. 53) study of Israeli schools as agents of citizenship indicates that “the researcher will unavoidably affect the trustworthiness of the inferences drawn from the data in some way or another.” However, Yarrow’s (2007, p. 7) work on the conflict and on educational training for Palestinians living in Lebanon, and Lee’s (1995, p. 23) study of field work in areas of contention both stress that remaining politically neutral when studying situations that are “highly politicised and potentially violent” is nearly impossible, and, though researchers attempt to remain unbiased in their interpretation and analysis, there may be unconscious bias. This thesis study accepts the work of Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 170), who writes that researchers must remain reflexive and aware of the possibility of invalid results based on bias and misinterpretations, since these “unacknowledged biases may entirely invalidate the results.” According to Kleven (2008), there is a constant need to produce and draw valid conclusions. Kleven (2008, p. 211) states that
“validity is a property of inferences, and the relevance of various types of validity depends on what kinds of inferences are drawn, not on what kind of methods used to collect the data.”

In efforts to further safeguard the study from the bias, assumptions, and predisposed conclusions I may have brought to this study, any assumptions and connections based on my findings from the four themes were noted and continually revisited through cross-references to the collected data. In this way, I may deconstruct and analyse whether such assumptions and interpretations were drawn on the basis of personal bias or of the data itself. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) continue by referring to this process as “awareness reflexive objectivity” and state that, though researchers try to separate themselves from the data, this process is difficult since a researcher remains sensitive to his or her own personal prejudices. This observation goes back to my safeguard, whereby I question my motivation for this study and the nature of my research. Tate’s (2011, p. 31) work on respecting educational rights in conflict-affected fragile states elaborates on Brinkmann’s point, which brings attention to the fact that prior experience (I taught in Israel and have both written curriculum and taught in the Social Sciences for over 16 years) and background (I have lived in Israel and am Jewish) can inevitably affect data interpretations. While my prior experience in the region and my religious ties to the region are important, my analysis remains motivated by a need to understand the development of the Jewish-Israeli identity versus that of the Other, and to discern how conflict has set a course for widening the rift between Israelis and Palestinians.

4.9 – Conclusion

Though gathering resources is a seemingly easy task, when studies deal with intractable conflict, cultural contestation, and a collective identity, obtaining qualitative data that is relevant
to the study and at the same time remaining unbiased in an analysis becomes increasingly difficult. As such, research requires an ethical research practice, and the researcher must be well-versed in the context, attentive to the process of power, and impeccably conscious of the impact of his or her actions and presence (Zakharia, 2009).

Since I am a Jewish educator and researcher, this Relational Content Analysis has to be constantly checked to ensure the validity of findings and the omission of personal bias. Because history, in general, is subject to interpretation and multiple narratives about how events transpired, key episodic events as a whole, not specific fragments of time, were analysed. This extremely time-consuming thesis study is not concerned with one battle, one act, or one village, but rather with the need to understand the larger conflict, as it relates at the same time to the Others’ actions. I am neither an apologist for Israel nor an opponent of Palestinian statehood, and I have to meander through pro- and anti-Zionist literature in order to understand my predecessors’ findings and attitudes towards education, supplementary resources, and the way meaning is ascribed through education. The process has demanded that I remain cognizant of the complexities involved in producing a piece of research that critically examines education. I believe that this conflict is a conflict of dual-victimization between peoples who are torn between right and rights. The conflict is about oppression and dispossession, and a thirst to regain what was lost. After reading various academic papers, various government and United Nations documents, and tens of thousands of newspaper and magazine articles about Israeli-Palestinian history and current relations, and after speaking with both those on the ground in the region and those writing and lecturing about the conflict from abroad, I have no doubt that the conflict is a struggle on a psycho-cultural level about narratives, dispositions, and interpretations as much as it is a conflict in a physical form on a social structural level. Though I may share the religion and culture of those I study, this thesis sets out
to provide a whole and balanced story and a collective narrative that intends to examine why peace eludes Israelis and Palestinians.
CHAPTER FIVE: THE ISRAELI CURRICULUM

5.1 – Introduction

Academics like Al-Haj (2002, 2005), Moughrabi (2001), and Peled-Elhanan (2006, 2010) charge that the most prevalent finding that can be extracted from the current curriculum is that the history of the Jewish people and the history of the State of Israel are solely histories of conflict, oppression, and persecution, which culminate with the presentation of a triumphant “new-Jew” in relation to a perceivably hostile and violent Other. This “new-Jew” proves to be contentious in the new-Jew’s positionality, which is depicted in the narratives the IMOE has embedded (refer to subsection 5.4 for further discussion). Contentious too is the fact that the school curriculum is a codified body of knowledge intended to be presented to students as an objective and bias-free universal truth. Yet Abu-Saad (2006, p. 714) explains that, in the past, for Jewish-Israelis,

The curriculum has been instrumental in explicitly and implicitly constructing racist and threatening stereotypes and a one-sided historical narrative that, through the educational system, is internalised in the Jewish Israeli psyche; and that has, in turn, provided the basis for maintaining a deeply divided society and its many discriminatory practices.

Podeh (2000, p. 66), in his work on the uses of educational texts in teaching history and memory, indicates that “the selection and organization of knowledge for schools is an ideological process that serves the interests of particular classes and social groups.” However, at the same time, in serving these groups and in their creation of a post-Oslo educational policy, the IMOE has seemingly revised its “racist” and “discriminatory practices,” even while its curriculum still instils a Zionist approach in its presentation of a historical narrative (Abu-Saad, 2006). This approach is
examined through the expression of what I consider to be the four key themes or findings evident in the curriculum:

1. Legitimization and Humanization of the Other;
2. Overcoming suspicion, hatred, and prejudices about Islam and the Arabs;
3. Legitimizing the opposing national movement;
4. Providing a balanced presentation of the conflict.

As Hofman (2007, p. 442) writes, “This historical narrative (formally presented as the official curriculum document) is influenced throughout by the values which the educational system seeks to instil in its students. There is no neutral story here, but a necessary moral message.” This moral message is woven into all IMOE-selected content in efforts to allow students the opportunity to adoptively witness and embody a common/collective Jewish identity, to instil nationalist values among them, and to safeguard them against further persecution and an Arab counter-narrative about history, the region, and nationalism.

Since this narrative is rarely contested and often mirrors the shared values of the collective, any attempt to understand, analyse, and evaluate the history curriculum must consider the relationship between how the Jewish-state perceives itself and how it views its citizens (as a collective body [e.g., the Jewish people]) throughout history (e.g., as victims).

5.2 – The Education System and the Government

Israel has been described as a melting pot of diverse cultures because of its continuous waves of immigration. The push for nationalism and the creation of a uniform national narrative have been roles of the education system for more than 60 years in Israel. Yet in political terms and in more recent years, Israel has become more conservative and hawkish, a trend that has led to
heightened security and strengthened the rhetoric of protectionism and defensiveness from the Other. This trend does not bode well for the acceptance of a softer, more inclusive narrative that promotes tolerance and a balanced presentation of shared historical events.

As Shefsky (n.d., p. 4) writes, “the very structure of the Israeli government constitutes another major obstacle. Because the structure of the government includes short-lived administrations, frequent turnovers, and a complex coalition-building process, it is often difficult for long-term policy changes to fully take root.” These coalition governments, which are all tasked to balance the politics of their partnerships to ensure that the coalition survives, often toe the historical narrative line of protectionism and state security and may lead to peaceful coexistence and partnerships with the Other. As such, Israel has established a centralized approach to education, in which the IMOE is responsible for all aspects of a student’s educational career, from creating to administering and examining the effectiveness of school curricula (including supplementary texts, resources, and the creation and enforcement of educational standards and examinations). Additionally, the employment of teaching personnel at the kindergarten and primary school levels is the responsibility of the IMOE, while educators in the upper grades are employed by local authorities and funded from the IMOE according to the size of the school population (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2013a; Mayseless and Salomon, 2003, p. 5).

Here, the IMOE’s centralized and hierarchically organized, publically funded system works in partnership with local authorities to finance 80% of education, including the allocation of resources to all school districts and to local authorities, while the remaining 20% comes from private donors and outside financial contributions. These finances and the employment of teachers are further organized around what Benavot and Resh (2001, p. 515) refer to as, “institutionally organized semi-autonomous sectors broken up by a student’s ethnicity-nationality [Jewish, Arab,
Druze] or by the student’s religion [State Jewish–secular; State Jewish–religious; Independent Jewish Orthodox, State Muslim, and State Druze]” (see Appendix A for a description of the educational sectors in Israel). An issue arising from this arrangement is highlighted by Mayseless and Salomon (2003, p. 5), who write that,

In many cases this segregation into various school systems reflects and further strengthens division also in terms of neighborhoods and municipalities. Thus, through centralized, the educational system has in certain respects reinforced in-group orientations, and societal cleavages in terms of values and traditions and has not fostered understanding, appreciation, and respect for other social and cultural groups.

Furthermore, Sabbage and Rash (2013, p. 7), who build on the works of Pinson (2008), Ichilov, (2005), and Resh and Benavot (2009), state that,

Historically, these sectors evolved to meet group-specific cultural and linguistic needs, which are currently manifested in sector-specific curricular guidelines. In light of today’s political realities, and contrary to the ethno-republican rhetoric of Statism, which emphasized the enhancement of general societal well-being and the implementation of a uniform state curriculum, these educational sectors continue to vary in terms of provision of actual curriculum, textbooks and pedagogy that are being taught, the quantity and quality of resources allocated to them, and degree of autonomy or close supervision applied by the central administration.

This variance is emphasized heavily through the cultural distinctiveness of each religious and ethnic community and embedded within the intended curriculum mandated for use in each sector, and the political and educational considerations outlined by the IMOE are still reflected. The belief and approach here are that, while Israel is a diverse state, made up of different races, ethnicities, populations and cultures, the material approved for use within the schools must reflect the community, build a collective sense of attachment to the community, and foster an understanding of how a student’s community fits within the larger state.

Building on this sense of self-identity and identification within the curriculum, and on efforts to enhance the students’ understanding of their society, the IMOE annually chooses one
special topic of national importance (e.g., immigration, democracy, peace, etc.) to be studied in depth throughout each course. While existing divisions within the dominant Jewish-Israeli society may be perpetuated through the intended curriculum used within these different institutionally organized, semi-autonomous sectors, this thesis study considers and gathers data only from the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli schools. In their provision of a cross-sectional analysis of this sector of the population, Sabbage and Resh (2013, p. 40) state that,

Although highly heterogeneous, the student population in the secular Jewish sector consists to a greater degree of more affluent Ashkenazi young people who live in big cities and more prestigious communities than their peers in the religious and Israeli Arab sectors. They have been described as carriers of globalized culture and ideologies (Hazan, 2001), as they are especially competent in wielding globalization-related technology (e.g. Internet, email, chat rooms, Facebook, and so on) and are engaged in transnational consumerism (music, movies, and cable television) (Adres et al., 2011; Lemish et al., 1998). Moreover, an analysis of both formal and informal contemporary education practices in this sector suggests that a move has occurred from the hegemonic and exclusionary Zionist citizenship discourse toward a more liberal and individualized discourse (Lomsky-Feder, 2011). This change has brought into focus and raised students’ awareness of individual rights, emphasizing tolerance toward “other” ethnic and national groupings (Ichilov et al., 2005; Pinson, 2004). This sector is also characterized by a tendency to assign secular national and historical meanings to Jewish culture and tradition (Ichilov, 2005).

These secular national and historical meanings are developed within an educational tier system whereby students move through kindergarten, elementary (grades 1–6), middle school (grades 7–9), and senior high school (grades 10–12). Provided free of charge, compulsory education begins in the last year of kindergarten and continues until grade 12. The IMOE noted that, during the 2012/2013 school year, there were 1,589,265 students in the education system from K-12 and 118,537 teachers. Class size generally ranged from 25 to 28 pupils, and all children were to complete 12 years of formal schooling (see Appendix B for a summary of data for the educational tiers grades K-6, 7-9, 10-12, organized by student population, the number of teachers, and average class size). These numbers represent an increase of 560,000 students and 26,537

5.3 – The Curriculum: Structure, Approach, and Rationale

On Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (IMFA), there is a telling statement on the country’s focus on education. It states that,

The education system aims to prepare children to become responsible members of a democratic pluralistic society in which people from different ethnic, religious, cultural and political backgrounds coexist. It is based on Jewish values, love of the land, and the principles of liberty and tolerance. It seeks to impart a high level of knowledge, with an emphasis on scientific and technological skills essential for the country’s continued development (Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs – Education: Challenges, 2013a).

This statement is an acknowledgement that, though the IMOE intends to create an inclusive society focused on the inclusion of those of different ethnic, religious, cultural, and political backgrounds, all teachings and approaches to education are based on Jewish values, as contrasted with a non-denominational approach, and on a love of the State of Israel. Subsequently, in its introduction to the mandated, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum, the IMOE takes a philosophical approach to the discipline, expressing the belief that human history manifests in the lives of every individual and community, and that, as a state, we (the state) must remember the past in order to deepen our nation’s sense of identity, community, and place in the region. On one hand, the IMOE seems to use the history curriculum as a tool of critical pedagogy, while, on the other hand, it appears motivated by the need to unify a collective in times of peace and war; the
curriculum’s use is to promote a sense of nationalism and patriotism and to bring about social cohesion in a divided society. Here, I mean critical pedagogy as an approach by teachers work with students in order to understand and refine their inquiry skills. In so doing, teachers can teach students to challenge posited domination and to undermine the beliefs and practices that are alleged to be dominant. According to Delisio (2009),

Teaching critically means that teachers and students are actively involved in constructing, questioning, and deepening the curriculum, probing its relevance and connection to the daily lives of students and their families. For both teacher and student, it means thinking critically and learning to learn. What might arise as a question or a conflict can crystallize into a series of essential questions that can guide our inquiry for months.

These essential questions that guide the inquiry process also challenge the status quo. They can be used to understand the relationship between the self and the Other in terms of the social order, and they can challenge the national/collective belief system, and people’s opinions about, and methods of interaction with or towards others, especially when the Other is one’s perceived enemy during “intractable conflicts” (Bar-Tal et. al., 2009). Situating this struggle between intractable conflicts and the role education plays in mitigating its influence on children themselves, Al-Haj (2005, p. 50) writes,

The school curriculum is usually used as an instrument for the creation of social beliefs that together constitute a national ethos that strengthens the nation to cope with the conflict while catalyzing the continuation of the conflict… and produces psychological conditions that enable students to cope successfully with a state of conflict. In this sense, the curriculum in Jewish schools is based strictly on primordial-particularistic principles that obstruct the possibility for alternative narratives.

This idea of obstructing alternative narratives coincides with Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs website presentation about teaching Jewish values and a love of the land, if the land and its history are read as a story the Jewish people have endured. In my reading through, and my analysis of the history curriculum, which is introduced in the next section (5.4 – Curriculum
Findings Coded by IMOE Theme), it appears that the people of Israel are grappling with questions about whether the purpose of history education is to focus on nation building and the strengthening of the national ethos by expanding on political history, and also the cultural, social, and economic history of mankind, with a specific focus on the Jewish people through a lens of Zionism (e.g., how each of the aforementioned have led or contributed to the establishment of the State of Israel), or, instead, to be used to build a shared state based on democratic values amongst all of its citizens. Within education, and seemingly reflected within the intended curriculum is the belief that the history of the Jewish people and the history of Israel are unique histories. In the context of learning general history, in examinations of the relationships between the “world history” and “Jewish history,” I believe that schools should foster an environment where students can reflect on how these two histories interconnect and where they intersect with each other as they weave different perspectives on events and the outcomes that resulted on the basis of decisions made at the time. However, as Hofman (2007, p. 443) notes, there are two fundamental issues unique to teaching history in an Israeli-Zionist context, namely:

1. The history of the Jewish people is spread out over thousands of years and takes place in different locations in the world; and
2. Much of the history of the Jewish people is a “history of disasters” over long periods of exile, oppression, and humiliation.

These issues can be found throughout the curriculum, but are specifically noted in its introductions to the History of Religious Creation, Medieval Jewish culture, and the economic and social effects of modernity. The issues also appear in the section on dealing with the existence of the Jewish people in modern times (e.g., the Holocaust, the Aliyah process, and the Arab-Israeli conflicts).
Furthermore, Jewish history (which utilizes a background or a general history approach) and the history of the Jewish people (in a context that requires the integration of the history of the Jews with the history of other nations) represent two very different aspects of the state’s approach to nationalism. The existence of each from biblical times to the present seems problematic because of the vast period of time covered and the facts that the Jewish people have been dispersed throughout the world and that diasporic Jews may have endured different forms of oppression and religious persecution. Here specifically it needs to be noted that the modern history of the Jewish people and that of the State of Israel is a convergence of two Jewish bodies, not just that of Jewish-Israelis in opposition to an Other. On the one hand, the modern State of Israel was founded by early pioneers during the first waves of Aliyah, on the other hand, Israel was faced with European immigrants who were fleeing and/or survived waves of anti-Semitism and the Nazi Holocaust. During and post World War Two, Nazi sympathizers and countries who had anti-Semitic policies, were fearful of Nazi retaliation, fearful of being drawn into the larger war, closed their borders to Jews, or expelled them, laid the foundation for Jewish refugees and Holocaust survivors to turn to Israel for shelter, survival and acceptance; Israel in turn accepted them.

Given the history curriculum’s extensive focus on periods of oppression and religious persecution and the repeated examination of the causes of this oppression and persecution and their effects on modernity, the curriculum can be interpreted as a mechanism for the perpetuation of the collective adoption of trauma and of the embodiment of the Israeli siege mentality. This narrative, combined with a siege mentality, may lead to a psycho-cultural disposition towards the world and to interpretations of a history that are played out in a modern context through interaction with the Other, or with those who are sympathetic to the Others’ plight or appear to embody the Others’ persona. As modern events are sequels to old tensions, the evolving history of
victimization and the repeated focus on oppression and religious persecution as defining elements in a people’s and a state’s identity can lead to an understanding of and justification for actions and (over)reactions to new and continued threats. As Al-Haj (2005, p. 51) observes, “Manipulation of post-war historical narratives to justify the present can deepen the animosity between rival groups that live in the same country, because in the context of conflictual situations, history curricula usually reflect hatred and alienation between the different groups.”

This siege mentality, in the wake of the establishment of the State of Israel, the learning of history in a modern context, and the focus on how the state was triumphant over the Other, has given birth to what has earlier been labelled a “new-Jew,” which is a topic of great interest to Jewish-Israeli students. Within the curricular framework, students still find themselves focused on the same oppression, conflict, and religious persecution they are familiar with learning about, but this “new-Jew” approach presents students with an event that stands out as glorious in the modern history of their nation.

The irony is that this unit on modern history is the shortest unit in the intended curriculum. This unit’s focus is on Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel; the unit seems intended to portray the state as a phoenix born out of the series of disasters endured by the Jewish people. In the curriculum’s efforts to instill the value of the “new-Jew” in modern history, the curriculum combines a series of different pedagogical approaches (e.g., single versus vertical approaches, chronological versus horizontal approaches in a continuum of time, and a developmental approach to subject matter [e.g., thematic research on various key events and application of their impact to a modern context]) to balance history and scaffold knowledge accordingly. These approaches are used throughout the curriculum but are particularly noteworthy in units intended to focus on the central phenomena of modernity. Lessons on the history of Israel and the State of Israel integrate
developmental approaches such as chronology when the intention is to study the notion of “settling the land of Israel,” in contrast with a horizontal approach that appears in the outlining of themes that focus on various aspects of life in the community and the country.

Balancing the integrated approach with the horizontal approach, the curriculum attempts to combine an understanding of Jewish history as part of a larger world (General History). This combination is done by approaching the study of general history as a background for understanding Jewish history and its (the Jewish) place within civilization. The areas of study focus on the birth and evolution of Christianity and Islam, the role Judaism played at this time, and the contribution each made, culturally and politically, to both the Middle Ages and to developments in modern times. Incorporated within these lessons are both the history of the Jewish people in Christian and Islamic countries and the contributions different cultures made to the Diaspora Jew as an integral part of the history of Zionism and the establishment of the State of Israel. There is an emphasis on the uniqueness of the Jewish people and their identity (e.g., culturally and religiously).

This thesis study sets out to examine how the events of 1948 are outlined and intended to be taught in the history curriculum as a means of political indoctrination. The curriculum as a whole (from antiquity through to the modern era) has not been critically analysed – instead, only units that focus on these events and their foundation in the birth of the “new-Jew” are studied. While there is no doubt that it is important to understand how past events are the basis for understanding the present and future, only the themes and topics studied in Unit 5: Modern Israel are examined since these areas of modern contention lay the foundation for current debates on Jewish nationalism in opposition to Palestinian statehood.
The Unit 5: Modern Israel focus appears to be motivated by four foci: the promotion of tolerance and peace, beyond the implications of 1948, through an examination of the reasons for Arabs’ opposition to the existence of the State of Israel; the intermittent battling between Jews and Arabs; the efforts to establish a Palestinian State; and the right of return and peace between Israel and Palestine, as revealed through an examination of past peace accords. These themes are partly represented in all seven of the unit’s prescribed key periods of instruction over 96 hours:

1. Establishment of the State of Israel;
2. Establishment of the sovereign government of the State of Israel;
3. Immigration, absorption, and settlement in Israel;
4. Israel;
5. Israel’s relationship with the Arab world;
6. The foreign policy of the State of Israel;
7. Israel-Diaspora relations.

Within this unit, students are to be introduced to Aliyah and the process of Jewish migration to “their biblical land,” and to be taught to examine the process that led to the establishment of the state and the challenges faced by the founders (i.e., the Zionists). Moreover, while this unit is the shortest in the curriculum, it is by far the most intense in its coverage of themes and historical events.

Although the unit focuses mostly on the events of 1948, Unit 5: Modern Israel is ideal for this thesis study’s analysis because of the way it defines the Arab and Palestinian Other before, during, and after the war of independence (Finding 1), speaks to the methods of development of cultural tolerance and civil rights for Arabs and other minorities (Finding 2), frames Arab attachment to
the land as a factor that led to the conflict (Finding 3), and presents the multitude of factors that led to a War of Independence (Finding 4).

Furthermore, in line with the unit’s apparent intent to deepen students’ understanding of the factors and events that led to the establishment of a nation-state’s “home,” Unit 5: Modern Israel focuses on key issues during the renewed Jewish settlement in Israel: namely immigration, settlement, and security. Highlighted in depth throughout this unit are criticism of Israeli intolerance and historic violence towards Arabs and Palestinians; presentation of the Palestinian historical link to Israel and as a legitimate political movement; and respectful portrayal of Muslim and Arab history, customs and beliefs… messages of peace were found in abundance and in various forms, promoting non-violent conflict resolution and pragmatic peace agreements with the Palestinians, as well as with Syria and Lebanon, and strengthening of existing peaceful ties with Egypt and Jordan (Teff-Seker, 2011).

The unit, outlined in Appendix D, also intends to highlight the struggles and the social and ideological tensions that accompanied the establishment of Israel. The outlined themes are broken up into four subunits: (1) the Yishuv in Eretz Israel in the 19th century until the end of World War I; (2) Arab nationalism in the Middle East and in Israel in the late 20th century; (3) the development of the Jewish national home in Israel; and (4) the establishment of the State of Israel, and then interwoven into regional and global events such as the two world wars and their impact on the new reality that developed in the Middle East and in Israel.

As part of the history curriculum, the IMOE institutionalizes these political narratives and embeds the intention to develop students’ research skills and methods of inquiry (e.g., questioning, debating, discussions) in order to refine learners’ ability to examine topics around diversity,
humanity, and the linkages and relationships amongst different groups in society. As Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006, p. 18) explain,

Institutionalization of the narratives is characterized by four features: (a). Extensive sharing. The beliefs of the narratives are widely held by society members. Society members acquire and store this repertoire, as part of their socialization from an early age on. (b). Wide application. Institutionalization means that the narratives are not only held by society members, but also put into active use by society members. They surface in society members’ daily conversations, via their leaders, and the societal channels of mass communication. (c). Expression in cultural products. The institutionalization of the narratives is also expressed in cultural products such as books. They are part of a society’s cultural repertoire, relaying societal views and shaping society members’ attitudes. Through these channels these beliefs can be widely disseminated and can reach every sector of the public. (d). Appearance in educational materials. Beliefs of the narratives appear in the textbooks used in school socialization.

Because knowledge, in this case, is institutionalized, it is very important to understand how it is intended for transmission. Through the pedagogical tools of education and the standardization of the curriculum, the message reaches all state school students. Given that students must attend school in Israel, all secular students in the country are “indoctrinated” into the same secular belief system, using the same or similar (though still echoing the same) political message. Given the fact that all secular students are subject to this educational framework, these messages become part of the larger psycho-cultural fabric of the state and its people and are recalled in interactions with both those within the group and the Other.

The linkage and relationship appear to frame a collective identity amongst secular Jewish-Israelis as citizens of the State of Israel (the “Jewish” State). Yet this collective identity is also a collection of immigrants from diverse backgrounds and, as such, the IMOE must assimilate its citizens to the collective “Israeli” identity by producing a curriculum that speaks to “their” (Jewish) collective struggles and investment in a Jewish homeland. As Pinson (2008, p. 203) illustrates,
One of the most fundamental characteristics of Israel for understanding its politics of citizenship is the tensions embedded in its definition as both Jewish and democratic. As a democratic state, Israel is committed to provide equal individual rights to all its citizens, regardless of their nationality or religion. However, at the same time, the state of Israel has acted to maintain its Jewish character and to preserve its Jewish majority, at a symbolic level as well as by means of legislation and resource allocation (Bishara, 2000). Therefore, its definition as a Jewish state means that membership in the Israeli civic collective is determined first and foremost in terms of membership in a national-ethnic group – the Jewish people – rather than according to universal civil criteria (Shachar, 2000).

Study of both the history of Israel and the history of the State of Israel through this lens is intended to allow students to recognize and understand “their” (as a collective) religious heritage and culture as part of a greater Jewish nation. This study also appears intended to further strengthen the student’s understanding of the situations that led to the State’s creation, of the issues and challenges the State faces at present and in the future, and of the (the students’) Jewish attachment to the land, to the State, and to the commitment to uphold and preserve national values and the national heritage. While this commitment to upholding and preserving the nation’s values may be reinforced through psycho-cultural narratives that underpin the legitimacy of the State and the means and methods by which it was created and remains protected, those same narratives and “the reinforcement of national identity should not imply that one’s nation is in some way superior to other nations, but should also entail respect for both one’s nation and others” (Al-Haj, 2005, p. 50).

In attempts to safeguard against this notion of superiority, the IMOE presents teachers with the opportunity within the curricular lessons (by providing inquiry questions, outlines of cause and effect models, etc.) to reflect on what thematic combination can be utilized in order to deepen the students’ awareness of the key historical events, and on how to frame the continuity and development of the history of Israel in relation to the history of humankind throughout the ages. The intention here appears for teachers to choose topics they (the teachers) believe will be
relevant to *their* students’ interests or backgrounds. Such opportunities would be significant to the learner and would foster a passion for learning by allowing the students a voice and a choice in the material. That said, the curriculum outlines a series of topics for only 75% of the allocated teaching time. The remaining 25% of allocated time is offered to teachers to choose, at their own discretion and according to the demographics of the community or the student population, which of the units to focus on more. While the intention may be to allow teachers an opportunity to deepen their teaching of and explanation of key events to students, without IMOE regulation and oversight such independence might create an opportunity for the injection of biased narratives and contradictory accounts of history.

It is noted here that Israeli teachers would have been brought up in a previous educational system which, at the time, probably negated the Other and presented the events of 1948 as solely caused by the Other. As previous versions of the history curriculum set out (see Firer 1985; Podeh, 2000, 2002), the events that transpired and the outcomes that ensued were the results of the Others’ aggressiveness facing Israel to act in self-defence. As Bekerman et. al. (2009, p. 227) highlight, “They came of age under circumstances that supported the forming of an ‘us vs. them’ mentality accomplished through ‘myth-making’ that idealizes one’s own group and demonizes Others (Aho 1994).” Furthermore, Bekerman (2009b, p. 9) adds that,

…for educators involved in initiatives focused on problematizing current nationalistic perspectives, it is difficult to overcome their own historical context. Despite their commitment to building peace and coexistence within the school, these teachers carry with them the legacy and habits of their lifetime membership in oppositional ethnic groups. Not only are these difficulties related to individual constraints, but they also have to do with the educational and political settings within which they work. Educators are caught in a double bind.

Bekerman highlights the double-edged sword. On one hand, teachers may bring with them an institutionalized bias about the Other that they have presumably been brought up in and
adoptively witnessed. On the other hand, teachers are entrusted to check their own bias and present a history that attempts to frame the other in a more legitimizing and humanizing lens. In attempting to further safeguard education from teacher bias, the IMOE has presented a curriculum that scaffolds themes and events chronologically, allowing opportunities for teachers to revisit past themes and to draw comparisons with historical events. This method may, in turn, facilitate the opportunity for the greater acquisition of knowledge by students and their development of critical thinking and experiential learning. Outlining areas where teachers can implement different learning techniques and vary tasks in the acquisition of knowledge allows students to deepen their understanding of key events through the examination of developments leading to and outcomes related to such events. In this way, the teacher is guided to use the curriculum and supplementary resources to provide an opportunity for students to make connections between history and the present. On the basis of the understanding that the state has a diverse background and that it is difficult for the curriculum to fully and equitably speak to such diversity, the curriculum stipulates that the choice of teaching content and the objectives of its use must emphasize, expose, and highlight moral aspects and the values that were the foundation of the historic event. The ways these events have affected the Jewish people and the modern State of Israel and the ways the effects may have changed during different periods and in the lives of different individuals must also be emphasized.

The goals of this curriculum, which appears intended to create societal inclusion in a divided society, to act as a tool of critical pedagogy, and to guide a student inquiry process, are examined throughout this chapter and next. The objectives include the provision of an understanding of key historical events and their meaning as formative experiences in the history of Israel, and of the way present situations can be affected by these key events. Building on the
goal of understanding how past events influence the modern landscape, the curriculum highlights the reciprocal relationship between people and the events, and the impact of ideologies on historical processes. Its intention is to promote tolerance and respect for the views, opinions, and traditions of different people and for different religious laws and beliefs. This outcome is further examined through the continual articulation or repetition of goals, aims, and intended results of the state’s history curriculum. The process is subject to the same type of framework Mar’i (1978) once identified in his examination of Arab education in Israel. In that framework, students:

1. … are to demonstrate an understanding of the culture of mankind as a mosaic of different nations;
2. … are to identify the Jewish contributions and the contributions of other nations in the creation of this culture;
3. … will develop an understanding of the need for cooperation in global peace efforts;
4. … will develop a Jewish national consciousness and understanding of the role of a common heritage in a historical, present, and future context;
5. … will foster a love for the Jewish people both in the State of Israel and the Diaspora;
6. … will demonstrate an awareness of the importance of the existence of the State of Israel in a physical modern context and a historical context, and an awareness of the importance of a Jewish attachment to the land;
7. … will understand the need for the readiness to protect the state and the importance of its cultural, religious, and historical preservation;
8. … will develop the tools to contextualize and deconstruct social problems through independence and critical thinking.
Applied to this study, Mar’i’s (1978) points are key in framing (as identified through specific examples in Findings 1 - 4) how the curricular selection of content is intended to help students to understand the creation and centrality of the State of Israel using a Jewish consciousness, the need for its protection, the awareness of and sense of responsibility for the continued existence of the Jewish people, and the importance of State of Israel to Judaism and Jewish life. They are key because they not only outline, but also contextualize both the lens by which the Jewish-Israeli identity is shaped and the way the siege mentality is perpetuated by notions of defensive readiness and the protection of the Jewish state. If this understanding is the ultimate goal, teaching the intended history of Israel within this framework may be an implicit attempt to assimilate all secular Jewish-Israeli students into a collective national identity founded solely on trauma over triumph, and protectionism over peace.

5.4 – Curriculum Findings Coded by IMOE Themes

From an analytical and deconstructive perspective, the intended history curriculum appears to be broken into two streams of focus: (1) on notions of patriotism and the legitimacy of the State of Israel as a Jewish State, and (2) on individual and collective human rights, including where and how the Other fits in. In the study of the latter area of focus, the curriculum uses a series of central teaching points and examples of the development of thinking skills. These thinking skills include exercises in self-criticism and self-reflection, differentiated instruction, analytical thinking, acknowledgement of emotions and skills for controlling emotions, and collaborative problem-solving.

Each of the units focus heavily on Jewish history within the larger discipline of world history, and key themes indicate periods of instruction that are also broken down into subunits
and that guide teachers through a number of central teaching lessons. Within these subunits, students are intended to learn individuality, yet also to understand where they fit in (as individuals and citizen within the state) within the larger collective identity. In so doing, with the central tenets of Zionism woven into all guiding themes, students are intended to be led to accept that Israel, as the only Jewish State, is the only answer to the historical Jewish problems, and is the only alternative for the Jewish nation.

Within each finding, I have selected a series of curricular and supplementary textbook excerpts (refer to subsection 4.5 and 4.7). These excerpts, translated by Groiss, have been selected and used because they provide a cross-section of the larger body of material and the varying narratives found within the material. Each excerpt is used to illustrate how the examined theme where I have placed them is intended to be presented to students. Also illustrated are the key triggers students are presented with, and the way the narrative that is used frames the examined event. While the excerpts themselves provide only a snapshot in time, each is considered as part of a larger whole and not simply extracted and analysed as a singular, stand-alone excerpt.

**Finding 1 – Legitimizing and Humanizing of the Other**

It has been previously stated that the curriculum is written with Zionism is mind, reflects 2,000 years of Jewish oppression and religious persecution, and is intended to foster a sense of attachment to the land. In so doing, Israel is portrayed in a narrative about the divine “homeland” and/or the “Promised land,” a land promised by God to the children of Israel, the Jews.

As previously introduced by Podeh (2000, 2002), earlier editions of the curriculum and textbooks were undeveloped, and there was an omission of the Others’ history pre-1948. The lack of recognition as a people was the ultimate delegitimization of the Others’ identity and struggle.
This omission solidified the belief that the land was, in fact, uninhabited and encouraged the notion that Israel was “a land without a people for a people without land.”

A study of previous history curricula conducted by Firer (1985) also noted that curricular resources from 1900 to 1948 stressed Jewish ownership of the land and portrayed Arabs (as a collective body) as a primitive people, agitated robbers, and vandals who were to blame for the outbreaks and continuation of the conflict. The narrative used was selective in events discussed, and biased and distorted in its presentation of events through its painting of a rudimentary, black-and-white description of history, in which the Jewish people were the victims.

Similarly, Bar-Gal’s (1993) findings uncovered an ethnocentric ignorance about any indigenous peoples, notably any Arabs, living in the area, and stated that the view of the land was as an uninhabited wasteland or “a land without a people.” As violent clashes erupted towards the new influx of Jewish settlers, Bar-Gal notes that the Palestinians began to be described in contemporary curricular texts as “the enemy.” This Orientalist framing depicts the “inferior” Other (the Palestinians) as an irrational body and collective enemy who stands in defiance of the Jewish people and the State of Israel, and, therefore, in a comparative sense, is marginalized. Yet a drastic shift in the narrative has emerged since these aforementioned studies. On one hand, while the curriculum can still be read as an ethnocentric and Orientalist document that portrays the Jewish-Israeli identity as just, tolerant, and peaceful, on the other hand, the curriculum sporadically introduces students to the conditions Palestinians endured before, during, and after 1948 because of their Arab neighbours and Zionism. While the curriculum still constructs a picture of Jewish victimization in the land at the time, the IMOE’s introduction of the Palestinian Other may also have a secondary motive. As Adwan, cited in Chen (2007), notes, “the idea is not to legitimize or accept the Others’ narrative but to recognize it.” The assertion of the dominant inclusive narrative
as authentic, coupled with a once full, now partial, negation of the Others narrative may be intended to further illustrate that the Others’ views are to be regarded as incorrect or distorted.

Whatever the motive, the IMOE decision to include a Palestinian perspective on the conflict is a drastic shift from previous official curriculum narratives about the pre-1948 land. For the first time, the IMOE’s history curriculum presents a modern history of the land as being not “uninhabited” and discusses a process of Jewish immigration that began during the 19th century. The introduction of Others living on the land is a huge step forward in the recognition of the Other, but the IMOE goes only so far as mentioning other inhabitants (not by name – possibly as a tool of negation) who live only within areas inhabited by the Jews. Yet this shift is slow and has not yet been fully implemented in all IMOE-approved supplementary curricular resources (textbooks) intended for usage in secular schools.

This shift has been emerging in the presentation of cause and effect, for example, with reference to key Jewish-Palestinian figures in the region at the time, and amongst academics who have been critical of the way Zionism was being used to negate the presence of the Other on the land at the beginning of the 20th century. Zionism is still the lens through which students are intended to be taught, but some early analysts, like Yitzhak Epstein and his essay, The Hidden Question, present students with a humanizing picture of the Other at the time. As it reads,

In general we are mistaken in regards to a great people... This is the mightiest, most excellent people in physical attainments and in the skill of its understanding. We must not belittle its rights (those of the Arab people). The Hebrew people respects not only the personal rights of each person, but rather the national rights of each nation and tribe (Manor, 2007, p. 12).

The use of Epstein’s text speaks strongly to the slowly evolving recognition of the Others’ narrative at the time, and the use of excerpts of the text may be intended to frame how a dominant Jewish-Israeli society must approach relations with its Arab and Palestinian neighbours. While the
IMOЕ is beginning to shift its descriptive terms about the land from “uninhabited” and “barren,” it remains grounded as it acknowledges that there were difficult decisions that Zionists had to grapple with.

Secondly, questions of legitimizing and humanizing the Other within a shared context are also introduced to some degree in the curriculum through the presentation of data sets that highlight different Arab populations in the region both in the 19th and the 20th centuries. This data, while inconsistent, is presented in some IMOЕ supplementary curriculum resources. The data focuses on the demographic ratio between Arabs and Jews, their geographic distribution from the 1930s to the present, and the ratio between the Jewish and the non-Jewish population, in 1931, in 1947, and in 2000 (CMIP, 2002, p. 7-10; Manor 2007, p. 14). However, while complete statistics on the Arab population are provided, they are presented sporadically and are framed to contextualize clashes between Jews and Arabs during key events, not to identify who these Arabs are. The assumption drawn from this kind of presentation is that the lack of consistency and completion may leave students with only a partial picture, to possibly downplay the extent or magnitude of the events, and in turn, to implicitly perpetuate a distorted impression of a Jewish majority in the area. Moreover, this implicit impression of the partial negation of the Other through selective discussions and usage of these statistics, and of a possible intention to present the land as only sparsely populated at the time, may, in turn, lead to a justification for the establishment of Jewish cities as settlements that would not displace any Arab inhabitants.

In the past, according to Podeh (2000), this myopic narrative about unwavering Jewish ownership of the land was used by the state to reflect the state’s goal of nation building and creating a homogeneous national identity founded on the denial of the Other. Yet this Orientalist approach is lessened in Unit 5: Modern Israel, when, Palestinians are portrayed in the Israel-
Palestine conflict not only as spectators or aggressors but also as victims. While the curricula are meant to function as ‘memory agents’ helping to mold the nation’s collective memory” (Podeh, 2000, p. 68), this shift in legitimization, humanization, and recognition of the Others’ role in the events of 1948 appears intended to shed a more balanced light on the conflict and to assist students in critically thinking through the conflict. To help teachers do this, the curriculum outlines a series of teaching prompts in an effort to develop thinking skills and guide both discussion and critique. Here, teachers are prompted to have students compare and contrast, determine positions, argue varied positions, and formulate their own reasoned positions about key situations or episodic outcomes. If students begin to contextualize history through the presentation of larger sets of data and through different or varying opinions and/or positions, then students may begin to develop a stronger sense of identity, as well as empathy for others. As Manor (2007, p. 7) writes, “Evoking the suffering of refugees in different places and periods is one way to arouse the empathy of the pupils for the ‘Other.’”

Moreover, the curriculum goes further, not only outlining the Other as having lived on the land prior to the formation of the Israeli state but also describing the suffering of Palestinians as possibly and partly (through cause and effect) as a result of the state’s formation. The curriculum expresses the actuality that the Palestinians themselves, as an independent body, did not lead the invasion, but it frames the Palestinians and their fate as by-products of an Arab incursion into Israel. This framing leads to the third emergence of a narrative of legitimization and humanization of the Other.

The status of “Palestinian refugee” is presented as resulting from ongoing conflict, but is compared and contrasted only to Jewish suffering and expulsion in Arab countries at the same time. The curricular emphasis on Jewish expulsion from Arab countries is depicted in IMOE
curricular narrative excerpts as “ransacking of Jewish homes” and “arrest of Jewish citizens and crippling restrictions which targeted Jewish commerce and travel in Iraq leading to more than a hundred thousand Iraqi Jews to flee.” Students are then intended to learn about how, in Egypt, Jews faced riots and murder, the confiscation of their property, legal restrictions, and mass arrests. In Yemen, Jews did not fare better. Violent anti-Jewish riots led tens of thousands of Yemenite Jews to flee, as did murderous pogroms in Morocco in 1948 and in Libya from 1945 to 1948 (see Adwan and Bar-On, n.d., and Ini, 2009).

In the presentation of the refugee situation, the curriculum teaches, through various supplemental texts, that, due to the 1948 war, hundreds of thousands of Arabs and Jews fled, in some cases forced from their homes in Mandate Palestine and beyond. While Israel estimated the number of Arab refugees to be approximately 500,000 to 600,000, during and in the years after the conflict, a statement is also made that 800,000 Jews indigenous to Arab and Muslim countries (e.g., Iraq and Egypt) were expelled. Of this number, about 400,000 to 600,000 Jewish refugees were said to have settled in Israel (Ini, 2009).

No doubt, during any armed conflict, there will be movement and displacement of people. However, to what extent and how many of those people are “forcibly displaced”? Such questions are introduced to the students in the same unit’s subsection column: Examples of the Development of Thinking Skills – 5. Representation of information and knowledge in diverse ways – finding ways to view the Revolutionary War moves into two phases. Ways are also found to mark the major turning points. Two major phases of fighting that many texts discuss are:


While most of the historical accounts within the curricular texts present no single time period or cause for flight, the current (2010) curriculum itself presents two schools of thought. The first is broken down into two key events. First, a follow-the-leader approach is cited, whereby the Palestinian leadership and elite are represented as having pre-emptively evacuated towns and villages early in the conflict, sometimes even before fighting moved near to their towns. At other moments, with violence threatening, many Arab villagers followed their local leaders and fled to avoid being physically harmed. The curriculum tells the story that, with much of the leadership gone, life for the Palestinians still remaining in their homes become harder, due to a deterioration of public services, food shortages, social demoralization, and the breakdown of law and order including, it says, misbehaviour by the Arab militia itself.

A second curricular narrative presents the motivation for the flight as a “response to exhortations by Arab military and political leaders that Palestinian civilians evacuate their homes until the end of the fighting.” In pursuing this narrative, the IMOE has embedded a selection of excerpts from the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, from the Arab Higher Committee, and from the National Committee, which present students with the theory (narrative) that the Palestinians “remove the women and children from the danger areas in order to reduce the number of casualties.” This idea is supported by the presentation of additional IMOE-selected excerpts that state that the local Palestinian leaders urged citizens to flee and that these leaders had said that those who resisted would be “an obstacle to the Holy War,” whose actions would only serve to “hamper” Arab fighters (Ini, 2009).

Yet, in stark contrast to previous versions of the IMOE curriculum presented by Podeh (2000, 2002), the curriculum (2010) notes that some Palestinian Arabs also became refugees due to the defensive actions of the Haganah militia. Contentious here is the idea that the Haganah
acted in defence, further legitimizing the justice of the Israeli course of action at the time. However, the curriculum notes that offensive operations began in April 1948. This offensive action was primarily attributed to the fact that Israeli intelligence had uncovered information that indicated that neighbouring Arab countries would soon be invading (known as Phase 2). This offensive action, which students are to be taught about as Plan Dalet or Plan D (refer to Finding 4 below), presents to students a justification for the Israeli military offensive to gain control of territory as needed to protect Jewish farmers and towns against the attacking Arab armies. The key Israeli military objective, according to this curricular narrative, was to gain control of border villages where fighting was imminent and obtain access to key transport routes. In what is believed to be the first case of offensive military expulsion, Plan D allowed troops to force residents from their homes. That said, through reference to IMOE-selected excerpts from Defence (and Prime) Minister David Ben-Gurion, students are intended to learn that there was never any blanket order to expel the Arabs. Rather, IMOE-approved supplementary texts frame the narrative that the Israeli government authorized the evacuation of some Arab villages. These texts also frame accounts stating that the Israeli military’s interpretation of the Israeli government’s position often led to significant fighting and spontaneous flight.

With only partial blame applied to Israel, the curriculum leads students toward the belief that, while Israel led an offensive that led to the evacuation of some Palestinian villagers, the overwhelming majority of Palestinian refugees were not expelled by the Israelis. The follow the leader argument is greatly emphasized, but the curriculum does also lead students to understand that Israel had a part in the expulsion. Thus, Israeli culpability is lessened when students are to be taught the notion that, had the neighbouring Arab countries not chosen to wage war against the Jewish State, the refugee problem would not have been created.
Finding 1 does make strides in laying the foundation for the legitimization and humanization of the Other through the recognition of what they endured—namely, the refugee situation—but this recognition is not complete. Conceptually, the terms used guide Israeli educators to teach students to consider whether the acts committed, and ideologies perceivably held by Palestinians in the wake of the events before and during 1948, were aligned with the norms and values held by Jewish-Israelis at the time. Secondly, through a lens of anti-racist education, such terms may contribute to the recognition of the common humanity shared between Jews and Muslims, as well as between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians—not only as people but as members of a shared space.

While the curriculum here begins to speak to these 1948 events as cause and effect, sharing some responsibility between Israelis and Arab Palestinians, as Bar-On and Adwan (n.d.) identify, “The issue of refugees… is so emotionally charged and complex, and so central to the identities that have energized the conflict, that no broad political settlement will likely be sustained without addressing the issue on a more fundamental, psycho-social level.” For students who are beginning to learn about the turmoil the Others endured, primarily (as they are taught) at the hands of their own leadership, it stands to reason that, while Israelis have played a part, they would not be viewed as to blame for the (refugee) outcomes that ensued. Thus, the psycho-cultural narrative and siege mentality (favouring a dominant Jewish-Israeli [othering] perspective) are maintained.

**Finding 2 – Overcoming suspicion, hatred, and prejudices about Islam and the Arabs**

As spoken about in Chapter Two and highlighted in the application of the theory of anti-racist education in Chapter Three, the IMOE’s selected curriculum content attempts to contextualize and structure power relations, at the time, between the British, the Moshov, the
Fellahim, and the Effendis. In so doing, the IMOE attempts to use this power structure to understand and in turn, shape the divide between each, as differing and distinct bodies, party to the same conflict. Because the history curriculum focuses heavily on the plight of the Jewish people throughout history, on the oppression and religious persecution they endured at the hands of the Other, there is a need to be cognizant of how Israeli Jewish positionality, generated through the conflict, affects “the politicization of identities and an escalatory conflict dynamic in which the basic value commitments, beliefs, and mores of the ‘Other’ are regarded as threatening and problematic” (Funk and Said, 2004, p. 1). This history of oppression, implied to be mirrored in current interactions with others who possess characteristics similar to those of previous Others, leads to the solidification of a siege mentality and fosters an atmosphere of doubt, distrust, and disrespect.

Speaking to this dynamic, Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006, p. 16) note, “delegitimizing stereotypes lower the standing of the rival by attributing to this group labels that imply immorality, evilness, and inhumanity. This differentiation allows feelings of superiority, which is of special importance in the situation of intractable conflict, when both sides engage in violence, often performing immoral acts.” Though it may be read as a document that highlights traumatic histories, the history curriculum does not explicitly call for violence or war. Rather, through its discussion of historical events and outcomes, the curriculum expresses a yearning for peace between Israel and the Arabs.

Furthermore, explicit indoctrination, negative stereotypes, and/or offensive remarks about the Arab nation and/or the Palestinian people and/or Islam in a negative light, are explicitly absent from the segment of Jewish-Israeli history curriculum (2010) examined in this thesis research. Instead, the curriculum takes a multicultural approach, introducing students to both Arab culture
and Islam in a respectful manner, by selecting content that presents basic knowledge and information about Arab people in terms of developments made in relation to human civilization, specifically in the fields of mathematics, literature, science, and medicine. The IMOE selections frame Arabs as a people whose culture is similar to theirs (Jewish-Israelis) and, in so doing, presents opportunities for students to discuss comparisons between Arabs and Israelis in terms of national identity, regional relations, and modes of leadership.

Moreover, while Arab culture and religion (Islam) are presented within the curriculum (2010) as going hand-in-hand, the curriculum distinguishes, yet essentializes these identity factors by explaining that Arabs are the followers of Islam posing a greater contradiction, between the identity of a people and their religion. Here, students are to be provided with information about Islam and its five pillars, the Prophet Muhammad, and Islam’s holy sites, including Jerusalem, in positive, factual language, devoid of offensive terms and explicit stereotypes, however, if all Arabs are identified as universally Muslim, such a stereotype would contradict this. Yet the history curriculum inevitably presents only selective (italics added to emphasize the notion that such narratives may be added or omitted to fit a political agenda) excerpts “to remove stereotypes and to build a foundation for coexistence and mutual respect between the two peoples” (CMIP, 2000, p. 7)—that is, between Israeli and Palestinian or Jewish and Muslim.

This approach seems intended to have students overcome bias and prejudices (which may have been informally or socially learned), and, by having students continually re-examine such instances, critically deconstruct statements in relation to how/why they are “manifestations of prejudices” (CMIP, 2000, p. 2; CMIP, 2002, p. 2). This attempt to foster students’ sense of empathy with the Other is an example of the IMOE’s facilitation of the thinking skills it wants teachers to model. As Funk and Said (2004, p. 2) note,
Recognizing the significance and pluralism of cultural narratives about conflict allows us to come to terms with the constitutive impact of identity and deeply embedded meanings, without contributing to dangerous stereotypes that foreclose latent possibilities for conflict transformation. In any situation of intense conflict, there is a tendency among disputants to become trapped inside their own stories of threatened identity, justified fear, and unjustifiable suffering. As advocates of narrative mediation have recognized, it is often more useful to help the narrators of these stories become more conversant with their counterparts’ framing of events than to attempt to impose a common and presumably neutral frame of reference.

However, in its discussion of the concepts of tolerance and empathy, IMOE-selected content also introduces the notion of Jihad and asks students to discuss that ideology in comparison and contrast with ideologies aligned with Judaism and Christianity. An excerpt from *History of Israel and the Peoples*, vol. B (CMIP, 2000, p. 23) describes the Jihad as follows:

Muhammad called on his people to go to war against Arab tribes that did not want to accept his faith. After his death, his successors called for a war against other peoples that did not accept Islam. They viewed these wars as a commandment, and called them “jihad”… The Muslims divided the entire world into two regions: “Dar al-Islam,” where the Muslims already rule, and “Dar al-Harb,” which needs to be fought with the sword, until it too is ruled by Islam. The war against the people of “Dar al-Harb” was considered to be a war that is commanded or jihad, since a Muslim had to participate in it. The leaders of Islam promised the fighters that anyone who fell in a war that is commanded or jihad is assured of going to Paradise. Thus, jihad became a 23 commandment in Islam, and some sects even viewed jihad as an additional, sixth Pillar of Islam.

This description is troubling. On one hand, students are presented with Islam as a peaceful religion, and on the other hand, they are presented with a narrative describing Muslim followers as commanded to wage holy war against non-followers of Islam. This contradictory picture, which seemingly would perpetuate Jewish-Israelis to hold and reinforce a negative psycho-cultural narrative and interpretation of the Arab Other, may also provide a basis for understanding negatively the identity of one’s perceived enemy and thus why it is important to defend the Israeli state against this enemy. This contradiction also impedes Finding 1, whereby the curriculum, in
attempting to humanize and legitimize and overcome suspicion, hatred, and/or prejudice against the Other, needs to be vigilant against (also, concurrently) further ingraining the siege mentality.

Secondly, building on the above, when Islam is discussed, greater emphasis is placed on the Jewish expulsion from Arab and Islamic countries (drawing a correlation between Arabs and Islam, and notions of Jewish expulsion)—as in the examples shared above in Finding 1. The IMOE prompts teachers to have students consider the role “Islamic countries” played in destabilizing the region, the way this destabilization led to Jewish suffering, and the role the Arab Other played in exacerbating or maintaining the Arab-Jewish conflict in Israel. Thus, once again, a narrative of Arab blame and Jewish victimization is presented.

The history curriculum’s identification of dispositions towards and narrative interpretations of the Other, in both positive and negative situations, may serve to teach an understanding of the Other’s motivation and corresponding actions or reactions to key episodic events. In the same supplementary curricular texts, teachers are instructed to divide their class into two groups that would role play two situations:

Groups representing Jewish journalists and Palestinian journalists who have been sent to cover the discussion in the United Nations Organization leading to the Partition resolution.

- Prepare a report that will include details about the discussion in the UN, the position of some of the states participating in it and the results of the discussion, the vote and the reactions to the resolution…
- Discuss with the whole class the differences between the reports of the Jewish journalists and those of the Palestinian ones.

By giving approval for such texts that propose such role-playing exercises, the IMOE appears to motivate students to empathize with, understand, and overcome previously held suspicion of, hatred, and/or prejudice towards the Other and to now have them look at different sides of the same story but does not contextualize it. The pedagogical assumption would be that there are no facts in common between both reports, that each report would be on differences, and
that a larger social structural conversation would need to focus undertaken as to why each side’s view or position would differ. This such exercise may lead to a larger disconnect with students, which as Boler (1997) suggests, using such multicultural narratives may lead to the students developing “passive empathy” whereby students may carry an illusion that since they feel they can put themselves in the Other’s place, that they understand and can empathize with the Other. However, with a larger engagement in narratives that stimulate debate and social critique, modelling possible ways to resist, students are left with uninformed perspectives “about actual contexts and causes of injustices and the ways they are implicated in the persistence of such injustice” (Bickmore, 2008, p. 5). As Bickmore, drawing on the work of Tyson (2002) continues, “Role play, where students are insufficiently prepared to actually make sense of unfamiliar perspectives, similarly carries the risk that it could reinforce misconceptions rather than provoking careful thought or inquiry” (Bickmore, 2008, p. 5).

Thus, through such activities that attempt to humanize the Other and their aspirations, this depiction is overshadowed by the curriculum’s approach to the larger conflict and its presentation of the threats that Jewish-Israelis and the State of Israel face as originating in “Islamic” countries. The constant equation of threats with Islamic countries could also be intended to perpetuate the siege mentality that holds that Islam, and followers thereof, is a threat to the students’ Jewish identity, their nation, and the state’s sovereignty. Explicit indoctrination is absent, and students are intended to learn some humanizing information about Arab people and Islam, but, implicitly, the curriculum presents a very different picture. At the same time, if students come to understand multiple versions of the same story, they will hopefully develop a critical lens that enables them to question, analyse, and interpret the context and outcomes that are presented to them. This is a key tenant of critical pedagogy discussed early, and through an understanding, and refinement to
their (the students) inquiry skills, they, the students, may be challenged to question how a collective Jewish-Israeli identity and that of the Other came to be as opposing bodies in conflict, how the dominate Jewish-Israeli position came to perceivably dominate the Other, and how such beliefs, values and practices came to be the societal norm for Jewish-Israelis. Could further immersion in a shared or aligned history further reduce the divide between the two both on a psycho-cultural and a social structural level?

**Finding 3 – Legitimizing the opposing national movement**

The goal of legitimizing the Other is a slow and difficult process since secular Jewish-Israeli students today face a threat posed by those they are now intended to acknowledge and humanize, and toward whom they are no longer explicitly guided to direct suspicion or prejudice. So, too, does the process to re-humanize aspects of the above curricular discourse contradict the psycho-cultural narratives, dispositions, and interpretations students may have adoptively witnessed within the larger, dominant Jewish-Israeli society. At stake are self-reflection and the political question of whether the psycho-cultural narrative embodying historical oppression and victimization that is used to justify the protectionist approach to security and sovereignty also would contribute to the othering of Palestinians by perpetuating the siege mentality. So, too, the politics at stake may call into question, not only the legitimization of a Palestinian national movement, but also the Zionist movement embraced by the larger State of Israel. In that case, if embarking on revisions of the curriculum, textbooks, maps, and narratives in order to acknowledge, legitimize, humanize the Other only calls into question one’s own (i.e., Jewish Israel’s) contemporary policy posture, then there would be little motivation to make those peacebuilding changes.
Through a theoretical prism of anti-racist education, a definition of the conflict through multiple-perspective narratives, as done by Bar-On and Adwan (2003, 2006), is only one step in this process, yet the acceptance of this step is of paramount importance in understanding and interpreting the Other’s actions. Reviews of the shift by previous Israeli governments and the IMOÉ through revisions of the history curriculum have shown (see Podeh, 2000, 2002; Adwan and Firer, 1997, 1999; Firer, 1998; Firer and Adwan, 2002) that the current and previous regimes have slowly, and not always fully, shifted the state-approved narrative from a full negation and blame of the Other to an approach that acknowledges legitimate causes (e.g., refugees) for the Other’s point of view. The IMOÉ’s curriculum (2010) chronologically frames interactions and the larger conflict between Jewish-Israelis and Arabs in nationalist and protectionist terms presenting such interactions and outcomes resulting from political (state formation) and military (pre-emptive need for defence) decisions.

Recognition of Arabs in a modern context, though sporadic, first emerges at the beginning of Unit 5, in the Diverse Jewish community in Israel from the late Ottoman period until the end of the 19th century and the First World War lessons, where students are to be presented with the first opposition by Arabs to Jewish land purchases and immigration in 1891. While students also are to be taught about previous instances where Jews and Arabs cohabited in small villages in the area, in this lesson, students are intended to learn about the crystallization of regional Arab nationalism. Here, the curriculum presents a history that focuses on local, unorganized clashes between Arabs and Jewish settlers, starting in the middle of the 19th century. This content is presented through a series of descriptions, excerpts, and explanations, “in order to show that Arab national desires are not ignored and that the development of Arab nationalism emerged not only in response to the
development of the Jewish Yishuv but also against the backdrop of the growth of nationalist movements in the Arab countries” (CMIP, 2000, p. 69).

Secondly, the curriculum uses terms like “localized” and “unorganized” clashes to describe acts committed by Arabs, not by soldiers, against the Moshavot (small agricultural villages established by Jewish immigrants during the Aliyah process). These acts are said to be motivated by local feuds, land borders, flocks, and the inability of Arabs to understand the language and customs of the Israeli settlers. In the curricular narratives, these localized clashes are depicted as only gradually taking on the character of two competing national movements: (1) Arab protectionism against Jewish settlement within Palestine caused by land purchases made by Jews participating in Aliyah (namely, the first Aliyah [1882-1903] and the second Aliyah [1904-1914]) by local Arab Fellahim (farmers) (some Arabs saw this process as distancing others from their land); and (2) Zionism.

In curriculum about events that transpired during the second Aliyah, students are presented with Arab attitudes that Zionism was a form of “political oppression.” In a chronological presentation, Unit 5 of the curriculum begins in 1891, marking this as the date of the first public expression by Arabs. The curriculum notes that the following year, various Arab dignitaries from Jerusalem petitioned the central government in Constantinople to intervene and prevent further Jewish land purchases. Additional IMOE-selected curricular content presents such Arab attitudes towards the Jews at the time, and it also presents the Arab fear that, with continued Aliyah (Jewish immigrants), the Arab national character of the district will shift away from Arabism. Yet, as the curriculum begins to introduce Palestinian dispossession, the IMOE also approves the use of selected excerpts from the anti-Zionist newspapers Al-Carmel and Filastin. In a 1911 article
published in *Filastin*, students may read about Ottoman representatives coming to the region in an effort to “fulfill their obligation and not allow Jewish immigrants to remain in the country” (CMIP, 2002). With this as an introduction to a broader examination of Jewish-Israeli and Arab clashes, the curriculum states that, for the next few years, anti-Zionist propaganda increased, and various Arab nationalist organizations aimed at preventing further Jewish immigration were established.

In the *Jewish Settlement transition from Ottoman rule of the British Mandate* lesson, and in the *Jewish-Arab conflict until World War II* lesson of instruction, the IMOE selects examples of Palestinian loss and dispossession caused by absentee *Effendis* (Arab land owners), losses that were exacerbated by the *Effendis’* selling their land to the *Moshav* (Jewish farmers). This history raises the question of ownership and, while the *Fellahim* (Arab farmers) tilled the land on behalf of the *Effendis*, serving as custodians for absentee landowners, what level of ownership did the *Fellahim* actually have? Only briefly does the curriculum appear to engage in this conversation through an examination of the Ottoman land law of 1858, which created a situation that allowed many of the *Fellahim* to lose their land to the wealthy. What was the agreement between the two? Did the *Effendis*, who bought the land, rent it back to the *Fellahim* they received it from? How might this situation complicate the then later sales between the *Effendis* and the *Moshav*? How is this ownership understood? Within the curriculum, Arabs are presented as the *Fellahim*, the once owners of the land, while the Jews are presented as purchasers of the land from land owners (*Effendis*) who are not necessarily the *Fellahim*. Moreover, many IMOE-approved texts indicate that the land owners from whom the Jews purchased land were, in fact, wealthy, absentee land owners (living in Syria and Lebanon). These *Effendis* only leased their land back to the *Fellahim*, who, in turn, tilled the land and paid them (the *Effendis*) with a share of their crop yields. For the
Effendis, their motivation to sell the land stemmed from a limited crop that yielded low incomes. As a result, the land was sold to Jewish settlers who tilled the land themselves.

I interpret this section of the curriculum as implying that the mere fact Jews were able to purchase the land stirred Fellahim fear that they, the Fellahim, were losing control of their land, and, as noted previously, were shifting the national Arab character of the area. As seen in *The Emergence of the Palestinian National Movement, 1918 – 1929* (CMIP 2000, 2002), “This development nurtured itself and created a solid basis for a radical anti-Zionist position, the land disputes had anti-Zionist political echoes among the educated, urban elite… they began to organize the villagers to oppose and sabotage land purchases by Jews.”

This act of land purchase brings into focus not only the notions of power and dominance, which were outlined in the previous section on anti-racist theories but also notions of humanization and recognition of what the Other owned prior to the first Aliyah. While the Palestinians are positioned as farmers, not as land owners, recognition of this attachment and then their dispossession from the land can facilitate teachers’ and students’ relatively open-minded examination of the causes and effects of the ensuing violent outbreaks.

The land purchase is presented by the curriculum as one of the catalysts of escalating violent conflict; the curriculum then shifts its focus towards the escalating tensions between Arabs and Jews. In the *Emergence of the Arab Nation-States in the Middle East* lesson, students are to examine the events of the 1920s, when the (previously discussed) localized clashes led to larger, less isolated violent disturbances. Though many of these disturbances may have been rooted in land purchase agreements, the curriculum texts indicate that these disturbances further escalated in reaction to the 1917 Balfour Declaration. In Balfour’s letter to Rothschild, students are to learn
about the plan to have Jews “return” to “their” land (Herzog, 2005). The following excerpt presented by the curriculum explains the situation and the rationale at the time.

His Majesty’s government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country (The Balfour Declaration in IMFA, 2013b).

Moreover, “Israeli history holds that the declaration was the ‘first time any country expressed support for Zionism’—the creation of a Jewish State in modern-day Israel” (Patience, 2005). To show Arab reaction to the Balfour Declaration and the violent conflict that began as a result, the IMOE curriculum selects and presents demands from the Arab Action Committee, quoted verbatim. Here students are to read that,

Churchill refused to accede to the Arabs’ demands and announced that the Balfour Declaration and Jewish immigration should be viewed as one of the facts established with the end of the war. The Arabs responded with anti-British demonstrations and bloody rioting against the Jews... the Arabs said: We demand –

a. The revocation of the Jewish National Home;

b. The creation in Palestine of a national government responsible to a legislature that will be elected by the population of Palestine that resided in it before the war;

c. A halt to Jewish immigration;

d. That Palestine not be separated from other Arab lands. (Zionism Tested in Action, 1914-1939, 1984, p. 72 in CMIP 2000, p. 65)

The curricular narrative indicates that as the political tension intensified, and the Arab population viewed the Balfour declaration as further proof that they were losing “their land,” Arab demands turned into violence in order to prevent the declaration’s fulfilment. The following excerpt highlights the sentiments of many-IMOE-approved texts:

During the four years following publication of the Balfour Declaration, the Arabs attacked the Jews and their settlements several times, and caused them great losses.
It became clear that the Arabs would not accept the establishment of a Jewish “national home.” The Arabs even began to organize themselves and to establish institutions of their own that would lead the struggle against the Jews (Homeland – Chapters in the History of the Jewish Yishuv in the Eretz Yisrael in the New Era, part b, p. 22, from CMIP, 2000).

Emerging in the *Growth of the National Identity of Israeli Arabs* lesson of instruction, the greater development of violence is presented through an analysis of key episodic events in Arab-Jews relations. The 1929 riots, for example, become one of the main focal points of the lesson and are situated as events that created a broader base for Palestinian nationalism. So too, students are intended to learn that these events were incidents tied to religion and the Jewish attachment to the Western Wall. The curriculum frames these events as the beginning of the Jewish-Arab and later the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Many supplementary texts present this development in a dual context. The following excerpt helps to illustrate the narrative presented to the students:

In the 1920s the national confrontation between the country’s Jews and Arabs worsened. For the purpose of this confrontation, the Mufti, Haj Amin al-Husseini, exploited the issue of the Western Wall. The dispute over the rights of the Jews at the Wall was used in order to ignite the fire of political, chauvinistic nationalism... the Mufti’s journal published the following: “The Muslims of Palestine are determined to sacrifice everyone and everything in order to preserve their religious rights. It was enough for them that their national rights were stripped from them.” The Mufti exploited Jerusalem’s holiness to mobilize the Muslim world in support of the national struggle of the country’s Arabs. He gave the struggle against Zionism an all-Muslim, religious hue (This is Jerusalem, Part Two: From the Crusader Period to Our Time, 1993, p. 196-197 in CMIP 2000, 2002).

Key here are binary themes of a unified national confrontation, the eroding of relations between the two groups, notions of self-sacrifice by the Arabs, and the Arabs’ goal to mobilize a collective Arab people to fight. All these elements added fuel to the tensions and rallied a people against an Other: in this case, the Others identified in the narrative were Jews. In shifting the focus from Arab-Jewish violence, the *Aliyah to Israel and its Settlements* lesson sets out to present an evolving picture of the Arab nationalist movement, the continuation of land disputes, and the
emergence of discussion about the creation of a binational state. Here, the curriculum presents the reality that both Jews and Arab were two national movements fighting over the same land. Through such a presentation, the curriculum further addresses the emergence of two opposing national movements: The revival of the Arab nation arising in response to Jews who had shifted the national character of the region, and the move by Jews to re-establish the ancient kingdom of Israel. On one hand, the curricular narrative presents the land as needed for the establishment of a Jewish State and for housing the increasing numbers of Jews making Aliyah to the region, and, on the other hand, it acknowledges that Arabs felt that their land was being stolen from them. This situation of conflict, involving the Zionist movement in opposition to the feelings of dispossessed Arab people seeking to regain what they believe has been taken from them, is noted in a series of sources intended for use. In *The Twentieth Century – On the Threshold of Tomorrow* (1999), it is noted that:

During the 1930s, Arab nationalist movements evolved all over the Middle East. Many of the Arabs of Eretz Yisrael also began formulating a national consciousness – in other words, the perception that they are not just part of the larger Arab nation, but are also Palestinians, residents of Palestine. Therefore, there are some who believe that the 1930s saw the start of the fight over the land between nationalistic movements: the Jewish-Zionist movement and the Arab-Palestinian movement. The Palestinian Arabs were still not organized into political movements and institutions as the Zionist movement was. A majority of them, who were uneducated Fellahim, were influenced by religious and traditional preachers, who saw the Zionist settlement in Eretz Yisrael as a desecration and defilement of Muslim holy sites and contradictory to Arab tradition. The Zionist settlement effort was perceived by many Arabs as undermining their very existence in the country. This view of Zionism prevented from the outset any chance of cooperation between Jews and Arabs – despite the efforts of the British to promote cooperation between the two communities. As the flow of Jewish immigrants increased in the 1920s and 1930s, so too did the hostility to Zionism and hostile acts perpetrated against Jews increase. Leaders of the Yishuv understood already then that they were not settling in an empty land, and that they must deal with the Arabs’ opposition to the Zionist movement. Some considered establishing a bi-national state, others sought to reach a compromise and divide the land between the two peoples. And there were still others who clung to an unflinching battle for the entire land and the creation of a Jewish majority (p. 85 in CMIP, 2000).
This recognition that the land was not empty, and that Zionism may have prevented cooperation between the two groups, is interesting because now, as in Finding 1, the curriculum presents a picture legitimizing both the Arabs and the opposing (Jewish-Israeli) national movement. Still, in an intention to prompt students to question the legitimacy of the Arab national movement, the curriculum shifts focus again, placing further emphasis on the importance of the Aliyah process.

In the *Jewish-Arab conflict until World War II* lesson, the curriculum presents three more years of violent clashes that were labelled as a “disturbance” by the Jews (at the time) but referred to by the Arabs (at the time) as a revolt. The labelling is important in understanding how each party perceived both themselves and the Others in context. By labelling the event as a disturbance, the IMOE seemingly downplays and devalues the actions by the Other in a manner reminiscent of a nuisance claim, that is, a matter that has to be dealt with, but that is not given much credit. On the other hand, labelling the event as a revolt positions the Arabs as an oppressed body subjected to an Other’s rules. This idea that people have to revolt presents a scenario that they (the Arabs) do not have power, that they are subjugated, and that they must take action to regain their sense of self-worth. By “revolting” against both the British and the Jews, Arabs are positioned as having a lesser societal status and as needing to attempt to regain power from those who either usurped it or created an unbalanced division of power.

Such curricular narratives, analysed through an anti-racist lens and cognizant of Fanon’s anti-colonial lens, raise questions as to whether the (Arab) Other’s actions were justified. Using an early excerpt from *Homeland – Chapters in the History of the Jewish Yishuv in Eretz Yisrael in the New Era*, Part 2, (1998, p. 65, in CMIP, 2000), the situation is presented as:
The Arabs began to organize. The Arab parties, whose leaders quarrelled frequently, reached reconciliation among themselves and a joint leadership was established – the Arab Higher Committee, headed by the Mufti, Haj Amin al-Husseini. The Arabs decided to begin a general strike – halting all economic activity, stopping transportation, and closing businesses, offices and stores, until the British government accepted their demands: prohibiting Jewish immigration, prohibiting the sale of land to Jews and the establishment of Arab rule in the country. They announced that if their demands were not met, they would declare a civil revolt: they would stop paying taxes, stop working in the government and police, and would begin acts of terrorism against the British government and against the Jews. This time, unlike the previous disturbances, these were not outbreaks of murder and robbery that ceased after a few days. This time an Arab revolt was declared against the British, and action was planned for a long time. And indeed, the Arab community halted its economic activity.

As illustrated above, such situations highlight the continuing motivation of Arabs at the time to take action against the British, and later against the Jews. Through revolt—both through violence and, in this case, a halt to economic activities—Arabs again pushed to prohibit Jewish immigration and British authorization of the sale of land.

In an effort for students to understand the gravity of both the overall situation and of economic strikes waged against Jews and the British, the curriculum provides an overview of the Peel Commission and its recommendations that the land should be partitioned into two states, one Jewish and the other Arab. The intention is that students come to understand that tensions were on the rise and that a larger conflict was brewing in reaction to the proposal for the establishment of a Jewish State. While many of the IMOE-approved texts speak to Arab opposition to the commission’s proposal, all ensuing violence is presented as perpetrated by Arabs against the Jews. Hammering this point, the curricular narrative continues to over-emphasize the point that Arabs expressed total opposition to the partition plan, indicating that they (all) viewed division of the country as acceptance of the establishment of a Jewish State in Eretz Yisrael.

In the narrative presented, the violence continued, and an Arab nationalist movement grew. So too does the curriculum highlight the growing Arab rejection of any peaceful outcome.
The curriculum portrays the Arab position between 1937 and 1947 as combative and willing to escalate the violence against both the Jewish *Yishuv* and the British. In line with the Arab belief that this land was and would remain “Arab land,” the Arab position on the matter is presented as remaining steadfast since any agreement that led to the creation of a Jewish State on Arab land would be the ultimate negation of what belonged to the Arabs.

In yet another back and forth teetering between explicitly legitimizing and implicitly delegitimizing, or explicit attempts to humanize versus implicit undertones of dehumanizing the Other, the curriculum narrates that the Jewish Yishuv themselves were divided on whether to accept the partition plan. In the *Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel, 1945 – 1947* lesson, the curriculum presents a picture different from the one above. In attempts to legitimize the Arab national movement, the curriculum compares and contrasts Jewish opposition to the partition plan with that of the Arabs. Indicating that this was not a one-sided debate, some older approved resources, like the following, frame the debate this way:

> The Jews were divided in their view of partition. The Right saw it as conceding Eretz Yisrael. Members of the Labor movement also rejected it, arguing that future borders should not be accepted before there is a Jewish majority in Eretz Yisrael. Others, who still believed in Arab-Jewish coexistence in the framework of a bi-national state, opposed a separation of the peoples. Many Zionists believed that the proposal should be rejected for practical reasons: the proposed Jewish State would not be able to absorb Jewish immigration and it would not be possible to defend its borders. The central personalities in the Zionist movement – Weizmann and Ben-Gurion – believed that the partition plan should in any case be accepted ... the Twentieth Zionist Congress accepted the principle of partition, but rejected the Peel Commission’s partition proposal (The Twentieth Century – On the Verge of Tomorrow, 1999, p. 89-90 in CMIP 2000).

These curricular narratives are interpreted as the Jewish Yishuv attempting to put an end to the current wave of violence and opposition by the Arabs. The Arabs continued to reject any compromise in 1947, including the UN’s decision (Resolution 181) to divide the country into two states. In an increasingly convoluted back-and-forth narrative, excessive presentation of key
episodic events seems to be an effort to paint the Arabs as having a legitimate cause for opposing the creation of the State of Israel. Still, the curriculum also stresses the fundamental assumption that the Jews have a right to settle on the land. In so doing, the curriculum appears to lead students to understand the events and to develop thinking skills in relation to the importance of the land, its acquisition by the Moshav from the Effendis, not the Fellahim, and the role of land claims in intensifying the conflict.

As CMIP (2000, p. 65) suggests, this assumption and all discussion relating to this and other conflicts, relations, and behaviour of and with the Arabs are examined from a Zionist perspective. Here, “the differences between the various explanations do not stem from different fundamental assumptions. The various assumptions differ from each other in the extent of the detail, accuracy, and readiness to present the Arab positions to the student as fairly as possible, even without identifying with them.”

Referenced here and throughout this thesis study, the IMOE curriculum has evolved from previous versions (see Podeh 2000, 2002; Adwan and Firer, 1997, 1999; Firer, 1998; Firer and Adwan, 2000). Many still cite the education system as being a tool for the complete negation of Palestinian nationhood, whereas this thesis analysis demonstrates that the IMOE’s current approach is beginning to take steps to educate students toward tolerance, recognition, and reconciliation (see Al-Haj, 2002; Abu-Saad, 2006; Peled-Elhanan, 2006, 2010). Complete recognition is still a long way away, but this history curriculum unit has begun to present a picture that shows the plight of the Palestinian people as members of a legitimate national movement fighting against Zionism and its Jewish national movement.

Moreover, similar to Finding 1 and 2, implicit indoctrination may still arise by presenting students interchangeably with different labels, in the descriptions or downplaying of events. While
this interchangeability and downplaying are real, the IMOE also makes specific reference to the Arabs of Palestine as part of a larger Pan-Arabian culture, but as distinct—of having a specific national identity that serves as the basis for their national movement. This is an important move following Israel’s signing of the Declaration of Principles in 1993 which recognized the existence of the Palestinian people and acts as a tool to understand Israel’s adversary and, ideally, using such understanding, may foster the process of peacebuilding and ensuing peacemaking. This acknowledgement of the Palestinians, as an independent body, separate from the larger pan-Arabian culture, is a means of recognizing and respecting their beliefs, even if it impinges on Israel’s. As Scham, Pogrund, and Ghanem (2013, p. 3) write, “In order to understand your adversary’s strategy or even his next step, you need to know his goals. And the goals are determined by his (or her) understanding of the conflict, not your own.”

While confusion may exist because of the presentation of the Other through such interchangeable terms (Arabs versus Palestinians), the struggles endured by the Palestinians before, during, and after 1948 are explicitly presented as a legitimate national movement, with a rationale and formal positions intended for presentation to students without an indication of an overt preference for one side or the Other (e.g., the Jewish-Zionist movement or the Arab-Palestinian movement).

The aforementioned elements are in place but are still presented through the Zionist lens. The Palestinian national movement is recognized as legitimate only to a lesser degree than the discussion and emphasis on a Jewish national movement. It becomes clear, through the presentation of quotations from David Ben Gurion (1931) that the Jewish right to self-determination is the emphasis in this curriculum. The curriculum cites verbatim the words of Ben-Gurion: “There is no doubt that the Arab people of Eretz Israel [Palestine] is entitled to the right
of self-determination… This cannot serve as a basis for blocking the rights of the Jewish people.”

The assumption may be made that the use of such a quote and other speeches by prominent Jewish figures would intentionally perpetuate the embodiment of negative or othering psycho-cultural symbols (like the attachment to land, the expulsion of Jews from Islamic countries, and a right of return for Jews to their “homeland”) and give credence to Jewish-Israeli nationalist psycho-cultural narratives, dispositions, and interpretations. Though some IMOE-selected content may be useful in acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the Palestinian people, their dispossession from the land, and their plight as a national movement, the content seems intended to complicate the understanding of events and confuse students. On one hand, the students are presented with the notion that the Palestinians have a right to self-determination, but, on the other hand, the students are presented with explicit arguments that this self-determination can exist only as long as it does not interfere with Jewish nationalism and the creation of a Jewish State. As Scham et. al (2013, p. 5) note, “Studying and attempting to understand the point of view of the ‘other’ is one of the few ways, absent the opportunity for face-to-face discussion and open debate, that the two sides possess which can enable them to understand the motives and goals of the ‘other.’” While on one hand the recognition of the Palestinian’s, their narratives and national aspirations may be motivated by a know thy enemy rational, so too may it be an opportunity to provide students with a unique, yet complex, interconnected view of how opposing narratives, values and views in the conflict clash.

**Finding 4 – Providing a balanced presentation of the conflict**

The (2010) curriculum, in many parts, reads more like a palimpsest of disconnected attempts to inject Arab narratives, experiences and history into the Jewish history IMOE intends
to be taught. The Arab motives over the course of the conflict are in some cases presented in contradictory ways, and, in other areas, completely absent (e.g. data sets of land not inhabited by Jews – as previously noted). Examination of the areas and methods that the curriculum uses to provide a balanced presentation of the conflict—including its use of differing perspectives, explanations, and approaches in its analysis of the Arab strategy, of the competing interests of the Arab inhabitants and Jewish settlers, and of later the Arab countries and the newly formed State of Israel—creates opportunities for confusion, misunderstanding and a disconnected narrative history. Within this finding, this disconnection is examined through the two most prominent events studied in this unit, (1) Resolution 181, which led to the establishment of the State of Israel, and (2) the ensuing refugee problem (e.g., the Nakba) that resulted from the large-scale armed conflict that erupted. Initially noted through the lens of Zionism, the conflict and the events leading up to it are presented to mirror the dominant Jewish-Israeli psycho-cultural narrative and siege mentality in religious, national, and cultural terms. As discussed in previous findings, this notion of nationalism is based on the issue of land ownership versus land rights (e.g., ownership and relations between the Fellahim and Effendis).

The dual-narrative presentation of this period in history, proposed by Adwan and Bar-On (2003), was intended to produce a balanced curriculum to examine key events in the shared history of Israelis and Palestinians. The aim of their work was to foster dialogue, to work towards peace and reconciliation, and to focus “on teachers and schools as the critical force over the long term for changing deeply entrenched and increasingly polarized attitudes on both sides of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The goal of the project [was] to ‘disarm’ the teaching of Middle East history in Israeli and Palestinian classrooms.” However, the IMOE did not approve Bar-On and
Adwan’s alternative curriculum, and schools were forbidden to use it as it may counter or contradict the dominant Jewish-Israeli narrative of history and identity.

In the spirit of Bar-On and Adwan’s study, I use the term “balanced” as a lens by which to study both the Jewish-Israeli collective and the Other’s histories. The understanding is that, given the mere fact that the IMOE selects content for dissemination, the curriculum cannot be fully balanced. Still, in its attempts, the IMOE (2010) includes the Others’ presence in accounts that at times may oppose the commonly held narrative within the larger society. Additionally, while previous curricula placed the majority of the responsibility for the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli wars on the Arabs alone, the curriculum (2010) now presents a more balanced mindset. Yet it is still selective, framing the armed conflict as a legitimate defence of (Jewish) Israel against Arab aggression.

As Davies (2005, p. 23) notes, “Practices such as ‘defence curriculum,’” defined as programs where “conflict is seen as constant threat and children are taught how to defend themselves,” are often embedded along with stereotypes of the Other and allegiances to the state and its cause. This idea is implicitly presented in the Establishment of Israel lesson, in which relations with the Other are framed so that students theoretically could conclude that “the Arabs are responsible not only for the wars they started but also for the wars in which Israel was first to shoot” (CMIP, 2000, p. 77).

In explicit terms, students are shown by the IMOE curriculum (2010) that, in some cases, Israel “had to” be pre-emptively violent, and that the action led to a reasonable outcome. Implicitly, this defensive idea can be interpreted based on words like “responsible” (implying blame of alternate options), and from the way that Arab actions may be interpreted as forcing Israel to defensively shoot first. While the curriculum attempts to legitimize and humanize the
Others and their national movement, who both occupy a shared space with the self, their very existence within that space undermines the Zionist perspective through which history is explicitly intended to be taught.

This presentation feeds the Jewish-Israeli collective’s prevailing psycho-cultural dispositions and seems to reinforce notions about victimization and the need to ensure security from the Other. Also reinforced is a psycho-cultural narrative that presents Jewish-Israelis as victims “once again.” Any attempt to reduce the defensiveness of the narrative through the presentation of a balanced history remains underdeveloped, as also illustrated by the IMOE’s failure to accept Bar-On and Adwan’s project. A fractured and contradictory account of history is presented in this (2010) curriculum. These fractured narratives appear through the infusion of selected primary sources, cited verbatim from various Arab political institutions, or by under-developing the presentation of Arab rejections to compromise or land deals with the Jewish Israelis, expressed through terms such as Arabs were “opposed to,” or “were angered,” or “became angry with.”

This idea is furthered in both the Development of the Jewish national home in Israel and the Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel 1945-1947 lessons. In these cases, the curriculum and corresponding supplemental curricular texts present the Jewish population in the region as celebrating and accepting the United Nations Security Council Resolution 181 (S/RES/242), and present the Arabs as unanimously rejecting it. Accountability is placed solely with the Arabs who are presented as engaging in violence to block Resolution 181. Still, the narrative alludes to the fact that the Arabs engaged in struggles with the Jews and does not utilize an explicitly negative lexicon that would present Arabs being murderous or engaging in insidious attacks.

This inconsistent placing of blame serves to contradict the IMOE’s own attempts to bring in a shared account and to move towards greater legitimacy and humanization of the Other through
attempts to overcome suspicion, hatred, and prejudice in presentations of Arab countries’ (Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia) steps to defy, through force, the implementation of Resolution 181. In his work on UN Resolution 181 – The Partition Plan – November 29, 1947, Hertz (n.d.), for instance, argues that it was the Arabs who sought to alter the settlement and, in turn, threatened bloodshed. As he quotes,

The [British] Government of Palestine fear that strife in Palestine will be greatly intensified when the Mandate is terminated, and that the international status of the United Nations Commission will mean little or nothing to the Arabs in Palestine, to whom the killing of Jews now transcends all other considerations. Thus, the Commission will be faced with the problem of how to avert certain bloodshed on a very much wider scale than prevails at present. … The Arabs have made it quite clear and have told the Palestine government that they do not propose to co-operate or to assist the Commission, and that, far from it, they propose to attack and impede its work in every possible way. We have no reason to suppose that they do not mean what they say (United Nations Palestine Commission, 1948, in Hertz, n.d.).

Yet a key here is that the use of terms and ideas such as “certain bloodshed,” “killing the Jews,” “they do not purpose to co-operate,” or “they propose to attack” is contentious and inflammatory. How could there be concurrently an expectation that the Arabs’ perspective would be understood by students? How would or could such a presentation lead to the overcoming of suspicion, hate, and prejudice, and to a state of wanting to legitimize and humanize them (the Arabs)?

In an effort to address some of these contractions and to foster the students’ development of independent critical thinking skills, the curriculum moves the focus back to notions of empathy in contextualizing the way this violent eruption brewed. Here, the curriculum presents perspectives about how the Palestinians may have interpreted the dispositions of the Jews at the time and about their perception that the United Nations was siding with the Jews.
In another lesson from Unit 5: Modern Israel, within the Development of the Jewish National Home in Israel and The Establishment of the State of Israel subunit, the curriculum frames a study of the Declaration of Establishment of State of Israel through activities that involve discussion and reflection about the attitude of Arabs in society; presentation of opposing positions (though intended to discredit them through the use of documents and evidence made available to students), and discussion of the degree to which Jews in the area actually had power. Previous curricular units (not the focus of this thesis study) have identified other instances of historical Jewish victimization. Here, the selected content focuses on the resilience of the Jewish people and the unwavering attachment they have to the land, through lessons that explore the emergence of the Arab national states in the Middle East in a focus on the creation of rifts. There is also a focus on the growth of this national identity for Arabs within Israel, on an exploration of the spread of Greater Syria, on the need for Aliyah and the redemption of the land by the Jews, on Zionism and its effects of this on the war and relations with the Other, and finally on an examination of the conflict and how Jews persevered in the wake of the Other’s invasion.

With great emphasis, this belief is epitomized through the curriculum’s presentation of Israel’s Declaration of Independence, which perpetuates the psycho-cultural narrative of religion, religious territorial attachment, and protectionism. The curriculum frames content in a manner whereby students are intended to learn about who they are (collective identity and religious attachment to the land); and the declaration sets out the three symbolizing characteristics of the Jewish-Israeli identity: the people, the state, and the nation. As the IMOE selections state: “The Land of Israel was the birthplace of the Jewish people. Here their spiritual, religious and political identity was shaped. Here they first attained to statehood, created cultural values of national and universal significance and gave to the world the eternal Book of Books” (Provisional Government
of Israel, 1948, p. 1). There is no doubt that this narrative and this document are meant to serve as responses to the question about “who we are” as Jews, “our” understanding of being the “chosen people” (through the notion that Jews gave the world the Bible), and “our” right to this land. As the declaration continues, this idea is personified through key identity-based markers.

After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their Dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration in it of their political freedom. Impelled by this historic and traditional attachment, Jews strove in every successive generation to re-establish themselves in their ancient homeland. In recent decades they returned in their masses (Provisional Government of Israel, 1948, p. 1).

Use of triggering words like “forcibly exiled” from “their land,” “their return,” and “political freedom” implies that, while this land may have had to be purchased from absentee land owners, as noted in Finding 1, Israel “was always” ancient Jewish land. This IMOE-selected excerpt calls on the Aliyah process and the work of the Jewish settlers, who are framed in the declaration as pioneers and defiant returnees. The excerpt highlights what these Jewish defenders did to “restore” the land. While much of this thesis study has worked to uncover whether the narrative depicts this land pre-Aliyah as uninhabited, the declaration itself notes that it was not. In the concluding paragraphs, the Arab Others are recognized as neighbours, and an olive branch is seemingly offered. While similar sentiments are expressed through Finding 4, in the IMOE’s attempts to present a balanced picture of how events transpired, the declaration notes that:

We appeal… to the Arab inhabitants of the State of Israel to preserve peace and participate in the upbuilding of the State on the basis of full and equal citizenship and due representation in all its provisional and permanent institutions. We extend our hand to all neighbouring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighbourliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land. The State of Israel is prepared to do its share in a common effort for the advancement of the entire Middle East (Provisional Government of Israel, 1948, p. 1).
Societal positioning and psycho-cultural dispositions and interpretations of the Other as a constant threat stem from a multitude of schisms that are inextricably intertwined and open the door to psycho-cultural narratives that justify the stance as both an occupier of the Other and a protector of the state’s citizens. Although Palestinians are not granted a distinct national recognition separate from the neighbouring Arabs, they are not denied national membership either. As such, while the curriculum is selective in nature, it does not explicitly make the claim that Israel is an occupier. Rather, its (Jewish) citizens are presented as taking back what they believe is theirs, and as taking every measure necessary to doing so.

This discussion leads to the second event examined, the *Nakba*, and the way it is framed within the curriculum mandates. These issues were previously discussed in Findings 1 and 3, and specifically, the way the establishment of the State of Israel led to the refugee problem. Still, questions about how the curriculum frames cause and effect in a balanced manner need further commentary. The depiction of the Jewish people and the State of Israel within the curriculum appears to justify the actions taken by Jewish-Israelis people and the state and to frame the armed conflict as a humanitarian war against an enemy who refuses to accept or acknowledge the existence and rights of the Jewish people in Israel (Bar-Tal et al., 2009).

As a key turning point in the conflict, many curricular resources quote “Plan D” as the catalyst for the Palestinian refugee problem, though the plan itself never explicitly called for Arab expulsion. In essence, the *Haganah*’s plan of March 1948 presented guidelines to (a) take control of Mandatory Palestine, (b) declare a Jewish State, and (c) defend the Jewish State borders and people before and in anticipation of Arab invasion (Tal, 2004, p. 165; Morris, 2004, p. 155). Some supplementary resources used in the *Establishment of Israel* and *The Establishment of the sovereign government of the State of Israel* lessons refer to the plan as the “conquest” of Arab
towns and villages inside and along the borders of the area allocated to the proposed Jewish State, according to the UN Partition Plan; some curricular texts explore the plan as “colonization” and a “land grab.” In light of these competing views, the curricular attempt may be to have students see these contradictions as stemming from the two approaches the Haganah were to employ. In the first, if members of the Haganah encountered resistance, the population of conquered villages was to be expelled outside the borders of the Jewish State for defensive purposes. The second approach was employed if members did not encounter resistance. Then those villagers could remain in their homes but live under the rules and laws of the now established Jewish State (Gelber, 2006, Vidal, 1997).

Following a reading of aforementioned studies by Podeh (2000, 2002), Firer (1998) and Adwan and Firer (1997, 1999, 2002), as well as those by CMIP (2000, 2002), Groiss (2000), IMPACT-SE (2013), Manor (2006, 2007), and Teff-Seker (2009, 2011), it is noted that strides are being made to include a more “balanced” presentation of the conflict. These efforts imply that the IMOIE, teachers, and curricular resources themselves take into account the evolution of the historical debate and present an inclusive history without distortion or the omission of violent, immoral, embarrassing, or shocking events. Specifically, in the Establishment of Israel lesson, the curriculum uses a seemingly balanced approach (understanding the limitations of this selection) in examinations of the other by-products of the conflict and the outcomes of “Plan D.” Here the curriculum presents the idea that, while Arabs may have been the intended target for Jewish defence, the defence itself may have been motivated by the Other’s growing anti-Semitism and the subsequent expulsion of Jews from neighbouring countries as a result of “Plan D.” As such, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the wars between Israel and the Arabs caused the migration of large groups of refugees – both Arabs and Jews. The Arab refugees were uprooted from their homes
which were in the area of the fighting. The Jewish refugees were uprooted from their homes in Arab countries due to the hostility that emerged as a result of the establishment of the State of Israel and as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict (CMIP, 2000, p. 85).

This approach to the conflict from a larger, multi-directional perspective may be intended to help students to comprehend collective responsibility and the interconnections in the conflict. There is not simply one cause, one victim, or one perpetrator; rather, it seems that each event has to be understood in context and as part of a larger whole. That may be the explicit motivation of the IMOE, but the use of a continually disconnected narrative may implicitly depict a picture of a David versus Goliath turn of events, whereby Israel won the war and established a country, absorbed Jews who were expelled from Muslim countries, and solidified a nation in need of protection from an increasing, visceral wave of anti-Semitism. Yet, in this process, an estimated 650,000 Palestinians were displaced (this displacement is known as the *Nakba*).

As previously indicated, while the term “*Nakba*” has been banned from many of the curricular texts (Black, 2009) and from conversations within formal educational space, the term has been used by academics who describe this event as “ethnic cleansing” because of the percentage of Arab inhabitants who were displaced (Pedahzur and Perliger, 2010, p. 356; Masalha, 1992, p. 175; Khalidi, 1998, p. 21). The cause and usage of the term “*Nakba*” are contentious, as the emphasis in its use seems less focused on the expulsion of Jews and more on the result of the Deir Yassin massacre and the ensuing military engagement (Groiss, 2003, 2007; Bar-Siman-Tov, 2010).

The IMOE continues to be unwilling to refer to these events as a possible “massacre,” but does allow the use of some supplementary curricular texts that highlight the term and challenge
the political narrative about these events. The curriculum takes these ideas and suggests that students complete a number of critical thinking activities, such as the following:

The War of Independence is called different names that express a different point of view on the war: The War of Independence […], El Nakba.

a. Explain the meaning of every name. […]
b. Explain the different points of view that led to giving each of these names (Teff-Seker, 2009).

While the process of uncovering and accepting one’s part in history is slow and contentious, the evolution of shared accountability in the history curriculum is a slow and arduous process. The term Nakba may be banned, but the history curriculum does in fact deal with the events in a more balanced and inclusive manner, though still contradictory and selective, way. The dominance of the inclusive narrative still remains heavily entrenched throughout the curriculum, namely, in assigning blame to Arab nations for their refusal to accept Israel’s right to exist, and blaming Arab leaders for a failure to accept peace. There has also been an emergence of a critical narrative (referred to here as “the post-Zionist” narrative). This shift has begun to challenge previously held approaches to the teaching of the conflict. While the assigning of blame remains, this critical narrative, which speaks to cause and effect, is becoming more evident. As seen in the text, Journey to the Past – The Twentieth Century, the students are to examine the differing aspects of the forced, politically authorized, Israeli expulsion, and of the environment that led Palestinians to flee their homes.

The war claimed a heavy human cost. As a result of it half of the Palestinian Arabs, who lived within the borders of Mandatory Land of Israel became displaced or refugees – some 600,000 of them. In most cases this was the direct result of the war and not the result of prior planning on the part of the Jews or the Arabs.

The exit of the Arabs from The Land of Israel began a short while after the [Partition] resolution of the 29 November [1947]. At the beginning members of the better off families left the towns. This weakened the spirit of those that were left. When the military operations, in which the Haganah, afterwards the Israel Defence Forces, won victories, intensified, the flight of Arabs from the towns and
the villages increased because of fear of the fighting forces. There was no plan on the part of the leaders of the State and the army to expel the Arabs from the Jewish State. In those places where there were good relations between Jews and Arabs an express order was issued not to expel the inhabitants. This is what happened in Abu Ghosh, near Jerusalem, in Fureidis, near Zichron Yaakov, and also in Haifa and Acre. In contrast to this, the expulsion of the inhabitants of Ramla and Lod was authorized by the political echelon.

The Arab leadership contributed its part to the panic stricken flight of the Arabs from the Land of Israel. It had no clear policy in this matter and it did not give the Palestinians clear instruction on what to do. The refugees were concentrated in refugee camps in Jordan, in the Gaza Strip, in Lebanon and in Syria. On account of their military defeat and the refugee problem the Arabs call the war of 1948, called the War of Independence by the Jews, - “al-Nakbah” in Arabic, [meaning] the catastrophe (p. 292-294 in CMIP, 2000).

But while the curriculum intends history to be presented as tolerant and inclusive, and also a tool for peacebuilding, its list of approved resources, primarily for the Establishment of Israel lesson, is not. As Manor (2007) identifies, some authorized IMOE supplementary curricular texts devote large portions of their discussion to the creation of the refugee problem and the different perspectives that are being considered, while others may introduce and examine the events through socio-political debate that presents events as contradictory and often polarizing. When narratives are not fluid or consistent, students are left to extrapolate information from one account in one text, or perhaps from another, that may present differing figures, narratives, or rationales.

In a contrasting view, discussed in Finding 1, the curriculum inserts a comparison between the plights of the Palestinians at this time and similar situations that Jews in Islamic countries were facing. In what seems to be an attempt to draw parallels between the sufferings endured by various actors in the creation of the State of Israel, and possibly to show that Israel’s creation did not benefit all world Jewry, the curriculum presents many examples such as the following:

The establishment of the State of Israel, and the battles between it and the Arab countries, led to a worsening of the situation of Jews living in Muslim countries: those events sparked hostility and aggression against their Jewish citizens. And in some of them, including Iraq, Syria and Egypt, laws were even enacted to revoke
their citizenship, leaving many of these Jews without a source of income. Tens of thousands of Jews left their homes and took nothing with them, most of them in the first years after the establishment of the State of Israel. Often they left via secret routes and risked their lives because some of the Arab countries forbade them to leave.

In contrast to the Arab refugees, many of whom still live in refugee camps and whose problem remains unsolved – the problem of Jewish refugees from Arab countries was long ago solved. Some of the Jewish refugees from Muslim countries immigrated to Israel and some immigrated to other countries. Those who immigrated to Israel did so out of a sense that they were coming to their homeland, and the State of Israel, one of whose primary goals is to absorb immigration, invested great efforts in absorbing these immigrants. After a difficult adjustment period, they were absorbed in Israel and were integrated into the life of the country (CMIP, 2000, p. 86).

While the IMOE has set out a number of themes to motivate the breaking down of barriers and to educate students through a relatively balanced perspective, this thesis study’s four findings show that contradictions still exist. In relation to previously stated studies which looked at previous curricula and textbook use within state secular Jewish-Israeli schools, strides are being made to be more inclusive, namely, by legitimizing and humanizing the Palestinian Other in a manner that also becomes self-reflective and acknowledges a shared responsibility. Yet any efforts to attain true objectivity can be successful only if the tools teachers are provided with and/or authorized to use are objective and honest, and also include different points of view and narratives that present a larger, contextualized history, even if the history is contentious. Students taught to critically analyse can be empowered to do so only when they are all given a complete picture.
5.5 – Conclusion

The IMOE (2010) history curriculum is not an apologist for past transgressions by Jewish-Israelis; the curriculum appears to contextualize outcomes and works to promote peace by improving the perception of the Other and, in doing so, uses situations where the Other intersects Jewish history as a way to foster understanding, mutual respect, and the legitimization of their (the Others’) cause. In so doing, “There is a concerted effort to utilize biblical and Jewish sources to emphasize shared values and traditions and the common destiny of the two peoples, whilst distancing the student from stereotypes and prejudices” (CMIP, 2002, n.p.) Through this process, the curriculum frames the delivery of content as a need for students to place themselves in the Others’ shoes, to build empathy and through this process, and to refine problem-solving skills in efforts to devise innovative solutions to historical problems. There was no doubt that these exercises and simulations would be highly sensitive and politically controversial, especially given the contentious nature of the process of legitimizing a historical “enemy” and possibly bringing one’s own history into question.

The findings in this chapter show that, while emphasizing a dominant Jewish-Israeli narrative is taken and begins to deconstruct history as the foundation of modernity, so too does the curriculum begin to acknowledge, legitimize and humanize the Arab or Palestinian Other. Though there are many questions about what constitutes a defence, whether pre-emptive or reactive, much of the violence is presented on the basis of a psycho-cultural belief that the existence of a sovereign Jewish State and the immigration of Jews to it (Aliyah) are legitimate and justified.

This defensive justification and notion of land and sovereignty are highlighted as the crux of Finding 1. Here, the IMOE’s selection of history content attempts to convey the legitimization and humanization of the Other through an understanding that the land was not uninhabited; rather,
through the emergence of the Palestinian narrative of these events, it becomes clear that the situation was that the land was purchased by Jewish settlers from absentee land owners, leaving Palestinian farmers who were the custodians of this land dispossessed. This idea is furthered by introducing students to the contentious topic of the Palestinian Nakba. While the Nakba is framed as a by-product of the larger Arab-Israeli war, the curriculum compares and contrasts this event with Jewish expulsion from neighbouring Arab countries. While the curriculum implicitly interconnects a siege mentality within the larger Jewish-Israeli national narrative, Finding 2 highlights the fact that the curriculum is making a concerted effort to help students to overcome suspicion, hatred, and prejudices about the Other. Given that this thesis study looks at the adoptive witnessing of memory, an assumption may be made that, partly because of the political climate in Israel and the larger region, many Israeli children have not interacted with Palestinians. As such, the framing of the Others as they intersect with the Jewish-Israeli space, though selective, seems intended to recognize pluralist psycho-cultural narratives, and also to allow students to examine the Others’ culture and religion. These two factors may have a substantial impact on the students’ narratives, dispositions, and interpretations of the Other’s actions.

With the Others acknowledged, and their presence legitimized and humanized in the region, Finding 3 explores the question of whether the Other’s presence constitutes a justification for national aspirations. This, in my opinion, is the most contentious of the four examined themes. The curriculum thoroughly presents students with an excessive, and, at times, an overwhelming amount of the chronological history that has occurred between Jews and Arabs. The presentation of the topics of land and dispossession, of the feuds, clashes, and riots the ensued, of the increase in Jewish immigration and spread Zionism in the area, and finally of various international bodies’ involvement in the partition of the land all seem geared to presentation of a picture of the
Palestinians as losing their identity. That said, the curriculum also notes that this process was a result of cause and effect and that, though Jewish settlers had a part to play in Palestinian dispossession, the Palestinian situation is a result of their own leaders’ choices (referencing Arab rejection of partition). The curriculum intends that students come to understand why Palestinians have national aspirations. These aspirations seemingly question Israel’s own legitimacy and security.

These findings are echoed in Finding 4, which, in its attempts to provide a balanced presentation of the conflict, does so through selective content. This finding uncovered the reality that differing perspectives, explanations, and approaches in the analysis of the Arab strategy and the competing interests of the Arab inhabitants and Jewish settlers are intended to be presented to students, but, much like conclusions drawn from Finding 3, this overloading may serve to create opportunities for confusion, misunderstanding and a disconnected picture of events. These disconnected depictions appear to be intended to provide students with an understanding of the intractable nature of the conflict, but they analyse actions and outcomes through the notion of nationalism and religious attachment, and also of a siege mentality.

Given these findings, the conclusion is that while the curriculum is explicitly written as a tool of tolerance and acceptance, it implicitly appears unaware of its use of terminology that seems to consider or frame the actions of the Other as more a nuisance or bother. Moreover—while the curriculum’s overall use of language regarding Arabs and Palestinians is usually factual, accepting, and non-offensive, as noted above—in relation to the removal of stereotypes and the elimination of suspicion, hatred, and prejudice of/towards the Other, revisions are far from complete. The use of such terms may be intentional. In relation to this thesis study’s methodology, it needs to be noted that possible narratives of incitement or triggers are embedded, and these
narratives could trigger emotions of fear and distrust of the Other, or, instead, empathy towards
the Other’s history and dispossession. Furthermore, when the Nakba (although not named as such
in the curriculum) is studied as a by-product of the larger conflict and aligned with the pogroms
and expulsion of Jews from neighbouring Arab countries, such narratives may show the
comparable struggles both groups endured at the time, and identify the contradictions involved in
recognition versus negation.

A stance that is critical of the Jewish-Israeli position during the conflict and the events
leading up to it would facilitate education for tolerance (see Chapter Two) and the framing of
decisions around the necessity of defence and also of justice for all. Consequently, with renewed
violence between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians, the psycho-cultural narratives used to describe
past events still serve only to strengthen the self-images and images of the Other that the students
adoptively witnessed in both school and society. These images still implicitly present the dominant
Jewish-Israeli society as just and the Other as violent. While tolerance and legitimization have
become key issues, the state’s survival remains the paramount concern. The process of removing
these connotations would mean working in collaboration with a government that is reliant on their
use to shift from a narrative of war and defence to a narrative that does not recreate and reimagine
an “Other” constructed through historical stereotypes and delegitimizing labels. If this trend
continues, Abu-Saad (2006, p. 715) notes that the system (meaning, the process of formal Israeli
nation-state education, including the IMOE curriculum and supplementary resources) will
continue to perpetuate the violent conflict, by recreating and exacerbating the divide between sides
and by educating generation after generation of students in a manner “that continues to deny the
history, humanity, legitimate grievances, and aspirations of Palestinian Arabs.”
History is a lived experience, and, in the region, history is still occurring. Conflict in the Middle East and tensions between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians remain high, but steps are being taken to speak with, as opposed to shooting at, members of the two groups. The conflict students witness on their doorsteps is far different from the conflict that occurred a century ago, the conflict remains fresh in their minds, the adoptive wounds of history also remain. As a tool of education and a mouth piece of politics, history discourses and texts need to be contextualized. There needs to be an understanding that its embedded stories occurred in a time different from the present. But, how different was it? The reality is, that while violence continues to erupt, political actions seem to be mitigated, and band-aids are applied until peaceful solutions can ideally be reached. History has shown that peace between Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians will not be made through violence. As long as peace is more a dream than a reality, tension remains. There are enemies and allies. In the case of Israel, though not all Palestinians or Arabs are “enemies,” the curricular discourse of defence of the nation-state dictates collective punishment by hard line nationalists. As long as the Other is depicted as an enemy and as the reincarnation of the Amalek who acts to prevent or destroy a “Jewish homeland,” the Other can never be truly legitimized or humanized.
CHAPTER SIX: THE PSYCHO-CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE JEWISH-ISRAELI HISTORY CURRICULUM

“ורכז הנ המ רוכז
(Remember what Amalek has done to you)
Deuteronomy 25:17

“The ruling class has the schools and press under its thumb. This enables it to sway the emotions of the masses.”

Albert Einstein

“You cannot build pathways towards others if you believe they are inferior beings, or that you, and not they, are superior, chosen one’s, with your suffering privileged above and beyond all else’s.”

Cathy Sultan

6.1 – Introduction

As explored throughout this thesis study, revisions to the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum have included efforts to initiate a more inclusive narrative of the Other through the presentation of a contextualized history. Yet the pedagogical tools and the curriculum’s emphasis on certain identifying or othering terms and labels remain contradictory.

For secular Jewish-Israeli students, the curriculum is intended by the IMOE to set out a path for them to follow, which reinforces the status quo. Through the presentation to students of a series of unifying factors (e.g., religion, religious persecution, attachment to land, perceived threat
by a common enemy), immersion in a formal space (the school itself), and reinforcement of these factors (through intended in-class teaching), it can be assumed that the history curriculum (the IMOE as a mouthpiece of the Israeli government) contributes to shaping the identities of the Jewish-Israeli self, the collective, and the Palestinian Other. As Patience (2005, n.p.) maintains, “The way a conflict or history is taught in the classroom can either support that conflict or (support) co-existence.” While the IMOE presents some episodic events in which the Palestinian Others and the way they shared space with Jewish settlers before 1948 are acknowledged, the psycho-cultural implications of the curricular narratives used to present these events to the secular Jewish-Israeli students appear to reinforce a narrative of religious persecution (of the Jews) that mirrors in some ways the narrative surrounding recent outbreaks of violence between the dominant Jewish-Israeli society and the Palestinian Other. Furthermore, the portrayal of Palestinian displacement is inconsistent and, at times, seemingly downplayed through comparisons with Jewish expulsions from Islamic countries. Students are intended to be introduced to Palestinian dispossession (see Finding 1) through interactions between the Moshav (Jewish settlers), the Effendis (absentee Arab landowners), and the Fellahim (the Palestinian farmers of the land); and through content (see Findings 3 and 4) focused on displacement beginning with the Haganah implementation of “Plan D” and the Arab invasion of Israel following the Israeli declaration of independence, which resulted in the Nakba. Any and all interactions between Jewish Israelis and Arabs or Palestinians are framed as violent and could presumably perpetuate a siege mentality.

Because the framing of these curricular narratives draw on past traumas and previous violent interactions between Jews and the Other (not necessarily Palestinians), as opposed to seemingly provide a de-centred presentation of history, these narratives may serve as “frameworks for action” (Ross, 2002, p. 303) that invite students, through a process of recall, to draw on their
adoptively witnessed memories and to imagine parallels between historical events and current outbreaks of violence. These narratives influence how the dominant Jewish-Israeli society comes to interpret their world and the actions of the Palestinian Others who occupy a shared space. The curriculum intends students to draw on first-hand experiences that might feel similar to those referenced in the narratives the history curriculum uses to reinforce Jewish-Israelis’ collective identity (i.e., adoptive witnessing). These curricular narratives thus become further adopted and infused with new experiences and new narratives. Their use is an endeavour to bind the Jewish collective together in the interpretation of and response to traumatic events apparently intended to create meaningful bonds by infusing these new experiences (e.g., conflict with Arabs) with the emotions and metaphors of conflicts in the past (e.g., the Nazi Holocaust). This dynamic is noted in the work of Funk and Said (2004, p. 3), who explain that,

Though contested by rival factions and leaders within a group, the narratives which come to dominate public discourse are often those which serve most effectively to give definition to in-group identity and values through reference to an out-group. Such narratives provide authoritative, common sense understandings about the nature of perceived threats to the group and its values, and connect the fears, insecurities, and problems of the moment both with past tribulations and with a forward-looking political program.

Within this thesis study, Funk and Said shed light on the process of defining the social hierarchy of the dominant Jewish-Israeli society as the in-group, and the Arabs and Palestinians as the out-group. Using an anti-racism lens to analyse power, it is assumed that building on these by-products of identity politics will tend to promote exclusive in-group loyalties and to project negative images of the out-group. The Arab and Palestinian out-group is presented as a threat, and such threats are further infused with the repetition of key metaphors recalling other historical interactions and outcomes. These curricular narratives are used to frame the Other. The dynamics of any curricular narrative (such as the IMOE-mandated history curriculum), the hierarchical
societal positions of “in-group” or “out-group,” “us” or “them,” “self” or “Other,” and the way such labels “manifest the emotional fears and visceral threats experienced by conflict protagonists” may be examined analytically. Such analysis of their use may “provide criteria for effective settlements” (Funk and Said, 2004, p. 3-4) and allow the curriculum to become a tool of peacemaking (“negotiation, mediation, and other dialogue to understand conflicts and identity mutually-acceptable resolution”) and peacebuilding (“complex long-term transformation of cultural and social systems, to develop sustainable positive peace by redressing the beliefs and practices that cause exploitation, marginalization, and dehumanization”) (Bickmore, 2017, p.5).

However, this forward-looking political program suggested by Funk and Said, which could presumably take shape as peace between Israelis and Palestinians, is likely to fail as long as Palestinians are “Othered” and Jewish-Israelis continue their defensive approach to Palestinian statehood. For today’s secular Jewish-Israelis, as for Israel’s early pioneers, the violent conflict has been embedded within the psycho-cultural dispositions and narrative interpretations of the Others’ actions. So too is this violent conflict rooted in the socio-political boundaries that define the dominant Jewish-Israeli society, its cultural and national identity, and the Jewish-Israeli psyche.

As this thesis study has repeatedly highlighted, this definition of the dominant Jewish-Israeli society revolves around identity politics and social positioning that fuel and sustain the collective “we” in defence against the Other. Pinson (2008, p. 203) notes that the politics and process for individuals to become citizens of the collective “we” are a struggle for the individual and group to define themselves and their place within the conflict and as part of the dominant state society. Based on both Pinson’s theory and a theoretical prism of anti-racism, this narrative positioning of the collective “we” produces and reproduces in-group relations, positioning the
collective within a socially constructed space. Within the curriculum, this (re)production of a divided space is accomplished through the constitution and protection of the discursive (societal space) boundaries of “we” and “them,” through its emphasis on a necessity for protection based on past violent encounters with the Other. So too does it parallel difference (Otherness) with acceptance and belonging – building on notions of the collective sharing a common history, religion, culture different from the Others.

This thesis study had not focused on the socio-structural or socio-political boundaries that encompass the conflict embedded within the mandated curriculum, nor on how such knowledge is intended to be disseminated to students. It does focus on relational concepts, specifically on how the history curriculum presents and intends to shape (through pedagogical tools) the individual as part of the collective. In so doing, positional narratives act as building blocks to bring groups together into a single narrative “we” through their shared religion and history of religious persecution. As membership within the dominant Jewish-Israeli in-group grew, through both the waves of Aliyah and Jewish expulsion from neighbouring Islamic countries, a sense of community and collective identity seems to solidify. While similar experiences were collected and absorbed into a dominant Israeli-Jewish narrative, the new collective “we” gains further strength through an emphasis on shared episodic events.

At the same time, considerable invisibility or exclusion of the Palestinian Other from Unit 5 of the IMOE history curriculum is evident, as explicitly identified throughout Chapter Five. Yet, through the inclusion of the Other in situational discussions found within the Jewish-Arab conflict untill World War II subunit on expressions of conflict, interpreted in parallel to the selective framing of the events from 1921 to 1929 and from 1936 to 1939, the curriculum does recognize the Others’ place in the region—that is, as farmers already living there during the first Aliyah.
This acknowledgement is an attempt, however incomplete, to legitimize and humanize the Others and their national aspirations. However, this recognition is not enough, since the Other’s legitimacy is a matter of framed perception. As Rosen and Salomon (2011, p. 139-140) propose, Legitimization means that one comes to acknowledge or perceive the validity (not correctness!) of items in the other side’s conflict-related narrative… That is, they come to acknowledge the importance of that issue in the eyes of the Palestinians… Thus, we operationalize legitimization of the other side’s collective narrative in terms of the importance individuals ascribe to issues emanating from the other side’s narrative. However, it is not the importance they themselves ascribe to these issues, but rather the importance they think that the other side attributes to those issues. One does not legitimize another party’s belief when she or he thinks that that belief is unimportant in the eyes of that other party.

This thesis study uses Rosen and Salomon’s notion of legitimization here to understand how the IMOE could have introduced and acknowledged the national aspirations of Palestinians, but not accepted these aspirations as valid. There is no doubt that the IMOE curriculum (2010) discusses the importance of a Palestinian state through the eyes of the Palestinians, but this importance is downplayed because, as it is framed by the curriculum, the acceptance of a Palestinian state could call into question the legitimacy of the Jewish state, the security of the Jewish people, and the Zionist ideology.

With respect to the legitimacy of the Jewish-Israeli perception of history, the curriculum’s presentation of the roots of the conflict outbreak(s) appears to justify any and all Jewish-Israeli incursions against the Arab and Palestinian Other. In turn, this same curricular justification contextualizes the role Jewish-Israelis played in the outbreak and development of the violent conflict. This framing of key ideas positions the Jewish-Israeli in-group collective in opposition
to the Arab and Palestinian Other. As Kelman (2005, p. 5) proposes, one can learn “to differentiate their image of the enemy by discovering that there are potential negotiating partners on the other side, that there is a distinction between the other’s ideological dreams and operational programs, and that the other has positive goals beyond destruction of their group.” This ideological dream may not only be the creation and sustainability of a Jewish State for themselves at the time but also the formation of a Palestinian State by the Other. Ironically (as noted in Finding 4), with much content of the later lessons in the unit framing the Arab’s rejection of the partition plan, the crux of the violent conflict is framed as from this nationalist movement. Moreover, while the curriculum introduces the Palestinian national aspirations, it does not speak to or engage in any activities that call for the establishment of the Others’ state. Rather, it only goes as far as introducing their claims through a perceivable “Palestinian” lens, compared and contrasted with the (preferred) Zionist perspective.

As such, a belief that land was offered to the Arabs and later the Palestinian Other is deeply woven into the psycho-cultural narrative of the Jewish-Israelis and in how this selective history of the conflict is conveyed in curriculum texts—in terms of relationships with the Other, land claims/disputes, immigration, the Aliyah process, and religious attachment to the land. As Nets-Zehngut and Bar-Tal (2007, p. 2) note, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict,

Is protracted (lasting almost a century); violent (causing thousands of casualties in both societies); central, (on the main public agenda); total (focused on fundamental goals such as identity and territory); and demanding extensive psychological and material investments by the parties, in order to cope with - and win - the conflict. It has also been considered of zero-sum nature and irresolvable peacefully (Kriesberg, 1993; Bar-Tal and Teichman, 2005); as a result, the conflict has inflicted upon both societies threat, stress, pain, exhaustion, and costs, in human and material terms (Abu-Zayyad and Bar-Tal, 2003).
Both societies have had to live with this harsh and violent reality, and therefore both have had to psychologically adapt to the ongoing situation.

It is this societal threat, stress, pain, and exhaustion, which Nets-Zehngut and Bar-Tal lay out, that amplify the psycho-culturally entrenched nature of the conflict. In turn, these belief systems presumably mitigate Jewish-Israelis’ perspectives on (1) how the conflict is currently playing out, and (2) why it remains protracted. Because of the zero-sum nature of the violent conflict, the dominant Jewish-Israeli society has emphasized and embedded within its narrative of history a series of fundamental goals like collective identity, (see Findings 1 and 3) land claims and Jewish expulsion, and (see Finding 4) the perceived need for security in the wake of Arab violence against Jews. This psycho-cultural perspective is noted specifically in the Establishment of Israel subunit’s focus on the causes that led to the establishment of the State, on the Arab refusal to accept the decision of Kaf-Tet November, and on the uncertainty and pressure created by Arab independence and the threatened invasion of Israel by Arab countries. This chapter takes the findings and assumptions from Chapter Five and explores their psycho-cultural implications in order to understand how they may facilitate the transmission of conflict-bound collective memory and identity.

6.2 – The role education and history curriculum may play in understanding conflict

Salomon, cited in Shefsky (n.d., p. 3), distinguishes three components of collective narrative: as historical memories, a set of beliefs, and a sense of identity. Throughout a number of subunits within Unit 5: Modern Israel, various lessons frame these three components. One finds that in the Diverse Jewish community in Israel from the late Ottoman period until the end of 19th century and the First World War and Jewish settlement transition from Ottoman rule of the British
Mandate lessons, students are intended to learn about, discuss, and apply a historical memory of establishing settlements in the wake of religious persecution, specifically, Jewish expulsion from Islamic countries. This chronology is then seemingly intended to lead to acceptance of the psycho-cultural disposition that Jews need to continue to fight for religious freedom and territorial sovereignty, through the study of topics and key episodic events embedded within the Jewish - Arab conflict until World War II, The Country road - Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel 1947-1945, and the Establishment of Israel lessons.

The selective nature of any curriculum is widely known. As laid out in the work of Apple (1979), history curriculum, in particular, is a constructed story that presents one account of how events took place. The implication of framing the evolution of modern Israel as such seems to be the creation of a path that students use to identify the current State of Israel through a frame of protection from Others, Others who have done us harm and want to do us (the collective Jewish-Israeli group) harm. This dynamic reinforces Ross’s position that psycho-cultural narratives reflect deep seated worldviews.

In reinforcing this position, the history curriculum uses hierarchal terms and presents Others and outcomes in a loaded manner. While terms like “revolts” and “riots” identified in Chapter 5 present the Others’ position as a people who themselves are oppressed, the terms and the situations they frame are presented only through a Zionist perspective that couples the siege mentality with a belief that the Other’s intentions are malicious and unjustified. This curricular narrative may perpetuate the image of the Other as an irrational enemy, reinforced by descriptive words like “rioters,” “disturbances,” or “gangs of marauders and outlaws.” This interpretation is furthered by an underlying implicit message that may introduce and reinforce negative stereotypes,
encourage a confrontational attitude towards those perceived to be the Other, and ignore contradictory or non-conflictual events that preceded the outbreak of the violent conflict.

Any reading of the IMOЕ’s history curriculum uncovers the ways Jewish-Israelis are intended to be taught about Jewish history and their role in it as both victims and victors. Framing the events of 1948 as a “War of Independence,” for example, conjures images of a need to fight for independence, and a sense of past victimization and oppression under a dominant Other. Thus, by highlighting and continually emphasizing a need to “rise up” against a dominant Other (see Fanon), such a fight for independence may foster a sense of Jewish collective nationalism and liberation from persecution by a once oppressive Arab Other, now framed as the Palestinian threat. This kind of process mirrors Fanon’s views on political independence. Fanon (1961, p. 310) believed that “independence is … an indispensable condition for the existence of men and women who are truly liberated.” At the same time, “the future of the national culture and its riches are equally also part in parcel of the values which have ordained the struggle for freedom” (1961, p. 246). Here, Fanon is understood as saying that, only through both the fight towards and the attainment of independence, a people are then no longer victims and oppressed. It is through this fight that the national culture and identity are born. As Smith (1995, p. 383) notes, “no memory, no identity; no identity, nation.” While identities are fluid and are constructed based on how memories are adopted and social relations are scaffolded, they are heavily influenced by the way the group is hierarchically positioned and the way it interacts with others who occupy the same social and geographic space.

Analysis of this portion of the history curriculum uncovers two contradictory images. One portrays Jewish-Israelis and the larger Israeli society as peace-aspiring – that is, as attempting to broker peace (through a process of peacemaking and peacebuilding – see Bickmore, 2017)
between Jewish settlers and the Others (Finding 1). The other image is heavily influenced by a peaceblocking mindset, implicitly contradicting the first by presenting the dominant Jewish-Israeli society as living under a constant existential threat noted in Finding 2 through the caution needed against non-followers of Islam, and in Findings 3 and 4 through the Palestinians process of attaining statehood. Such an image perpetuates past traumas and forces the nation to adopt a strong militaristic “self-defence” posture. This second image is more explicit within the curriculum through the presentation of the Palestinian Other in a state of constant readiness to fight (identified through labels such “gangs,” “rioters,” “marauders,” etc.) and, through this image, the evolving historical picture presents Palestinian angst as violent outbreaks, leading to the larger Arab invasion of 1947. This variegated picture of 2,000 years of oppression and religious persecution, embedded in the 2010 IMOE history curriculum, reflects “the tension in Jewish-Israeli society between its ethnocentric group identity and the aspiration for tolerance and pluralism towards the ‘other’” (Teff-Seker, 2011, n.p.).

This tension, as Teff-Seker identifies, makes the task of producing an inclusive curricular document even more difficult. On one hand, as has been identified throughout this thesis study, the history of the Jewish people is a traumatic history both at the hands of an Arab Other and of others whose more recent actions and narratives share similar traits. With the establishment of a Jewish home land, there should be the assuming belief that the Jews are finally free. This is seen in the history curriculum through its primary trope, which portrays Jews as resilient people who possess strength through struggle, and as a Jewish people who will prevail. These current images place a strong emphasis on the development of a national identity, and on active belonging or participation in the secular Jewish-Israeli milieu, through an emphasis on security, Jewish heroism, and victimization. However, the protectionist rhetoric, ensuing defensive actions against the Arab
and Palestinian Other, and repeated references to a traumatic history make the inclusion of this Other and the legitimation of the Others’ actions against Israel difficult to understand and accept. This difficulty is echoed in Fanon’s discussion of humanity.

For Fanon (1961, p. 223), to fight for the national culture, and, in this case, the sovereignty of the state, means “to fight for the liberation of the nation.” Once the nation has been liberated, it too must be protected. As such, this protectionist rhetoric, while preparing the nation in arms to defend itself, emboldens the creators of a national narrative that defines Others through the need to defend oneself.

This study’s fourth finding is that the IMOE curriculum (2010) attempts to balance these implicitly embedded duelling national images: Israel’s strong military culture and the need for security, and its notion of victimization and trauma. This sense of victimization is fed by a psycho-cultural narrative and siege mentality about being under a constant existential threat that is founded on a history of religious persecution. Reinforcing previously identified curricular studies, my own analysis shows that the legitimacy of the State of Israel, as a Jewish and independent state, is never questioned in the portion of the curriculum I studied, nor is its legitimacy or divine right to be the home land of the Jewish people – specifically noted in its Declaration of Independence.

So, what historical episodes were of most value to secular Jewish-Israeli students in shaping the intended political identities of Jewish-Israeli society within the history curriculum? According to Apple and Christian-Smith (1991), knowledge infusion and omission in curriculum mandates consistently reflect the dominant culture and values (power and dominance) of a society. Within Israel, this curricular system is structured to teach children who they are as part of a collective identity, and how to value themselves and their future in opposition to the imagined Other within a larger global community. In the fragility of a conflictual peace, the history
curriculum appears to have become the battleground for justification of right versus wrong, and of the actions of the state in the conflict, as this conflict is taught about inside the classroom and how it is lived outside of it.

6.3 – History curriculum as a narrative of identity and collective memory

Memory is the key focus of this subsection, but it is important to begin with a short note about the politics of forgetting. According to Fernandes (2004, p. 2451), this politics of forgetting “refers to a political-discursive process in which specific marginalised social groups are rendered invisible within the dominant national political culture.” Integrated within the theoretical lens of anti-racist education, within the IMOE’s history curriculum, this dynamic unfolds through discussions of territory, power, and inequality, and of how such narratives are used within the curriculum to shape psycho-cultural dispositions.

In his work on learning and knowledge, Scott (1983) notes that learning, in opposition to forgetting, is a process in which an organized representation of experience is constructed. The construction is built through the reinforcement and constant validation of psycho-cultural narratives that become etched in memory as stories about who one is (as a collective) and how one is associated with a larger group. Memory, a significant component of psycho-cultural narratives, refers to the process of recollecting and preserving events or impressions from the past. According to Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006, p. 6-7),

The collective memory component of the narrative has a number of characteristics: (a). It is shared by group members and is treated by many of them as truthful accounts of the past and valid history of the group; (b). It does not necessarily tell the truthful history of the past but intends to tell the past that is functional for the group’s present existence and functioning… (c). The body of collective historical narrative appears to entail both memories of past events.
Because memory, and thus remembering, is treated as truth and is not necessarily an accurate account of history, and as multiple memories and versions are used to construct the larger collective memory, so the collective memory becomes distorted. While this study has not seen or read the presentation of the Other as a deliberate attempt to delegitimize the Other, through the IMOÉ’s selection and omission of facts and misrepresentation or interpretation of events, this memory, if believed as truth, can be shaped to fit the current needs and dispositions of the (dominant voices in the) larger group, and adopted by the group as their own. These now adoptive memories, which are reinforced formally and given legitimacy through their use within the school curriculum, remain fluid. Within formal schooling, these memories are constantly being infused, and new memories, through the intended process of knowledge dissemination, are adopted to make sense of current events through a historical “what was” lens. As such memories are told and retold, they mesh into the political narrative and are used to further justify and validate the collective’s actions and to interpret the Others’ reactions.

Through its “learn through absorption” process, memory is acquired (adopted) not necessarily experienced. Within the mandated history curriculum, the process is founded on a motif of victimization and constructed through a shared experience of religious persecution, trauma, and survival. The result is the creation of a sense of belonging with others who survived the same or similar experiences. As Singh (2006), cited in Lomeland (2011, p. 36), suggests, “People effortlessly feel that they share a common culture when it can be demonstrated to them they have evolved from a common past.”

The collective memory describes the identity group’s (ostensible) origin and the origin of the conflict, but it is selective, biased, and distorted, providing a black and white outlook on history and the Other. Yet these memories become embedded in the mandated curriculum as valid
accounts of history (Kansteiner, 2002). As Smith (1995, p. 383) previously suggested, “no memory, no identity; no identity, no nation.” Here, Smith’s statement is interpreted as meaning that a people without a history are a people who never existed, and those with a memory of history use this memory to shape their nation, their culture, and their people. Similarly, Kelman (2005, p. 1) writes,

One of the most pervasive phenomena in the relationship between societies and between different entities within a society—defined in terms of race, religion, ethnicity, or some other characteristics—is the placement of certain groups into the category of the “other.” Categorizing these groups as the other makes them vulnerable to varying degrees of distrust, prejudice, hatred, and demonization. It makes it easier to exclude them from one’s own moral community—the community whose members share a sense of mutual moral obligation and accord each other respect, caring, and protection. Moral exclusion creates the conditions for social and economic discrimination and, in the extreme, for ethnic cleansing and genocide.

As shown in Finding 2, the curriculum can in fact implicitly frame suspicion, hatred, and prejudice towards the Other. The government’s concurrent motivation to continue revising the curriculum to be more inclusive of the Other stems from a need for warring states to grapple with providing a balanced legitimate approach to history without delegitimizing themselves or their own history. However, according to my analysis, the curriculum appears to be aimed at instilling particular psychological conditions. As Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006, p. 6) found in previous curricula, these psychological conditions are: “loyalty to a society and country, high motivation to contribute, persistence, ability to cope with physical and psychological stress, readiness for personal sacrifice, unity, solidarity, maintenance of the societies’ objectives, determination, courage, and endurance.” When the curriculum deals with violent acts and riots, the retaliation against Jewish occupation of the region and uprisings in protest to the British, and, later, the United Nations resolutions to partition the land, as discussed in Finding 4, it does identify the Others and the Others’ actions within key episodic events, and more so when it highlights Jewish or Jewish-
Israeli triumphs. The assumption is that, by infusing the Other in this way, the state (the Israeli government) can ensure the preservation of the dominant collective identity within the conflict by highlighting, not a “we will,” but rather “we have” overcome.

Consequently, though the curriculum has intended to introduce opportunities for students to analyse and critically think about the Others, the Zionist lens remains firm in framing outcomes as acts of defence (e.g., Plan D) and victimization, as opposed to acts of aggression. This selectiveness in efforts to convey a new narrative is evident in Finding 1, in a discussion about the legitimization and humanization of the Palestinian Other through deliberations about land ownership and issues of Jewish and Palestinian expulsion. It is also evident in Finding 3, in lessons where students are to be introduced to and to discuss the national aspirations of the Palestinians to combat Zionism, and in Finding 4, where the curriculum (while still selective) attempts to provide a balanced presentation of the conflict through discussion of motivations, reactions, and the aftermath. However, these curricular narratives also seem to magnify and racialize the “us” versus “them” divide, and, in so doing, pave the way for violent conflict between Palestinians and the dominant Jewish-Israeli society. Using Fanon to provide insight, it may be noted that the violence that has been engendered in the Other, when expressed, prompts retaliation that in turn feeds an escalating spiral of violence and counter-violence.

A focus on the cause and effect roles played in the conflict, and on the structure of the actions of each group in response to (interpretations of) the Others’ actions, is helpful in efforts to deconstruct these actions and narratives. At the same time, it frames cognitions and infuses emotions in relation to the process of humanizing the Other. The infusion of key (contentious, loaded, or double meaning) terms within the curriculum appear to downplay or misconstrue the legitimacy of the Others’ actions in explanations of the motivations for Israeli attacks. For
instance, as noted earlier, terms like “disturbances” and “skirmishes,” which are used regarding
the first and second Aliyah, also appear to downplay the emotions of the Other and convey a sense
of the Other as a nuisance, not as a legitimate threat. However, these disturbances did escalate into
a larger violent conflict.

Theorists such as Jansen suggest that memory is often instrumentalized through a filling-in-
the-gaps process. Further, from a witnessing by adoption stance, these memories become the
binding collective property of a group, and they weave historical, social, and cultural perceptions
into the story the collective body tells about itself. As Margalit (2003) writes, “Memory… is
knowledge from the past. It is not necessarily knowledge about the past” (p. 14), and, therefore,
as Bar-Tal and Salomon proposed above, memory can be disturbing because it does not have to
be an accurate or verifiable account. This is not to say that the IMOE’s curriculum is not accurate;
rather, the content is as accurate but selective. Throughout, this thesis study has shown that history,
and how one remembers it, is selective. And so, assuming history curriculum is used to shape
action, identity, and Otherness, its content would be selected and framed to align in particular
ways. This selective nature is not a matter of half-truths; rather, it is a matter of whose eyes,
experiences, and viewpoints are used to tell the story. This notion of a selective narrative being
embedded within a curriculum and used to shape a collective connection to those represented, as
well as to those who contradict the position, is further discussed by Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006,
p. 18-19), who suggest that,

The narratives serve as lenses for society members through which they view their
world. In this role, they play a determinative role in the way society members,
process information. They lead to the selective collection of information, which
means that society members tend to search and absorb information that is in line
with the narratives and omit contradictory information. But, even when ambiguous
or contradictory information is absorbed, it is encoded and cognitively processed to
be in accordance with the held beliefs of the narratives through bias, addition, and
distortion.
This is not to say that one account is right and the other wrong. Rather, after selective inclusion or exclusion of (re-contextualizing) certain historical events, narratives, and motivations, the narratives of history are seen to be authentic and complete.

The dominant Jewish-Israeli narrative about the creation of the State of Israel and the events that ensued rely on this selectiveness. Auerbach’s study on conflicts of identity within national narratives helps with an understanding of the conclusions drawn from Chapter Five. As Auerbach (2010, p. 100-101) proposes, within the history curriculum, for the 100 years,

the Palestinian side, backed by Arab countries, refused to recognize the right of the Jewish people to establish a state in part of the land of Israel. The Palestinians, for their part, regard denial of their national identity and their right to establish a state in the territory of Israel/Palestine as justification for continuing acts of violence against the Jewish community and the State of Israel.

Because security and the need for state sovereignty are based on the protection of the “Jewish home land”, that protection comes from a collective struggle and a Jewish right to the home land. Finding 1, through its discussion of the Aliyah process and Jewish expulsion from Arab lands, Finding 3, through its discussion of Arab uprising against waves of Jewish immigration and the spread of Zionism in the region, and Finding 4, through its emphasis on violence and riots in the wake of international proposals and resolutions to partition the land substantiate the way the IMOE curricular selection interprets and promulgates this notion of an exclusive state founded on protection from the Other’s national aspirations.

Memory is a product of the stories people and governments tell about themselves and Others; it gives meaning to the past and to the way particular groups fit into this past. There is no doubt that this othering of Palestinians has led to heated emotions that are deeply woven into the psycho-cultural narratives and dispositions that each group holds today. When active memories become habitual, they weave a given identity into the practices of a culture.
Time and again, this thesis has presented the ways Jews are victims and represented as such within the IMOE curriculum (2010). Does this depiction blind them to the (un)intentional harm done by their perceived pre-emptively defensive tactics against the Palestinian people? Due to their victimization over a 2000 year history, the fragility of their psyche has influenced the narrative of “We will no longer be victims”. As Lewis (2004) argues, given this narrative, history in the Middle East is still occurring and that past transgressions play into the interactions among groups. Such a narrative and the curricular recalling of past transgressions further embed Jewish-Israelis within their collective memory, and, as Ross (2001, p. 165) proposes, “Their significance lies in the way the elements are put together into authoritative accounts that trigger strong emotional responses.” Memories alone do not guide an individual or collective behaviour; Ross suggests that the way these memories are given meaning may lead to mental conditions where meaning serves to trigger emotions.

Often the adoptive witnessing of, and the workings of memory and remembering provide distorted facts and bias. As such, it could be assumed, that given the numerous players in this conflict above and beyond Israel and Palestine, that the adoptive witnessing of history and different narratives used to frame one’s history and narrative thereof, would inhibit de-escalation, peaceful resolution, and reconciliation. In contrast, if teachable moments, as intended by the IMOE, illuminate situations where bias exists, Nets-Zehngut (2012, p. 128) suggests that such moments may serve to “increase the likelihood of achieving peace and reconciliation between rival parties.”

However, the history curriculum in its present form cannot help in the achievement of reconciliation. While Findings 1 and 3 show that the curricular unit studied here tries to present the Other as attempting to form a legitimate movement to create or regain lost territory, the implicit
message is that the Others do not form a nation and that their recognition, acceptance, legitimization, and/or humanization would challenge the legitimacy of the Israeli national identity and its own right to statehood. Kelman (2005, p. 1) sheds light on this reality, as it appears in Finding 4, suggesting that,

In conflicts such as that between Israelis and Palestinians, in which the two sides live in the same space and claim ownership of the same territory, it is not only the actions of the other, but the identity and the very existence of the other that are a threat to the group’s own identity. The other’s identity and its associated narrative challenge the group’s claims to ownership—at least to exclusive ownership—of the land and its resources. The other’s presence in the same space, particularly if it is accompanied by demands for a share of the power and for recognition of the other culture, religion, and/or language, is perceived as a threat to the integrity and cohesiveness of the group’s society and its way of life.

As Kelman proposes, the Other’s mere presence in the space challenges the very nature of the legitimization of the dominant Jewish-Israeli state, since the Other also claims ownership of the land. With regard to the disposition towards and the interpretation of the Others’ actions, Ross (2008, p. 9-10) writes that “When narratives portray no possible common ground between opponents, search for alternatives to fighting is unlikely.” But what will be the solution? While these narratives carry weight by attempting to introduce students to actions and their corresponding historical reactions, the narratives do not force any group to take a particular course. At no point in the above analysis did I find that the IMOE was taking a Fanonian stance by explicitly calling on students to actively resist the Other. Rather, the 1948 events are presented as a situation where arms were taken up in acts of protection against the Arabs, and later the Palestinian Other; nor does the content explicitly call for the othering of Arabs or Palestinians.

So how does this curriculum shape collective action in a process of othering? The students’ membership within this collective is founded, not only in the geography of their birth and their Judaism, but also in how they are intended to be taught (formally) in relation to experiences,
interactions, and knowledge about the Other. These narratives may not intentionally force collective action, but they do reflect and exacerbate the larger violent conflict by reinforcing a protectionist narrative and a narrative that recalls, reinforces, and aligns itself with new threats by Palestinians and the larger Arab Other.

As a reflector (and reinforcer) of the conflict, the curriculum outlines the causes and effects of historical events (see Finding 4) and presents an interpretation of such events through a Zionist lens. This narrative may serve to increase in-group conformity by reinforcing the collective need to protect the in-group from an Other whose actions and/or narrative toward the in-group may be seen as sharing traits similar to those in past traumatic events that the collective endured.

Building on my use of adoptive witnessing, Volkan (2004), cited in Bar-Siman-Tov (2010, p.102), notes that these “stories about suffering and courage are passed down from generation to generation and identified as ‘chosen traumas’ and ‘chosen glories’” (Volkan, 2004); the stories are reinforced by formal, trusted institutions (schools). Through the retelling process, these stories illustrate the group’s collective existence and attempt to instil motivations for the uncompromising struggles and sacrifice needed for such an existence. These stories about suffering, which are infused with symbolic memories (e.g., the Holocaust, the destruction of the Second Temple, the pogroms), are psychological scars that represent the fragility of the Jewish psyche and the collective’s deepest sense of threat and fear.

While the notion that Jews are under threat is not new in this thesis study, Finding 4 specifically illustrates the ways historical and modern threats are justifications for preemptive aggressive “defence” against the Other because, as may be perceived in the reinforcement of continuing waves of Arab and Palestinian violence against Jewish settlers during the mid-18th century and early 19th century, the Others will not stop until they have regained the land of Israel.
(as is also illustrated in Finding 3). This notion is further illustrated in IMOE-selected curricular excerpts from the Arab High Commission in response to the Balfour Declaration and UN Resolution 181. This reading of the data is done on the basis of the suggestion by Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006, p.8) that,

focusing on injustice, harm, evil, and the atrocities of the adversary, while emphasizing one’s own society as being just, moral and human, leads society members to present themselves as victims. Beliefs about victimhood imply that the conflict was imposed by an adversary, who not only fights unjust goals but also uses immoral means to achieve them.

The curriculum attempts to legitimize a Palestinian national movement by introducing students to the duality of history and cases where, due to the actions of the Jewish settlers at the time, Palestinians either felt threatened or became dispossessed by Jewish settlers or by the larger Arab community. Findings 1 and 3 assert that, while this may have been the case, the establishment of a Jewish State was approved by the international community and given legitimacy through the adoption of UN Resolution 181. As such, the curriculum implies that any action against those who intended to interfere with these plans would not constitute an injustice. Furthermore, in Finding 4, the curriculum proposes that before 1948, the Palestinians were not a “people” distinct from other Arab inhabitants in neighbouring countries. This proposal may appear to be an act of negation; the curriculum does not state that Palestinian were or were not a people (as in not existing). Instead, as a body separate from the larger pan-Arabian identity, the curriculum implies that Palestinians had not exercised sovereignty in a distinct Palestine territory. This idea is also mirrored in Finding 1, but in this case, the proposal delves deeper through its identification that, while students are to be presented with the idea that actions taken at the time by the Haganah may have contributed to the Palestinian “Nakba,” the responsibility for the events and the resulting suffering lies primarily in their own (Palestinian) aggression, and not in earlier,
pre-Aliyah claims to territory. Further, the curriculum claims that the Arab leadership at the time rejected all compromises and initiated violent attacks in order to block the establishment of Israel (Kelman, 2005), not to establish Palestine.

Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006, p. 11) elaborate on this narrative of threat, saying Israel “became a ‘nation in arms’ or ‘nation in uniform,’ living in a situation that has been termed a ‘dormant war.’” For secular Jewish-Israelis, this idea of living under constant threat, remaining in a state of defence, and each day living in the shadow of a dormant war, remains at the forefront of their government’s intended curriculum.

On the basis of previous studies on the Jewish-Israeli curriculum, efforts have been made by the IMOE to humanize, legitimize, and share responsibility with the Other. How are these interactions understood? Many secular Jewish-Israeli students may never have interacted with the Other. Hirsch’s (2002, 2008) work on transgenerational memory, which is used to interpret the notion of adoptive witness applied to this thesis study, states that “Experiences are communicated through stories and images that can be narrative eyes, integrated, however, and easily, into a historically different present, they open up the possibility of a form of 2nd generation remembering that is based on a more consciously and necessarily mediated form of identification.” These experiences, which are intended to be transmitted through the IMOE’s selected narrative of events, present a contentious history with the Other. Their framing of the history of the Jewish people as a history of strife and persecution that the students’ ancestors (directly or adoptively) endured at the hands of the Other, has, as a teaching tool, been reconstructed to fit the evolving socio-political context of power relations in the global as well as local spheres.

As previously noted in Chapters One and Three, these narratives are founded in and reflect, the intractable nature of the violent conflict. As such, they could conceivably enable students to
adapt to the changing conditions of the prolonged violent conflict. Furthermore, because the mandated curriculum is standardized, all members of the dominant Jewish-Israeli society within secular schooling are given the same formal educational tools to make sense of their environment, to interpret their and the Other’s actions, and to shape their choices about the best course of action that is suited to their psycho-cultural dispositions and interpretations. Echoing this point, Rosen (2009, p. 142) writes,

> Education in schools is sure to reach a whole segment of a society (i.e., the young generation) because schools are compulsory and all children and adolescents are required to attend them. Schooling takes place during children’s formative years and the young generation, which still is in the process of acquiring beliefs, values, and behavioural patterns toward the “other,” is least affected by the dominating ethos and is more open to new ideas and information.

Rosen speaks about the reach education has in society and the influence it has on children immersed in the education program. There is no doubt that education would, during the early years, lay a foundation for indoctrinating youth into the political narrative of the state and establish a foundation for identity politics that may be built upon, as previously noted in citing Bekerman. Further mirroring Rosen, this thesis has examined the idea that, within the history curriculum, emphasis on key episodic events influences political dispositions by focusing on significant moments of group triumph over trauma. However, so too has the thesis argued that, if students are introduced to this history, to the role the Other has played in situational outcomes, and to the role they (the dominant Jewish-Israeli society) had in cause and effect situations, then such an introduction can also serve as an opportunity for students to cope with and make sense of events that may evoke deep fears and a sense of threat to their existence. If the students are intended to learn that the land was not uninhabited, but instead purchased from absentee land owners, and, if the plight of the Jews can be paralleled to that of the Palestinians (Finding 1); if the students can interconnect Zionism with the national aspirations of Palestinians (Finding 3) and see that Jewish
history is linked to the land, as history is for Palestinians (Finding 4), then the learning of history and can begin to foster a sense of humanizing the Other (Finding 2). However, while the aforementioned process could be ideal if completed in its entirety, the curricular emphasis on a history of religious persecution, oppression, and violence could also serve to recreate traumas, when greater emphasis is placed on continued battles than on the eventual positive outcomes.

Ross (2001, p. 166) explains that “When group members feel too humiliated, angry, or helpless to mourn the losses suffered in the trauma… the group then incorporates the emotional meaning of the traumatic event into its identity and passes on the emotional and symbolic meaning from generation to generation.” This passing on of symbolic memory, referred to in this thesis study as the process of adoptive witnessing, does not always need to highlight and emphasize trauma, but also, as seen in Unit 5: Modern Israel, can use trauma to introduce moments of triumph over the Other and to embolden those who hear about the triumph. This sense of “we will” and “we have” overcome seems intended to align a history of religious persecution with moments when Jews rebelled against their oppressors. Through such an alignment, students are intended to engage in discussion about how Jewish heroes like David, the Maccabees, Bar Kochva, or Joseph Trumpeldor personify “good” and embody the national ethos. The emphasis is that “we will no longer be victims.” The motivation for using these historical figures when engaging with content that is focused on needed security and defence against the Palestinian Other is to give credence to Israeli’s position in the fight against Others (Auerbach, 2010). This dynamic is not unique to Israel; rather, as Devine-Wright (2003, p. 11) notes, “Ethnic groups commonly recount their narratives in a chronological fashion that blends key events, heroes, metaphors and moral lessons.” These recountings can come in the form of psycho-cultural (re)productions that connect people across time and space.
As an exacerbating factor in the violent conflict and in the peaceful solutions that need to be achieved, the curriculum emphasizes differences and commonalities among Jews and Arabs, who are later referred to as Israelis and Arabs, and uses their attachment to the land as justification for measures to ensure security from the Others’ attacks, and for the purposes of continuing hostility and escalation, as much as for moderation and de-escalation. Furthermore, the psycho-cultural narrative of “defence” against historically repeated violence by the Other, and continued reference to the Jewish people’s collective history of oppression and religious persecution validates particular political positions and puts the current Palestinian Other’s face on the group’s fears.

It is this offensive fight for “security” that enlivens the triumph and patriotism narrative. Here, the curricular narrative appears intended to strengthen the Israeli national ethos and ensure its longevity. This validation becomes a foundation for the group’s psycho-cultural interpretation of the Others’ actions and justifies uses these events and situations to establishing and fight for the collective’s goals in the conflict. These narratives seemly justify the group’s dispositions toward defensive actions and the exertion of force, including intentional harm and institutionalized aggression, implemented through a readiness for military service and self-sacrifice in the name of state security and of the assurance that the Other will not prevail. This thesis study agrees with Kelman’s (2005) description of the existential threat, which is compounded by an ethnic and religious difference, that the (Palestinian) Other can pose to the personal or collective existence of the Jewish state. Kelman (2005, p. 2) notes that “In such a situation, the other comes to be seen as a threat to the ultimate meaning of personal and collective existence. Moreover, an unlimited violent response to the threat is often justified by obedience to the highest authority.” This notion of a violent response is illustrated through the Haganah’s actions during the implementation of
“Plan D,” noted in both Findings 1 and 4, and through the proportional/disproportional actions taken in response to Arab resistance to the partition plan, Israel’s Declaration of Independence, and the subsequent Nakba. As noted in Finding 1, the curriculum attempts to legitimize and humanize the Other by outlining to the students the fact that the Palestinian farmers (Fellahim) were caretakers of land for absentee landowners (Effendis) from whom Jewish settlers (Moshav) bought the land. This legitimization and humanization become difficult to accept when, through their violence against the Moshav, the Palestinian Other threatens the establishment of a Jewish homeland. This dynamic is also emphasized in Finding 3, in relation to the occasion when the Fellahim rallied to take the land back from the Moshav and gave birth to a Palestinian national aspiration separate from the larger Arab collective. While the history curriculum does present some encounters with Palestinians as positive, the curriculum as a whole places a heavier emphasis on how the Arab Other attempted to marginalize and discriminate against Jews prior to 1948. This marginalization and discrimination are noted through an intended discussion about and revisiting of violent pogroms and subsequent expulsions Jews endured in neighbouring countries, as well as through discussion about the aforementioned attacks in Israel before and after 1948. Since this implicit theme underlies all encounters with the Other, the threat remains a core issue within the curricular content.

There is no doubt that, through the use of the IMOE-approved resources, students can continue to deny that both Israelis and Palestinians, through their national movements and aspirations, make valid claims to the same territory and its resources. This claim to ownership perceptibly serves as the basis of both national identities, and any threat against one is framed as a threat to the Other’s survival. Kelman (2005, p. 1), lists reasons why this recognition and attachment to the land is so important:
First, the integrity of the national identity is an end in itself, in that the identity serves as a source of distinctiveness, unity, and continuity for the group and of a sense of belongingness for its members. Second, the national identity constitutes the ultimate justification of the group’s claim to ownership of the land and control of its resources. And third, the national identity provides a focus for developing and maintaining the group’s distinctive culture, religion, and way of life.

Hence, without ownership of the land, each cannot claim a national identity. While one may negate the Others’ attachment to the pre-1948 land, the curricular narrative bolsters support for the Jewish ownership of both the pre and post-1948 territory, through repeated stories of the Jewish people’s biblical attachment to the land, their history on land, repeated attempts to expel them from it, and examples of events when Jews have persevered. Similar results were found by Manor’s (2006, n.p.) study of the attitudes to Arabs, Palestinians, Islam, and peace in Israeli school books. Manor notes,

>> Israeli textbooks embody a genuine effort to improve the pupils’ view of “the other” and to take a level-headed view of the Arab-Israeli conflict. National identity is not built upon the rejection, but rather upon the acceptance, of the Palestinians’ national identity and an effort is being made to prepare for coexistence and peace with them.

The Others’ narrative appears to be emerging within the mandated history curriculum, but this incorporation is complex and requires the students to develop an awareness of how the inclusion and legitimization of the Other challenges dominant society, the Jewish state’s legitimacy, and its own Jewish narrative and history of oppression. As such, supplementary resources that integrate the narrative are contradictory and/or incomplete. They select episodic events that include the narrative of the Other but use those sources to further emphasize and solidify the Jewish-Israeli position. Moreover, there is a fine line between defence against the Other and oppression of the Other and, as such, both these positions should be accounted for in the dissemination of historical content. Rather, what occurs is noted in Finding 4; in attempts to provide a balanced approach to the conflict, the Other is sporadically and inconsistently infused
within the story, both in the space, the Others occupy and in their identity – which flip flops between Arab and Palestinian. While the motivation of the IMOE may be to acknowledge, legitimate, and humanize the Other by imposing a narrative that selectively retells modern history, in so doing, the IMOE remains stuck in both othering them as a people and distorting their history. This notion of denial or distortion is addressed in Finding 1, whereby the curriculum addresses the state’s role in the Nakba, not as the sole cause of it, but as a possible cause-and-effect party to it.

The dehumanization and suffering of Palestinians is examined through their dispossession at the hands of their Arab neighbours – including the Effendis as well as the British, and later the Moshav and Haganah (see Finding 4). As a result, riots led to larger, more violent, and less isolated outbreaks. Through such an awareness, students may experience emotional empathy between their suffering and dispossession in Arab lands in the wake of the Holocaust and the suffering of the Palestinians, however this empathy, drawing on the fragility of the Jewish psyche and recalling of the Holocaust, draws on adoptively witnessed history. While denial and complete negation of both the Other and the role Israel played in the conflict are absent from the explicit curricular narrative, the selective framing of defensive action in the wake of a history of persecution, which is shown throughout this thesis study, still frames the history in a distorted and incomplete manner.

A second factor making peacebuilding difficult is the dichotomy between who is right and who has rights over the land. Resolving the “who was here first” debate has become more an obsession than a peacebuilding exercise. While territory and its ownership are two of the defining roots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, this notion of whose land it was, or whose it is, frames the larger debate. For both parties, the issue about the land is founded on religious attachments and, as Benn (2011, n.p.), notes, “The Jewish narrative relies on the Bible to link today’s Israelis to the ancient Israelites while the Palestinian counter narrative reaches back to the Jebusites, who ruled
Jerusalem before King David’s occupation, as the forefathers of contemporary Palestinians.”

While the religious debate is touched on in Finding 1, most notably in both The Yishuv in Eretz Israel in the 19th century until the end of World War I and The 20th century – Arab nationalism in the Middle East and in Israel at the end of the century units of study, through content that discusses “The Promised Land” and “The Jewish people returning to its land” and the “Children of Israel,” the larger discussion in the Development of the Jewish national home in Israel unit of study focuses on land purchases and ownership.

While the history curriculum places an emphasis on the religious connection to the land and the existential need for a Jewish homeland, through a pursuit of a narrative of Israel as a Jewish homeland, the curriculum designer’s choice seems intended to underemphasize the Other’s claims to the land is an important part of the process of attempting to inculcate in the religious attachment to the territory. This narrative is the basis for the direction the state expects society to follow. By instilling the attachment from an early age, this narrative frames interpretations of action and of the Other’s actions and justifies dispositions towards the Other as not random. So too, these narratives are echoed by the state through political decisions and the organization of the state itself, including its sectors, laws, customs, and commemorations. Because such belief systems are taught and reinforced early, the narrative of the ethos instils in members of the dominant Jewish-Israeli society the belief that their government is justified in its actions and protection of the state, and that, as a collective, they (the dominant society) remain under constant threat from the Other. While Findings 1 and 3 work to legitimize and humanize the Other and to explain their national aspirations, the acceptance of these aspirations would come at the expense of Jewish-Israeli sovereignty.
6.4 – Conclusion

This chapter has discussed how, through the selection of key episodic events within the intended history curriculum, memory, identity and collective dispositions (i.e., temperament, character) are expressed through the narrative interpretation of the Others’ actions. In so doing, this chapter explained the role that the mandated IMOE history curriculum (2010) may have played in shaping and conveying the variables that led to the conflict, and how the intended teaching of a people’s history and the embedded narratives help to construct identity and collective memory.

Like memory, the curriculum is selective and presents an incomplete, biased, and myopic version of history. This chapter helped to answer this thesis study’s research question: where and how, within the history curriculum, key episodic events, narratives, and symbols of the Palestinian Other are intended to be used to introduce and reinforce peaceblocking identity politics.

In answering this question, the chapter first considered the fact that history is written by the victors, and history curriculum is written to reflect the viewpoints of dominant parties in a nation-state. As such, this history curriculum’s incomplete representation of why the conflict has erupted and persisted remains static. As assumption may be made that the intention is to ensure protection of the Jewish-Israeli state, it is reminder that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is about the concrete interests that all parties pursue (i.e., land, recognition of identity, and the need for defensive readiness against the Other), and the interpretation of what is at stake in the dispute (i.e., the loss of land and an identity intertwined with territorial sovereignty).

Secondly, on the basis of the findings presented in Chapter Five, this chapter noted that, while the intention of the history curriculum is to foster tolerance of the Others through the legitimatization and humanization of both them as a distinct people and their national aspirations,
the narrative actually used by the IMOE (2010) to convey key historical episodic events contradicts this intention by acknowledging the Others and making them visible in the historical narrative, but only insofar as the acknowledgement does not question Israelis’ justness and legitimacy, or call into question their national ethos and protectionist or defensive rhetoric. Within state schools, secular Jewish-Israeli students are presented with a historical narrative about Israel as the Promised Land and about how they (Jews) are the children of Israel who must return to and defend this land. In this state of defensive readiness, Israel remains a nation in arms, and a society with a troubling siege mentality that emphasizes that “we” (Jews) will no longer be victims, and we shall overcome! This narrative is balanced by an emphasis on triumphant historical Jews, like David, who defeated Goliath, and the Maccabees, who defeated King Antiochus IV, but it is still perpetuated through the infusion of biblical and modern symbols of Jewish victimization, from the destruction of the second temple to the Nazi Holocaust.

The IMOE (2010) curriculum does not deny the role Israel may have played in Palestinian dispossession, specifically through cause and effect (i.e., the Nakba being the by-product of the Arab invasion of Israel), but it frames these events as justified defensive measures to protect Jewish-Israeli citizens. Moreover, in the discussion of contentious topics like the Palestinian Nakba, this exodus is compared to Jewish expulsion from neighbouring Islamic countries. Moreover, through references to Arabs and Palestinians that use key terminology triggers like “rioters,” “outlaws,” and “gangs of marauders” engaged in “disturbances” and “skirmishes,” coupled with the intended presentation that they (the Arab Others) continued their wave of violence from 1921 to 1929, and from 1936 to 1939, the curriculum seemingly presents the (historical) Arabs as irrational and violent.
It can only be assumed that, if the IMOE selects content that presents the Other in a negative light – even implicitly – then the curriculum plays a role in maintaining the conflict. However, it must be noted that the curriculum is and would only be one mechanism for the conflict’s intractability. If in fact, this is the intention of the curriculum, then a question is raised about how the dominant Jewish-Israeli society can broker peace with an Other whom they have learned wants to destroy them? While the Palestinians are present in the history curriculum, and their story is beginning to be told, it is done so only in as far as it does not contradict or question Israel’s right to the Promised Land.

For the dominant Jewish-Israeli society, managing the conflict effectively means not only addressing the issues in contention (i.e., Zionism versus the pursuit of Palestinian nationalism) and the fragility of the Jewish psyche (the Holocaust remains fresh in may Jewish-Israeli’s mind as a modern example of attempted Jewish extermination), but also addressing deeper underlying concerns (i.e., the role a history of religious persecution and oppression have played in othering, and how the Other has been aligned with historical traumas, as noted in Finding 3, or examination of the roots of Jewish expulsion in Arab lands and the parallels that can be drawn between that and the Nakba, as uncovered in Finding 1). These deep seated, underlying concerns, adoptively witnessed and deeply embedded within the psyche of the collective, fuel the siege mentality and affect the more explicit issues of contention through their influence on the way the collective interprets the actions of Arab and Palestinian Others. These underlying concerns influence, and are influenced by, the narrative the collective uses to describe events, and the dispositions the narrative presents towards the Other and in reaction to the Others’ responses. When these underlying concerns are not addressed, peace becomes at best a band-aid solution. If peace is not sustainable, then the assumption can be made that future generations will continue to be born into
a culture of conflict and to be bought up (i.e., through education) perhaps knowing nothing about the Other beyond that what they have been taught. This culture of conflict, which the IMOE does not appear to deliberately feed, speaks to “a society’s particular constellations of norms, practices, and institutions” (Avruch and Black, 1991, in Ross 1993a, p.2), but in a way that is shaped only by the selected narrative that the state intends to communicate.
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

7.1 – Big Ideas

The story of modern Israel, as introduced within the IMOE’s mandated history curriculum, is a continuation of the narrative about the afflictions Jews endured throughout the narratives in the Bible. In my reading of the mandated, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum, I framed the documents as tools for dialogue and the curriculum’s intention for knowledge dissemination as an act of interaction between pupils, instructional content, materials, and resources, on one hand, and the processes for evaluating the attainment of educational objectives, on the other hand. Education and learning, even in a rote setting, are conversational; teachers direct, and students respond, laying a foundation for further thinking and inquiry. However, the IMOE’s selection of key episodic events and a curricular focus on religious persecution and trauma are seemingly intended to introduce secular Jewish-Israeli students to an identity-forming psycho-cultural narrative that culminates with stories of Jewish triumph and of national heroes who embody the ethos of the Jewish-Israeli people. As a process of adoptive witnessing, this narrative implicitly frames the Arab and Palestinian Other as the modern Amalek, the historical enemy of the Jewish people, who was bent on their eradication. By making such inferences, the history curriculum appears to be intended to prepare secular Jewish-Israeli children to fight against the Palestinian Other and to sacrifice their Jewish lives for the protection of the Jewish state.

7.2 – Curricular Policy and Practicality

Policy

This study has shown that the mandated history curriculum is structured and intended to introduce and reinforce historical knowledge about Jewish history through the embedding of key
episodic events that highlight trauma, religious persecution, and oppression. In doing so, the curriculum also lays out a set of skills students need in order to analyse and interpret the IMOE-selected history. From a policy perspective, the curriculum presents historical events in chronological order and infuses each with examples of the thinking skills that teachers are intended to teach (e.g., recognizing varying or opposing perspectives, causes and effects, differing opinions and inquiries that challenge the material). These intended learning opportunities may entail the shaping and transmission of culturally shared, psycho-cultural interpretations, first hand experienced and adoptively witnessed memories, Zionist ideologies, and politically framed metaphors of the self, the Other, and the outside world. Compared to previous curricula studied by Firer (1998), Firer and Adwan (2002), and Podeh (2000, 2002), this current (2010) IMOE document has made significant changes to shift its focus from negation to acknowledgement of the Arab and Palestinian Other.

Yet what is most striking, given the examined texts, is that, while the history curriculum intends to build a Jewish national identity, the way this national identity is constructed (both in presentation of content and the content’s intended dissemination) does not negate the Palestinian identity or the national aspirations of the Palestinian people. While my analysis does not discover or conclude that the history curriculum is a tool of total negation of Palestinian Arabs, the current educational structure within the dominant Jewish-Israeli society continues, as the aforementioned findings note, to inhibit de-escalation of the Israeli-Arab conflict by not accepting the Palestinian Other as an equal. While the curriculum does lay a foundation for acknowledging, legitimizing, and humanizing the Arab and Palestinian Other, acceptance of both Others as equals within the Jewish-Israeli society remains incomplete. While the Palestinian Other is recognized as an individual body within the dominant Jewish-Israeli space, a body that has influenced Israeli
history, a lack of equal representation of the Others within the curriculum will assumingly result in their continued de-legitimization, distrust, and othering.

This point is highlighted in the curriculum’s discussions of the legitimacy of the Other’s national aspirations. While the IMOE’s selective curricular content may not appear to encourage acceptance of the Other’s national aspirations, it does introduce students to the reasons why the Others are pushing for their own state. However, in terms of the curriculum’s intention to have students examine the Palestinian push for statehood, this acknowledgement of motivation and humanization of the Palestinian Other fails when the push for a Palestinian state is framed as a threat to the legitimacy and security of Israel. Given this contradiction, it is concluded that students are intended to be taught to examine the multiple narratives that frame historical accounts, as indicated in the curriculum’s examples for the development of thinking skills, but to conduct this examination with little access to a complete picture or to critical (for instance, anti-racist) analytical tools or resources. Moreover, it seems that students are intended to contextualize outcomes on the basis of cause and effect, and to encourage conversations between the Jewish-Israeli collective and the Other, with hopes that, through such encounters, a course of thinking and action may arise that differs from the status quo. But again, given the selective nature of the history curriculum and the learning opportunities it presents, the students are rarely given such opportunities.

Therefore, my opinion is that, given that the Other is framed by the IMOE (2010) curriculum as an “Other” as opposed to an “equal”, and given the last 70 years of violent conflict and the selected history presented in the curriculum, this status quo approach will continue to serve to prolong the conflict. So too, the presentation of the divergent perceptions of the Others and their stake in the conflict can only partially aid in learners’ analysis of the persistence of this
intractable conflict. As in other complex, violent “ethnic” conflicts (such as in Northern Ireland, Cyprus, and Rwanda), there are strong factional differences within each community as well as between them. Thus, this thesis study’s use of both psycho-cultural theory and theories of anti-racist education can only be applied to a limited extent.

While Chapter Six examined the numerous markers of psycho-cultural interpretations and dispositions that have solidified the Jewish-Israeli in-group solidarity and led to the expression of out-group hostility, the intractable nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict serves to contextualize and highlight the evolution of the Jewish-Israeli siege mentality. However, the mere fact that the Other is now openly discussed in secular Jewish-Israeli state schools shows promise. I believe that as much as the learning of one’s national identity through a history of oppression and religious persecution can reinforce an oppositional national identity (defined against an Other), so too can the even partial teaching of such narratives be part of the solution. Thus, the way the history curriculum continues to frame the Jewish-Israeli identity and that of the Others, and then to position or align the collective with or in opposition to the Other affects students’ learning about their positioning within the conflict and about how their dominance and power are used.

Through a theoretical prism of anti-racist education, how this power is conveyed within the history curriculum and how it is taught in practice will affect the way students come to think, interpret, and (re)act. If the history curriculum shifts its focus from action to reaction, and then examines the causes and effects of political decisions in the wake of historical outcomes, so too it can foster an environment where students may deepen their understanding of how the conflict has evolved from a catalyst to an explosion and about what tools are needed to mitigate its intractability and shift the focus to peacemaking and peacebuilding.
However, Kelman (2008) suggests that students are intended [I would add, through the use of mandated curriculum] to be shown how their identity is partially founded in the protection of their state. This is shown through the relationship between the Aliyah leading to Arab resistance, and the resistance turning to violent encounters with the *Moshav* as they buy land from the *Effendis*, settle and begin to establish the State of Israel. As such, the siege mentality can serve as a basis for highlighting how elements of identity are constructed as vehicles for conflict. Thus, the way the content is presented in this curriculum reflects the conflict at the present time. While I am optimistic that education can be a tool for change, the tool will be effective only if students and the current situation are reflected in the content. In this case, what is lived in the present, experienced in the past, and remembered either directly or adoptively witnessed, and also the way that content is lived and remembered, are key since the content is relevant to the present situation at the student’s doorstep.

This focus on the political nature of education and the history curriculum has been emphasized throughout this thesis study. As a political tool, the curriculum reflects and influences identity politics. It reinforces the collective’s adoption of memory and oversees its transmission to and transformation within secular Jewish-Israeli society. As Hofman (2007, p. 442) writes,

> The purpose of studying history at school is not only to know the past but also to form an orderly future, logically flowing from the past and the present. In other words, educational systems hold, in the main, a teleological view of history, seeking to form the future according to some kind of plan that will create the desired order.

This teleological view of history that Hofman identifies, which reflects how the past frames the present, has been extremely important in examining how members of society can be both peace brokers and peace keepers. However, this teleological view is put to the test when the government that is entrusted to educate remains locked in a siege mentality. While the mandated Jewish-Israel history curriculum may serve to illuminate the roots of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict
and Israel’s relations with its Arab neighbors, the historical development of the state remains, for instance, during the in-gathering of exiles, explored through lessons in *The Yishuv in Eretz Israel in the 19th century until the end of World War I* and *Development of the Jewish national home in Israel* subunits. The internal conflicts that have resulted in religious, national, and social divisions also persist. While the focus on the establishment of the State of Israel is most prevalent in the awareness of the political and social divisions of the dominant Jewish-Israeli society, the focus on early Jewish immigration and the conflicts that ensued is the most pressing concern, which remains at the forefront of the larger conversation about Israel’s legitimacy and of the national, political, ethnocratic culture that has created a structural and ideological apparatus to establish and safeguard the national ethos. As Yiftachel (2000, p. 735) identifies, “it is within these ethnocratic regimes, that those who are not of or share the dominant ethos, may be treated as external to the ethnonational fabric of the state, or seen as a subversive threat.” Interpreting Yiftachel, this Other and the way the IMOE intends to approach the Other’s recognition as a subversive or existential threat within the Jewish-Israeli history curriculum further divide, not just the dominant Jewish-Israeli society, but also the state’s political relations with the Other and with the state’s allies.

Given the considerations already mentioned from the perspective of curricular policy, the IMOE’s history curriculum is not a tool of negation. However, I do echo Bekerman’s (2009, p. 2) sentiment that “these educational efforts do not seem to support the fostering of peace and reconciliation.” While the national narrative is somewhat accepting of the Others and their history, the narrative appears intent on pursuing the *status quo* in an effort to foster peace by contributing to the students’ current understanding of an embodiment of nationalism.
Practice

From the standpoint of practicality, this thesis study has set out to uncover the way language is used within the IMOE-mandated history curriculum, and the way the deep seated emotions are drawn from and embedded within psycho-cultural narratives may frame action. These actions (ranging from the negation of the Other to violent conflict) solidify the often polarizing us-versus-them identity of groups. Within the mandated IMOE (2010) history curriculum, this polarization is exacerbated by the corresponding narratives used to define the Jewish-Israeli collective and the Arab and Palestinian Other, both historically and in the present. As Kelman (1999) and Hammack (2006) both echo, such curricular narratives, founded on a collective struggle against a common enemy, are portrayed in terms of a formidable, polarizing, and negative interdependence. As such, this thesis provides commentary on how the curriculum uses history as a tool of adoptive witnessing, drawing on these polarizing and implicitly negative images to define and project the secular Jewish-Israeli collective in opposition to the Arabs and Palestinians. This opposition, which is founded on the dominant Jewish-Israeli historical narratives and the ways these narratives frame the outcomes of key episodic events, may be shared by the dominant Jewish-Israeli society, but is learned formally through stories of threatened identities, both in ancient history and more modern occurrences and of perceptible existential insecurity.

Applied to this thesis study, psycho-cultural conflict theory has stressed the importance of, and efforts to, share Jewish-Israeli interpretations of significant, yet ambiguous situations, leading to the events of 1948. In the introduction of the Palestinian Other within Jewish-Israeli history, the representation of key episodic events (i.e., the Aliyah process, land purchase and territory, the War of Independence, the Haganah’s Plan D, and the Nakba) has shaped, through adoptive witnessing, the understandings and experiences of students and future generations. The
findings have stressed that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict epitomizes Ross’s (1993a, p. 160) culture of conflict whereby: “the frustration, projections, fears of extinction, sense of low self-esteem, and development of positive in-group and negative out-group images – identified as basic causes of ethnocentric conflict by this theory – are all present.” This culture of conflict, which emerges within the dominant Jewish-Israeli national narrative, reflected in the mandated history curriculum, is perpetuated by psycho-cultural narratives that feed the already present siege mentality.

There is a powerful link between Jewish-Israeli history as a lived experience and the role education plays in perpetuating psycho-cultural narratives surrounding historical actions and outcomes. History is re-remembered and re-witnessed through contemporary incarnations of key historical episodic events. Through its focus on such events, this thesis study has presented how the adoptive witnessing of a Jewish-Israeli history of traumatic events became recorded within the dominant psycho-cultural narrative and remains in the curriculum-legitimized national Israeli narrative. As Hammack (2008, p. 230-232) has suggested, “The content of identity is inherently ideological.” How a group remembers shapes its identity, its understanding of their world, and its place in the world. It is my position, adopted through a theoretical prism of anti-racist education, that, if students do not have opportunities to engage in discussion surrounding identity and to deconstruct historical narratives, then the distortions of a history project might inhibit them from becoming critical thinkers, social activists, and objective members of society.

Left unchallenged, history is re-remembered and revised (through intentional and unintentional omissions) through the prism of one’s present suffering and one’s power position. Thus, it needs to be noted that the way the IMOE’s mandated history curriculum ascribes meaning to key episodic events does not necessarily imply or refute its historical accuracy. Yet the
curriculum simply models, with a slight deviation, the *status quo*. Accurate or not, this selective and ascribed meaning is critical to the way secular Jewish-Israeli students may come to understand and construct their identity and that of the Other. In specific terms, these identities and the narratives used to convey them are embedded with notions of *historical accuracy* (italics used to refer to the contentious nature of memory as amnesic and selective) and are recalled and exacerbated under the influence of the particular conditions and perceived threats they currently face. The longer the overarching conditions brought about by the intractable conflict exist and remain unaddressed, the more the mandated history curriculum shapes the conflict’s goals, conditions, and requirements, and also the images of one’s own group and of the Others within the conflict (Bar-Tal and Salomon, 2005). This idea is coupled with Ross’s (1995) point that the past affects the future. In practical terms, the intended learning of and adoptive witnessing of past transgressions actively affect the course of current events by assigning meaning to a sense of threat (the Other) and to consequent courses of action against threats deemed appropriate.

As such, this curricular alignment of the Jewish historical narrative with the contemporary Israeli national political narrative influences the history curriculum’s durability when it is confronted with contradictory narratives. The IMOE has begun to explore the role Jewish-Israelis played in Arab and Palestinian actions and reactions, but any intended curricular content is still juxtaposed with the informal education students obtain at home, in their communities, and within social interactions, including those with the Other.

In this process, one problem for Jewish-Israelis is that intractable nature of conflicts implicitly fosters the evolution and reinforcement of negative stereotypes and societal beliefs that delegitimize the Others and deny them basic rights such as self-determination. The implicit de-legitimization has been one of the bitter manifestations of the conflict. I believe that both Israelis
and Palestinians want peace and see it as the ultimate goal, though any concrete, realistic ways of achieving it are never specified. Formal education can be the most important forum of focus because students are the future peace brokers and political game changers. In efforts to establish and ensure the longevity of peace, the Israeli government, in conjunction with the IMOE, needs to ensure that future generations are not being indoctrinated into old hostile and hawkish ideologies. Education must become a tool of peace, tolerance, and reconciliation, and a forum to allow and encourage “new societal beliefs that describe the multidimensional nature of peace, realistically outline the costs and benefits of achieving it, connote the meaning of living in peace, and specify the conditions and mechanisms for its achievement (for example, negotiation with the rival and compromises), and especially for its maintenance” (Bar-Tal and Salomon, 2005, p. 23). As a matter of both policy and practice, the current (2010) IMOE history curriculum is a work in progress and as such, opens a space, that while not perfect, is beginning to not only recognize that the Other exists, but humanizes their converging national aspirations in hopes and efforts to foster dialogue and work for attainment of peace between Jewish-Israelis and their both Palestinians and their neighboring Others.

7.3 – Implications and Recommendations

The way Israel’s government intends to educate Jewish-Israelis about the Palestinians is of great concern. Issues of nationalism and conflict and the psycho-cultural narratives and dispositions surrounding a contested history in which the Other plays a part are bound to call into question the legitimacy of the Jewish state and its origins, and also the complicated, interwoven religious, human, cultural, and political attachments both Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians have to the land. So too, do narratives regarding the legitimacy of the State of Israel question the identity
of those within the state and those who associate their identity with the sovereignty of the Jewish state.

There is no doubt that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has evoked powerful emotions, especially in highly ambiguous situations. Theoretically, interpretive frameworks play a crucial role, internally and psychologically, in the way Jewish-Israelis may make sense of their identity, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and their uncertainty about the future and relations with others. This ambiguity, the IMOE-mandated history curriculum’s presentation and infusing of psycho-cultural narratives and interpretations of the Others’ motives and actions, and the emotional salience of the conflict in relation to past (adoptive) memories seem intended to produce a sense of existential threat to Jews and a regression to intense, primitive feelings of enmity internally and psychologically (Bar-Tal, 2008; Cole, 2005; Kelman 2005; Rosen, 2009). The history curriculum toes the Israeli political line that future generations should fight for national and cultural survival. This thesis study has found that the history curriculum has practical implications for the potential fostering of peaceful dialogue with the Other, through culturally rooted learning opportunities that could revise the status quo approach to history education. In this practical application, Chapter Six examined how the educational discourse embedded within the IMOE’s (2010) history curriculum reflects psycho-cultural narratives that construct notions of self and subjugate the Other, through an analysis of how it may indoctrinate Jewish-Israeli children to subjugate the Palestinian Other.

The IMOE (2010) curriculum may appear to be written as a tool for tolerance and as an effort to break down barriers through its attempts to acknowledge, legitimize, and humanize the Palestinian Other. This thesis study concludes that, while an opportunity to explicitly “break down barriers” is present, this opportunity is presented only when it does not call into question Israel’s own narrative of legitimacy and right to protection. In explicit terms, the IMOE’s selected
content intends that teachers present a history framed in a manner that legitimizes the Palestinian Other. This legitimization, albeit minimal and inconsistent, lays a foundation for recognizing the Palestinian Other’s humanity, by drawing attention to their dispossession and their membership (see Pinson) within the dominant Jewish-Israeli space. Implicitly, however, the IMOE’s approach to history glorifies Jewish triumphs, from the days of Abraham to the present, and emphasizes the relationship between the Jewish people and the land of Israel. In so doing, while the IMOE highlights 2,000 years of Jewish people’s exile and suffering as minorities in other people’s lands, it has left little room for full recognition and a greater acknowledgement of or discussion about peace with the Other and reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians.

Further affecting the formative powers of history education is education’s interplay with coexisting learning opportunities such as school structure (access, segregation, etc.), public media, cultural rituals (e.g., holidays/commemorations), and out-of-school (such as social structural) influences on learning. As a critical tool, this history curriculum is not simply a static document, separate from the outside world. As Asante (2012, p. 40) explains, the institution must reconstitute the curriculum. The curriculum must be used to bring ideas to life, to utilize ideas that reflect the world, and to ensure that the institutions entrusted to convey them are outfitted with the tools (texts, written or recorded) needed to foster change. While I agree with Asante that the curriculum should remain fluid and constantly adapted, not treated as wholly accurate because the state mandates it, such a process entails more than simple revisions. The process requires a change of mindset and the acceptance of repercussions that may ensue. Jewish and Jewish-Israeli history, like all history, is a story of real people, of their lives and their wants, and not simply an account of isolated events. The selective nature of the historical content presented, the framing of its narratives, and its emphasis or omission foster a direction, a mindset, and an understanding of who
people are (both Jewish-Israelis and Palestinians) and how they have been adoptively or directly shaped by the past. As mentioned earlier, every decision, action, outcome, and response is presented by the IMOE in chronological order and as a sequence of cause and effect. The implications of this curriculum are that these stories, through their emphasis on trauma and triumph, construct and solidify identities and relations, and lay the foundation for future interactions between both parties.

Understanding these practical implications, I must reiterate that peace is not simply the absence of violence, conflict, or war; rather, peace means nonviolent and just cooperation and engagement with the Other for collective benefits and the pursuit of equality, mutual sensitivity, and common goals. In this way, the IMOE (2010) curricular content may act as a tool of reconciliation. This process involves identification of how, with the introduction of the Arab Other, Jewish-Israeli students can begin to acknowledge the space Arabs occupied prior to the first Aliyah, and how, through cause and effect, they may understand how Palestinian dispossession may have played out due to the actions of Moshav and the Haganah. After this identification, the historical narrative notably shifts towards understanding and legitimizing the national aspirations of the Arabs, later the Palestinians, through an exploration into the actions and reactions that ensued as the Israeli-Palestinian space became divided after 1948 (refer to Appendix D - Central teaching focus and Examples of the development of thinking skills). I see the beginning of a more accepted Palestinian presence within the history curriculum: I assume that, if the history curriculum constructs and reinforces in-group and out-group identities, then a further increase in the presence of the Others, including their narrative and their history, may be placed in alignment with the dominant Jewish-Israeli history. As a tool for tolerance, the history curriculum can work to develop
and refine critical thinking skills through its presentation of cause and effect. A stronger foundation for peace and reconciliation may be laid, and the current siege mentality may be replaced.

Given these implications, this thesis study recommends that the curriculum place greater emphasis on, and continue to provide opportunities for students to challenge, the status quo in a safe environment. Those challenges may be used, not to disrupt, but to foster an understanding of the importance of transformative change. As in any dimension of peacebuilding, here the curriculum needs to provide an opportunity for students to obtain the tools and knowledge about their use, as well as a chance to apply the tools to build bridges. The curriculum needs to teach students and encourage them to move beyond prejudice, stereotypes, and bias. These tools are emerging in the IMOE (2010) history curriculum, in comparison to earlier versions. Further work by the IMOE is needed to give students the opportunity to learn about the Other and to challenge dominant narratives, to look at outcomes from multiple perspectives and at different times, and to use competing narratives to craft and support arguments for discussion and debate (Holt, 1990 in Freedman et. al., 2008). In my opinion, it is not enough that the IMOE intends that the students be introduced to the Others and their culture. Rather, the curriculum needs to allow the students to delve deeper by engaging in anti-racist dialogues that challenge the current structure of power and dominance, by unravelling power relations, and by questioning whose knowledge is being taught, and why or how this knowledge came to be more “legitimate” than another’s.

In my reading of the IMOE (2010) history curriculum as a potential tool of anti-racism education, I find that the curriculum needs to do more to allow students to critically and fairly focus on the social consequences of ideological and political decisions and the effects historical outcomes had/have on current events. Students need to learn to discuss, debate and deconstruct as laid out in the curriculum’s examples of the development of thinking skills. In my opinion, the
curriculum cannot simply intend to have students justify their answers or provide opposing perspectives, without being armed with both the content and context to analyse and the learning skills to do it. With the history curriculum, teachers, as decoders of curriculum and disseminators of knowledge, should be provided with the tools and content that creates critical thinkers and knowledge disruptors, so as to arm students to be peace builders. Clearly, after 70 years, the status quo is not working.

Thus there is an underlying duality of purpose that the IMOE (2010) curriculum still embodies. On one hand, the curriculum is intended to foster an understanding for peaceful coexistence with the Other; on the other hand, it continues to safeguard and strengthen the collective national identity. As much as it is the role of the teacher to lead students in this process, formal education curriculum is a mouthpiece of governments. The government’s will and effort to seemingly establish peace should be reflected in its curricular narratives. While the Other may be feared by Jewish-Israelis through the equating them as a body whose intent is to destroy the Jewish state, intending to introduce the Other, examining the roots of their Otherness and the threats they perceivably have to the state does not challenge the state’s sovereignty, rather negating the Other does.

7.4 – Research Strengths and Limitations

As indicated in Chapter One, the motivation of this thesis study was understanding the intensity and intransigence of the violent Israeli-Palestinian conflict by examining how the curriculum mandating teaching of the events of 1948 could contribute or mitigate the reproduction of ethnic hostility within the region, and/or be used as a tool of peace and reconciliation. If meant to serve as a tool to engage in reconciliation, the curriculum must first be used as a tool to
decolonize the Jewish-Israeli psyche – in a Fanonian sense, lead students to separate themselves from the narrative and thinking of the masses – through identifying the language and belief system in which the collective, which they are part of, has been immersed in and perpetuated by dominant powers. It has already been stated that the curriculum appears to begin this process of reconciliation by acknowledging, legitimizing, and attempting to humanize the Other, yet in doing so still takes an outside looking in approach, going through the motions of fostering empathy in students through a “put yourself in their shoes” presentation, while not fully accepting the Other as an equal. The internalization of fears created through the reinforcement of the siege mentality, the adoptively witnessing of history, and the collective memories of trauma, persecution and victimization remain embedded within these same stories and curricular content which drives the actions of collective.

Within the theories of anti-racist and anti-colonial politics, the mental conditioning that takes place as people interpret the visual images around them often unconsciously reinforces forms of power and dominance, discrimination and subjugation, and, as such, perpetuates the oppressive social order. Thus, there is a need to disempower these images. Within education, there remains a space to question and resist and to deconstruct and re-align knowledge and the narrative in order to provide a larger contextualized and inclusive narrative of history. This space exists despite the selective nature through which history education is constructed to frame and define identities and group politics, spiritual and cultural memories, and language and the internalized colonial power relations. As such, there is the possibility of recognizing the diverse experiences and peoples who conceptualize the land and space very differently.

This thesis research was framed through both the application of Ross’s interpretations of psycho-cultural conflict theory and the theoretical prism of anti-racist education (specifically
its notions of power and dominance within society). In so doing, this thesis study sheds light on how the formal, secular Jewish-Israeli history curriculum frames dispositions of the Other through the presentation and reinforcement of psycho-cultural narratives based on a history of religious persecution and a consequential siege mentality. These dispositions, reinforced through the history curriculum and embedded in the positional hierarchy of Jewish-Israelis in opposition to the Other, include deep seated fears for the dominant Jewish-Israeli society, and are used to interpret the motives of the Other in ways that may prevent stakeholders from addressing the competing substantive interests which divide Jewish-Israelis, Arabs, and Palestinians.

Yet, after completing this study, it is noted that the application of psycho-cultural conflict theory to the history curriculum still cannot definitively decipher which particular dispositions steer behaviour in one direction versus another. So too, my use of a psycho-cultural analysis could not accurately predict the spatial dispositions evoked in diverse situations. Consequently, this thesis study’s conclusion remains theoretical, whereby the IMOE needs to grapple with unofficial, biased and myopic histories both students and teachers carry with them inside the classroom otherwise their attempts to legitimize and humanize the Other will fall flat. As this study was a curricular analysis, it is concluded that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not solely based on social structural factors such as wealth and land disputes; rather it is rooted in symbolically meaningful experiences and discourses. While this study did not look at the learning process, it did consider how students may be led to interpret or react in a certain manner, yet there is no concrete way to document whether what the individual was to be taught, in fact, was learned, much less whether this learning actually shaped behaviour. Rather the official curriculum documents represent prevailing (dominant) discourses on these matters and highlight the interpretive dimension of this project whereby conflict reignites deeply held emotions in situations that are highly ambiguous.
and often unstructured. As such, the role of formal education and the goal of the curriculum should not be the learning of historical facts, but rather I propose “critical teaching” of a key historical mindset. While such teaching to think critically is a means to reinforce intellectual agency, it too could provide students with a means to construct their own well-documented historical narratives and to balance perspective with bias. Understanding the process of knowledge selection and transmission via an intended curricular framework during times of conflict would provide a vital grounding for articulating the connections between individual developmental processes and the psycho-cultural dimension of a community whole.

Consequently, given the findings of my analysis, as the IMOE attempts to infuse narratives acknowledging, legitimizing, and humanizing of the Palestinian Other, limitations remain in the (2010) history curriculum. On the one hand, the narratives intended to teach about key episodic events are presented in a way that allows students to reflect on their (Jewish-Israeli) actions and that of the collective; on the other hand, it does not address the adoptively witnessed historical lens students bring into the classroom or how that lens shapes and can be shaped by Others’ adoptive accounts. Yet the curriculum is constructed to teach students how to be critical in their examination of outcomes. In order for students to construct authentic peacebuilding narratives, the curriculum includes the opportunity for students to be critical in the reading of historical sources; provide them with the tools and know how, and the opportunity to execute this. Breaking the cycle of violent conflict may be difficult, as historical memories of traumatic conflict experience, deeply entrenched in the fragility of the Jewish-Israeli psyche, often hinder attempts at reconciliation. For teachers, there needs to be the acknowledgement and acceptance that history is unavoidable, and that history, as a multiple and complex collection of memories, is allowed to surface and be engaged with.
7.5 – Next Steps

So, what now? Education alone cannot and will not foster peace, tolerance, and reconciliation; rather it works in conjunction with government policies, families, economies, and the larger society to do so. While formal education is only one component of action toward peace and reconciliation, it is a major factor influencing the societal organization. I believe that, if education is a tool of negative political indoctrination, then so too can it be a tool of positive change. The haunting question remains, when dealing with identity politics and issues of difference, prejudice, and conflict: are "schools and teachers really in a position to draw on and reinforce the children’s perspective of backgrounding ethnic/religious identity, when in fact, society (including the children’s parents and community) foregrounds such identities" (Bekerman, Zembylas, and McGlynn, 2009, p. 227)?

This thesis study was, for me, an opportunity to understand who I am as a secular Jewish academic. It was born out of heated anti-Zionist and often anti-Semitic rhetoric that left me speechless. At the time, I could not respond to what seemed to be insidious hatred and personal attacks, not because of fearing further engagement, but because I didn’t know the answers. In efforts to prepare myself, this thesis study has forced me to question whether an individual, a nation, or a state, can, without the suppression of alternative narratives, question adoptively witnessed memory, whether such memories have a place or should even be addressed within history education, and to what lengths adoptively witnessed memory is used to construct the larger discipline of history. This study has forced me to question what knowledge I possess, where I obtained my knowledge from, and as a teacher, how I use this knowledge in my class. Is partial amnesia needed for peaceful coexistence? Bordering a Freudian study on Melancholia, do past atrocities need to be forgotten so that a people can begin to heal? While I knew that history is
simply a story of a people, I learned that even with a mandated set of knowledge, what I am intended to teach, what I teach, and what my students learn may be disconnected by the bias, lens and narratives used, heard and projected back through content and context. I have learned that what students bring with them to the class affects how they learn, as much as my own adoptively witnessed account of my own Jewish history. How I have learned about the Nazi Holocaust and embodied the fragility of the Jewish psyche in my own schooling, coupled with the experiences I learned about through my family’s history, has provided a lens for me to view and understand current global atrocities, not just the violent conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. If this has affected me, then so too did this thesis study force me to question how a student’s lived and adoptively witnessed experience would affect their lives, their empathy towards Others, and their drive for change versus a complacency towards the status quo.

Yet this study has only been one-half of the larger issue and conflict and as such, the second half of my research needs to be taken up. While this study for me was a self-reflective journey, the same analysis needs to be done on the Palestinians side. Does the Palestinian government (as separate Fatah and Hamas), indoctrinate their children into hating their Other (Jewish-Israelis)? Is there is a difference between intended education in Gaza versus the West Bank? How is a collective Palestinian identity and their memory shaped and transmitted in their history curriculum and what implications may that have on the larger culture of conflict? While this study set out to study both sides of this conflict, the analytical tools put in place and practice will help in answering these questions and as such, a Palestinian study is forth coming.

With this, I have learned that as much as formal education and mandated curriculum can be tools of peace and fairness, the selective nature of the content makes this task impossible.
Maybe I am an optimist, hoping still that schools can be a place for dialogue, activism, and social change.

I refuse to submit that it can’t be. Thus it is my hope that, from this thesis study, the analysis provided in Chapter Five, the outcomes highlighted in Chapter Six, and recommendations outlined in this chapter may be used to analyse and understand other areas of contention in this conflict and other intractable conflicts. In order for peace to be brokered, there needs to be a conscious effort to question the selected educational content and methods of intended knowledge acquisition from a psycho-cultural and anti-racist perspective. How does the learning of the past affect the future? How are racialized bodies represented in the dominant discourse? How do teachers model change? How do governments teach teachers? What tools are needed for this process? If the IMOE’s history curriculum is shifting its focus from negation of the Other to the even partial acknowledgement, legitimization, and humanization of the Other, are teachers following suit? This study did not look at what teachers teach, but maybe such a study needs to be conducted.

With this observation and through this study’s exploratory nature, I hope that a larger public discourse may ensue, bringing together educators, administrators, curriculum developers, education consultants and politicians. Each group needs to be held accountable for developing, overseeing, and implementing a history curriculum that promotes students’ positive mental and physical development and also the larger, fragile push for a sustainable Israeli-Palestinian peace. There needs to be a greater effort put forth towards a transcultural definition of national identity that encompasses, not just national religious values, but also values of dignity, human rights, mental health and a common history (though contested) in the region.
In efforts to explore the next steps and future studies, an investigation is needed about how ethno-political or racial groups define historical events as critical, and why conflicts attain longevity, intensity, and intransigence. Such an effort could help bring parties to the conflict together to work towards the establishment of peace and reconciliation. For the achievement of such peace, and for the history curriculum to be the tool of tolerance and reconciliation, I propose two recommendations:

1. Within the greater scholarship and within the State of Israel itself, the dominant Jewish-Israeli society must shift the narrative from an emphasis on what caused the conflict to the pursuit of goals that foster peace and engagement in positive dialogue. The history curriculum maintains a rigid adherence to its own positive image that Jewish-Israelis are the sole victims, and the Other is the sole perpetrator. For peace to be achieved, this narrative needs to shift to one that is more self-reflective and self-critical and acknowledges the Jewish-Israeli role in the Other’s outcomes.

2. Professionally, students need to be taught that peace is more than the absence of war; it is lasting cooperation and an environment where each one comes to know the Other as an equal. The mandated IMOE (2010) history curriculum is starting to acknowledge, legitimize, and humanize the Palestinian Other by introducing the role the Jewish people played in Palestinian dispossession, but greater strides still need to be taken. Simply introducing the Palestinians and their history into the Jewish-Israeli narrative does not foster their acceptance, but it is a start. Requirements for peace today need to be realistic and founded on achievable measures, as part of a process of growth and reconciliation.
While Bar-On and Adwan laid the foundation for a dual narrative approach to history education, the push needs to come from the IMOE. The curricular narratives, while not forgetting the history the Jewish people endured, should highlight feelings more than actions. However, I do not simply propose a dual-narrative approach to history. The alignment of histories (i.e., the Nakba and the Jewish expulsion from Islamic-countries) has already begun in the curriculum; these events should be examined through an approach that deals with the causes, the effects, and the emotional aftermath and not simply a focus on differences and whose events were worse. What emotions ensued, and what occurred as a result of these feelings? Since the curriculum is already taking an alignment of events approach, this process can be furthered by identifying other events that intersect. If the curriculum frames the histories as similar events with differing outcomes, then the humanization of the Other can go beyond why the Other should be humanized to questions about how they could be, that is, questions that speak to action-oriented approaches.

As Bar-Tal and Salomon (2006, p. 20) note, “History has proved itself to often hold people’s collective identities, beliefs and attitudes towards the ‘Other’ in a firm grip that won’t let go.” With all that said, the state controls the education systems and controls the decision making about what content to include and omit. There is no doubt about the way that any government, let alone the IMOE, would construct the intended curricular content to align with the way the state views itself, the Other, and its history.

I have authored Social Science curricular materials; it is my opinion that, if the curriculum presents history as evolving through a series of choices, not as merely a list of names and dates in chronology, if it structures outcomes in terms of cause and effect, and if it presents this cause and effect through the lens of competing and overlapping interests, only then may students be able to critically interrogate history. Only then can history be truly understood, and only then can it be
used as a tool for self-reflection and for the provision of commentary on the collective identity. This act of reorganizing the intended history would create an opportunity to distance (adoptive) memory and experience from lived outcomes. If students are to be taught how to distance themselves from the material and frame events under an umbrella of universalization of human evil and frailty, then the curriculum can shift students from a fixed mindset which feeds a siege mentality to a growth mindset that allows them to create a space for imagining peaceful coexistence beyond the continued application of band-aid solutions.

The memory of who “we” are as a people and what “we” have done to others is an exercise in morality and humanism. In this sense, remembering precedes moral principles. Remembering helps in the recollection of the phenomena through which one group sees another. Yet what becomes of the past if we move on? How do we move on when multiple groups occupy a space? Neither personal nor collective memory can undo the past, and these difficulties do not imply an obligation to the past or a justification for a policy of pardon and forgetting (Duvenage, 1999). I wonder: if we forgive, must we forget? If we never forget, do we ever heal? I believe that, in the case of Jews like myself, we come to define ourselves by who or what we are not. My grandmother would always say, “We are not like them… we would not do such things.” While there is no doubt that their history is part of who they are, their history should not be what defines their future.
### GLOSSARY and ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aliyah (Hebrew)</td>
<td>Immigration of Jews to Israel. The literal meaning of Aliyah is “ascent”, expressing the ideological motive - religious or Zionist – for Jewish migration to the Land of Israel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amalek (Hebrew)</td>
<td>The Hebrew Bible (Torah) identifies the Amalekites as a nomadic, or semi-nomadic people who inhabited ancient Israel. Biblically, the term Amalek or Amalekites are identified as a recurrent enemy of the Israelites. In modern usage, the term or label of Amalek is meant to serve as anyone or party attempting to destroy the Jews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Higher Commission</td>
<td>The central political organ of the Arab community of Mandate Palestine. It was established on 25 April 1936, on the initiative of Haj Amin al-Husayni, the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, and comprised the leaders of Palestinian Arab clans and political parties under the Mufti's chairmanship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashkenazim (Hebrew)</td>
<td>Jews who originate from central and eastern Europe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balfour Declaration</td>
<td>A statement of British policy conveyed by the British Foreign Secretary Arthur J. Balfour on November 2, 1917, declaring that “His Majesty’s Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people”.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Mandate</td>
<td>Under the League of Nations system of mandates, Britain assumed the Mandate of Palestine on July 24, 1922. The Balfour Declaration was included in the text of the Mandate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deir Yassin</td>
<td>A Palestinian Arab village of around 600 people near Jerusalem. It had declared its neutrality during the 1948 Palestine war between Arabs and Jews. It was depopulated after a massacre of around 107 of its residents on April 9, 1948, by Jewish paramilitaries from the Irgun and Lehi group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effendis</td>
<td>A person of high education or social standing in an eastern Mediterranean or Arab country.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eretz-Yisrael (Hebrew)</td>
<td>The Land of Israel. The term refers to the Promised Land which extends over both banks of the Jordan River. During the British Mandate, Eretz Yisrael was part of the official name of Palestine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallah/Fallahim (Arabic)</td>
<td>A peasant farmer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haganah</td>
<td>Jewish paramilitary organization in what was then the British Mandate of Palestine from 1920 to 1948, which later became the core of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebron Massacre</td>
<td>Refers to the killing of sixty-seven or sixty-nine Jews on the 24 of August 1929 in Hebron, then part of Mandatory Palestine, by Arabs incited to violence by rumours that Jews were planning to seize control of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDF</td>
<td>Israel Defence Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMFA</td>
<td>Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMOE</td>
<td>Israeli Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intifada (Arabic)</td>
<td>The term refers to the uprising of the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip against Israeli occupation. It broke out on December 9, 1987. The uprising gradually expanded from initial local riots in refugee camps into a full conflagration with mass participation. By the end of 1991, it had almost totally ended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moshav/Moshavim (Hebrew)</td>
<td>An agricultural village which is Israel’s predominant type of rural settlement, based on private ownership of the farm unit combined with cooperative arrangements. The settlement is on national land and basic means of production e.g. land and water, are equally distributed among the members of the Moshav. Marketing of produce and joint purchase of equipment are organized through a cooperative agency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moshavot/Moshavah (Hebrew)</td>
<td>Small towns established by the new Jewish immigrants to Israel in the late nineteenth century.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mufti</td>
<td>An Islamic scholar who is an interpreter or expounder of Islamic law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peel Commission</td>
<td>A British Royal Commission of Inquiry, to investigate the causes of unrest in British Mandate for Palestine following the six-month-long Arab general strike in Mandatory Palestine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>PLO</td>
<td>Palestine Liberation Organization. An umbrella organization, established in 1964, which represents the Palestinian people. Its main goal is the liberation of Palestine and the establishment of a Palestinian state.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sephardim</td>
<td>Jews who originate from Islamic countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yishuv (Hebrew)</td>
<td>The literal meaning is “settlement” or “community”. The word was used to refer to the Jewish residents in Palestine, before the establishment of the State of Israel. The term came into use in the 1880s, when there were about 25,000 Jews living in Palestine, then comprising the southern part of Ottoman Syria, and continued to be used until 1948, by which time there were about 700,000 Jews there. The term is used in Hebrew even nowadays to denote the Pre-State Jewish residents in Palestine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zionism</td>
<td>A nationalist and political movement of Jews and Jewish culture that supports the re-establishment of a Jewish homeland in the territory defined as the historic Land of Israel.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
REFERENCES


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APPENDIX

Appendix A

Overview of Educational Sectors in Israel

With the breakdown of the early years and elementary aged schooling as such, it is noted that different sectors of the population attend different schools, and though parents are comfortable with the fact that their children’s school may more or less reflect their basic worldview, this separation results in very little contact among the various segments of the dominant Israeli society which in turn may perpetuate stereotypes and create a divide within the state itself.

State Schools (Mamlachti)

State schools or Mamlachti are attended by the majority of pupils. Broken down as having a curriculum that is seventy-five percent State-mandated, and twenty-five percent supplementary, the basic curriculum includes mathematics, language skills, science, history, Jewish studies, art and physical education. Jewish studies are given a national, cultural interpretative lens without any emphasis on the students’ religious observance or belief. The remaining twenty-five percent supplementary material is meant to focus on the unique dynamics within a community and the choice of material is done by an education committee in each school made up of teachers, community members and the school administration.

According to Hazan (2011), the demographics found within this sector are primarily affluent Ashkenazi students living in larger urban centres, and as such, considered carriers of globalized culture and ideologies (Hazan, 2001) through their engagement with technology and consumerism (Adres et al., 2011; Lemish et al., 1998). Through such access, many like Pinson
(2004), Ichilov et. al (2005), Lomseky-Feder (2011) and Sabbage and Resh (2013) note that this sector’s pedagogical shift away from a hegemonic and exclusionary Zionist citizenship discourse has fostered a more liberal and individualized discourse, that emphasizes an awareness of human rights and tolerance while balancing a secular, national and historical understanding to the larger Jewish culture and its traditions.

**State Religious Schools (Mamlachti Dati)**

State Religious Schools or Mamlachti Dati, made up primarily of Mizrahi Jews (Jews of Oriental descent) emphasize accelerated Jewish and religious teachings fostering an atmosphere of Torah observance, daily prayers and the adherence to religious norms and other value-oriented subjects concerned with the sacredness of the land of Israel and the redemption of the Jewish people. Because of a stronger theological approach to Israeli studies, this sector facilitates the inculcation of ethno-republican orientations and discourages liberal values through a reduced focus on ‘secular’ disciplines such as sciences or world history (Lemish, 2003; Pinson, 2004; Resh and Benavot, 2009). While still under the umbrella of the IMOE, this sector has been granted significantly more autonomy and as such is in full charge of all administrative matters: it has its own school inspectors, teacher training, curriculum content and textbooks choice (Feniger, 2008; Pinson, 2004).

**Independent Religious Schools (Chinuch Atzmai)**

Independent Religious Schools or Chinuch Atzmai focus almost entirely on Talmud Torah and offer very little in terms of secular subjects. These schools place heavy emphasis on religious studies and observance, with a scarce focus on math, language skills, history and science. While
the schools are supported by the State, the IMOE is not responsible for the curriculum development and delivery, nor are they responsible for the employment practices within the schools, and thus not a focus of this thesis study.

**Private Schools**

Private schools are founded on and reflect a certain philosophy towards education (based on a specific group - Democratic Schools), or are based on a curriculum of a foreign country (e.g. The American School). Though recognized by the IMOE and mandated to follow only the basic State curriculum set forth by the IMOE (and allowing staff and parents to determine the instructional and educational norms of each school with little intervention from the state), Israel is home to a number of private schools founded on and reflect a certain philosophy towards education (based on a specific group - Democratic Schools), or are based on a curriculum of a foreign country (e.g. The American School). As these schools do not need to focus on all curricular aspects, including time allocations, and is influenced by norms and values which may be outside of those shared by the State of Israel, this sector too is not discussed further in the study.

**Arab and Druze Schools**

While questions of their loyalty to the State, Israeli Arab, Muslim and Druze schools reside in separate geographical localities (e.g. villages or towns) or in segregated neighbourhoods of ethnically mixed cities (Gonen, 1996). This sector, which has been granted permission to teach in Arabic, remains completely dependent on the IMOE for their resources, much of which they are discriminated in, both in the allocation of and content therein. While their official curriculum is very similar to that taught in secular Jewish schools, focusing on general subjects such as
mathematics, science, and English, in recent years the IMOE has been marked by a growing recognition of this sector's distinctive cultural heritage, religion, narratives, history, and right to educate toward its own national identity.
Appendix B

Summary of Data: Students, Classes, Teaching Positions 2012-2013 (Hebrew and Arabic Education)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Tier</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Average Class Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades K-6</td>
<td>935,141</td>
<td>63,619</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 7-9</td>
<td>276,608</td>
<td>19,679</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 10-12</td>
<td>381,516</td>
<td>35,239</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix C
Hierarchical Matrix of Coded Data

Step 1 – Research Questions

RQ1 Within the formal, secular, Jewish-Israeli history curriculum, where and how are key episodic events, narratives, and symbols of the Palestinian other, intended to be used to introduce and reinforce a polarizing sense of identity?

RQ2 What shapes history curriculum and what intended messages are transmitted through history education (texts and curriculum guidelines) in relation to distinct narratives and peace building, both exacerbating and overcoming prejudices, stereotypes and politicized differences?

Step 2 – Study’s Examination of

E1 The form of history curriculum and the intended messages transmitted through history curriculum in relation to distinct psychocultural narratives, collective memory and trauma.

E2 The role history curriculum could have in reproducing and redefining collective memory, trauma, and triumph during the events of 1948, which in turn may further polarize this “us-them” divide.

E3 The role history curriculum could play in the socialization, transmission and dissemination of societal and cultural knowledge, including the representations of one’s own socio-cultural group and that of other groups.

Step 3 – IMOE Themes

T1 Legitimization and Humanization of the other

T2 Overcoming suspicion, hatred and prejudices by knowing and respecting Islam and the Arabs

T3 Legitimizing the opposing national movement

T4 Providing a balanced presentation of the conflict
Step 4: IMOE Goals/Aims/Outcome of the Curriculum

G1 Demonstrate an understanding for the culture of mankind as a mosaic of different nations

G2 Identify the Jewish contributions and the contributions of other nations in the creation of this culture

G3 Develop an understanding for the need of cooperation in global peace efforts

G4 Develop a Jewish national consciousness and understand the role of a common heritage in a historical, present and a future context

G5 Foster a love for the Jewish people both in the State of Israel and the Diaspora

G6 Demonstrate an awareness of the importance of the existence of the State of Israel in a physical modern and historical context, and the importance of a Jewish attachment to the land

Step 5 – Main Topic of Instruction

I1 Diverse Jewish community in Israel from the late Ottoman period until the end of the 19th century and the First World War

I2 Jewish Settlement transition from Ottoman rule of the British Mandate

I3 Emergence of the Arab nation-states in the Middle East

I4 Growth of the national identity of Israeli Arabs

I5 Institutions of the Yishuv in Eretz Israel

I6 Aliya to Israel and its settlement

I7 Jewish-Arab conflict until World War II

I8 Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel during the Second World War

I9 Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel 1945-1947

I10 Establishment of Israel
Step 6: Applied International Educational Standards

S1  Do the curriculum and schoolbooks recognize the “Other”?

S2  Do they promote tolerance, understanding and respect toward the “Other,” its culture, achievements, values and ways of life? Does it address the sources of intolerance?

S3  Do the curriculum and schoolbooks develop capabilities of non-violent conflict resolution?

S4  Do the curriculum and schoolbooks promote peace and peace processes?

S5  Does it promote international understanding and cooperation?

S6  Does it bring the pupil to understand and assume his or her responsibilities for the maintenance of peace?

S7  Are the curriculum and schoolbooks free of wording, imagery and ideologies that would likely create prejudices and misconceptions, stereotypes, misunderstandings, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry, and national hatred, as well as any sort of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples?

S8  Are all educational materials (textbooks, workbooks, teachers’ guides, maps, illustrations, aids) up-to-date, accurate, complete, balanced, and unprejudiced, and do they use equal standards so as to promote mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples?

S9  Do the curriculum and schoolbooks include full, adequate and objective data and critical analysis of the historical and contemporary factors underlying the contradictions, disputes, conflicts and tensions between countries and groups, together with study of ways of overcoming these contradictions?
Hierarchical Matrix of Coded Data².

² This figure illustrated the breakdown of data analysis as it is coded and related back to the overall research question. Here each research question is broken up and analyzed based on what this study has set out to examining, the themes identified by the IMOIE, the Goals/Aims/Outcomes of the history curriculum, the main topic/lesson of instruction, and then finally how it fits into UNESCO’s Applied International Education Standards.
Research Question #1: Hierarchical Matrix of Coded Data

Within the formal, secular, Jewish-Israeli history curriculum, where and how are key episodic events, narratives, and symbols of the Palestinian Other, intended to be used to introduce and reinforce a polarizing sense of identity?

The role history curriculum could play in the socialization, transmission and dissemination of societal and cultural knowledge, including the representations of one’s own socio-cultural group and that of other groups.

The role history curriculum could have in reproducing and redefining collective memory, trauma, and triumph during the events of 1947 – 1948, which in turn may further polarize this “us-them” divide.

Do the curriculum and schoolbooks recognize the “Other”?

Do the curriculum and schoolbooks promote peace and peace processes?

Does it promote international understanding and cooperation?

Does it bring the pupil to understand and assume his or her responsibilities for the maintenance of peace?

Research Question

Study’s Examination of

IMOE Themes (Findings)

IMOE Goals / Aims / Outcomes of the Curriculum

Main Topic of Instruction

Applied International Educational Standard

Know the role of history curriculum could play in the socialization, transmission and dissemination of societal and cultural knowledge, including the representations of one’s own socio-cultural group and that of other groups.

Legitimization and Humanization of the other

Identify the Jewish contributions and the contributions of other nations in the creation of this culture

Develop an understanding for the need of cooperation in global peace efforts

Legitimating the opposing national movement

Develop a Jewish national consciousness and understand the role of a common heritage in a historical, present and a future context

Provided a balanced presentation of the conflict

Demonstrate an awareness of the importance of the existence of the State of Israel in a physical modern and historical context, and the importance of a Jewish attachment to the land

Establishment of Israel

Does the Jewish community in Israel from the late Ottoman period until the end of the 19th century and the First World War

Jewish Settlement transition from Ottoman rule of the British Mandate

Emergence of the Arab nation-states in the Middle East

Growth of the national identity of Israeli Arabs

Aliya to Israel and its settlement

Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel during the Second World War

Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel 1945-1947

Does it bring the pupil to understand and assume his or her responsibilities for the maintenance of peace?

Legitimizing the opposing national movement

Knowing and respecting Islam and the Arabs

Develop an understanding for the need of cooperation in global peace efforts

Does the Jewish community in Israel from the late Ottoman period until the end of the 19th century and the First World War

Jewish Settlement transition from Ottoman rule of the British Mandate

Emergence of the Arab nation-states in the Middle East

Growth of the national identity of Israeli Arabs

Aliya to Israel and its settlement

Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel during the Second World War

Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel 1945-1947

Does it bring the pupil to understand and assume his or her responsibilities for the maintenance of peace?
This figure illustrates the breakdown of data coded as it applies to Research Question #2. Here the research question is placed in an analysis line showing its contributions and relationships to what this study has set out to examine; which specific IMOE themes contribute to this answering the research question; which Goals/Aims/Outcomes of the history curriculum contribute to this question’s understanding; which specific topic/lesson of instruction are examined within this research question, and how UNESCO’s Applied International Education Standards can be applied.
## Appendix D

### History Curriculum for High Schools – Public Schools and Religious Schools – Unit 5: Modern Israel

The Yishuv in Eretz Israel in the 19th century until the end of World War I

These two sections build on each other through the recognition of the characteristics of Jewish settlement in Israel in the late 19th century development and appreciate this contribution to the continuity of Jewish settlement in Israel. Students will understand the proportion of immigrants’ during the first and second Aliyah, and examine the conflicts and controversies between them and “community old “. These lessons conclude with an examination as to their role in laying the foundations to the UK National: Balfour Declaration providing and receiving the Mandate for Israel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periods of Instruction</th>
<th>Central Teaching Focus</th>
<th>Examples of the development of thinking skills</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Diverse Jewish community in Israel from the late Ottoman period until the end of 19th century and the First World War (10 Hours) | Between the “old” “new” community development in Israel.  
1. Population of the Old Yishuv:  
   - Ashkenazi community assembly, its economy, its leadership and the ways her organization;  
   - Sephardic community assembly, its economy, its leadership and the ways her organization;  
   - March of Ethiopian Jews to Israel in 1862;  
   - “Leaving the walls”;  
   - Jerusalem and the settlements around the country and the resettlement of “diverse” population of immigrants.  
2. Love of Zion  
   - The first increase in the population of a cooperative and socialist community during the Second Aliyah, and the rise of the Yemenites.  
3. Between tradition and innovation:  
   - Issues that question the nature of the “new settlement”;  
   - Selecting and reviewing the deepening debate about the nature of the new Yishuv using a series of selected issues. | 1. Comparison - similarities and differences between the various groups Old Settlement using criteria determined by the students.  
2. Bargain, Management of Discussion and Drafting Opinions on whether “leaving the walls” contributed to the spread of “old” or start a “new”?  
3. Comparison criteria determined by and between the students’ regarding the First Aliyah and Second Aliyah.  
4. Determining position while bringing arguments and evidence.  
5. Argument and varied perspectives discussion stage.  
6. Selected Issues - Show the position of each side in the debate, to each other, the determination of position and argument.  
7. Formulation of reasoned position on what the question really was.  
| Jewish settlement transition from Ottoman rule of the British Mandate (6 Hours) | 1. Mandatory contribution for laying the foundations of the Jewish National Home. Balfour Declaration and its significance against the backdrop of one of British interests in the Middle East (The McMahon- Hussein Correspondence; Sykes-Picot Agreement; Faisal- Weizmann Agreement, etc.).  
2. Establishment of the British Mandate in Israel too uniqueness of the British Mandate in Israel and British obligations towards a mandate to form the National Home (Conference San - Remo) allowing immigration, land allocation, land development and public works. | 1. Analysis and drawing conclusions.  
2. Analysis “Balfour Declaration” and drawing conclusions about Britain’s position towards the establishment of a national home.  
3. Asking questions about the commitment of the UK towards the establishment of a national home.  
4. Analysis and/or Reasoning Analysis towards sections of the Mandate of the British the Land of Israel and conclusions regarding the British commitment to the establishment of a national home. |
The 20th century – Arab nationalism in the Middle East and in Israel at the end of the century⁶

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Periods of Instruction</th>
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<th>Examples of the development of thinking skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Emergence of the Arab nation-states in the Middle East (2 Hours) | 1. Awakening of a modern Arab nationalism in the Middle East and having a local Arab Identity (particularistic) alongside national identity at all Arabic (Pan - Arab) penetration of the national idea in the modern Arab world.  
2. The rift created between states by creating a division of powers in the Middle East.  
3. The policy of splitting the only Arab nation in the Middle East following War World I.  
4. The establishment of Transjordan Emirate - Faisal administration in Damascus and its collapse. | 1. Identifying components and connections.  
2. Identify national principles as expressed in the process of formation of national identity in the Arab Middle East and Israel.  
3. Reading Maps and reasoning map analysis and conclusions about the changes wrought by World War I the Arab world. |
| Growth of the national identity of Israeli Arabs (2 Hours) | 1. Causes strengthening of Palestinian Arab national identity in Israel.  
2. Existence of some elements of identity among Israeli Arabs before the First World War (e.g., religious, cultural, Ottoman identity, Arab identity, family and regional identities).  
3. “Greater Syria” setting the boundaries of the land of Israel and the end of World War I.  
4. Dilemmas question of identity of the Arabs in Israel.  
5. Israel After the war: “Palestine” or “Greater Syria” establishment of a Jewish homeland in Israel.  
6. Arab immigration to Palestine during the British Mandate. | 1. Identifying components and connections analysis the factors that led to the strengthening of Arab national identity in Israel.  
2. Identify causes and effects (at least three components) elevation range of points of view.  
3. Show two Arab perspective on the question of identity: “Palestine” or Greater Syria. |

## Development of the Jewish National Home in Israel

The section examines chopped settlement institutions and its parties, and understanding their contribution to the preparation of infrastructure for Israel the Jewish and democratic states. Building on settlement formation, students analyse the role of immigration and settlement in building a national home and the challenges and difficulties faced by the pioneers of religious integration in the Zionist project while examining ways to cope and evaluating their contribution to home building national character. From this understanding, the focus shifts to the many reasons for the Jewish–Arab conflict, and the changes in British policy towards the National Home.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periods of Instruction</th>
<th>Central Teaching Focus</th>
<th>Examples of the development of thinking skills</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institutions of the Yishuv in Eretz Israel (4 Hours)</td>
<td>1. Methods of realization of Jewish autonomy. 2. Establishment of government institutions (e.g., the Israeli Knesset, one of the National Committee, the Chief Rabbinate, two chief rabbis) and Adi communities). 3. Institutions to represent the Jewish people (e.g., the Jewish Agency. 4. Establishment of the democratic electoral system. 5. The struggle for women’s suffrage. 6. Political parties and political blocs in the community (e.g., Bloc practice, religious bloc, the Civil Bloc, ethnic parties and organizations).</td>
<td>1. Show information and knowledge in diverse ways displaying structure settlement institutions and their role in the way suitable representation. With its selection by way of representation chosen. 2. Justifying knowledge and appreciation - examining the assumption that institutions formed a government settlement to Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. 3. Elevation range perspective - presenting arguments about women’s suffrage from the perspectives of supporters and opponents. 4. Argument - a podium discussion on the issue which to choose elected assembly. 5. Presenting opposing positions, reasoned, by groups of students. 6. Reasoning - of videos and information source platform issues of the various parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aliyah to Israel and its settlement (10 Hours)</td>
<td>1. Immigration and settlement through the Zionist vision. 2. Purposes of immigration and Zionist settlement in first establishing a Jewish State. 3. The return of the people to its land and redemption of the land. 4. Solution for the adversity of the people - physical and spiritual solidarity at all. 5. Jewish building in the country (national capital and creating a Jewish majority in Israel. 6. Political dilemma of immigration and settlement in two of the Zionist movement and the Yishuv leadership (e.g..</td>
<td>1. Identifying components and connections identifying streams that supported the Zionist movement especially any of the goals. 2. Solution to the dilemma and problem formulation (i.e., what problems may face community leaders on issues of immigrants and priorities?). 3. Priorities in resource allocation for settlement. 4. Reference emphasizing the different sides of the dilemma. 5. Bids are explained on the basis of evidence from the information learned in solving dilemmas.</td>
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| Jewish - Arab conflict until World War II (10 Hours) | a choice between dilemmas regarding immigration and dilemmas relating to settlement.  
7. Priorities and judgments in raising Aliyah.  
8. Background on the increase of immigrants and ideology on the one hand and immigrants out of necessity situation in their home country on the other.  
9. Control as a tool for designing power relations country’s political occupation and settlements spot (e.g., agricultural settlement, cooperative alongside urban settlement and industrial development).  
10. The debate around the social system - economically appropriate (e.g., free market or socialist economies, private capital or national capital).  
11. Works immigration and settlement ideological shadings during the 1920’s and 1930’s (a choice of data analysis waves of immigration and settlement projects data analysis).  
12. Established the “pioneer” and training.  
13. Realizing the values of Zionism.  
14. The study of religious striker; eastern religious kibbutz, and training in the Islamic countries.  
15. Waves of immigration, their uniqueness, their contribution to the building.  
16. National Home and nature: - “Third Aliyah” - “Fifth Aliyah” (Rise Rescue, Youth Aliyah) immigration from Islamic countries. | 6. Argument - “those who immigrated to Israel from the necessity of the situation in their respective countries and of Zionist ideology are immigrants.”  
7. Make arguments in favour and arguments opposed.  
8. Argument and debate reasoned from a member of the “pioneer” general and pioneer of religious, regarding the need to establish a separate frame, religious pioneers.  
9. Reasoning - Analysis Sources and reasoning about innovation worldview of “Hapoel Mizrachi”.  
10. Raising varied options for solving a problem which challenges faced messengers who went for training in Islamic countries?  
11. Proposed ways of dealing with the challenges mentioned.  
12. Reasoning analysis maps settlement and analysis tables data increase over Mandate period; drawing conclusions about the contribution of immigration and settlement fulfil the goals of the Zionist movement. | 1. Comparison and conclusions comparison between events by causes, manifestations of violence and scope of events.  
2. Drawing conclusions about the direction of development of the conflict (i.e., escalation or a solution).  
3. Comparison and conclusions comparing the British commitments to the National Home Balfour Declaration “and in The Mandate” and the provisions of the White Paper, “drawing conclusions about the change in Britain’s position towards the establishment National Home.  
4. Elevation range perspectives bringing points of view of the defence against extremist organization regarding the proper response to events such as “restraint” or “comment”. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel during the Second World War (3 Hours)</th>
<th>Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel 1947-1945 (5 Hours)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.</strong> Consequences of the conflict on the Arabs of Israel Ideologically: strengthening Palestinian national consciousness, on a practical level - social disintegration, leadership crisis, disruption of war.</td>
<td><strong>5.</strong> Involve making reasoned argument “for” or “against” the establishment of a separate Jewish economy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>8.</strong> Attempts to resolve the conflict and responses from the Jewish and Arab community on proposals such as bi-national, dividing the country, and Cantonisation, British proposal - Peel Commission.</td>
<td><strong>6.</strong> Asking questions if regarding information on the destabilization of the situation of Jews in Islamic countries following the worsening Arab-Jewish conflict in Israel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>9.</strong> Attempts at dialogue between leaders: Jews and Arabs - conversations with Arab leaders, established the “covenant of peace”.</td>
<td><strong>7.</strong> Examine a variety of opinions drafting opinions on the issue (e.g., do Israeli Arab events help promote national goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel during the Second World War (3 Hours)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel 1947-1945 (5 Hours)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Community dilemmas during World War II and the Holocaust.</td>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Community dilemmas during World War II and the Holocaust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Collaboration with the British in battle and action plans against the German threat.</td>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Collaboration with the British in battle and action plans against the German threat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> The establishment of the Palmach, “Masada Mount Carmel” - join the British Army and the establishment of the Brigade to fight the British restrictions on immigration and illegal immigration.</td>
<td><strong>3.</strong> The establishment of the Palmach, “Masada Mount Carmel” - join the British Army and the establishment of the Brigade to fight the British restrictions on immigration and illegal immigration.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> Declaration of Hachiko rebellion to Lehi.</td>
<td><strong>4.</strong> Declaration of Hachiko rebellion to Lehi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.</strong> What brought about the end of the British Mandate over the Land of Israel and who “drove” out the British?</td>
<td><strong>1.</strong> Representation of information and knowledge in diverse ways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.</strong> The struggle of a diverse community of British policy towards first settlements, illegal immigration, land and sea routes from Europe and from Islamic countries.</td>
<td><strong>2.</strong> Show causes and processes that led to the end of the British Mandate highlighting the relationship and hierarchy between the various parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.</strong> Military struggle towards retirees - the Irgun and Lehi, and their struggle against the British “Resistance Movement” and its dissolution.</td>
<td><strong>3.</strong> Insights gained representation on this question through to representation in which select students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.</strong> “The White Paper” after World War II: Commission of Inquiry Anglo - American and results.</td>
<td><strong>4.</strong> Explaining why this method was chosen to display the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.</strong> Circumstances of International decolonization and considerations of UK colonial powers weakened.</td>
<td><strong>5.</strong> Speculation in Britain could prevent the termination of the Mandate?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Establishment of the State of Israel

This last section focuses on the diplomatic and military measures led the establishment of the State of Israel and recognizes the various waves of immigration and settlement plans in understanding their impact on design over the state and society. Students examine the meaning of “the principle of statism” designed by Ben-Gurion and examine the implications for the three design character of the state while recognizing the expressions of Arab-Israeli conflict in all its diversity, to understand its causes and examine the attempts for solvers. This section and course concludes with a thorough examination and reflection on tensions in Israeli society the importance of foreign relations between Israel and the countries of the world, the existence of Israel, the Diaspora status, and Israel as a Jewish State.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periods of Instruction</th>
<th>Central Teaching Focus</th>
<th>Examples of the development of thinking skills</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Establishment of Israel (6 Hours) | 1. What led to the establishment of the State?  
2. November’s fees decision by the first Jewish settlement in Eretz Israel.  
3. Revolutionary War - Arab refusal decision Kaf-Tet November and the war between Israeli Arabs Jewish settlement.  
4. Declaration of Independence.  
5. Uncertainty and pressures Arab independence and the threatened invasion of Arab countries to Israel.  
6. Israel and the question of preparedness community - pressure from the United States to postpone the establishment of Israel.  
7. War of Independence when Arab countries initiated an attack.  
8. Defence, perpetrators, and the facts on the ground resulting in war and the refugee problem.  
9. Kaf-Tet decision and the War of Independence on the situation of Jews in Arab armistice agreements and setting boundaries. | 1. Elevation range perspectives - management discussion reflect the attitudes in Arab society the question: “Is accept the division or fight it?”  
2. Presenting opposing positions and discredited through documents and evidence available to students.  
3. Argument - Management “discussion stage” issue “whether to declare the establishment of the state?”  
4. Presenting opposing positions and discredited sources available to students.  
5. Representation of information and knowledge in diverse ways - finding ways to view the Revolutionary War moves in two phases, and to mark the major turning points therein.  
6. Argument - formulation was the true extent to which the phrase “quality versus quantity” about dealing Jewish power in both stages of the war?  
7. Bringing arguments and evidence formulated a position.  
8. Identifying components and connections - examining areas where the Revolutionary War affected the results of Israel’s life today. |
| Establishment of the sovereign government of the state of Israel (4 Hours) | 1. Exercise of sovereignty and sovereignty a design.  
2. Establishment of government institutions.  
3. Establishment of the Israel Defence Forces as the people’s.  
4. Ben Gurion and design concept State. | 1. Drafting an opinion reasoned argument based on the national perception of Ben Gurion and expressed in one of the following: - cancellation of the currents in education and the establishment of state education varied. (Establishment of a religious state education) - Altalena - dismantling the Palmach. |

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8 State of Israel Ministry of Education (2010), History Curriculum for High Schools – Public Schools and Religious Schools (IX-XII): Compulsory Units. A division of planning and curriculum development. Jerusalem, Israel
| Immigration, Absorption and settlement in Israel (10 Hours) | 1. Effects of immigration and settlement design across the country as a choice between focusing on the subject of immigration and settlement issues.  
2. What characteristics lead to the “highs” in the first decades after the establishment of the country?  
3. Waves increased dilemmas around the Aliyah policy in the 1950’s: (e.g., the free immigration versus the rising emergency towards infrastructure, limitations absorption, the economic situation and policies of austerity, the immigrant population size relative to number of the Yishuv, the ways of immigrant settlement and employment, the immigrant camps, transit camps, melting pot policy and the issue of education in the camps and transit camps - development towns.  
4. Wave increased dilemmas around the Aliyah policy in the 1970’s: the rise and extent of, characteristics and struggles from the Soviet Union; products of Ethiopian immigration.  
5. Settlement of the State at the end of the seventies.  
6. Factors and dilemmas in settlement policy.  
7. Design and stabilizing the country’s borders, the debate on a green or purple line - population distribution - making the desert bloom - security.  
8. Works of major State settlement: settling the Negev versus the Galilee.  
9. Construction of the development towns  
10. Yesha settlement after the Six Day | 1. Uploading a variety of opinions reference to the dilemma: “free immigration front rise is classified”.  
2. Preference for one position or the other.  
3. Formulation of arguments and reasoning are based.  
4. Compare 50’s and 70’s.  
5. Comparison of increases in years the last century and the first decades increases the State, and reasoning about continuity and difference in addressing the state in immigration.  
6. The increase in the scope, methods of immigration, absorption patterns, the ratio of Israeli society and immigrants.  
7. Uploading a variety of opinions dilemma Management  
9. Show position while bringing arguments are based. |
| Israel (6 Hours) | 1. Major conflicts in shaping the society (choose three conflicts and discuss).  
2. The debate on the Jewish character of the state.  
3. Expressions of struggle in the fifties about “Who is a Jew” and about “the nature of Shabbat” in Israel.  
5. The debate over reparations from Germany - Kastner case - Eichmann trial. | 1. Identifying components and connections.  
2. Identify connections between what happened in the early days of the country’s Jewish character and the issue of adverse events today.  
3. Formulation argument opposing arguments for reparations from Germany and the arguments that support the agreement, while presenting evidence and arguments.  
4. Taking a personal stand reasoned. |
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<td>6. Ethnic gap and struggles for equality: Wadi Salib events; “Black Panther” minorities citizens of Israel from 1948 – 1966, the military government policy and its impact on the Arab society’s attitude to Israel.</td>
<td>5. Argument involves making social discrimination and ethnic discrimination raised by the protesters in Wadi Salib.</td>
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<td>6. Taking a stand personally present their arguments and reasoned ways were present.</td>
<td>6. Taking a stand personally present their arguments and reasoned ways were present.</td>
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<td>7. Uploading a variety of opinions drafting arguments for imposing opponents “military government” Israeli Arabs and the arguments supporting it, while presenting evidence and arguments divergent views.</td>
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<td><strong>Israel’s relationship with the Arab world</strong>  (10 Hours)</td>
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<td>1. Dealing political solution to the war.</td>
<td>1. Comparison (similarities and differences) and conclusions comparison between the wars and conflict query by criteria such as Causes, effects results.</td>
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<td>2. The conflict between Arab states and Israel.</td>
<td>2. Conclusions resulting from the comparison of the relationship between the Arab countries to Israel.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Arab opposition to the existence of the State of Israel</td>
<td>3. Drawing conclusions from the analysis of sections of the Palestinian Covenant and Hamas Charter and reasoning about the attitude of the PLO and Hamas to Israel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. The conflict, destruction and establishment of a Palestinian state on Israeli soil.</td>
<td>4. Reasoned argument formulation was having “a podium discussion” regarding the best solution to the conflict between Israel and the Arab world.</td>
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<td>5. Wars between Israel and Arab countries: Six Day and Yom Kippur.</td>
<td>5. Show reasoned position based on evidence and explanations of historical sources.</td>
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<td>7. Israel two refugee problems.</td>
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<td>8. Palestinians in Arab countries after the War of Independence struggle in Israel, 1959 - Established Fatah at Convention 1964 - establishment of the PLO on Palestinian and goals.</td>
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<td>10. Solving the Arab - Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem: the peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan.</td>
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<td>11. Attempts at a political solution to the conflict (Israeli – Palestinian peace talks - Oslo).</td>
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<td><strong>The foreign policy of the State of Israel</strong>  (3-4 Hours)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Foreign policy role in maintaining Israeli sovereignty.</td>
<td>1. Group research project on “Examining Foreign relations of Israel with one of the countries or blocs of the world.”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Israel between the blocks - between East and West</td>
<td>2. Formulating reasoned position on the issue (i.e., do Foreign relations serve as a source of strength or weakness?).</td>
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<td>3. Israel’s relations with the European countries (UK, France and Germany) relations between Israel and the EU.</td>
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<td>4. Israel’s relations with the United States.</td>
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<td>5. Israel’s relations with the Third World.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Israel-Diaspora relations</strong>  (3-4 Hours)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Dilemmas interaction Diaspora in Israel.</td>
<td>1. Uploading a variety of opinions.</td>
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<td>2. Understanding contemporary Jewish centres.</td>
<td>2. Show different positions relative to the dilemma upon the relations between Israel and the Diaspora.</td>
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<td>3. Understanding Jewish organizations and activities - assimilation.</td>
<td>3. Each group will present the views of its members in connection with a dilemma, and disagreements among group members.</td>
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<td>4. Relationships in areas such as immigration and settlement; economics; education political sphere - political.</td>
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<td>5. Dilemmas: disagreements on the issue of recognition of current - religious involvement and intervention policy - Israeli issues of dual loyalty - Center and Diaspora or “Land of Israel and Babylonia” - new?</td>
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