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WHAT DO ISRAELI UNIVERSITY STUDENTS KNOW ABOUT CANADA?¹

Introduction

Between March 1996 and October 2000, six groups of students in “A Regional Geography of Canada,” a second- and third-year, optional, semester course in the Department of Geography at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, were asked at the outset of the course to complete a general knowledge questionnaire about Canada (see Appendix). The primary purpose of the survey was to provide the instructor with a sense of what students in the class knew about the geography of Canada as well as aspects of its history, economy, and culture. A by-product was the inauguration of a discussion of what Israeli university students know about Canada and why.

At the outset, it should be noted that Israeli university students have a keen interest in geography, which is not reflected in the low percentage of students taking the non-compulsory, high school geography matriculation examination or in enrolment figures for geography programmes of Israeli universities. The interest is a practical one, a deep-rooted interest in seeing and experiencing the world. Especially after completing their army service, a large number of young Israelis take “time out” to travel to distant places far away from Israel and the tensions of the Middle East. Their journeys take them to relatively less expensive areas in the East (India, Nepal, Thailand, and China) and South America as well as to Europe,

Australia, and North America. Their wanderlust reflects not only a desire to escape but also an interest in knowing more about the world beyond the borders of their own small, hemmed-in country.²

Theoretical Background and Methodology of the Survey

Surveys of American university and high-school students' general geographic knowledge and their knowledge of Canada, in particular, provided a model for the present study. (A number of these surveys will be referred to herein.) The survey group consisted of 242 students (131 second-year B.A., 102 third-year B.A., and 9 M.A.). Their departmental affiliations were Geography (180), Sociology (21), Economics (14), the general B.A. programme (12), and the remainder from various other departments. The gender distribution was close to equal (53 percent men and 47 percent women). Most of the respondents were native-born Israelis, with 31 from the former Soviet Union, three Americans, and two South Africans.

Sixteen percent of the respondents had visited Canada, and their destinations were in the heartland (the Windsor-Quebec City corridor). Almost all had visited Toronto and Niagara Falls, and half of that group had visited Montreal, as well. A handful had visited Canada's West Coast. The response rate and number of correct answers of those who had visited Canada was noticeably higher than those of the other respondents. (Students majoring in geography also tended to score higher than others.) This accords with the results of the baseline geography competency test administered in Indiana universities in 1987. A direct relationship was found in the latter test between travel (out of state and out of country) and higher test scores.³

The survey group had certain limitations. First, it represents only a partial cross-section of Israeli society: one age cohort (20-29) and of those, people with more than twelve years of education.⁴ Also, it did not include two significant population groups within Israeli society: non-Jews and ultra-Orthodox Jews.⁵

Some of the questions were open-ended. The purpose was to elicit answers and to limit the amount of guessing or logical deduction, a common problem with multiple-choice questions. The four multiple-choice questions required estimates of numerical ranges (questions 25-28). The questions examine the respondents' knowledge about Canada in the following categories: place recognition or geographic knowledge, culture and society, population, and economic indicators.⁶

The majority of the students surveyed answered many questions incorrectly and failed to respond to others. This is not surprising. American university students surveyed in similar studies exhibited limited knowledge of their neighbour to the north and often could not answer questions about Canada despite the strong connections between the two nations. The problem in the United States appeared so acute to the editors of the *Journal of Geography* that they devoted a special issue of the journal to Canada.⁷

Geographical Knowledge

In an editorial, "Canada: A Neighbor Taken for Granted," in the special issue on Canada of the *Journal of Geography* just mentioned, Anthony R. de Souza noted that only eleven percent of American university students surveyed knew that Ottawa is the capital city of Canada.⁸ By contrast, 59 percent of the Israelis identified Ottawa correctly (question 1). Others thought one of the three most populous cities was the national capital (Toronto-16 percent; Montreal-10 percent; Vancouver-12 percent).

That Canada is the second largest country in area in the world was known by 29 percent of the students. Of the others, 27 percent ranked Canada as the third to sixth largest country, and two percent thought that Canada was the largest country. While over half the students, then, recognized that Canada is among the largest countries in the world, 42 percent of them had no idea of its size and did not answer question 18.

With regard to the political sub-divisions of Canada, only 16 percent knew that Canada has ten provinces, only six

percent knew that the country had territories (two or three).⁹ When asked to list the names of the provinces and territories, only five respondents could name them all (four of those had visited Canada). The provinces identified were: Quebec (49 percent), Ontario (31 percent), Alberta (21 percent), British Columbia (17 percent), Newfoundland and New Brunswick (eight percent each), Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories and Yukon Territory (six percent each), and Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island (three percent each). The high recognition of Quebec reflects the prominence of the Quebec separation issue in the media at the time the survey was administered, as discussed below in the section on Culture and Society.

Respondents were asked to name the maritime and land boundaries of Canada (questions 19 and 20). Eighty-four percent identified the United States as Canada's only neighbour with 16 percent adding that this border was to the south of Canada and also to its northwest (Alaska). Seventy-four percent of the students knew that the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans define the eastern and the western borders of Canada, but only 24 percent were aware of its northern saltwater border, the Arctic Ocean. This indicates the respondents' ability to visualize the relative position of the large Canadian land mass on the globe, again in striking contrast to American university students. In 1985 and 1986, 879 students were surveyed on the first day of two introductory courses in geography at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. They were asked to locate eleven countries that had all figured prominently in recent world affairs on a 1:100,000,000 scaled blank map (21.6 by 27.9 centimetres) of the world that included political boundaries, major rivers, and lines of latitude and longitude. Students without prior college geography classes located the following large countries correctly: Soviet Union (73 percent), India (65 percent), and China (60 percent). The conclusions of the survey pointed to relatively high levels of geographic illiteracy among the test group.¹⁰ Some years later, the National Geographic Society commissioned a survey of Americans' geographic knowledge.

They found what they suspected, that Americans are deficient when it comes to fundamental geographic knowledge. For example, only half the survey's respondents could locate Britain or France on a map of Europe, and only 55 percent could locate New York State on a map of the US. Over 20 percent could not identify the Pacific Ocean—which covers half of the globe. Nine percent could not identify Mexico, the US's neighbour to the south, and 14 percent of the respondents could not even find their own country on a map of the world.¹¹

The Israelis in the present study were asked to name Canada's longest river and largest lake (questions 9 and 11). Only three respondents knew that the Mackenzie River is the longest, while 12 respondents knew that Lake Superior is the largest lake. Fifteen percent of the students thought the St. Lawrence River was the longest. Although Lake Superior is the world's largest freshwater body, 18 percent named Lake Ontario as Canada's largest. The very low response rates to these questions (18 and 24 percent) indicate general unfamiliarity with the extraordinary features of the geography of Canada: seven of the world's twelve largest freshwater lakes; the Mackenzie, Yukon, and St. Lawrence Rivers, which are among the 20 longest in the world; and its mountains, especially the Rockies, which are among the world's most spectacular and best known. (In fact, in discussion students could identify the "Rocky Mountains," the western mountain chains running through the Yukon Territory and British Columbia. These mountain zones are a significant feature on the map of Canada, occupying approximately 12 percent of the country's territory.)

Two further questions investigated the respondents' ability to visualize major elements of Canada's landscape. These were related to the relative position of three large urban centres: Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary (questions 24 and 25). Thirty-five percent identified Toronto as the southernmost of the three cities, and 21 percent identified Vancouver as the westernmost. The low correct response rate was partly due to respondents' lack of familiarity with Calgary. Even those who

remembered that Calgary had hosted the 1988 Winter Olympics had difficulty in locating it. Still, since Toronto is on Lake Ontario below the 49th parallel, and Vancouver is on the Pacific Rim, the answers should have been obvious.

Another study relevant to this discussion for comparative purposes is a 1992 survey of 708 students (junior high school through undergraduate college) in Mount Pleasant, Michigan. The survey used ten multiple-choice questions to measure spatial misperceptions. The results indicated a considerable number of misperceptions concerning the location and size of large land masses and ocean bodies and the relative position of states in the United States, and it pointed, as well, to difficulties in identifying correct geographic positions.¹² Israelis, it would appear, have fewer misperceptions regarding the location of continents and oceans on the world map but exhibit difficulties when dealing with the relative location of places on the map of Canada.

Culture and Society

A number of questions on the survey related to historical, linguistic, and cultural divisions between English and French Canada. In response to a question about Canada's official language, 64 percent identified English and French, 27 percent English only and six percent French only (question 16). Seven respondents replied that Canada had gained its independence from France, although the official language was English.

Israeli students appeared most knowledgeable in their response to question 13: "What were the results of the 1995 Quebec referendum?" Fifty-nine percent responded correctly that a majority of voters in Quebec had voted not to separate. Thirteen percent thought the opposite, and 28 percent offered no answer. Strikingly, 71 respondents supplemented their answers with either the results (51 percent against and 49 percent in favour of separation) or with the comment that the margin had been only one percent. This considerable knowl-

edge regarding Quebec separation is partly a result of the high rate of newspaper readership and television news viewing among Israelis. Also, the first of the six surveys was conducted just four months after the referendum of 30 October 1995. The percentage of correct responses declined over time (75 percent in March 1996 but only 49 percent in October 2000). It is also likely that the potential for regional instability through the separation of Quebec from the rest of Canada and the seeming parallel with the Israeli-Arab conflict piqued the interest of Israelis. The narrow margin of victory and the antisemitic comments of a former Quebec premier following the vote drew media attention in Israel as international events and especially those relating to the Jewish Diaspora usually do.

Students' knowledge about Quebec can be contrasted with their inability to identify the prime minister of Canada. Eighty-six percent offered no response to that question. Eight percent identified Jean Chrétien, although two had his first name wrong; others made complete or incomplete reference to former Prime Ministers Pierre Eliot Trudeau and Brian Mulroney. Two comments are in order in this context. On the one hand, Canada has played a limited role in the Middle East over the past decades. The country's presence has been evident in various peacekeeping activities in the region and through Lester B. Pearson's intervention in the 1956 Suez Crisis for which he received the Nobel Peace Prize.¹³ Such activities are not significant in the Israeli mindset. Prime Minister Jean Chrétien's attendance at the funeral of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin in November 1995 went unnoticed by almost all the respondents. His visit to Israel in April 2000, on the other hand, received negative attention in the media because of certain statements regarding Israel, the Palestinians, and Syria. During the latter visit, Chrétien received an honorary doctorate from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. As a result, 17 percent of the respondents in the November 2000 survey identified him correctly. Still, one might expect more recognition of the prime minister of Canada who regularly attends G-7 and G-8 meetings.

Respondents were asked to identify Canada's national sport (question 14). Although there is no official national sport, the popularity of lacrosse in the late nineteenth century led to a belief that that sport had been canonized as Canada's national game by an Act of Parliament. By the beginning of the twentieth century, ice hockey had become Canada's unofficial national game.¹⁴ And, indeed, 48 percent of the respondents of the present survey identified it as such, although there was a gender difference: 90 men (70 percent) but only 26 women (23 percent) knew about hockey. Five students answered "lacrosse." Ten percent answered "skiing," which probably reflects their perception of Canada's climate. The conspicuously higher response rate of the male students is undoubtedly connected to their greater tendency to watch various sports, including NHL hockey and NBA basketball, which are shown on the sports channels available on Israeli cable television. Anecdotal support for the latter observation comes from a Canadian student from Hamilton, Ontario:

While I have found that the World Geography classes in Israel leave something to be desired, the sports education certainly doesn't. Without exception, every one of the people [I] surveyed were [sic] able to name 3 [Canadian] cities and without exception these three cities were Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver. I asked people how they have heard of these cities and most of them knew them from sports (Raptors, Canadiens, and Grizzlies). Israelis may not be up on all the world news (they have enough of their own to keep them occupied ...), but they certainly are up with all the happenings in the NBA.¹⁵

Respondents knew much less about Canadian writers and singers (questions 21 and 22) than about sports. Only a few answers were given to questions in these areas. Among writers, individual respondents knew of Mordecai Richler, Margaret Atwood, and Leonard Cohen. In the follow-up discussions, very few names of Canadian writers were recognized except for

Lucy Maude Montgomery, author of *Anne of Green Gables*. Many women students had, in fact, read that book and others by Montgomery, but they did not think of the works as Canadian. A limiting factor regarding familiarity with Canadian literature is the unavailability of works by Canadian writers in Hebrew. Until recently, very few translations had appeared, although the catalogue has grown over the past five years and is being read by an increasing number of Hebrew speakers.¹⁶

More knowledge was exhibited regarding Canadian singers and bands with between five and ten percent of respondents mentioning Bryan Adams, Cowboy Junkies, Crash Test Dummies, Leonard Cohen, Celine Dion, and Alanis Morissette. In a follow-up discussion with the students, it became clear that many knew the music of these and other Canadian artists but did not recognize the performers as Canadian. For many Israelis, Canadians fall into the general group of English-speaking artists. Their performances and accomplishments are familiar, but they are not known by their nationality.¹⁷

An unexpected result of the survey was the respondents' ability to describe the flag of Canada (question 5). "A national flag is a simple, effective way of identifying both individual citizens and the nation as a whole—expressing its collective will and sovereignty."¹⁸ Eighty-six percent of the participants noted that a leaf graces the Canadian flag, and one-quarter of this group identified it as a maple leaf. (Some said it was a cloverleaf or a cedar tree as in the Lebanese flag.). Seventy-eight percent correctly specified the colours of the flag. One reason for greater recognition of the flag than of other elements of Canadian culture is its use by many young Canadians during their travels. Students sew flag patches on their backpacks, back pockets, and baggage in an attempt to signal foreigners that they are Canadian and not American. Most Israeli university students have travelled inside and outside of Israel and met Canadians displaying their identity "badge." Seeing the Canadian flag flying at televised sports events, in news broadcasts, and in advertisements of Air Canada and other

Canadian companies, has reinforced acquaintance with the national symbol.

One final observation on the students' perception of Canadian culture relates to multiculturalism. Canada has been in the forefront of the development of multicultural theory and practice in recent years, and Canadians tend to be particularly proud of their accomplishments in creating a tolerant society that nourishes difference (to a point). Canadian Jews, like other groups, are aware of the benefits of living in a society that encourages ethnic, religious, and other groups to preserve their heritage while participating in the larger society. The Israeli students surveyed, however, were not aware of this aspect of Canadian life. At first, it was assumed that the lack of any correct responses to question 12 had to do with a lack of clarity in the wording of the question. But in follow-up discussions, students admitted ignorance regarding multiculturalism.¹⁹

Economic Indicators

Four questions provided an indication of the students' perception of the Canadian economy. Eighty-one percent identified the Canadian dollar as the country's currency (question 15) and in follow-up discussions revealed that they were aware that the Canadian dollar was worth less than the American dollar. With other indicators, the response rate was much lower. The United States was correctly identified by 61 percent as Canada's largest trading partner (question 17). Ironically, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in Geography in its 1994 survey of the geographic knowledge and skills of American students found that just ten percent of those in grade 12 could identify Canada as the United States' largest trading partner.²⁰

Canada's high Gross National Product per capita was correctly identified by just over one-third of the respondents as over US\$20,000, while 22 percent placed it between US\$15,000-19,999, and ten percent placed it below US\$15,000 (question 26). The fourth economic question was about agricul-

tural exports (question 23). Canada is the world's sixth-largest producer of wheat (25 billion tons annually) and one of the largest exporters (19 billion tons). Fewer than half those surveyed answered this question. Twenty-two percent identified wheat as the main agricultural export, and a similar number identified a non-agricultural product, lumber.

Population

Four questions dealt with Canada's population (size, level of urbanization, growth rate, and largest metropolitan centre). Only 35 percent of the respondents tried to answer the open-ended question on the size of the population (question 7). The range of answers was between 10 and 50 million, and only 18 percent came close to the actual population of 30 million. Sixty-five percent of the respondents addressed the annual population growth rate, and 54 percent of them chose the correct range of 1.0-1.9 percent (Actually 1.93 percent for 1986-1991 and 1.64 percent for 1991-1996). Forty-four percent placed the growth rate at less than one percent. All respondents perceived Canada as a developed country in the fourth stage of its population transition with low birth rates and low death rates. Canada's natural growth rate was 0.98 percent for 1986-1991 and 0.91 percent for 1991-1996.

Israeli students did not have great difficulty in identifying Canada's largest city (Toronto 54 percent, Montreal 30 percent, and Vancouver 5 percent). The population of these Census Metropolitan Areas in 1996 was 4.4 million, 3.4 million, and 2.8 million respectively. The relatively high response rate for Montreal reflects the primacy of Montreal into the 1970s and awareness of events in Quebec.

The third and fourth questions in this category looked at levels of urbanization (questions 2 and 28). In 1996, Canada's urban population was 77.9 percent of the total. The responses to question 28 did not provide any clear understanding of the students' perception of Canada's level of urbanization, since the

structure of the questions was faulty with too many possibilities to choose from.

Conclusions

The study cannot claim to offer definitive conclusions about the level of knowledge of Canada among Israeli university students. The number of respondents might be considered statistically significant. As noted at the outset, however, this was a group with particular interest in Canada and not a random sample. Others may know much less. Still, there is much to be learnt from the survey regarding Israelis' geographic knowledge.

First, it should be noted, there are two geographies. There is "incidental" (or "naïve") geographic knowledge acquired as we pursue our episodic activities and "intentional" geographic knowledge that we accumulate after being taught how to think and reason geographically. There can be large differences between incidental knowledge and structured knowledge intentionally acquired in the classroom or elsewhere, but they can reinforce each other.²¹

Respondents in this study had both intentional and incidental knowledge of Canada. These were obtained in a number of ways, and each path to knowledge is effective in its own way. One can assume that the general knowledge acquired in intentional settings helped along by Israelis' curiosity about the world outside their country facilitated assimilation of incidental knowledge about Canada,

Israeli paths to knowledge about Canada include: 1) entertainment; 2) the Israeli-Canadian Diaspora axis; 3) investigation of Canada as a real and potential destination for emigration; 4) Israeli media coverage of Canadian news; 5) Canada's role in the Middle East; 6) encounters with Canadians in Israel and abroad; 7) travel to Canada; and 8) the Israeli educational system. Each of these avenues is explored here briefly. With the exception of the last and sometimes the third, they are all "incidental."

1) *Entertainment*—Anecdotal evidence supports the notion that this is the dominant avenue for conveying information to young Israelis about Canada. Documentaries on educational TV channels and films and television shows, such as “Due South,” the “Degrassi” series, “Street Legal,” the “Anne of Green Gables” series, and the “Nature of Things,” are among the educational “tools.”

An illustration may aid comprehension of this process. A popular television show, “Entertainment Tonight with Dudu Topaz,” featured Israelis who were sent abroad on various missions. On 24 April 1996 (Israel Independence Day), the sequence aired showed two men sent to the northernmost settlement in the world (located in Canada), with the purpose of finding someone there who would read an advertisement for the show in Hebrew. They located an Inuit in front of an igloo who read the text. The Inuit was then interviewed in the studio in Israel and explained that the term “Eskimo”²² was considered derogatory. During the class following the program, students related details of the show. This information about Canada reached a large audience and even, if only temporarily, the term “Inuit” had entered Israelis’ consciousness.²³

2) *Canadian Jewry* numbers over 360,000 and is the sixth largest Jewish community in the world after the United States, Israel, France, Russia, and Ukraine.²⁴ The size of the community, its relative affluence, and its philanthropic activities in support of projects and institutions have raised the visibility of Canada in Israel. Among Canadian Jewry’s unique contributions to Israel are Park Canada (a Jewish National Fund forest and park off the Jerusalem-Tel Aviv highway) and the Canada Centre (located in the northern Israeli town of Metulla). The latter project funded by Canadian Jewry was opened in 1990 and offers a range of sports facilities, including an Olympic size ice-skating rink and swimming pool and a basketball court.

Israelis also have many personal connections to Canadian Jews. Many have relatives or friends in Canada. Students work as counselors in Canadian-Jewish summer

camps and host Canadian-Jewish youth groups visiting Israel. Such encounters with members of the Canadian Jewish community often open avenues for inquiry for young Israelis and facilitate their acquisition of knowledge about Canada.

3) *In general, Israelis perceive Canada as an attractive destination for emigration.* Among students in the course on the geography of Canada were several contemplating emigration. Pull factors are the high standard of living, the liberal and democratic society, peace, and security. Tens of thousands have already emigrated and are a source of information on the country for friends and relatives.²⁵

4) *There is limited coverage of Canada in the Israeli media.* Only a few outstanding events, such as the 1995 Quebec referendum, negotiations between Canada and Israel over Air Canada landing rights in 1999, the ice storm in Quebec and eastern Ontario in 1998, and the snow slide at Kangiqsualujuaq (Quebec) on 1 January 1999 made the headlines of Israeli newspapers. This study has found a positive correlation between Canada's visibility in the Israeli media and specific knowledge about Canada.

5) *Canada's role in Israel and the Middle East.*²⁶ Many of Canada's activities do not seem well known to Israeli youth. On occasion, certain events stand out—the Khaled Meshal affair,²⁷ and the Air Canada dispute,²⁸ for example. Sometimes Israelis encounter Canadians serving in peacekeeping units in the region.

6) *Contact with Canadians* in Israel and abroad can lead to the acquisition of knowledge about Canada. During most of the 1990s, some 40-50,000 Canadians visited Israel annually; an estimated 15-20,000 Canadians live in Israel; normally 40-80 Canadian university students a year enrol at the Rothberg International School and other Hebrew University of Jerusalem programmes, and many more study at other Israeli universities, as well as *yeshivot*, seminaries, and high-school programmes. Israeli students may meet a Canadian student and strike up a conversation, which will include a discussion of Canada.²⁹

7) *Visits of Israelis to Canada* allow them to gain first-hand knowledge of various aspects of Canadian life. In 1999, 62,000 Israelis visited Canada and spent, on average, 9.18 nights. Israel ranked fifteenth according to country of origin of visitors to Canada.³⁰ The student population surveyed had a higher rate of visiting Canada than the general population.

8) *The Israeli educational system* provides, in general, a solid foundation for acquisition of intentional knowledge. Israeli school students are taught to observe fundamental geographic principles like location, place, connectivity, spatial interaction, spatial distribution, pattern, hierarchy, distance, direction, orientation, reference frame, geographic association, scale, region, and geographic representation.³¹ On the other hand, most pupils in Israeli schools only study geography up to the age of 14 (grade 9). In 1991-92, matriculation examinations in the Hebrew educational system were taken by 31,146 students of whom fewer than ten percent (3,053) were examined in geography. The Ministry of Education's official curriculum for courses in geography for junior and high schools does not include a section on Canada, and in other subjects, there is very limited discussion of the country.³²

In summary, then, it is clear that compared with American students living "next door" to Canada, the level of Israeli university students' geographical knowledge about that country is quite high, if somewhat spotty. Israelis know quite a lot more about Canadian geography, sports, and economics, and about the flag of Canada than about other aspects of life there. And they are familiar with Canadian pop culture figures, although they may not recognize them as Canadian. Israeli students' awareness of Canada is undoubtedly eclipsed by their knowledge of the United States which occupies a central role in the Israeli consciousness. It seems fair to say, however, that the assessment of Joe Wilder in 1999, then the chair of the Canada-Israel Committee, a lobby and publicity coordinating group based in Ottawa, is accurate. In the *Canadian Jewish News*, Wilder was quoted to the effect that

Canada, in recent years, has developed a much higher international profile and has more influence than it did in earlier years.... Wilder said he noticed a huge change in the way Israelis regard Canada and Canadian Jewry.

The last prime minister of Israel was quoted as saying that “Canada was not on his radar screen,” Wilder recounted. “We are now. We found that Israelis understand that we are distinct from Americans.”³³

Appendix—English Translation of Questionnaire

Personal data

- 1) Year of Birth
- 2) Sex
- 3) Country of birth
- 4) Have you visited or lived in Canada? If yes, for how long?
- 5) If yes, where did you live or visit?
- 6) Year of study
- 7) Department

General Knowledge Questions

- 1) What is the capital of Canada?
- 2) What is the largest city (metropolitan area) in Canada?
- 3) How many provinces are there in Canada? List them.
- 4) How many territories are there in Canada? List them.
- 5) Describe the Canadian flag.
- 6) When did Canada gain independence? And from which country?
- 7) What is the size of Canada’s population?
- 8) Who is the Prime Minister of Canada?
- 9) What is the longest river in Canada?
- 10) Who discovered Canada? And when?
- 11) What is the largest lake in Canada?
- 12) The United States has a “melting pot”, what does Canada have?
- 13) What were the results of the 1995 Quebec referendum?

- 14) What is Canada's national sport?
- 15) What is the currency of Canada?
- 16) What is the official language of Canada?
- 17) Which country is Canada's largest trading partner?
- 18) Canada is the ____ largest country in the world.
- 19) How many countries have land borders with Canada? What are they?
- 20) How many oceans border Canada? What are they?
- 21) Name four Canadian singers or musical groups
- 22) Name two Canadian authors
- 23) What is Canada's principal agricultural export?
- 24) Which city, Toronto, Vancouver or Calgary is located the farthest south?
- 25) Which city, Toronto, Vancouver or Calgary is located the farthest west?
- 26) What is Canada's GNP per capita? a) \$5,000-9,999
b) \$10,000-14,999 c) \$15,000-19,999 d) \$20,000 or more.
- 27) What is Canada's annual population growth rate? a) less than 1.0% b) 1.0-1.9% c) 2.0-2.9% d) 3.0% or more.
- 28) What is the percentage of Canada's urban population?
a) 0-49% b) 50-59% c) 60-69% d) 70-79% e) 80-89%
f) 90-100%

NOTES

¹Thanks to the Halbert Centre for Canadian Studies of the Hebrew University and the Israel Association for Canadian Studies for their support in conducting this project and to the students who were willing to partake in the survey. Thanks also to Professor Arie Shachar and Dr. Noam Shoval, both of the Department of Geography of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Prof. Michael Brown of York University, and Ms. Natalie Amar of the Canadian Embassy in Tel Aviv for their insightful comments on a draft of this paper.

²Natan Uriely, Yuval Yonay and Dalit Simchai, "Backpacking Experiences: A Type and Form Analysis,"

Annals of Tourism Research, 29:2 (April 2002): 520-38; Shahar Smooha, "Experimenting with Death," *Haaretz*, 20 October 2003, www.haaretz.com [English].

³Frederick L. Bein, "Baseline Geography Competency Test: Administered in Indiana Universities," *Journal of Geography*, 89:6 (November-December 1990): 262-63; see also S.A. Jennings, "An Evaluation of the Influence of Travel on the Geographic Knowledge of College Students," *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, 5:1 (1996): 45-54.

⁴The average age of the respondents was 25.1 years. Four percent of the students were 30 years old or older.

⁵Only two of the respondents were non-Jews (Arabs). This number does not allow for any significant conclusions.

⁶Questions about Canadian Jewry were not included in the survey. It was assumed that the students knew of the existence of an important Jewish community in Canada, but that they would not know detailed information on its size, spatial distribution, composition, and other characteristics. This assumption proved to be correct in the follow-up discussions with the respondents.

⁷*Journal of Geography*, 83:5 (September-October 1984). See also, Kenneth C. Davis, *Don't Know Much about Geography, Everything You Need Know About the World but Never Learned* (New York: Avon Books, 1992), pp. 13-23.

⁸Anthony R. de Souza, "Canada: A Neighbor Taken for Granted," *Journal of Geography*, 83:5 (September-October 1984): 194. See also, Cotton Mather, "O Canada! Reality and the Image in America," *Journal of Geography*, 83:5 (September-October 1984): 195-98. An acknowledgement of American geographic illiteracy regarding Canada in popular culture is illustrated in the following excerpt from the television show "The Simpsons," Episode 2F19, <http://www.snpp.com/episodes/2F19.html>.

Homer: So, how was everybody's day at school?

Lisa: Horrible!

Bart: Pointless!

Marge: (who was a substitute teacher this day)
Exhausting! It took the children 40 minutes to locate Canada on the map.

Homer: Marge, anyone could miss Canada—all tucked away down there.

⁹Four of the groups responded before the establishment of Nunavut on April 1, 1999 and two afterwards. Only two respondents identified Nunavut.

¹⁰John A. Cross, “Factors Associated with Students’ Place Location Knowledge,” *Journal of Geography*, 86:2 (March-April 1987): 59-63.

¹¹Hilary R Persky et al., *NAEP 1994 Geography Report Card: Findings From The National Assessment Of Educational Progress* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1996).

¹²Mark A. Francek et al., “The Persistence of Selective Geographic Misperceptions: A Survey of Junior High through Undergraduate College Students,” *Journal of Geography*, 92:6 (November-December 1993): 247-53.

¹³Zachariah Kay, *Canada & Palestine, The Politics of Non-Commitment* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1978); idem., *The Diplomacy of Prudence, Canada and Israel, 1948–1958* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997).

¹⁴*The Canadian Encyclopaedia*, (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), s.v. “Sports History” by J. Thomas West.

¹⁵Morry Walfish, “Life in Israel - Views From Abroad,” *The Wire—Westmount Secondary School* (Hamilton, ON), May 2001, <http://www.hwdsb.on.ca/westmount/thewire/5/9.shtml>.

¹⁶Works by Lucy Maude Montgomery were translated into Hebrew as early as 1951. Selected writings of Stephen Leacock were translated into Hebrew in 1955. Four novels and a children’s book by Mordecai Richler were translated in the 1980s and early 1990s. Since the late 1990s, a growing number of works by Canadian authors has been translated: Michael

Ondaatje's *The English Patient* (1997); Nancy Huston's *L'Empreinte de l'Ange* (2000); Alice Munro's *Love of a Good Woman* (2000); five books by Carol Shields; and seven books by Margaret Atwood.

¹⁷Robert Fulford, "Mary Pickford, Glenn Gould, Anne of Green Gables, and Captain Kirk: Canadians in the World's Imagination," Public Lecture Series, 1 (Halbert Centre for Canadian Studies, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, 1998); Geoff Pevere and Greig Dymond, *Mondo Canuck: a Canadian Pop Culture Odyssey* (Toronto: Prentice-Hall, 1996).

¹⁸*The Canadian Encyclopaedia* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), s.v. "Flag of Canada," by Auguste Vachon, and "Emblems of Canada." See also, Conrad Swan, *Canada: Symbols of Sovereignty* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977); John Ross Matheson, *Canada's Flag: A Search for a Country* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1980).

¹⁹This response was most helpful in redesigning the course, "The Geography of Canada." In order to introduce the concept of multiculturalism and explore its spatial implications, a unit dealing with the geography of multiculturalism was added to the course.

²⁰Joseph P Stoltman, "The National Assessment of Educational Progress in Geography," *ERIC Digest*, April 1997, http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed412169.html; Statistics Canada, "Imports and exports of goods on a balance-of-payments basis," <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/Economy/International/gblec02a.htm>.

²¹Reginald Golledge, "Geography and Everyday Life (again!)," *DirectionsMag*, 20 March 2001, <http://www.directionsmag.com/columns.asp?ColumnID=40>.

²²*Webster's Dictionary*, explains that "Eskimo, Esqimau, pl. Eskimos, Esqimaux" originated from the Danish, *Eskimo*, which was derived from the American Indian, *Eskimatsic*, A *skimeg*, eaters of raw flesh. Those labelled, "Eskimo," were the aboriginal population inhabiting Greenland,

the Arctic and Hudson's Bay coasts of North America, the Labrador coast, and sections of Alaska. The term preferred by this population today is "Inuit" which in their own language means, "the people."

²³At the time of writing this article, two Israel Television Channel Two prime time programs had also featured Canada. "Massa' Olami [World Travel]" on October 4, 2001 presented Vancouver, and "Passport" on October 7, 2001 introduced Toronto.

²⁴*Jewish Communities of the World, 1998*, World Jewish Congress, <http://www.wjc.org.il>.

²⁵The Israeli community in Canada is estimated to number between 20,000 and 50,000. Since many Israelis were not born in Israel and some entered Canada by way of Europe or the US, it is difficult to arrive at a definitive figure. More than half of the Israeli-born Jews live in Toronto. Among the sources, see Rina Cohen, "The New Immigrants: A Contemporary Profile," *From Immigration to Integration, The Canadian Jewish Experience: A Millennium Edition*, eds. Ruth Klein and Frank Dimant (Toronto: Malcolm Lester, 2001), pp. 213-27. A recent report in the Hebrew daily, *Yediot Ahronot* (Itamar Eichler, "Toronto is in our Hands," 12 August 2003, p. 2) maintained that 20,000 Israelis had moved to Toronto since the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa *Intifada* in September 2000. The article placed the number of Israelis in the Toronto area at 60,000 based on data compiled by the Israeli Foreign Ministry. Amiram Barkat, in "Canada: Approximately 9,000 Israelis immigrated since 2000," (*Haaretz*—13 August 2003) responded to the "exaggerated" figures and reported that 9,000 Israelis had immigrated to Canada since 2000. *Yediot Ahronot* (14 August 2003, p. 23) corrected its figures to 10,000 in three years. According to Ron Csillag in "Yiddish Speakers dwindling in Canada" (*Canadian Jewish News*, 19 December 2002) 12,435 listed Hebrew as their mother tongue on the 2001 census (Toronto, 7,390 and Montreal, 2,945).

²⁶For a general overview, see Zachariah Kay, "Canadian-Israeli Diplomacy," *Canadian Jewish News*, 12 February 1998, and idem, *Diplomacy of Prudence*.

²⁷On October 3, 1997, Canada recalled its ambassador to Israel to protest the use of forged Canadian passports in a reputed attempt to assassinate a leader of the Islamic militant group Hamas in Jordan.

²⁸The concern that if Air Canada's request was not met, Ottawa might close its airspace to Israeli flights en route to U.S. destinations, meaning flights would become longer and burn additional fuel, provided a clear understanding of Canada's global position. For a general summary of the dispute, see Ron Csillag, "Air Canada and El Al reach an agreement," *Canadian Jewish News*, November 4, 1999.

²⁹To further the exchange of information, meetings between Israeli and Canadian students were organized by the author. For example, students in the Canadian geography course and Canadians studying at the Rothberg International School of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem were invited to hear talks by the Canadian Ambassador to Israel, Michael Bell, on "Canada-Israel Relations" on November 18, 1999 and December 14, 2000.

³⁰Statistics Canada, <http://www.statcan.ca/english/Pgdb/People/Culture/arts37b.htm>.

³¹Golledge, "Geography and Everyday Life."

³²*Changes in the Structure of the Geography Matriculation Examination* (Jerusalem: Israel Ministry of Education, 1996) [Hebrew]; Yoram Bar-Gal, "Geography Teaching in Israel: A Retrospective View," *Journal of Geography*, 92:2 (March-April 1993): 64-68; Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, *Statistical Abstract of Israel*, 45 (1994), table 22.27. Later statistical abstracts do not provide data on the number of students examined in geography.

³³Quoted in Myron Love, "CIC chair sees amicable resolution to peace talks," *Canadian Jewish News*, 30 September 1999.