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‘Jewish Toronto’: street naming policies and practices in the north of Metropolitan Toronto

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Abstract

This article deals with street naming policies and practices with regard to the Jewish urban community in the north of Metropolitan Toronto, Canada. It highlights the linguistic landscape as a cultural and symbolic expression of a Jewish-Israeli minority group in Vaughan, a city in North Toronto. The Jewish nomenclature is also examined viewing Toronto's multicultural-cum-pragmatic street naming policies. While such a display of Jewish toponymy is almost non-existent in Toronto itself, the creation of 'Jewish Toronto' in the north of the metropole is the product of both 'Jewish' and 'Canadian-Torontonian' factors. This article analyzes these two factors and their related characteristics in terms of demography, socio-political approach, religiocultural identity, economy, and municipal by-laws. It concludes that the development of a Jewish toponymic culture as an ethnic-minority culture in the public domain of northern Metropolitan Toronto is a result of a bipartite process. This process has been enabled by the aspirations of the minority group, on the one hand, and the flexibility and tolerance inherent in the multicultural policies of the majority group/government, on the other.

Keywords: Toronto/Vaughan; linguistic landscapes; multiculturalism; Jewish minority; Hebrew.

1. Introduction

The term 'linguistic landscape', as noted by the Canadian linguists Rodrigue Landry and Richard Bourhis, has been originally developed in the field of language planning (1997). This term refers to the visibility and salience of languages on public and private signs in certain areas as either official or unofficial (informal) indications of the status of the languages. Language architects from regions of ethnolinguistic conflicts such as Belgium and Quebec were among the first to discern the importance of making and remaking territorial boundaries through regulation of language use in public spheres (Corbeil, 1980; Leclerc, 1989; Spolsky & Shohamy, 1999). In addition, recent studies in critical toponymy show that it is especially in bilingual and multilingual societies that beyond being part of an administrative act aimed at facilitating spatial orientation, street naming mirrors the suzerainty of political and ideological powers over the urban landscape (Berg & Vuolteenaho, 2009; Bigon & Dahamshy, 2014; Giraut & Houssay-Holzschuch, 2016; Wildeman & Masuda, 2018). The production of linguistic landscapes is therefore a process that is intimately entangled with the symbolic design of the public space, and includes toponymic policies and practices. These policies and practices could be instrumental in conveying nationalistic ideologies and demarcating borders between ethnolinguistic groups (e.g., Jones & Merriman, 2009; Light et al., 2002; Nash, 1999; Raento & Watson, 2000) or, otherwise, in conveying a benign difference between such groups (e.g., Raento & Husso, 2001; Yeoh, 1996).

The process of administrating toponymic and signage policies in postmodern Western states, both in the intracity governmental level and in the intercity municipal level, is compelling with regard to regulation of ethnolinguistic and sociopolitical diversity. These states seem to be conscious of several significant factors, such as the substantial symbolic and psychological meaning assigned to the presence or absence of the language of an ethnolinguistic minority on signs; the connection between different languages and the issue of scale, that is, the number or percentage of speakers of a specific language in a certain territory; consumption motives, etc. In Canada, similarly to other countries where several national, ethnic, or cultural communities speaking different languages co-exist, language policy issues are supplemented with ideological, political, cultural, and emotive implications that contribute to the shaping of public spatialities.

The present study explores street names and street naming processes that represent the Jewish culture as introduced over the last four decades in the largest district in the north of Metropolitan Toronto, Canada. It is focused on the city of Vaughan, which is located at the northern tip of Toronto and feeds directly into the heart of the metropolitan area. The Jewish presence in Toronto as a whole dates back to the 1830s. The toponymic manifestations of this community are particularly visible in Vaughan. The city is home to the second largest concentration of Jews in the metropolitan area after Toronto. In

2011, some 35,000 Jews lived there, constituting 20% of the 180,000 Jewish residents in Metropolitan Toronto. This represents 4% of the total population (4.5 million) (Berman Jewish Databank, 2011).

This article operates on two levels of exploration. The first level is from the bottom-up, by being site-related and community-centered. Here, we describe and analyze the Jewish street names and naming practices from geographical, historical, and cultural perspectives. This level addresses the key question of why many of these toponyms are concentrated in this particular location while other areas of Metropolitan Toronto with large Jewish congregations have never had many streets with Jewish/Israeli names. Our contention is that the Jewish presence in the north is distinctive and this special character explains why the Jewish toponymic landscape there is conspicuous. To highlight this distinctiveness of this area, a section of this article is dedicated to giving some background on the relevant features of the Jewish community of Vaughan and its environs. The second level of exploration is a top-down one. This level is focused on the following question: have there been any enframing street naming politics or policies on the national, metropolitan, or municipal scale that have enabled this toponymy to exist? We contend that the answer to this question can partly be found by examining Toronto/Canada street naming policies. These policies are distinctive in comparison to other multicultural and multiethnic societies and states. As we shall see, the bottom-up and the top-down levels are intertwined together and collectively yield the present onomastic situation in Vaughan.

Methodologically, the article is based on the authors' visit in situ (in 2011 and 2018), including linguistic landscape analysis and interviews with community members. Further information about the life and cultural nuances of Vaughan's Jewish community has been gained from local and municipal newspapers, some of which are available online. This evidence was examined against the background of relevant toponymic municipal policies, while fostering this article's main contribution: to provide an insight into an underexplored topic in an underrecognized geographical area, as documentation on this subject in the research literature is sparse, if it exists at all.

2. History and geography of the Toronto Jewish community

Toronto is the capital of the province of Ontario, Canada. It was established in 1793 along the shores of Lake Ontario, though the precolonial indigenous settlement of Tkaronto has been inhabited since time immemorial. In 1834, it was declared a city. As waves of immigrants arrived from Europe, especially after World War II, Toronto grew and expanded northward. From the 1970s, internal migration from Quebec and other provinces, as well as mass immigration from the Far East, turned Toronto into Canada's largest city and economic nucleus (Levine, 2014). Today, Toronto is the fifth most important in North

America, after New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Washington. Globally, it ranks number 17 in the world (Kearney At, 2019). It is home to international trade and industry, a hub of land, naval, and air transportation. It serves as a center for flights to all North American destinations. As a result, Toronto is a non-stop magnet for newcomers. The population has already passed 2.8 million, with over 6 million people in greater Toronto (World Population Review, 2019).

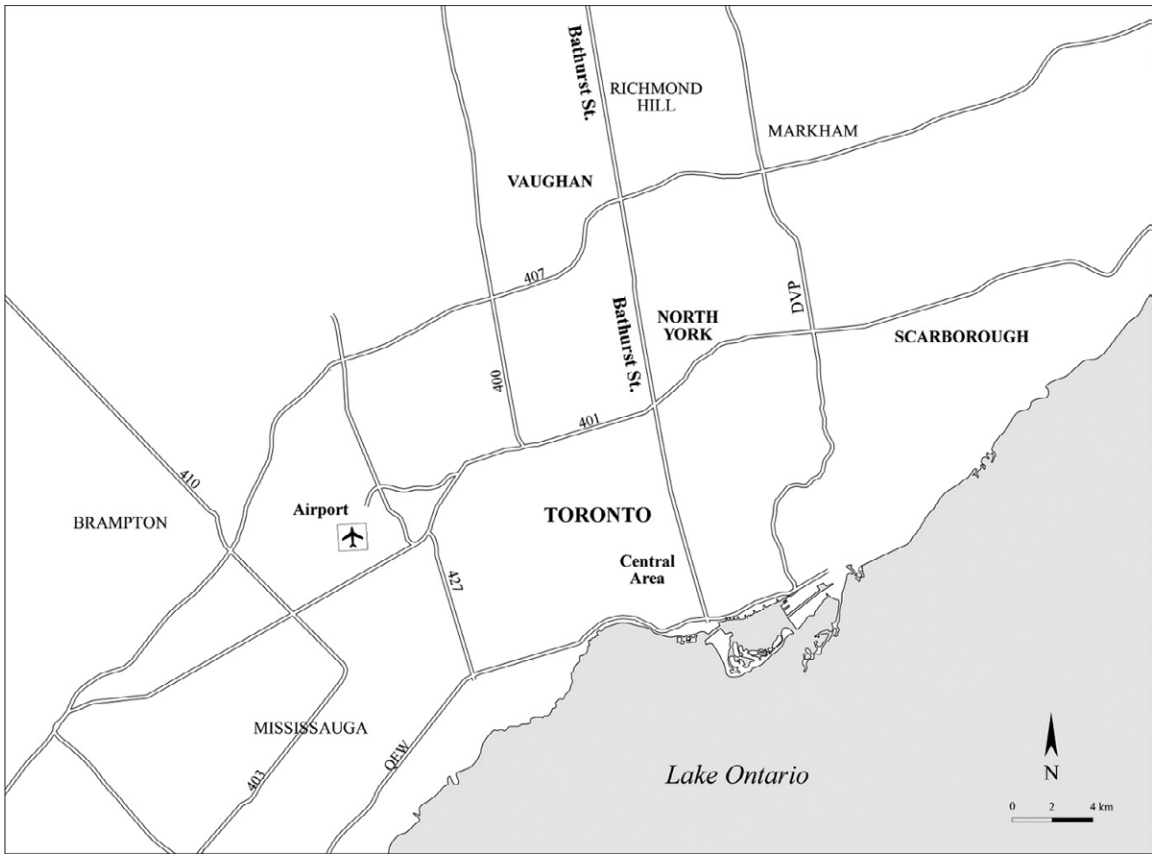
The Toronto Jewish community dates back to the 1830s. At the end of the 19th century, waves of Jews began to arrive from Poland and Russia, leading to the establishment of communities organized around hometowns (Speisman, 1987). The Holocaust and the rise of Communism in Eastern Europe further boosted immigration to Toronto. Later, the community grew in the wake of mass migration from Montreal when it was feared that Quebec would sever its ties with Canada. The city's rapid economic growth combined with its many cultural and educational opportunities also attracted Jews from other parts of Canada, the United States, Israel, and the Soviet Union (Tulchinsky, 2008). Consequently, by the end of the 20th century, this community had transformed into the largest Jewish community in Canada and one of the largest in all of North America (Tulchinsky, 2008). As of 2011, greater Toronto had nearly 200,000 Jews. A quarter of them are Israeli (Berman Jewish Databank, 2011).

Many of Toronto's Jews are well-off financially, and Jewish philanthropy and community commitment are common (The Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, 2018). These factors provided the foundation for the establishment of a long line of Jewish institutions, which expanded over time and opened in other Jewish neighborhoods around the city. Jewish-sponsored public buildings in Toronto include synagogues and schools serving the different denominations (ultra-Orthodox, modern Orthodox, Conservative and Reform), a school for Israelis living in Toronto, Jewish community centers, libraries, retirement homes, youth clubs, volunteer organizations, and more[1]. Today, as in the past four decades, most of the Jewish community is spread out along Bathurst Street. The street begins at Lake Ontario at the southern tip of the city, and moves northward across the whole length of the city of Toronto and into Vaughan, which borders Toronto in the north and constitutes part of Metropolitan Toronto. There is no visible cessation in building between the two cities (see figure 1).

1 The UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's internet site (2019) provides an annual report on the community solidarity and organization with relation to philanthropy, sponsors, volunteering, heritage, and education centers. See also Toronto's Jewish Virtual Library Project (2019).

FIGURE 1

Map of metropolitan Toronto (drawn by authors, 2019)



As Toronto developed northward, the Jewish population moved northward, too, continuing to adhere to the tradition of living on both sides of Bathurst (west and east) and gradually crossing into the municipal boundaries of Vaughan. There, Jews are predominant in the expansive Thornhill and Richmond Hill neighborhoods. As aforementioned, Vaughan has the second largest Jewish population center in greater Toronto. However, in terms of density, Vaughan is the most Jewish district in the whole of the metropolitan area. To give an idea of the size of Vaughan's Jewish community, it is the third largest in Canada after Toronto and Montreal respectively, with Vancouver and Winnipeg lagging far behind (Berman Jewish Databank, 2011).

3. Street names and the naming process: community ideological practices

Apart from the synagogues, Jewish identity in Vaughan is apparent in the names of public buildings. However, Jewish identity has left a visible and prominent imprint on Vaughan's

street names. Vaughan has 28 streets with Jewish/Israeli names, out of 2,230 street names in total, that is, 1.3%. These streets can be broken down as follows[2]:

- *Torah Gate*. This street was named after the Torah, the Old Testament of the Bible. The Torah is the core symbol of Judaism.
- *Chabad Gate*. A Chabad is a major Jewish organization.
- *Crown Heights*. This crescent was named after the neighborhood in New York where the spiritual and symbolic headquarters of Chabad organization is located. Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok Schneerson arrived in the United States in 1940 in his escape from the Nazi regime in Europe. Chabad Association had managed to purchase a house for him in Crown Heights, which since then became the hub of Chabad activity.
- *Ner Israel*. Meaning 'the candle of Israel', this name was given to one of the leading Yeshivas in Vaughan (a *Yeshiva* is a Biblical learning center).
- *Gesher*. This crescent means in Hebrew 'Bridge', and is named after the Jewish colony in Saskatchewan, western Canada. It is also known as *Yidnbridge*, which means in Idish 'Jews' Bridge'.
- *Noah*, *Amnon*, *Uriah (Oriah)*, *Leah*, *Judith*, *Tova*, *Esther*, *Jonathan*, *Joshua*, and *Tami*. These nine streets bear Jewish anthroponyms, most of them are evidently originally biblical (*Tami* is the nickname for *Tamar* in Hebrew).

Five streets are named for toponyms in Israel, all of them are place names that are mentioned in the Bible or with biblical connotations:

- *Gamla*. This road's name means literally 'the Camel' and was an ancient Jewish city on the Golan Heights, established under Hashmonean rule in 81 BCE. A heroic symbol for the modern state of Israel, it is currently an important historical and archaeological site within a nature reserve.
- *Yarden*. This street bears the Hebrew-origin name of *Jordan*, referring to the Jordan River and means 'one who descends' or 'to flow down' (could be also used as a given name or a surname).
- *Givon*. This drive bears the Hebrew-origin name for *Gibeon*, a Canaanite city north of Jerusalem later located in the tribal territory of Benjamin (Joshua, 18: 25).

2 The meaning of the names is based on Vaughan City Hall records, and interviews with city officials and members of the Jewish Federations of Canada (carried out by the research assistant Maxa Sawyer).

- *Carmel*. Named after a coastal mountain range in northern Israel stretching from the Mediterranean Sea towards the southeast, this toponym is derived directly from the Hebrew, and means planted 'fresh' or 'vineyard'. Because of the area's many caves and hillside vegetation, it was mentioned in biblical times as a place of asylum or escape from God (see Book of Amos; Book of Kings).
- *Timnah*. This crescent is named after the Philistine city in Canaan that is mentioned in the Bible in Judges 14, with relation to Samson. The site is currently identified with the ancient settlement Tel Batash, near the modern city of Beit Shemesh, Israel.

Another five names commemorate famous people in the Jewish world:

- *Ilan Ramon*. This boulevard is named after the Israeli astronaut.
- *Lebovic*. The Canadian Jewish philanthropist brothers Joseph and Wolf Lebovic gave an inspiration to the naming of this drive.
- *Wallenberg*. This drive is named after the Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, who saved tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews during the Holocaust.
- *Israel Zilber*. This drive is named after the Soviet Jewish chess champion.
- *Michael Fisher*. The renowned Jewish-American professor of Chemistry is being commemorated in this avenue's name.

Three streets have generic Hebrew names, and thus are somewhat random:

- *Yemina*. This word means 'rightwards'.
- *Sadot*. This name means 'fields' (presumably after the still discernible agricultural grounds in the vicinity of Vaughan, a past reminiscence).
- *Zahavy*. This drive's name means 'my gold'.

Only two of these 28 streets are major thoroughfares: Ilan Ramon Boulevard and Chabad Gate. All of the other 'Jewish' streets are basically side streets. Apart from Chabad Gate, which was built several decades ago, the 'Jewish' streets are in neighborhoods developed very recently, over the last decade only. The fact that 34% of the names are biblical-derivative anthroponyms is further evidence of the strong Jewish identity of the place and the pride in the Canadian Jewish faith and traditions; while the fact that 17% of the street names are named after toponyms in Israel (with biblical orientation) testifies to the Zionist sentiment among the greater Toronto Jewish community and its general support for Israel[3] (see figure 2).

3 Based on authors interviews with community leaders, members of the Jewish Federations of Canada, and City Hall records. The community's recent activities during the Jewish Heritage

FIGURE 2

(a, b) Jewish/Hebrew street signs, Vaughan (authors photos, 2011, 2018)

Naming major arteries for *Ilan Ramon* and *Chabad* is a testimony to their importance by the naming parties. This is a phenomenon known all over the world: setting up a link between the functional importance of a street and the prestige of the personality or institution that it is named for. In Israel, for instance, it is the policy of the Street Naming Committee that major streets in the prominent cities are to be named for key personalities and institutions in the history of the country (Katz, 1995). In Vaughan, *Ilan Ramon* and *Chabad* rank higher than other Jewish/Israeli street names. This is because of the profound admiration in the Jewish world for Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli astronaut, during his lifetime and after his tragic death on board the Space Shuttle Columbia in 2003. Unveiling the street sign bearing his name about four years later, Jewish community members stressed the importance of commemorating a modern-day hero among the community's thriving young generation. At the same ceremony, Vaughan's Mayor indicated the proximity of the new street to Chabad Street and its growing Lebovic Campus, needed by all members of the community (News Staff, 2007). Montreal also has a street named for

Month constitute an example, among many. These included a memorabilia to Theodor Herzl, who promoted the dream of the State of Israel, in Vaughan's City Hall, and celebrating Israel's Independence Day (City of Vaughan, 2019).

Ramon, albeit a smaller one. While this street is also in a Jewish neighborhood, it stands out less for its importance as a traffic artery than for the fact that there are no other streets in its vicinity with Jewish names, as in Vaughan.

Dedicating a main thoroughfare to the worldwide Hasidic movement known as *Chabad*, as well as naming a street for the neighborhood in New York where Chabad has its main headquarters, is not only due to the fact that Vaughan is home to some of the movement's important institutions (Lapidus, 2004; Goldschmidt, 2000). It is also a product of the close ties to Chabad of the man who built much of Thornhill, Joseph Tanenbaum. Tanenbaum is one of the leading donors to Chabad enterprises around the world, including Canada and Israel (Hielman & Friedman, 2011; *Kfar Chabad*, 1986). Lebovic Campus Drive is also relatively important in terms of road hierarchy, as naming this road, as well as the vast Jewish community campus in the same vicinity[4], for the two Lebovic brothers is an expression of appreciation for their work on behalf of the greater Toronto Jewish community and Vaughan's municipality (McNaughton, 2012; News Staff, 2007).

4. A glimpse on street numbering and linguistic landscape

Critical studies on place/street numbering examine how the political technologies of street addressing systems assist in producing a spatially calculated, governmentally surveyed, geocoded world (Miller, 1992; Rose-Redwood, 2008). Usually the street numbering is consecutive and follows a logical sequential order so that a building can be located easily. Yet on two streets in Vaughan, we see a clear divergence from this order in two addresses. The first is 613 Clark Avenue in Thornhill. This is the address of the largest Orthodox synagogue in North America, also named for Tanenbaum, the Toronto philanthropist. The second is 770 Chabad Gate, the address of Chabad Lubavitch of Ontario, also in Thornhill (see figure 3).

The number 613 is highly significant in Judaism. It represents the sum total of commandments in the Torah that Jews must observe, and is also considered significant in gematria, Jewish numerology. In this way, an ordinary mailing address is recruited into the service of Jewish identity. The meaningfulness of the address could be interpreted not only as a call to prayer, but as a reminder of the totality of Jewish religious observance. This number adds another dimension to the Jewish cultural character of the district as a whole. The other non-sequential number is 770, or 'Seven-seventy' in local parlance, the address of

4 The 50-acre campus of the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Center at the northern tip of Thornhill opened in 2012. This campus, the largest in Canada and one of the largest in North America, houses Jewish social service agencies, conference halls, schools, child-care facilities, theater and art venues, and fitness centers which have relocated from southern Toronto (also previously clustered around Bathurst Street).

Chabad-Lubavitch. This number is 'sacred' to Chabad because it was the house number of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the last leader of the Chabad movement and the one directly responsible for its tremendous growth since the second half of the 20th century (Heilman & Friedman, 2011). Schneerson was the visionary of the 'Chabad emissary' idea and its global influence, and, most importantly, he is perceived by many Chabadniks (the messianic faction) as the messiah. His home on Eastern Parkway in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, New York, now the world center of the movement, is treated as a shrine, and its holiness is encapsulated in the number 770. In fact 'Seven-seventy' is the symbol of everything that Chabad does and stands for: it is the global 'code' of the organization. Chabadniks do everything they can to incorporate this number in their home addresses, telephone numbers, license plates and the names they choose for their businesses.

The Jewishness of Toronto is also apparent in certain signage on the main streets. Signage interpretation constitutes part of the dynamic research field of linguistic landscape, which tries to grasp the uses, interests, and ideologies of such inscriptions in public spaces. Vaughan's signs fall into two categories: billboards and signs on shops and offices. The billboards appeal to the Jewish public to contribute to various Jewish local and transnational institutions. Billboards near the synagogues announce prayer times and community activities. The fact that signs with a Zionist message are also posted near the Orthodox (Haredi) institutions—a practice that is not at all common in Israel—says a great deal about the tolerance of within the Toronto Jewish community. Many of the signs over shops and offices are also written in Hebrew. Grocery stores and supermarkets post signs with the word 'kosher' in English or Hebrew along with a kashrut seal. The Sobeys supermarket chain has gone even further: it designated one of its largest stores in greater Toronto a 'kosher market', and many of its items are carried from Israel. The store is located in downtown Thornhill, and a huge illuminated 'kosher' sign over the entrance is lit up at night and visible from a distance (see figure 3).

5. Toronto street naming policies: municipal pragmatism and multiculturalism

The introduction of Jewish/Israeli street names in metropolitan Toronto seems to be attributable to two main intertwined factors. The first is the growing strength of the Jewish community in Toronto, and particularly in Vaughan. The second is the pivotal role of Jewish and Israeli entrepreneurs in building large parts of Vaughan, which, as we shall see, gave them the right to choose street names in the areas they developed.

As mentioned earlier, the Jews of Toronto are clustered around Bathurst Street, south of Vaughan, where many Jewish community buildings, especially synagogues, are located. Yet none of the streets in the area have Jewish names. One of the reasons for this onomastic absence is that when the Jews settled in this area—mainly in the first half of the 20th cen-

FIGURE 3

Jewish signs: (a) street number 613; (b) street number 770; (c) linguistic landscape of 'kosher' sign (authors photos, 2011, 2018)

tury—they made up a much smaller percentage of the population and had considerably less sociopolitical and economic power than Torontonian Jewry today. Many of them hailed from Eastern Europe and others were Holocaust survivors. They did not own reserves of land and were not involved in real-estate projects to the point that they had any say in naming (Speisman, 1987). Furthermore, the roads built before the Jews arrived already had names. With the gradual demographic growth of this community, its financial, organizational, and political clout grew as well. As a prominent community in North America, Toronto's Jews are high on the socioeconomic scale, well-educated, close to sources of power and influence, and involved in all aspects of life in the city. They are leaders in many spheres, and donors to causes also outside of the community. They enjoy representation in the city council, the provincial government and the Canadian parliament (Levine, 2014; Speisman, 1987; Tulchinsky, 2008). Requests to approve Jewish/Israeli names for streets in neighborhoods with a high concentration of Jews are in line with Canada's government-sponsored multiculturalism and its naming policy, as part of its multicultural commitment.

However, in order for the present linguistic landscape in Metropolitan Toronto to exist, community practices (ideologically driven or else) alone do not constitute the sole explanation. No less significant is the broader systemic support for street-naming policies manifest in the local and municipal authorities and official state policies.

The street naming procedure in Ontario/Toronto, for example, is as follows. City Hall (Vaughan) asks the entrepreneurs to submit a list of names for consideration. The naming criteria indicate that ideally "street names should portray a strong positive image and have historical, cultural, aboriginal or social significance or contribution to the community, the City, the Province of Ontario or Canada" (City of Toronto Street Naming Policy, 2017: § 3.2). Yet it could be concluded that in practice, providing some background information for a street name that operates in the micro-level only—that is, relevance to the street, its community, residents and landlords—is most often enough for approval (City of Toronto Street Naming Policy, 2017; Barrie, 2013). This is true unless the meaning of the name raises objection from the street residents or if it is perceived to be discriminatory or derogatory of race, color, ethnic origin, gender identity, or any other social factor (City of Toronto Street Naming Policy, 2017, 2013). In fact, these few criteria are the only ones that relate to the contextual meaning of the name on the part of the local authorities. The rest of the many criteria of the City of Toronto Street Naming Policy are all functional and pragmatic. They are concerned only with possible problems that might arise, and dictate that the pronunciation of the name shall be so that the average person will have no problem finding it; that the name shall not duplicate or be similar sounding to an existing street name; that it shall not confer any unfair competitive advantage or benefit by advertising the named party, product, or business; and, particularly important to the authorities, that the name shall not impair the ability of First Responders to treat emergencies or impair the City's ability to deliver services (City of Toronto Street Naming Policy, 2017, 2013).

From the perspective of Toronto/Vaughan City Hall, street naming has virtually nothing to do with politics or ideology: it is a technical matter and nothing more, normally subjected to the approval of the City's Engineering and Construction Services (the Municipality website even offers a 'Street Naming Application Form' for the interested (City of Toronto's website)). Canada's seemingly neutral naming procedure can be read against the grain, in terms of provoking some wider political questions such as what is difficult to pronounce and by whom—particularly regarding indigenous communities in white settler societies such as the US and Canada (e.g., Champoux, 2012); or regarding other ethnic minorities (e.g., Wideman & Masuda, 2018). Our examination, however, found that Vaughan's officials recently refused to approve one Jewish/Israeli street-name application due to fairly-understood pronunciation difficulties. The proposed name, Urierik, was composed of the name of a developer's two family members joined together: *Uri* and *Erik* (Boyle, 2012; Warzecha, 2012). On the more general level, this situation can stimulate further questions regarding the unheard voices of the less dominant urban residents, who are not entrepreneurs, and who are economically disprivileged, as well as questions regarding the salience of other prominent minorities in Vaughan's linguistic landscape, such as Italians, Russians, Chinese, and Indo-Canadians. While answering these questions is beyond the scope of this study, we argue that it is both the bottom-up site-specific characteristics of the community in question and its history, on the one hand, and the particular top-down character of Canadian/Torontonian politics and policies, on the other, that equally produce Vaughan's toponymic landscape.

6. Conclusion

It has been especially in the last four decades that a 'Jewish Toronto' has emerged, attested to by a significant display of Jewish-Israeli toponymy in the public domain of northern Metropolitan Toronto. It has been shown that the current toponymic landscape in Vaughan has been gradually produced as a result of two main factors. The first is endogenous and relates to the particular character of the Jewish community there, its desires, ideological aspirations, socioeconomic ability, and political influence. The second is exogenous and relates to the wider umbrella of 'Torontonian-Canadian' street naming policies and their essentially multicultural character. It includes an almost technical approach to street naming allowing, inter alia, building developers to choose street names to be normally approved by the City's Engineering and Construction Services. Yet another factor is the presumed tolerance of Torontonian society for such visual manifestations of ethnic/national culture, apparently influenced by the national policy of multiculturalism. In light of the scarcity of literature and sources on this topic and specific geography, the contribution of this article is to show that due to the interplay of these both bottom-up and top-down factors, the region north of Metropolitan Toronto may serve as a model for the creation of pockets of visual minority culture in the urban public sphere. This invites further research into the visibility and prominence of other notable minorities in the linguistic landscape of Toronto/Vaughan, both in terms of identifying the percentage of their names from the total number of street names and in terms of the politics behind the naming processes. Such a comparison can assist in examining the degree of neutrality on part of the municipal government facing minority cultures and languages. It could also serve as a basis for a closer examination of Canada's multicultural policies versus those of other multiethnic states in America and beyond.

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