"La Survivance" Discourses and the Curriculum in French-Speaking Communities in North America, 1840-1960

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ABSTRACT: A comparative study of the cultural resistance curriculum artfully integrated in the English Program of Studies by patriotic teachers who taught in Franco-American and Canadian bilingual schools before 1960 disclosed that the French curriculum was based on the Quebec Program of Studies. As a result, *la survivance* discourses concealed in the French textbooks were founded on a defensive form of nationalism which blended language and faith. This paper provides examples illustrating the kinds of la survivance discourses selected by textbook writers to incite young Francophones to continue their ancestors' battles to protect and defend their linguistic, religious, and educational rights. For instance, discourses referring to French Canadians as victims of English Protestant fanatics, as champions of Christian democratic liberties, and as progressive people.

RÉSUMÉ: Une étude comparative du curriculum de résistance intégré subtilement dans le Programme d'études anglais par les enseignants patriotiques des écoles bilingues Franco-Américaines et Canadiennes avant 1960 était basé sur le Programme d'études du Quebec. Les discours de *la survivance* dissimulés dans les livres d'écoles en français étaient donc fondés sur un nationalisme défensif qui liait la langue et la foi. Cet article expose des exemples illustrant les sortes de discours de *la survivance* sélectionnés par les concepteurs de programmes pour inciter les jeunes francophones à continuer les battailles commencées par leurs ancêtres pour la protection et la défense de leurs droits linguistiques, religieux et, éducatifs. Par example, les discours décrivant les Canadiens Français comme étant les victimes des fanatiques Anglais Protestants, les champions des libertés démocratiques Chrétiennes, et des personnes progressives.

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For upwards of three centuries, Francophones in North America carried out a spirited resistance to English domination and an equally zealous collective effort to unite themselves for the purpose of retaining their language and preserving their menaced culture. Between 1840 and 1960, *la survivance* discourses disseminated by the Roman Catholic clergy and professional elites in French-speaking communities incited Francophones to carry on a struggle for their cultural and linguistic survival. These discourses shaped the curriculum in church-controlled and state-controlled schools situated in French-speaking communities in North America.

In this paper church-controlled schools include Catholic schools in Quebec as well as convents and colleges in North America, and Franco-American parish or private schools built and financed by Catholic parishioners. State-controlled schools or national schools refer to small public and separate school districts (usually Catholic districts) established in Canadian provinces outside of Quebec after 1840. In 1867, the British North America Act provided Catholics and Protestants with constitutional guarantees with respect to confessional schooling. Yet, in most provinces outside Quebec school laws stipulated that the first school district to be established in a community had to be a public school district. However, in Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta school laws allowed Catholics who constituted a majority in a public district to petition the Department of Education for a separate school district. As long as Francophones constituted a majority in a public or separate school district they could elect French-speaking trustees who were willing to hire Catholic French-speaking bilingual teachers (Mahé, 1997). The term bilingual schools rather than Francophone schools is used in this paper when referring to church-controlled schools in Franco-American communities and state-controlled schools in French-speaking communities outside Quebec because state and provincial laws required that the English Program of Studies be taught in all types of schools.

This study does not go beyond the 1960s as a number of political and social changes occurred at that time which transformed the character of Francophone schooling as well as discourses on cultural survival. During the Quiet Revolution in Quebec in the 1960s the state took over control of schooling from the churches and redefined the goals of schooling. By 1960, all small public and separate school districts outside of Quebec had been consolidated into large school divisions (Johnson, 1968, pp. 110-115). As a result, Francophones became a minority within the large Anglo-dominant school divisions. They therefore lost control over their

local schools and could no longer pressure trustees to hire Catholic bilingual teachers. In the 1960s, Franco-American parish schools were also consolidated or closed permanently because enrolments dropped precipitously (Brault, 1986, p. 172). Subsequently, Francophone children were integrated into the American public school system.

Dumont (1978) refers to the ideology of *la survivance* as a sort of developmental theory which is socially inspired by the past heritage (p. 6). According to Mannheim (1936), ideologies are organized sets of ideas which emerge from social and historical changes, and from political conflicts. As a consequence, they provide strong human emotions which are instrumental in unifying groups and in controlling social reality (pp. 40-41; 53-87). The parameters for the construction of the ideology of *la survivance* can be traced back to French Canada's political aspirations which first manifested themselves in the Patriots' rebellions of 1837-38, and to two disparaging statements in Lord Durham's Report of 1840, namely, that Canada should be thoroughly British, and that the French in Lower Canada had no history and no literature. A defensive form of nationalism, rooted in Quebec's constitutional and political struggles, therefore served to inflame growing patriotic sentiments in French-speaking communities in North America (Bonenfant & Falardeau, 1971; Dandurand, 1978).

François-Xavier Garneau (1809-1866) was one of the first French Canadian historians to elaborate cultural myths and representations to dispel the notion that French Canadians lacked a cultural heritage. He also implored French Canadians in his *Histoire du Canada* to resist Anglo-domination (Bouchard, 2000, p. 117; Wade, 1968, pp. 152-214). Cook (1977) explains that historians in French Canada played a leading part in defining the ideology of *la survivance* as their stories are about the survival of a small group of people struggling against the odds, who must continue the struggle in the present, to guarantee their survival in the future (p. 97).

Up until the mid-20th century, clerico-nationalist historians, the Catholic church and religious orders, the press, cultural organizations, and educational institutions in French-speaking communities in North America promoted a national culture based on an imaginary construction of a common past, a cult of French ancestors, French Canadian traditions, and a providential mission to diffuse Catholicism in North America (Bouchard, 2000, pp. 83, 104-105; Chevalier, 1972, p. 4; Dumont, 1997; Theriault, 1951, p. 232). Clerical and professional elites expected teachers who taught in bilingual schools to develop in the

young a national consciousness by craftily integrating a cultural continuity curriculum, or a hidden or resistance curriculum, in their English Program of Studies (Mahé, 2000, 2001).

In this paper, the term curriculum refers to socially constructed knowledge, cultural values and attitudes deemed by interest groups in society to be legitimate and worthy of transmission for cultural reproduction (Apple, 1979, pp. 1-22; Forquin, 1991; Gérin-Lajoie, 1993). Textbooks, which constitute an integral part of the curriculum, are therefore one of the most important cultural artifacts for studying how a society makes sense of its existence, transmits its cultural heritage, and creates cultural loyalty and a collective consciousness (Fowler, 1995; Garnier & Rouquette, 2000, pp. 59, 80-81; Hodgetts, 1968, p. 64; Laloux-Jain, 1974, pp. 43, 58; McAndrew, 1986, pp. 25-26; McAndrew & Tessier, 1997; Monière & Guay, 1987, pp. 13-14).

To explore the interplay between *la survivance* discourses and nationalistic curriculum practices in church-controlled and state-controlled bilingual schools in North America between 1840 and 1960, this paper draws upon primary and secondary sources on Francophone education, and my content analysis of an 85 page textbook, *Ta richesse et le merveilleux avenir qu'elle t'offre. Manuel de civisme albertain* (Association des éducateurs bilingues de l'Alberta, 1949) (hereinafter referred to as the A.E.B.A. text). The data from the A.E.B.A. text provided me with a point of entry for embarking on a comparative study of the cultural continuity or resistance curriculum implemented in bilingual schools situated in French-speaking communities in North America.

The first part of the paper examines the politics of language which compelled Francophones in North America to create and disseminate a cultural resistance curriculum in their local schools. To demonstrate the relationship between *la survivance* discourses and the curriculum, the second part provides examples illustrating the kinds of emotional language, evocative imagery, nationalistic ideals, myths and beliefs inserted in French textbooks to develop a Francophone national consciousness.

The Politics of Language and the Cultural Resistance Curriculum

Giroux (1983) writes that schools are sites for cultural reproduction, but he adds that they can also become sites where resistance against

domination occurs. This section speaks about how Francophone minorities in North America disregarded state and provincial laws which stipulated that English was the language of schooling and actually used their local schools as a refuge for their national salvation.

There is a body of literature which substantiates that French was taught illegally or beyond the time allowed by state laws in Franco-American parish schools, and in public and separate schools situated in French minority communities in Canada. There is also evidence that teachers used textbooks endorsed by Quebec's Catholic institutions for teaching French and subjects in French (Bachand, 1938; Blanchard, 1938; Brault, 1986, pp. 85, 95-96; Carmel, 1990; Charlebois, 1914; Comeau, 1938; de Grâce, 1938; Denis, 1993; Ducharme, 1990; Dufault & Desautels, 1938; Dumont, 1997; Gagnon, 1989; Hodgetts, 1968, pp. 31-33, 64; Huel, 1969, pp. 31-61; Laliberté, 1938; Landry, 1962, pp. 110, 159-161; Le Gresley, 1938; Lepage, 1990; Mahé, 1993, 2000, 2001; McKee-Allain, 1997; R.-B. Perreault, 1990; Perry, 1992; Roby, 1990, pp. 120, 209-211; St. Jean, 1990; Theriault, 1951, p. 383).

Quebec Francophones who migrated to the United States after 1840, particularly in the New England states, built and financed their own elementary and secondary parish schools and in these schools they transmitted the French language and the French Canadian cultural heritage. Although state laws specified that all school subjects had to be taught in English in private and public schools (Brault, 1986, p. 87; Landry, 1962, p. 86), the teaching nuns who taught in Franco-American parish schools spent half a day teaching English and half a day teaching French (Bachand, 1938; Chevalier, 1972, p. 45; Laliberté, 1938; Landry, 1962, p. 187; Péloquin, 1991). Brault (1986) points out that they also used French throughout the school day for prayers, informal conversations with students, and for all school activities inside as well as outside of the classroom (p. 95).

By the end of the 19th century, provincial governments in Canada had replaced the system of confessional schools, which had previously allowed Francophones outside Quebec to preserve their language and culture, with a system of national schools and an English Program of Studies (Aunger, 1996). In 1890, the Manitoba government passed legislation to abolish the teaching of French, but teachers who taught in French-speaking community schools continued to offer instruction in French (Hébert, 1998; Jaenen, 1984). In Nova Scotia the teaching of French was not tolerated by the government, but according to Comeau (1938), French was taught in schools situated in French communities.

After the establishment of national schools in Ontario in the 1840s, Franco-Ontariens continued to use their separate or Catholic schools as a refuge for their linguistic and cultural continuity (Choquette, 1993; Gervais, 1993). However, in 1912 the Ontario government adopted Regulation 17 which restricted the use of the French language beyond the primary level. This regulation was gradually relaxed, and abolished in 1927 (Godbout, 1979, p. 46-58). In 1892, the Saskatchewan and Alberta governments passed legislation stipulating that English was the official language of instruction in all public and separate schools, but a School Ordinance, also passed in 1892, allowed trustees in French communities to offer no more than one hour per day of instruction in French. Nevertheless, French was taught almost exclusively in 77 rural bilingual school districts in Saskatchewan in 1918, in 160 districts in 1931 (Huel, 1969, pp. 37, 59), and beyond the time allowed by law in most of the 97 rural bilingual school districts which existed in Alberta before 1940 (Mahé, 2000, 2001).

Bilingual school teachers concealed the teaching of French from state inspectors by fulfilling the requirements of the mandated English Program of Studies (Gagnon, 1989; Hébert, 1998; Joyal, 1938; McKee-Allain, 1997; Mahé, 2000, 2001; Theriault, 1951, p. 377). In Franco-American parish schools teachers also paid attention to developing American loyalty (Bachand, 1938; Brault, 1986, p. 94; Laliberté, 1938; Landry, 1962, p. 30; Wessel, 1931, p. 244), and in so doing, they formed young citizens with a dual identity and a dual sense of patriotism (Dumont, 1997). The situation in Western Canada was quite similar as state inspectors and Francophone parents expected bilingual school teachers to prepare citizens who could integrate themselves in Canadian society (Mahé, 2000, 2001).

Curriculum and Cultural Continuity

Between 1900 and 1930, Francophone minorities in North America established cultural societies and/or educational associations[1] to resist Anglo-conformity by overseeing the transmission of the French language and culture in educational institutions attended by young Francophones. These associations created a parallel or unofficial system of education in their localities. For instance, they developed a French Program of Studies, they prepared and administered yearly French exams, and they named members of the Catholic clergy as unofficial school inspectors (Visiteurs d'écoles) to supervise the teaching of French and religion in bilingual schools (Blanchard, 1938; de Grâce, 1938; Dumont, 1997;

Godbout, 1979, pp. 71-74; Huel, 1969, p. 24; Mahé, 2000, McKee-Allain, 1997).

The clergy and members of cultural associations pressured bilingual school teachers to inculcate in the young religious, spiritual, and moral values, and to develop a sense of pride for their French forefathers' who struggled for cultural survival. They recommended that teachers use textbooks from Quebec for teaching reading, grammar, spelling, Canadian history, catechism, holy history, and songs in French (Brault, 1986, p. 95; Carmel, 1990; Chevalier, 1972, pp. 45, 285; Dufault & Desautels, 1938; Lepage, 1990; Mahé, 1993, 2000; Perry, 1992). There is evidence that the most popular textbooks used in bilingual schools for teaching French and transmitting the cultural heritage were written by clerico-nationalists such as the Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes, Clerics de Saint-Viateur, Frères du Sacré-Coeur, Congrégation de Notre Dame, Bonneau, Augé-Desrosiers, Claude-Augé, and Montpetit (Blanchard, 1938; Brault, 1986, pp. 85, 95; Chevalier, 1972, p. 65; Comeau, 1938; de Grâce, 1938; Gagnon, 1999; Godbout, 1994; Huel, 1969, p. 47; Mahé, 1993, 2000; Rumilly, 1958, p. 195).

Brault (1986) and Perry (1992) who studied graded readers and grammars produced by religious orders, for instance, by the Frères des Écoles Chrétiennes, concluded that there was a close relationship between language and religion in the texts. Brault (1986) found, for example, numerous sentences in the readers which aimed to instill in the young piety, moral values, love of family, obedience, and patriotism (pp. 95-96). Perry (1992) noted that the *Leçons de Langue Française* sketched out a French Canadian people strongly devoted to its language, religion, and heritage. She also remarked that a number of French Canadian historical figures were included in the texts to enable students to identify with their ancestors.

After carrying out a content analysis of 26 textbooks used in bilingual schools in Alberta before 1940 (21 of which were published in Quebec), L. Godbout (1994) deduced that language was rooted in religion and not the reverse as religious terms, Christian values, and the contribution of the Catholic church in the evolution of Canada permeated the texts. His greatest criticism of these texts was that they contained very few references to the presence of francophones in Western Canada. Hence, he concluded that in the first half of the twentieth century, bilingual schools in Alberta failed to develop an authentic Franco-Albertan identity.

To assist students in conserving the French language and spirit, teachers who taught in church-controlled and state-controlled schools in French-speaking communities in North America employed similar teaching strategies. In the early 1930s, Sainte-Madeleine-des-Anges (1938) conducted a survey of 52 convents in North America who offered French language instruction (46 of these convents were located in Quebec, Ontario, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, and six in the United States). She discovered that the majority of the teachers integrated "Cercles du bon parler français" in their elementary and intermediary French courses, and they involved students in recitations, and in reading and discussing historical texts. Mahé (2000) noted that bilingual school teachers in Alberta employed analogous strategies before 1940. Bilingual school teachers in the United States as well as in Canada also prepared their students to write the yearly Concours de français, an exam prepared by members of cultural associations. Concours results were published in local French newspapers thereby providing the community with a sense of how well teachers were teaching French and transmitting the cultural heritage (Association Catholique franco-canadienne, 1927, pp. 109-115; Blanchard, 1936; A. Godbout, 1979, pp. 71-74; Johnson, 1979, p. 17; Lepage, 1990; Mahé, 1993; 2000; St. Jean, 1990).

History and Nationalism

In 1937, l'Abbé Lionel Groulx reminded Francophones present at the Deuxième Congrès de la langue française au Canada that history was the guardian of French Canadian traditions and served to keep the collectivity alive (Groulx, 1938). Between 1840 and 1960, the teaching of history in Quebec and in bilingual schools in North America served to develop in the young patriotic sentiments which combined language and faith. The national culture promoted in textbooks produced in Quebec was based on the primordial role of the Catholic Church in French society, and a cultural heritage founded on a cult of Christian ancestors (Dufault & Desautels, 1938; Dumont, 1997; Duplessis, 1936; Hodgetts, 1968, pp. 31- 33; Huel, 1969, p. 466; Johnson, 1979, p. 17; Laloux-Jain, 1974, pp. 43-58; Landry, 1962, p. 110; Lepage, 1990; Mahé, 2000).

In his study of the *Programme d'études élémentaires* in Quebec, Hodgetts (1968) remarked that French Canada was described in textbooks as having a history peopled with saintly heroic figures, motivated by Christian ideals, who were preoccupied with working for

the glory of God and the survival of their society. He concluded that the purpose of teaching history in French Canada was to reveal to the child the purity of his French Canadian origins and the idealistic character of heroic ancestors who, with the protection of the Divine Providence, struggled for their national survival (pp. 31-33).

Up until the mid-twentieth century, the Quebec curriculum for teaching French and subjects in French served as a prototype for developing a cultural continuity or resistance curriculum in Franco-American parish schools and in Canadian public and separate bilingual schools.

The A.E.B.A. "Programme de Survivance"

The 85 page textbook analyzed in this section, *Ta richesse et le merveilleux avenir qu'elle t'offre. Manuel de civisme albertain* (Association des éducateurs bilingues de l'Alberta, 1949) was developed by members of A.E.B.A., an educational association founded in 1927, who was supported by l'Association canadienne française de l'Alberta, founded in 1926. In the first three pages of the text the program developers use the term *programme de Survivance* on five separate occasions to emphasize the ideological purpose of the civics text (pp. 3-5).

In the introduction to the A.E.B.A. text the developers inform valiant and dedicated teachers that they are the hope for cultural survival "À nos valeureux professeurs dont le magnifique dévouement forme notre plus bel espoir de SURVIVANCE" (p. 3), and are ultimately responsible for the loss or the salvation of the young "Nous sommes la perte ou le salut de nos Jeunes" (p. 5). They are advised that the Immaculate Virgin Mary will guide them in their patriotic work "Nous aurons le patronage de l'Immaculée" (p. 5). Their patriotic work includes teaching students about the miracle of *la survivance*, persuading them to continue their ancestors' struggles for their language and religious rights, and instilling in them the idea that when God created them as French Canadians he expected them to carry on a providential mission in North America (pp. 3-5). In the note addressed to students in the introduction, they are promised that each special page of the text will help them to see the wonders of their life as French Canadians, and if they carefully study the lives of their brave, heroic, and progressive ancestors they will come to recognize that they too possess their qualities (pp. 6-7).

The A.E.B.A. text is divided into five lessons. Lesson 1 identifies French-speaking ancestors who founded fifty American cities and who

were the first to reach the Great Lakes, the Mississippi, Western Canada, the Pacific Coast, and the far North (pp. 9-16). Lesson 2 refers to French-speaking Christian heroes and heroines, missionaries tortured by the "Indiens" and "Sauvages", and ancestors who combatted the Iroquois, the English, and Americans, who were Zouaves, and who fought in the two World Wars (pp. 18-25). Lesson 3 describes the life of settlers in New France, and mentions women and men who were successful entrepreneurs. This lesson also makes reference to how the English controlled the economy after 1760, and in later years, how government settlement policies in the West favored immigrants from foreign countries rather than Francophones (pp. 26-36). Lesson 4 outlines Christian democratic liberties in Canada, recounts events which led to the suppression of the French Canadians' religious and linguistic rights after 1763, and sums up how Francophones struggled to re-conquer their rights after 1763. The Constitutional Act of 1791 serves as a starting point to demonstrate that Canada is a bilingual and binational country. This lesson terminates with an overview of the system of confessional schools established in Canada in the 19th century (pp. 37-61). Lesson 5 begins with Article 93 of the British North America Act which gives Francophones the right to confessional schooling, then discusses the abolishment of the system of confessional schools by governments in various Canadian provinces. A focus is placed on the Manitoba School Question and Règlement XVII in Ontario. The last section of the lesson traces briefly the history of Western Canada and of Alberta's pioneers and their early schooling, and concludes by listing French Canadian associations involved in protecting Francophones' religious and linguistic rights in Alberta (pp. 68-75).

At the end of each lesson there are lists of textbooks for further readings (see List of Further Readings), questions for classroom discussions, and suggested classroom activities. Some of the questions and activites are designed to create patriotic sentiments. For instance, students are asked to explain how they would defend their language and faith in the face of adversaries (pp. 24, 58, 84), and to role-play a situation in which their ancestors' rights were taken away (p. 60).

Examples of "La Survivance" Discourses Embedded in the A.E.B.A. Text

Recurring key words, concepts, principal ideas, themes, and catchy emotional phrases extracted from the A.E.B.A. text were analyzed, and

five major categories of *la survivance* discourses were retained, namely, French Canadians as victims of Anglo-dominance, the miracle of *la survivance*, French Canadians as champions of democratic liberties, French Canadians as progressive and resourceful survivors, and continuing the struggle for *la survivance*. The examples of *la survivance* discourses presented in this section are by no means exhaustive, but they nonetheless provide insights into definitions of social reality which young Francophones may have been exposed to in bilingual schools.

French Canadians as Victims of Anglo-Dominance

There are 230 references in the A.E.B.A. text which portray French Canadians as victims of Anglo-Protestant fanatics who persecuted and mistreated them, and of governments who treated them unjustly by failing to respect their religious, linguistic, and educational rights. For example, French Canadians were persecuted by anti-French and religious fanatics such as Orangists and the Ku Klux Klan who influenced government decisions to abolish their rights "Mais les Orangistes soulèvent une tempête épouvantable: devant leur fanatisme les gouvernements concernés évoquent leur règlement" (p. 65)! Subsequently, intolerant Protestant governments passed despotic educational and language laws in Ontario, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan to assimilate them "les hautes autorités seront tous des protestants; puisque le but clair de toute l'affaire est de nous assimiler" (p. 54). The developers use evocative imagery to emphasize the injustices committed towards Francophones when governments abolished confessional schooling. For example, "Le système des écoles séparées de cette province du Manitoba a été aboli d'une manière barbare, brutale, cruelle" (p. 67).

The Miracle of "la Survivance"

The A.E.B.A text contains 152 references which link the miracle of *la survivance* since the Conquest of 1760 to the fearlessness, bravery, perseverance, and tenacity of French Canadian ancestors who organized themselves to resist government injustices, who formed ingenious cultural and educational associations to defend their religious, linguistic, and educational rights, and who developed a leadership skilled in defensive strategies "Tout de suite s'organise la résistance à pareille injustice" (p. 68).

In 45 out of the 152 references to the miracle of *la survivance*, the bravery and fearlessness of French ancestors who struggled for their rights is attributed to the protection of the Divine Providence "Parce que tes ancêtres allaient puiser leur bravoure en DIEU" (p. 23). God, for example, had sent them the courageous Lafontaine to stand up for their rights against formidable adversaries "Seulement Dieu veillait: sa miséricorde nous envoie Lafontaine, l'homme au courage miraculeux, seul contre l'adversaire tout-puissant" (p. 47).

French Canadians as Champions of Democratic Liberties

Sixty-five statements in the A.E.B.A. text characterize French Canadians as champions of Christian democratic liberties in Canada "Tes ancêtres furent les conquérants par excellence de notre démocratie canadienne, de sa liberté chrétienne" (p. 52). The liberties identified in the text include the liberty of religion, of language, of schooling, of laws, and of politics.

The text explains that on account of the French Canadians' struggles to obtain religious rights and constitutional democratic liberties, their victories have benefited all present and future Canadians "nos ancêtres ne pouvaient gagner la liberté pour nous, sans la gagner pour tous les canadians future et présent" (p. 45). Their successes therefore led to the establishment of the Canadian Constitution and the growth of democracy in Canada "Leurs victoires ont forcé la CONSTITUTION CANADIENNE TOUT ENTIÈRE À DEVENIR DÉMOCRATIQUE" (p. 45).

The most popular defenders of Christian democratic liberties and rights in Canada referred to in the A.E.B.A. text include, Sir W. Laurier, Senator R. Dandurant, Minister of Justice E. Pointe (p. 51), Louis Saint-Laurent (p. 52), and H. Bourassa "notre grand défenseur H. Bourassa" (p. 75).

French Canadians as Progressive and Resourceful Survivors

There are 63 references in the A.E.B.A. text which describe French Canadians as a progressive, resourceful, and an ingenious race of people "C'est une personne qui AIME BEAUCOUP le progrès" (p. 11), who are forward looking and not a backwards people "tes ancêtres n'avaient pas une vie d'arriérés, de paresseux. Non! Mais une vie progressive" (p. 13). The text paints a picture of French Canadians as being able to overcome

all obstacles to achieve their ends "qu'elle cherche toujours à marcher de l'avant, plus loin, malgré les obstacles" (p. 11).

The story told in the text is that after the Conquest of 1760 Francophones were left in a desperate economic situation because of Anglo-dominance in business and administration "a englouté tous nos capitaux" (p. 32). However, these events did not prevent them from eventually succeeding in business "Même en affaires, tes ancêtres savent réussir" (p. 30)! To prove this last statement, there are 10 short stories of men and 10 short stories of women who distinguished themselves in the economic field before the end of the 1880s. For example, Messieurs J. Ladrue (1896) who discovered gold in the Klondike and became a millionaire, Beaudry (1856) who discovered a way to smelt iron, P. Beaudry (1851-1871) who developed a good part of the city of Los Angeles, J. Dubuque (1804) who exploited the first lead mines in Wisconsin, Sister Marguerite Bourgeoys who founded two religious communities, built schools, and was a member of the Montreal city council, Mme de Repentigny (1700) who set up a wool, a textile, and a maple factory, Mme J. Enard (1652) who was a fur trader, Mme M. Poisson who was in the import business, Mme A. Lemire (1715) who was involved in the fishing industry in Montreal, and Mme A. Barret (1745) who ran a seal hunting business (pp. 29-30).

Continuing the Struggle for "la Survivance"

There are 33 emotionally laden statements which aim to persuade students of the importance of continuing their ancestors' battles for cultural survival. Students are told, for example, that the conquest for their liberties is not yet finished "Vois-tu, la conquête de ta liberté n'est PAS ENCORE FINIE" (p. 37). They are asked, for instance, if they want to live as slaves, defeat others or be defeated "Tu peux choisir de vivre en esclave ... écraser les autres ou te laisser écraser .... Est-ce bien ton désir?" (p. 38). They are also reminded that if they do not fight for their rights, no one else will do it for them "Si tu ne la finis pas toi-même, qui le fera pour toi" (p. 38)?

There are 13 additional statements which try to convince students that they are capable of carrying on their ancestors battles for their rights because they are from a race of people who do not know how to die "Vois tu, nous sommes d'une race qui ne sait pas mourrir" (pp. 66, 69, 73, 76). To further strengthen this view, the developers impress upon students that when God created them as French Canadians they

inherited their ancestors bravery and heroism "Souviens-toi, maintenant, qu'en te créant canadian-français Dieux t'a fait héritier de cette vie là" (p. 14). Their mission is therefore to imitate their heroic ancestors' who were champions of democratic liberties "Tes ancêtres furent les champions...TU DOIS LES IMITER les CONTINUER...Voilà TA MISSION" (p. 57). Students are informed throughout the text that their ancestors heroic blood, energies, passions for Christian democratic liberties and progressiveness can also flow in their veins (pp. 9, 22-28) if they are willing to receive a mysterious moral blood transfusion, a transfusion which can only take place if they are prepared to assimilate information about their ancestors' glorious accomplishments and successes,

> Ce **comment,** l'histoire de tes ancêtres, de leurs sacrifices courageux pour gagner contre la tyrannie, TE L'ENSEIGNERA de la **bonne manière**: je veux dire: **EN TE FAISANT REVIVRE TOI-MÊME l'héroïque et glorieuse lutte des tiens .... Par elle, d'une façon mystérieuse, mais réelle**, tu vas recevoir en toi-même, **une** transfusion **morale,** mais très **vraie**, de l'énergie **puissante et progressive** qui fit tes Pères, et qui te fera toi-même, CHAMPION sans défaillance de la démocratie chrétienne, **de la liberté chrétienne pour TOUS ... Es-tu prêt?** La transfusion commence! (p. 38)

Discussion

A content analysis of the A.E.B.A. text sheds some light on the kinds of images, language, ideals, myths, values, and beliefs selected by Francophone elites in Alberta in the late 1940s to develop in the young a defensive form of nationalism while at the same time promoting an image of Francophones as a progressive and forward-looking people. However, the discourses in the text failed to recognize that young Francophones were living in a society undergoing transformations.

Defensive Nationalism

The A.E.B.A. text portrays French Canadians as victims of Anglo-dominance who, with the protection of the Divine Providence, fought legal and political battles to obtain linguistic rights and Christian democratic liberties. The developers inform students that it is their responsibility to continue these battles as they are not yet finished. Discourses surrounding the miracle of *la survivance* attribute the Francophones' successes in defending their language and culture to their

bravery, resourcefulness, and tenacity. To instill in the young the notion that they are capable of carrying on their ancestors' battles to defend their rights, the program developers advise them that they have inherited their ancestors' heroic qualities and attributes.

A. Perreault (1971) who studied nationalism in French Canada writes that Catholicism and the French spirit are the sources from which French Canadians in the past drew upon "to overcome the obstacles against their survival as a distinct race in America" (p. 221). Bonefant and Falardeau (1971) explain that group-consciousness and patriotic feelings which developed in French Canada after the British conquest are the result of the Francophones' isolation from France, their struggles with a culturally-alien conquering group, and their sensitivity to their minority political and economic status. They add that clerical and professional elites organized themselves to develop group cohesiveness and to make explicit to French Canadians the unconscious relationship which had always existed between national feelings and religion. In 1834, for example, they established the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society in Montreal and throughout the years society members rallied French Canadians by glorifying their traditions and institutions, and by creating an emotional and myth-like interpretation of their historical development and national mission. According to Bonenfant and Falardeau, in 1838 Mgr Laflèche began to popularize a defensive form of nationalism founded on the French Canadians' providential mission in North America. The clergy and the teaching nuns were the first ones to promulgate this messianic form of nationalism in French communities.

The problem with the clerico-nationalist interpretation of history and nationalism promoted in bilingual schools in the past is that the cultural curriculum had no regional referents, nor local heroes and symbols to shape the identity of young Francophones and to help them understand their social, political and economic situation. According to R.B. Perrault (1990), such was the case in Franco-American schools as generations of Franco-Americans grew up never knowing about the Franco-American cultural richness.

There are a total of 11 pages in the A.E.B.A. text which make reference to Francophones in Western Canada. These pages focus on the role played by provincial Francophone cultural and educational associations in defending the collectivity's linguistic, religious, and educational rights against Anglo-Protestant fanatics (pp. 66-60, 73-82). In the last four pages of the text students are presented with a bleak

picture of their inferior and unequal status in society as members of a minority "Mais, par expérience, tu connais également trop bien, *l'inégalité, l'infériorité* de ta situation" (p. 79). They are informed, for example, that on account of past linguistic injustices they are presently faced with having to submit to a double program of studies to conserve their religion and language, a lack of bilingual teachers because governments failed to establish bilingual normal schools, and attending schools where fanatics do not respect their language and religious rights (pp. 79-80).

Repetitive terms in the A.E.B.A. text characterize French ancestors as victims of Anglo-Protestant fanatics, tyrants, oppressors, and persecutors. These portrayals of Anglophones as oppressors leaves one with the impression that thousands of young Francophones may have grown up with an ethnocentric bias or feelings of animosity towards Anglophones. My major criticism of the text is that it fails to provide students with the conceptual tools and critical thinking skills necessary for understanding power relations and conflicts which arise when two dominant groups in society compete to give legitimacy to their language and culture. The negative images of Anglophones combined with a subjective and uni-directional interpretation of history appear to have been propaganda tools used by the developers to incite students to carry-on their ancestors' battles for linguistic and educational rights. However, the developers failed to provide them with any guidance on how to solve such complex socio-political problems. The one solution they do offer is simplistic and ethereal. For instance, students are asked to write a prayer they can recite each day, form prayer groups, and offer masses for the salvation of their schools "Organiser une croisade volontaire de prières et de messes pour le salut de nos écoles. TOI-MÊME, compose-toi, *dans tes propres mots*, une petite prière à cette intention: récite-la tous les soirs ou matins" (p. 82).

The Notion of Progressiveness

Part of the discourse on the miracle of *la survivance* in the A.E.B.A. text is based on a positive image of French Canadians as brave, tenacious, progressive, and resourceful people who can overcome any obstacle. But, this image contradicts Durocher and Linteau's (1971) thesis that before 1970 French Canadians were perceived as "hewers of water and of occupying an inferior economic position compared to English Canadians in Quebec. Maybe the program developers were trying to create a positive image of French ancestors for students to emulate so that they

could invent themselves as forward-looking and economically progressive citizens. Articles in the Franco-Albertan press at the turn of the twentieth century support this view. Francophones such as Rinfect, for example, wrote that the future of the collectivity depended on the French Canadians' involvement in industry, commerce, and agriculture "...il doit chercher les voies de son avenir du côté de l'industrie, du commerce, de l'agriculture, ces ferments économiques qui verseront dans son composé nationaliste le grand frisson du Progrès moderne" (Rinfect, 1907, p. 5).

Conclusion

Linguistic and religious insecurity in Anglo-dominant North America compelled French-speaking clerical and professional elites in the past to develop an ideological stratagem to unite and mobilize all Francophones around shared interests and cultural objectives. The creation of a national culture, founded on a cult of French ancestors and a providential mission provided Francophones with a sense of direction and cohesion, and strengthened their ability to resist Anglo-hegemony. *La survivance* discourses, founded on a defensive form of nationalism which blended language and faith, shaped the cultural resistance curriculum in Franco-American parish schools and in Canadian public and separate bilingual schools. This paper provided a number of examples to illustrate the essence of *la survivance* discourses concealed in textbooks used in bilingual schools to induce young Francophones to preserve and defend their language and culture.

While young Franco-Albertans were being exposed to outdated and proselytizing discourses in their A.E.B.A. *programme de Survivance*, Francophones in North America were experiencing the effects of materialism, secularism, urbanization, industrialization, and pluralism in their society.

A number of political and social transformations took place in the 1960s which affected definitions of French Canadian nationalism and cultural transmission in schools situated in French-speaking communities in North America. In the 1960s, the Quiet Revolution in Quebec resulted in the state taking over control of education. Subsequently, traditional interpretations of French Canadian nationalism and old cultural survival models to emulate based on myths, catchy emotional phrases and slogans were questioned and demystified, and clerico-nationalist textbooks were discarded from the school curriculum (Ducharme, 1990; Parent, 1964, pp. 149-159). As a result of

the Official Language Act of 1968 and the demands of Anglophone parents for bilingual education, provincial governments in Canada passed legislation which allowed for the teaching of French for up to 50% of the school day. Provincial governments subsequently became involved in developing the curriculum for the teaching of French in bilingual schools. As a consequence, discourses of *la survivance* were obliterated from the school curriculum. The closing of Franco-American parish schools and the integration of young Franco-Americans in Anglo-controlled public schools in the 1960s jeopardized the future of Franco-American cultural continuity.

In Canada, after years of legal and political battles, Francophone minorities succeeded in obtaining from provincial governments the right to establish French schools in the 1980s, and to govern them in the 1990s. Now that Francophones have control of their own schools it would be interesting to capture the processes of social and cultural reproduction in these schools by investigating the sorts of *la survivance* discourses cloaked in the curriculum. It would also be important to study how teachers attempt to form a national consciousness and how students perceive the cultural models to emulate. For instance, are the cultural survival discourses in Francophone schools still based on the old myth of language as guardian of the faith? Are the language discourses still associated to a race or ethnicity? If such is the case, Bocquel (1990) warns Francophones, then the future of the French language is condemned as French is no longer a heritage language, like Ukrainian, for example, it is an official language: "Le français de l'avenir est condamné, s'il est associé, de près ou de loin, à une ethnie. Le français n'est pas l'ukrainien, il n'est past une langue patrimoniale. Il est officiel" (p. 118).

NOTE

1. Between 1900 and 1930, Francophone minorities in North America established a number of cultural societies and/or educational associations to ensure cultural transmission. Associations responsible for French education in provinces outside Quebec include, for example: l'Association canadienne-francaise d'education d'Ontario; l'Association Catholique franco-canadienne de la Saskatchewan; l'Association d'education des canadiens-francais du Manitoba; l'Association des instituteurs et institutrices acadiens de l'lle-du-Prince-Edouard; l'Association acadienne d'education du Nouveau Brunswick; and l'Association des educateurs bilingues de l'Alberta. The Societe Saint-Jean-Baptiste d'Amerique and l'Association Canado-

Americaine took an interest in promoting French education in Franco-American communities.

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