

The EU as reflected in high school curricula in Israel:

European perception in Israeli civic studies textbooks

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Why research Civic Studies in Israel?

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of teal, blue, and yellow-green, creating a modern, layered effect on the right side of the slide.

Civic Education:

- ▶ Civic education reflect on state perception of justice and good citizenship (Schremer 1993)
- ▶ The struggle of control over the definition of justice in Israel is always escalating (Avnon 2013)
- ▶ Civic Education has a huge role in shaping the political identity of the “citizen to be” (Torney-Purta 2000 ; Dudley and and Gitelson 2002)

The Civic Studies Textbook and Curricula: At the heart of a public dispute for the past 23 years



Three main bodies of knowledge:

Civic Education	Normative Power Europe (Manners, 2002)	The Cultural Filter
<p>“...Civic knowledge affects civic competence, character, and conduct” (Galston, 2001: 226).</p> <p>“...Civic education in Israel is set to justify the national Zionist project...” (Pinson, 2007: 373).</p>	<p>“...The most important factor shaping the international role of the EU is not what it does or what it says, but what it is” (Manners, 2002: 252).</p>	<p>The cultural filter affects the <i>impact of international norms and political learning in third states and organizations leading to learning, adaptation or rejection of norms</i> (Kinnvall, 1995: 61-71)</p>

The Methodology - Textbook Research Discipline:

These researchers started with counting the pages that covered specific topics followed by descriptions and interpretations of the content, including evaluating the quality of the content.

Source: Hsieh, Hsiu-Fang, and Sarah E. Shannon.
"Three approaches to qualitative content analysis."
Qualitative health research 15.9 (2005): 1277-1288.

Textbook Research - Quantitative & Qualitative

Quantitative	Qualitative
<p>Measuring aspects of the text in terms of frequency and Space:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. How many times a term is used or a person or people are mentioned.2. How much space is allotted to a country or topic, etc.	<p>Revealing underlying assumptions that cannot be measured:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What does a text tell us, what messages does it transmit?2. In what context are terms or people placed?

Source: Pingel, Falk. *UNESCO guidebook on textbook research and textbook revision*. Unesco, 2010.

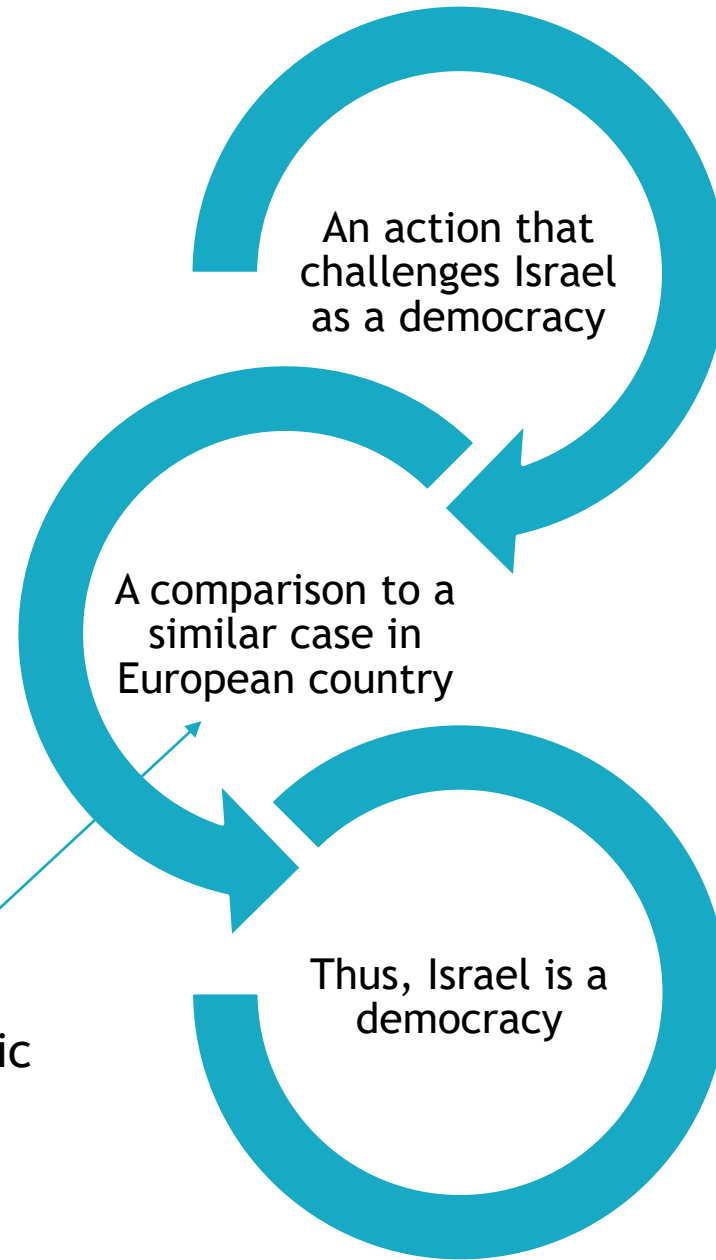
Behind the numbers:

	Times mentioned (2001)	Times mentioned (2016)	Change in %
Democracy	969	404	-239%
Anti-Semitism	1	15	+1500%
Nazism	10	34	+340%
Fascism	14	2	-700%
Communism	13	19	+146%
WW2	8	17	+212%
The Holocaust	13	28	+215%
EU	0	9	
Europe	35	55	+57%
Germany	21	48	+129%
France	17	78	+359%
USA	186	74	-60%

Main Findings:

Justification = Comparison

Main Findings:



European=Democratic - Axiomatic claim

Six core political issues:

1. The limits of Democracy (Security and Democracy)
2. Jewish diaspora
3. Collective rights for minorities
4. Israel as a Jewish nation state
5. Minority representation in the parliament and the danger in the tyranny of the majority
6. Law of return

The Law of Return:

Dominate narrative (2001)

Every country in the world establish rules for citizenship. The majority Jewish population thinks the Law of Return is not racist in favoring Jews. A Jewish minority and the majority of Israeli Arabs thinks that the law should not favor Jews

Dominate narrative (2016)

Many democratic countries have citizenship laws on the basis of ethnicity. Israel is no different from them. Citizenship law is therefore not a challenge to democracy.

The Law of Return (2001 textbook):

Another argument raised by those who view the Law of Return as a just law is that every nation-state has the right to preserve the dominance of its own people. This dominance will only be achieved if people of the same nation are the majority in the state. The purpose of the Law of Return is to preserve the Jewish majority in the state, and therefore it is a legitimate law.

On the other hand, there is a small Jewish minority and a large Arab majority that believes that the State of Israel is first and foremost a democratic. Those who favor this approach regard the Law of Return as a discriminatory law that should be annulled and replaced by a law that will determine the conditions of immigration and citizenship that are suitable for the State of Israel, as in all other democratic countries. (p268)

The Law of Return (2016 textbook):

The law acts in the name of international law, which recognizes the right of countries to establish an immigration policy as a major feature of their sovereignty. **Many countries in the world** adopt a discriminatory law that makes it easier for people of the same nation who are outside the borders of the country to return to their homeland.

International human rights bodies have recognized this policy (for example, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1965). **Many European countries have adopted such policies, including Finland, Ireland, Greece, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Croatia, Armenia, Ukraine and Russia**

The political issue	Dominate narrative (2001)	Dominate narrative (2016)
The limits of Democracy (Security and Democracy)	There are different approaches regarding the limits of democracy. The state needs to maintain the balance between security concerns and democracy. Otherwise, democracy will be damaged.	The way that a democracy deals with security threats vary from country to country. There is no formula for the balance between the two factors.
Jewish diaspora	Israel's relations with the Jewish Diaspora are close. Israel is bringing and will continue to bring the world's Jews to Israel. The dominant Jewish community (and almost exclusively) is the American one. There is a disagreement among the Israeli public about the degree of involvement that American Jews needs to have in Israeli politics and agenda	The State of Israel is a Jewish nation-state. Many democratic countries give preferential treatment to the dominant ethnic group inside and outside its borders. In the Jewish context, Jews around the world who do not make "Aliyah", may develop dual loyalty, due to the assimilation. Where there is no assimilation, there is no dual loyalty
Collective rights for minorities	There are democracies that do not provide collective rights to minorities. this can harm some democratic principles because it leaves the minority group as inferior.	There is no connection between the level of democracy of a country and the degree of recognition of the collective rights of minorities. A country can be democratic, and not recognize any Collective rights for minorities

The political issue	Dominate narrative (2001)	Dominate narrative (2016)
Israel as a Jewish nation state	There are many types of democratic nation states. Every nation state incorporates a political component an ethnic component in it's national identity. The influence of each component varies in every country	There is no connection between the level of the nationalism in a nation-state and to the fact that a country is democratic or not. Various European countries representing different models of nationalism.
Minority representation in the parliament and the danger in the tyranny of the majority	Israel is a unique case in democratic countries where there are majorities and minorities who does not experience the regular exchange of political power between them. A constants majority and minority is a symptom of a non-stable democracy. and therefore is of paramount importance to maintain the rights of minorities and their adequate representation	In many democratic countries, there is a permanent minority. These countries have to put special emphasis on the rights of minorities and adequate representation.
Law of return	Every country in the world establish rules for citizenship. The majority Jewish population thinks the Law of Return is not racist in favoring Jews. A Jewish minority and the majority of Israeli Arabs thinks that the law should not favor Jews	Many democratic countries have citizenship laws on the basis of ethnicity. Israel is no different from them. Citizenship law is therefore not a challenge to democracy.

Conclusion:

- ▶ Everything that is defined as “Europe” is always a liberal democracy. Thus, Europe is THE Justification for a Jewish and democratic Israel
- ▶ European countries aren't holding a single interpretation to European norms. Thus, Israel is adopting the interpretation of norms and not the norms themselves.
- ▶ On the contrary to the 2001 text-book, resistance or rejection to European norms will consider rejection to the democratic idea.



Thank you for your
attention.

Any questions?