

## Understanding EU External Perceptions: Theorising Local 'Cultural Filters' in the Normative Power Approach (case-study of textbooks)

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### Abstract

*This article argues that one way to advance the 'Normative Power Europe' (NPE) discourse is to shift the analytical focus to the 'locals' – or 'norm-receivers' – rather than to 'norm-senders/makers'. The analysis examines the range of locals' reactions – from learning to adaptation or rejection of norms – and explains the factors behind those reactions. Building on Ian Manners' claim that normative power is informed by 'cultural filters' which affect the impact of international norms and political learning in non-European Union (EU) countries, the article advances the concept of 'external recognition'. It considers one type of local cultural filters -- images and perceptions of the EU as a normative power. Deepening and enriching the 'Normative Power Europe' Approach (NPA) by theorising 'cultural filters' of external perceptions, this article undertakes a comparative study of Europe's normative images in high school textbooks in Israel and New Zealand.*

**Keywords:** EU external perceptions, school textbooks, Israel, New Zealand, 'Normative Power Europe', cultural filters, 'Normative Power Approach'

### Introduction

For some the 'Normative Power Europe' (NPE) discourse is obsolete – if not dead especially after Brexit. Yet, for others, the NPE approach remains a valid paradigm in European Union (EU) studies with a number of important perspectives still overlooked. One such neglected concept is the norm-receivers and their agency. Previous research has focused on the norm-sender – in this case the EU. Yet, norm-receivers' agency is critical for explaining the range of reactions to the norm-sender's intention to communicate and 'sell' norms and values. On the positive side of this interaction, the norm-taker may either adapt or adopt exported norms and values. The former process is defined as 'a conscious and unambiguous translation of exported European norms into local policies, institutions and practices'.<sup>1</sup> The latter is

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<sup>1</sup> Annika Björkdahl et al., *Importing EU Norms: Conceptual Framework and Empirical Findings* (New York, Heidelberg: Springer, 2015), 4.

characterised by two features. Firstly, '[e]xported European norms must be changed in some way from European practice to meet local demands. This might involve, for example, changes in institutional form and decision-making procedures'.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, and most importantly, '[r]egardless of such alterations, however, the original normative content of the export must remain unmistakable'.<sup>3</sup> However, resistance and rejection are also typical. 'Blended' reactions are common too. This is when a norm-taker reacts positively to one norm and rejects or resists another at the same time.

Arguably, the range of reactions – in a 'pure' or 'blended' form – may be explained by a mix of internal and external factors. Internal factors include 'cultural filters'. Those are to be 'based on the interplay between the construction of knowledge and the creation of social and political identity by the subjects of norm diffusion'.<sup>4</sup> This idea was informed by an earlier study which asserted that a cultural filter 'affects the impact of international norms and political learning in third states and organisations leading to learning, adaptation or rejection of norms'.<sup>5</sup> Introduced in Manners' seminal work on NPE, this concept has remained overlooked until recently. As Movahedi explains, this lack of scholarly attention is not surprising:

Mystified by a conception of foreign policy as a rational-bureaucratic and strategic process, most analysts are reluctant to acknowledge the significant role of social-psychological, cultural and ideological forces in the daily conduct of international affairs. Rather, they focus their attention on the formal analysis of so-called 'objective geopolitical and economic variable'.<sup>6</sup>

Fortunately, the concept is emerging from obscurity in the 'Normative Power Approach' (NPA) debate.<sup>7</sup> The NPA 'originates in post-Cold War rethinking of the conceptualisation of power in global politics.' As Manners explains, the NPA 'is concerned with understanding how conceptions of normal can be shaped in normatively justifiable and sustainable ways'.<sup>8</sup>

In this article we revisit the place of the 'cultural filters' in conceptualising the NPE mechanisms and focus on one important 'filter': external recognition of the EU in terms of NPA based on perceptions and images among the norm-receivers. For the post-Brexit EU challenged by many crises, it is short-sighted to ignore external

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ian Manners, "Normative Power Europe: A Contradiction in Terms?", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40, no. 2, (June 2002): 245.

<sup>5</sup> Catarina Kinnvall, *Cultural Diffusion and Political Learning: The Democratization of China* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1995), 61-71.

<sup>6</sup> Siamak Movahedi, "The Social Psychology of Foreign Policy and the Politics of International Images", *Human Affairs* 8, (January 1985): 18-9.

<sup>7</sup> See for example: Natalia Chaban and Martin Holland (eds.), *Communicating Europe in Times of Crisis: External Perceptions of the European Union* (Houndmills: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2014); Natalia Chaban, Serena Kelly and Martin Holland, "Perceptions of Normative Power Europe in the Shadow of the Eurozone Debt Crisis: Public Perspectives on European Integration from the Asia Pacific," in Annika Björkdahl *et al.*, *Importing EU Norms*, 57-77; Annika Björkdahl *et al.*, *Importing EU Norms*; Neve Gordon and Sharon Pardo, "Normative Power Europe and the Power of the Local", *Journal of Common Market Studies* 53, no. 2, (March 2015); Neve Gordon and Sharon Pardo, "Normative Power Europe Meets the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict", *Asia Europe Journal* 13, no. 3, (September 2015); Sharon Pardo, *Normative Power Europe Meets Israel: Perceptions and Realities* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2015); Natalia Chaban and Sharon Pardo, "Normative Power Europe and Perceptions as Cultural Filters: Israeli Civic Studies as a Case-Study," in Pardo, *Normative Power Europe Meets Israel*, 39-54.

<sup>8</sup> Ian Manners, "Theorizing Normative Power in European Union-Israeli-Palestinian Relations", *Middle East Critique*, (Forthcoming 2018): 2.

recognition and reactions to the EU's normative discourse that has been and is communicated to the world, intentionally or unintentionally. These recognitions and reactions based on them will continue to inform how international actors relate to the EU in an increasingly multipolar world.

## Revisiting 'Cultural Filters'<sup>9</sup>

Manners<sup>10</sup> proposed a set of factors critical for the diffusion of ideas from the norm-sender. Two of them are conceptualised on the basis of a one-way information flow directed from the norm-sender to the norm-taker – *informational diffusion* (intentional transfer of information, via strategic communication) or *contagion* (unintentional transfer). In the latter case, the mutual exchange of information occurs – through either the institutionalisation of a relationship – *procedural diffusion*; or through substantive or financial exchanges such as trade, aid or technical assistance – *transference*; or as a result of physical presence – *overt diffusion*.<sup>11</sup> The last factor in Manners' paradigm is the 'cultural filter', that is 'the interplay between the construction of knowledge and the creation of social and political identity by the subjects of norm diffusion'.<sup>12</sup> This filter 'works as the embodiment of culture' and it acts as an 'intermediary between the diffusion process and the learning process'. Hence, the cultural filter 'reflects the on-going process of political learning', as it puts into focus 'how available ideas must pass through [it] in order to reach any particular society'. At the same time, the cultural filter 'forces us' also 'to analyse the willingness and intensity to import these ideas'.<sup>13</sup> Both Manners and Kinnvall argue that normative power is influenced by the cultural filter and is thus embedded in the norm-receivers (or the so called 'locals').<sup>14</sup>

We argue that the cultural filter should occupy a central space in the NPA as 'it arguably underlies and shapes the other factors'.<sup>15</sup> The cultural filter is crucial for turning the normative communications from a one-way self-centred Eurocentric monologue, into a two-way exchange of ideas and information. By doing this, the EU would no longer be perceived as 'preaching' to the world<sup>16</sup> and it would succeed at conducting a 'true dialogue',<sup>17</sup> in which it would not impose its views on third countries, rather it would listen and understand the other side. This 'European preaching' to the world leads to proliferation of negative reactions, resistance and rejection by third countries.

External recognition based on a set of perceptions and images is argued to be a type of the cultural filter at the heart of the NPA. Increasingly researched in EU studies,<sup>18</sup> external perceptions have been found to be location-, time-, issue- and cohort-

<sup>9</sup> Some parts of this section draw on Chaban and Pardo, "Normative Power Europe".

<sup>10</sup> Manners, "Normative Power," 244-5.

<sup>11</sup> Chaban, Kelly and Holland, "Perceptions of Normative Power," 58.

<sup>12</sup> Manners, "Normative Power," 245.

<sup>13</sup> Kinnvall, *Cultural Diffusion*, 69.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 61-71; Manners, "Normative Power," 245, 257-8; Ian Manners, "Assessing the Decennial, Reassessing the Global: Understanding European Normative Power in Global Politics", *Cooperation and Conflict* 48, no. 2, (June 2013): 318-9; Ian Manners, "Theorizing", 10, 16.

<sup>15</sup> Chaban, Kelly and Holland, "Perceptions of Normative Power".

<sup>16</sup> Richard Youngs, *Europe's Decline and Fall: The Struggle Against Global Irrelevance* (London: Profile Books, 2010), 123.

<sup>17</sup> Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Touchstone, 1970).

<sup>18</sup> Sonia Lucarelli, "Seen from the Outside: The State of the Art on the External Image of the EU", *Journal of European Integration* 36, no. 1, (April 2014); Natalia Chaban and Martin Holland, "EU External Perceptions: From Innovation to an Established Field of Study," in *The SAGE Handbook of European Foreign Policy*, eds. Knud Erik Jorgensen *et al.* (London: Sage), 672-86.

specific.<sup>19</sup> Perceptions are complex constellations of meanings including cognitions on three levels: actor-centred,<sup>20</sup> location-specific<sup>21</sup> and globally-oriented.<sup>22</sup> These combination are possible to a human ability to form categorisations – inherently flexible cognitive constructs, a central mechanism for human beings to cognise and navigate the ever changing world.

Braudel conceptualised the ability of human beings to re-categorise the world when it changes. For Braudel changes to categories occur on three different time spans: 1. when crises trigger re-categorisations of an international actor in a very short time span: *micro histoire*; 2. when re-categorisation occurs due to permutations over 25-50 years: *histoire conjuncture*; 3. when re-categorisation evolves over centuries: *histoire de longue durée*.<sup>23</sup> Using this model of time spans and taking into account NPA categorisation, we argue that external norm-receivers can also change their local reactions on temporal grounds. This conclusion suggests an urgent need for large-scale comparative longitudinal studies, yet, as Larsen explains, those systematic accounts remain a rarity in the NPE debate.<sup>24</sup>

Perceptions may also result in stereotypes. These are notoriously rigid and resistant to change. This rigidity serves the ‘interest of the structures of power which [the stereotype] upholds’.<sup>25</sup> As Pickering maintains, it is easier ‘to resort to one-sided representations in the interests of order, security and dominance’ than to ‘allow for a more complex vision, a more open attitude, a more flexible way of thinking’. Pickering further argues that by portraying categories and groups as homogenous, stereotypes convey inaccurate and imprecise information.<sup>26</sup>

There is a further distinction between auto-stereotypes (solidified images of the ‘Self’) and cast images of the ‘Other’. The former feature constructs which are more nuanced and more positive towards the ‘Self’. The latter profile more generic concepts loaded with less positive connotations. We contend that the dialogue between these two types of images is crucial for the understanding of external perceptions of NPE, mainly because this dialogue serves as a cultural filter to third countries’ reactions. If the self-visions of a norm-taker resonate with the images of the external other (the norm-sender), more positive reactions to the exported norms should be expected.<sup>27</sup> Checkel emphasises the importance of such resonance and argues for an increased speed in

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<sup>19</sup> Natalia Chaban *et al.*, “Images of the EU beyond its Borders: Issue-Specific and Regional Perceptions of European Union Power and Leadership”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 51, no. 3, (May 2013); Ole Elgström and Natalia Chaban, “To Study External Perceptions of the EU: A Conceptual Approach,” in *Perceptions of the EU in Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa: Looking in from the Outside*, eds. Veit Bachmann and Martin Müller (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 17-33; Chaban and Holland, *Communicating Europe*; Natalia Chaban and Serena Kelly, “Tracing the Evolution of EU Images Using a Case-Study of Australia and New Zealand”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 55, no. 4, (July 2017).

<sup>20</sup> Richard K. Herrmann *et al.*, “Images in International Relations: An Experimental Test of Cognitive Schemata”, *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 3, (September 1997).

<sup>21</sup> Michito Tsuruoka, “How External Perceptions of the European Union are Shaped: Endogenous and Exogenous Sources”, *GARNET Conference on the EU in International Affairs*, (Brussels, 24-6 April 2008).

<sup>22</sup> Natalia Chaban and Ana-Maria Magdalina, “External Perceptions of the EU during the Eurozone Sovereign Debt Crisis”, *European Foreign Affairs Review* 19, no. 2, (2014).

<sup>23</sup> Fernand Braudel, *On History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

<sup>24</sup> Henrik Larsen, “The EU as a Normative Power and the Research on External Perceptions: The Missing Link”, *Journal of Common Market Studies* 52, no. 4, (July 2014).

<sup>25</sup> Michael Pickering, *Stereotyping: The Politics of Representation* (Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), 3.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

<sup>27</sup> Natalia Chaban, Annick Masselot and Katharine Vadura, “Introduction. Asia-Europe Dialogue on Norms: Revisiting the Role of Norm-Receivers in the Conceptualisation of the ‘Normative Power Europe’”, *Asia Europe Journal* 13, no. 3, (September 2015).

reception. As he explains, '[d]iffusion is more rapid when a cultural match exists between a systemic norm and a target country, in other words, where it resonates with historically constructed domestic norms'.<sup>28</sup>

## Social Identity Construction and Textbooks

Checkel's argument leads us to assess discourses that construct 'normative' narratives, such as the education discourse. Education is a prominent example, because 'schools are an important factor in instilling, even producing identity' and a special role belongs to teachers and school textbooks – they 'generate pronounced forms of [...] identity'.<sup>29</sup>

Textbooks are the modern version of village storytellers, as they 'are responsible for conveying to youth what adults believe they should know about their own culture as well as of other societies'. In Hutton's and Mehlinger's opinion, none of the socialisation instruments can be compared to school textbooks 'in their capacity to convey a uniform, approved, even official version of what youth should believe'.<sup>30</sup> Thus, for Kimmerling, textbooks function as a sort of 'ultimate supreme historical court' whose task is to decipher 'from all the accumulated "pieces of the past" the "true" collective memories which are appropriate for inclusion in the canonical national historical narrative'.<sup>31</sup> Podeh notes that in so doing textbooks not only forge a society's identity, and also constitute a central prism through which the images, perceptions and stereotypes of and the information on the 'Other' have been filtered.<sup>32</sup>

Following Davies,<sup>33</sup> we pose that textbooks can be oriented towards the state, nation and other states and nations through inclusion or omission of information. These 'selective framed communicative highlights'<sup>34</sup> constitute the framing process. To frame is to 'select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation'.<sup>35</sup> Cascade activation framing theory adopts this concept and argues that information about foreign policy events and actors is spread top to bottom, from government to elites to media to the general public. The media texts and newsmakers who 'pump' selective frames up and down the cascade – from elites to the general public and the other way around occupy a special place.<sup>36</sup> One of the main concepts of the cascade activation framing theory is the concept of a 'capable frame'. Such a frame needs to possess qualities of magnitude (in terms of volume and frequency) and of cultural

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<sup>28</sup> Jeffrey T. Checkel, "Norms, Institutions, and National Identity in Contemporary Europe", *International Studies Quarterly* 43, no. 1, (March 1999): 87.

<sup>29</sup> Fritz Groothues, 2002. "Imagine: A European Identity", 14 March 2002, *Open Democracy*, [https://www.opendemocracy.net/people-debate\\_36/article\\_330.jsp](https://www.opendemocracy.net/people-debate_36/article_330.jsp) (accessed online 18 March 2018).

<sup>30</sup> Deborah S. Hutton and Howard D. Mehlinger, "International Textbooks Revision. Examples from the United States," in *Perceptions of History: International Textbooks Research on Britain, Germany and the United States*, eds. Volker R. Berghahn and Hanna Schissler (Oxford: Berg, 1987), 141.

<sup>31</sup> Baruch Kimmerling, "Academic History Caught in the Cross-Fire: The Case of Israeli-Jewish Historiography", *History and Memory* 7, no. 1, (Spring-Summer 1995): 57.

<sup>32</sup> Elie Podeh, *The Arab-Israeli Conflict in Israeli History Textbooks, 1948–2000* (Westport: Bergin & Garvey, 2002): IX, 5.

<sup>33</sup> Lynn Davies, *Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos* (London: Routledge, 2004).

<sup>34</sup> Robert M. Entman, "Cascading Activation: Contesting the White House's Frame after 9/11", *Political Communication* 20, no. 4, (June 2003): 421.

<sup>35</sup> Robert M. Entman, "Framing: Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm", *Journal of Communication* 43, no. 4, (December 1993): 52.

<sup>36</sup> Entman, "Framing".

resonance.<sup>37</sup> We argue that cultural resonance of media frames is based on what is recognisable in the messages. Importantly, the creation of capable frames is not exclusive to the media.

Education is another important discourse that is extensively engaged in ‘selective highlighting’ and framing of the reality. As Schissler argues, ‘in addition to transmitting knowledge’, textbooks also ‘seek to anchor the political and social norms of a society.’ Textbooks aim at conveying ‘a global understanding of history and of the rules of society as well as norms of living with other people’.<sup>38</sup> Thus, school textbooks are powerful agents in the framing of foreign policy events and international actors, even more so than the news media. While the news media typically frames international relations on the level of micro history (see Braudel’s model above), school textbooks tend to frame such events and actors within the long-term time-spans building a solid background for the frames appearing in short-term time periods.

This article aims to assess the frames of NPE in high school textbooks using two case-studies: Israel and New Zealand (NZ). The history of these two countries is very different, yet they share a common element as their histories are deeply interwoven with European histories and cultures. Europe – as a source of heritage and a geographical reference – is an important component of the national narratives and the national identities of these two nations. Stereotypically, a turbulent history of Europe in the twentieth-century with the tragic destruction of the Jewish people in the ‘Old Continent’ would suggest that norms and values sent by NPE would trigger more negative than positive reactions among norm-receivers in Israel. In contrast, NZ’s experience of being populated by volunteer migrants from Europe – and mainly the United Kingdom (UK) – and its unofficial title of ‘the Little Britain of the Pacific’ would suggest a greater cultural and historical resonance between NZ and Europe, thus engendering positive reactions to Europe as a norm-sender. We now turn to explore these two hypotheses with a special focus on the framing of Europe in the context of ‘norms and values’.

## **Images and Perceptions of Europe/EU in Israeli and in NZ High School Textbooks**

### **Methods**

The two studies were designed and undertaken in parallel. While the Israeli study concentrated only on civic studies education, the NZ research surveyed textbooks in four disciplines: social studies, history, geography and economics (NZ does not have civic studies as an explicit subject). In this analysis we focus on history textbooks in NZ. At first sight one might think that civic education and history education diverge and even employ opposite methods. However, these subjects are interconnected at the level of their general predicate. In the Israeli study, for example, ‘civic history’ actually means ‘political history,’ while the predicate ‘civic’ is designed to distinguish it from the traditional ‘sacred history’.<sup>39</sup> International textbook analysis deals mainly with history, geography and civic studies textbooks, ‘as these subjects in particular are

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<sup>37</sup> Entman, “Cascading Activation”.

<sup>38</sup> Hannah Schissler quoted in Falk Pingel, *UNESCO Guidebook on Textbook Research and Textbook Revision* (Paris and Braunschweig: UNESCO, 2010), 7.

<sup>39</sup> Albena Harnova, “History Education and Civic Education: The Bulgarian Case”, *Journal of Social Science Education* 10, no. 1: 39.

relevant for education towards democracy, human rights and international, as well as intercultural, awareness'.<sup>40</sup> History subject in NZ is in the core of the social sciences curriculum which aims at educating students on 'how societies work and how people can participate as critical, active, informed, and responsible citizens. Contexts are drawn from the past, present, and future and from places within and beyond [NZ]'.<sup>41</sup>

The two studies employed the content analysis method using both quantitative and qualitative techniques to establish frames of Europe and the EU and their visibility in the examined school textbooks. Both traced the representation of nine normative themes that constitute the core of the normative self-identification of Europe: peace, democracy, human rights, liberty, rule of law, social solidarity, good governance, anti-discrimination, and sustainable development.<sup>42</sup> The analysis in both cases is based on all references to the names of the 28 EU member states or any other European country/entity, the terms 'EU' and/or 'Europe', as well as relevant concepts, maps, pictures, graphs and tables in the textbooks, either in a value-laden context or in which it was used in a descriptive, factual, graphic or in an artistic manner. We then used a simple matrix to catalogue whether the context was positive, negative, neutral or a simple presentation of general information.

In analysing Europe's/the EU's normative images and perceptions in Israeli civic studies education we examined both the Hebrew textbook and its manual for teachers.<sup>43</sup> We also checked to see whether it concerned Manners' nine normative themes that constitute the core of the NPE approach,<sup>44</sup> World War II (WWII), the Holocaust, Nazism, fascism, communism and anti-Semitism. The NZ study surveyed 37 textbooks in four disciplines in the last four years of high school: social studies (textbooks in year 10), history, geography and economics (textbooks in years 11, 12 and 13). A sample of fourteen current history textbooks – all recommended by the NZ Ministry of Education – was content analysed.<sup>45</sup> Europe-related content was coded according to Manners' nine normative criteria (and their inverse) for the NZ case. The set of the key terms in NZ content analysis was not limited to the terms relevant only to the European integration process. The list of search terms included Europe (as well as other continents for comparison), individual EU member states, non-EU members, European regions and autonomous areas, European states that no longer exist, and all 15 former Soviet Republics. The United States (US) was also observed for comparative purposes.

The quantitative method dealt with all the countable data, such as the frequency that a concept appeared, mention of a member state, of the EU, one of its institutions, or other key search words (in the NZ case), the number of pages that contain specific content and diagrams, tables, figures and illustrations provided for specific content. Where needed our qualitative findings were supported and supplemented by quantitative methods.

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<sup>40</sup> Pingel, *UNESCO*, 8.

<sup>41</sup> Ministry of Education – NZ, <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/The-New-Zealand-Curriculum/Social-sciences> (accessed 17 March 2018).

<sup>42</sup> Manners, "Normative Power".

<sup>43</sup> Hannah Aden, Varda Ashkenazi and Belha Alpersen, *Manual for Teaching Civic Studies: A Jewish and Democratic State* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education, 2004).

<sup>44</sup> Manners, "Normative Power".

<sup>45</sup> History is not a core high-school subject in the NZ curriculum. Moreover, teachers are given a substantial autonomy in selecting historical cases and resources.

## Israeli Civic Studies Education

In any given society, and especially in societies that are faced with societal conflicts, civic studies education contains particular sensitivities and controversies that can influence the societal power structure. In these societies, therefore, civic studies education is usually carefully censored.<sup>46</sup> In a society facing both internal and external conflicts, the civic studies curricula in Israel are no exception. It is carefully censored by the Israeli government which sees civic education as ‘a threat to education for national, Zionist and Jewish identity’.<sup>47</sup> Currently, ‘all the political streams in Israel have interests in determining the character of civic education in Israel’ and questions about its content have escalated into a ‘continuing struggle between two political streams that see the future image of the state in a contradictory way’.<sup>48</sup> For these reasons, in its first phase, the Israeli study concentrated only on Israeli civic education curricula. Bahmueller explains that in any democracy civic education consists of:

...the intensive study and understanding of the nation’s system of self-government, its values, commitments, and assumptions, and its relevant history; in short, it should involve the theory and practice of a free and open democratic society.<sup>49</sup>

And indeed in Israel the ultimate goal of civic education curricula is to provide a common core curriculum for all state high schools – Arab, Jewish and religious – so as to:

...inculcate a common Israeli civic identity, together with the development of distinct national identities, and to impart to students the values of pluralism and tolerance, educate students to accept the diversity that exists within Israeli society, and to respect those who are different from oneself.<sup>50</sup>

To this end the core curriculum provides analysis that reveals ‘on the one hand, how the Jewish and democratic state components are connected, and on the other, the fact that tensions may arise between them’.<sup>51</sup>

In 2001 a new national curriculum that addresses tension between universalism and particularism, between the values of democracy on the one hand, and the nationalistic ethos that defines Israel as a Jewish state on the other, was adopted and a new Hebrew/Arabic textbook was written.<sup>52</sup> Between 2001-2016 the book was the main

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<sup>46</sup> David Bridges, “Dealing with Controversy in the Curriculum: A Philosophical Perspective”, in *Controversial Issues in the Curriculum*, ed. Jerry Wellington (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 19-38.

<sup>47</sup> Mikhal Barak, “Civic Education in Israel”, *Adalah’s Newsletter* 18, (September 2005): 1.

<sup>48</sup> Ami Pedahzur and Arie Perliger, “The Structural Paradox of Civic Education in Israel”, *Megamot* 43, no. 1 (2004): 73-4.

<sup>49</sup> Charles F. Bahmueller, “The Core Ideas of ‘CIVITAS: A Framework for Civic Education’”, *ERIC Digest*, ED346016, (March 1992): 1, <http://www.ericdigests.org/1992-3/core.htm> (accessed 11 February 2018).

<sup>50</sup> Orit Ichilov, Gavriel Salomon and Dan Inbar, “Citizenship Education in Israel – A Jewish-Democratic State”, *Israel Affairs* 11, no. 2, (January 2005): 314.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Hannah Aden, Varda Ashkenazi and Belha Alperson, *To be Citizens in Israel: A Jewish and Democratic State* (Jerusalem: Ministry of Education, 2001).

textbook for civic education in all Israeli secondary schools and was the basis for matriculation examinations in all high schools' streams.<sup>53</sup>

At the heart of civic studies education in Israel lies the 'Jewish-democratic state' debate. It is the treatment of this topic which probably provides the most surprising perceptions of Europe in the Israeli civic studies curricula. To begin with, the textbook uses a very narrow geographical definition of the European continent and, with some minor exceptions, 'Europe' is mainly used to describe Western European countries. In its first part, which is dedicated to the question "what is a Jewish state?", the textbook presents (Western) Europe as 'the cradle of democracy' and uses, France and the UK as ideal case-studies for the different types of democracies. By using these examples, the textbook presents the European model of democracy as a progressive democracy that successfully copes with national and ethnic tensions. At the same time, the textbook ignores the European history of dictatorships. The textbook then goes on to describe Rousseau's 'Social Contract'<sup>54</sup> and compares his understanding of democracy, the philosophical-theoretical basis of the European model of democracy, and, the 'Social Contract' in a Jewish-Israeli context. The textbook aims at explaining to students that Israeli democracy is equal to the European model of democracy.

In the second part, which examines the meaning of democracy, the textbook analyses the principles of democracy while constantly comparing them to Jewish sources. The textbook creates an analogy between European democracies and the Israeli democracy while highlighting the uniqueness of the Jewish sources. The book emphasises that both (Western) European countries and Israel are democratic, thus Israel clearly equals Europe. With this perception of Europe as 'the cradle of democracy' and with the analogy between Israel and the European democracies, the European democratic norms are diffused by contagion – or in Manners' words: 'diffusion of norms results from the unintentional diffusion of ideas from the EU to' Israel. The Union and its member states are clearly leading 'by virtuous example' in exporting the European model of democracy to Israel.<sup>55</sup>

Moreover, not only the textbooks form one 'Self' – Israel and Europe – but it also posits the 'Other:' Russia. The European/Israeli democracies are constructed in relation to the 'ultimate Other,' which is Russia. After all, as Hastings and Manning argue, 'it takes two to differ'.<sup>56</sup> Russia is almost always presented in the textbook in a negative context because it is portrayed as a non-democratic country. Thus, Russia, unlike Israel, is not a European democracy/country.

In its third part, while discussing Israeli governance and politics, the textbook deepens the diffusion of European democratic norms by contagion, and strengthens the comparison between (Western) Europe and Israel, mainly in the legal and constitutional dimensions, as well as introducing the students to the democratic principles that can be found in Jewish sources. The textbook further argues that

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<sup>53</sup> In May 2016 a new textbook was adopted and since May 2017, the new textbook serves as the basis for matriculation examinations in all high school streams. As the future of this textbook is still uncertain, we have decided not to examine it in our study.

<sup>54</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract* (Indianapolis: Hackett Pub Company, 1988).

<sup>55</sup> Manners, "Normative Power," 244.

<sup>56</sup> Adi Hastings and Paul Manning, "Introduction: Acts of Alterity", *Language & Communication* 24, no. 4, (2004): 293.

Eastern European countries are non-democratic because of their links to Russia and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

Given the centrality of the Holocaust in Israeli history education, and thus the negative representations of Europe in Israeli history textbooks, and given that for many years Israelis perceived Europe/the EU to be ‘an anti-Semitic power’,<sup>57</sup> an initial assumption of this study was that the image of Europe/the EU in Israeli civic studies curricula would be significantly dominated by the Holocaust and anti-Semitism. Moreover, it was assumed that the textbook would frame Europe/the EU as an anti-Jewish entity. Yet these assumptions proved to be wrong. The analysis found that in its 604 pages, the term anti-Semitism was mentioned only once in a sub-section discussing the relationship between Israel and the Jewish diaspora.<sup>58</sup> Also the terms Holocaust, Nazism and WWII receive minor attention and are mentioned only 13, 10, and 8 times respectively. Altogether, Europe is mentioned 371 times, out of these mentions, 280 references are of EU member states.<sup>59</sup> Western European countries are mentioned 283 times, with 254 references pertaining to EU member states (90 per cent of the total number of references to Western European countries) and only 29 mentions of non-EU Western European countries. Eastern Europe is mentioned 56 times, with 27 of these references referring to EU member states (32 per cent) and 29 mentions of non-EU Eastern European countries.

### **New Zealand History Textbooks**

The observed NZ textbooks focus on a number of topics ranging from modern history of individual European states, European history during the twentieth-century in a global context to NZ history after WWII (with special attention to the UK’s accession to the European Economic Community (EEC)). The period considered in these textbooks could be described as a formative period for the above listed values in the history of Europe. In his work, Manners credited European history as being a source of a specific set of values. According to Manners,<sup>60</sup> the violent history of WWII along with the critical rethinking of Europe’s destiny after the war, pushed the Europeans to prioritise the values of peace and liberty. To be precise, it was the search for peace that triggered the European integration processes. The history of Europe’s division during the Cold War set the values of democracy, rule of law and human rights as markers of identity between the West European democratic states and the East European communist countries. The adoption of these values was crucial for EU accession of the post-communist states. The developments of the European integration project in the 1980s and the 1990s led the Community to focus on norms of social solidarity (a ‘counter-measure to the drive for liberalisation of the Single European Act and economic and monetary union’);<sup>61</sup> anti-discrimination (a legal reaction to the prosecution of minorities in the early 1990s); sustainable development (following the 1992 Rio Earth Summit) and good governance (emerging after the 1999 resignation of the European Commission).

Despite these crucial developments, historical reflections on the actual process and outcomes of the European integration post WWII were limited in the observed NZ

<sup>57</sup> Pardo, *Normative Power Europe Meets Israel*.

<sup>58</sup> Aden, Ashkenazi and Alperson, *To be Citizens in Israel*, 48.

<sup>59</sup> In comparison Israel is mentioned 1,734 times, the US 212 times, the Middle East 147 times, Asia 35 times and Africa 19 times.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 242-3.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid*, 243.

textbooks. European integration was not considered on its own and was not used as a case-study for telling Europe's history over the past 50 years. The European integration process was only referenced in the textbooks that dealt with NZ history (two books out of 14 in our sample)<sup>62</sup> and, according to Greenland, only in the chapters that considered the implications of the 1972 UK's accession to the EEC for NZ.<sup>63</sup> Both texts and visual means accompanying those texts<sup>64</sup> portrayed the EEC from a predominantly negative perspective. NZ was presented on a receiving end of offence – first from the UK who 'abandoned' NZ and joined the EEC without the Commonwealth, and later from the member states of the EEC who have adopted protectionist policies in the agricultural sphere.<sup>65</sup> In some cases the historical implications for NZ from the protectionist policies were compared to a slaughter.<sup>66</sup> These textual and visual portrayals framed Europe violating global free trade norms. In contrast, NZ was cast in a role of a supporter of the global liberal market values. The textbooks do not elaborate an evolving reality: the EU has been among NZ's largest trading partners for more than a decade.

The comprehensive monitoring revealed that the authors of the history textbooks devoted most of their attention to the Union's three big members – the UK, Germany and France (68% of the mentions of the EU members).<sup>67</sup> In contrast, other EU members were under-represented. Eastern and Central European states (with the exception of Russia and the USSR) were almost invisible. Poland, the most covered Central European state, received altogether only 54 mentions.<sup>68</sup> In the textbooks that focus on NZ history, the UK is the most visible (mentioned 170 times).<sup>69</sup>

This high visibility of certain European states is crucial, as normative frames were typically observed when the textbooks covered historical events in these countries. As already discussed, our initial premise was to code the content of the textbooks for the nine norms constituting the core of NPE.<sup>70</sup> The pilot data analysis of history textbooks demonstrated the need to code European actors' actions in terms of the antitheses of these norms – war, authoritarianism, totalitarianism, anarchy, lack of human rights, divided society, no/bad governance, discrimination and exploitation.<sup>71</sup> Between the two coding schemes, the antitheses values led in the coverage of Europe and its powers in history textbooks.

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<sup>62</sup> Mark Andrew Laffey, *Sovereignty and Security: New Zealand's International Relations since 1945* (Auckland: Pearson Education NZ, 1990); George Bowen, *Defending New Zealand: New Zealand's Search for Security 1945-1985* (Auckland: Addison Wesley Longman, 1997).

<sup>63</sup> Berengere Greenland, "The EU and the European Dimension in History Textbooks in New Zealand's High Schools", in *EU in Schools: Reflections on the EU and Europe as a Context for New Zealand Curriculum*, eds. Genievie Taylor and Peter Perry, (Christchurch: NCRE, 2014), 64-87.

<sup>64</sup> For example, contemporary media cartoons reprinted in the textbooks.

<sup>65</sup> For example, a cartoon portrayed NZ prime minister receiving repeated boxing blows from the UK, Germany and France, as well as from the EEC itself. Laffey, *Sovereignty and Security*, 81, as cited in Greenland, "The EU and the European Dimension in History Textbooks in New Zealand's High Schools".

<sup>66</sup> For example, a cartoon portraying a person representing NZ lamb about to be guillotined, with 'heads' of butter and cheese already chopped off.

<sup>67</sup> Greenland, "The EU and the European Dimension in History Textbooks in New Zealand's High Schools".

<sup>68</sup> In comparison, only in Year 12 textbooks, the UK was mentioned 415 times, France 537 and Germany 568 times.

<sup>69</sup> France, the distant second, was mentioned only 20 times; Greenland, "The EU and the European Dimension in History Textbooks in New Zealand's High Schools".

<sup>70</sup> Manners, "Normative Power".

<sup>71</sup> Natalia Chaban and Berengere Greenland "To the Question of Cultural Filters and Cognitive Priors: Shaping Reception of NPE among External Norm-Receivers", *NCRE Symposium on NPE? EU International Identity and External Outreach*, 28 February 2014.

In general, Europe was framed as a continent of wars, not a continent of peace. For every mention of Europe or a European state in peace there were five mentions of Europe at war on average. One may argue that history textbooks are inevitably more negative in their focus on the dark side of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe. Yet, history of Europe in the 20<sup>th</sup> century is more than history of wars. Perhaps the most telling is the fact that the textbooks have ignored the story of peace in Europe and of individual European states constructing a united Europe after WWII.

Democracy was another norm that received negative ‘mirror’ reflection. Chaban and Greenland<sup>72</sup> found that Europe was often framed as an initiator of certain democratic processes, yet was not able to fully deliver them. The theme of European women, excluded from the democratic process historically, is significant as NZ granted the vote to women before any European state. In this context, a chapter on the suffragette movement in Britain – focusing on the times when NZ women were already able to vote – is indicative. No present-day reflections on the gender equality and democratic practices in Europe is discussed in the textbooks.

European states – such as the UK and France – were also portrayed as colonial powers. France in particular was presented as an exploitative country which “resisted the process of decolonisation”.<sup>73</sup> In contrast, Britain is portrayed as a fairly neutral colonial power<sup>74</sup> (arguably, NZ perceptions of the European actors in this case are filtered through the UK perspective given the historical connections). Norms of anti-discrimination do not appear in the textbooks but discrimination does.<sup>75</sup>

In conclusion, this analysis discovered that when it comes to the history textbooks recommended by the NZ Ministry of Education, norms and values identified by Manners<sup>76</sup> as the ones that define the NPE are indeed presented as a part of the European culture and heritage. Yet, Europeans are framed as not always being able to uphold and defend these values. Conflict and wars, authoritarianism and discrimination, colonial exploitation and disregard for free market values are highly visible in Europe’s representations in the observed textbooks. Often these negative normative portrayals remain unbalanced and uncontested while more positive examples from post-WWII history of Europe/EU are overlooked by the authors of the textbooks.<sup>77</sup> In this light, the systematic overlooking of the historical development of the peace building in Europe and the European integration project after WWII – leading to the present-day reflections – is of concern. It is important to remember that these textbooks are helpful for understanding the mechanisms of the formation of a nation’s collective memory by selecting different aspects of the past to expose students to.<sup>78</sup>

Importantly, particular self-visions of NZ surface through the analysis of these images of Europe/the EU and its member states. Recognising a historic link to Europe (and to the UK in particular) and to norms that originated from Europe, NZ claims its difference from Europe. It is framed as being ‘more normative’ than Europe in some

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Bowen, *Defending New Zealand*, 35.

<sup>74</sup> Greenland, “The EU and the European Dimension in History Textbooks in New Zealand’s High Schools”.

<sup>75</sup> Specifically, Germany and anti-Semitism during WWII.

<sup>76</sup> Manners, “Normative Power”.

<sup>77</sup> Still, teachers would have sufficient power and flexibility to put textbook materials into modern-day contexts.

<sup>78</sup> Audrey Bryan and Frances Vavrus, “The Promise and Peril of Education: The Teaching of In/Tolerance in an Era of Globalisation”, *Societies and Education* 3, no. 2, (August 2005).

cases, on a higher moral plane – an external partner from whom Europe could perhaps learn. As such, the portrayals of Europe and the EU in NZ textbooks might be more revealing of NZ identity than of Europe. Facing the reality of textbooks having a ‘legally assured captive audience’,<sup>79</sup> these representations may become strong contenders for shaping location-specific cultural frames of Europe and the EU in NZ in normative terms.

## Discussion and Conclusions

We conclude with three arguments which are central in understanding the mechanisms behind NPA’s appeal and reception among the EU’s external counterparts.

Firstly, a systematic insight into EU external normative images has become an urgent diplomatic necessity for the Union post Maidan, Operation Protective Edge, EUNAVFOR Med (Operation Sophia), Brexit and the rise of the populist far-right parties in Europe. Assumptions are misleading, and potentially dangerous. Given the centrality of the Holocaust in Jewish-Israeli memory and the fundamental perception among Israelis that Europe/the EU is ‘an anti-Semitic power’,<sup>80</sup> it could be assumed that the image of Europe/the EU in Israeli civic studies curricula would be dominated by the narratives where breaking of norms and values is typical and would lead to framing Europe/the EU as an anti-Jewish entity. NZ is a former colony of Britain with strong historical, cultural, economic and political connections to the UK. Given that present-day NZ retains many commonalities with Britain ‘sharing its food, languages national sports, political and legal systems as well as head of states’;<sup>81</sup> and features the EU as its third largest trading partner, we expected that NZ history curricula would frame Europe, and the EU in it, as its natural important partner sharing similar values and norms. These expectations proved to be somewhat inaccurate, and the heart of it is the treatment of the topic in the relevant textbooks through the local ‘cultural filters’ that provide the unexpected perceptions of Europe/EU in both case studies.

In the case of civic studies education in Israel it is the Jewish-democratic state debate and Israel’s self-visions in the region that treats the topic of Europe/EU from a particular perspective. With some minor exceptions, ‘Europe’ is mainly used to describe Western European countries. In its first part, the textbooks present Europe, or indeed Western Europe, as ‘the cradle of democracy’ and uses European countries like Belgium, France and the UK as ideal case-studies for the different types of democracies. By using these examples, the textbooks present the European model of democracy as a progressive democracy that successfully addresses national and ethnic tensions. Unexpectedly, at the same time, the textbooks almost completely ignore the European history of dictatorships. The textbooks aim at teaching students that Israeli democracy is based on the European model of democracy. The textbooks emphasises that both (Western) European countries and Israel are democracies defending themselves and that the ‘defending democracy model’ is in their DNA, thus Israel clearly equals Europe.

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<sup>79</sup> Carmen Luke, Suzanne de Castell and Allan Luke, “Beyond Criticism: The Authority of the School Text”, *Curriculum Inquiry* 13, no. 2, (Summer 1983): 121.

<sup>80</sup> Pardo, *Normative Power Europe Meets Israel*.

<sup>81</sup> Serena Kelly, “New Zealand Elite Perceptions on the EU: A Longitudinal Analysis”, *Baltic Journal of European Studies* 3, no. 3, (2013): 155.

Similar to Israel, in the NZ history textbooks, Europe is also mainly associated with Western European countries (with the main focus on the UK, France and Germany). However, the texts in history textbooks choose to frame Europe in terms of war and authoritarianism (including colonialism) and to depict the EEC/EU mainly as an offender of the free market norms. Importantly, in the 14 textbooks analysed, there was not a single chapter with a sole focus on the European integration process following WWII. The EU is presented only in those textbooks that deal with NZ history and only in the context of the UK's accession to the EEC with the subsequent economic pain inflicted on NZ. Within these frameworks, NZ is seen as the champion of the norms and values that originated in Europe: something which lives by free market norms and which has performed historically better than Europe in the same normative areas (for example, by allowing women to vote before any European state did). Thus, the implicit message is that while NZ has a strong European theme in its heritage, and Europe has been a normative 'role model', NZ is something which actually may be surpassing Europe on the normative turf. This framing should be positioned in a broader context of NZ's growing orientation towards the dynamic Asia-Pacific area vis-à-vis traditional ties with the UK/Europe.

In both cases we observed how self-visions of a location in question, lead to a particular treatment of the topic. These observations bring us to our second conclusion – the need to analyse the role of local *self-visions* as a powerful 'cultural filter' in understanding Europe's/EU's normative reception in the world. This article started by arguing the importance of EU external images as one powerful 'cultural filter' in explaining external reactions to NPE. The article ends with a call to extend the concept of 'cultural filters' – by incorporating the notion of *self-visions* into it. Such focus should include systematic contemporary and historical insights. Finally, a complicated interaction between the two types of images – self-images vis-à-vis external ones – is yet another critical 'cultural filter' to enter the research agenda on the diffusion of NPA.

Our third conclusion highlights the need to assess local 'cultural filters' – in this case perceptions and images – in a range of receiving channels. Existing perceptions research elaborates EU external images in news media (press, television and internet); among elites and the general public. Yet, textbooks remain overlooked in the mainstream EU perceptions studies. This analysis argues that textbooks – on different levels – are influential sources in Europe/EU image formation outside its borders. Future research should systematically account for textbooks and also broader educational discourses as these are the primary arenas where local cultural and ideological viewpoints are formed. Finally, we call for comparative analysis across different countries as was exercised in this article; image sources (news media and textbooks); subjects (something attempted in the larger research projects informing this article's case-studies); and levels (primary vs. secondary vs. tertiary).

In sum, the NPA's research programme must incorporate the notion of the local 'cultural filter' as one of its central concepts. We argue that it underpins and shapes all the other factors and helps to understand local cultural and ideological forces behind the daily conduct of international affairs. EU studies scholars, as well as international relations and foreign policy researchers in general, should not underestimate the 'cultural filter' of external images, and should not overlook another critical 'filter' – the complex interaction between external and self-images. A systematic and on-going analysis of the resonances and clashes between the two provides a promising analytical gateway to explain a range of external reactions to and contestations of the EU as a

norm-sender globally. Critically, these systematic, individually-tailored, empirically informed insights should become a tool in shaping the EU's diplomatic dialogues with its counterparts in the world.