The Representation of 'Others' in Israeli Schoolbooks: A Multimodal Analysis

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Abstract

The article uses social semiotic methods of inquiry and multimodal tools of analysis in order to analyse the multimodal texts of Israeli textbooks in the school subjects of History, Geography and Civics. The article's argument is that both non-Jewish 'minorities' and Jewish 'ethnicities' are represented, both verbally and visually, in a racist manner, as stereotypes and not as individuals. Palestinian citizens and those who live under a military regime in the Palestinian occupied territories are presented – if at all - as vile, primitive and dangerous. Jewish 'ethnicities', which include mainly Arab-Jews and Ethiopian Jews, are represented in an 'anthropological' way, mostly as under-developed 'sector'. Both groups are culturally and socially marginalized in textbooks as they are marginalized in Israeli society. The multimodal analysis allows a unified perception of this representation, which reveals ideological undertones and interests.

Introduction: the Zionist narrative

Every form of social communication and interaction needs a common ground, says critical discourse analyst Fairclough (2003:55). Common grounds are construed of 'shared assumptions', which are presented as given and irrefutable. The shared assumptions of Israeli schoolbooks are as follows:

1) *Assumptions about what exists:*
   a) A Jewish democracy in Israel
   b) Jewish historical rights to the Land of Israel/Palestine.
   c) Arab threat and hatred and global anti-Semitism.

2) *Propositional assumptions: what can or will be the case:*
   a) Palestinian citizens constitute a demographic problem, which can expand into a 'demographic threat' unless controlled.
   b) Palestinians in the occupied territories are a constant threat and must be controlled.

3) *Value assumptions: What is good and desirable? (Or what ought to be):*
   a) A Jewish state, Jewish majority, Israeli control.

These convictions stem from the Jewish collective memory summarized by Daniel Bar-Tal and Rafi Nets-Zehngut (2008), a memory which "finds anti-Semitism to be the norm, the natural response of the non-Jew […] [and] is based on a prevailing belief according to

which Jewish society is alone in a hostile world […] "

Regarding the 'Jewish democracy': In spite of Israel's success to advertise its regime as such, it is often defined by researchers as either an 'ethnocracy' (Yiftachel 2006) or as an 'ethnic democracy' (Smooha 1997). This is because ethnicity[1] and not citizenship is the main determinant for the allocation of rights, power and resources in Israel. Jews who are citizens of other countries and Jewish settlers who live beyond the official border of the state have full citizenship rights. Arab citizens inside the state's borders do not have such rights and Palestinians from the occupied West Bank are considered 'state-less'. In all schoolbooks Israel is defined as the state of the Jews wherever they dwell and not as the state of its citizens.

Regarding Jewish historical rights: An important task of Israeli schoolbooks has always been to reproduce a narrative that would connect the Jewish students to their 'origins' in the Land of Israel. Pierre Nora (1996:12) explains that this important notion of 'origins' comes from the 'cult of continuity', which is "that secularized version of myth" that gives a society, "in the process of nationalist secularization its idea and need for the sacred" (ibid.). As in other nation-states (Wertsch 2002), the main task of Israeli schoolbooks is to construct a continuous national narrative in order to construe and consolidate the national identity for all Jewish citizens or at least of those who constitute the dominant group. Israeli schoolbooks have always presented Israeli Jews, who have come from the remotest corners of the world, with nothing in common except their ancestors' religion, practiced differently by every ethnic group, as a natural nation from the dawn of history. The Zionist immigrants are represented as homecoming indigenes. These 'indigenized' Jews are perceived in Israeli discourse as modern Westerners who are the direct descendants of the biblical Hebrews – the children of Israel. All other identities, whether Jewish or Muslim or Christian, are either erased and excluded or considered inferior to this 'Israeli' identity.[2] Histories of other Jewish ethnicities are not taught in the same depth and manner as the East-European Jewish history, and even the latter history is highly limited in its coverage, mainly restricted to events that precipitated and perpetuate Zionism. This narrative is "molded as a continuous struggle of the Jewish people for its very existence, according to the familiar pattern of the Jews as few and good, struggling against the Goyim (non-Jews) who are numerous and bad […] This creates an artificial defining narrative, which construes the collective memory of the Jewish citizens of Israel" (Naveh et al. 2009: 308). This narrative "constitutes an entirely novel Jewish collective memory" (Zerubavel 2002). It includes both the denial of 2000 years of Jewish life in 'exile', which are literally bracketed in schoolbooks (Peled-Elhanan 2009b), as well as the denial of any meaningful life in Palestine during the same period of time (Piterberg 2001). This notion may be at the basis of the statement by Ruth Firer of the Harry Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace in her analysis of Israeli schoolbooks of History: "the sovereign

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[1] The study adopts Yiftachel's (2006: 216) definition of ethnicity as a "cultural identity, based on belief in common ancestry at a specific place."
[2] See Shenhav (2006), Chetrit (2005), Shohat (1998) and Yona, (2005).

state of Israel was *re-established* in 1948" (Firer 2004:22, my emphasis). This statement assumes that the current state of Israel is a direct successor of another, ancient 'State of Israel' or rather, kingdom.

In Israel, neither the Jewish students who constitute the 'majority', nor the Palestinian-Israeli students, who constitute the 'minority' are taught the Palestinian collective memory. All are taught the European-Zionist one (see Nasser and Nasser, 2008). This policy is typical of ethnocratic regimes that construe historical narratives about the dominant ethno-nation as the rightful owner of the territory, while "the Other's history, place and political aspirations are presented as a menacing package to be rejected thoroughly" (Yiftachel 2006:19). The Palestinian citizens of Israel do not have their relative share-or rather any share at all-in any report that concerns them in the 16 textbooks I studied (Peled-Elhanan in press)[3], all of which were published after the Oslo Accords in 1994 and the mutual recognition of State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

In order to inculcate the canonical Zionist narrative and the educational values that accompany it, disciplinary content is transformed or re-contextualized (Bernstein 1996) in schoolbooks. Such transformation, which is a "permissible tampering," (Hodge and Kress 1993:10) is not innocent; rather it is done through the mediation of various semiotic resources, including narratives, strategies of argumentation, mythic structures (Wertsch 1994) and visuals (Van Leeuwen 1992). As semiotician Van Leeuwen (2007:96) makes clear, "what exactly gets transformed depends on the interests, goals and values of the context into which the practice is recontextualized."

Podeh (2002) who studied Israeli schoolbooks from 1950 until 2000 asserts that in Israel, "since […] the state controls the educational apparatus, it can shape the nation's collective memory by determining what is to be included and what excluded from the curricula and from textbooks. Such a course of action opens the way for the manipulation of the past in order to mold the present and the future" (Podeh 2000:1).

The main goal of the Israeli and other official narratives is to distinguish one group from other groups, be they out-groups or 'enemies'. As Allport (1958:171) explained, one of the ingredients of national identity is hostility toward out-groups, which "helps strengthen our sense of belonging". Allport notes that the opposite tendencies seem to mark the tolerant person; but official national accounts, especially in new states, cannot be tolerant, for they require "the outright rejection" of all other accounts and "the generation of something completely different" (Wertsch 2002:88).

The Palestinian-Israeli conflict is what Bar-Tal (2007) termed an "intractable conflict." Bekerman and Zembylas (in press: 135-7), who studied both the Greek-Turkish conflict in Cyprus and the Israeli-Palestinian one in the context of mixed schools, explain that

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3 This paper is based on a study of 20 Israeli schoolbooks in the subjects of History, Geography and Civics. The forthcoming book, based on this study is entitled, *Palestine in Israeli Schoolbooks- Ideology and Propaganda in Education* (London: I.B. Tauris).

"the narrative of collective memories relating to intractable conflicts provides a black and white picture, which enables parsimonious, fast, unequivocal, and simple understandings of the history of the conflict." This narrative, which dominates school textbooks and pedagogical practices, justifies the outbreak of the conflict and the course of its development. It presents a positive image of the in-group and delegitimizes the opponent, while presenting one's own society as its victim.

Following arguments advance by the aforementioned theories, one may safely conclude that the Israeli-Zionist narrative reproduced in schoolbooks, which may be seen by some historians (i.e. Piterberg 2001) as fraudulent and misleading, is not meant to transmit historical truth. Its main purpose is to create a collective memory, a national identity and a 'usable past' for the sake of group coherence.

The importance of history instruction in the formation of national identity "snaps into focus", especially during times of transition and turmoil (Wertsch 2002:70). In the case of Israel, the same is true for instruction in Geography, since, according to the Zionist narrative, "the Land of Israel is the only site on which the nation's destiny could be fulfilled" (Piterberg 2001:31). Geographer Bar-Gal (2000:169) observes that Zionism recognized at the very outset the importance of teaching issues related to the territorial. The teaching of Geography in Israel has always "emphasized the national goals as the principal goals." Therefore, Geography curricula are intended, first and foremost, to teach how to "know and love our country" (Bar-Gal 2003), and hail the Zionist achievements in agriculture and settlement. Tyack (2003), who studied American schoolbooks, observes that national narratives use Geography to introduce ideas about 'natural' boundaries of nation states. And indeed, Israeli Geography textbooks present in all their maps the 'greater land of Israel', of which the present state of Israel is just a part, and justify it using biblical quotes regarding the 'Promised Land'. Geography schoolbooks conceal the geo-political reality of the present, which appears to Israeli curriculum developers an "accidental consequence of cease fire commands which paralyzed military momentum" (Bar-Gal 1993a:125).

The Representation of 'Others' – A Multimodal Analysis

"The shape of the signifier, its 'form', materially or abstractly considered, is chosen because of its aptness for expressing that which is to be signified" (Kress 2003:37 and 42). Schoolbooks are multimodal texts. They use an array of verbal and visual modes in order to transmit values and meanings. From a social semiotic point of view, which this papers adopts, these meanings are never neutral and their form is never arbitrary or random. No sign is a pre-given entity but is rather motivated by interests, perspectives, values and positions of the sign maker regarding the message and the recipients of the message (Kress 2003).

The analysis presented here follows the principles of social semiotic enquiry and uses methods of multimodal analysis. It considers the page or the double-spread as one

semiotic unit that has meaning beyond or apart from the meaning of any of its parts (Lemke 1998a:283).

Earlier and current studies of Israeli schoolbooks do not focus on the multimodal nature of schoolbooks and concentrate solely on content analysis (e.g., Podeh 2002, Firer 2004, Bar-Tal 2007, Solomon 2006, to name but a few), while considering images as illustrations to the verbal reports. Firer (2004: 58) remarks that photographs contribute to the "text-appeal" of the book. Content analysis often avoids critical discourse analysis and therefore touches very lightly on questions of rhetoric, genre, modality or style. Semiotic or multimodal analysis can enhance meanings beyond the single term, or the single image, meanings that are different from those reached by content analysis alone.

Schoolbooks are 'intertexts' for they both refer to other texts and transform texts of different genres. The result is multimodal, multigeneric texts that "operate both transgenerically (work to obliterate the traces of its prior textual origins) and intragenerically (work to affirm the stability of textual types)" (Kress 2000:140). The composition of the page or double-spread may suggest various reading paths and intertextual connections. Therefore schoolbook texts are what Kress calls "a constantly shifting flow" (Kress 2000:54), whose meanings are constantly made by readers through the changing intertextual connections they make. In multimodal texts such as schoolbooks, information can be carried in one mode more than in others. The motivation to use one mode or another is their aptness, or their being "best fit" for the occasion (Kress 2003:45). Every mode has the stamp of regularities of organization—in other words, every mode has its lexicon, grammar and syntax, just like language (Kress and Van Leeuwen 1996/2006). Though words and images may be parts of the same message, "the world narrated is different from the world displayed" (Kress 2003:2). As Kress explains, writing is time-based whereas image is space-based. Writing is governed by the logic of sequence or linearity: first and second are inescapably hierarchic. Image is governed by the logic of space and simultaneity. Order in language and placement in images or multimodal texts have meaning. Visual language depicts elements in spatially organized arrangements: placing something in the center means that all other things are marginal. Being above means being superior, given our position in space (head in the sky and feet on the ground). Hence the meaning relations on the page are: bottom equals grounded or earthly, namely empirical or real, and top means not of this earth, ideal, abstract, theoretical or divine (Kress 2003:69).

In English, the information on the left of the page would be what the writer would like us to see as 'Given', known, accepted or as the starting point of the message. The information on the right would be what the writer wants us to treat as 'New'. In Hebrew, since the directionality of writing is from right to left, the order is reversed so that the right side of the page or the image is the starting point of the message or the 'Given' part and the left side is where we are heading or will get to.

Verbal language is mostly typological, committed to naming relations and classifications: "the cell has….this man is…" (Kress 2003:43). Image is committed to location – this

is where it goes – and to shape – this is what it looks like, and is mostly topological, allowing "The meaning of an element to change by infinitesimal degrees, instead of simply switching from one category to another: shades of a color, relative proximity in space, lengths of a line, curvature of a shape, rate of motion" (Lemke 1999). Multimodal texts show relations through layout, color and perspective (Kress 2003) and are therefore more given to interpretation.

Depicting 'Others' in Israeli Schoolbooks

The 'others' of Israeli mainstream society are labeled in schoolbooks as 'minorities' when they are not Jewish and 'ethnicities' when they are Jewish. This vast group includes more than half of the population. The 'minorities' are those who were in the country before the European Zionist Jews arrived: the Bedouins, the Druze, the Circassians and the Palestinians. The 'ethnicities' are the Jews who were brought in after the founding of the Israeli state from different countries in the world, especially Arab-Jews, ex-Soviets and Ethiopian Jews.

Visual Ways of Depicting 'Others'

Van Leeuwen (2000) counts five different strategies for visually representing people as 'others', all of which can be found in the schoolbooks studied here:
1. The strategy of exclusion, not representing people at all in contexts where in reality they are present.
2. Depicting people as the agents of actions, which are held in low esteem or regarded as subservient, deviant, criminal or evil.
3. Showing people as homogenous groups and thereby denying them individual characteristics and differences.
4. The strategy of negative cultural connotations.
5. The strategy of negative racial stereotyping.

The first strategy is the most widespread in Israeli schoolbooks—namely, not to show 'others' at all, to ignore these people, their culture and the contexts in which they live and work. In Geography schoolbooks, the tendency to erase Palestinian life from the Israeli scene is realized by omitting from maps the international border of Israel–the Green Line-and by depicting the occupied West Bank–renamed Judea and Samaria–as part of Israel though it has never been officially annexed to the State. On the map depicting "the distribution of Arab population in Israel 2002" (Fine, T., Segev, M., and Lavi, R. 2002; *Israel – Man and Space* 2003: 16), Palestinian regions are colorless and defined as "Areas for which there are no data", which is to say, as areas within the State of Israel where there is no 'population'. On the map depicting the distribution of employment (*ibid*: p.33) there is a colorful graph depicting the Israelis who work in the occupied Palestinian territories, but no data about Palestinian employees. These are labeled in the verbal text,

"foreigners" or "host workers". Their being employed in "unprofessional jobs" is the only information the schoolbook provides about the sort of work Palestinians actually do. Moreover, treating the Palestinians as foreigners points to an odd geographical perception: The Palestinian territories are presented as part of Israel and yet the inhabitants of these same territories are foreigners. However, the readers may not be aware of this peculiarity because the occupied territories are not marked as Palestinian areas. Another map (*ibid*: p.175) titled "Jerusalem as capital – government, culture, administration and national sites," shows no Palestinian cultural sites or administrative buildings in the eastern side of the city, which is inhabited almost exclusively by Palestinians.

Another example of exclusion is the following double-spread from the History schoolbook *The 20th Century* (Bar-Navi, E. 1998):
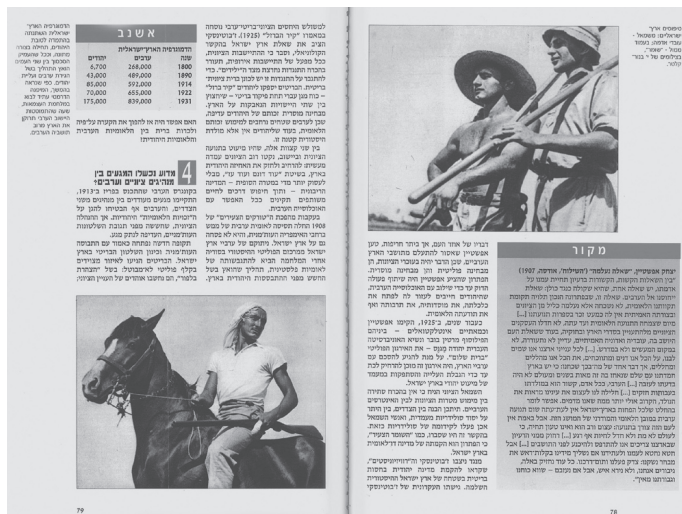
Image #1. Source: *The 20th Century* pp. 78-79: Land of Israel types: Top-right: Land labourers. Bottom-left: A Jewish guard from the Hashomer group. Courtesy of Illan Rot Archives, Hertzlia, and Mapa Publishers, Tel Aviv, Israel. [4]

In this double-spread there are two axes (Following the analysis of layout offered by Van Leeuwen and Kress, 1995). The photographic axis represents the two main parts of the ideal 'New Jew' perpetuated by socialist Zionism: a Jewish farmer and a Jewish guard in the Land of Israel. These 'New Jews' had been re-indigenized. They have cast off their Diaspora appearance to resemble the natives of the Land: sun-tanned, healthy and well-built, wearing an Arab kaffiyah, mastering an Arab horse and the art of cultivating the Land. The farmers look with anticipation towards the future by Hebrew directionality, while the guard looks indignantly towards the past (the bottom-left or the Real–Given part of the double-spread). Firer (2004: 74), who analyzed the meaning of each photograph

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[4] See Peled-Elhanan 2009a for an analysis of ideological layout in Israeli schoolbooks.

by itself, neglects to take into account the layout as a whole complex sign or as a whole semiotic unit, and writes about the "Land of Israel Types": "They have open, optimistic faces, are well built and sun-tanned, as is the young guard who rides a noble black horse and is dressed in modern clothes with an Arab Kaffiyah and Aqal on his head. He too is very athletic, sun-tanned, healthy and optimistic." Firer ignores in her description the colonialist connotations of these photographs, especially of the sun-tanned "optimistic European" with the gun, who rides an Arab horse, and wears a Lawrence of Arabia-like Kaffiyah in addition to his 'modern' European clothes. The photos are strongly connected to each other by a diagonal vector and form the most salient part of the cross-shaped composition of the double spread, constituting its main message: the conquest (which is termed 'redemption') of the ancient homeland by its returning sons.

The other axis of the double-spread, ignored by Firer completely, is composed of two 'windows' containing 'sources' regarding the Arab population or as it is labeled, 'The Arab question.' This axis is less salient for there are no human beings in the 'windows.' One cannot guess its meaning before reading the verbal text in each of them. The green window at the Given-Real part (bottom-right), titled "A missing question," is a quote from a speech with the same title given in 1907 by Yizhak Epstein, a Zionist leader who was born in Palestine, and who, as a linguist and an educator, studied and knew very well the different tribes that populated the region. Epstein warned the Zionist Congress that, should it go on ignoring the Arab population, whom he called "the true masters of the Land", Zionism would be short-lived. The other end of this axis is the New-Ideal yellow window – a sheet of data showing the increase in Jewish and Arab population between 1800 and 1931. The caption, at the extreme Ideal and New spot (top-left), is a 'proleptic' account which reminds one of events that would happen more than 40 years after the events specified in this double spread. It states that by 1948 the Land would be "emptied of most of its Arabs." The relationship between the two 'windows' can be interpreted as question and answer. The answer to the "missing question" is that in 40 years this Real-Given 'question' would be 'solved,' for the Land would be almost 'Arab-free.' The inescapable intertextualization of this double spread with the present occupation of Palestinian lands, house demolishing and the eviction of Palestinian and Bedouin residents, and the constant Israeli efforts to Jewify the whole of Israel/Palestine, carries the message of this layout far beyond its scope.

Whenever "The Palestinian Problem" is mentioned in Israeli History textbooks it has no human face. Its existence materializes visually in empty flooded streets (*Modern Times II* Bar-Navi, E., and Nave, E. 1999) and in stereotypical photographs of 'refugees' and 'terrorists' (Peled-Elhanan 2009a) or in empty-looking refugee camps photographed from above (Rap, E., and Fine, T. 1996/1998). Van-Leeuwen (1992:49) writes about such aerial photographs: "It is the angle of the omnipotent observer, placed high above the madding crowd or to use an even stronger image: the angle of the pilot who flies too high to be able

to see the people on whom he is dropping his bombs.…"

Racist Representation of 'Others'

Van Leeuwen argues (2008:137) that the consideration of images "should have the pride of place in any inquiry into racist discourse. We need to show that images do more than just show what is, we need to make their racist sense explicit." Van-Leeuwen asks two questions regarding the relationships between the image and the viewer (p. 142) that have to do with the options and the choices the 'language of images' gives us to depict people. The first is: how are people depicted as 'others'? And as a follow-up to this question, when depicted, what do these people do?

All books divide Israeli life-world into Jewish and non-Jewish. The non-Jews or the non-Jewish sector and 'population', are actually the Arabs. Non-Jews such as the Russian immigrants are included with the Jewish group under the label 'others'. The strategies of showing negative cultural and/or negative racial attributes are used especially in *The Geography of the Land of Israel* (Aharony. Y., and Sagi T. 2003). In this book, whenever 'Arabs' are discussed we see the image below - a sort of an icon of an icon, which receives its features not from the real 'model' itself, but from an imagined model (Groupe μ: 1992: 132) imported into Israeli schoolbook from European illustrations of books such as *The Arabian Nights* (see Image 2).

Image #2. Source: *Geography of the Land of Israel*, p.303)

Van Leeuwen emphasizes that cartoons are less factual than photographs and therefore express opinion, not fact (2008:167). He summarizes the motivation for cartoon-like presentations: "Cartoons are general without being abstract. Represent people as types rather than as tokens. All Turks have moustaches and all Arabs have camels. This reality is replacing the reality of naturalism and individualism" (Van Leeuwen 2000:349).

In the Geography textbook *People In Space* a chapter describing "traditional life in the non-Jewish population" presents a photograph of the 'primitive farmer' or the "Oxfam image" (Hicks 1980) of the third-world farmer who follows a primitive plough pulled by oxen or donkeys. The primitive plough, as Van Leeuwen notes (2000), is included in the

taxonomy of racist representations and connotes backwardness, under-development and a non-Westernized society. It is used in an Israeli Geography schoolbook as an illustration of the verbal statements about Palestinian 'traditional' and un-modern way of life. Since no other Palestinian Arabs are ever shown in these schoolbooks, the icons of the Ali-Baba nomad and the primitive farmer, connoting backwardness, represent the whole Arab population.

A particular aspect of the representation of Palestinians is that they are usually engaged in activities of which we cannot see the goal. For example in *Modern Times II* (Bar-Navi, E., and Naveh, E. 1999) there are only two photographs of Palestinians, one is of face-covered Palestinian children throwing stones "at our forces" (p. 321), but the forces in tanks – revealed in the Palestinian reproduction of this photograph - are not shown probably because showing them would turn the picture into 'little Davids against Goliath' and would obviously miss the point of depicting these children as terrorists.

Van Leeuwen explains that biological categorization of people implies that these characteristics are "in the blood" (2008: 146). But cultural characterization can also be presented as "in the blood." For instance, "The Arab society is traditional and objects to changes by its nature, reluctant to adopt novelties […]. The Arabs refuse to live in high buildings and insist on living in one-story land-ridden houses." (The Geography of the Land of Israel p. 303) These statements portray the 'Arabs' – all millions of them – as possessing by nature or by heredity these 'negative' qualities.

People can be depicted either specifically or generically, as 'Arabs' or 'The Arab', or a particular Arab human being. Van Leeuwen (2008:143-4) emphasizes that "this is of evident importance to the study of racist discourse. Are we talking about a specific Jew or black or about Jews and blacks? Moving from one to another is always moving from specific judgment to prejudice and racism. Depiction can be concentrated on what makes a person unique or a certain social type." Van Leeuwen and Jaworski (2002) found, for example, that during the Gulf War Allied soldiers were depicted as individuals, while Iraqi soldiers were always depicted in groups. This implies that "they are all the same, and that you cannot tell them apart".

Jewish 'ethnicities' like 'Arab' minorities, are usually depicted in Israeli textbooks either as a collective or as specimen of their kind: Ethiopians, Mizrahi and Arab Jews. The stereotypical images are thus objectified, presented as "an object to be scrutinized" (Van-Leeuwen 2008:46). Such are most photographs of indigenes, 'refugees' and immigrants in Australian and Dutch schoolbooks, studied by Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996/2006) and Van-Leeuwen (1992), where "we look at the depicted people as 'voyeurs' rather than as inter-actants" (Van-Leeuwen 2008:141).

An important question Van Leeuwen asks regarding visual representations of 'others' is, How do the depicted people relate to the viewer? Kress and Van Leeuwen (1996/2006)

distinguish three dimensions in these relationships: the social distance between the viewer and the people represented in the picture, the social interaction between them, and the social relation between them. These three factors must always be in every picture, for one cannot decide to photograph without making choices in these three aspects. "The gradation and multiple combinations these dimensions allow, can realize many ways of depicting people as 'others'. The same image parameters can be used to show the exclusion, the keeping-at-a-distance of people in order to accuse and critique, or to ourselves exclude and keep at distance members of our own school class, our own community, our own country etc. as in the case of school textbooks" (Van Leeuwen 2008:141). And further: "Distance indicates closeness. We keep our distance from strangers, but we 'work closely' or talk face to face with someone we like. This representation is common in schoolbooks dealing with questions of immigration, developing countries and so on" (Van Leeuwen 2008:138). In the schoolbooks examined here, 'others', when depicted, are usually shown from a long distance, as strangers, their faces are usually blurred, which makes them alien to the viewers. When the viewers are school children they learn to keep their distance from this kind of people.

Vertical and horizontal angles determine whether we look at the person from above or from below, eye-to-eye or from the side. All these angles represent power relations. Minorities and ethnicities are usually below our gaze, so that we look down at them. Regarding the issue of gaze "the crucial factor is whether or not depicted people look at the viewer and how" (Van Leeuwen 2008:140). If they do not look at us they may be "offered to our gaze as a spectacle for our dispassionate scrutiny" (ibid.). But people who don't look at us may also convey indifference, people who go about their business, immersed in their own world. Such are the photographs of immigrants from wealthy countries or from ex-Soviet union (*People in Space*, Rap, E., and Fine, T. (1996/1998): 117). When figures in photographs do look at us it means that they engage us in a closer relationship and even 'demand' something of us. This something may be guessed from their expression and from the context.

The aforementioned photograph from *People in Space* is presented side by side with a photograph of Yemenite immigrants during the 1950s. The Yemenites are presented by a mass of children, poor and needy, who fill up the frame of the photo like a flood of wide open eyes and hungry mouths. They are placed at the "real-given" spot reserved for the past; they look straight into our eyes with a 'demanding' look. The Russian immigrants, placed at the "real-new" spot, are individual people, well dressed, coming off a modern plane, going their individual way and ignoring the viewer, demanding nothing of her. An interesting point here is that the caption under the Russian photograph says: "at the beginning of the 1990s more than half a million Jews came to Israel, especially from the former USSR and Ethiopia". However, the Ethiopians are not represented, either here or anywhere else in the book.

In the series of schoolbooks *Living together in Israel a textbook in Homeland Studies, Society and Civics* (Gal Offira et al. 2006) for grades 2-4, Palestinian, Jewish-Ethiopian, Bedouin and Druze children living in Israel are completely excluded from the main texts and visuals of 'Israeli life'. They are confined to strongly framed 'Windows' where they are depicted on pages of different colors, as decontextualized and marked specimen of Israeli 'minorities' or 'ethnicities'. On the cover of every booklet, a colorful drawing of people of all ages represents the Israeli population. None of these people is Arab or black, and only one of them is brown as 'Oriental' Israelis, who are the majority, are. In each of the booklets there is a "gang" of children who act as guides and take the reader on a trip in Israel, to meet the people and become acquainted with various locales, and who greet the Jewish newcomers. The Arab, Druze and Ethiopian children mentioned in the framed 'Windows' are not part of this "gang." In the booklet for Grade 4, the "gang" sets out to welcome Jewish newcomers to Israel: The heading of the chapter is: *The big Aliya in the last 15 years*. Two groups of Jewish immigrants or Olim (pilgrims) are depicted on a double-spread. On the right-the first page to be read, at the ideal spot-we see the Russian-Israeli theatre group Gesher, welcomed and applauded by two members of the "gang". The viewer looks at the actors a bit from below, as if looking up to them. The Russians are considered a very cultivated and cultured group – people of music, art, theatre and dance who contribute to the Israeli state. On the opposite page, at its bottom, saved for the "real", down-to earth New facts, we see an Ethiopian group upon which we gaze from above. The group crouches in some nameless desert, and no member of the "gang" is greeting them. The verbal chunk on the Russian Aliya is much larger than that on the Ethiopian side. This means, without even reading the section, that there is a lot more to say about Russians than about the Ethiopians.

Image #3. Source: *Living together in Israel a textbook in Homeland Studies, Society and Civics*, Grade 4 schoolbook. Courtesy of Gesher Theatre for the Russian photo and Aliza Aurebach for the Ethiopian one.

Conclusion

This paper seeks to answer Van-Leeuwen's questions (2000:92) regarding the visual representations of people:

- What kinds of people and things are depicted in the image and how do we recognize them as such?
- What ideas and values do we associate with these depicted people, places or things, and what is it that allows us to do so?

The conclusion is that the representation of 'others' in Israeli schoolbooks has clear racist features, especially when 'minorities' or non-European 'ethnicities' are shown. The Israeli schoolbooks in History and Geography examined here make use of visuals, scientific and others, for the inculcation of a political ideology and discriminatory social standards. Besides serving as a tool for instilling racist attitudes, this representation enhances ignorance, both of the real social and geopolitical situation and of geographical and historical discourse. Assuming that students do not run to libraries to verify the facts and fill in the gaps in their schoolbooks, and that most teachers were brought up on similar schoolbooks, one must conclude that the past three generations of Israelis are, for the most part, not aware of the geopolitical or social realities of their country. The negative representation of 'others' engenders in students hostility and contempt towards their immediate neighbors and environment. This stands in contradiction to the persistent Israeli claim, echoed by American and European politicians who endorse Israeli policy, that "Palestinians teach their children to hate us and we teach Love thy Neighbor".[5]

As this paper demonstrates, one of the aims of the Israeli-Zionist narrative, which can be seen in each phase of the Zionist project, is to create a homogenous 'Western' identity to all the Jewish 'ethnicities' in Israel. This identity requires the rejection and denial of all other identities, languages and religious practices, and acceptance of the Israeli Hebrew ones. Mainstream Israeli schoolbooks in History and Geography manifest what Reisigl and Wodak (2001:24) term, following Van-Dijk, 'elite racism'. This is the "racism reproduced in elite discourses, such as papers, schoolbooks, academic discourse, political speeches and parliamentary debates – the racism which is then implemented and enacted in other social fields."

Since the authors of schoolbooks are not always professional researchers in the discipline but rather, as Bernstein put it, "working in the field of recontextualization," they obey educational dictums more than disciplinary rules and conventions. Therefore, as Coffin (1997:220) argues in her study of secondary school history in Australia, the books position the readers to accept the values and judgments of the dominant discourse. This way, they teach the students the discourse of power, of politicians and generals, and put at

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[5] Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Zipi Livni, during the Israeli raid on Gaza, *Haaretz*, 30 December 2008.

stake "the disciplinary politics of truth" (Coffin, 1997:201).

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