Turkey’s Curriculum Under Erdoğan

THE EVOLUTION OF TURKISH IDENTITY

An Interim Report

Hay Eytan Cohen Yanarocak
November 2016
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Executive Summary

This current IMPACT-se report monitors Turkish school textbooks published since the Justice and Development Party’s (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi [AKP]) rise to power from 2002–15, with special emphasis on recent years (2013–15). The report examined 117 school textbooks covering subjects in the humanities, science, religious instruction and civics.1

Islam Rediscovered

The gradual integration of Islamic values into Turkey’s secular curriculum began after the 1980 military coup, orchestrated by General Kenan Evren. Following the War of Independence and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey emerged under its first president, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1923–38), as a strictly secular republic. With the post-1980 military coup’s “Turkish-Islam Synthesis,” the introduction of a greater degree of Islamic elements was aimed at enhancing Atatürk’s secular-democratic vision into what became known as “Atatürkism.” Following the 2002 rise to power of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, a more Islamic-enhanced version of the “Turkish-Islam Synthesis” was launched. Even as the focus on Atatürk’s philosophy continues to be a core guideline—his pictures and quotations are evident throughout the textbooks—it is no longer the only guiding principle.

In reality, this change mostly took place in 2012–15. Islam’s domination over other monotheistic religions and faiths is apparent, while atheism is portrayed as a rebellious way of thinking that may bring about the collapse of society. The Turks are seen as the protectors of Islam. This worldview should be understood as the source of AKP’s foreign policy strategy.

Following this line of thinking, in what can be described as a revolutionary act compared to the pre-2002 period, the curriculum explains the use of hijab (covering used by Muslim women, especially of the head).

With an emphasis on the compatibility of Islam and science, the textbooks challenge Western and Turkish secularists, and their conviction that the Ottoman Empire and Turkish society fell behind technologically because of Islam. The curriculum depicts the Turkish-Islamic civilization as equal and in some cases, superior to the Western world. Turkish-Muslim scientists are shown alongside their Western counterparts to present an image of their mutual contribution to world civilization. Much praise is showered on Turkish-Islamic culture in general and the Ottoman Empire in particular.

Other Religions

Freedom of conscience and respect for other religions (including sustaining churches and synagogues), is portrayed as a central Turkish trait. The Islamization of the Greek Orthodox Hagia Sophia Basilica in Istanbul and the description of the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem as the Al-Aqsa Mosque are notable exceptions.

Attitudes toward Judaism and Christianity are often unclear. The Hebrew civilization is praised, as is the uniqueness of Jewish identity. The historical and religious attachment of Jews to their ancient

1 Subjects include: history, religious studies, Prophet Muhammad’s life, life sciences, Holy Qur’an, science, social studies, Turkish language, Turkish literature, civics, biology, geography, democracy and human rights, design, economics, geometry, chemistry, astronomy, international relations, and Turkish sports history.
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homeland, and particularly Jerusalem as their religious center, is appreciated. While Muslims should revere all monotheistic holy books (including the Torah and Psalms), parts of the Hebrew Bible are characterized as having been corrupted. Only the Qur’an remains completely unblemished.

In the section on early Islamic history, Jews are portrayed as potential traitors, though fully tolerated by the Prophet. Other textbooks provide a positive and balanced depiction of the faith and its believers. Only superficial information about the Holocaust is presented. Significantly, the term itself is not even mentioned.

In the context of Christianity, Christians are portrayed as ushering in Prophet Muhammad’s arrival as the last prophet. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on what it sees as the Catholic Church’s bigotry and its anti-science stance, challenging those who blame Islam for hindering technological improvement. The Crusaders are presented as a calamity to the region while the Jihad and Gaza Holy Wars of the Islamic and Ottoman armies are not criticized. Despite that, the curriculum also includes a balanced and respectful depiction of Christianity and steers away from theological polemics.2

National Minorities

No debate is permitted about minorities perceived as a threat to Turkey’s territorial integrity. The sections dealing with Greeks and Armenians offer the official Turkish position that no genocide occurred during the twentieth century. Beyond the Turkish borders, both Armenia and Greece are recognized (again from a Turkish perspective); peace and good neighborliness are the stated objectives.

There is a slight improvement over past textbooks in recognizing the Kurds, but they are still generally ignored. Unlike the pre-2002 textbooks where “Kurd” was mostly not mentioned at all (except in a derogatory manner), the name is no longer obliterated from the curriculum. The Kurdish language is recognized and for the first time is used in a couple of elementary-level Kurdish culture textbooks. The Newroz [Nevruz], widely known as a Kurdish holiday in Turkey, is represented in the texts as an ancient Turkic tradition. In the context of post-World War I arrangements, Kurdistan and the long wars since are only hinted at.

In respect to the Assyrians, a demographically small and non-threatening community, highlighting their culture helps demonstrate the richness of Anatolia’s past and present.

International Relations

Historical interactions with Europe and Turkey’s European Union accession process are addressed in detail. Turkey is characterized as being proud of defending democracy and the West. But its Muslim identity is assumed to be the reason behind Europe’s opposition to the country’s accession to the EU.

The Cyprus question follows the official narrative. The Republic of Cyprus is not on maps.

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2 Gaza (גザ) is the Ottoman Turkish term for a military raid/campaign against neighboring Christian states, typically understood as part of an on-going Islamic Holy War.
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The Bosnian-Serbian Conflict is superficially covered. Turkey's solidarity is with the Muslim Bosnians. Turkey's Middle East orientation is explained and in this context, a pro-Palestinian discourse occupies some space. Turkish-Israeli relations are justified, drawing on geopolitical and other state interests. The Gaza Flotilla is praised, as are its organizers from the semi-official Islamist organization, IHH.3

Turkey's Ottoman heritage and Pan-Islamic fervor are combined with a Pan-Turkic discourse which predates Islamic culture and religion; past empires spreading from Europe to China—all belonging to a common Turkish race—are lauded. The curriculum urges solidarity with all ethnic Turks near and far, particularly those of former Soviet Republics, but including China's Uyghurs.

Human Rights and the Environment

The brotherhood of humanity is espoused by the curriculum. It meticulously provides information on human rights, and includes documents such as the Magna Carta, the Declaration of Independence, France's Declaration of Human and Civil Rights, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Relevant Islamic theological sources are also added.

To such lofty aspirations embodied in these hallowed treatises, the curriculum adds practical education for democracy that includes democratic processes, listening to others, reducing gender inequalities, population policies and sexual education. There is no mention of LGBTQ but the curriculum encourages tolerance toward opinions, beliefs and lifestyles of all people; there is much compassion, for example, toward AIDS patients. Still, Atatürk’s well-known aphorism that a woman’s most important task is motherhood, suggests that conservative family values remain central.

Values imparted by the curriculum revolve around politeness, unselfishness, tolerance and faithfulness to God. Hospitality, compassion and care for others are virtues to aspire to as good “neighbors” in communities.

Environmental awareness and concerns are taught. But the nuclear issue is more nuanced. Nuclear energy is dangerous (Chernobyl is in mind) but sorely needed by Turkey as an essential energy source.

The arts and sciences are important. The evolutionary theories of Darwin and Lamarck are discussed. Religious restrictions are not applied to the arts: Sculptures and art, including those that portray a woman’s naked body, reflect the modern side of the curriculum. Buddha statues are represented, as is Michelangelo’s “Moses,” along with the best of Western art.

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But what is the report’s conclusion? To a great extent, the Turkish curriculum is a bold enterprise to replace Atatürk’s secularism with the more organic Turkish-Islamic identity that combines democracy, moderation and past glory with Islam, at home and abroad. Is this a revolution? The concept of Turkish-Islamic Synthesis is not new. Atatürk remains a central mainstay of the curriculum where democracy and the Western context are strictly preserved.

So what future can we divine?

3 The Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief (İnsan Hak ve Hüriyetleri ve İnsani Yardım Vakfı [IHH]).
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A meticulous reading of the textbooks allows for guarded optimism that UNESCO-derived standards of peace and tolerance education are mostly being adhered to. Unlike many curricula, there is no hate education. Democratic values are taught; there is a measure of tolerance and respect for other religions. And despite anxiety by some that Turkey may use its rediscovered relationship with Islam to move in a radical direction of aggressive intolerance, this is not apparent in the current textbooks. Long-standing issues involving large national minorities remain unresolved—and mostly not taught. Because this curriculum remains a work in progress—as does Turkey itself—the report recommends that the conversation on the direction of the curriculum must continue.
Preface

Turkish-speaking people have ruled the entire Middle East for much of the last millennium. Southeastern Europe and the Crimea were governed by Turkish leaders for centuries. Throughout this period, Islamic civilization has been the common denominator binding together a great variety of religious, ethnic, tribal and cultural collectives that include surviving pre-Islamic groups and global actors, interests and networks. These memories remain alive in the Turkish curriculum as it pertains to present and future policies. There is a vivid memory of large pre-Islamic Turkic states stretching from central Europe to China.

The rise to power of the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2002, signaled a dramatic change in Turkey’s positioning and self-perception. As witnessed with other Islamic countries such as Iran, Turkey has tried to build an educational alternative to the Western systems that separate state and faith—often seen as overly liberal and lacking in spirit and values. What separates the Turkish undertaking from others is their commitment to the principles of a secular state and democracy as they strive to introduce more Islamic principles into their educational system. Turkish Islam is showcased as compatible with ancient Turkish traditions, imbued with respect and tolerance for others and a love of Sufi mysticism and commitment to peace; but also uncompromising national pride and military spirit.

For Turkey, this is important. But why should experimentation with Islamic education interest the rest of the world? One good reason is that it offers a serious attempt to combine religious and secular democratic dimensions of the human experience within a state curriculum. Potentially, this means that it trains students to overcome the distractions of the moment toward a wider vision that encompasses past, present and future generations.

The Turkish experiment could offer some ethical and communal responses to the challenges unleashed by a rapidly evolving information age. The curriculum stresses self-discipline, teaches hospitality for all and respect for the elderly. But can such a curriculum guarantee freedom, tolerance and respect for all? Can it make Turkey a successful and peaceful country? Will Turkish-Islamic values yield a humane and compassionate democracy? Or, to the contrary, will Islamization bring more schism and radicalization? Will the Turkish imperial impulse be revived as students repeatedly hear about the glorious conquests of the past, namely, the Jihad and Gaza Holy Wars?

Of perhaps more importance is the idea that the Turkish curriculum could serve as a litmus test for those who argue that a humanistic and compassionate Islamic education is the best antidote for radicalism and its consequences.

The examined curriculum teaches secular-democratic values and is clearly proud of Turkey’s role as a defender of Western democracy. The instruction rests on Turkey’s heavenly mission and draws on imperial glory and ambitions stretching across three continents. Turkey’s Islam is “Turkish Islam.” Turkish Islamic contributions to the arts and sciences are apparent in the curriculum, but much space is also dedicated to Western achievements and shortcomings. Reconciliation with past enemies beyond Turkey’s borders remains an important part of the curriculum’s worldview.

The curriculum encourages democratic processes and open debate but does not engage in serious self-reflection. Turkish Islamic states are characterized as having been forces of good. Sensitive topics
are not easily discussed. The Devshirme—slave recruitment of Christian boys—is described, but the broader institution of slavery is not dealt with. LGBT is omitted while we are reminded that the Prophet accepted all lifestyles. The Holocaust is left unnamed, but Nazi horrors are discussed. The curriculum is decidedly pro-Palestinian, but pragmatism is evidenced in Turkey-Israel relations.

Islam is the greatest religion, but the curriculum’s textbooks are sympathetic to Hinduism and Buddhism. Judaism and Christianity awaken early Islamic grudges, ranging from the conflict of Muhammad and the Jewish tribes of Medina through the time of the Crusades, stirring anti-Jewish-Christian sentiments. The attachment of the Jews to Jerusalem and the Holy Land is taught, as are shared values with Israelis, of cherishing identity and homeland. There is mention of Einstein’s offer to send Jewish scholars and scientists to find refuge in Turkey. Helping fellow Syrian Muslims is encouraged. Armenian and Greek genocides are explained from a Turkish standpoint, but the existence of controversy is noted. A future of good neighbor relations is envisioned.

The curriculum is silent on the Kurdish issue. While it is true that in recent years a few Kurdish language textbooks were released, which is more than the Iranians or Syrians have done, there is no discussion of Kurdish culture (including language) in books we’ve examined.

The Alevi are also mostly ignored as a people. But the Sufi and Alevi-Bektashi spirit and history are fully recognized and impart a unique religious spirit of love and tolerance to Turkish Islam, as seen in the basic philosophy of Yunus Emre:

Love your fellow human. Do not make distinctions among people according to their religion, race, denomination, language, color and class. How beautiful it is to see all the created, because they come from the Creator.

I wish to thank and acknowledge those who participated in preparing this interim report.

The current report is written by Mr. Hay Eytan Cohen Yanarocak from the Moshe Dayan Center at Tel Aviv University and a leading expert on Turkish education. This paper also includes research materials collected and analyzed in the early stages of research by Mr. Felix Konovitch (IMPACT-se); Mr. Mehmet Ekinci (Hebrew University); and Prof. Hatice Dogan (Erbakan, Konya and Nevşehir Universities). Once initial research is submitted to IMPACT-se, it undergoes a rigorous process of further research and analysis. Assisting me with this was David Byer, who also oversaw the final editing. Finally, I would like to thank the Middle East Forum Education Fund for their support in preparing this report.

Dr. Eldad J. Pardo
Director of Research, IMPACT-se
Introduction

The successful military coup led by Turkish army General Kenan Evren on September 12, 1980, put an end to the widespread violence among rightists, leftists, Islamists and Kurds. The new regime launched an ideology, termed “Turkish-Islamic Synthesis,” which was amalgamated into traditional secular Kemalism and formed the official state ideology called “Atatürkism.” While reconciling secularism with religion, Atatürkism had utilized Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s cult of personality, aimed at uniting all segments of Turkish society. This newly modified official ideology allowed for a religious presence in the public sphere. Atatürkism was a departure from the Turkish Republic’s secular nationalism, Kemalism, which separated Islam from the political realm. The coexistence of secularism and Islam, coupled with Atatürk’s historical popularity, became the core agenda of the period between 1980–2002, until the rise of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan’s Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi [AKP]).

In the early years of the AKP administration, Erdoğan refrained from making bold changes in education. His most important educational reforms came in 2012 after weakening the Turkish army during the Ergenekon probe (2008–13), when many high ranking generals were accused of planning a coup and imprisoned. The July 2011 protest retirement of army Chief of Staff Işık Koşaner, further strengthened Erdoğan’s position, clearing a path to advancements in education. Atatürkism, formerly the sole guiding principle of Turkish national education, was diminished; but Atatürk’s heritage remained. In addition to this revolutionary move, Erdoğan further weakened the army’s influence when he removed the army-authored “National Security Studies” course from the curriculum.

With Atatürk’s influence diminished in the aftermath of these reforms, “Turkish-Islamic Civilization” [Türk-İslam Medeniyeti] inevitably began to constitute the backbone of Turkey’s educational system. Erdoğan’s campaign of religionization became even more conspicuous with the introduction of optional subjects such as “Life of Prophet Muhammad” and the “Holy Qur’an.” Ottoman Turkish” entered the curriculum in 2014 as an optional subject. Not surprisingly, secular circles in Turkey perceived these reforms—openly challenging secularism and Atatürk’s alphabet reform—as an attack on his legacy.

A clear example of this direction can be seen in Erdoğan’s speech delivered at the Fifth Religious Council in December 2014, where he criticized Atatürk implicitly for relying only on rational thinking.
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and science. Erdoğan stressed the need to add religion to these fundamentals. In light of this new direction, textbooks published after 2012 were designed with this more conservative worldview.

IMPACT-se’s primary goal with this interim report is to determine the effect of this enriched “Turkish-Islamic Synthesis” on the Turkish educational curriculum, through the prism of UNESCO-derived standards on peace and tolerance education. Our research sheds light on the history and values of Turkish-Islamic civilization. After examining the texts, the report finds a Turkish-Islamic-dominated narrative in its portrayal of other religions, national minority groups, different countries and other entities. While the report covers the many positive features taught in the Turkish curriculum in such areas as human rights, world peace, gender equality and environmental consciousness, it points to several challenging aspects, contradictions and paradoxes contained in the textbook writing.

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Turkish-Islamic Identity

Defining the Turkish Nation and Education of National Symbols

Turkish textbooks highlight the nation’s geostrategic importance.

The importance of a nation is defined by its geographical location, its economy and political agenda, military and cultural connections. Turkey is one of the world’s major nations due to both its political and geographical circumstances. It is possible to say that the developments in the Middle East and in the Balkans in recent years have further increased Turkey’s geopolitical importance. . . . Turkey has Eastern as well as its Western aspects and a diversity of international organizations. Turkey is the only country with memberships in NATO, the Council of Europe, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the Islamic Conference Organization (ICO).10

 Atatürk’s embrace of non-ethno-religious nationalism is also apparent in the texts.

The principle of nationalism, as stated by Atatürk, is to love the Turkish nation and try to dignify it. This principle attaches importance to the unity of language, emotion, culture and goals within national borders. Regardless of their religious faith and language, everybody who identifies themselves as Turkish and lives as a Turk, is Turkish. Atatürk expressed this by saying, “How happy is the one who can say ‘I am a Turk.’”11

The famous “Our Oath” (recited during 1933–2013), is perceived by many as the source of Turkish ethno-nationalism by seeking to assimilate other ethnicities such as the Kurds. It can be seen in pre-2013 textbooks before its removal by the AKP.

‘Our Oath’

I am Turk, I am honest and I am hard-working.
My principles are to protect the young, to respect the elder, to love my country and my people more than I love myself.
My ideal is to improve, to progress.
O! Great Atatürk,
I promise solemnly to walk on the road you have paved, toward the goal you showed forever and ever.
Let my entity be an asset to the existence of the Turk.
Happy those who say ‘I am a Turk’!12

Turkish-Islamic Identity

The Turkish flag is introduced with pictures and poems.

‘My Flag’

My ancestors brought down the moon and the stars from the sky. They wrapped them in a cloud redder than the dawn. Its fiery red is not from poppies or roses, It is the blood of the Turkish sons That it takes its color from . . . . I’ll give my life, shed my blood and not give up on this right.13

Turkish Emergence and Characteristics

The mythical story of Ergenekon and the emphasis on the Turkish Central Asian heritage forms an essential pillar of the national Turkish identity.

İl Han’s son Kayi and nephew Dokuz Oğuz escaped from their enemies. They arrived in a place like paradise that contained every tone of green. They became a new nation. Centuries later they grew so much that they could not fit into this country. They convened the council and started to seek a solution. They could not open a road from the iron mine in the mountains surrounding them. In the end an ironsmith suggested to melt the mountain’s iron. A grey wolf [Bozkurt] took their lead and guided them.14

The textbook relates that the Ergenekon story occurred on March 21, the period which begins Newroz (Nevruz), the Kurdish (and Iranian) New Year spring festival. The Kurdish cultural and political context of this day is ignored in an attempt to contain and assimilate Newroz and the Kurds into the dominant Turkish culture, but also reflects a more relaxed attitude toward the Kurdish “dilemma.”

This historic day, which signifies a new life, a new start, falls on the 21st of March. You see, today it is celebrated as a holiday by the Turkish communities.15

The Turkish fighting spirit and uncompromising commitment to independence are seen as the nation’s most important characteristics, justifying martyrdom and the “army-nation mythology” of the Turkish nation.

Defeated in fights with foreign nations, the Turks refused to come under anyone else’s rule and sacrificed their homeland in the name of independence; they preferred to move to other countries and live independently. In addition, one should not forget that while striving for world domination, the Turkish communities were moved by the ideal of ruling the

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15 Ibid., p. 80. (“Turkish communities,” includes speakers of Turkic languages worldwide.)
world as they conquered new countries.\textsuperscript{16}

‘[The] dignity, honor and capability of the Turk are so mighty and great. It is better for such a nation to perish than to live as slaves. The people of Turkey have been living free and independent for centuries; they are of a nation’s hero sons who have been thinking of independence as a necessity of life.’ \textsuperscript{(Atatürk)}\textsuperscript{17}

Contrary to what Europeans claim, the Turks did not try to destroy the civilization of others; on the contrary, they helped to preserve their culture that exists at the present day. The culture and civilization created by the Turks in Anatolia and the Balkans are some of the most civilized, thoughtful, humanitarian and beautiful civilizations of all. Turkish customs (such as) Turkish food and clothing styles have influenced most of the Balkan nations.\textsuperscript{18}

The army-nation myth can be seen in the anthem of the Turkish Armed Forces.

\textbf{Anthem of the Turkish Armed Forces}\textsuperscript{19}

They are coming, those who wrote history, those who made history,  
Those who engraved their names on the monument of civilization.  
They are coming, those who attacked the enemy in three continents,  
The army-nation is coming, passing through the eras,  
The Turkish army is coming, overflowing histories. . . .

An ethno-religious aspect of Turkish nationhood and homeland defense can be seen in Mehmet Emin Yurdakul’s famous poem, “The Warpath” \textit{(Cenge Giderken)}.

\textbf{‘The Warpath’}

I am a Turk, my faith, my kin are awesome.  
My heart and my essence are filled with fire.  
A true man is the slave of his homeland.  
An offspring of the Turks rests not at home, so I shall go. . . .  
I will not have Osman’s flag removed.  
I will not have my enemy charge my homeland.  
The House of the Lord cannot be laid to ruins, I shall go. . . .  
With a white shirt shall I wipe my tears.  
With a black stone shall I sharpen my knife.  
For my homeland, I wish exaltation.  
None shall remain in this world, I too shall go.  
(\textsuperscript{Mehmet Emin Yurdakul})\textsuperscript{20}

\textbf{Turkish Language, National Culture and Consciousness}

After the collapse of the multinational Ottoman Empire (which used the Turkish-Ottoman language), the founders of the Republic made contemporary Turkish, the national language. Regardless of the AKP’s slightly more relaxed attitude, the Kurdish language is still considered a threat to national unity.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{16} Zahide Tekten, \textit{Sosyal Bilgiler - 6. Sınıf Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı} (Social Studies, Sixth-Grade Student Workbook), Yakın Çağ, 2015, p. 44.
\textsuperscript{17} Yasemin Okur et al., \textit{Tarih - 9. Sınıf Ders Kitabı} (History, Ninth-Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 72.
\end{flushleft}
Language is among the most valuable cultural aspect of a nation and is the foundation of a nation. Since language is the vessel to emanate feelings and thoughts to one another, it develops with solidarity in emotions and thoughts. Any Turk who is willing to learn and study his nation’s history and culture must know his own language. There should not be any Turkish citizen in Turkey who does not speak Turkish. . . . ‘The foundation of the Republic of Turkey is Turkish heroism and the Turkish culture.’

In a speech delivered in 1930, Atatürk explained the natural conditions for the effective formation of the Turkish nation: ‘unity in language, unity in motherland and affinity in morals.’

Individuals and societies are equipped with characteristics that build themselves; I cannot be the same as you; the Turkish society cannot be the same as the Chinese or the American society. . . . But while we can celebrate one’s birthday in Turkish, why do we say ‘Happy Birthday’ in English? It is not like a technological term or any other difficult term that does not exist in the Turkish language, so then why in English? We seem to be willing to get lost among foreign cultures.

After dominating Konya, Karamanoğlu Mehmet Bey issued an imperial order. According to this order ‘From now on, no one in the council (government office), convent (palace), bargâhta [official meeting], council [also used for] entertainment place and in squares (bazaar, flee-market) shall speak in any other language but Turkish.

**Teaching Islam**

The curriculum endeavors to shape a Turkish-Islam consciousness. Islam is portrayed as the only valid monotheistic religion: the one religion for all humanity. Rivalry between Islam and Christianity is underscored.

In the Noble Qur’an Allah says, ‘Indeed, the religion [Hak dini] in the sight of Allah is Islam. . . .’ (Surah Al-I Imran, Verse 19). What do you understand from the term ‘the religion’ in the verse?

The name of the religion Almighty Allah revealed to all prophets from Prophet Adam to Prophet Muhammad and by prophets to people is Islam.

The Qur’an is a universal book. It was sent to all humanity. The principles laid down in the Qur’an are over ages, are not limited to a certain time, [and] are valid till the Day of Judgment. Qur’an has remained until today in its original version, [and] has maintained its presence.

Islamic principles, seen from the perspective of discipline, require obedience to authority and Muslim solidarity in maintaining public order and preventing anarchy.

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22 Ibid., p. 54.
23 Türkçe - 7. Sınıf Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı (Turkish, Seventh-Grade Student Workbook), Meram, 2015, pp. 27–28.
24 Komisyon, Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Textbook, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 60.
Islam is a religion that is based on peace, unity and solidarity. Hence, our religion classifies all behaviors that disturb others’ peace and aim to cause chaos in society as trouble-making. Almighty Allah says ‘. . . cause not corruption upon the earth . . . ’ (Surah al-A’raf, Verse 85) and commands that we avoid all bad acts. He also identifies those people as munafiq [hypocrites] who cause corruption by sowing seeds of dissension and demands that care be taken against them (Surah al-Baqarah, Verses 8, 9, 10, 11, 12).27

Belief in the afterlife contributes to the reduction of bad deeds and an increase of good deeds in society. A person who believes that he will be questioned in the hereafter over his actions on earth, pays attention to his behavior. He would try to establish good relations with others, be helpful to himself and to the society and do favors always. Moreover, societies with such people would be peaceful.28

The concepts of Jihad and Gaza (two variations of Holy War) are introduced in the medieval sections of International Studies and Social Studies textbooks. Holy War against non-Muslims “in order to protect or spread the Islamic religion” constitutes part of the curriculum, with no qualifications.

Jihad is the struggle of spreading Islam all over the world. Dar al-Islam is the Muslim place where Muslims live free and in security; Dar al-Harb is the non-Muslim abode that poses threats to the security of Muslims. On the other hand, Dar al-Sulh are the territories where Muslims live with non-Muslims in peace.29

Gaza is holy war against non-Muslims in order to protect or spread the Islamic religion.30

While the hijab could be seen before 2002, advocacy for veiling can be seen as a revolutionary change (but the textbooks rarely show female students with a hijab).

Veiling, which started with Prophet Adam and Eve, is a reminder to all the nations by the prophets, as an order of Allah. Likewise, the last Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) also put forward a set of principles in this regard. With the needs of social life, the main purpose of these principles was to keep the social relations between man and women at a human level.31

Religious holidays such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are presented as important days in the Turkish calendar, another indication of the departure from the secular recent past.

Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha are religious holidays that bring people together, restore ties between the resentful and strengthen love and respect. . . . Our religious holidays are examples of the change and continuity of the Turkish people from the past to present.32

30 Komisyon, Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 54.
**The Prophet Muhammad’s Reputation**

The Prophet Muhammad is portrayed as the perfect human role model. Islam was sent to all humanity and the Prophet is the perfect embodiment of the faith.

Like rain is merciful to nature, Prophet Muhammad is a mercy to human beings.\(^{33}\)

The most obvious characteristic that distinguishes Hz. [His Holiness] Muhammad from other people is that he received revelation from Allah. In many verses of the Qur’an, it is highlighted that Hz. Muhammad was both a person as well as a prophet. . . . Prophets never lie, do not misappropriate, do not commit sins and they are smart and intelligent. . . . Our Prophet was sent as an envoy to the whole of humanity. . . . He has abided with the advice, commands and prohibitions received from Allah and has lived as an example for all Muslims. He has gathered in person all the characteristics of the type of Muslim envisaged by the Qur’an and was a living interpreter of the Qur’an.\(^{34}\)

‘My claim is that the Prophet Muhammad is the most exquisite value. It is far from likely that the Creator will make a second of such a person possible. Muhammad, I am sorry that I was not able to live in the same century as you. . . .’ (Prince Otto Von Bismarck, the first prime minister of modern-day Germany [The Subject and Messenger of God, p. 59.])**\(^{35}\)

‘The Great Prophet of Islam has risen to the level of the Almighty Creator and met with Him. I believe in the Ascension with all my heart.’ (Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky, Russian author)**\(^{36}\)

That arrow and archery have an important place in Islam, led archers to have immense interest among the people. Prophet Muhammad was known to be good archer.\(^{37}\)

**Compatibility of Islam and “Turkishness”**

Compatibility of Islam and “Turkishness” [Turkish heritage] constitute a central theme of the curriculum. Similarities between Tengrism, Central Asia’s pre-Islamic Turkish faith, and Islam are emphasized. The former is presented as a proto-monotheistic religion.

There is no contradiction between Turkishness and Islamization because one [Turkishness] has national character and the other [Islamization] has international character. (Ziya Gökalp: His Life, Art and Selection of His Works)

We know little about pre-Islamic Turkish civilization. However, many things about our culture belong to that period. (Prof. Mehmet Kaplan)\(^{38}\)
Pre-Islamic Turkish Faith

- [Turks] believed in the religion of the Sky God.
- According to Turkish custom: theft, deceit and injustice were forbidden.
- Within the Turkish belief in the hereafter, good people would be rewarded in Ucmağ [heaven], while bad people would be punished in Tamu [hell].
- Importance was given to cleanliness.
- Tolerance toward different beliefs was common.
- There was no supremacy of the clergy.

Islamic Faith

- There is monotheistic belief.
- Within Islamic morality: theft, deceit and injustice are regarded as sin.
- There is a belief in the hereafter. There is a belief that after living, good people with good deeds will go to heaven, while bad people will go to hell.
- There is a principle of ‘cleanliness is next to godliness.’
- Islam is the religion of tolerance.
- [In Islam] there is no supremacy of the clergy.39

Today, when someone dies, neighbors and relatives take food to the funeral home. This tradition is the new form of the feast given after the yuğ [funeral] ceremony. Turks continue their Islamic-appropriate traditions by blending them nicely with the Islamic religion.40

Other than pointing to the similarities between Islam and Tengrism, the textbooks also present Islam as the most suitable religion for the Turkish character. In this respect, the argument by Ibrahim Köseoğlu (a well-known pioneer of Turkish-Islam Synthesis), that when a Turkish clan chooses a religion other than Islam it always loses its Turkishness, can be seen in the textbooks.41

The Hungarians always commemorate Attila and their Hun [empire] with great love and attention. This stems from the fact that the Hungarians are of eastern origins and are of a nation with Turkish character.42 Hungarians gradually lost their Turkish identity as they embraced Christianity in the early eleventh century.43

The Huns, who came north of the Black Sea after the collapse of the European Hun Empire in 469, merged with the local Ogurs, who were made up of different Turkish tribes. This newly formed community was called by the name, ‘Bulgarian.’ . . . The Danube Bulgarians struggled against the Byzantines, and took the Slavs under their rule. . . . Following the fact that their ruler Boris Khan embraced Christianity in 864, they [the Bulgarians] melted away among the Slavs.44

41 Ibrahim Kafesoğlu, Türk İslam Sentezi, (İstanbul: Ötüken, 1999), p. 86.
42 Yasemin Okur et al., Tarih -9. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (History, Ninth-Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 82.
43 Ibid., p. 96.
44 Ibid., p. 94.
Atatürk and Islam

As the founder of modern Turkey and the architect of the secular republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is frequently mentioned throughout the curriculum. To avoid any contradictions between the Turkish-Islam Synthesis philosophy (which guides the current curriculum) and Atatürk’s secularism (on which the 1980–2002 texts are based), the current curriculum emphasizes the compatibility of the two concepts. In order to do that, Atatürk’s personal belief and his loyalty to Islam are highlighted.

Atatürk regarded secularism as the greatest assurance to protect the essence and spirit of religion. According to him, secularism does not only mean the separation of religion from earthly affairs. Besides that, all citizens have freedom of religion and [religious] worship is a requirement of secularism. In addition, secularism means neither irreligion-ness nor opposition to religion.  

In one of his speeches on the religion of Islam, Atatürk said, ‘Islam is the most convenient religion conforming to reason and logic; therefore it is the final religion.’

‘If it was in contradiction with reason, logic and reality, there should have been also a contradiction between [Islam] and the other divine and natural laws. Because Almighty Allah is the one who has created all the universal laws.’ (Atatürk)

Kemal Atatürk wanted the Turkish nation to read and understand the Qur’an and Islam as a way to eliminate ignorance. For that reason, he published translations of the Qur’an in Turkish and distributed it to the people for free.

Turks—Protectors of Islam

The curriculum extensively covers the history of the Seljuk and the Ottoman empires with emphasis on their roles in the defense of Muslim lands against the Crusaders and European-Christian powers. Indeed, this discourse may be seen as a window to understand the Turkish administration’s current foreign policy.

Thanks to his service to the authority of the Caliphate and the city of Baghdad, the Caliphate, in 1058, rewarded Tuğrul Bey with the title of ‘the Sultan of the East and the West.’ It meant that the earthly dominion of the Islamic world was officially given to the Turkish ruler. The Turks started to represent the entire political power of the Islamic world connected to the Caliphate.

The title of Caliph was given to the rulers of the Islamic state after the death of Prophet Muhammad. The caliphs tried to represent the religious and political unity of the


Turkish-Islamic Identity

Soon after embracing Islam, the Turks became the guardians and leaders of Islam. This mission passed to the Ottoman sultans following the conquest of Egypt.50

I swear that I heard from one of the trustworthy informants among the imams of Bukhara, and from another imam of the people of Nishapur: when both of them were talking about the signs of the hour and the trials of the End-of-Time, and when both of them were mentioning the advent of the Oghuz Turks, they said: ‘Learn the Turkish language because their reign will be long.’ If this saying [hadith] is right, then learning the Turkish language is a religious duty; and if it is not right, still wisdom demands it.51

Pan-Islamism and Muslim Solidarity

The Tanzimat period (1839–1876), a period of reformation and modernization of the Ottoman Empire aimed at granting equal status to Muslims and non-Muslim subjects, was considered, until 2002, as beneficial. In recent years, however, an anti-Tanzimat undertone appeared in the school textbooks. The democratic ideal of “equal rights for all” is described in the following example as abandoning Islamic customs and traditions—leading to the empire’s collapse.

According to some historians, the Ottoman state did not imitate the West with the Tanzimat; [on the contrary] they became under the control of the West. Therefore, [the Turks] started to abandon Turkish customs and Islamic law. Muslims, who were the essential elements of the [Ottoman] state, lost their supremacy and became the equals of non-Muslims. And this weakened the commitment of Muslims to the state.52

Ruling an empire wisely is part of Turkey’s heritage.

Yusuf Has Hacip: ‘A country is conquered with a sword, and the country is kept with the help of a pencil.’ Yavuz Sultan Selim’s act of carrying along his library on mules when going to war is a testament how our ancestors succeeded to build great empires.53

Islamic solidarity supersedes ethnic consideration. All Muslims are brothers.

An Arab is not superior to a foreigner who is not an Arab and the foreigner is not superior to the Arab. We are all the children of Adam. Adam is from the soil. Believers! Listen carefully to my words. Muslims are the brothers of Muslims.54

In His many hadiths the Prophet has advised the unity of Muslims: ‘My Companions! Do not be hostile to each other, do not envy one another, and do not turn your face to one and other and leave. O servants of Allah! Be brothers to each other. It is not halal to be estranged from your Muslim religion brothers for more than three days.’55

Islam entails support of “all Muslim countries” struggling to regain their rights. The textbook coverage on the activities of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and Turkey’s policy on Syrian refugees,

50 Komisyon, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İnkılâp Tarihi ve Atatürkçülük (The Republic of Turkey’s Revolution History and Atatürkism), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014, pp. 77–78.
51 Komisyon, Türk Edebiyatı- 10. Sinif Ders Kitabı (Turkish Literature, Tenth-Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, pp. 67–68.
55 Hatice Arıcı, Hz. Muhammed’in(s.a.) Hayati - 5. Sinif Ders Kitabı (The Life of the Prophet Muhammad [pbuh], Fifth-Grade Textbook), Tekno Artı Bilişim, 2014, p. 50.
can be seen as vital examples.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation ([OIC], formerly Organization of the Islamic Conference) was founded September 25, 1969, with the intent of increasing development concerning the Islamic world and improving cooperation and solidarity between Muslim countries. Fifty-five Islamic states are members of the organization. Since its founding, Turkey has been involved in the activities of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The purpose of the OIC is:

- To improve Islamic solidarity among member states. . . .
- To coordinate the support given the Palestinian people, help them regain their rights and save their lands.
- To strive to eliminate all forms of colonialism and give support to struggles of all Muslim countries for the protection of their national rights.56

All of our people—in particular the state authorities and certain non-government organizations—have received their Syrian Muslim brothers, who have been left in a difficult position, with open arms, and provided them with material and spiritual support. Discuss with your friends whether the circumstances set out above are similar to the support provided by the people of Medina to their immigrating Muslim brothers.57

**Martyrdom and War Veterans**

Martyrdom (sehitlik) and being a war veteran (gazilik) were praised and justified for homeland defense. Islamic references are used as well. The martyrs live forever in paradise.

The Turks are a peace-loving nation. They are peaceful as long as their country is not attacked. If needed, the Turkish people protect their motherland by war.58

Our religion commands us to sacrifice our lives, if necessary, for the sake of sacred values such as homeland and honor, and to esteem martyrdom and war veterans. Accordingly, the Almighty Allah [in the Qur’an] says as follows: ‘Never think of those who have been killed in the cause of Allah as dead; rather, they are alive with their Lord [and] are provided sustenance from their Lord. They rejoice in what Allah has bestowed upon them of His Bounty, rejoicing for the sake of those who have not yet joined them, but are left behind [not yet martyred]; that on them no fear shall come, nor shall they grieve.” (Surat ‘Ali Imran, Verses 169–170).59

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58 Türkçe - 7. Sınıf Öğrenci ÇalışmaKitabı (Turkish, Seventh-Grade Student Workbook), Meram, 2015, p. 20.
Defending the Homeland, Respecting the Enemy

Defending the homeland is a central value of the curriculum. The Turks’ noble behavior and respect for the enemy are stressed. The fallen among the enemy are to be respected, with special attention to their humanity, the suffering of mothers and equality in heroism. Atatürk’s principle of “Peace at home, peace in the world” is still taught to Turkish children. The Greek flag should be respected as a symbol of independence. National pride plays a role in this attitude.

A French lieutenant who swam and reached the shore during the Gallipoli War explains:

After a while, Turkish soldiers appeared on the hills and between the trees a little distance away from the shore. I thought ‘we were finished.’ They first looked at our state. Then they put down their weapons. They took off their military cloaks and came toward us. They motioned us to take off our garments. They gave us their cloaks to wear. They picked us up by our arms. We started to walk. What a surprise! They all were treating us as if we were one of their family.60

During the Gallipoli War, the ANZACs [Australian and New Zealand Army Corps] battled against the Turkish troops alongside the British soldiers. We won this war but our friendship with the ANZACs did not deteriorate. . . . Atatürk prepared a speech for the Interior Minister, and the text reads as follows:

‘Those heroes who shed their blood and lost their lives: You are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore, rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmetes to us where they lie side by side, here, in this country of ours. You, the mothers, those who sent their sons from far away countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.’

Thank-you letters were received from Australia and New Zealand. . . . The ideal of Atatürk: ‘Peace at home, peace in the world’ was therefore announced to the entire world.61

On the morning of the August 30 victory, Atatürk was walking around the war front. He was deeply saddened with what he saw. The terrible images may embarrass the entire human race. But this was the natural result of a homeland defense. They forced us. But the Turks shall not do the same thing to other nations. Then, pointing to a Greek flag on the ground covered in dust ‘This is the symbol of independence of a nation. We must respect it even if it belongs to the enemy.’62

61 Mustafa Aldı et al., Türkçe - 5. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Turkish, Fifth-Grade Textbook), Cem, 2013, pp. 26–27.
Freedom of Conscience, Respecting Other Religions and Minority Rights

Islam is presented as sensitive to freedom of conscience. Examples of tolerance during the Ottoman rule are given, with a focus on the pragmatic as well as the moral advantage of tolerance, though not all religious minorities (e.g., Christians) were particularly loyal to the Ottoman state. Nevertheless, pride is expressed throughout both for the Turkish conquests made on behalf of Islam and for tolerance displayed toward conquered populations. Examples that do not fit this idyllic narrative are not presented and the conquests are simply depicted positively.

Democracy is explained with special emphasis on the obligation of a democratic nation-state to respect minority rights including: freedom of speech, assembly and conducting group activities. The textbooks elaborate on Turkey’s special commitments to international treaties in this regard. The following examples of tolerance education are divided between the imperial Turkish-Islamic perspective and the democratic Turkish-Republican one. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne serves as a watershed dividing these two eras, but the gradual re-emergence of Turkish Islam makes this division somewhat blurry.

The Imperial Turkish-Islamic Perspective

Almighty Allah gave freedom to people to choose and embrace any religion. This situation is expressed in the Qur’an as follows: ‘There is no compulsion in religion.’

Muslims have never put pressure on the people under their domination to perform their prayer and worship. They have granted them the opportunity to perform their religious service freely. For example, at the time of his immigration to Medina, our beloved Prophet told the Jews that they can perform their worships freely. Mehmet the Conqueror, after his conquest of Istanbul, and the Caliph Umar, after his conquest of Jerusalem, let Christians perform their beliefs and worship freely. As one of the results of this situation, there are many churches and synagogues both in our country and in Muslim-dominated territories.

The firman [decree] published in 1453 with Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror’s conquest of Istanbul may be considered one of the significant democratic developments. In this firman, Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror especially stressed physical integrity and religious freedom.

Islam also protects the right-to-life of non-Muslims. Even in the case of war, those who do not actively participate in the war: women, elderly, children, captives and clergymen, as well as those who are busy with their jobs and the vulnerable wounded, cannot be bothered. There are so many such examples in Islamic history.

The Turks, who secured great conquests for the spread of Islam, never mistreated the

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64 Ibid., p. 86.
people in the conquered territories, [and] protected them irrespective of what religion they adhered to. The Qur’an has had a substantial impact on this friendly and tolerant attitude.\textsuperscript{67}

Located within the boundaries of Kars, the Ani Castle was conquered by Alp Arslan. How could the fact that Alp Arslan built a mosque in Ani and allowed Christians living there the freedom to practice their religion, contribute to the conquest of Anatolia?\textsuperscript{68}

Just think about the lands on which the Ottoman Empire existed. It was a state that ruled over six hundred years across three continents. People with different nationalities (Turkish, Arab, Greek, Bulgarian, etc.) and different religious faiths (Muslim, Christian, Jewish) all lived in unison. Despite these differences, the Ottoman Empire was able to govern everyone in harmony. How? By administering the principles of tolerance and justice for all. They did not discriminate [against] their subjects for the differences in their language, religion, culture and any other values they might have. In this way, people maintained their religion, culture and way of life. Today, people living in the Balkans and the Middle East can speak their own languages and continue living with their own cultural values all because of this particular tolerance. Tolerance and justice was one of the most important factors that facilitated the conquests of the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{69}

On the article presented to the appointed patriarch of the Christian population, Fatih is quoted to say: ‘Nobody should dominate the patriarch. The great priests and his entourage will permanently be exempt from any kind of public services. Churches shall not be converted to mosques. Weddings and burials and other similar customs shall be practiced, as before, according to the procedures and rules of the Greek Church.’\textsuperscript{70}

“I am Sultan Mehmet Han. I bestowed upon the Bosnian priest and ordered: ‘Worship at your churches and reside in your country without fear. None of my viziers or anyone among my people shall ever hurt or offend them. I swear on my Prophet, Allah, the Qur’an and my sword that their lives, properties and churches are under my guarantee as long as they obey me.’”\textsuperscript{71}

The Turks lived on friendly terms with the other nations living under Ottoman rule.

On religious holidays, the Turks will present flowers to their Christian neighbors, and Christians will offer food to their Turkish friends during their religious holidays.\textsuperscript{72}

Christian minorities all over the country, covertly or overtly, try to realize their own private ambitions and purposes and to ruin the [Ottoman] state soon. . . . (Atatürk’s Sermon, v. 1, p. 1–2.)\textsuperscript{73}

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
  \bibitem{67} Ahmet Türkan et al., Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi - 9. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Religious Culture and Moral Education, Ninth-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 73.
  \bibitem{68} Komisyon, Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2011, p. 55.
  \bibitem{69} Komisyon, Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, pp. 76–77.
  \bibitem{70} Ibid.
  \bibitem{71} Komisyon, Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Student Workbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 63.
  \bibitem{72} Komisyon, Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, pp. 76–77.
  \bibitem{73} Komisyon, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İnkılâp Tarihi ve Atatürkçülük (The Republic of Turkey’s Revolution History and Atatürkism), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014, p. 25.
\end{thebibliography}
The Democratic Turkish-Republican Perspective

According to Atatürk, religion is a relationship between human beings and God, and the place of religion is in the conscience of people. He explained this point in the following way: ‘Religion is a matter of conscience. Everyone is free to obey the voice of his or her conscience. We respect religion, and are not against thoughts and ideas. We just try to not combine religious affairs with political issues.’ Beside these, his statement: ‘Every individual in the Republic of Turkey is free to choose his or her own religion and also allowed to perform ceremonies and rituals of that religion. In other words, the freedom to observe rituals is guaranteed [by the constitution] . . . has emphasized the importance of freedom of belief and worshipping.’

In democratic societies, the rights of minorities should be protected by the majority. In democracy, minority rights should be respected and freedom to express views freely should be given to minorities. Democratic societies can sometimes consist of different ethnic or religious groups. The purpose of democracy is to make the best decision for everyone in the society. For that reason, all segments of the society should contribute to the decision-making process.

Articles 38–45 of the Treaty of Lausanne contain regulations relating to minorities. Some of these regulations are as follows:

‘The Turkish Government undertakes to assure full and complete protection of life and liberty to all inhabitants of Turkey without distinction of birth, nationality, language, race or religion’ (Article 38).

‘No restrictions shall be imposed on the free use by any Turkish national of any language in private discourse, in commerce, religion, in the press, or in publications of any kind or at public meetings’ (Article 39/4). ‘Turkish nationals belonging to non-Moslem minorities . . . in particular, shall have an equal right to establish, manage and control, at their own expense, any charitable, religious and social institutions, any schools and other establishments for instruction and education, with the right to use their own language and to exercise their own religion freely therein’ (Article 40).

Representatives of three religions met at Iftar. The Iftar dinner held at the Galata Mevlevi Lodge brought together representatives of the three monotheistic religions. Organized by the Beyoğlu Municipality, the Iftar was attended by Istanbul Mufti Mustafa Çağrıcı, Greek Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomeos, Chief Rabbi Isak Haleva, Armenian Deputy Patriarch Aram Ateşyan and Assyrian Orthodox Spiritual Leader Yusuf Çetin (Newspaper article, August 3, 2011).

75 Bülent Tarman et al., Demokrasi ve İnsan Hakları (Democracy and Human Rights), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014, pp. 15–16.
76 Komisyon, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İnkıláp Tarihi ve Atatürkçülük (The Republic of Turkey’s Revolution History and Atatürkism), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014, p. 206.
77 Komisyon, Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Student Workbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 96.
Narrating Anatolia's Conquest

Besides providing the underpinnings for Turkish-Islamic civilization, the textbooks address the question of Anatolia's Turkification.

The Seljuk forces and the Byzantine army met at the Rahva Plain, which is located between Manzikert and Ahlat (August 24, 1071). Of course, the [Byzantine] emperor did not accept the peace offer; therefore war was inevitable.78

Alp Arslan, who gathered his soldiers on Friday, August 26, got off his horse and prostrated himself and prayed, ‘Oh Lord! . . . I bow down in the face of your grandness and fight for your sake. . . . The emperor was taken slave. Sultan Alp Arslan forgave the hopeless emperor who was brought to him after the war. A peace treaty was signed in exchange for the Byzantine emperor paying war compensation, taxes every year and sending soldiers to the Seljuk army if needed. However, the Byzantine throne changed hands as Diogenes was returning to Istanbul and invalidated the treaty. Alp Arslan tasked his Seljuk princes with the conquest of Anatolia. The Turks shortly became the rulers of Anatolia.79

The majority of today’s cities [in Anatolia] were formed during the Ottoman era. The Ottomans repaired the old buildings and also built roads, bridges and caravanserais [large inns for caravans].80

I am Suleiman Shah. . . . I was assigned to conquer Anatolia. . . I secured for the state the commitment of the non-Muslim people who found peace but had been miserable because of Byzantium’s bad management. To the migrating Turkish clans, I gave lands so they could settle in Anatolia.81

Turkification of Anatolia

The Turkish name of Anatolia, Anadolu (full of mothers), derives from the Greek (Ἀνατολή; Anatolē, means east or sunrise). In the textbooks, Turkish roots are added in the form of two etiologic myths, one about an old woman feeding thirsty soldiers; the other, a miracle performed by the great Sufi: Hacı Bektaş Veli.

The soldiers swarm to the groove, and troop by troop start filling up their flasks.
Grandma: Fill it up my son!
Soldier: It’s full mother. . .
Grandma: Fill it up my brave soldiers!
Soldier: It is full mother. . .
As the old mother said ‘Fill it up’ ([doldur]), the soldiers replied ‘it is full mother’ ([anadolu]). They quenched their thirst with the ice-cold buttermilk. So from that day on, this holy land until then known as Belde-i Rum [Greek Land], was renamed as ‘Anadolu’ [full of mothers].82

One day Hacı Bektaş Veli . . . He saw Kadıncık Ana next to the flowing stream washing her clothes. Hacı Bektaş Veli was very hungry. He did not have any food. He approached Kadıncık Ana saying: ‘Sister, I am hungry. For God’s sake do you have some food’? Kadıncık Ana had nothing in her home . . . she couldn’t say no to a dervish’s face. She called upon the girl who was playing next to her. ‘Go

78 Komisyon, Türk Edebiyatı - 9. Sinif Ders Kitabı (Turkish Literature, Ninth-Grade Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 16.
inside. If you see something, bring it.’ The child ran to their home. When the child arrived at home she saw food everywhere . . . she went out with joy and began to call out to Kadınçık Ana: ‘Mother it’s full!’ [Ana Dolu]. After that day, this piece of land was called as Anatolia [Anadolu].

The Sufis Played an Important Role in the Turkification of Anatolia

Turkish Seljuks escaped from the Mongols and settled in Anatolia. Sufis were also among them. The Sufis developed social, cultural and religious activities in their areas of settlement. These activities led to the emergence of orders such as the Mevlevi, Bektashi, Akbariyya, Naqshbandi, Qadiriyya and Rifa’i. Among such Sufis, the thoughts of Ibn Arabi, Rumi, Yunus Emre and Sadr al-Din al-Qunawi made an impact long beyond the periods in which they lived. The development of Sufism in Anatolia played an important role in the Turkification and Islamization of Anatolia.

Turkish-Islamic Civilization: Contributions to Science and Morality

The curriculum extensively covers both Turkish and Muslim contributions to world civilization; Islam is presented as compatible with modern science and technology. The textbooks challenge an assumed Western Judeo-Christian dominance in science, while recognizing the achievements of others. . . . On another level, the curriculum portrays the Turkish-Islamic-Imperial heritage as having unique social and moral characteristics for the present-day world at large.

The religion of Islam assigns great importance to religious knowledge and has ordered Muslims to learn and teach [their] knowledge. Our Prophet (pbuh) said in relation to this, ‘To seek knowledge is an obligation of all Muslim men and women. . . . In the following periods, madrasas, known to be important educational institutions were established. . . . The scholars educated at the madrasas wrote works on various subjects and most have inventions that are still valid today.

Our religion encourages reading, learning, research and science . . . in various verses of the Qur’an, Allah orders people to think and research about events like the creation of human beings, the precipitation of rain, development of humans within the womb and a comprehensive understanding of the order in the universe. This is possible only with science.

Islamic scholars living in the Middle East and Asia Minor attained various substances to be used in the treatment of diseases. Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi (860–940); Ibn-Sīnā (980–1037); and Ibn Rushd (1126–1198); are examples of Islamic scholars who adopted Aristotle’s conception of the elements and made significant contributions to his theory. This scientific tradition of the Middle Eastern Region first spread to Spain through Andalusia and from there spread to Europe.
Before Newton, Ibn Sinâ made studies in relevant force fields, making numerous contributions to science. Here, it implies that scientific information is not only accredited to specific cultures. Over time, scientists of different nationalities have contributed to scientific information.\(^{88}\)

Jabir ibn Hayyan invented nitric acid, sulfuric acid and aqua regia around 800 CE.\(^{89}\)

Abû al-Wafâ’ Bûzjânî was an Iranian mathematician and astronomer who discovered a new geometric method to approximate drawings of seven and nine-sided polygons. . . .\(^{90}\)

Idrîsî (1100–1166) speculated that the earth was spherical. A world map drawn by Idrîsî is one of the good examples of that particular era. European explorers also benefited from the world maps drawn by him. It is thought that Columbus used Idrîsî’s maps during the discovery of America.\(^{91}\)

Omar Khayyam established the first observatory in the world. His works have been translated into the European languages; original versions of these works are available at the famous libraries, such as in Moscow, London, Oxford, Geote and Holland.\(^{92}\)

Mathematical concepts such as Pascal’s Triangle were taught at schools for the first time by Omar Khayyam . . . he laid the foundations for non-Euclidean geometry.\(^{93}\)

Euclid’s postulates were first challenged and modified by the Turkish mathematician Omar Khayyam (1050) and then by Nasir al-Din al-Tusi (1200).\(^{94}\)

Nasir al-Din al-Tusi, particularly gained a reputation in the field of empirical astronomy and geometry. . . . He formulated trigonometry (previously regarded as a sub-branch of astronomy), as a separate mathematical science.\(^{95}\)

Al-Tusi solved the long-standing puzzle afflicting many mathematicians, the proof for the sum of interior angles of a triangle equaling 180 degrees.\(^{96}\)

Muslim scholars were the first to use the number, ‘0.’ ”Ziffer” in German, ‘zenero’ in Italian and ‘zero’ in French and English are the equivalent of ‘sifr’ in Arabic.\(^{97}\)
Turks have laid the foundation of the Turkish-Islamic civilization. . . . Starting from the Abbasid era, the Turks, who came to settle in significant population centers, (particularly in Basra), brought different perspectives to the art of Islamic architecture. . . . Great musicians, who grew up among the Turks, produced the most outstanding works of the Islamic world. . . . All the studies done in the fields of science, philosophy, literature, architecture, music and calligraphy, demonstrate the contributions of the Turks to Islamic civilization.99

During the ninth and tenth centuries, the Uyghurs discovered a method of creating art other than the block-press replication technique of the Chinese; using individually movable letters made out of hardwood, they created the first printed book in the Uyghur language.100

The development of the iron mine is a gift of the Turks to the world’s civilization.101

The curriculum emphasizes that Turkish-Islamic empires contributed to more than science and technology; they teach that much more can be learned from the past to contribute to the world’s current social challenges.

During the Seljuk and Ottoman period, a culture of pious endowments [waqf] was created, emanating from a consciousness of kindness and love for fellow humans. Through this institution, many people offered their property to serve social needs. . . . The institution of pious endowments—providing services to all, regardless of their language, religion or race—also became a symbol of tolerance. Imparting awareness of these values and their translation into action will bring a new leap forward to our society. The world needs them too; we live in times of income inequality, causing hunger and poverty . . . the spirit of charity will play a major role in resolving this problem and will lead to a new revival.102

The forced abduction and Islamization of Christian boys by the Ottoman institution of “Devshirme” to become Sultan’s slaves, is accurately described (though there is no reference to them being sold for other purposes).

During the Ottoman era, in order to train qualified people to act as civil servants, apart from the madrasa, ‘Enderun Schools’ were established at the Topkapi Palace. . . . They had to be of an age that they would not need their mothers. Those beyond education age and the single children of families were not admitted to Enderun. . . . Those well-trained youth at Enderun were qualified to be grand viziers, viziers and high-ranking soldiers as well as artists such as poets, musicians and architects.103

During the reign of Murad IV, Lagari Hasan Çelebi is credited in the curriculum to be the first person to achieve

101 Ibid.
the vertical take-off of a rocket to a height of about 300 meters, and remaining in the air for twenty
seconds.\textsuperscript{104}

The Turks established the Nezamiyeh Madrasa, at the time, the largest madrasa in the Muslim world.
Founded at the command of Alp Arslan in Bagdad by the vizier Nizam ul-Mulk, subjects like literature,
math, and philosophy were taught alongside theology.\textsuperscript{105}

The Cacabey Astronomy Madrasa was built in 1272. Serving as an astronomy high school of the
period, studies in the field of astronomy, mathematics and science were carried out in the madrasa. .
. . Due to its scientific and historical significance, the Cacabey Astronomy Madrasa is included among
the UNESCO World Heritage tentative list.\textsuperscript{106}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{cacabey Astronomy Madrasa.png}
\caption{THE CACABEY ASTRONOMY MADRASA}
\end{figure}

Bir\=uni (973–1048) was a major Turkish scholar from Central Asia. He stated that our world is in the
shape of a sphere. . . . Bir\=uni mentioned the existence of the American continent five hundred years
before Christopher Columbus.\textsuperscript{107}

Some textbooks strike a balance between Turkish and foreign scientists. A fifth-grade autobiogra-
phy series begins with Anatolian engineer Al-Jazari (1136–1206), moves to Newton, Galileo, Edison,
Madam Curie, Einstein, Baird (television inventor) and ends with Gazi Yaşargil (a Turkish world-leader
in micro-neurosurgery).\textsuperscript{108}

I was born in Cizre (Şırnak) in 1136. When I was a child I used to inspect how the tools around
me worked. . . . The picture you see on the side is the water gauge I designed. Time started to be
measured automatically for the first time thanks to this gauge and people learned to tell time better.\textsuperscript{109}

\begin{flushright}
107 Erol Ünal Karabıyık, \textit{Fen Bilimleri - 3. Sınıf Ders Kitabı} (Science Studies, Third-Grade Textbook), Bilim ve Kültür Yayınları, 2014, p. 129. (Biruni was born in Khwarezm [now Uzbekistan]. His mother tongue was Khwarezmian [an Iranian language]. In Iran, where he lived for many years, he is considered to be Iranian.)
109 Ibid., p. 114.
\end{flushright}
Ali Kuşçu, who lived in the fifteenth century, trained in astronomy and mathematics, is one of the most famous scholars in the Turkish world. . . . He also made the map of the moon.110

Attention is given to Western scientists like Galileo, who experienced persecution and narrowmindedness from the rulers of Western society. The curriculum teaches that he relied on the accomplishments of scholars from the Turkish-Islamic civilization.

Born in the city of Pisa in Italy, Galileo, while observing the sky, took advantage of the works of Uluğ Bey . . . since his countrymen did not care about science at the time, they scorned Galileo’s work. They did not believe that the Earth was round and that it rotated. They also perceived the scientific facts revealed by Galileo as disrespectful towards religious beliefs. Therefore, Galileo was tried and punished by the church.111

The curriculum continues to teach Atatürk’s tenet that seeking guidance outside of study and science is wrong.

Atatürk’s saying: ‘The most truthful guide in life is science,’ is widely known. The full text reads as follows: ‘For everything in the world, the truest guide for material things, for spirituality and for success is learning and science; looking for a guide outside learning and science amounts to somnolence, ignorance and misguidance, . . .’

The main challenge facing our Westernization project was the great dynamism of the Western model whose special feature had been to leave its own self behind and surpass it as it moved ahead. Atatürk saw in science the basis of civilization. He believed that the dynamism and mobility of Western civilization were essentially grounded in science and in science’s potential for unlimited development.112

These innovations are indications of the importance Atatürk gave to science and rationality. Such improvements, made by virtue of Atatürk’s foresight have rather simplified our lives. [For example] changes made in the standards of weights and measurements have helped our country’s economic relations with European countries.113

According to Atatürk: “. . . modernization, for us, does not mean to imitate the West blindly. . . . We are not taking Western civilization saying ’let’s mimic!’ We adopt what we find befitting our context, on the level of world civilization.”114

112 Serdar Arhan et al., Türkçe - 8. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Turkish, Eighth-Grade Student Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, pp. 28–30.
Economy

Economy is directly linked to independence. The curriculum explains Atatürk’s etatism (statism), economic ties with the West and interest-free Islamic banking.

‘No civilized state would take care of its army and navy prior to its economy.’ (Mustafa Kemal Atatürk)  
‘For us, the principle of etatism [state-based economy] means that the state should regulate the country’s general economic activity and that the state should participate in areas where private enterprise is unwilling, or proved to be inadequate, or where national interest requires it.’ (Atatürk)  
In the map below, ruling prices between the regions, domestic income per person and regional revenue for 2007 are shown.  

Initiatives for interest-free [Islamic] banking emerged for the first time in Egypt during 1963–67. . . . In a sense, interest-free banking, based on the direct transfer of savings to the trade and industry sectors, was established with the idea of trying to distribute borrower’s profits to those with savings accounts [interest is not permitted in Islam]. Today, it is possible to find such banks both at home and abroad.  
Surprisingly, though the current curriculum still features a poem, “Homeland,” by early twentieth century nationalist, Ziya Gökalp, depicting the fantasy of a Turks-only economy (understood as excluding non-Muslims), the future focus is on Turkish-Islamic economic dominion.

‘Homeland’

A country with all capital circulating in its market,  
Science and knowledge that guide its arts are of the Turk.  
Her crafts always protect each other,  
Shipyards, factories, ferries, trains are of the Turk.  
Oh Turkish son, that is your country!  

As a symbol of Turkish nationalism, Atatürk’s picture is in every textbook.

“HOMELAND,” TURKISH LITERATURE, GRADE 11, P. 157
Other Faiths

All Religions are Similar

While their names are different, religions have similar sides to them. It is possible to find common aspects even among religions that emerged in far-apart geographical locations. As one examines the foundational principles of religions, it seems that the goal of all of them is to spread goodness and beauty, avoid evil, elevate humans and bring them to a perfect state. This indicates that the common values brought forth by religions are universal.120

Judaism and the Jews

The historical and religious roots of the Jews (also referred to as Hebrews and Israelites) in Jerusalem are recognized in the curriculum as the Jewish homeland (“. . . . the Jews built Al-Aqsa Temple/Mosque,” [Mescid-i Aksa]). The death of Jews in the Holocaust is mentioned, but the word is not used. In this regard, more depth and clarity might well be considered.

In religious textbooks, Jews constitute the first monotheistic religion and their attachment to Jerusalem and the Land (of Israel) is recognized. The Hebrew Bible is portrayed as partially corrupt, with parts missing, but its “original” text is binding to all Muslims. Judaism is criticized as existing only for Jews, not embracing or available to others. In the context of early Islam, they are even seen as potential traitors. The moral superiority of universal Islam and the Turks is manifested by providing safe shelter and tolerance to the Jews. The major Biblical figures are considered Muslim prophets.

The name of the religion Almighty Allah revealed to all prophets from Prophet Adam to Prophet Muhammad and by prophets to people is Islam.121

Faith in the books [of Allah] necessitates believing in all the holy books (Torah, Psalms, Gospels and Holy Qur’an) in their original forms that were revealed by Allah. However, a portion of the holy books sent by Allah completely disappeared; nothing from [that portion of] these books has reached our present day. Some other parts [of the holy books] were modified by human corruption. The only holy book to reach our present day without any human corruption is the Holy Qur’an. (Surat Al-Ḥijr, Verse 9).122

Jewish historical roots in Palestine (including Jerusalem), as the Jewish homeland, are depicted. The narrative regarding the Hebrew Bible is given in Islamic terms.

The Torah [or the Old Testament] was written down about six centuries after Moses. According to historical records, after the Assyrian [sic] King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem, he ordered to burn the copies of the Old Testament for the first time. According to the Jews, one century later, Ezra, who knew the Torah by heart, wrote it down again. Again, according to the sources, the copies of the Torah were burnt for the second time after King Antiochus of Roman Empire [sic] invaded Palestine. Muslims believe in the holy book of the Torah in its original version, which was given to Moses.123

For example, the discourse of the Torah is limited to the Israelites. On the other hand, the message[s] of the Prophet encompasses all of humanity.\(^\text{124}\)

Israel and Judea are both included. The Jewish Temple, (synonymous in the curriculum with Al-Aqsa Mosque), was built and rebuilt by the Jews. The Hasmonean Kingdom is not mentioned.

The Hebrews were a Semitic people. In antiquity they lived as nomads in Syria and Mesopotamia; they later settled in Palestine. They established a kingdom there around 1040 BCE. (His Holiness) David became the head of this kingdom, established the city of Jerusalem and made it his capital city. In the time of his son, (His Holiness) Solomon, trade flourished with the Mediterranean countries, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Arabia, thus enriching the country. Following the death of (His Holiness) Solomon, the unity among the Hebrews was disrupted; they were divided into two states: Israel and Judea. The Assyrians, taking advantage of the struggle between the two states, destroyed the State of Israel in the seventh century BCE. In the beginning of the sixth century BCE, the Second Babylonian State destroyed the State of Judea and sent the Jews into exile in Babylonia. Not only did the Babylonians send the Jews into exile but also destroyed their Mescid-i Aksa [Aqsa Temple or Mosque]. Soon after the Persian king conquered Babylonia, the redeemed Jews returned to Jerusalem in the last half of the sixth century BCE and rebuilt Mescid-i Aksa. Although Jerusalem regained its previous importance by becoming the religious center, the Jews could not establish a state; they kept living under the dominion of the Persians, Alexander and the Roman Empire. The Hebrews, losing their religious unity with the spread of Christianity, attempted to rebel against the Roman Empire. Since they were not successful in their uprising attempt, they were sent into exile from their homeland [yurtlarından sürülmüşlerdir] for the second time [sic] in 70 CE.\(^\text{125}\)

The following summary displays a penetrating, yet flawed understanding of the Jewish condition as a community, nation and faith between the periods of exile and return to the Land.

**Jerusalem is Very Important for Jews**

The Walling Wall in Jerusalem is very important for the Jews. Besides, the Jews attach great importance to religious symbols. Chief among these symbols to be found in the synagogues are the Menorah, the seven branch lampstand, and the [Star of David] two intertwined triangles.\(^\text{126}\)

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\(^{124}\) Ibid., p. 18.


Saving the Jews of Spain

After explaining why the Ottomans could not do more for Muslims in Spain and how Turkish seamen succeeded in rescuing many Muslims, the text deals with helping the Jews.

The Jews who continued to be subjected to oppression in Spain, were brought by the Ottoman Sultan Bayezid II from Spain to the Ottoman State and were settled in Salonika, Izmir and Istanbul.127

National Religion: Judaism

Among early civilizations, the Hebrews held a lonely position; for the first time [in recorded history] a community uniquely believed in a monotheistic religion. They lived under the sovereignty of many states in different geographic areas. Nevertheless, they have continuously held onto a consciousness of country and nationhood until the present era; it is a community that does not assimilate. The Hebrews have preserved their customs and traditions during times of exile. Despite changing conditions, they have never lost their distinctiveness. This secured the adoption of Judaism as a religion pertaining only to the Hebrews.128

Judaism is Special

What especially distinguishes Judaism from other religions?

What is the reason that Jews survived until the present, even though they have been living in various countries? Please explain.129

Narratives of early Islam reflect an appreciation of peace, but the Hijazi Jews, destroyed during that period, are presented as the evil antagonists of the time. The text neither provides a balanced account nor warns against bigotry.

The ‘Medina Agreement’ played an important role in the establishment of peace among the communities. With this agreement, people of different faiths lived together in an atmosphere where peace, tranquility and security were dominant. . . . During the Battle of the Trench, the Jewish Banu Qurayza [Beni Kureyza] tribe made a secret pact with the enemy, and attempted to stab the Muslims in the back. After the siege had ended, they were punished by being forced to leave Medina, as a result of their betrayal.130

In the pagan military, there were soldiers of non Meccan tribes and the soldiers of the Jews who were formerly expelled from Medina. Moreover, the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayza in Medina also joined this alliance with a secret treaty. These Jews aimed to put Muslims in a difficult situation in the war. . . .131

Following the Battle of the Trench, the Jews of Banu Qurayza, who supported the pagans covertly, were expelled from the city.

Prophet Muhammad besieged the fortress of Khaybar, which was under the control of the Jews, because the Jews, in an attempt to stop the spread of Islam, supported Meccans during the Battle of the Trench and injured the Muslims trading in the Medina-Damascus route. The fortress of Khaybar was taken after ten days of siege . . . as a result of the conquest of Khaybar. The tax of jizya was imposed on non-Muslim men, who were not able to fight, in exchange for ensuring their safety. The

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131 Yasemin Okur et al., Tarih -9. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (History, Ninth-Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 44.
Other Faiths

Jews paid a product tax and gave one-half of the crops they had planted in the fertile Khaybar lands.132

The following unsubstantiated anecdote—hinting that Jews might harm the Prophet as a child despite having no proven historical context or other qualification, is nevertheless included in the curriculum.

[Monk Bahira told Abu Taleb that] since Damascus was an area inhabited mostly by Jews, who may harm our Prophet, he thus recommended them not to go to Damascus.133

In one of the many paradoxes evident in the curriculum, Jewish praise of Turkey and Islam sends a message of tolerance.

Born in Germany but continuing his life in Edirne, a French Jew, Isaac Zarfati has described the peaceful lives of the Jewish community under the Ottoman Empire as follows: “I hear my brothers in Germany are living in sorrow that is worse than death; under despotic laws, being baptized by force, and exiles are ordinary everyday occurrences. I was told that life was like going out of the frying pan into the fire. Brothers, teachers, friends, acquaintances! I am Isaac Zarfati and I urge you: Turkey is a country where nothing is missing. If you wish, now this will be the most beneficial place for you. Isn’t it better to live under the sovereignty of the Muslims rather than the Christians? Here, everyone can sit in peace in their own vineyard and under fig trees. Here, you are allowed to wear the most valuable attire.”134

There is no real discussion of the Holocaust. In the following text, the killing of millions of Jews is mentioned with warnings against racism. The text also warns against misuse of religion.

Racism, based on ethnic claims of superiority, has been a major problem throughout human history. The largest massacres, exiles, deportations and other social catastrophes in history always occurred when religions, ideologies and [political] systems were used as its instruments [of hatred]. For instance, Adolf Hitler, the leader of the Nazi Party, caused massive destruction both on Germany and the world during his rule. During the years of World War II, Hitler, who espoused the superiority of the German race, tortured many non-German elements, especially murdering millions of Jews in the concentration camps.135

133 Mevlüt Kesman et al., Hz. Muhammed’ın Hayatı - 8. Sınıf Öğretim Materyali (The Life of the Prophet Muhammad, Eighth-Grade Teaching Material), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 15.
134 Komisyon, Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Student Workbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 47.
In yet another paradox from an excerpt taken from a revised *Modern History* book, the Holocaust is all but denied. While the curriculum takes a stern anti-Nazi stand and identifies with democracy, the destruction of the Jewish people as a central war goal, the killing of six million Jews and the Holocaust as a unique phenomenon and culmination of anti-Jewish hatred, is excluded. Killings of Jews are obscured among many other atrocities. While the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is extensively dealt with in the same book on many pages, Jewish persecution leading to the rise of the Jewish National Movement is completely omitted. So too, were Turkey’s policies during the 1930s and 1940s, though they were mainly positive, saving a great many lives; but they also included some darker events (such as the establishment of the wealth tax [*varlık vergisi*], imposed on non-Muslims and the 1942 sinking of the Struma refugee ship with almost 781 Jews aboard).

WWII occurred not only on the frontlines; it was also a war where civilian lives were [affected and] lost behind the fronts through air raids, rationing, plundering of occupied lands, the killing of civilian detainees and the spread of diseases such as tuberculosis and typhus. As a corollary to the Nazi goal of creating a master race, disabled people, Jews, Romas, Sintis, and people of color were sent to concentration camps and exterminated. As a result, some sixty million people lost their lives. These included twenty-one million Soviet citizens, 13.5 million Chinese and seven million Germans. The USSR lost 13 percent of its 1939 population, Germany, 10 percent and Poland, 16 percent. Comparatively far fewer lives were lost in Western Europe and the USA as a result of the war.136

**Christianity**

Similar to the Torah, the New-Testament is also seen as falsified. Owing to its openness to recruit more believers, Christianity is perceived as an opponent of Islam. The Inquisition, Crusades and the Church are seen as having been obstacles to humankind; thus Islam—but also free speech and Turkish democracy—offer the right choices. Indeed, during Islam’s early period, Christians were the first to usher in Prophet Muhammad as the last prophet. Still, Turkish-Muslims display tolerance toward Christians, whom they consider to be legitimate members of society.

The only holy book to reach our present day without any human corruption is the Holy Qur’an (Surat *Al-Ḥijr*, Verse 9).137

The Gospels [or the New Testament] is the name of the holy book sent to Jesus. Alongside the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, which are generally accepted in the Christian world, the Gospel of Barnabas and Gospel of Saint Thomas are regarded to be among famous biblical texts. Especially, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are the books written by the group of people from the next generations [after Jesus] in order to give information on the life of Prophet Jesus. Although Prophet Jesus used to speak Aramaic, all of the books in the hands of Christians today are in Greek. The Gospel was not written down at the time when Jesus was alive. [Just as the Old Testament was written after Moses’ death], the Gospel was also written down sixty years after [the death of] Prophet Jesus.138

Father Bahira, a priest at the monastery, asked our Prophet certain questions due to certain characteristics he had seen in him. That is because he had noticed that he possessed certain characteristics

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136 Okur, Yasemin et al., *Çağdaş Türk ve Dünya Tarihi*, 12 Ortaöğretim (Contemporary Turkish and World History, Twelfth-Grade, Secondary School), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 64.

137 Ahmet Ekşi et al., *Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi - 10. Sınıf Ders Kitabı* (Religious Culture and Moral Education, Tenth-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 30. (More on this topic in the section on Jewish Scriptures.)

related to the last prophet, who had been revealed in the Bible.  

Letter of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to Heraclius: ‘In the name of Allah, Most Gracious and Most Merciful. [This letter] is from Muhammad the slave of Allah and his prophet to Heraclius the Byzantine emperor. Peace be on those who follow the right path. I invite you to Islam. If you become a Muslim you will be safe. [And] Allah will double your reward. But if you reject to do so, you will bear the sin of having misguided your subjects.’

Some cities have become certain religious centers, and [therefore] have turned into religious cities. For example, Rome has been the center of Christianity.

In the same vein, Mecca and Medina are the major Islamic cities in our days. On the other hand, Jerusalem is a holy city for Jews, Christians and Muslims.

The curriculum teaches respect for Jewish, Muslim and Christian holy cities. A ninth grade history book explains that Attila the Hun did not conquer Rome out of consideration for the city’s significance as the center of the Christian world.

Although Attila had no obstacle to invading Rome, the most important reason for him not to invade was because Rome was a sacred center of the Christian world.

This is in fact a distortion of history. It is widely believed that Attila the Hun did everything in his power to conquer Rome but was unable to.

Refusing scientific and rational thinking, the Church forbade the expression of personal opinions. By interpreting the Bible in their own interests, church leaders misled the public and presumed the authority to curse people and to forgive sins in the name of God. Those in opposition were cursed [and exiled] from religion or were later tried in the Inquisition yet again established by the priests. As a result of the trials, many scientists and philosophers were punished just because they spoke their mind. In the aftermath of these tragic events, by interstate agreements and within their own constitutions, countries established the freedom of thought through laws. In our constitution, Article 27, and in the

139 Mevlüt Kesman et al., Hz. Muhammed’in Hayatı - 8. Sınıf Öğretim Materyali (The Life of the Prophet Muhammad, Eighth-Grade Teaching Material), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 15.
142 Yasemin Okur et al., Tarih -9. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (History, Ninth-Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 82.
European Human Rights Convention, Article 10, guarantee this right. Galileo observed the movements of the earth and stars with the telescope he had built himself. . . . When he explained this discovery, he was arrested on a ruling by the Church. His books and research were banned. He was warned that he would be punished by death if he insisted on revealing his theories. Upon that, although he trusted his discovery, he had to consent to the opinion of the church. The words he uttered while leaving the court ‘No matter what I say, it continues to revolve,’ caused a stir in the scientific community for a long time.143

The Crusader notion of ‘just war’ meant to protect the Orthodox Christians in the East and Christians in the Holy Land; this notion was the justification for the Crusades.144

The Devşirme System is presented, but its moral dimensions are not discussed.

With the expansion of the conquests in Rumelia the infantry and the cavalry soldiers were not able to meet the demand. Upon this, sons of Christian families were collected and trained as soldiers. With the ‘Devşirme System’ they formed the ‘Kapıkulu’ [sultan’s household troops].

The Byzantine Christian population lived harmoniously with the Turkish population. Intermarriages of Byzantine women with their Turkish conquerors amid the daily activities of market bazaars brought cohesion to the people.145

Islam shows respect to temples of other religions. Destruction of these institutes or prevention of prayers in these places is regarded as intervention in the right to worship. Indeed, throughout history, [Turkish] Muslims have never touched temples of other religions in conquered territories; they have even tried to preserve them.146

A Turkish eighth-grade textbook presents an idyllic history of Ayasofya Mosque [Hagia Sophia] by a seventeenth century Ottoman traveler, Evliya Çelebi. The text describes the centrality of the one-time basilica to pre-Ottoman Christians, adding Islamic legends, while ignoring the horrors of the 1453

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conquest. There is no real grasp of the basilica’s history, which became a mosque and later a museum, yet a sense of religious unity endures.

Solomon built a sanctuary there. [Around] 5052 years after Adam, the grandson of Madyanoğlu Yanko, King Vizendon arrives and rebuilds Istanbul for the seventh time becoming ‘a ruler known to the world’. . . . the priests collected saliva from the mouth of the Prophet, some Zamzam water and some of the clean soil from Mecca and came to Istanbul. They started the repairs on the collapsed section of the Hagia Sophia.

The location where it was repaired with the saliva of the Prophet is located in the kiblah side of the dome. . . . After the conquest, Fatih stated ‘This dome was kept alive with the water from the Prophet’s mouth.’147

**Atheism**

While not categorized as a faith, Atheism is shown as a challenge against established society that potentially leads to Satanism.

Atheism is the absence of belief in the existence of God and living as if God does not exist. In addition to denying the existence of God, atheism also opposes all religions and their conceptions of God. As a reactionary idea, atheism is adopted by some philosophers of the Western world; today it has lost its intellectual foundations and the ideology has weakened. . . . Satanism, meaning worshiping Satan, was born as a movement rebelling specifically against Christianity and generally, all other religions. Satanists often regard youths who have problems as targets. They try to impose their ideas on them. During their rituals, the Satanists torture people, kill animals and encourage violence.148

**Hinduism and Buddhism**

An eighth-grade religious studies textbook overview focuses on four main world religions: Hinduism and Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The educational message is that all religions are inherently forces for good and resemble each other. This narrative includes respect for statues of Buddha and the importance of attaining Nirvana, just as it encourages students to discuss the Ten Commandments, presented as part of Judaism. Hinduism is criticized elsewhere because of the caste system.

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While their names are different, religions have similar sides to them. It is possible to find common aspects even among religions that emerged in far-apart geographical locations. As one examines the foundational principles of religions, it seems that the goal of all of them is to spread goodness and beauty, avoid evil, elevate humans and bring them to a perfect state. This indicates that the common values brought forth by religions are universal.\(^{149}\)

In Buddhism, there is no particular form of worship and prayer. The Buddhists visit their Pagoda temples and pay respects to statues of Buddha. Besides, they also worship by showing respect to smaller ‘Buddhas’ that they keep in a corner of their homes. In addition, the reading of sacred texts, meditation and fasting at certain times are also seen as worship. . . .

One of the most important beliefs of Buddhism is the concept of Nirvana. Nirvana means to attain a state of purity and cleanliness by annihilating all of one’s desires and ambitions and ending suffering. Buddha stresses that in order to be happy one should reach Nirvana.\(^{150}\)

**Lamenting acid rain, the artistic value of a Buddha statue is praised.**

The world’s largest Buddhist statue of the Great Buddha, measuring 71 meters in length and 28 meters in width, has religious, artistic and social significance. However, acid rain is damaging the natural structure of the statue.\(^{151}\)

According to Hindu religious beliefs, a person who does not obey the rules of the caste system to which they belong, will be reborn as a member of a lower caste in the next life. And a person, who follows the rules of the caste exactly, will be awarded with being a member of an upper caste in the next life. Status of members in the caste system is continuous. Therefore, the system is closed to social mobility.\(^{152}\)

**Religious Images**

Together with statues of Buddha and figurative works of art in general, the curriculum enthusiastically displays prophets that are holy to the three monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

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150 Ibid., p. 109.


National Minorities

As the main opponents of the Turkish army during the War of Independence (1919–22), the Greeks and the Armenians are covered prominently in the textbooks. In both cases, the texts convey the official Turkish position which disputes the historical narratives of the 1915 Armenian Genocide and the Greek Pontus Genocide in 1914–22. Besides these groups, the significantly outnumbered Assyrians and the demographically heavy Kurds are also included in the curriculum overview. While the presence of the Assyrians serves to communicate Turkey’s cultural richness, the Kurdish culture is downplayed. Expunging the term “Kurdistan” amid attempts to establish Newroz—the Kurdish holiday that ushers the coming of spring as an ancient Turkish holiday—may be seen as one more maneuver by the state to contain the Kurdish “problem.”

Greeks

Among the many variables that can accelerate migration are developmental disparities between countries, wars, changes in borders and political regimes, population exchange agreements and ethnic and religious oppression. For example, after the War of Independence, culminating in the Lausanne Peace Treaty, a population exchange treaty was signed between Turkey and Greece. According to this treaty, Turks were allowed to emigrate between the two countries. Due to changes in political regimes and ethnic and religious oppression, many of our compatriots living in the Balkans have migrated to Anatolia.\(^{153}\)

The Pontus Question

The TBMM Government [the Provisional Government of the Grand National Assembly, 1920–23] took some precautions in order to prevent arming and looting of the separatist Orthodox gangs, to protect life and property of the people in the region and to impede forceful displacement of the Turks. Within the context of military measures, the TBMM Government formed a new unit, the Central Army \([\text{Merkez Ordusu}]\) to struggle against [Greek] Pontus gangs. . . . The TBMM also undertook some administrative, judicial and other legal measures. Weapons were seized from Greeks. Pontus villages in the eastern coast of the Black Sea were evacuated with residents resettled in the inner parts of Anatolia. The Orthodox clergy who supported the gangs were deported, and some of them were tried in the Independence Courts \([\text{Istiklal Mahkemeleri}]\). In accordance with the population exchange article of the Treaty of Lausanne, the activities and goals of the Pontus came to an end, as Greeks, with the exception of those living in Istanbul, left Anatolia. Greece has recently attempted to reawaken the question of the Pontus allegations, which came to an end with the Lausanne Peace Treaty. In the international arena, \([\text{Greece}]\) continues to maintain the alleged genocide claims in the eastern Black Sea. However, these genocide claims are void and groundless in terms of the historical, cultural, political and demographic facts. . . . On the contrary, massacres perpetrated by the Greeks have been revealed through investigations and excavations.\(^{154}\)

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Armenians

1915 Armenian Events [1915 Ermeni Olayları]155

With the arrival of the Russian army in the Ottoman territory in the east, Armenians in the Ottoman army fled with their weapons and joined the Russian forces. Those Armenians who refused to enlist in the [Ottoman] army, despite the declaration of mobilization [of the Ottoman state], formed gangs in the mountains. The advancing Russian army had invaded Van, Muş and Bitlis, and then Erzurum, Erzincan and Trabzon since mid-1915.

In fact, the Armenians saw the participation of the Ottoman Empire in World War I as an opportunity. Under the leadership of the Hinchak and Dashnak committees, they instigated rebellion in many parts of Anatolia, and engaged in massacres against innocent civilians in the Russian-occupied territories. They even killed Armenians who did not join them. Upon the instruction of the Armenian committees—‘First destroy your neighbor, if you want to survive’—Armenian rebels attacked and slaughtered [people in] defenseless Turkish villages [while those villagers of military age] were fighting on battlefields. In many villages, such as Van Province’s Zeve Village, they massacred even women and children. In the provinces of Kayseri, Maraş, Muş, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Elazığ and Van, they rebelled and committed massacres. Moreover, the Armenians betrayed the Turks [stabbed them in the back], blocked the movement of the Ottoman troops, cut supply routes, destroyed bridges and roads, spied for the Russians and rebelled in the cities in order to facilitate the Russian invasion.

During the time when World War I continued at a brisk pace, as a life-and-death struggle transpired on the Dardanelles front, the Ottoman state had to take some precautions in order to prevent Armenian-Russian collaboration. On April 24, 1915, [the Ottoman state] issued a notice to all commanders, calling for ‘the closure of Armenian committee centers, seizure of their documents and arrest of the presidents of the committees.’ Following this notification, bureaus of the Hinchak and Dashnak committees in Istanbul were closed down and their members were arrested. The day that Armenians commemorate as the anniversary of the 1915 Events is the day on which this circular was issued.

Since the measures taken were not effective, tehcir [deportation] orders were issued on May 27, 1915. With this ruling, those Armenians who had collaborated with the Russians, committed massacres and constituted danger were forced to emigrate from their home provinces to safer Ottoman lands in Syria. Although the Ottoman state was in the war, it took precautions and measures for the displaced Armenians. Taxes owed by displaced Armenians were deferred; they were allowed to take their belongings if they wished; officials were assigned to protect them against assaults on the road and meet their needs; police outposts were established to secure lives and property. After the war the Law of Return was instituted for the return of displaced Armenians [to their hometowns].156

Armenia is held responsible for the failure to develop Turkey-Armenia relations. The Armenian genocide and Nagorno Karabakh are not mentioned here.

155 This is the official name for describing the 1915 Armenian Genocide.
156 Komisyon, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İnkılap Tanımı ve Atatürkçülük (The Republic of Turkey’s Revolution History and Atatürkism), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014, p. 23.
Turkey became one of the first countries to recognize the independence of Armenia and invited Armenia to be a founding member of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC). Moreover, Turkey delivered humanitarian aid to Armenia when it faced an economic crisis during 1992–93, and allowed the delivery of humanitarian aid goods to Armenia [through its territories]. Nevertheless, despite these positive efforts of Turkey, relations have not developed according to desired expectations because of the bilateral problems between the two countries.157

When the Turks came to Anatolia they encountered the Syriac, Greek and Armenian people. The Turks treated these communities leniently under their rule. . . . Armenians took part in the Seljuk state administration.158

Kurds

Kurds are mostly non-existent in the curriculum, although there are a few new Kurdish language textbooks. In the following examples, a text on Newroz (Nevruz) New Year, providing shelter to Iraqi Kurds and an old plan to create a Kurdish state, the name “Kurd” is not mentioned.

Newroz (Nevruz) Holiday: Newroz means ‘New Day.’ It is one of the special days Turks celebrate every year on March 21. Other countries, along with Turkey have celebrations on this day. During this time, people gather and dance folk dances, plant trees and light fires to jump over.159

In 1991, around 300,000 Peshmergas, who escaped from the Iraqi central government’s [military] operation, were allowed to take refuge in Turkey; camps were formed for them and they were provided shelter. Likewise, the number of refugees escaping to Turkey in 2011 because of the civil turmoil in Syria exceeded 900,000, as of April 16, 2014.160

According to the Treaty of Sevres, two new states [Armenian and Kurdish] should have been created in Eastern Anatolia.161

As people are passing by, some of them speak Turkish and some speak Arabic. An old man stands there and at first calls out in Arabic then says something in Kurdish to someone who passes next to him. The [person passing by] replies in Turkish. Languages are embracing each other in Mardin. The words fall in the dark like a symphony. . . .162

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161 Komisyon, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti İnkılâp Tarihi ve Atatürkçülük (The Republic of Turkey’s Revolution History and Atatürkism), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014, p. 42.
162 Komisyon, Türkçe - 6. Sınıf Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı (Turkish, Sixth-Grade Student Workbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 136.
**Assyrians**

In the streets of Mardin where Assyrian churches and mosques and madrasas are intertwined, many times the church bells and the azan are blended together. You can come across Assyrian priests talking with the imam of the mosque with a southeastern accent. They are still very famous for their craftsmanship of silver and gold ornaments. And what about the Assyrian and Muslim coppersmiths—working shoulder-to-shoulder? All the buildings have been protected within the conservation area. Cultures should also be protected in Mardin.\(^\text{163}\)
International Relations and World Peace

In addition to being covered in subjects such as social studies and geography, international relations are more comprehensively dealt with in the National Security Studies textbooks. However, with AKP’s extensive de-militarization campaign in 2012, those textbooks that were written by the office of the Turkish Chief of Staff were removed from the curriculum. That aspect of the curriculum defined Turkey’s neighbors and the great powers as potential national threats. The new textbooks avoid such practice. New learning materials that could not be seen during the pre-2002 period have been added. Detailed information about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Turkey’s accession to the European Union provide concrete examples.

European Union Accession Process

Following the First World War, the Republic of Turkey, since its foundation, adopted Western Europe as a model for its new secular structure. Since then, Turkey has formed close alliances and relationships with the West; was a founding member of the United Nations; became a member of NATO, the Council of Europe and the OECD; and has established alliances with the [Western] European Union. During the Cold War, Turkey, as a part of the Western world, defended freedom, democracy and human rights. Turkey has played, and still plays, a vital role in the defense of the European continent. In this context, the main elements of its foreign policy are consistent with its European partners.164

Some EU members claim Turkey’s cultural and historical identity and its geographical location are not in accord with the European Union. All the current members of the European Union are countries with an absolute Christian-majority. In case of its accession to the EU, Turkey will be the first EU member with a Muslim-majority population. . . . In the event of our country’s full membership, we will benefit from many EU aids and loans. Social security, monetary and fiscal policies will be stabilized, democracy will function much better, and the country’s integration with Western countries will be achieved.165

Interactions with Europe

While providing information about Turkey’s accession to the European Union, the textbooks also give students insight into cultural interactions with Europe.

Again in the seventeenth century, an emissary named Suleiman Agha was sent to France. In a very short period of time, Suleiman Agha and his entourage won the admiration of the people. At masquerade balls, wearing clothing that reflected the Turkish culture become fashionable. Suleiman Agha decorated his house with carpets, mattresses, couches that became known as sofas and scented his household—attracting great interest—with rosewater scent.\(^{166}\)

It is known that, at the ancient Olympic Games, only the Greek athletes were allowed to compete, while many slaves, captives and non-Greek athletes were not allowed to attend the contest. If it is assumed that the first [Greek] Olympics began in 770 BCE, then the Turks were pioneers of the first international dual competitions, organizing archery and equestrian events with the Chinese in 1000 BCE.\(^{167}\)

Cyprus Question

The Cyprus question is explained in the texts according to the official Turkish position without entering into the complexities of the situation. Turkey’s 1974 military intervention on the island is called the “Peace Operation.” The European Union considers this operation an illegal invasion on European territory and that the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is not recognized internationally.

Greeks, who did not want to share Cyprus with the Turks, decided to realize their plans on the island by force . . . attacks against Turks on the island still continued in 1974. For that reason, the Turkish Armed Forces initiated the second Cyprus Operation on August 14, 1974. Within two days, Turkish forces seized 38 percent of the island, designated as the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Following the ‘Peace Operation,’ the island was essentially divided in two. The Turks, led by Rauf Denktaş, founded the ‘Turkish Federated State of Northern Cyprus’ on February 13, 1975.\(^{168}\)

Despite portraying Turkey in general as a law abiding country in the UN, the textbooks ignored Turkey’s violations of twenty-three United Nations resolutions on Cyprus since 1974.\(^{169}\)

Turkey became a member of the United Nations in 1945 as a founding member. Since its membership, Turkey has abided by all the decisions undertaken by the UN. In line with these decisions, Turkey has sent troops to Korea, Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Cyprus issue, currently among those


\(^{167}\) Tuncer Kurt et al., *Türk Spor Tarihi* (Turkish Sports History), Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 2013, pp. 42–45.


issues before the UN, is the one of most concern to Turkey.170

The map below shows both KKTC (Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti—Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus) and GKRY (Güney Kıbrıs Rum Yönetimi—The South Cypriot Greek Administration). The Republic of Cyprus, as the legitimate sovereign state for the island, is not recognized.171

Israel and Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The section on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be seen as the most significant change in Turkish school textbooks. Unlike other regional conflicts, the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its current geostrategic ramifications are covered in great detail, with a decidedly pro-Palestinian stance, which includes many inaccuracies. Jewish rights with respect to the Land are depicted as unjustified. Israel’s legitimacy as a sovereign state is challenged. However, in yet another departure from congruency, the historical and religious sections of the curriculum emphasize the strong attachment of Jews to the Holy Land and Jerusalem.

The meanings of “boycott” and “non-recognition” are explained to students using Israel as an example. While de-legitimizing Israel, the textbook justifies the cooperation between the two states; the war against terrorism and regional balance of power are given as core reasons for maintaining bilateral relations.

The anti-Israeli tone is augmented with cartoons including a picture of the 1969 fire in the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

In accordance with the secret treaties signed during World War I, the whole Middle East was shared between England and France, while the British mandate administration in Palestine was established. The British Mandate administration’s policies regarding the interests of Jews, which continued until 1948, exacerbated the Palestinian question.172

During the Arab-Israeli War of 1967, Turkey’s relations vis-à-vis Middle Eastern countries began to improve. Turkey sided with the Arab world, and would not allow American bases on its land to be used against Arab countries. Also, during the war Turkey provided food and material aid to Syria, Jordan and Egypt.\textsuperscript{174}

In accordance with the 1979 Camp David Agreement between Egypt and Israel, although Israel withdrew from the occupied Sinai Peninsula, it has not yet withdrawn from other occupied territories, contrary to the UN Resolution. The Oslo Accords, established in 1993, have also not achieved the expected peace. The Oslo peace process envisioned an Israeli withdrawal from occupied Palestine and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. This peace initiative ended because of the Second Intifada, which broke out after the visit of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, to the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Today, ensuring a durable peace in Palestine depends on the resolution of the following problems:

- Withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories,
- Issue of Jerusalem’s final status,
- Return of Palestinian refugees,
- Status of the Jewish settlers in the occupied territories.\textsuperscript{175}

Another development that increased the prestige of Turkey in the eyes of Middle Eastern countries was Turkey’s attitude toward the arson attempt of the al-Aqsa Mosque by a Jewish settler (in reality, a mentally ill Christian tourist [EP]) on August 21, 1969. Together with others in the Islamic world, Turkey severely condemned this incident and attended the ‘Islamic Summit Conference.’ This conference became the first step in the foundation of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). In 1980, when Israel annexed Jerusalem as its ‘eternal capital,’ Turkey said it would not recognize it. After this development, Turkish-Israeli relations became more strained.\textsuperscript{176}

\textsuperscript{173} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{174} Ibid., p. 152.
\textsuperscript{175} Ibid., pp. 110–11.
\textsuperscript{176} Ibid., 2014, p. 152.
Terrorism has been one of the significant elements regarding Turkey’s relations with neighboring countries. Although Syria and Iran are against an independent Kurdish state in the region, they have used the [Kurdish] terrorist organization [PKK] as leverage against Turkey. Turkey implemented strong policies, to counter this and Syria was forced to step back; the PKK terrorist organization’s founding leader was deported [from Syria] in October 1998. To avoid isolation in the international arena and to keep pressure on Syria, Turkey began a policy of rapprochement with Israel. A positive environment in Turkey-Israel relations reached the highest level through concluded agreements in 1996–97. As a result, Israel made its first official statement condemning the [PKK] as a terrorist organization in 1997. Since the early part of the century, Turkey’s relations with Middle Eastern countries have improved, while Turkish-Israeli relations have somewhat deteriorated. The debacle of the Middle Eastern peace process by Israel and the Israeli army’s crackdown on Palestine are the cause of such tensions.\footnote{177}{Ibid., p. 159–60.}

Although Turkey has been trying to maintain balanced relations with Israel, it has not remained indifferent to the Palestinian issue. In 1979, the Turkish Government allowed the PLO (Palestinian Liberation Organization) to have [diplomatic] representation in Turkey; in 1988, it (Turkey) became one of the first countries to recognize the state [of Palestine] established by the Palestinians in exile.\footnote{178}{Ibid., p. 154.}

There are countries which have the character of a ‘state,’ like the Vatican, but are not members of the UN. There are also states like Israel—though it is a UN member is not recognized by some other UN members.\footnote{179}{Ibid., p. 87.}

Boycott means that a country stops buying some goods or services or to totally stop buying these [goods and services] from another country. The boycott of Israeli goods by Arab countries because of the occupation of the Palestinian lands [by Israel] can be given as an example of this.\footnote{180}{Ibid., 73–74.}
In 2004, the construction of the wall by Israel around the occupied Palestinian lands was ruled an infringement of international law.\^\textsuperscript{181}

Naci Salim el Ali, the artist who made the cartoon in Figure [Resim] 4.1, is protesting the war and injustice in Palestine. He never draws any child named Hanzala facing readers. He said ‘participation refers to the state of being consciously active in a certain process, so until the war and the injustice is over, Hanzala will never show his face to people.’ Do you think the cartoonist’s protest can impact public opinion or those who make decisions regarding Palestine? Explain why?\^\textsuperscript{182}

Ironically, despite this anti-Israeli stance, in another textbook one can find admiration of Israelis [Jews], for preserving their identity despite the absence of a sovereign state.

According to Atatürk, the simplest definition of a nation is as follows: ‘A nation is a group of people who share the same culture.’ National culture has a vital role in maintaining and preserving a nation’s existence. The fact that Poles and Israelis lived for centuries without a state, and they easily became a nation soon after their independence, is due to preserving their national culture.\^\textsuperscript{183}

On maps, Israel exists, with or without Palestine.

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\textsuperscript{181} Bülent Tarman et al., \textit{Demokrasi ve İnsan Hakları} (Democracy and Human Rights), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014, p. 155.


Bosnia and Herzegovina War

The Bosnia Herzegovina War between Muslim Bosnians and Christian Serbians is sketchily covered; Serbia is depicted as responsible for the conflict.

In the war, which lasted three-and-a-half years from 1992–95, hundreds of thousands of innocent people lost their lives. Forty-four thousand Bosnian women and girls were exposed to sexual violence by Serbs during the war.186

Pan-Turkism

Turkish nationalism is officially limited to the boundaries of the Turkish Republic Türkiyecilik [Turkeyism] but the textbooks also feature a strong Pan-Turkic discourse. As such, one can find a Pan-Turkic heritage from the Balkans to China. The textbooks also suggest utilizing Turkey’s close kinship relations to maximize relations with ex-Soviet states and China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. In order to emphasize Turkey’s deep relations with the Turkic states, additional maps of the Turkish world were added to the textbooks.

Turkish cultural artifacts can be seen in a vast region, which starts from the Central and Eastern Asian countries, such as China and Mongolia, and extends to Herzegovina and Hungary.187

Atatürk developed the Turkish language and by circulating the language among the Turkish world, and by eliminating the different dialects he wished to unite them all with one single language. Therefore: ‘We should first deal with the culture issue for the Turks

living outside Turkey. Indeed, we have taken positive measures to handle such cases. We care about the great Turkish history, the sources of the Turkish language, its rich dialects and the ancient Turkish monuments. We don’t even neglect the language and culture of the Yakut Turks living beyond the Baykal Lake’ . . . This alone indicates how much he cared about the unity of the Turkish world in language and history.188

Atatürk, who determined the role followed by our country in foreign politics and was foresighted, guessed what would happen in the 1990s. ‘Today, the Soviet Union is our friend, our neighbor, our ally. We need this friendship. But nobody can know what might happen in the future. . . . It might be divided just like the Ottoman Empire, like Austria-Hungary and shrink. The nations it holds tightly today might get away. The world might reach a new balance. And when that time comes, Turkey must know what to do. . . . We have brothers who share our language, our faith and our substantiality under our friend’s administration. We must be ready to protect them. Being ready does not mean sitting back and waiting for that day to come. Preparation is necessary. How do nations prepare for this? By establishing strong spiritual bridges. Language is a bridge. . . . Faith is a bridge. . . . History is a bridge. . . . We must go down to our roots and integrate in our history divided by incidents. We cannot wait for them (non-Turks) to approach us. We need to approach them. . . . The political, social, cultural and economic relations between Turkey and the Turkish Republics (Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan), which became independent in 1991, are developing continuously. The major role of the Turkish International Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TİKA) in these developments is gaining pace.’ (October 29, 1933, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk)189

Turkey’s great interest in the Central Asian [Turkic] republics in the early 1990s was regarded as Pan-Turkish policy at that time; it particularly disturbed Russia and China.190

Research the problems in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China, and the responses of the Chinese government to other countries’ criticism on this issue.191

Three siblings from East Turkestan arrived in Ankara after walking eight months. The youngest of them was a twelve-year-old girl. Her two brothers were ages sixteen and eighteen, respectively. These three children travelled a long way, going through all sorts of difficulties, hunger, cold and heat. The children brought with them only one thing, which they kept with care: it was their father’s letter written to Atatürk. . . . In this letter, their father wrote that since he could not endure his children living in Chinese Turkestan as captives he entrusted them to the Turkish people.192

Ziya Gökalp’s Pan-Turkic Poem

O son of Turks, from now on, there is neither me, nor you, nor he, nor she; there is nothing! There are no nations or clans, but there is big Turan [pan-Turkic mythical homeland]. In Turkish spirit, there is only one state; there is only one ilkhan [leader].
(Ziya Gökalp)193

188 Komisyon, Türkçe - 7. Sınıf Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı (Turkish, Seventh-Grade Student Workbook), Meram, 2015, p. 56.
191 Ibid., p. 123.
‘Ballad of My Race’

We are the Turks, who are the descendants of the Oghuz,
Those who first invented fire,
Those who first plowed hard soil with plough,
While grizzly bears were wandering in the Ural [Mountains],
We, the Uyghurs, were the first who invented the caravan.

(Mehmet Emin Yurdakul)\textsuperscript{194}

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\textsuperscript{194} Cafer Yıldırım and Ali Asker Ova, \textit{Türk Edebiyatı-12. Sınıf Ders Kitabı} [Turkish Literature, Twelfth-Grade Schoolbook], Lider, 2012, p. 82. (Poem’s original title reads \textit{Irkımın Türküsü} [türkü means folk poem, but alludes also to \textit{Türk}, Turkish.])
World Peace

World peace and Atatürk’s ‘Peace at Home, Peace in the World’ philosophy remains a pillar of the curriculum. Turkey’s collaboration with the international community to preserve world peace includes former alliances like the Sâdâbat and Balkan Pacts; former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan’s Pan-Islamic Alliance Developing-8 (D-8, which includes: Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey) is presented as a remarkable pact, initiated by Turkey (though Erbakan was ousted from the government by Turkish Armed Forces during the so-called “post-modern coup d’état” of February 28, 1997).

If you want to succeed, use diplomacy in your words because the tongue is like a sword for a king. Keep in mind that words are more effective than weapons.\(^{195}\)

Today’s Turkish nation, for its existence, is satisfied with its current homeland because Turks are sure that they will preserve their deep and glorious history and great and mighty ancestral sacred heritage in this homeland.\(^{196}\)

Turkey is one of the founding members of the United Nations, which was established to maintain international peace and security. . . . Turkey has supported peace operations at different levels and in various respects, throughout different regions of the world. . . .\(^{197}\)

Atatürk was connected to the Turkish nation through great love. Also, he would think of the people of other nations; he was very willing to ensure world peace and resolve disputes between people. Today many nations are almost all related and they try hard to remain close [like families]. Therefore, people should try very hard and show compassion about the existence and happiness of other nations just as we do for our own and carry the same values for the safety of all nations, as we do for our own. Because working for the happiness other nations, means our own happiness and peaceful minds. If global and international peace, openness and goodwill fail, then no matter what we do for ourselves, we will always lack peace.\(^{198}\)

One of Atatürk’s greatest hopes was to create a fraternal relationship between nations. He exerted a great deal of effort to realize his ideals, as seen in such examples as the Balkan Pact signed in 1934 and the Sâdâbat Pact in 1937. Atatürk was a leader committed to peace. According to him, all nations suffer as peace declines. The world should be dominated by love alone. Atatürk’s understanding of love derived from his respect for humanity. His saying, ‘Peace at Home, Peace in the World’ has become a symbol of the promise of peace.\(^{199}\)

New political regions can be set up through the cooperation of different countries. The D-8 Group can serve as an example of a political region.\(^{200}\)

\(^{195}\) Erdoğan Sağdıç and Zafer Araz, Uluslararası İlişkiler -Ortaöğretim Ders Kitabı (International Relations, Secondary School Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 201, p. 40.

\(^{196}\) Komisyon, Coğrafya -11. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Geography, Eleventh-Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 141.

\(^{197}\) Bülent Tarman et al., Demokrasi ve İnsan Hakları (Democracy and Human Rights), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014, pp. 150–151.


\(^{200}\) Komisyon, Coğrafya -9. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Geography, Ninth-Grade), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 164.
Human Rights—Democracy and Gender Equality

After addressing the regional alliances and global attempts toward world harmony, Turkish school textbooks also teach about human rights. The Turkish Constitution, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Magna Carta, the US Declaration of Independence, the French Declaration of Human and Civil Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are offered as the fundamental sources of human rights in the world. The lives of important human rights activists like Martin Luther King, Rosa Parks, Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi are included. Besides these core documents and personalities, Islam’s perspective on human rights and well-known quotes by other Turkish-Islamic figures are featured. The curriculum lauds the special moral qualities of the Turkish-Islamic civilization, which it represents as pioneering the cause of human rights.

Human Rights

No matter the different languages we speak, the color of our skin and different cultures, we all share the same planet. As human beings, we all have responsibilities and duties towards each other.202

Regardless of different language, religion, race, gender, class, skill or status, people have the same value. This basic principle has been included in the [Turkish] constitution and laws and therefore the equality of humanity is secured. Nevertheless, it is unfortunately not possible to claim that equality between people in daily life is fully achieved.203

UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Article 1: All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
Article 3: Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.204

Magna Carta Libertatum (UK)

This document was signed in 1215 between the nobles and the King of England. It limits the powers of the king. One of the most important statements in the decree, Article 39 of the Magna Carta states: ‘No free person shall not be arrested before being tried by their equals, according to the provisions of the laws of the country, shall not be imprisoned, shall not be deprived of their property and assets, shall not be declared an outlaw, shall not be deported or no matter what, shall not suffer any harm.’205

US Declaration of Independence and Constitution (Bill of Rights)

All men are created equally, they all have inalienable rights, and because of these rights they are entitled to seek quality of life, freedom and prosperity; they have the right to change a government that behaves contrary to human rights and have the right to elect a new government.206

203 Bülent Tarman et al., Demokrasi ve İnsan Hakları ( Democracy and Human Rights), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014, p. 121.
206 Ibid.
French Declaration of Human and Civil Rights

All people are born free and are equal and have the right to resist persecution; sovereignty is based on the nation which cannot be ruled by one person or group; those governing the country are responsible to the nation and no one can be condemned for their religious or social beliefs.207

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

No child can be discriminated against because of race, color, language, religion or gender (Article 2). Every child who is born has the right to live and develop in the best way possible (Article 6). Every child that is mentally and physically disabled has the right to be raised and receive aid as a self-confident, respectable individual through special family and state protection, care and education (Article 23).208

Martin Luther King, who fought for equal rights for African Americans through non-violence, received the Nobel Prize in 1964.209

Rosa Parks was arrested as she refused to give her place in the bus to a white man. Her action for the sake of equal rights is regarded as the beginning of [the Civil Rights Era], enabling black people to rise to the most important positions in the USA today.210

Nelson Mandela, who became the symbol of freedom, was released after long-term imprisonment and became the first black president of South Africa.211

Born in 1869 in India, Mahatma Gandhi studied law in England. There, he experienced racial discrimination for the first time in his life. . . . He organized a protest and was imprisoned for fighting against injustice. This did not make Gandhi give up his belief that violence was always wrong.213

207 Ibid.
210 Komisyon, Sosyoloji - Ortaöğretim Ders Kitabı (Sociology, Textbook for Secondary Schools), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 36.
It [The Indian the caste system] is a stratification system based on religious foundations; although it was abolished officially, its effects still continue in modern-day India.\textsuperscript{214}

According to Islam, people are born equally free. There is no distinction between people in terms of gender and race.\textsuperscript{215}

\textbf{Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi}

Come, come, whoever you are, come!
Heretic, Magus, worshipper of idols—it doesn’t matter!
Our [Dervish] lodge is not a lodge of despair.
Come, even if you have broken your vow a hundred times\textsuperscript{216}

\textbf{Yunus Emre}

Let us come together and meet.
Let us make it contentedly.
Let us love and be loved.
For this world will not be left to anyone.\textsuperscript{217}

One of the most beautiful examples of harmonious living during the Ottoman era is the Darülaceze [Hospice] opened during the Abdulhamid II period. The hospice was established to accommodate orphans, the homeless, the ill, the disabled and the elderly. Still continuing with its activities at the present time, the institution housing a mosque, a church and synagogue continues to serve people without discrimination—of language, religion or race.\textsuperscript{218}

\section*{Democracy Education}

To highlight the value of democracy, the curriculum emphasizes the democratic nature of the state with a focus on parliamentary life. School and class elections are encouraged. Freedom of the press is mentioned, but only casually.

As a result of Mustafa Kemal Pasha’s efforts, the Grand National Assembly opened in Ankara. Mustafa Kemal Pasha, who was elected president at the meeting, said the following in relation to the importance of the assembly: ‘The people have taken direct control of their sovereignty and future and are represented not by a single person, but at a grand assembly composed of deputies selected by all. That assembly is your grand assembly.’\textsuperscript{219}

All practices in our school and classrooms are done by democratic means. . . . We all have equal rights in the classroom. We express out thoughts freely. We make decisions by voting. And we adopt the decisions that are made. Thus, we learn to be more patient, more respectful, more tolerant and fair. And we solve any problems we encounter by democratic means. Our teacher told us that a republic is the best form of government. The public chooses the persons to govern them by voting.

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\textsuperscript{215} Ahmet Ekşi et al., \textit{Din Kültürü ve Ahlak Bilgisi - 10. Sınıf Ders Kitabı} (Religious Culture and Moral Education, Tenth-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 105.
\textsuperscript{216} Ibid., p. 23.
\textsuperscript{217} Türkçe - 7. Sınıf Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı (Turkish, Seventh-Grade Student Workbook), Meram, 2015, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{218} Komisyon, \textit{Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Ders Kitabı} (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 77.
\end{flushright}
The elected ministers govern the nation on their behalf.220

Freedom of Press: ‘The press cannot be pressured or influenced under any circumstances. Journalists should write about what they saw, what they think and what they know candidly.’ (Mustafa Kemal Atatürk)221

**Gender—Population and Sex Education**

Tansu Çiller’s election victory in 1993, making her the first female Turkish Prime Minister, paved the way for gender consciousness in Turkey. Prior to her election, the textbooks oriented women toward traditional jobs such as teaching or nursing. Her election signaled a dramatic change. The textbooks of the late 1990s encouraged women to participate in the workforce without any limitations. This trend continued to gather momentum after 2002. To this end, the curriculum has employed a three-pronged method to support gender equality: 1) pointing to the high status of women among the ancient Turks; 2) Islamic egalitarianism; and 3) Atatürk’s comprehensive reforms promoting women’s rights. The post-2002 editions go a step further and criticize gender inequality in society and education. The textbooks openly encourage families to send girls to school. Population strategies and sex education are also discussed, yet sexual orientation issues are not. And motherhood is still portrayed as a woman’s most important role in society.

Gender-oriented prejudices of the society can bring about gender-based discrimination between men and women. Labor division based on sex, underlies the roots of gender-based discrimination.222

In the days of the old Turks, paternal and maternal lineages were regarded equally. Goods were fully shared among family [members]. Mother and father had equal rights over the custody of children. . . . In Turkish states, women not only worked at home, but also on farms, in markets and even in state affairs with men; in particular, they [women]...
appeared in the forefront of social activities.223

In the Göktürk [state] women could ride horses, shoot arrows and compete with men in wrestling matches.224

There is no comparison between the Ancient Turks and Arabs with respect to gender.

Prior to Islam, bad habits, such as drinking alcohol, gambling and fortune-telling were very widespread amongst the Arabs. Members of rich and powerful tribes could oppress the weak. There were blood feuds which had lasted for many years between the tribes. People were being enslaved. Slaves, women and girls had no value and almost no rights within society. Those who had male children were happy and held feasts and made sacrifices to their gods; but those who had a girl were ashamed of this.225

Our Prophet said . . . ‘To seek knowledge is obligatory for all Muslim men and women.’226

Final Sermon of Prophet Muhammad: ‘People! I recommend that you look out for the rights of women and fear God on this subject. Women have been entrusted to you by God. You have rights with respect to women and they have rights concerning you.’227

Still, when it comes to gender, secular rules take precedence.

Legal affairs in the Ottoman era used to be determined in accordance with the rules of religion. These rules were inadequate in meeting the needs of the Turkish people. Men and women gained equal rights and civil marriage became obligatory for women with the acceptance of the Turkish Civil Code on February 17, 1926. Women were also given the right to divorce and inherit.

224 Tuncer Kurt et al., Türk Spor Tarihi (Turkish Sports History), (Milli Eğitim Basımevi, 2013 p.15
227 Mevlüt Kesman et al., Hz. Muhammed’in Hayatı - 8. Sınıf Öğretim Materyali (The Life of the Prophet Muhammad, Eighth-Grade Teaching Material), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 31.
After the founding of the republic, Turkish men and women gained new rights with the acceptance of the Turkish Civil Code. Atatürk expressed the importance of women at every opportunity; he emphasized equality for both men and women. Following this line, regulations were established to allow women more access to social and political life. Most important was the right of women to vote and be elected to political office. These rights were first realized in the 1930 municipal elections and the 1934 general elections. . . . After their success in political life, opportunities for women opened in numerous professions as: prosecutors, judges, lawyers, pilots, etc.229

‘A woman’s greatest duty is motherhood. Considering that the first place of discipline is the mother’s bosom, the importance of this duty will be understood as it should be. Our nation is determined to be a powerful nation. One of our needs today is to ensure our women rise in every matter. This will lead them to be wise and knowledgeable and they will go through all the learning stages men go through. Then, women will walk side by side with men in social life and be one another’s helpers and supporters.’ (Atatürk)231

Hit the Bitch [Vurun Kahpeye]

[Here, a gender committed chapter from Halide Edip Adıvar’s feminist novel Hit the Bitch [Vurun Kahpeye] is given].232

There are girls who are not sent to school. In the following three years, the ‘Come on Girls, Let’s go to School!’ campaign started to cover all our provinces.233

Campaign for supporting education of girls: ‘Come on girls! Let’s go to school!’234

234 Ibid.
The population of our country is above seventy million and half of this population is under age twenty five. . . . All we need is for this young population to be subjected to appropriate education required for this time and day.235

In 1968, at the UN General Assembly, the legal right relating to reproduction in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is stated as follows: ‘Parents have a basic human right to freely and responsibly decide when—and how many—children they would like to have.’236

Menstrual cycles begin at age 13–14 for people in hot countries, while they begin at 15–17 for people in cold countries and continue through ages 45–55.237

The male reproductive system consists of various glands and the penis.238
Shaping Behavior

Traditional Turkish values such as hospitality, close neighborhoods and visiting Turkish baths, are featured along with pluralism, individualism and non-discrimination. Life sciences, the Turkish language and religious studies are most effective in imparting these values. Islam, too, has proven to be helpful in this regard.

Belief in God

Belief in the afterlife contributes to the reduction of bad deeds and an increase of good deeds in society. . . . [A believer] tries to establish good relations with others, be helpful to himself and to the society, and does favors. Moreover, societies with such people would be peaceful.239

Fasting has a variety of benefits to people. Those who fast, learn to be patient and to control their willpower. They are able to understand how difficult it is to be hungry, thirsty or destitute. For this reason, they would be more willing to help the needy and indigent. Such people would approach everyone with love, respect and tolerance.240

Tolerance

Everyone can have their say in a family. Each thought is received with tolerance. Tolerance brings harmony and happiness in the family. Children who grow up with love, respect and tolerance participate in society as healthy individuals.241

Family

Family values are conservative and intent on the future of society.

Family is the core and foundation of the community. A strong and powerful community is made up of strong and organized families. A strong and organized family means a strong and organized community. Behaviors that are gained in the family have a direct impact on community life. Every individual in a family has a distinct importance. The mother has an important role in the child’s growing process. The mother also plays a major part in building healthy relationships between the individuals in the family. Being well-educated herself, will also reflect on the generations she will raise. Children raised by well-educated mothers and fathers will grow up to be individuals in the community who know traditions and customs. Expressing the importance he attached to family life, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk said: ’The basis of civilization, the foundation of progress and power lies in family life. Degeneration in this life will certainly lead to social, economic and political corruption.’242

240 Ibid., p. 39.
**Love and Respect: Respecting Elders—Accepting Differences**

All types of problems can be solved through love and respect. All evil deeds can be transformed into good ones, and all ugliness into beauty. Love and respect eliminates jealousy, hatred and other evil behavior. Certain responsibilities rest on the individuals within society in order for the unity and solidarity between people to remain. In order for an exemplary family and society to become established, individuals need to perform their own duties within the framework of love and respect. Respecting the opinions, beliefs and lifestyles (hayat biçimleri) of people, endeavoring to ensure that they benefit from equal rights and opportunities, and hurrying to help them with love and compassion are among the indispensable values of fellowship.243

Youngsters respect the elderly members in a family while the elders express their love to youngsters and protect them. They make an intensive effort to raise the children in a healthy way.244

If we upset our parents and lie, despite having read the verses which say that it is not appropriate to disrespectfully complain to our parents and which tell us not to harm others, it will not be completely correct to say that we love the Qur’an. That is because a person who loves will abide by the wishes of those whom he or she loves and listen to them.245

Positive Parental Behavior: Being tolerant and forgiving in the event of mistakes while encouraging goodness and keeping children away from evil.246

We should help old people.247

We should respect our teachers.248

**Making Mistakes**

I made a mistake; I am sorry.
I made a mistake too; I was very slow.
When we make a mistake we should apologize.249

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248 Ibid.
249 Ibid.
**Being Different is Good**

Aren’t we all so different from each other? Our appearances, our way of speech, our personalities, our thoughts, interests, abilities and skills are so different. These differences add richness to our lives. I wouldn’t like to be surrounded with people who are identical to me, because my life would be very boring.\(^{250}\)

We see our differences with our friends naturally. But sometimes there might be some behaviors that we dislike. Even in these cases we should respect them [our friends] and act in a tolerant way.\(^ {251}\)

**Greeting [Selamlama]**

We come across many people in everyday life. We greet them. We emanate cordial feelings towards others by greeting them. They return our gesture. Thus, strong bonds of love and friendship blossom.\(^ {252}\)

**Not Making Noise**

We must not increase the volume of televisions, radios and musical instruments to the level of making others uncomfortable. We must also refrain from making noisy repairs late at night or in the early hours of the morning.\(^ {253}\)

**Right to Speak—Not Interrupting Others**

Talking is a way to exchange thoughts. In other words, talking is sharing our lives with others. By talking, we can be involved in communal life and democratic society. It is a fact that a society composed of silent individuals cannot form a healthy democracy.\(^ {254}\)

Besides addressing the right to speak and express oneself, the textbooks also paid attention to the style [manner] of speech.
How would you feel if someone interrupts you constantly while you are talking? Buse speaks softly and Buse listens to her friend with great interest.256

**Loving Neighbors**

In the past, there used to be ‘neighborhood friendship.’ At times it was deeper than family ties; it meant solidarity and unity. This close friendship was called ‘community.’ Within the frame of the monetary and moral responsibilities of those people living in the community, the civil culture formed among people is pretty hard to experience in other nations.

‘House neighbor,’ ‘next-door neighbor,’ and ‘backyard neighbor,’ are all different names given to this tight community. In this society, ‘a neighbor could share [even unimportant things as] ashes with their neighbor’ at one time. People will consider buying a neighbor when buying a house. Even the ‘dog of one neighbor would not bark at his neighbor.’ These relationships were so revered that, strangers would inquire about someone ‘from their neighbors.’257

**Solidarity and Sharing Sorrows**

As human beings we are social creatures. For those of us who live in communities, solidarity is paramount.

Sorrows decrease when they are shared. How do you treat a friend when they are sad? What would you like your friend to ask you when you are sad?259

After the earthquake in Van, people needed permanent housing and relief to get back to normal life. . . . As a class, we actively participated in the aid campaign and provided help to Van.260

**Holding One's Temper**

A hero is not someone who beats his opponent in wrestling. A real hero is a person who beats his/her anger when angry.261

256 Ibid.
257 Komisyon, Türkçe - 6. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Turkish, Sixth-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, p. 98.
259 Alev Müftüoğlu and Selahattin Bektaş, Türkçe - 5. Sınıf Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı (Turkish, Fifth-Grade Student Workbook), FCM Yayıncılık Anonim Şirketi, 2013, p. 16.
Short story: ‘Nail’

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence. The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Finally the day came when the boy didn’t lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, ‘You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, it leaves a scar just like these.’

Empathy

Empathy is an ability that allows people to come closer to each other and has the power to facilitate communication. When empathy is established between people, they feel that they are understood and that they matter to one another. This puts people at ease.

Hospitality

The friendly, welcoming hospitality of Turks, toward foreigners, strangers, orphans and travelers visiting their country, cities, villages and towns goes back a very long way in history. . . .

‘When a guest sits at your table, do not leave him under-appreciated. Understand that it is your debt to thank him for coming.’ (Nâsır-ı Hüsrev)

Hygiene

We touch many things with our hands. These may have germs on them. We cannot see the germs with naked eyes. We should wash our hands with plenty of soap and water as soon as we get home. If we do not wash our hands, germs can enter our bodies. The germs in our bodies can cause diseases.

As with all of the prophets, one reason the Prophet Muhammad was sent, was to act as an example for people. While the Prophet Muhammad set an example for Muslims on every subject, he also set an example on the subject of oral and dental cleanliness and hygiene. The Prophet was very meticulous on the matter of the cleanliness of the body, which is a reflection of inner cleanliness. The Prophet would pay great attention to oral and dental hygiene and would make recommendations to his friends on this matter. Those of us who love the Prophet Muhammad, and who endeavor to follow his life as an...
example, also need to pay the necessary attention to oral and dental hygiene.  

The Prophet Muhammad also paid attention to hair care. The personal belongings he carried with him included a mirror, a comb and scissors. He would comb his hair whenever it needed to be combed, and say, ‘Whoever grows hair must take care of it,’ thus instructing his friends to pay attention to their hair as well.

‘The Turks frequently go to the hamam [Turkish bath] in order to keep their body clean and healthy. Therefore, there are many beautiful hammams in this country. They are all built in the same style; the only difference between the smaller and larger hammams is the larger or smaller amount of ornate marble.’ (Jean de Thévenot, 1655–56, Turkey p. 85.)

By the fifteenth century, bathing and using hot-baths began to emerge in large European cities. However, bathing in this period meant to get into a barrel. Steam-cabins were used only by the very rich. Bathing was not very common among [ordinary] people. Modern Europe became aware of the importance of bathing and hygiene after the outbreak of cholera in the 1830s. In old Istanbul houses, the bathrooms were lined with marble, stone, ceramic and spelter tiles.

Alcohol—Drugs—Smoking

Alcohol, smoking and drug use cause addiction by harming the nervous system.  

Let’s review briefly the harmfulness of alcoholic beverages; prohibition has often been difficult to enforce . . . It is very difficult to stop for those who drink alcohol every day. Inebriation symptoms include inability to focus, weakened willpower, aggression and trembling of hands. Once the influence of alcohol is over, these symptoms [may] disappear. But these symptoms are only the temporary damages of alcohol.

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266 Hatice Arıcı, Hz. Muhammed’in (s.a.) Hayatı - 5. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (The Life of the Prophet Muhammad [pbohydr], Fifth-Grade Textbook), Tekno Artı Bilişim, 2014, pp. 30–32.
267 Ibid., p. 34.
268 Komisyon, Sosyal Bilgiler - 7. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Social Studies, Seventh-Grade Textbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2015, pp. 87–89.
270 Seda Ercan Akkaya and et.al., Biyoloji -12. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Biology, Twelfth-Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 137.
Shaping Behavior

Guarding against Waste

We should not be purchasing all the items that we see advertised so our money is not wasted.272

BE THRIFTY NOT WASTEFUL273

Health Awareness

Let’s write an essay about someone that we know from our immediate neighborhood or anyone in our society who goes through everyday life with success despite their health problems (vision, hearing or speech impaired, wheel chair bound, or having diseases such as AIDS, leukemia or kidney disease). Such individuals, including those with hereditary diseases and physical disabilities, continue to live in their communities, work, and perform their various responsibilities. . . . We must provide any arrangements needed to ensure they too, are able to live comfortably.274

Patients, with advanced heart, liver and kidney failure, can have a healthy life only through organ transplants. Currently, there are almost 17–18 thousand patients waiting for kidney transplants in our country.275

In your opinion, how important is organ donation? Cooperation and solidarity help to strengthen the bonds of our nation. Atatürk greatly valued the importance of national unity and solidarity.276

A first in the world: The doctor who performed the world’s first double arm and the second face transplant at the University of Akdeniz scored another first. He transplanted double legs to a patient who lost both of his legs in an accident.277

272 Gülcan Değirmenci and Fatma Karafilik, Türkçe - 1. Sınıf Ders ve Öğrenci Çalışma Kitabı (Turkish, First-Grade Textbook and Student Workbook), Harf Eğitim Yayıncılığı Limited Şirketi, 2015, p. 71.
277 Ibid., p. 56.
Protection of the Environment

Protecting the environment includes not polluting, loving and protecting animals and saving energy and natural resources; these are introduced as core values in all Turkish schoolbooks. While the curriculum warns of the dangers of nuclear energy, as seen in the 1986 Chernobyl disaster it also highlights Turkey’s vital need for nuclear energy and teaches about Turkey’s nuclear program.

No Polluting

We must avoid any actions that might disrupt the natural environment. For example, while visiting natural environments, we must not disturb the creatures living there.278

Loving Animals

Water Consumption

How should we use the source of our limited water to ensure avoiding drought in the future? First of all, we must use water sparingly. We must avoid wasting water as much as possible.280

Protection of the Environment

Global Warming
The destruction of the rain forests will lead to the decrease of the amount of rain, to the increase of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and the increase of toxic gases and will thus lead to the acceleration of global warming.281

Examine the cartoons below. What facts were emphasized in the cartoons that will lead to global warming?282

Recycling
Research about recycling activities carried out around your vicinity and gather information about the benefits of recycling into the economy. Write down the information you learned in the section below and share with your classmates.283

Renewable Energy
Gather information about studies related to renewable energy production in our country. Write down the information gathered in the following section and share with your classmates.284

Radiation
The greatest problem associated with nuclear power plants is the radiation released into the environment by radioactive waste. The effects of accidents at nuclear power plants

282 Ibid.
284 Ibid., p. 91.
Protection of the Environment

last for many years. Many people died as a result of the 1986 Chernobyl power plant explosion in
Ukraine and all of the countries in the Black Sea region have been affected by the radiation since that
time.  

Unfortunately, our dependence on [fossil fuel] energy sources, like natural gas and oil, compels us to
find other alternative energy sources. Turkey can resolve this deficit only through nuclear energy.  

Depending on electricity supply and demand projections in our country, it is projected that the portion
of nuclear power plants in electric energy production will reach 5 percent as a minimum by the year
2020. For that reason, an agreement between the Russian Federation and Turkey, with respect to
the nuclear power plant construction in Mersin-Akkuyu, was concluded in May 2010. Nuclear power
plants are under control as long as they are operating. Therefore, the risk of a nuclear power plant
accident which could hurt people and the environment, is almost negligible. . . .

287 Ibid.
Science, Art and the Turkish Islamic Synthesis

The former Turkish Minister of Education, Vehbi Dinçerler, tried to prevent the inclusion of Darwin’s theory of evolution in the curriculum, and sought to have it replaced with a religious version of this theory in 1987. Perhaps surprisingly, the theory of evolution is being taught, with relevant information as to its relationship with Islam.

A twelfth-grade biology book includes a unit on “The Beginnings of Life and Evolution.” Graphics show the development of the biosphere from the Big Bang until the present. Among the topics covered are Francisco Redi’s experiment showing that flies are not created spontaneously and Louis Pasteur’s follow-up experiment demonstrating that even the presence of air will not bring about spontaneous generation. The evolutionary theories of Jean-Batiste Lamarck and Charles Darwin are analyzed. The textbook also includes in the discussion, a brief synopsis of the Theory of Creationism.

*A: THE BEGINNING OF LIFE; B: EVOLUTION.* BIOLOGY, GRADE 12., P. 200.
The following diagram offers an explanation of evolution theory from the text:

“Contributions of Information Acquired through Fossils Research to Secure Understanding of Life,” on how the dog-like *diacodexis pakistanensis* evolved into our contemporary Blue Whale (*balaenoptera musculus*).290

Creation Theory: According to the holy books, all living and nonliving beings in the universe were created by an omnipotent Creator. . . . Creation Theory states that the universe works in accordance with the Creator’s laws in a certain order which cannot be created spontaneously. According to this theory, all things in the universe have been created for a purpose which the Creator has defined.291

An eighth-grade science and technology textbook explains that Lamarck’s theory is not relevant any more. Yet, the book explains new findings in epigenetics.

**Theory of Evolution**

The process by which organisms change over time as a result of natural conditions is called the theory of evolution. According to this theory, organisms change continuously from simple structures to more complex structures. However, this change takes place very slowly. Even the smallest genetic change could take up to a century to be realized. Studies and findings about evolution are not proven facts in laboratory findings. Views on this issue are mostly based on observations and assumptions. Currently, there are more than half a million animals and an equal number of plant species known to exist on earth. Evolution theory cannot fully explain how so many species can exist and live to this day. . . . The French naturalist [Jean-Baptiste] Lamarck put forth the theory that animal species living today originated from old, extinct animals. Lamarck focused on genealogy and by making a casual explanation about the origin of life he became the founder of the theory of evolution.292

Scientific studies have subsequently revealed that acquired properties cannot be inherited. Accordingly, the long necks of giraffes cannot be associated with lengthening their necks to reach higher branches. However, the changes occurring in the structure of genes of living things are inherited.293

According to the Big Bang theory, the universe was formed about fourteen billion years ago by a huge explosion. The solar system and the earth were formed some five to six billion years ago by gravitational compression of gas and dust clouds.294

291 Ibid., p. 204.
293 Ibid., p. 49.
294 Seda Ercan Akkaya et al., *Biyoloji -10. Sinif Ders Kitabı* (Biology, Tenth-Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013, p. 197.
Science, Art and the Turkish Islamic Synthesis

Cloning

Cloning is considered important and explained in the curriculum.

In 2007, with studies conducted by a team of experts at Istanbul University, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, the first cloning [of a sheep] in Turkey took place. The cloned sheep was named ‘Oyalı.’ In 2009, the Turkish cloned a calf, named ‘Efe,’ as part of the ‘Cloning of Anatolian Native Cattle Breeds Project’ with the cooperation of TUBITAK, Istanbul University and Uludag University.295

Art

Although prohibited in Islam, making sculptures is encouraged within the texts.

‘If a nation doesn’t draw a picture or make sculptures, or meet the requirements of science; it should be admitted that such a nation cannot develop. The successes achieved in the fine arts are the most absolute evidence that all revolutions are successful.’ (Atatürk)297

Conclusion

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk’s definition of what it means to be a “Turk” is found in the Turkish Constitution (Article 66), which stipulates that “everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk.” The curriculum adheres to this concept completely. Atatürk’s picture still appears in every textbook. But the curriculum also emphasizes the Islamic nature of the national identity. Arguably, non-Muslim citizens of Turkey are excluded from fully sharing Turkish identity, with the caveat that democracy, tolerance and respect for the Other are core values for a Turkish student. Considering that 99.8 percent of the citizenship is Muslim, this might be viewed as a minor concern.

The curriculum does reflect political and social realities. A focus on the Islamic identity of Turkey that began in 1980 following the coup of General Evren has been enhanced in recent years with the rise of the AKP. Inculcated into the minds and hearts of Turkey’s schoolchildren as it continues to be, the influence of Islam is seemingly here to stay.

Islam, as a faith, and as it is understood in the curriculum, is not restricted to one country but embodies a universal, transnational community of believers. The textbooks are quick to point out the role of Turks as historical guardians and leaders of Islam. Granted, it presents a strictly democratic and peace-seeking nation-state of Turkey as defender of the democratic West and NATO member closely associated with Europe. Yet it also embraces a three-dimensional global ambition, unavoidably with a Muslim flavor: 1) a Pan-Turkish unity stretching from Europe to China via Central Asia; 2) the post-Ottoman post-Seljuk domains covering the Middle East, North Africa and Southeast Europe; and 3) present-day Islam as a global Third Worldist movement.

The curriculum suggests a strong state ideology that serves the needs of the great majority of Turkish citizens. Islamic aspects feature noble values such as freedom of conscience and respect for enemies, as well as tolerance toward other lifestyles and religions. It highlights the contributions of Turkish-Muslim scientists and scholars to humanity as a whole, along with the contributions of people from other cultures. Nudity in art is shown. Islam is characterized as compatible with modern life. Quality education, gender equality and co-existence with other religions are stressed. The Prophet Muhammad is represented as the perfect role model for students, with Islam viewed as morally superior to other nationalities and cultures.

But it is a Turkish Islam that draws on a long Turkish history—from the Göktürks to Atatürk—that is presented as being more tolerant. Judaism, Christianity and Buddhism, are viewed positively, especially when compared with atheism, which is seen as dangerous and possibly triggering Satanist tendencies. And historical and theological grudges remain—some pernicious—toward Judaism and Christianity.

The Turkish school textbooks teach about ethnic and religious minorities, including Jews, Greeks, Armenians and Assyrians, as well as the large Kurdish minority. Controversial episodes of Anatolian history are taught but only from the official Turkish perspective that rejects the term genocide. In this respect, introspection remains a challenge for this curriculum, despite many impressive accomplishments.

Conclusion

As for the large and strategically significant minority of Kurds, some improvement was registered, particularly the introduction of elementary level textbooks in the Kurdish language. But Kurdish issues are barely covered historically, politically and culturally. The Alevi-Bektaşi and Sufi cultures are presented as part of the religious and national heritage. However, according to our research, the large Muslim Alevi community in Turkey is not discussed on a political level.

In discussing current affairs, the Turkish-Islam Synthesis leads to the adoption of Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkish viewpoints, but historical commitments to the defense of Western democracy are also taken seriously. Current affairs subjects include Turkey’s European Union accession process, the Cyprus question, the Bosnian War and the Arab-Israeli conflict. In the latter, the curriculum supports the Arab position. The Holocaust is all but denied and the demise of Jewish communities in the Muslim world ignored; but the historical and religious attachment of the Jews to their homeland is recognized and the unusual perceived condition of Israel as a religion-nation is understood. Specific Turkish-Israeli relations are discussed in geopolitical-economic terms.

Both universal and Islamic perspectives are cited as reasons to learn about world peace and human rights. While social contracts like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are taken as core references, Prophet Muhammad’s hadiths, his teachings in the “Final Sermon” and Qur’anic verses are also taught.

Similarly, a distinction between science and religion can be seen in the section that deals with the theory of evolution and creationism.

Among the core values imparted to Turkey’s next generation, democracy, respect and national pride are perhaps the most important, along with gender issues. Being a good Muslim and a citizen of the world, love, tolerance, compassion, faithfulness, patience, serving the elderly, hospitality, cleanliness, modernity, giving to others and defending the homeland at all costs are extremely important.

It is encouraging to see how much effort has been invested in a curriculum intent on teaching democratic values as well as compassion, love and hospitality. In light of IMPACT-se’s methodology and the institute’s conviction that curricula shape the future, one needs to ask: What is the meaning of this “new” Turkish curriculum and to what extent will it indeed maintain and create a Turkish-Islamic nation that is democratic, vibrant, successful and benevolent?

Providing a proper and fair assessment for this curriculum is not an easy task. The Turkish education system promotes tolerance, understanding and RESPECT toward other cultures, achievements, values and ways of life. This is true particularly when it comes to the West versus Islam, but also as regards Israel and the Jews, Greece, and even Armenia. Many INDIVIDUAL OTHER figures—from Plato (the Greek) to Galileo (the Italian Catholic) to Einstein (the German Jew) to Baird (the British inventor)—are presented. Also included are the mothers of the Australian soldiers who fought at Gallipoli, along with such well-known Turks as the Alevi-Sufi: Haji Bektash Veli.

The textbooks, with few exceptions, meet the principle of NO HATE and generally are free
Conclusion

of wording, imagery and ideologies likely to create prejudices.

As for PEACEMAKING, the curriculum mostly complies with IMPACT’s standards. It applies a variety of methodologies such as Turkey’s pragmatic strategy with Israel, teaching about international human rights documents and encouraging open debate and listening skills. The curriculum’s design serves as a model for peacemaking by combining cultures and identities. It ranges from ancient Turkish paganism to the Sufi tradition; from Sharia-based Islam to an uncompromisingly secular constitution; from the role of Jews and Assyrians in Turkish history to solidarity with Muslim countries; and from appreciation of Buddhism to the study of evolution theory.

Harmony and peace are highly valued and so is compassion and love, the *sine qua non* of peacemaking. But there is also a fascination with the transnational identities that have comprised Turkey’s history, including Pan-Turkic, post-Ottoman and the Pan-Islamic Nation that could be easily translated into an imperial drive directed at other nations in the region. The curriculum sees Turks as the leaders of Islam.

In terms of GENDER, the curriculum not surprisingly receives a high grade. Gender equality is gaining strength within the curriculum on a par with religion and traditional family values. And though women should be treated equally, the traditional role of women as mothers continues to be stressed. Similarly, as regards LGBTQ, the topic is not directly addressed, but hints of compassion and tolerance are evident throughout the texts. There are no apparent issues in the curriculum with respect to SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION, except one old patriotic poem that dreams about a Turkish economy that would be 100 percent Turkish-Muslim.

The only benchmark remaining is the question of UNBIASED INFORMATION, which, to an extent, also concerns PEACEMAKING. The overall picture that comes out of the curriculum is that of a peaceful world led by a just, generous and tolerant Turkish-Islamic actor, while facts that do not comport with this harmonious worldview, are brushed aside. For example there is no ownership of the suffering inflicted by the *Jihad* and *Gaza* Holy War conquests of Turkey’s historical past; or the uneasy relationship with the Kurds. We are convinced—as we assess the entire curriculum with its genuine values of peace and tolerance—that the goal is to follow an easier path and maintain the status quo and a semblance of harmony, rather than the hard work of resolving some of these issues. But such a strategy can only go so far.

One of the examples of great concern mentioned above, because it pertains to the future, is the Kurdish question. We believe a discourse on that topic should begin. The curriculum should be part of it. Silence is not a policy. The gradual—and largely successful—transformation of the Turkish curriculum, which aims at making it more inclusive and more accommodating to religion, should not stop there, but also include more balanced narratives and open discourses with respect to Turkey’s large minorities.

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Finally, we cannot ignore the current political crisis in Turkey; amid mass arrests, firings and suspensions, including tens of thousands of educators and professors. In times of crisis, governments all too often decide to apply emergency laws; in this case, ostensibly to defend Turkey’s democracy.

Those who have studied the Turkish curricula have mostly been impressed by the patience, perseverance and caution of the post-2002 reforms. It is now up to the Turkish government and its leaders to show that moving cautiously was not merely a tactical decision aimed at minimizing opposition at home and abroad, but a strategic move toward a better future that also preserves—in the actual present—freedom, peace, prosperity, tolerance and respect for all.
Methodology

Similar to its previous reports, IMPACT-se’s report on Turkish textbooks utilized the content analysis research method. While doing this the report examined the content of the textbooks according to the following criteria which is a condensed version of UNESCO’s standards for peace and tolerance in school education: 299

1. **RESPECT:** The curriculum should promote tolerance, understanding and respect toward the “Other, “his or her culture, achievements, values and way of life.300

2. **INDIVIDUAL OTHER:** The curriculum should foster personal attachment toward the “Other” as an individual, his or her desire to be familiar, loved and appreciated.301

3. **NO HATE:** The curriculum should be free of wording, imagery and ideologies likely to create prejudices, misconceptions, stereotypes, misunderstandings, mistrust, racial hatred, religious bigotry and national hatred, as well as any other form of hatred or contempt for other groups or peoples.302

4. **PEACEMAKING:** The curriculum should develop capabilities for non-violent conflict resolution and promote peace.303

5. **UNBIASED INFORMATION:** Educational materials (textbooks, workbooks, teachers’ guides, maps, illustrations, aids) should be up-to-date, accurate, complete, balanced and unprejudiced, and use equal standards to promote mutual knowledge and understanding between different peoples.304

6. **GENDER:** The curriculum should foster equality and mutual respect between women and men. It should refrain from stereotyped gender roles.305

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299 The methodology was initiated by Yohanan Manor. This is an updated version of the standards prepared by Eldad J. Pardo, Jean-Claude Nidam and Shimon Shetreet (May 2014). http://www.impact-se.org/methodology/

300 As defined in the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance Proclaimed and signed by Member States of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Articles 1, 4.2. See also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding Between Peoples (1965), Principles I, III. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): Education shall be directed to the full development of human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial and religious groups and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

301 The goal of education for peace is the development of universally recognized values in an individual, regardless of different socio-cultural contexts. See Ibid., Article 6. See also, on exchanges between youth, the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principles IV, V.


304 Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Article V.14.

305 The preamble to the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, notes the Convention on the Elimination of Any Form of Discrimination against Women and emphasizes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to gender.
Methodology

7. **SOUND PROSPERITY and COOPERATION**: The curriculum should educate for sound and sustainable economic conduct and preservation of the environment for future generations. It should encourage regional and local cooperation to that effect.306

306 Based on UNESCO recommendation concerning education for international understanding, cooperation and peace and education relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms, adopted by the General Conference at its eighteenth session, Paris, November 19, 1974, Articles III.6, and IV.7. On the imperative for developing “systematic and rational tolerance teaching methods that will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance,” see the Declaration of Principles on Tolerance proclaimed and signed by member states of UNESCO on November 16, 1995, Article 4.2. On education for international cooperation, see also the UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965), Principle II.
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Religious Studies Textbooks


Science Studies Textbooks


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Science and Technology Textbooks


Life Sciences Textbooks


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**Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy Textbooks**


**The Holy Qur’an Textbooks**


**I Learn How to Read and Write Textbooks**


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Özensoy, Ahmet Utku, *Sosyal Bilgiler* - 5. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Social Studies, Fifth-Grade Textbook),
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**Citizenship and Democracy Education (Civics) Textbooks**


**Astronomy and Space Sciences Textbooks**

Ceylan, Hamdullah et al., Astronomi ve Uzay Bilimleri (Astronomy and Space Sciences), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013.

**Biology Textbooks**


Ercan Akkaya, Seda et al., Biyoloji -10. Sınıf Ders Kitabı (Biology, Tenth-Grade Schoolbook), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2013.


**Geography Textbooks**


**Democracy and Human Rights Textbooks**

Tarman, Bülent et al., Demokrasi ve İnsan Hakları (Democracy and Human Rights), Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı, 2014.

**Design Studies Textbooks**

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**Economics Textbooks**


**Geometry Textbooks**


**Human Anatomy Textbooks**


**Chemistry Textbooks**


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