



History Education in Schools in Turkey and Armenia

A Critique and Alternatives

Authors: Alişan Akpınar, Sos Avetisyan, Hayk Balasanyan, Fırat Güllü, Işıl Kandolu, Maria Karapetyan, Nvard V. Manasian, Lilit Mkrtchyan, Elif Aköz Özkaya, Hasan Tahsin Özkaya, Garine Palandjian, Ararat Şekeryan, Ömer Turan

Editors: Bülent Bilmez, Kenan Çayır, Özlem Çaykent, Philip Gamaghelyan, Maria Karapetyan, Pınar Sayan

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Association of Young Historians aims to unite active social science specialists and students; become a platform for the development of knowledge and skills of young scientists in the fields of history and social sciences; and become a bridge between young scientists and elder generation.

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Preface to This Publication

Analyzing a country's history education model can give profound insights into a society's prevailing attitudes towards and perceptions of diversity, justice, peace, and democracy. In conflict and post-conflict contexts, such an analysis can also shed light onto how ways of constructing historical narratives may act as one of the underlying drivers of conflict within and between societies. Many works have been published on how conflict narratives in history education and textbooks, as well as conflict-promoting teaching methodologies and extra-curricular activities, may contribute to the formation of monolithic nationalist identities ensued by antagonistic and hostile attitudes, rhetoric, and actions towards groups and communities considered as the "other"¹.

This publication is a joint endeavor of a network of history educators, historians as well as other social scientists, and conflict transformation practitioners from Turkey and Armenia. The aim of this publication is to analyze the history education models and the narratives in the current school textbooks of history in these countries challenging the image of the "other" as an "enemy". The publication also aims at contributing to the transformation of the current exclusivist narratives and developing and advocating for inclusive, multiperspective, and conflict-sensitive content and approaches to history education in Turkey and Armenia.

This publication was developed in the framework of the project "Politics of Memory and Forgetting in History Textbooks: Network Building for Historians and History Educators in the Context of Armenia-Turkey Relations" co-led by the History Foundation and the Imagine Center in cooperation with the Center for Sociology and Education Studies (SEÇBİR) of Istanbul Bilgi University and the Yerevan-based Association of Young Historians. The project was

¹ For conflict and links to curriculum, teaching, and textbooks see for example: the 1979 book "Ideology and Curriculum" by Michael W. Apple, the 1991 book "The Politics of the Textbook" by Michael W. Apple and Linda Christian-Smith, the 2005 book by Lynn Davies "Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos". For history education and conflict in various geographies, see for example: the 2016 volume "History Can Bite: History Education in Divided and Postwar Societies" edited by Denise Bontrovato, Karina V. Korostelina, and Martina Schulze; the 2013 volume "History Education and Post-conflict Reconciliation: Reconsidering Joint Textbook Projects" edited by Karina V. Korostelina, Simone Lässig, and Stefan Ihrig; the 2012 volume "History Education and the Construction of National Identities" edited by Mario Carretero, Mikel Asensio, María Rodríguez Moneo; the 2007 volume "Teaching the Violent Past: History Education and Reconciliation" edited by Elizabeth A. Cole. For history education and conflict in specific contexts, see for example: the 2004 volume "Reckoning with the Past: Teaching History in Northern Ireland" by Margaret E. Smith, the 2005 volume "History Education and National Identity in East Asia" edited by Edward Vickers and Alisa Jones, the 2009 volume "'Transition' and the Politics of History Education in Southeast Europe" edited by Augusta Dimou, the 2008 volume "Contested Views of a Common Past: Revisions of History in Contemporary East Asia" edited by Steffi Richter, the 2007 volume "History Teaching, Identities and Citizenship" edited by Luigi Cajani and Alistair Ross (Europe and the Mediterranean), among others.

supported by the Program “Support to the Armenia-Turkey Normalization Process: Stage Two”.

The agreement on the principles and methodology that guided the work towards this publication was developed during a five-day “Dialogue and Capacity Building Workshop” that took place in Istanbul in January 2017. The workshop brought together 12 history educators and historians from Armenia and Turkey based on the criteria of commitment to long-term collaboration and a diversity of institutional and professional affiliations. The Workshop served as a platform for exchange of experience and learning from international experiences of reform in history education especially in conflict and post-conflict contexts. The workshop focused primarily, but not exclusively, on the following topics:

- discourse construction processes in historiography, history education, and public history;
- the politics of memory, commemoration, and remembrance;
- collective forgetting, silenced memories, and marginalized narratives;
- places of memory and sacralized landscapes in conflict contexts;
- history and reconciliation commissions;
- language, ideology, and power;
- critical historiography, oral history, critical narrative and discourse analysis;
- inclusive history teaching methodologies and textbook development.

Following the Workshop, the newly-formed network of history educators and historians engaged into the production of two co-authored and interconnected papers that make up this publication.

During the first process, the network members conducted an analysis of the current school textbooks of history in Armenia and Turkey. The focus of this critique was the representations of “self” and “other” in the textbook narratives. The analysis also considered the wider context of history education in Armenia and Turkey including the legacy of the previous generations of textbooks, recent education and textbook reforms, the current state-prescribed and approved history curricula and teaching methodologies, as well as the politics of textbook development and production today. The findings and reflections of this process are presented in the paper “**Analysis of History Education Models and Historical Narratives in School Textbooks in Armenia and Turkey**” of this publication.

For the second process, the network members discussed alternatives to the existing models and approaches to history education forming an agreement around principles and approaches necessary for advancing inclusive and multiperspective historiography and history education. The results of this quest for alternative models and approaches is presented in the paper “**Guiding Principles Towards an Alternative Understanding of History Education**” of this publication.

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Supported by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, some of the network members met again for a second Workshop in Yerevan in March 2017 to discuss the ongoing work. On June 2017, the first version of this publication was published online. The network has presented the work conducted within the event “What future for the Armenian-Turkish dialogue? Memory issues and international relations in discussion” organized by the Embassy of France in Yerevan and the non-governmental organization “Yerkir Europe” in Yerevan in February 2017. The work has been shared also in a presentation titled “Nationalism and Sexism in History Textbooks in Armenia and Turkey” hosted by the History Foundation and in a program of Radio Agos in Istanbul in April 2017. It was also presented in the conference “Armenia-Turkey: Paving the Way for Dialogue and Reconciliation” organized by the Caucasus Research Resource Center-Armenia in Yerevan in May 2017. This is the revised second version of the publication.

The network members have also developed a vision and strategy for long-term collaboration agreeing on an action plan focused on the development of pilot alternative history lessons for schools and universities, as well as a training manual for universities and other educational settings for training younger generations of historians and history educators. Within this scope, Imagine Center and History Foundation have focused on the second stage of the project in 2018 with the support of the Association of Young Historians. As a result of the activities that were supported by Support to the Armenia-Turkey Normalization Process and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, three alternative history education modules have developed.

The project partners – the Imagine Center and History Foundation – will continue to collaborate in an effort to build the professional capacity in both Turkey and Armenia in contemporary and alternative methods of historiography and history teaching that incorporates alternative narratives and oral histories, promotes critical thinking and multiperspectivity, and uses interactive, student-centered and discussion-based teaching methods.

Paper 1. Analysis of History Education Models and Historical Narratives in School Textbooks in Armenia and Turkey

Introduction

The conceptual framework of this paper draws from Michael W. Apple's approach to official curriculum and textbooks that he calls "official knowledge". According to this approach, "the curriculum is never simply a neutral assemblage of knowledge [...]. It is always part of a selective tradition, someone's selection, some group's vision of legitimate knowledge" (Apple 1993, 222). When we look at history education and contexts of conflict, Apple's approach becomes more evident. Divergent and sometimes even mutually exclusive historical narratives codified in official history textbooks largely define knowledge shaping and reproducing group identities based on antagonism. In this paper, we look at the history education models and historical narratives in the school textbooks in Armenia and Turkey with the aim to expose how the current configuration of curricula, textbooks, and methodologies contribute to the construction of enemy images and the perpetuation of conflict.

As a methodology, the current paper relies on critical discourse analysis. According to Teun van Dijk, critical discourse analysis focuses on "(group) relations of *power, dominance and inequality* and the ways these are *reproduced or resisted* by social group members through text and talk". He defined critical discourse analysis as an attempt to "*uncover, reveal or disclose* what is implicit, hidden or otherwise not immediately obvious in relations of discursively enacted dominance or their underlying ideologies" (van Dijk 1995, 18). Norman Fairclough defined critical discourse analysis as the exploration of the "often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes"; the aim of critical discourse analysis is, therefore, the investigation of how practices, events, and texts "arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power" and to "explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony" (Fairclough 1995, 2013, 93). In this sense, the discursive power of official history textbooks involves the struggle both to construct a sense of (historic) reality and to circulate that reality as widely as possible throughout society.

This paper consists of two parts – Part 1. "Analysis of History Education Models and Historical Narratives in School Textbooks in Turkey" and Part 2. "Analysis of History Education Models and Historical Narratives in School Textbooks in Armenia".

The first sections of each part titled "Background and Politics of History Education" give a brief overview of the past research and work on education and curricula in general and history

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education and history textbooks in particular. Following this, a brief contextualization of education reforms within the politics of the recent past of each country is offered.

The second sections of each part titled “Current History Education Curriculum and Textbooks” begin by looking at the current state of history education in the respective country. The state’s vision is traced through a scrutiny of the laws, decisions, and other official documents that guide history education in each country. The history curricula objectives and content are looked at together with technical provisions of grades, schedules, and hours. These sections also look at the current state of textbook production and the available teaching resources for history education.

The third sections of each part titled “Discourse Analysis of History Textbooks” are the core sections of this paper; they explore the results of the discourse analysis of a selection of school history textbooks authorized by the respective ministries of education. These sections look into the images of the Turks and Armenians in the history textbooks in Armenia and Turkey respectively, against the background of the meta-narratives of “self” and “others”/“enemies”. These sections criticize the textbooks for their ideological focus on nationalism, essentialism, and sexism; problematize history education language that is based on anachronisms and retrospective teleology; and expose the limited understanding of history as the story of and by political elites ignoring everyday life history, alternative and silenced narratives, and oral histories.

The current analysis and critique aims to add to the already conducted research reviewed in the first sections of each part. Meanwhile, it also stands out from the previously conducted work in a few ways.

First, the current study concentrated on history textbooks specifically as opposed to all social studies or the entire body of textbooks in general. This allows to delve deeper into *historical* discourse analysis. This critique also takes the larger context of history education examining related curricula and other documents that regulate history textbook production as well as how history education is conducted. Second, a word of caution should be inserted regarding the target content of the analysis: the current critique does not aim to single out the representation of the Armenian Genocide in the textbooks in Armenia and Turkey; it focuses on the discursive construction of the images for various “others” in the textbooks and the way that Turks and Armenians fit into the “roles” of “we” and “they”². And perhaps most importantly from the perspective of history education practice, the current analysis and critique is conducted jointly by a group of history educators and historians from Armenia and Turkey that have formed a

² It is important to point here that the authors of this paper were aware that the historical asymmetry between victims and perpetrators of genocide makes a comparative study more difficult. Despite this challenge, the authors have tried to conduct an analysis that encompasses a number of different historical periods and the overarching narratives of the textbooks.

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network for long-term collaboration. This analysis also builds the base for the alternative models and approaches that are presented in the paper “Guiding Principles Towards an Alternative Understanding of History Education” of this publication.

The fourth sections of each part titled “Untold Stories: Patterns of Omissions of Her Story in the Hi(s)Story Textbooks” analyze the textbooks from the perspective of the representation of women. The aim was to expose the stereotyped gender roles in the textbooks, how the approach of masculine dominance shapes the content of the textbooks, as well as the discursive specificities of the representation of women.

At the end of each part as well as this paper, some conclusions are drawn.

This paper is addressed to teachers, current and potential; current and future textbook authors, methodologists, and editors; academicians in the field of social sciences; and policy makers in Turkey and Armenia.

Part 1. Analysis of History Education Models and Historical Narratives in School Textbooks in Turkey

1.1 Background and Politics of History Education in Turkey

Recent scholarship on Ottoman and Turkish history in the 19th and 20th centuries has put great emphasis on the problems of ethnicity, empire, and national state formations in this region. This scholarship has examined the explicit and implicit violence of the state formation process during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including forced migrations, removals, killings and genocide. There are also several works dwelling on the mechanisms of political violence and denial patterns in the Ottoman and Republican era³. However, few of the outcomes of this critical research find a place in secondary school education. On the contrary, politicized and ideological approaches to education prevail with essentialist, militarist, and highly discriminatory narratives that reproduce and sustain prejudices and stereotypes. Education in Turkey is highly centralized, and all teaching materials and related resources are prepared or approved by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). History education is directly tied to national policies. It is only through determined civil society initiatives and great efforts that any change can be created within teaching resources.

Examples of such civil society initiatives can be grouped into dialogue projects (such as those conducted by the *Deutschen Volkshochschul-Verband* (DVV International) or the Imagine Center) where individuals from across conflict divides are brought together to initiate an understanding of each other. A second group consists of academic workshops and cooperation where again resources are put together to achieve history education that overcomes the prejudices and shortcomings of bordered minds and sources. There are exemplary projects such as “Turkish-Greek Civil Dialogue”, a large-scale, long-term effort which was conducted between 2002-2006

³ See for example: the 2015 volume “*Kıyam ve Kıtıl: Osmanlı’dan Cumhuriyet’e Devletin İnşası ve Kolektif Şiddet*” [“Revolt and Destruction: Construction of the State from Ottoman Empire to Turkish Republic and Collective Violence”] edited by Ümit Kurt and Güney Çeğin; the 2011 volume “A Question of Genocide: Armenians and Turks at the End of the Ottoman Empire” edited by Ronald Grigor Suny, Fatma Müge Göçek, and Norman M. Naimark; the 2015 publication “*1915: Siyaset, Tehcir, Soykırım*” [“1915: Politics, Deportations, and Genocide”] by Fikret Adanır and Oktay Özel; the 995 volume “Empires in Conflict: Armenia and the Great Powers 1895-1920” by Manoug Somakian; the 2012 volume “State-Nationalisms in the Ottoman Empire, Greece and Turkey: Orthodox and Muslims, 1830-1945” by Benjamin C. Fortna, Stefanos Katsikas, Dimitris Kamouzis, and Paraskevas Konortas; the 2000 volume “Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires. Central Europe, the Middle East and Russia. 1914-1923” by Aviel Roshwald, among others.

(although the network was established in 1990s) that looked into Greek and Turkish history textbooks published between 1980 and 1987 and which resulted in some, albeit not substantial, ameliorations (AEGEE-Europe 2012).

In the last decade, many scholars have looked critically at the textbooks in Turkey – social science textbooks in general, history textbooks in particular, as well as textbooks of other disciplines –examining them from various lenses. A general survey critically reviewing history textbooks was conducted in 2006. Professor at the Department of Educational Sciences of the Middle East Technical University Ali Yildirim conducted a study as a part of a research project supported by the MoNE of Turkey. The study provided “an insight into the problems experienced with history textbooks at high school level through the perceptions of teachers and students as the primary beneficiaries of textbooks” (Yildirim 2006, 227).

Textbooks were looked at also through the lens of militarism. In a chapter “Educating Little Soldiers and Little Ayşes: Militarized and Gendered Citizenship in Turkish Textbooks”, Tuba Kancı and Ayşe Gül Altınay “explore the creation and continuous reinforcement of the intricate link between the nation and the military in the Turkish nationalist project, by focusing on education and the different roles assigned to women and men in this endeavor” (Kancı and Altınay 2007, 7). In a 2004 book, Ayşe Gül Altınay further examines the links between gender, militarism, and education and the implications of the ideology of militarism for ethnic and gender relations (Altınay 2004).

Most extensively the textbooks in Turkey have been examined from the lens of national identity and citizenship, human rights and minority rights. In 2009, Kenan Çayır conducted an analysis of the social sciences textbooks after Turkey’s curriculum reform of 2004-2005. Looking into nationalism, national identity, and “otherness” in the textbooks, Çayır argues that they “are still imbued with an exclusive and narrow definition of nationalism and citizenship, backed by the myth of origin, ethnocentrism and essentialism” (Çayır 2009, 39). In a 2012 study, Başak İnce examines the civic education textbooks of Turkey “to determine the extent to which they promote democracy and human rights, make positive references to ethnic and religious minorities, and promote social cohesion” and makes the argument that the textbooks “promote an ethno-cultural nationalism based on race” (İnce 2012, 115, 126). In a 2015 article, Kenan Çayır, exploring the presentation of Turkish national identity and the identities of ethnic, religious, and language-based minorities in the textbooks, argues that the attempts to include these minorities in the textbooks are done within the frame of the discourse of tolerance indicating an inclusion based on an unequal social position for minorities (Çayır 2015, 519).

Education for human rights and minority rights has been a specific focus of work also for the History Foundation. It conducted the “Project for Promoting Human Rights in (Primary and Secondary School) Textbooks” in three phases between 2002-2004, 2007-2009, and 2013-2014. For the first phase of the project “Promoting Human Rights in Textbooks I”, around 300 volunteers (mainly school teachers) analyzed 190 textbooks with an eye to the criteria of democracy and human rights. Three different volumes, one on the results of the monitoring titled “Human

Rights in Textbooks: Screening Results” (Çotuksöken, Erzan and Silier 2003), another on writing more human rights sensitive textbooks (Bağlı and Yasemin 2003), and a third, a guidebook for the teachers for a more human rights friendly school environment (Gök and Şahin 2003), were published. For the second phase “Promoting Human Rights in Textbooks II”, the 2004-2005 changes in the curriculum were monitored by the same methodology and the results of the monitoring titled “Human Rights in Textbooks: Screening Results II” were published in 2009 (Tüzün 2009). For the third phase “Promoting Human Rights in Textbooks III”, 245 textbooks were analyzed by 25 experts under the criteria of human rights and the research study titled “Who Are We? Identity, Citizenship and Rights in Turkey’s Textbooks” was published in 2014 constituting an important step in the institutionalization of the monitoring of textbooks in Turkey (Çayır 2014). Also, the History Foundation published the textbook “History of Civilizations” for Grade 9 disseminating it among teachers.

The History Foundation is also dedicated to conducting research on minority education in Turkey. Between 2011-2013, it implemented a research project on minority schools and a summary report on the project was published in 2013 (History Foundation 2013). The History Foundation has also been implementing projects on monitoring discrimination in education. Between March 2014 and October 2015, Minority Rights Group International (MRG) in partnership with the History Foundation ran the project “Mobilizing Civil Society for Monitoring Equality in the Formal Education System in Turkey (Monitoring Equality in Education)” that resulted in the report “Discrimination Based on Color, Ethnic Origin, Language, Religion and Belief in Turkey’s Education System” (Kaya 2015). The monitoring conducted in the project was carried out based on the “Monitoring Guide on Discrimination in Education” prepared in 2014 (Karan 2014).

The Center for Sociology and Education Studies of Istanbul Bilgi University has also conducted two projects publishing results relevant for anti-discrimination in educational studies. Between 2010 and 2012, the Center conducted the projects “How to Deal with Discrimination in Education Settings: Lesson Samples and Resources for Educationalists” (Center for Sociology and Education Studies 2012) and “Prejudice, Stereotypes, and Discrimination: Sociological and Educational Perspectives” (Center for Sociology and Education Studies 2012).

Among other things, all the studies above do look into the construction of the images of Armenians in the textbooks in Turkey from various lenses – militarism, national identity and citizenship, human rights and minority rights. These images rest on stereotypes of “national traitors” and “enemies” emphasizing how Ottoman Armenians were influenced by foreign powers who were trying to break apart the empire. The 1915-1923 policies against Armenians are explained in the textbooks in a slipshod manner as a necessity for Turkish national security (Akçam 2014). As a matter of fact, there is no specialized knowledge or scholarship behind these nationalistic texts in the textbooks that lack any modern methodology in pedagogy and, therefore, call for an urgent intervention.

In a 2010 article, Jennifer Dixon looked into the changing representation of the Armenian Genocide in the History Textbooks in Turkey highlighting “institutional and ideational reasons for silencing this part of the Turkey’s past”, “the content of the narrative in four different historical phases”, and “the domestic and international pressures that account for these shifts in the narrative” (Dixon 2010).

Most recently, two volumes examining the images of Turks and Armenians in history textbooks in Armenia and Turkey were published by the Economic Policy Research Foundation of Turkey (*Türkiye Ekonomi Politikaları Araştırma Vakfı* (TEPAV)). One of them looked at the image of Turks in the history textbooks in Armenia with a particular focus on how the Armenian Genocide is presented in history textbooks in Armenia (Bozkuş 2016). The other looked at the image of Armenians in textbooks in Turkey (Metin 2015).

Before delving into the current examination of the images of Armenians as “others” in history textbooks in Turkey, a brief contextualization of education reforms within the politics of the recent past is due.

The education reforms of the Republican period started in 1924 with a focus on shaping loyal citizens based on a new paradigm of nationalism and secularism, and language and history were instrumental in these reforms. To break away with the past in general and Ottoman Islamic texts in particular, the Latin alphabet was adopted and the “purity” of the Turkish language was promoted. Meanwhile history was re-thought and now focused on Turkish history rather than the history of Islam or Ottoman history.

With the 1936 reform the founding principles of the Republic of Turkey and Kemalism – republicanism, nationalism, populism, statism, secularism, and revolutionism/reformism – were further reinforced. The “Sun Language Theory” and the “Turkish History Thesis” guided the nationalism of the 1930’s. The purpose of the “Turkish History Thesis” was to dig to the “roots” of the Turkish nation and to establish the “true” course of development of Turkish history within world history. The tenets of this new history were: (a) the Turks were the ancestors of all the brachycephalic peoples including the Indo-Europeans with Central Asia as the cradle of civilizations; (b) the Turks, therefore, had created civilizations in all the lands where they had migrated including the earliest Hittite civilization in Anatolia; (c) Anatolia, therefore, is the Turkish homeland since the Turks were its original, autochthonous inhabitants; and (d) most importantly, the thesis added that all Anatolia’s inhabitants were Turks (Cagaptay 2004).

The 1960 military coup had a further impact on social studies education as an ideological tool. The emphasis on bringing up “self-sacrificing and virtuous citizens who are loyal to their family, nation, country, Turkish revolutions and ideals” were reinforced (Akdağ and Kaymakçı 2011). The 1980 coup, on the other hand, strengthened the “Turkish-Islam synthesis” (Akdağ and Kaymakçı 2011) bringing about a curriculum that was statist, conservative, and mostly emphasized knowledge instead of individual freedom in education (Ibrahimoglu and San 2017). All throughout the Republican period, these shifting or escalating nationalism in the curriculum

was reflected in the way social studies were either taught under one umbrella or split into separate courses often with a marker of “national”. In the late 1960s, history, geography, and citizenship were unified into a new course entitled “Social Studies”. In 1985, middle school social studies courses were split into discipline-based courses entitled “National History”, “National Geography”, and “Citizenship”. This lasted until 1998-1999 when curriculum reform began, and currently social studies courses are taught in an integrated manner in primary education. (Açıklan 2011; Çayır and Gürkaynak 2007)

The most recent education reform in Turkey happened in 2004-2005. The MoNE implemented a comprehensive reform aimed at shifting pedagogy from a behaviorist to a constructivist approach and adopting interdisciplinary curricula with a focus on skills and values and alternative assessment methods. Approaches aimed at developing critical thinking and problem solving supported the constructivist tone of the curricula (Açıklan 2011). New textbooks, student workbooks, and teaching manuals were devised and cleared of some of the discriminatory statements and language.

By 2009, significant transformations occurred in Turkey and there were some crucial steps taken to address some of Turkey’s longstanding problems. The democratic initiative process comprising of various strands – Armenian, Kurdish, Roma, Alevi, Greek Orthodox, and Caferi initiatives – brought changes in policy. In the period when the Peace Process was on-going, the Kurdish issue became part of an open discussion. The problems and demands for equality of Roma, Alevis, and non-Muslims started to be heard in the public space. The educational system echoed these changes. For example, elective lessons for the Kurmanji, Zazaki, Abaza, Adyghe and Laz languages were introduced, and National Security lessons were removed from the curriculum. (Çayır 2014, 114)

Despite these development, however, the analysis of the textbooks of all subjects used for the 2012-2103 school year showed that “the basic mentality” of the textbooks is unchanged; it “still portrays Turkey as a country that is homogenous, monolingual and mono-religious” (Çayır 2014, 115). With nationalism persisting as the methodological choice of the curriculum and pedagogy and various educational policies such as the standardized testing system creating bordered minds, there is no room for a constructivist approach to unfold in the education system.

1.2 Current History Education Curriculum and Textbooks in Turkey

The documents that regulate history education in Turkey are the “Basic Law of National Education”, which was issued in 1973 and has been subsequently amended, the “Teaching

Programs⁴”, and the “Weekly Course Schedules⁵”. The Board of Education and Instruction of the MoNE develops the curricula and approves textbooks.

The “Basic Law of National Education” determines the general framework of the educational system. One of the general goals of education is phrased as “raising all individuals of the Turkish Nation as citizens who are committed to Atatürk’s principles and reforms and Atatürk’s nationalism as expressed in the Constitution; who adopt, protect and promote the national, moral, human, spiritual, and cultural values of the Turkish Nation; who love and always seek to exalt their families, country, and nation; who know their duties and responsibilities towards the Republic of Turkey which is a democratic, secular, and social state governed by the rule of law, founded on human rights, and the tenets laid down in the preamble to the Constitution; and who have internalized these in their behaviors” (Bakanlar Kurulu [Council of Ministers] 1973). Following the general goals, one of the fourteen basic principles called “education for democracy” encourages placing value on freedom and democracy; yet it prohibits making political and ideological suggestions or engaging in the educational process topics of daily political incidents and discussions that are against Atatürk’s nationalism. The law also underlines the importance of “preserving, developing, and teaching national morality and national culture in our own way without decaying and within the boundaries of universal culture”. (Bakanlar Kurulu [Council of Ministers] 1973)

History is not a separate subject in the primary education⁶ curriculum in Turkey. Together with geography and civic education, history is taught within the course of “Social Studies”. In Grades 1-3 there is a compulsory subject called “Life Studies” (“*Hayat Bilgisi*”) and according to the current “Teaching Program”, the vision of this subject includes “knowing, protecting, and developing oneself, one’s nation, one’s homeland, and nature” and “basic knowledge needed in everyday life”. Following “Life Studies”, “Social Studies” is a compulsory course in Grades 4-7 as an interdisciplinary field including history, geography, economics, sociology, anthropology,

⁴ The Board of Education and Instruction issues the “Teaching Programs” (“*Öğretim Programı*”) for the school subjects. The latest “Teaching Programs” for the compulsory “History 9” and “History 10” were approved in 2011. The latest “Teaching Program” for the compulsory “Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism” (Grade 11) was approved in 2012 (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2014). These are the “Teaching Programs” studied in this paper.

⁵ The “Weekly Course Schedules” are developed by the Board of Education and Instruction. The latest “Weekly Course Schedules for Primary (Elementary, Middle) Education Institutions” were approved in 2017 (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2017). The latest “Weekly Course Schedules for Secondary Education Institutions” were approved in 2014 (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2014).

⁶ In Turkey, starting with the 2012-2013 school year, compulsory education spans from Grade 1 to 12. It is split into primary education in Grades 1-8 (with elementary school Grades 1-4 and middle school Grades 5-8) and secondary education in Grades 9-12 (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı [Ministry of National Education] n.d.).

psychology, philosophy, political science, law, human rights, and citizenship. (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012). In Grade 8, there is also a compulsory course on “Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism” (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2017).

In secondary education Grades 9-12, some of the social studies subjects become discipline-based courses and are taught independently from each other. The “Weekly Course Schedules for Secondary Education Institutions” define “Common Courses” as compulsory courses that students in secondary education institutions must take. In General High Schools⁷, in Grade 9 and 10, students take “History” (two hours per week with a total of 72 hours per year⁸) and in Grade 11, students take “Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism” (two hours per week a total of 72 hours per year) as compulsory courses. As an elective for Grade 11, they can also choose to study an additional course of “History 11” (four hours per week with a total of 144 hours per year). And in Grade 12, there is only an elective course of history “Contemporary Turkish and World History” (four hours per week with a total of 144 hours per year). This pattern is more or less valid for all schools, with the Social Science High Schools having “History” as a compulsory course for Grade 9 (two hours per week), Grade 10 (four hours per week), Grade 11 (three hours per week). In addition, the course “Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism” is compulsory for Grade 11 (two hours per week), and the course “Contemporary Turkish and World History” is compulsory for Grade 12 (four hours per week). Additional hours for “History” are also available for Grades 9 and 12 (two hours per week) for the Social Science High Schools. It is worth of notice that unlike in Armenia, the educational system in Turkey does not make a distinct division between “World History” and “National History”. (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2014)

This paper’s analysis of history education in Turkey focuses on secondary education where history courses are taught separately from the other social sciences. In particular, the compulsory courses of “History 9”, “History 10”, and “Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism” for Grade 11 with the related “Teaching Programs” and textbooks are scrutinized below.

The “Teaching Programs” are composed of several sections. The section “General Objectives of Turkish National Education” cites the clauses of the “Basic Law of National Education” that

⁷ There are several types of schools in Turkey – General High School (*Genel Lise*), Anatolian High School (*Anadolu Lisesi*), Science High School (*Fen Lisesi*), Social Science High School (*Sosyal Bilimler Lisesi*), Fine Arts High School (*Güzel Sanatlar Lisesi*), Imam Hatip High School (*İmam Hatip Lisesi*), Anatolian Imam Hatip High School (*Anadolu İmam Hatip Lisesi*), and others.

⁸ In Turkey, there are on average 34 weeks (180 school days) in a school year, and “an hour” in schools is equal to 40-45 minutes. The weekly load is usually 30-40 periods.

focuses on educating students that “love and always seek to exalt their families, country, and nation” and based on Atatürk’s concept of nationalism and promoting “the national, moral, human, spiritual, and cultural values of the Turkish Nation”. This brief section is quite influential in the formation of the remaining part of the “Teaching Programs” and the textbooks. The content, objectives, and sample activities in the “Teaching Programs” and the textbooks mostly focus on Turkic and Islamic history and aim to raise individuals with a feeling of national pride. There is no mention of the “others” in these introductory sections. (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012)

The next section titled “General Objectives of the History Course” is subject-specific and is quite similar, if not the same, for Grades 9-11. They once again emphasize the importance of Atatürk’s principles as well as of “national unity and cohesion through linking the past with the present”. They call for a history education that helps students “to understand the formation of national identity, the elements forming this identity, and the necessity of protecting national identity” as well as “to understand the basic elements and processes that make up Turkish history and Turkish culture and to take responsibility for the protection and development of cultural heritage”. In addition to the nationalistic priorities outlined above, there are others that call for a history education that “covers not only political but also economic, social, and cultural fields” and “makes use of the methods and techniques of the discipline of history, its concepts and a historian’s skills when conducting research in the field of history”. They further underline the “importance of fundamental values such as peace, tolerance, mutual understanding, democracy and human rights”. (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012)

The next section titled “Basic Approach of the Teaching Program” calls for student-centered learning environments that emphasize the ability of creative and critical thinking, among others. Following this, the Grade 10 and 11 “Teaching Programs” have a section on “Historical Thinking Skills” that is a methodology directly translated and cited from the National Center for History in the Schools of the History Department of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Five interconnected dimensions of historical thinking are outlined: “Chronological Thinking”, “Historical Comprehension”, “Historical Analysis and Interpretation”, “Historical Research Capabilities”, “Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making” (National Center for History in the Schools of the History Department of the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) 1996; Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012).

This section is followed by “Explanations on the Application of the History Course Teaching Program” that explain the grade-specific logic of the “Teaching Program” and the relation between Grade 9, 10, 11 courses on history. The section “Units and Hours of the History Course” details the number of hours dedicated to history education.

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All these sections are followed by the core section of the “Teaching Program” that lays out the units to be included in that grade level, the content and objectives of the units with activity suggestions.

The “Teaching Programs” are concluded by guidelines for “Assessment and Evaluation” and “References”. While the “Teaching Programs” do not explicitly demand that the sources provided in the “References” be used by the textbook authors, their inclusion in the mandatory “Teaching Programs” is suggestive.

The rules for textbook writing in Turkey are determined by the “Ministry of National Education Regulation on Textbooks and Training Instruments⁹”. According to this regulation, textbooks are produced in the following ways:

- directly by the Ministry: commissions formed by the staff of the Ministry may write textbooks, provided that they do not contradict with the provisions of the Regulation;
- through an order: a draft textbook may be written by an independent commission, institution, or organization by the order of the Ministry;
- through a purchase: if necessary, the Ministry may purchase already available textbooks that are either written or translated in the country or abroad.
- through private publishing houses: publishers may prepare a draft textbook in accordance with the procedures and principles specified in the Regulation (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı [Ministry of National Education] 2012).

A committee determined by the Ministry reviews the draft textbooks and decides whether they should be published or not. The review for the draft textbooks prepared in the related Service Unit of the Ministry or electronically submitted by private publishing houses is carried out twice a year. The decision of the committee is valid for five years. The textbooks approved for printing are bought by the Ministry and distributed to the schools free of charge.

According to the list of “Textbooks for the 2016-2017 school year”, the following textbooks¹⁰ were authorized related to the compulsory courses in history education (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı [Ministry of National Education] 2016).

Textbook and Grade	Authors	Publisher	Year
History 9 ¹¹			

⁹ The latest “Ministry of National Education Regulation on Textbooks and Training Instruments” was published in the *Official Gazette (Resmî Gazete)* numbered 28409 on September 12, 2012. The textbooks are available in Turkish at <http://www.eba.gov.tr/ekitap>.

¹⁰ The textbooks that were examined within this paper are marked in bold type.

¹¹ This grade level is supposed to cover six units – “The Science of History”, “The Birth of Civilization and the First Civilizations”, “The First Turkish States”, “Islamic History and Civilization (Until the 13th Century)”, “Turkish-Islamic States (10th-13th Centuries), and “History of Turkey (11th-13th Centuries)” (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012).

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History 9	Behçet Önder	Bir-Yay Yayınları (Bir-Yay Publications)	2013
History 9	Sami Tüysüz	Tuna Matbaacılık (Tuna Publishing)	¹²
History 9	Ahmet Yılmaz	Tutku Yayınevi (Tutku Publisher)	
History 9	Ahmet Yılmaz	Ekoyay Yayıncılık (Ekoyay Publishing)	
History 10¹³			
History 10	Sami Tüysüz	Tuna Matbaacılık (Tuna Publishing)	2016
History 10	Ahmet Yılmaz	Ekoyay Yayıncılık (Ekoyay Publishing)	
Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism (Grade 11)			
Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism (Grade 11)¹⁴	Ersun Balcılar, Murat Kılıç, Yunus Kurt	Top Yayıncılık (Top Publishing)	2015
Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism (Grade 11)	Commission	Millî Eğitim Yayınları (National Education Publications)	2015
Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism (Grade 11)	Bahattin Demirtaş	Mevsim Yay. A.Ş.	
Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism (Grade 11)	Ömer Faruk Evirgen	Semih Ofset	
Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism (Grade 11)	Ökkeş Kurt	Lier Yayınları (Lier Publications)	
Revolution History of the	Ahmet Yılmaz	Ekoyay Yayıncılık	

¹² The textbooks that do not have publishing dates appear on the MoNE website also for the 2017-2018 school year (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı [Ministry of National Education] 2017).

¹³ This grade level is supposed to cover five units – “From Beylik [Princedom] to State (1300-1453)”, “World Power: The Ottoman State (1453-1600)”, “The Search Years (17th Century)”, “Europe and the Ottoman State (18th Century)”, and “The Longest Century (1800-1922)” (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012).

¹⁴ This grade level is supposed to cover seven units – “Mustafa Kemal from 1881 to 1919”, “The Preparation Period of the National Struggle”, “The Fronts of the Independence War”, “The Turkish Revolution”, “Atatürkism and the Principles of Atatürk”, “Turkish Foreign Policy in the Atatürk Period”, and “Atatürk’s Death” (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012).

Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism (Grade 11)		(Ekoyay Publishing)	
Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism (Grade 11)	Mahmut Ürküt	Ata Yayıncılık (Ata Publishing)	

In Turkey, several organizations and institutions have also published alternative textbooks, that is textbooks that are produced by private institutions and that do not seek and do not have the MoNE's approval. Usually teachers at private schools use these textbooks alongside the state-authorized ones that are compulsory.

Textbook and Grade	Authors	Publisher	Year
History of Civilizations I (usually used in Grade 9)	Dilara Kahyaoğlu, Nilgün Yaman, Aydan Demirkuş, Elif Aköz, Hasan Sungur, Işıl Kandolu, Özge Küçükosman	Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları (History Foundation Yurt Publication House)	2014
History of Civilizations II (usually used in Grade 9)	Dilara Kahyaoğlu, Nilgün Yaman, Aydan Demirkuş, Elif Aköz, Hasan Sungur, Işıl Kandolu, Özge Küçükosman	Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları (History Foundation Yurt Publication House)	2014
World History, Volume 1, Ancient Period (usually used in Grade 9)	Author: Susan Wise Bauer Translator: Mihriban Doğan	Say Yayınları (Say Publications)	2017
Modern History for Youth (usually used in Grade 11)	Group of authors	Epsilon Yayınevi (Epsilon Publisher)	2004
History of the World and Turkey in the 20th Century (usually used in Grade 11)	Faruk Alpaya	Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları (History Foundation Yurt Publication House)	2014

1.3 Discourse Analysis of History Textbooks in Turkey

The dominant narrative of history textbooks¹⁵ in Turkey has some basic features that construct the concepts of “we” and “others”:

- It is a **single-voice** narrative that excludes or silences all other voices. It presents itself as the “only objective” interpretation of history and the “absolute historical truth”.

¹⁵ The analysis in this section concerns the textbooks marked in bold type above. For the ease of reading, the analysis refers to these as “the textbook(s)”, “the author(s)”, “the textbook narrative”, or “the narrative of the textbook(s)”. The citations indicate specifically which textbook instance is the basis for the argument.

- It is also an **essentialist** and **historicist** narrative that links the ancient past to the present through seemingly unchanging qualities of the Turkish nation and a fictitious continuum.
- And finally, it is an **antagonistic** narrative that presents other nations and groups as “threats” and “enemies” of the Turkish nation.

1.3.1 A Single-voice Narrative

In the history textbooks in Turkey, there is a mythical historical narrative that begins in Central Asia, continues with the adoption of Islam and the spread to Anatolia through Iran, and then arrives to Europe. This historical development spanning thousands of years and a vast geography is presented as “the history of Turks”. While the Grade 9 textbook acknowledges that “the spread of Turks to a wide geography made it difficult to study Turkish history as a whole” (Önder 2014, 86), it is alleged that everything described in this narrative is related to the Turkish nation. While this fictitious continuum is explored further in the next section, the resulting singular point of view is the subject of this section. In the textbook narrative, we hear one distinct voice about “our history”, and it is the perspective of ethnic Turks that confess Islam. The voice of the other peoples or actors in history are either barely heard or instrumentalized to glorify the Turkish nation.

According to this narrative, for example, when Seljuks conquered Anatolia, some non-Muslim communities were also living there – mainly Greeks, Armenians, Assyrians, Georgians, and Jews. The Grade 9 textbook describes how these communities lived under unbearable political pressures before the Muslim Turks reached these areas: “At the beginning of the Turkish influxes to Anatolia, Byzantium extracted heavy taxes from the people and exerted pressure on those who did not have Orthodox confessions. People were longing for fair administration” (Önder 2014, 188). According to the textbook narrative, living under Seljuk sovereignty brought freedom and prosperity upon the people of Anatolia, and in return they served the Turkish empires as loyal subjects.

While the textbook claims that there were no problems between the state and the communities, these arguments are not supported by documentary evidence from Byzantine sources. The counter-narratives of Byzantine historians are not mentioned; however, narratives of non-Turkish historians are included only when they support the nationalist narrative:

“The Armenian historian Asoghik wrote that Armenians welcomed and helped Turks when they came to Anatolia because of the atrocities of the Byzantines. The Armenian historian Mateos of Urfa writes that Armenians were happy and rejoiced when the city was conquered by Turks. Armenians could see clearly that Turks did not touch the security of life and the property of Armenians; they gave freedom of religion and conscience and the opportunity to live in prosperity and peace; they built hans¹⁶,

¹⁶ Hans were roadside or inside-town inns.

hammams¹⁷, bridges, caravanserais, palaces, and developed their cities. Armenians living in Anatolia and Cilicia loved the Turks more day by day and wherever they went, they welcomed Turks as saviors” (Önder 2014, 205)

A similar singular perspective is used when the narrative argues that the non-Muslim communities revolted against the Ottoman sovereignty to gain their national independence. The textbook’s unequivocal stance is that, provoked by the Western¹⁸ powers, these nationalist movements harmed the Muslim communities:

“The first armed Greek riot for the idea of an independent Pontus emerged in the Samsun province in 1908. This separatist movement made its first actions by attacking Muslim villagers during the Balkan Wars. These separatist gangs first committed massacres by pushing the villagers in Samsun’s Bafra province with the support of arms from Russia at the beginning of the First World War. Greeks repeated their cruelties in Samsun, Çarşamba, Terme, Amasya, Merzifon, Köprü, Ladik, Gümüşhacıköy, Havza, Tokat, Erbaa and Zara. Behind the front, they gave great damage to the Ottoman army” (Tüysüz 2016, 163)

“Armenians revolted in Erzurum in 1890; in Merzifon, Kayseri and Yozgat in 1892-1893; in 1894 in Sason; in 1895 in Zeytun; and in 1896 in Van. In the same period, rebellions appeared in Erzincan, Sivas, Bitlis, Maraş, Urfa, Diyarbakir, Malatya, and Elazığ. In the following years, the Armenian committees expanded their rebellion areas knowing that the Ottoman Empire had to deal with various internal and external problems. The Armenian terrorists, who bombed the Ottoman Bank in Istanbul in 1896, also organized a bombed assassination to Sultan Abdülhamit II. The Armenian gangs also caused the death of many people in 1909 in Adana” (Tüysüz 2016, 178)

Passages similar to these are not accompanied by divergent or opposing arguments of historians or sources of what other causes there could have been to the revolts. In contrast, the nationalist narrative chooses to refer to passages taken from foreign or non-Muslim sources only when they support the narrative of foreign instigation:

“George Hepworth, an American journalist who visited Eastern Anatolia [...] said, ‘Britain not only gave the right of asylum to the Armenian brigade but also sympathized with them, protected, helped, supported, and provoked them against Turks. It [Britain] was willing to commit to both business and crime partnership with the Armenian gangs. It suggested the idea that they were patriotic and national heroes. The gangs took advantage of these titles and exercised influence over the Armenian community’”. (Tüysüz 2016, 179)

¹⁷ Hammams were communal bathhouses.

¹⁸ With reference to such civilizational constructs as “East” and “West”, the authors of this paper do not seek to reproduce orientalist categories, but only refer to the vocabulary used by the textbooks.

Similarly, the textbook prefers to support its thesis using the words of Poghos Nubar Pasha in an excerpt from a 1919 issue of the *Le Matin* newspaper. To underline how this source wires the argument, the textbook framed Nubar Pasha's words as "Confessions". In the excerpt, the head of the Armenian delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, Nubar Pasha describes the Armenians' fight on the side of the Allied Powers against the Ottomans. He further claims that the emerging Armenian state in the Caucasus should be enlarged to include six provinces of Eastern Anatolia and Cilicia to establish the Great Armenia. He concludes that this should be done with the support of the Western states as had been in case of Greek independence. (Tüysüz 2016, 179)

The narrative in the history textbooks in Turkey is single-voiced and one-dimensional. The voice of the other parties involved in the events under discussion is not heard at all. Quotations made from foreign sources or non-Muslim and non-Turkish local people do not lead to a pluralist vision; they are selected and framed in a way to further strengthen the singularity of the narrative.

1.3.2 A Historicist and Essentialist Narrative

The term "historicism"¹⁹ has different and sometimes divergent meanings. Here it is used in the sense of envisioning events as part of a single temporal continuum with causal connections and history as a development through a unified and logical process. The historical narrative in the textbooks in Turkey is historicist in that it builds a fictitious continuum that, on the one hand, joins in a line of historical development Turkic peoples of Central Asia with the Turkish nation today and, on the other, describes Anatolia as the motherland of Turks. This postulate is well-articulated in the textbooks but is explicitly elaborated in the textbook for "Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism" for Grade 11. Here the concept of Turkish historiography elaborated in the 1930s is cited to have brought the understanding that "the former inhabitants of Turkey were also Turkish" and "Turkey is the true owner of this place because of links with the ancient civilizations" (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 102). The Grade 11 textbook further argues that it was a shortcoming of Ottoman historiography that "the contributions of Turks to pre-Islamic civilizations were ignored" and "Anatolian civilizations and a comprehensive world history were not explored" (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 101).

¹⁹ Karl Popper distinguishes between (a) historicism that assumes historical prediction and the discovery of "rhythms" and "patterns" that underlie the evolution of history and (b) historicism which "analyzes and explains the differences between the various sociological doctrines and schools, with predilections and interests prevailing in a particular historic period [...] or their connection with political or economic or class interests (Popper 1957, 3, 17). Some scholars attribute this second meaning also to "historicism". In this paper, "historicism" is used as the reconstruction of a line of events in their temporal order without gaps and not in the Foucauldian and Lacanian sense of knowledge being historically conditioned.

5. Ünite

Savaşa Doğru

Anadolu'ya Selçuklu akınları başladığında Bizans'ta daha önceden de var olan iç karışıklıklar artarak devam etmekteydi. Merkezdeki taht kavgaları yüzünden eyaletler ihmale uğramıştı. Bizans kuvvetleri çoğu zaman ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için şehir ve köyleri yağmalyordu. Bu kargaşadan kurtulmak ümidiyle Bizans İmparatorluğu'na "Romanos Diyojen" (Romen Diyojen) getirilmişti. İmparator olan Diyojen Türk akınlarını durdurmak için hazırlıklara başladı. Amacı sadece Türk akınlarını önlemek değil bütün İslam ülkelerini ele geçirip Bizans'ı Türk tehlikesinden kurtarmaktı. 200 bin kişilik bir ordu ile Türklerle karşı sefere çıkan Bizans ordusunun içinde çeşitli milletlerden oluşan ve kiminle savaşacaklarını bilmeyen paralı askerler de bulunuyordu. Bizans'ın güçlü bir ordu ile Anadolu'ya yönelik sefer başlattığı haberi üzerine Alp Arslan, süratle Doğu Anadolu'ya yöneldi ve birtakım hazırlıklar yaptı. Alp Arslan, bu sırada Bizans imparatoruna elçi göndererek barış teklifinde bulundu. Bu teklif imparator tarafından reddedildi. Diyojen'in red cevabı Selçuklu ordusunun savaş azmini bütünü artırdı ve neticede iki ordu 26 Ağustos 1071 tarihinde yanda resmi gösterilen Muş'un Malazgirt Ovası'nda karşı karşıya geldiler.



5.3. Fotoğraf: Malazgirt Savaşı'nın yapıldığı Malazgirt Ovası'ndan bir görünüm (Muş)

Aşağıda verilen "Alp Arslan Malazgirt Ovası'nda" adlı metni okuyarak altındaki soruları cevaplayınız.

Figure 1. The title reads "Towards War" and the caption to the photograph reads, "View of the Malazgirt Plain where the Battle of Malazgirt took place (Mush) (Önder 2014, 171).

"The Anatolian Civilizations" and prefers not to include the pre-Christian cultures and the Christians of the Byzantine period into the concept of "we", because they had lived in a pre-Turkic era. Furthermore, even the non-Sunni Muslim elements living under the sovereignty of a state operating in accordance with Sunni law in Anatolia are not included in the concept of "we". For example, even though Alevi Turkmens are acknowledged as ethnically Turkish, they are not mentioned in the narrative of the textbook. Their relations with the Safavid dynasty, established in Iran in the 16th century, are never connected to the problems that they experienced within the state due to sectarian differences. Everything is reduced to tactical wars between states:

"The founder of the Safavids, Shah Ismail, was very careful to get along with the Ottoman State at first. However, as he increased his power, he began to follow a propagation policy towards Anatolia. To fulfill his purpose, Shah Ismail sent propagandists and tried to spread Shiism in Anatolia, which he accepted as an official sect." (Tüysüz 2016, 68)

This passage clearly shows how the existence of non-Sunni Muslim elements in Anatolia and their connection with the non-Sunni Muslim states are ignored or subordinated to Sunni Muslim presence. Perhaps the most striking "invisibility" resulting from such a historicist approach concentrating on Sunni Muslim Turkish identity is the exclusion of Kurds from the textbooks. Not once in the entire set of textbooks examined does a reference to Kurds appear. Only in Grade 11 textbooks for "Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism" Kurds are referenced, and even that is done in a negative light – the Kurdish Teal Society that "based on the support of the United Kingdom and the Wilsonian Principles wanted to establish an autonomous Kurdish state" is part of the chart on "Enemy/Hostile Associations to the

National Existence". (Balcılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 45; Yazarlar Komisyon [Writers Commission] 2015, 31)

The nationalist narrative of the Sunni Muslim Turkish ancestors is very clear: Turkish history starts with the conquest of Anatolia by Sunni Muslim Turkish nomad groups in 1071, a mythical year, and the Republic of Turkey is presented as one of the stops of this thousand-year-old adventure. Besides being historicist, this narrative is also essentialist. Essentialism²⁰ assumes a permanent, unalterable, and eternal substance or characteristics for groups, societies, and historical figures. The examined textbooks all emphasize the existence of a common culture that has developed over the course of millennia but never lost its *essential* qualities; "nation" is seen as a natural category rather than a cultural one:

"In Ottoman entertainment and festivals, games were given a great importance. During war games, real soldiers were engaged and they would entertain the people by fighting among themselves. The hunting, a sport of thousands of years, was also seen as a good opportunity for marksmanship training. The sultans occasionally attended the games. Horse riding and javelin games also attracted great interest in the Ottoman society. Despite being dangerous, statesmen also participated in javelin games. Wrestling which was a traditional Turkish sport became more important among the Ottomans after the conquest of Edirne, and the Kırkpınar competitions were very famous. The Ottomans were in an unbeatable position in archery, as they were wrestling and riding. Okmeydanı in Istanbul was one of the places where Ottoman Turks showed their talents in war games." (Tüysüz 2016, 92).

In this passage, presenting hunting as "a sport of thousands of years" and wrestling as "a traditional Turkish sport" claims that there is a certain persistent nature of Turks. From referring to the Orkhon Inscriptions as "the first written example of Turkish history and Turkish literature" (Önder 2014, 106) to references to a "noble blood", "superior talents and common sense", "infinite loyalty and esteem for those who do good work" through Atatürk's words (Balcılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 197, 156; Önder 2014, 84) build an essentialized image of "self" persisting through time.

Perhaps one of the most essentialized qualities throughout the textbook narratives is "tolerance". The Uyghur, the Seljuk, the Ottomans, and other peoples with whom a line of continuity is built are all presented as societies of tolerance: "Many religions and beliefs lived together in the Uyghur country where religious tolerance was dominant" (Önder 2014, 108).

²⁰ For a more detailed explanation, please refer to the section "Moving from Essentialism to Social Constructivism" of this publication.

Fatih, fethi takip eden günlerde, Bizans'ın ileri gelen din adamlarından Gennadios'u (Genadyos) Rum Ortodoks patriği olarak tayin etti (Resim 2.2). Patriğe sadece Rumlara değil, Osmanlı topraklarındaki tüm Ortodoks Hıristiyanların dini lideri ve milletbaşı olma yetkisi tanıdı. Ayrıca ona verdiği bir fermanla Ortodoks milletin haklarını güvence altına aldı. Buna göre; Ortodoksların kiliseleri korunacak; evlenme, boşanma ve cenaze defin işlemleri kendi dini geleneklerine göre yürütülecekti. Ayrıca, ayinlerin yapılmasına ve dini günlerin kutlanmasına da devam edilecekti. Fatih bu hareketiyle yönetimi altına giren Hıristiyan halka, her şeyin eskisi gibi devam edeceğini anlatmak istiyordu. Çünkü onun amacı, Osmanlı topraklarındaki tüm insanların korkmadan serbetçe yaşayabilmesiydi.

Osmanlı millet sisteminin kurucusu olan Fatih, Rumlara tanıdığı hakları Ermenilere ve Musevilere de tanıdı. Bursa'da oturan Ermeni Piskoposu Ovakim'i 1461 yılında yanındaki Ermenilerle birlikte İstanbul'a getirtti. Onu Ermenilere patrik ve **milletbaşı** olarak tayin etti.

Fatih'in hoşgörü ve birlikte yaşama fikrine dayalı, insan haklarını koruyan uygulamalarından İstanbul'un Galata bölgesindeki Ceneviz kolonisi de yararlandı. Fatih, İstanbul'un Fethi'ni takip eden günlerde verdiği bir **Amanname** ile Galata Cenevizlilerine imtiyazlar tanıdı. Aşağıda bu fermandan alınmış bir bölüm okuyacaksınız:

"Ben Ulu Padişah, Ulu Şehinşah Sultan Mehmet Han'ım. Galata halkı, üzerlerine askerimle varıp kalelerini yıkıp harap etmeyeyim diye elçilerini bana göndermişler. Buyurdum ki malları ve rızıkları ve mülkleri ve mahzenleri ve bağları ve değirmenleri ve gemileri ve sandalları ve kadınları ve çocukları ellerinde kalsın. Onlar dahi rençberlik etsinler. Denizden ve karadan sefer yapmasınlar. Kimse engel olmasın. Memleketimin diğer yerlerinde olduğu gibi kiliseleri ellerinde kalsın ve ayinlerini okusunlar. Ceneviz tüccarları karadan ve denizden ticaret yapıp gelsinler ve gitsinler. Vergilerini âdet olduğu üzere versinler. Onlara kimse düşmanlık etmesin. Buyurdum ki rızası olmadan hiçbir Müslüman yapılasın. İçlerinden kimi isterlerse onu elçi olarak seçsinler."⁽¹⁾



Resim 2.2: İstanbul'daki Fener Rum Patrikhanesinin duvarında bulunan ve Fatih'i Gennadios'u Ortodoks patriğine atadığına dair fermanını verirken gösteren mozaik resim (1454)

Figure 2. The passage is telling about "The Consequences of the Istanbul Conquest". The picture shows Gennadios Scholarios with Mehmet II. (Tüysüz 2016, 47)

the same rights of the Greek Community to Armenians and Jews. The Armenian Bishop Ovakim, who lived in Bursa, brought with him Armenians to Istanbul in 1461. The sultan appointed him as the Armenian patriarch and national leader" (Tüysüz 2016, 47). The textbook narrative further argues that this tolerance was not a matter of power or a key element of an imperialistic strategy; it was the essential characteristic of the Ottoman culture as a Turkish-Islamic one:

"Even at the peak of its might, when the Ottoman Empire ruled over three continents, it did not have a missionary or even a colonial consciousness and mentality and did not intervene in the faith of its subjects. Besides, it did not need a missionary activity that looks harmless on the ground but works underground. If the state ordered its Christian subjects, 'Either you will be Muslim or you will be driven out or killed,' then this sole command of this most magnificent state of the earth would be sufficient to convert the entire non-Muslim subjects" (Tüysüz 2016, 27).

And this essential quality of tolerance is also something that is depicted as uniquely Turkish: "The Ottomans, who embraced the Jews as well as the Muslims, exhibited the most beautiful example of religious tolerance that was not witnessed in Europe those days" (Tüysüz 2016, 80).

The ultimate conclusion of the narrative is that "the understanding of tolerance has always existed as an important value in Turkish culture and Turkish states" (Tüysüz 2016, 27). The textbooks, therefore, present a very monolithic and essentialized image of Turks as a group that remained unchanged and virtuous throughout centuries.

1.3.3 A Narrative of Antagonism and Enemy Images

The narrative that dominates the textbooks in Turkey does not only alienate “other” groups, but transforms them into “the enemies of the nation”. The construction of these enemy images is done juxtaposing the “others” to the perpetuated goodness and tolerance of Turks.

As we discussed above, the local communities are presented to have welcomed the Seljuks as the latter brought peace to Anatolia. In the textbook narrative, the non-Muslims in Anatolia unequivocally supported the Turks, and “the Seljuk sultans frequently visited the churches, monasteries, and synagogues, gave financial support to them and set an example of religious tolerance” (Önder 2014, 204).

A further link is built between the practice of tolerance in the Seljuk and Ottoman states. After the Mongol invasion, the Seljuk state was demolished, and the Ottomans took their place. Within a brief time, the Ottomans spread Islam to the Balkan peninsula where new Christian communities were taken under their rule. In the textbook narrative, the peace that the Seljuks had established in Anatolia was carried to the Balkans after the 14th century by the Ottomans: “Examples of tolerance fill the history of the Ottoman Empire that stands out as a multinational, multi-lingual, and multi-religious state among the world states” (Tüysüz 2016, 27). According to this narrative, all Muslim and non-Muslim people lived in peace under the just rule of the great sultans.

As we read onto the 17th century, this picture of peaceful and just coexistence is marred as some symptoms of an emerging socio-economic crisis start to be seen in the classical Ottoman system. The textbook narrates how the Ottomans understood that modernization was the only way to avoid the crisis. In the early 19th century, during the stage of the Ottoman modernization that concerned the non-Muslims, the relations between the state and its non-Muslim subjects were reorganized based on the notion of citizenship. Under these conditions, the textbook argues, non-Muslims could realize their own modernization process freely and their communities could develop in the best way possible:

“The Ottoman State declared the Tanzimat Fermanı in 1839 and granted new rights to the Armenians like to other minorities. The state further extended these rights with the Islahat Fermanı declared in 1856 [...]. After that, Armenians, like Muslims, were employed in the administrative staff of the Ottoman State. They were brought to the most crucial duties of the state, such as counseling, interpreting, palace medicine, architecture, and management. Armenians, who were Ottoman citizens, also raised literary figures, musicians, architects, bankers, bureaucrats, and important medical men” (Tüysüz 2016, 73).

At this point in the narrative, there is a rising tension between the state and its subjects. These reasons, however, are placed beyond the Empire. The narrative argues that during the late 19th century, as a result of the imperialistic struggles in the Middle East, foreign powers, using

missionary activities, started controlling the non-Muslims and provoking them against the Empire:

“Towards the end of the 19th century Western states began to take a closer interest in the Ottoman lands where rich raw materials, especially oil, were found. These states wanted to control the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire by sending missionaries and to provoke them against the state in order to have access to these resources” (Tüysüz 2016, 74).

As it is explicitly stated in the narrative, the first important “enemy” of the Turkish nation is “the imperialist Western countries”. If the construction of the “internal enemies” accelerates only in the later stages of the Ottoman Empire, “the West” is presented as one of the oldest “enemies” of the nation: when the Seljuks began to conquer Anatolia, the Crusaders came from the West and dealt a blow to the Seljuk sovereignty. The Crusaders finished “the Turkish peace” in the country and committed bloody massacres: “Antakya that was conquered by Shah Suleyman Sah in 1085, fell under Great Seljuk rule after his death. The city was seized by the Crusaders after the First Crusade. The Crusaders did not leave a single Turk alive in the city and executed them all. All of the houses of the inhabitants of Antakya, either Muslim or Christian, were plundered” (Önder 2014, 196). According to the textbook narrative, this hostility, which has been around for centuries as a reaction to the spread of the Islamic states, entered the most violent stage in the 19th century due to the imperialist and expansionist activities of the West. A cornerstone of the textbook narrative is that the imperialist Western powers have always supported internal revolts and separatist movements to speed up the collapse of the Ottoman Empire.

Within this frame, the nation’s greatest “internal enemies” were the non-Muslims who did not hesitate to engage in separatist revolts against the state where they had lived in tolerance for hundreds of years. The textbook argues that the Ottoman Empire used its legal right to put down the riots by force, but the international public opinion was manipulated by the news arguing that the Ottomans were committing massacres. Furthermore, it is maintained that during the First World War, the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire – Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks – continued to rebel and refused to join the army of the Ottoman Empire; they used their guns against their own state:

“[...] Assyrians living in Western countries issued a statement titled ‘Assyrian Wishes before the Paris Peace Conference’. They demanded that the Ottoman Empire should take responsibility for the death of Assyrians in the First World War and that Western states should support the establishment of an Assyrian state in Anatolia. Before the Sevres Treaty, they tried it again but were never successful” (Tüysüz 2016, 74).

Again, according to the nationalist narrative in the textbooks, during the Independence War, the Turkish army fought against not only the foreign occupation forces but also the “harmful” organizations of the “nationalist” non-Muslim minorities. Some of these Greek, Armenian, and

Jewish organizations are presented in a chart titled “Foundations of the Minorities” with their goals and activities that frame them as “enemies of the national existence”. Following this chart, there is a second chart titled “Enemy/Hostile Associations to the National Existence” with foreign and Kurdish organizations listed (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 43).

In a primary source about the Southern Front of the Independence War, Armenians are described as collaborators of the French troops, plunderers, and murderers in the context of the fighting in the port city of Dörtyol and the villages of Karakese and Özerli (Yazarlar Komisyon [Writers Commission] 2015, 50).

The antagonism with Western powers culminates in the narration of the Treaty of Sevres where the “external” and “internal” “enemies” of the Empire conspire to dismantle the Ottoman Empire. Deemed as “not legal because it was not ratified by the Ottoman Parliament” and “contrary to the Wilsonian principles”, the Treaty of Sevres constitutes a fear in the narrative of textbooks. The Treaty of Lausanne on the other hand is appraised as just. Through the words of Atatürk, the textbook frames it as “a document expressing the collapse of a centuries-long great assassination plan that was supposed to be completed by the Treaty of Sevres against the Turkish nation” (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 218). The textbook celebrates the Treaty of Lausanne for bringing about “the peace that the Turkish nation had longed for years” pointing out a number of the points of the treaty. Among them, the non-Muslims became legal minorities of the Turkish Republic; they gained the status of equal citizenship with “equal rights with the Turks” (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 86). Thus, the nationalist narrative points out that despite the hostility of the Western states and the non-Muslim subjects of the Empire, the Republic of Turkey has not implemented a vindictive policy.

The textbooks build an overarching single-voiced, essentialist, and historicist narrative that antagonizes with various groups of “others” to prevent their attempts at dividing and ruling over Turkey; and this narrative, therefore, justifies all actions in the interests of the survival of the state.

1.4 Untold Stories: Patterns of Omissions of Her Story in the Hi(s)Story Textbooks in Turkey

Feminist historiographers have used the theory of “gender” for elaborating a methodology of history. They have argued that history should not be written from the position of binary oppositions, such as female/male, reason/nature, active/passive roles. The current history textbooks in Turkey do not follow this approach and tend to promote stereotyped gender roles even though the “Teaching Programs” for history for Grades 9, 10, and 11 all state that “attention should be paid to the contribution of women and men to the formation of civilizations and cultures, and that the essence of history is ‘human’” (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012). Nonetheless, in all examined textbooks, the texts maintain

manipulated gender roles; the approach of masculine dominance shapes the topics and the content of the textbooks; and women are given a rather limited place, space, and voice in the textbooks.

Using a discourse on morality and honor, the textbooks confine the woman to the function of upholding these “values” in societal life. In the description of the lifestyle of the Central Asian Turkic tribes, women appear in an example showing the relationship between sociology and history. After making the case that “while studying Turkish history, it is necessary to know the concept of family and marriage in ancient Turks” and “the place and importance of women in social life”, the textbook cites a passage: “It was the duty of the mother to educate her son and to educate her daughter. It was impossible to get close to the girls who were very fond of their honor. After the father, the mother is the pillar of the house”. The textbook asks the students, “How does knowing the social and cultural characteristics of the Turkish society help the science of history?”. (Önder 2014, 44) Putting these pieces together, it appears that the concept of a woman’s “honor” and her secondary role after the father is what constitutes the *social* importance of a woman, and this is a key learning for history as a *social* science.

Women are often depicted as auxiliary to men; women emerge on the pages of the textbook most often when they are mothers, wives, and daughters of “important” men. During the entire classical Ottoman period, the European Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the reforms and the wars in the 18th and 19th centuries, we can see only two female rulers. One of them is Czarina Catherine II, sending troops to Poland in order to influence the outcome of who would be the next king in Poland (Tüysüz 2016, 136). The other one is Kösem Sultan mentioned only because she was Murat IV’s mother and ruled while Murat was still very young. The textbook states that the Ottoman Empire faced major problems during this period, but as Murat grows up, he begins to reclaim power (Tüysüz 2016, 106). In the narration of the Middle Ages and the Modern Period in Europe and in the Ottoman Empire, the witches of the Dark Ages, the women who took part in the peasant revolts during the reform movements, the powerful aristocratic women of the Renaissance, and the Muslim and non-Muslim women of the Ottoman Empire all alike are never mentioned.

Even in cases when the textbook cannot ignore the active presence and activity of women, it still chooses those attributes of such activities that are complementary to a masculinist narrative. Such is the case with the Bacıyan-i Rum (Anatolia Sisters) – a women’s organization that had an important contribution to social, economic, and military activities of Turkic peoples such as helping Turkmen immigrants who came to Anatolia to settle or defending Kayseri against Mongols in 1243. The textbook instead frames it as the female branch of the Ahi organization (a union of artisans), founded by Ahi Evran’s wife Fatma Bacı. Again, stressing morality and honor, their main activity is described as assisting their husbands and taking care of the house (Önder 2014, 207). The artisanal contribution to economic production, the military contribution to the defense of the cities, or the establishment of the Islamic educational institutions – *tekkes* and *zaviyes* by the Bacıyan-i Rum are all overlooked by the textbook. In general women’s labor

is understood predominantly as household chores. Similarly, Prophet Muhammad's first wife Hatice bint Hüveylid's economic activities are not elaborated (Önder 2014, 124).

Women's role is played down in science and literature. In the Grade 9 "Introduction to History", all the sources in the chapter refer to male thinkers – Cicero, Aristotle, Goethe, Leon Halkin, John Tosh, Ibn-i Haldun, Halil İnalçık (Önder 2014, 12, 13, 20, 47). While the life stories of male scientists in the narrations of Islamic culture and civilization are in abundance in the Grade 9 textbook, the names of the female scientists of the early Islamic period, such as Meryem El-Usturlabi, a 10th-century astronomer, are absent from the textbook. In the Grade 10 textbook, Florence Nightingale is the only woman whose biography is highlighted in a separate box. Novelist and politician Halide Edip Adıvar's name is mentioned in relation to the "Turkism" political movement (Tüysüz 2016, 184). She is one of the very few if not the only woman who is referenced several times in the Grade 11 textbook as well. Known for her books as well as for founding a press agency, her extensive biography in the section "The Rights Given by the Republic to the Turkish Women" feature her contributions to the Independence War (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 118).

The textbooks systematically depict past societies – especially those with whom a line of continuity of Turkishness is built – as having a certain level of respect for women's rights. Covering the Antique Civilizations, the Grade 9 textbook contains the following passage for the Mesopotamian Civilizations: "If a woman does not want to stay in her husband's house, the dowry brought from her father's house is compensated, and the woman may go." (Önder 2014, 60). And for the Hittites, the textbook narrates: "The queen's authority was near to the king's. The family was established by a formal contract. Monogamy was common. The Hittites, who attached importance to women's rights, also recognized women's rights to divorce and inheritance. In the text of the Kadesh Treaty signed in 1280, both the signature of the king and the queen were found" (Önder 2014, 69). Even the name of the queen, who is said to have been as powerful as a Hittite king, does not appear in the textbook.

The Grade 10 textbook puts a special emphasis on the women of the 19th century under the title "Women's Rights in the Ottoman State", and in this part, the names of women's associations, women's magazines, among them *Terakki-i Muhadderat* [Women's Ascent], *Şükufezar* [Flower Garden], and the names of publisher Afife Hanım, writers Fatma Aliye Hanım and Emine Semiye, and actress Afife Jale are mentioned. The textbook does not elaborate the female writers' ideas on issues such as the education of women and the criticism of marriage with multiple women, but it does give a summary of the opinions of male writers such as Tevfik Fikret or Namık Kemal on the same matters (Tüysüz 2016, 188-189). Overall this section of the textbook contains more women's photographs than the other parts. However, only one female painter's – Mihri Müşfik's name is given as an example, and non-Muslim women such as some of the first female Ottoman actresses Arousyak Papazian and Aghavni Papazian are ignored while talking about the development of the theater in the Ottoman Empire (Tüysüz 2016, 194).

The interplay of nationalism and militarism produces some “notable” depictions of women in the Grade 11 textbook “Revolution History of the Republic of Turkey and Atatürkism”. Here women’s figures gain importance in the chapters on the National Struggle. The textbook having ignored women’s movements during the First World War and the women’s labor battalions set up by the Union and Progress Party in the wartime, introduces another female character named “Black Fatma”. She is presented in a photograph alongside photographs of men; all of them are “local folk heroes who led the resistance troops [...] all over the country against the occupation forces and minority gangs” (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 42). Among other “patriotic” women who join the independence struggle, the textbook mentions Tayyar Rahime who fought on the Southern Front. She called to the male soldiers who hesitated to attack the French headquarters, saying, “I stand despite being a woman but you drag on the ground despite being men; aren’t you ashamed?” (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 64). The female figure that has “trespassed” onto a masculine role challenges men to perform what is expected of them.

Describing the beginning of the Republic era, the contribution of women to the multi-party system are overlooked. The textbook does not mention Women’s People Party established before the Republican People’s Party (CHP) and does not give references to the names of female party members. Nothing is said about the women who organized the World Women’s Congress in Turkey and made speeches in the Women’s Union in 1935; yet it is deemed important to mention that the Turkish Civil Code gave equal rights to divorce to women in 1926 (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 98).

The Grade 11 textbook outlines the population policies adopted at the beginning of the Republican era: “The Republic identified the main objective of raising the youth of Turkey in a sound and vigorous manner, for them to internalize the supreme duty of the defense of the country. For this purpose, practices such as encouragement of marriage, taking measures for protecting the health of children and adults, criminalization of the acts and movements which may prevent increasing fertility, and rewarding families with many children have been enforced.” (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 115). This policy has direct implications for controlling women’s bodies, and the textbook does not contain any criticism of it.

The women of the “others” are the most disadvantaged in the textbooks. The Grade 9 textbook narrates an Uyghur legend called the “Migration Epic” where the Uyghur Khan marries a Chinese princess, again a nameless character, and gives away the holy mountains that are the source of fertility and prosperity for the Uyghur people. After losing the holy mountains; the people of the Khan are doomed to famine and are forced to migrate. While the story is meant to give a mythical depiction of the reasons behind the Uyghur migrations, it also has the “hidden” agenda of depicting the negative consequences of the matrimonial tie with the woman of the “other” (Önder 2014, 109). On the other hand, the story of “The White Mother” who is an important character in a creation myth is only briefly mentioned (Önder 2014, 105).

The situation with the women’s rights is painted grim in the societies of the “others”. In the pre-Islamic Arab society, like Chinese princesses “used” by Chinese rulers to establish relations

with Turkish Khans, women are depicted as worthless: “The woman was not seen as a value in community life”; “Before Islam, women had no right to choose the men they married and neither if to leave them. When a man wanted, he could divorce his wife and marry her again. Boys in the family were considered better than girls” (Önder 2014, 123). This situation changes when it refers to the nomadic cult of the Central Asian “Turkish culture”. Here women can do all the jobs – holding guns, directing armies, equally participating in leadership, hunting, fighting, and organizing religious rituals.



Figure 3. The page from the textbook showing the exercise on the choices of women. The title reads, “Secularism is the founding stone of the Turkish Revolution”. (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 190)

Overall, in all the examined textbooks, women are drastically underrepresented. Whenever they do appear on the pages of the textbooks, it is to fulfill roles of nursing and caring, of wife and mother. While explaining a major thought or ideology, the views of female writers and thinkers are not referenced, nor are they discussed sufficiently in cultural and scientific spheres. The concept of honor is attached to the role that women are supposed to take in a society, and their main function is understood as perpetuators of generations. Non-Turkish women are barely present in the textbook. Yet, the textbook systematically attempts to create the perception of women always having an equal presence, role, and rights alongside men in Turkish history or in the Turkish societies. The women’s struggle for equal rights in the world and in Turkey and the elaboration of these rights is not presented in the textbooks. The invisibility of women from the life of the nation leaves an open question: what were women doing while men were

Perhaps a positive and impressive activity about women in the textbook is in the section where the principles of Kemalism are told. Various women’s photographs are given, and students are requested to make reflections under the photographs in relation to secularism. It is written “I can choose the profession I want” under the first female *muhtar*’s (head of a village) photograph. Under the photograph showing field marshal Fevzi Çakmak’s wedding ceremony, it is written “I decided whom to marry”. Under the photograph showing Mustafa Kemal’s visit to the Adana High School for Girls, it is written, “I am educated with rational and scientific methods” (Balçılar, Kılıç and Kurt 2015, 190). These images and statements are empowering while the students are also asked to elaborate on their meaning.

producing science, building and demolishing states, and taking part in battles with their brothers in arms?

1.5 Analysis of Teaching Guidelines and Methodologies in “Teaching Programs” and Textbooks

Unlike some of the primary education textbooks, the secondary education textbooks for history do not have a teacher manual, so the “Teaching Programs” and the textbook provide the only guidelines as to how the teaching and learning process should be organized. This section looks at the correspondence between the guidelines and methodologies prescribed in the “Teaching Programs” and those of the textbooks. Textbooks and guidelines from Grades 9, 10 – which cover issues related to Armenians most extensively – and 11 were also examined. In case of the Grade 11 history course, we have examined the textbook produced by the MoNE unlike the rest of this paper that looks at textbooks produced by a private publisher.

The “Teaching Programs” have a small section titled “Expectations from Book Authors” where it is stated that “textbooks should present controversial topics, history texts with different perspectives, research questionnaires, examples of diverse types of text (debatable, descriptive, persuasive, explanatory) presentation examples, different types of maps, chronology, examples”. However, in the entire compulsory curriculum, there is only one example of this approach. Objective 5 of Unit 1 in “History 9”, requests to look at selected examples from history – the Ankara War, the provisions for capitulations, the Tanzimat Decree, etc. – from differing perspectives. In general, Unit 1 of “History 9” is dedicated to the study of the method of history. The curriculum calls to focus on “the concepts of event, phenomenon, place, time; cause-effect relationship; evidence, objectivity, searching sources, classifying, analyzing, criticizing, and synthesizing data” (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012). However, these approaches are not applied to the rest of the curriculum. The omission of multiperspectivity is particularly detrimental to a multifaceted discussion of controversial issues like the events in 1915.

The methodology of the “Teaching Programs” suggests using student-centered activities and assignments for every objective; however, the textbooks do not make use of this methodological frame. There is a general aridity in terms activities and assignments; there are mainly two types of methods used – questions between the sections of the main narrative and questions related to primary or secondary sources assisting the main narrative. Most of the questions aim to measure comprehension.

In few cases does the Grade 9 textbook specifically call for covering issues related to Armenians. Objective 4 of Unit 6 in the “Teaching Program” of “History 9” calls “to emphasize Turkish-Armenian relations and the cultural life of Armenians under the rule of the Turk Seljuk State” (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education,

Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012). Correspondingly, in the textbook, there is an activity titled “Turkish Armenian Relationships”. The question at the end of the text is: “What might be the reasons for Armenians perceiving Turks as saviors all over Anatolia?” (Önder 2014, 205). This question follows the passage about historians Asogik and Mateos cited above in this paper. The ultimate answer suggested by the passage depicts Armenians as happy and grateful under the rule of the Anatolian Seljuks.

The textbooks refer to Armenians also in cases when the curriculum does not necessarily have a related objective. Within the same Unit 1 of “History 9” that is to address concepts and skills related to the discipline of history, there is an activity exploring the purpose of history learning titled “Historical Consciousness” (Önder 2014, 25). In an excerpt from a different source, it is argued that “some of today’s foreign policy problems stem from the past”, and as the first example, the “Armenian Question” is mentioned. The passage follows arguing that public awareness is needed about these problems “to prevent the loss of our rights” and “to be vigilant in these issues”. After being furnished with this answer, students are posed with the question “Why do we have to be informed about topics related to our country?” in the activity that follows. (Önder 2014, 25)

In the next part, the subject is the relationship between geography and history and the title of the activity is “Sarıkaş Operation”. The main purpose of this text is to show the impact of geographical factors on war-making, but there is also a piece of information saying, “Armenians and Georgians fought on the side of Russians against Ottomans”. (Önder 2014, 40) At the onset of studying history in high school, the textbook already builds a negative image of Armenians through references that are not called for by the curriculum.

The “Teaching Program” for “History 10” is the most systematic in framing how issues related to Armenians should be taught. The section “Basic Approach of the Teaching Program” refers to the Decision 272 of the Board of Education and Instruction in 2002 related to teaching about “Armenians, Pontus Greeks, and Assyrians” according to an appendix attached to the “Teaching Program”. The detailed appendix contains goals, objectives, and explanations that elaborate how within Units 2 and 5 issues related to Armenians, Pontus Greeks, and Assyrians should be treated. The appendix does not contain suggested activities. (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012). Hence, this appendix reads like a guide to textbook authors, and the textbooks are completely in line with these additional requirements. Most of the additions in the appendix for the “Teaching Program” of Grade 10 are about Armenians. The “Teaching Program” for “History 11” also has a smaller chart based on this decision with most of the points referring to the teaching about Pontus Greeks.

In line with the guidelines of the “Teaching Program”, the “History 10” textbook, under the title “The Situation of Armenians in the Ottoman State”, narrates that Armenians were happy to live under the Ottoman rule and they felt liberated because the rulers of the Byzantine Empire were oppressing them. The textbook goes on to elaborate that they had all their religious rights and

their own printing press, and they could be actively involved in trading activities because they were exempt from military service. The textbook refers to Armenians being called “*Millet-i Sadıka*” (“loyal nation”) and mentions that Turks and Turkish culture had a significant influence on Armenians. The questions that follow ask students to make an inference about the Ottoman understanding of administration and speak of “the benefits that the Ottoman Empire had for different religions and peoples living together in peace”. (Tüysüz 2016, 72)

In Grade 10, the usual core part of the “Teaching Program” (and not the specific appendix related to instruction about “Armenians, Pontus Greeks, and Assyrians”) speaks about Armenians only in Objective 11 of Unit 5 – “Explain the reasons of 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War”, and one of the sub-points of this objective is “the emergence of the Armenian Question and the activities of the Armenians”. One of the activities suggested by the “Teaching Program” is titled “*Millet-i Sadıka*”, and it asks students to “investigate about the situation of Armenians under the Ottoman rule and the reasons behind their uprising”. (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012) However, similar to other suggested activities of active inquiry, this one is also ignored by the textbook authors.

In the corresponding lesson of the textbook, under the title of “1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War”, there is a section titled “The Armenian Issue”. In that section, there is a long narration that ends with a subsection titled “The Armenian Terrorist Organizations” that speaks of the “revolts” in the 1890s, the “Hınçak and Taşnaksutyun committees” and “the support of the European states to the Armenian committees giving them shelter in their representations in the Ottoman State” and “preventing the punishment of the Armenian gangs” (Tüysüz 2016, 177-178). This narration is followed by only one question asking to evaluate “these attitudes” of the Western states (Tüysüz 2016, 178). The second assignment for this section is related to analyzing a source – an excerpt from a 1919 issue of the *Le Matin* newspaper cited earlier in this paper. The textbook asks the students to evaluate Nubar Pasha’s words. (Tüysüz 2016, 179)

The only other instance, where the usual part of the “Teaching Program” for Grade 10 calls for covering Armenians is Objective 17 of Unit 5 – “Learning the reasons and results of World War I”. This is followed by an elaboration that “the reasons and consequences of the 1915 Events will be discussed” with a suggested activity to watch “*Sarı Gelin*”, a documentary about 1915 Events”. (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012) The textbook does not suggest this activity; however, a decision of the MoNE in June 2008 authorized the distribution and use of this film in the classrooms. A strong reaction from the public as well as various organizations followed and was covered by the media. In response to the reaction, MoNE suspended the distribution. (HaberVesaire 2009) The activity nonetheless remains in the “Teaching Program” to this date.

Objective 17 of Unit 5 is also what the appendix elaborates on the most with 49 “aims/behaviors” added to the “Teaching Program”. Some of these aims/behaviors are: “to

explain the goals of Armenian revolts”, “to explain the dimensions of the atrocities committed by the Armenian committees against the Turkish people”, “to comprehend the precautions taken against Armenians”, “to explain the reasons for taking measures against Armenians”, “to comprehend the necessity of taking the decision of deportation”, “to explain the reasons for the decision of deportation”, “to explain the causes of the losses that occurred during the relocation”, “to explain the numerical dimensions of losses”, “to explain the position of the Ottoman State against the illegal practitioners during the relocation”, “to explain the social and economic situation of the returning Armenians”, “to explain the Armenian genocide allegations [...] territorial claims according to Articles 40 and 61 of the Lausanne Treaty”, “to explain the aims behind murders of the Armenian terrorist organization ASALA [Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia]”, “to explain the Armenian lobbying activities on genocide claims”, “to learn the definition of genocide according to the UN [United Nations] Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide”, “to compare the definition of genocide according to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and Armenian genocide claims”, “to prove that the Armenian genocide claims are legally and historically invalid”. (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012) These “aims/behaviors” are transformed into the main narrative in the textbook.

In the textbook, the narration and activities covering that objective and its 49 additions are in the section of “Fronts of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War” under the subtitles “Caucasus Front”, “The Armenian Issue in the First World War”, “The Armenian Issue After the First World War”, “Post-Cold War Armenian Issue” and others. So, the textbook goes beyond the era that Unit 5 was supposed to cover according to the core part of the “Teaching Program” but in consistency with the additional objectives of the appendix. (Tüysüz 2016, 201-208)

There are five activities following this section, and four of them are source-based even though source-based activities are not abundant in the textbook. The first one titled “Enver Pasha’s Directive” is a communication sent to the minister of interior Talat Pasha and comes from the Government’s Ottoman Archive. In the communication, Deputy Commander-in-Chief Enver Pasha explains the reasons why he thought it necessary to send Armenians of the Van province to Russia or to various places in Anatolia. The reasons he presents are that “Armenians are prepared for revolts” and “Russia has sent Muslims within their borders across to our borders in a miserable manner”. The question under the source is “What would you decide in such a situation if you were in Enver Pasha’s position? Why?” (Tüysüz 2016, 203)

The second activity, titled “Relocation Law” gives the four main articles of the May 27, 1915 law that outlines that the state officials are obliged to take action if they identify disturbance to the public order, espionage, or betrayal. The question asked about this source is: “What are the aims of the Relocation Law?” (Tüysüz 2016, 204)

The third activity, titled “The Armenian Question in Lausanne” cites two articles of the Treaty of Lausanne. Article 40 gives equal rights to non-Muslim minorities as Turkish citizens to establish their own schools, religious or charity institutions as well as the freedom to use their own languages and practice their religions. Article 61 states “any person becoming a citizen of countries other than Turkey cannot make claims regarding their former retirement pensions, widow or orphan benefits”. The question about that source is: “How can you evaluate Armenian claims to our country based on Articles 40 and 61 of the Treaty of Lausanne?” (Tüysüz 2016, 206)

The fourth activity presents two photographs of newspaper clippings about ASALA’s murders. The names of the newspapers and publication dates are missing. The question follows: “What are your thoughts and feelings about the terrorist news you see in the above newspapers?” (Tüysüz 2016, 207). The fifth activity is a comprehension question: “What else can you add to the evidence that the above-mentioned deportations of Armenians’ are not genocide” (Tüysüz 2016, 208).

Based on these five activities, it can be concluded that the textbooks comply with the requirements of the appendix presented in the “Teaching Program” for Grade 10 in that they can justify the “1915 Events” as necessary measures taken to protect the state.

Each of the units in the textbooks is concluded with “fill in the blanks”, “true or false”, multiple-choice as well and open-ended questions, and the ones after Unit 5 of the Grade 10 textbook are also in line with the guidelines of the “Teaching Program”.

In the main body of the Grade 11 “Teaching Program”, there are only Objectives 2 and 4 of Unit 2 that contain points related to Armenians – “1915 Events” and “communities that supported and did not support the National Movement”, both of these as well as the entire core section of the “Teaching Program” do not refer to Armenians directly (Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı, Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı [Ministry of National Education, Board of Education and Instruction] 2011 and 2012). In addition to complying with these points and dedicating a page to the “1915 Events” and presenting the chart with the organizations and associations that aimed at dismantling the Ottoman Empire (Yazarlar Komisyon [Writers Commission] 2015, 23, 28-30), the textbook takes initiative to include other activities related to Armenians in Unit 2 as well as in Unit 3 that is dedicated to the Independence War.

In Unit 2 of Grade 11, there is a description of a memory of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk related the Erzurum Congress. In that memory, he converses with an old man who came from Çukurova (Cilicia) to prevent the handover of Erzurum to Armenians. The question asks students to evaluate this event in the context of the Turkish nation and independence. (Yazarlar Komisyon [Writers Commission] 2015, 34)

Within Unit 3, an excerpt from Atatürk’s address – called “Nutuk” – at the second Congress of the Republican People’s Party in 1927 is cited under the title “The War with Armenians According to Atatürk’s Narration” referring to the Eastern Front of the Independence War. The

question at the end of the source is: “What was the impact of the war with Armenians on the National Struggle?” (Yazarlar Komisyon [Writers Commission] 2015, 49). In the assessment questions at the end of Unit 3, there is an open-ended question: “With whom and why was there a war carried out in the Eastern Front?”. Further, a “true or false” question asks students to identify if the Harbord Report was the first international document proving the invalidity of Armenian claims on Anatolia. (Yazarlar Komisyon [Writers Commission] 2015, 66) In one of the primary source activities in Unit 5, the students are asked to identify the reasons of launching the National Struggle and one of the passages that follows is an excerpt from the resignation statement of Mustafa Kemal who identifies these reasons as “saving the motherland and the nation from the danger of disintegration and sacrificing it for the demands of Greeks and Armenians” (Yazarlar Komisyon [Writers Commission] 2015, 119). A limited comparison between the Grade 11 textbook produced by the MoNE and the one produced by a private publisher examined in this paper reveals that the one by MoNE takes “bolder” steps in going beyond the limits of the “Teaching Program” in covering issues related to Armenians in the textbook. There is also a more direct acknowledgement of the war with Armenia/ns on the Eastern Front than in the textbook published by the private publishing house.

Overall the textbooks follow methodologies prescribed by the core sections and appendices of the “Teaching Programs”. However, the entire sections of the “Teaching Programs” that call for a constructivist approach in the educational process are nowhere to be seen either in the core sections and appendices of the “Teaching Programs” or the textbooks themselves. The overwhelming majority of the activities and questions is leading and asks students to pull the answers from the text of the textbook or to make deductions or express attitudes that are already strongly suggested by the textbook. In the cases when the “Teaching Programs” call for investigating an issue, the textbooks ignore the recommendation for further investigation. The activities in the textbook support the overall narrative of seeing “others” as threats and push students to regurgitate these statements building enemy images and hostile attitudes. Even if the “Teaching Programs” do not necessarily ask for covering issues related to “others” in general and Armenians in particular, such as in the sections related to general history skills, the textbooks instrumentalize the case of the “others” only in ways to support the dominant nationalist narrative.

Conclusion to Part 1

History textbooks in Turkey remain very nationalistic despite the efforts at ameliorating the curricula and teaching resources that have been made since the early 2000s.

In these texts, the concept of “we” is still strongly defined through Turkism and the Sunni version of Islam. The narrative is single-voiced and one-dimensional with all other voices excluded or silenced. Non-Muslim and non-Turkish local perspectives are chosen as to avoid a pluralist vision; they are filtered and framed in a way to further strengthen the singularity of the narrative.

The textbooks present a very monolithic and essentialized image of Turks as a group that remained unchanged and virtuous throughout centuries. The narrative relies on historicism building a fictitious continuum that joins in a line of historical development a chosen kinship of peoples bonding them with essentialized qualities of goodness and tolerance and a chosen chronology of events connecting them with ties of causality. Non-Muslims and non-Sunni Muslims are presented as the “others” in the narrative of the textbooks.

Furthermore, the textbooks maintain an antagonistic and hostile rhetoric about groups and communities considered as the “other”. The developments experienced during the collapse of the Ottoman Empire during and after the First World War are presented as treacherous attempts against the Empire by the non-Muslim communities. It is argued that Western powers took a hostile stance against the Ottoman state and that they provoked non-Muslim communities in order to undermine the internal integrity of the Empire. On the other hand, different groups of “others” present internal “threats” and are “the enemies of the nation”.

The textbooks build an overarching single-voiced, essentialist, and historicist narrative that antagonizes with various groups of “others” to prevent their attempts at dividing and ruling over Turkey; and this narrative, therefore, justifies all actions for the survival of the state.

The textbooks are also gender blind and gender biased. In all the examined textbooks, women are drastically underrepresented or presented with manipulated gender roles. They are either faceless and nameless groups or individuals bearing the actions of others or caregivers that conform with gender stereotypes upholding female “honor”. They are presented as axillary to men – their fathers, husbands, brothers, or sons and are often occupying the niche of victims or ruled subjects.

In terms of methodologies of teaching – activities and tasks that follow the lessons – the textbooks lack variety. Overall, they follow the methodologies prescribed by the core sections and appendices of the “Teaching Programs”. However, the overarching constructivist and student-centered approach suggested by the other sections of the “Teaching Programs” are completely ignored. The overwhelming majority of the activities and questions is leading and asks students to fish out the answers from the text of the textbook or to make deductions or express attitudes that are already strongly suggested by the textbook.

Part 2. Analysis of History Education Models and Historical Narratives in School Textbooks in Armenia

2.1 Background and Politics of History Education in Armenia

Today's history education in Armenia carries the legacy of the Soviet Armenian education, both discursively and in terms of pedagogy. During Soviet years, and in line with Stalin's Nationalities Policy, each of the fifteen Soviet Republics had the opportunity to develop its "national history". The National Academies of Sciences were charged with the task. The narratives all resembled one another discursively: they would start with the ethno-genesis of the nation, followed by the development of national consciousness and national liberation struggle, leading to the development of a class consciousness that directed them toward communism as the better form of social organization.

History textbook narratives closely followed this same plot. History education was also highly centralized and only one textbook was approved for each subject and grade. Pedagogy was based on memorization and reproduction of the author's text. The questions that followed each lesson aimed to test whether the student has memorized the data, as well as the ideological bias, which were to indicate the adherence of the student to communist ideals.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the independence certainly brought important changes to the history education in Armenia. Reforms in the education system have largely been driven through World Bank loan projects. Through the first project – "Education Financing and Management Reform Project" in 1998-2002 – it was envisaged that textbooks would be based on the existing curriculum, with the exception of removing Soviet ideological biases and reflecting Armenian culture – an interim curriculum that would allow time for policies on curriculum and methodology to be developed (World Bank 2003).

As the priority of those years was textbook production and supply, curriculum design was left without methodological improvement and the only condition was the removal of Soviet ideology. From this perspective, the drift towards a nationalistic ideology was not exposed or hampered since it allowed for the much-desired departure from the Soviet past. Stripped of communist internationalism and saturated with nationalism, the historical narrative still strikingly resembles its Soviet predecessor starting with ethnogenesis, followed by struggle for national liberation and culminating, this time, in independent nationhood.

The state's monopoly over producing textbooks was abolished in the 1990's, yet it was and still is responsible for the approval of the textbooks. The new textbooks were written against the backdrop of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan, the influence of which can be seen

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in the portrayal of the struggle against oppressors. The story of Armenian culture and in particular Armenian statehood were similarly presented in a context of Armenian opposition to various others, reinforcing the ethnic framing of the current conflict.

However, the problem with the Soviet legacy is significant not only because its ideological approach is replicated by present-day policymakers, but because it trained a generation of historians and educators able to work only within that paradigm. Interestingly, the first post-Soviet Armenian government tried to remove ideology from history teaching. However, the historians educated in the Soviet academia and trained in writing history that fit a particular ideological framework saw the absence of ideological guidelines as a problem, and not an opportunity gradually returning to the familiar Soviet model with nationalism replacing communism as the main pillar (Matosyan 2013, 58).

The experience of the neighboring Georgia is even more instructive. Since 2003, the Georgian government has liberalized its approach to education doing away with the state-mandated textbooks. However, studies show that the consequence of the liberalization was confusion and a drop in the quality of education and not the development of a more inclusive society as the historians were unprepared to write non-ideological history and the teachers are not able to teach in methods other than memorization and repetition (Karpenko 2014). As the early post-Soviet Armenian and the recent Georgian experience show, laying the groundwork through the professional development of historians and educators is critical for advancing effective history education reform.

The initial attempts in the 1990s to strip history of ideology and strive toward what was termed as “objective history” was soon replaced by official guidelines issued by the Ministry of Education and Science (MoES) that now officially required the textbooks to focus on the history of Armenian statehood, Armenian culture, and the struggle of the Armenian people against foreign oppressors. The second World Bank-funded project – the “Education Quality and Relevance Project” in 2004-2009 – was to address the issues of curriculum that were deliberately left out in the previous phase. Driven by this project, a new National Curriculum Framework as well as “Subject Standards and Subject Syllabi” for all subjects and grades were developed in 2003-2004. Textbooks and teacher guides were also produced and provided to every school in the country and the introduction of the new curriculum to schools started in the school year 2009-2010. Until 2000, the general secondary education in Armenia consisted of eight years of compulsory basic education (three years of primary and five years of lower secondary) and two years of upper secondary education. From 2001, there was a transition to an 11-year general secondary education system providing a smooth transition to the 12-year system. In the 2006-2007 academic year, the MoES started to transfer to a 12-year school system. (World Bank 2010)

The “Second Education Quality and Relevance Project” in 2009-2015 did not concern curriculum reform and textbook production. Yet, in 2011-2013, the MoES attempted to unload the “Subject Standards and Subject Syllabi” for some subjects based on the new “State Standard for General Education” that was approved in 2010 and called for competence-based approach to the

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curricula and greater integration between subjects. The results are not very successful especially in the case of integrating the subjects. (Khachatryan, Petrosyan and Terzyan 2013)

The fourth World Bank-funded project – the “Education Improvement Project” – is being implemented between 2014 and 2019 and has a strong curriculum component. As of March 2017, the report for the project states, “The Curriculum Feasibility/Needs Assessment study has been finalized, draft of the National Curriculum Framework has been developed with the support of the International Curriculum Expert and is currently under review by the Ministry and stakeholders. The work on the subject standards and syllabuses are expected to be launched in Fall 2017” (World Bank 2017).

Noteworthy of the recent period of reforms has been the civil society’s active involvement in providing feedback regarding the implementation and achievements of the project. For instance, in August 2014, an Inspection Panel was set up to look into the problems that were identified by nine NGOs, two students, and five parents from Armenia who requested to keep their identities confidential. They submitted a “Request for Inspection” identifying a number of issues in the implementation of the “Second Education Quality and Relevance Project” and the “Education Improvement Project” (World Bank 2014). Following up on one of the problems identified in the “Request for Inspection”, a “Gender Analysis of Armenian School Curriculum and Textbooks” was carried out by the World Bank, and the results were published in June 2016 bringing out the complexity of the issue (Silova 2016).

Subtle challenge to nationalized historiography specifically also emerged in the mid to late 2000s from the civil society sector. A multi-year “South Caucasus Mediation and Dialogue Initiative” coordinated by International Alert developed a “Myths and Conflicts” strand. Bringing together many academics that had been critical of the existing historiography, the volume “Myths and Conflict in the South Caucasus. Instrumentalisation of Historical Narratives” was produced (Karpenko and Javakhishvili 2013).

The European Association of History Educators (EURCOLIO) has for years been leading projects in the Black Sea region, involving educators from both Turkey and Armenia, aimed at training history educators to bring critical thinking and multiperspectivity to classrooms and collaboratively publishing educational resources. Projects examining oral history and memory started appearing, all of which are approaches that constitute an implicit challenge to the idea of a state-controlled political narrative being the only legitimate history (Neyzi and Kharatyan 2010). The Imagine Center initiated the project “History Education in the Context of Conflicts in the South Caucasus” that brought together dozens of historians from all the corners of the South Caucasus, including Armenia. They developed a joint critique of existing approaches and produced a methodological manual “Challenges and Prospects of History Education and Textbook Development in the South Caucasus” that offered alternative approaches (Karpenko 2014).

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As stated above, the meta-narrative of the textbooks is the centuries-long struggle against foreign occupation generally and occupation by the Ottoman or Persian empires specifically. The conflicts with Turkey and Azerbaijan are presented in the textbooks in the context of a centuries-long struggle against foreign occupation.

The Armenian Genocide does not stand out with extensive coverage in the textbooks. Still, Turks, when they appear in the narrative, are presented in a negative light and as the “enemy” (Zolyan and Zakaryan 2008, 19-27). The commentators, however, differ in their assessment on the acuteness of reinforcing enemy images. Zolyan and Zakaryan argue that the authors avoid, to a certain degree, the trap of reproducing negative stereotypes (Zolyan and Zakaryan 2008, 21, 30). Gamaghelyan and Rumyansev, to the contrary, argue that the history textbooks contribute to the formation of enemy images (Gamaghelyan and Rumyansev 2013). Garine Palandjian shows that the nationalist discourse is not limited to history education and begins with the primary school textbooks (Palandjian 2014).

The teaching methodology, again borrowed from the Soviet system, is based on the students memorizing and reproducing the mandated materials. Little to no space is given to discussions, critical thinking, multiperspectivity, or developing analytical ability.

2.2 Current History Education Curriculum and Textbooks in Armenia

Several state documents regulate the teaching and learning of the subject of history at schools in Armenia. Following the “Law on Education” adopted in 1999, the “State Standard for General Education²¹” (“State Standard”) has been developed as the main document that regulates the content of all subject areas²². The “Teaching Plan and List of Subjects²³” then breaks down these areas into specific subjects and the “Subject Standards and Subject Syllabi²⁴” spell out the content of each subject and the hours per lesson.

²¹ The “State Standard for General Education” is developed by the MoES and is approved by the Government of the Republic of Armenia; the current one was approved in 2010 with the latest revision in 2012 (Government of Armenia 2010).

²² Subject areas that can be otherwise called “educational spheres” are general umbrella terms such as “Nature, Natural Sciences”, “Society, Social Sciences”, “Arts”, “Foreign Languages”, etc. that are then broken down into separate subjects. History falls under the subject area of “Society, Social Sciences”.

²³ The “Teaching Plan and List of Subjects” is approved by an order of the Minister of Education and Science every year; the latest was approved in 2016 for the academic year 2016-2017 (Minister of Education and Science 2016).

²⁴ The “Subject Standards and Subject Syllabi” are developed by the Center for Educational Programs of the MoES and approved by an order of the Minister of Education and Science; the latest one on “Armenian History” was approved in 2008 for Grades 10-12 and in 2012 for Grades 6-9 (Center for Educational Programs 2008; Center for Educational Programs 2012).

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In elementary school (Grades 1-4), the subject area of “Society, Social Sciences” is covered together with the subject area “Nature, Natural Sciences” by the subject “Me and the World Around” in Grades 2-4.

In middle school (Grades 5-9), the subject area of “Society, Social Sciences” covers the subject of “Country/Fatherland Studies” in Grade 5, “History of the Armenian Church” in Grades 5-9, “Armenian History” and “World History” in Grades 6-9, “Geography of Armenia” in Grade 9, and “Social Studies/Sociology” in Grades 8-9.

In high school (Grades 10-12), the subject area of “Society, Social Sciences” is covered by the subject of “Armenian History”, “World History”, and “Social Studies/Sociology” in Grades 10-12; and in the “Humanities Stream²⁵” by an additional subject of “History of the Armenian Church” in Grades 10-11 (Government of Armenia 2010).

The subject “Armenian History” is taught chronologically starting from ancient times and until the present-day in two cycles. The basic course on history in the middle school (1.5 hours per week with a total of 51 hours per year²⁶) is repeated through a more advanced and extensive study of history in high school (three hours per week in Grade 10 with a total of 102 hours per year, five hours per week in Grade 11 with a total of 170 hours per year, and eight hours per week in Grade 12 with a total of 272 hours per year)²⁷ (Government of Armenia 2010; Minister of Education and Science 2016). The study carried out at the request of the MoES’s Center for Educational Programs within the World Bank-funded “Education Improvement Project” points out that this repetition could be replaced by an integrated course of “Armenian History” and “World History” and with choosing separate themes from both for a more profound study to develop analytic skills and critical thinking as well as independent research skills (EV Consulting and Ayb Educational Foundation 2016, 130).

The focus of this paper is the subject of “Armenian History” in middle school Grades 6-9 and high school Grades 10-12 with the corresponding “State Standard for General Education”, “Subject Standards and Subject Syllabi”, the textbooks, and the “Teacher Manuals”.

The “State Standard for General Education” sets rather positive goals for the subject area of “Society, Social Sciences”. Among them most notably, in the middle school, this subject area is supposed to promote “the value of lifelong learning”, underline “the importance of equality,

²⁵ High school education in Armenia is carried out in various streams – General, Humanities, Natural Sciences/Mathematics.

²⁶ There are 34 weeks in a school year in schools in Armenia, and “an hour” is equal to 45 minutes.

²⁷ For comparison, the Level A high school program in England requires only 360 hours (60-minute blocks) of History (general without specification of national or world). The cumulative of the above data for the Humanities Stream in Armenia would be 544 hours in 45-minute blocks or 408 hours in 60-minute blocks. This is coupled with the same number of hours for “World History” – 544 hours in 45-minute blocks or 408 hours in 60-minute blocks. So overall, students in Armenia study history 2.2 times more than students in England (EV Consulting and Ayb Educational Foundation 2016, 144).

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justice, friendship and peace among individuals”, “gender equality and prevention of discrimination based on sex”, “acceptance of the differences between peoples, religions, individuals and their lifestyles”, “respectful attitude towards the cultures of other peoples”. The drawbacks in the middle school level “State Standard” for this subject area is the goal to encourage a vision of “unity between the personal, societal, and national interests” (Government of Armenia 2010). In the high school level, this gets reinforced; students are supposed to graduate from high school “realizing the importance of harmony between personal, group, national, and state interests”, “having a state thinking and way of acting”, “patriotic and ready to defend the fatherland” (Government of Armenia 2010).

These general clauses of the “State Standard for General Education”, among others, are what drive the subject-specific standard. The “Subject Standards and Subject Syllabus” for both the middle school and high school define the value of “Armenian History” as “an inexhaustible source of patriotism, selfless struggle, and proofs of national dignity” and claim “the fight for the liberation of Armenia – the Armenian homeland – is the perpetual companion of our people, one of the forms of its existence” (Center for Educational Programs 2012). Overall the goals are formulated centering around “the fatherland” and the teacher leaving nothing but a passive recipient role to the student. The study carried out at the request of the MoES’s Center for Educational Programs within the World Bank-funded “Education Improvement Project” points out that unlike the guidelines in elementary school that promote learning about society, communication, and collaboration through self-discovery and self-expression, the middle school guidelines reduce the subject area of “Society, Social Sciences” to a base of Armenian studies with Armenian history, religion, culture taking over all other subjects that could make up this area; “the self-awareness of the learner is limited to a national component” (EV Consulting and Ayb Educational Foundation 2016, 117).

The “Subject Standards and Subject Syllabi” for high school have a strong element of promotion of ethnic nationalism. The “Subject Standards” say that “the being of a person goes through cultural forms [...]. And those cultural forms exist in ethnic diversity. The awareness of belonging to a specific nationality and culture makes a person profess real values in their being” and that “the ethnic socialization happens through national culture”. Acknowledging the role of the teacher in delivering these values, the textbook underlines the importance of “freeing teachers from the ‘unnecessary’ ideological burden of the previous period [refers to the Soviet period]; however it goes on to say that “in any social system the teacher of history has been and remains the primary shaper and main representative of the ideological front which is why it is important that the historian teachers learn the subject standards and syllabi content” (Center for Educational Programs 2008). The “Subject Standards” also call for the formation of the content of the educational program based on “the civilizational principle of interpreting and evaluating history” coupled with “the achievements of the theory of social formations”. Both the middle school and high school “Subject Standards” strictly lay out a chronological approach to history (Center for Educational Programs 2008; Center for Educational Programs 2012).

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The “Subject Standards and Subject Syllabi” for both middle school and high school include a list of primary sources and studies thus effectively limiting the textbook authors in what sources they can use. However, the textbooks themselves lack a section on sources.

Overall the “Subject Standards and Subject Syllabi” for both middle school and high school remain largely ideological and center around patriotism and forming a national consciousness, leaving out many important aspects of studying history such as historical thinking and reasoning, critical thinking, exploring continuities and changes/discontinuities in history, and independent inquiry. The textbooks champion in complying with these ideological fames and methodological drawbacks.

In 1997, the state’s management of the textbook system was revised and transferred to a self-supporting organization – the “Textbook Revolving Foundation” renamed into “Textbook and Information Communication Technologies Revolving Fund” in 2001. Among its aims, the Fund states the promotion of “further development of the market relations and competitive environment in the textbook publishing sphere through competitive selection procedures of publishers” (Textbook and Information Communication Technologies Revolving Fund 2011). In the 1990’s, there were only two publishers capable of supplying textbooks; currently there are more than a dozen local private publishing companies with the interest for developing textbooks (World Bank 2003). Although the state monopoly on textbook publishing was eliminated and replaced by a market-oriented, open publishing mechanism, there are doubts regarding the independence of these publishing houses and the fair nature of the bidding and evaluation. In order to overcome the dominance of the academic elites within the Competition Commissions that selects textbooks, currently two commissions – one composed of lecturers and academicians and one composed of teachers – review the textbooks (Khachatryan, Petrosyan and Terzyan 2013). The selected textbooks are piloted at schools, and feedback from teachers is collected. The textbooks are then put into circulation for five years.

According to the “List of Authorized Textbooks²⁸” that comes out for each academic year, the following textbooks²⁹ were authorized for the subject “Armenian History” for the academic year 2016-2017:

Textbook and Grade	Authors	Publisher	Year
Middle School Grades 6-9			
Armenian History, Grade 6³⁰, Oldest and Old Period	Babken Harutyunyan, Vladimir Barkhudaryan, Igit Gharibyan, Petros Hovhannisyan	Manmar	2013
Armenian History, Grade 6	Ashot Melkonyan, Artak Movsisyan,	Zangak	2013

²⁸ The “List of Authorized Textbooks” is approved by an order of the Minister of Education and Science every year; the latest was approved in 2016 for the academic year 2016-2017 (Minister of Education and Science 2016). The textbooks are available in Armenian at <http://books.dshh.am/bookcase/hsma>.

²⁹ The textbooks that were examined within this study are marked in bold type.

³⁰ This grade level is supposed to cover a period “from ancient times until the end of the 3rd century” (Center for Educational Programs 2012).

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Armenian History, Grade 7³¹, Middle Ages	Babken Harutyunyan, Hayrapet Margaryan, Artashes Shahnazaryan, Vladimir Barkhudaryan, Igit Gharibyan, Petros Hovhannisyan	Manmar	2014
Armenian History, Grade 7	Ashot Melkonyan, Eduard Danielyan, Gagik, Harutyunyan, Hakob Muradyan	Zangak	2014
Armenian History, Grade 8³², New Period	Vladimir Barkhudaryan, Pavel Chobanyan, Albert Kharatyan, Emma Kostandyan, Ruben Gasparyan, Ruben Sahakyan, Ararat Hakobyan	Manmar	2013
Armenian History, Grade 8	Ashot Melkonyan, Aram Simonyan, Aram Nazaryan, Hakob Muradyan	Zangak	2013
Armenian History, Grade 9³³, Newest Period	Vladimir Barkhudaryan, Ararat Hakobyan, Hamlet Harutyunyan, Vladimir Ghazakhetsyan, Edvard Minasyan, Edvard Melkonyan	Manmar	2014
Armenian History, Grade 9	Edik Gevorgyan, Karen Khachatryan, Amatuni Virabyan	Zangak	2014
High School			
Armenian History, Grade 10³⁴, Humanities Stream	Ashot Melkonyan, Hayk Avetisyan, Artak Movsisyan, Petros Hovhannisyan, Eduard Danielyan	Zangak	2014
Armenian History, Grade 10, General and Natural Sciences/Mathematics Stream	Ashot Melkonyan, Hayk Avetsiyan, Artak Movsisyan, Petrosy Hovhannisyan, Eduard Danielyan, Vladimir Barkhudaryan, Gagik Harutyunyan, Pavel Chobanyan	Zangak	2014
Armenian History, Grade 11³⁵, Humanities Stream	Ashot Melkonyan, Vladimir Barkhudaryan, Gagik Harutyunyan, Pavel Chobanyan, Aram Simonyan, Aram Nazaryan	Zangak	2015
Armenian History, Grade 11,	Ashot Melkonyan, Pavel Chobanyan, Aram	Zangak	2015

³¹ This textbook is supposed to cover a period “from the beginning of the 4th century until the middle of the 17th century” (Center for Educational Programs 2012).

³² This grade level is supposed to cover a period “from the second half of the 17th century to May 1918” (Center for Educational Programs 2012).

³³ This grade level is supposed to cover a period “from May 1918 until our days” (Center for Educational Programs 2012).

³⁴ This grade level is supposed to cover “the Armenian Civilization from its formation until the middle of the 9th century” (Center for Educational Programs 2008). This particular textbook consists of two parts – “The Formation and Development of the Armenian Civilization in the Old Period” and “The Armenian Civilization in the Middle Ages”.

³⁵ This grade level is supposed to cover “the Armenian civilization from the middle of the 9th century until June 1918” (Center for Educational Programs 2008). This particular textbook consists of two parts – “The Armenian Civilization in the Middle Ages” and “The Armenian Civilization in the New Period”.

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General and Natural Sciences/Mathematics Stream	Simonyan, Aram Nazaryan, Vladimir Barkhudaryan, Edik Gevorgyan, Karen Khachatryan		
Armenian History, Grade 12³⁶, Humanities Stream	Ashot Melkonyan, Edik Gevorgyan, Karen Khachatryan, Yuri Hovsepyan, Amatuni Virabyan, Edik Minasyan	Zangak	2016
Armenian History, Grade 12, General and Natural Sciences/Mathematics Stream	Ashot Melkonyan, Yuri Hovsepyan, Edik Gevorgyan, Amatuni Virabyan, Edik Minasyan	Zangak	2016

As can be seen in the chart, in the middle school Grades 6-9, there are two sets of textbooks that are authorized to be used in schools. The middle school set that was published by “Zangak” constitutes the so-called “alternative textbooks” that came out in 2013 and 2014, even though the content and methodology of the two sets of textbooks are not very different.

2.3 Discourse Analysis of History Textbooks in Armenia

The historical narrative in the history textbooks³⁷ in Armenia, which has both structural similarities and differences with the narrative found in textbooks in Turkey, is constructed around the following characteristics that determine the images of “self” and “other”:

- It is an **essentialist** historical narrative that links the ancient past to the present through seemingly unchanging qualities of the Armenian nation and a fictitious uniformity.
- It is a **single-voice** narrative focusing on a history of wars and political elites and an ongoing strife for national liberation.
- It is a narrative of **victimhood** and oppression by “others”.

2.3.1 An Essentialist Historical Narrative

The narrative of the history textbooks in Armenia emphasizes the significance of a nation understood as an ethno-nation – homogenous and with inherent and essential characteristics, ancient and perpetual. To this end, the textbook narrative projects modern concepts such as the word “nation” with its current burden of meaning into the past and protracts old concepts onto the future as viewed from the past. An example of projection onto the future (from the viewpoint of the past) or “prophesizing” is the framing of “the short-lived national local

³⁶ This grade level is supposed to cover “the Armenian civilization in the newest period”. This particular textbook consists of the following parts – “The First Republic of Armenia”, “The Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia”, “Armenian Statehood in the Modern Period”; “The Armenian Diaspora from 1920 until Our Days”, “Armenian Culture in the New Period”.

³⁷ The analysis in this section concerns both the course of “Armenian History” in middle school Grades 6-9 and high school (Humanities Stream) Grades 10-12. For the ease of reading, the analysis refers to these as “the textbook(s)”, “the author(s)”, “the textbook narrative”, or “the narrative of the textbooks(s)”. The citations indicate specifically which textbook instance is the basis for the argument.

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authority in Van” following the self-defense of Van in 1915 as a “precursor of the restored Armenian independence three years later” in the territory of modern-day Armenia (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 261).



Figure 4. The caption to the map reads, “Armenia in the First Half of the 17th Century” (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 73).

The narrative of the textbooks both in text and images (especially maps) depicts a self-image of Armenia and Armenians as unique, always homogenous, and proud of an ancient heritage. Throughout the textbooks, either the text or the images accompanying the texts portray spaces that are called “Armenia” without an explanation of what is the category of the word “Armenia” – conflating its geographic, ethnic, and political meanings. These spaces or images may not be within the national

boundaries of today or of the time, but are referred to as “Armenian”. Although the narrative includes the history of foreign conquests, the shape of Armenia, which is usually a borderless area spanning across the South Caucasus and the Armenian Highlands, remains intact.³⁸

Referring to shifting borders between empires during centuries that preceded the formation of nation-states, the textbook presents these as a series of divisions of an entity called Armenia over the course of history. In other cases, “Armenia” is used as an emotional category; when no Armenia existed as a political unit, the text or the maps override the toponymy of the time with words that denote Armenia. The introduction to the course of “Armenian History” in Grade 10 states that Armenians “continue living on one piece of their native land and with two states and the diaspora are ready to become owners of their entire Fatherland” (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 12), without specifying which territories are claimed as “Armenian Fatherland”. The letter to the students at the beginning of the course of “Armenian History” in Grade 6 states, “Immortal is the people whose children/sons are ready to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of the fatherland” (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 5).

The textbook describes Armenians as native to the Caucasus and Anatolia in the lesson “The Early State Formations/Entities in the Territory of Armenia”:

³⁸ See for example: (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, Harutyunyan, Chobanyan, Simonyan, and Nazaryan, 2015, 73, 163, 271).

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Armenians are the only aborigine/indigenous Indo-European people that formed in their pre-patria [*nakhahayreniq*], never left it, and have survived till nowadays. Hence, the Armenian Highland is both the pre-patria and the patria of Armenians. (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 32)

The Grade 10 textbook further equates the place of origin of the group with political rights over that place by naming Armenians “the indigenous owners and heirs of the Armenian Highland” (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 26).

The Grade 10 chapter on “The Genealogy of Armenians” makes references to various Armenian and foreign sources – among them the Bible – that place Armenia not only as the “pre-patria” and “patria” of Armenians but also as the “pre-patria” of the entire humanity or at least Christianity (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 27). The chapter concludes with the following passage:

“So in times immemorial, there was a trans-national, trans-religious³⁹ holy ideology in which our highland had a pivotal role. Why exactly the Armenian Highland? What is the symbolism/mysticism of our land? What is the secret of the holiness of our fatherland...?” (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 33).

Christianity is a cornerstone in representing Armenians. The authors refer to religious affiliation in the texts frequently to indicate the consistent and significant role of Christianity in the Armenian history. The struggle for freedom is also presented as inherently present in Armenians: “The absolute understanding of the freedom of the nation that was established in times immemorial is perpetual among our ancestors and reaches our days transmitted through blood” (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 161).

The presented infinity of the existence of Armenia and Armenians constitutes the perennialist view of nation and history, and the presented enduring essence of the Armenian nation is what makes this view essentialist. The textbook thus interchangeably uses the words “ethnos”, “nation”, “people”; molds time and space together; and applying the historicist explanatory schemes eschews discontinuities in history, blurs inconsistencies and silences alternative views that could somehow challenge the seeming ideological consensus within history.

2.3.2 A Single-voice Narrative Focusing on a History of Political Elites and On-going Struggle for National Liberation

The narrative of the textbooks presented through a single and authoritative voice of the textbook authors focuses mainly on the history of political elites and the wars they fought. This might seem paradoxical under the circumstances of the absence of an Armenian state during prolonged spans of history; the textbook addresses this discontinuity through a meta-narrative

³⁹ The textbook uses these words because the passage is preceded by examination of sources from various traditions and religions.

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of continuity of statehood or the presumed desire for it by the Armenian people. The introduction of the Grade 10 textbook argues that “in times of absence of a state, there were various formations that had the principal characteristics (bodies of authorities, armed forces, etc.) of a statehood (princedoms, melikdoms, semi-independent mountainous communities)” (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 5). Even during the absence of Armenian statehood, therefore, the textbooks resist refocusing on social or cultural history and instead build political and elite continuity through struggles for an Armenian statehood with the argument that those political elites, throughout various empires and centuries, were conscious of their united efforts to build a future Armenian nation-state.

The single-voiced historical narrative is written from the perspective of the patriotic elites who share the same national-liberation ideology. The narrative systematically seals itself off of any challenge to this seeming coherence. Divergence of views, even when present, is portrayed as secondary or marginal.

An illustration of this pattern of marginalization of divergence is the description of “the rise of the political life” and the advent of “the new ideology of the liberation struggle” among Armenians in the 19th century Ottoman Empire (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 182-205). For a page or so, the Grade 11 textbook narrative breaks away from presenting the various leaders and the people as a monolith. The views of “the national conservatives that spoke in the name of the entire nation but expressed primarily the viewpoints of the peasants, city artisans, and small-scale merchants” are discussed as divergent from the liberal stream that itself included various ideas. (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 183)

However, the authors, having paid the dues to presenting a relative diversity of opinions in the first lesson of the chapter, immediately subordinate the divergence to a consolidated stance toward the national liberation in the lesson on “the formulation of the ideology of armed struggle”. The textbook argues that the 1862 rebellion in Zeytun “deepened the understanding of national unity as necessary” and that the Berlin conference following the Russian-Turkish war of 1877-1878 further changed the stance of those conservative or liberal Armenian writers and activists such as Raffi, Tserents, and Mkrtych Khrimyan who prior favored peaceful means. The textbook highlights writers Mattheos Mamourian⁴⁰, Muratsan, Tserents, and Raffi as samples of literature that “compelled youth towards new heroic acts, self-sacrifices, and morality”. The chapter concludes with the message of all this “preparing the generations for a more determined struggle”. (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 191-205)

⁴⁰ Two of the lessons in the chapter on “The Rise of the Armenian Political Life” are followed by quotes from Mattheos Mamourian under the heading of “Additional Material”. The quotes are on “the necessity of liberation through own efforts” and “real patriotism” and call on not waiting for external actors to end “the black chain/bandage” around Armenians and to “take on the centuries-long vengeance” (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 186, 194).

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History as a perpetual fight for independence told in the voice of the continuous political elite brings to the fore common people as a faceless mass who either acted in unison with the elites in support of the idea of national liberation or as victims whose persecution further underlined the need for this liberation.

The historical narrative of the textbooks is constructed, therefore, from a narrow lens presenting a patriotic image of a people struggling for independence and nation⁴¹-building. The introduction to the Grade 10 textbook argues that “the centuries-long struggle for the preservation or restoration of freedom and independence constitutes the axis of Armenian history” (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 5).

Building a narrative of a perpetual national liberation struggle, the textbooks highlight those events and phenomena that are compatible with that narrative and omit those that are not. As a result, there emerges a mythologized image of history, in which since the end of the Cilician kingdom, Armenians have been striving for national liberation and struggling against their enemies, among them the Ottoman Empire. The narrative of the unequivocal strife against the Ottoman Empire is embedded into this perpetual struggle, leaving open many questions: for example, why before the 19th century there was no major movement of Armenians against the Ottoman Empire; why even in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the national liberation movements encompassed only a small number of Ottoman Armenians and never became a country-wide popular uprising, and ultimately it does not explain why many Armenians in 1915 obeyed the deportation order of the Ottoman authorities that resulted in the Genocide. (Zolyan 2016)

The narrative of the textbooks neglects to consider alternative perspectives or a diversity of idea(l)s among ordinary people. It equally ignores the experience of coexistence of Armenians and other peoples within the same spaces and the role or contributions of other groups of people to the different domains of societal life. Every now and then there is a mention of an alternative opinion; however, this diversity of opinions represents exclusively alternative views amongst elites, as illustrated by the example of “the Armenian Patriarch Nerses Varzhapetyan and the members of the National Assembly coming forward with appeals to remain loyal to the

⁴¹ The meaning of the word “nation” (“azg”) (and its derivative “national”) is multifold in the textbooks; most of the time it means an ethno-nation and is interchangeably used with the word “people” (“zhoghovurd”). The concept of national liberation or forming a nation-state is treated in the textbooks as though Armenia was a unique case disregarding the historical context of the 19th and 20th centuries where the idea of nation-states was forming in Europe, and the word “nation” was gaining its present meaning. The problem is not the use of the word “nation” in reference to Armenians prior to the inception of the concept of nation-states, the problem is its retrospective application to the centuries prior as though it bears its entire modern burden of meaning. Even in reference to population, the textbook uses the word “nation-population” – “azgabnakchutyun” that is a coinage of “azg” meaning “nation” and “bnakchutyun” meaning “population”, so the notion of “nation” is ever-present. See for example: (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 183).

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Empire” during the 1877-1878 Russian-Turkish war (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 176). However, even the opinion of these elite constituencies is marginalized, and the voice of the people is presented as an imaginary singular voice that comes to support the patriotic elites: “The liberation of Armenia had transfused the entire people both in the fatherland and in the diaspora” and in favor of the “courageous”⁴² leaders directing the people towards national liberation (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 3).



This narrative of national liberation is also saturated with the ideology of militarism. The speed with which the textbook content absorbs militaristic content is astonishing. Within just a couple of months after the April 2016 escalation in the zone of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Grade 12 “Armenian History” textbook for the 2016-2017 school year includes a two-page narration of it with the conclusion that “this new phase of the Artsakh [Nagorno-Karabakh] war proved that the Armenian people in its unity and determination to stand beside their soldiers and the army is deathless and ready to self-organize, enroll as soldiers for the holy task of defending the fatherland and continue our triumphant campaign of the Artsakh war” (Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016, 157).

Figure 5. The textbook narration about the April 2016 escalation in the zone of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with a photograph of a military parade in Yerevan (Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016, 155).

2.3.3 A Narrative of Victimhood and Oppression by the “Others”

Within the framework of national liberation, the textbooks consistently portray Armenians as victims. With Armenian history taught as a separate subject without contextualizing it within world history, a narrative of repeated submission to empires and conquests emerges: the Byzantine and the Sassanid Persian Empires, the Arab Caliphates, the Seljuk conquest, the Mongol conquest, the Safavid Persian and the Ottoman Empires⁴³ are all portrayed primarily in relation to Armenia and Armenians as either

⁴² This word appears several times as a marker of a difference between those who favored peaceful means to change and those who favored the armed struggle.

⁴³ The Russian Empire has an ambivalent representation. Sometimes it is the lesser of the evils – the empire where Armenians could find refuge after the oppression of the Persian Empire and could practice religious freedoms and participate in the development of economy (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 38). At other times, the Russian Empire is ranked among the oppressor empires most often called a

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their conquerors and victimizers or their allies. Within this repeating pattern of oppression and victimhood, the Ottoman Empire and the Turks come to fill the already established “role” of the “other” and the “enemy” within the narrative of the textbooks.⁴⁴ With the tipping point of the Genocide, the narrative builds the image of the ultimate victim and the ultimate perpetrator exemplified by Turks.

The Ottoman Empire is also referred to as “Turkey” or “The Sublime Porte” with the corresponding adjective being “Turkish” or “Ottoman”. The word “Turkish” (*turqakan*) is used in the textbooks for the Ottoman period in such a way that it could refer both to the state and to people. For example, the title of the chapter “The Beginning of the Realization of the Turkish Program of Genocide of Western Armenians” which tells about the Sultan Abdul Hamid massacres – qualifying them as one of the first genocides of the world – implies not just that there was a certain program of extermination of Armenians, but also that it was “Turkish” and it is not clear whether the word “Turkish” refers to the Turkish state, Turkish nationalists, or Turkish people in general (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 211; Zolyan 2016). The use of the word “beginning” also ties into a singular narrative of both the Hamidian massacres and the Genocide carried out by the Young Turks. In the Grade 8 textbook, the word choice is even more problematic: “Abdul Hamid decided to solve the Armenian question in the Turkish manner (*turqavari*) – through massacres” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 81), or in other words, the textbook assumes that there is a certain Turkish way of resolving issues, and that is through massacres.

None of the textbooks describe the Ottoman Empire or the Turkish people and its relations with Armenians within any positive or neutral context of coexistence. The narrative of this relationship is based on wars, conquest, oppression, and discrimination of the Armenians⁴⁵. The textbooks have a distinct de-humanizing vocabulary reserved for Turks or the Ottoman Empire

“colonizer” and “oppressor” that closed schools and limited religious freedoms and exploited the region to her benefit. Curiously, the textbook refers to “the myth of Armenian separatism” as something that was cultivated at the end of the 19th century in order to strike up anti-Armenian attitudes in the Empire (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 65). The representation of the Russian Empire has been changing in the textbooks of the independence period becoming more and more negative and so has been changing the representation of Bolshevik Russia and the Soviet Union. For instance, the “Kemalist-Russian plan conspiring against Armenia” in the context of the Sovietization of Armenia and later in the context of the Treaties of Moscow and Kars is relatively new in the textbooks (Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016, 51, 76).

⁴⁴ For a more extensive discussion of the enemy image in the textbooks in Armenia see: (Zolyan & Zakaryan 2008).

⁴⁵ The success of Armenian individuals such as lawyers or writers within the Ottoman Empire is assumed to be the result of their exceptional “inherent talents” and the success of groups such as “the class of wealthy Armenian amiras” that had affinity with Ottoman officialdom is episodic and looked down upon (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 184, 256).

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(and other Empires) such as “yoke” (“*luts*”) or a “backward empire” that exercised a “ferocious” (“*dzhndak*”) and “savage” (“*vayrag*”) “dominion” (“*tirapetutyun*”).

When the textbook describes the second half of the 19th century as the period of “intense rise in the political, economic, and cultural life”, it states that “market (capitalistic) relations take root in the economy and the domain of culture experiences an unprecedented awakening” (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, Harutyunyan, Chobanyan, Simonyan, & Nazaryan, 2015, 191). However, it does not contextualize these as developments within the Ottoman (or Russian) Empire that could serve as an example of positive coexistence. Positive developments are attributed exclusively to self or factors beyond the Empires such as “revolutions in Europe” (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 191).

Events that might challenge the unequivocal labeling of the Ottoman Empire as an oppressor and make the black and white narrative more nuanced are under-presented in the textbooks or interpreted in a way that they play into the meta-narrative. For example, the official note of condolences for the people of Alashkert killed during the 1877-1878 Russian-Turkish war or the promises of reforms given to Armenians by the Ottoman government are dismissed as “attempts to appease/please Armenians” (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 176). The textbooks dismiss also the 1839 Tanzimat and 1856 Islahat decrees⁴⁶ and the 1860 national constitution of Armenians⁴⁷ as positive steps framing them as attempts at preventing an overall crisis that was looming in the Ottoman Empire or as the result of the pressure of the European empires (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 71; Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 160). The textbooks portray Armenians as destined for extinction in or expulsion from⁴⁸ the Ottoman Empire.

Another example of a de-contextualized narrative is that of the settlement of Muslims from the Caucasus and Balkans into Anatolia starting from the end of the 19th century. The textbook frames the arrival of the Circassians and other Muhajirs as “the settlement of numerous Muslims in Western Armenia for the sake of containing liberation movements” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 103) and in another instance calls it “a real evil” (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 231). The textbook does not address the wider context of massacres and displacement of Muslims in the Balkans and in the North Caucasus that resulted in the resettlement and likely contributed to resentment toward Christians and, among some of them, desire for misplaced “revenge” (Zolyan 2016).

⁴⁶ The Tanzimat and Islahat decrees were reforms adopted by the Sultan’s government hailing the equality of all nations and an improvement in the tax and court systems.

⁴⁷ Islahat Decree made it possible for Armenians to prepare their own constitution. The constitution was accepted by the Sublime Port in 1963 with amendments.

⁴⁸ In this latest generation of textbooks, Muslim or Islamized Armenians are mentioned; even if in the context of oppression and albeit with a passing tone, it is an important step towards inclusion of marginalized groups into the narrative (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 144; Zolyan 2016).

A critical shortcoming of the textbook discourse, therefore, is that the complex historical developments are reduced to a simplistic narrative of a struggle for national liberation told in the voice of political elites building an essentialist view of Armenia and Armenians with a major accent on victimhood and on Turks as perpetual oppressors.

2.4 Untold Stories: Patterns of Omissions of Her Story in the Hi(s)Story Textbooks in Armenia

Similar to textbooks in Turkey and elsewhere, and consistent with world historiography in general, it came to be normalized and nevertheless surprising that historical narratives omit the presence of half of the population throughout the history. It is even more astounding that with the advancement of the democracies, the state of the affairs in this sphere has remained unchanged.

A 2016 policy brief completed by the World Bank states that “Armenian history focuses exclusively on subject area content and generally remains gender blind” (Silova 2016). We further argue that the history textbooks are not only gender blind, they are also gender biased. One reason for the near-absence of women from the narrative is the preoccupation of the narratives with the history of wars and elites discussed above. Even within the context of elite and political history, however, women are unduly excluded.

The analysis conducted for this section looked at the textbooks for “World History” and “Armenian History” for Grades 6 to 9, as well as textbooks for “Armenian History” for Grades 10 to 12. The aim of the analysis was to observe if there were consistent patterns of exclusion or bias throughout the content of the subject area of history. The additional textbooks⁴⁹ analyzed in this section are:

Textbook and Grade	Authors	Publisher	Year
World History, Ancient World, Grade 6	Albert Stepanyan, Hayk Avetisyan, Aram Kosyan	Zangak	2013
World History, Middle Ages, Grade 7	Gagik Harutyunyan, Aram Nazaryan	Zangak	2014
World History, New Ages. Grade 8	Albert Stepanyan, Ruben Safrastyan, Aram Nazaryan	Zangak	2013
World History, Newest Period, Grade 9	Albert Stepanyan, Aram Nazaryan, Ruben Safrastyan	Zangak	2014

For that purpose, text segments with the key words “woman”, “women”, “queen”, “princess”, “daughter” and others were taken for analysis together with the entire paragraph where the key word appears. All images have also been studied, and the ones depicting women in any capacity are selected for further analysis. Since the World Bank study has already shown that the high school history textbooks have a level of representation of women that is below five

⁴⁹ The textbooks are available in Armenian at <http://books.dshh.am/bookcase/hsma>.

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percent and no single quotation is attributed to women (Silova 2016), the objective of this analysis was to look at the discursive specificities of that five percent representation of women, comparing them with the discourse of the middle school textbooks.

Women leaders are a scarcity in the textbooks. Only two women made in to the “World History” textbooks as characters on their own – Margaret Thatcher (albeit with a sentence) and Angela Merkel, (Stepanyan, Nazaryan and Safrastyan 2014, 88, 136). The Grade 6 “World History” textbook discusses the history of Egypt, yet it fails to mention any of its female rulers. There is no mention of Hatshepsut, the second female pharaoh; and even in the case, when Akhenaten is discussed, there is no mention of Nefertiti, the chief consul and a co-ruler of the time. (Stepanyan, Avetisyan and Kosyan 2013, 21-14, 46)

One of the main forms in which women found their way into the history textbooks was in the capacity of a victim or a ruled subject. Recurrently, women were portrayed collectively in the context of mass deportations and killings. In the description of self-defense actions organized by Armenians of Cilicia within the context of the Genocide of 1915, the Grade 8 textbook states that “beautiful women and girls were forcefully taken to the harems of Muslims” on the backdrop of mass killings and deportations. A page later, the textbook highlights that mostly women and children were forced to migrate to Russia, Eastern Armenia, and other places. (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 127)

When describing the 1915 resistance of Urfa, the Grade 8 textbook highlights the name of a male leader and mention that “women and ladies also participated in the fights”. The Grade 11 textbook that takes on the same period completely omits the participation of women in the fights in Urfa and mentions women and children only when writing about deportations. (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 136-137; Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 261) The textbooks have overlooked both the names and the iconic photographic depiction of the women of Urfa, one of them Armenuhi Ketenjian (nicknamed “Khanum”) who was the leader of the all-female squad.

In the discussion of the 1915 resistance of Van, the Grade 8 textbook mentions only that “women and girls were engaged in the procurement of clothes and food for the fighters and Armenian and Assyrian refugees”. However, the effort of women is left without examples and names as is the effort on the part of women in the 1915 resistance of Musa Dagh. (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 134-136) Similarly, when referring to the 1894 rebellion of Sasoun, the textbook mentions that women took part in the struggle along with men (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 94). Here, once again, the participation and contribution of women is collective. Similarly, within the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh war of the early 1990s, the Grade 9 and 12 textbooks feature a number of men with details and photographs; yet, not a single woman is presented in comparable detail.

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Therefore, within the existing paradigm of history as the story of political elites and their struggles, women are largely excluded. When they are present, it is either collectively, namelessly, and as a background or as ruled subjects and victims.

In the rare cases when individual women are present, they are called to reinforce the role of woman as a caregiver, even if this is not the main identity of the person or their main contribution. Shushanik is one of the rare female figures that has made to the history textbooks. In this portrayal, her key contribution is the mercy she exhibited towards Arab invaders as she begs Smbat Bagratuni to spare the lives of 300 remaining men (Harutyunyan, Margaryan, et al. 2014, 62, 67). Within the current military political logic of the textbooks, this could lead to undue speculations on the inapt nature of women meddling in state affairs.

The depiction of women as victims is not limited to the “Armenian History” textbooks only. In the Grade 6 “World History” textbook, the only mention of women in the ancient Greek context is the fact of them not holding citizenship in Athens (Stepanyan, Avetisyan and Kosyan 2013, 81), which might lead the students to the conclusion that women were destined to stay out of power from ancient times. And yet, the richness of the same Greek history ignored by the textbook indicates that this was not the case. One wants to think of Aspasia of Athens, the equal to Pericles and his lover, the first female doctor of Athens Agnodice, and many others. There is no shortage of women rulers or goddesses in Ancient Greece, were the authors inclined to see them in positions other than powerless.

In the high school textbooks, women are not present collectively or as victims (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014) (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015; Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016). Only at the beginning of the Grade 10 textbook, the authors mention the veneration of the Mother Earth in ancient times that was called the Big Mother during the middle Stone Age (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 22). However, no attempt is made to relate this to the attitude toward the women of the time or their role in the society.

In the Grade 12 discussion of the Second World War II, when the majority of men are said to have been drafted to participate in the war, there is no mention of the role of women who, as is well known, had to step in into all the positions of civilian life, including those traditionally occupied by men, sustain the society, and support the front as well (Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016, 104-110). In the Grade 9 textbook that treats the same topic, there is a brief mention of “women, the elderly, and the underage replacing the workers of the villages that went to the front” (Barkhudaryan, Hakobyan, et al. 2014, 78).

Women are not mentioned in the military and diplomatic context either, even when they played a major role. For instance, in Grade 12, when speaking of the political organization of the Third (current) Republic of Armenia and enumerating the political parties of the 1990s, the textbook omits the all-female political party “Shamiram”, which was not only present in the public life of the time, but was represented in the parliament (Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016, 165). When speaking of benevolent organizations in the Diaspora and later in Armenia, the authors again

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ignore the role of many women benefactors, among them the fact that the Armenian Relief Society is an expressly all-female organization (Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016, 214).

Another role in which women are present is as mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters of male figures. The Grade 11 textbook speaks of a defense heroine of the late 19th century, Sose (Vardanyan), only in relation to her husband, guerrilla leader Serob Vardanyan (nicknamed “Akhbyur Serob”). Sose is said to have continued her husband’s activities after his death. (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 208) Despite her history as a fighter in her own right and being buried in the pantheon of soldiers, she is presented in the textbook only as the wife of a male fighter.

The Grade 7 “World History” textbook depicts Byzantine Empress Theodora with a mosaic from a church in Ravenna in the context of her marriage to the Emperor. The accompanying text speaks of Emperor Justinian and his evolution to power, and Theodora is described as an itinerant dancer in her youth. She is said to have attracted the attention of the emperor with her beauty and intelligence. The textbook also mentions in a sentence that Theodora was also interested in religion and politics and participated in the rule of the country, failing to mention that she was the co-regent along with her husband. (Harutyunyan and Nazaryan 2014, 16)

Another political figure, 4th century Queen Parandzem, fulfills three “female” roles at the same time, of a mother, a wife, and a victim. The short passage talks about the seized fortress in Artagers, where the queen was captured and tortured by the Sassanid king Shapur’s army (Harutyunyan, Margaryan, et al. 2014, 23). One of the key political figures of mediaeval Armenia, Queen Parandzem, is presented only in her relation to men and as a victim, while there is no scarcity of materials and research on her role as a politician.⁵⁰

The Grade 6 “World History” textbook speaks of Cleopatra only alongside Mark Antony in the defeat when they committed suicide (Stepanyan, Avetisyan and Kosyan 2013, 128). It does not need much of a research to be aware of the influence of the last pharaoh. However, her entire history is reduced to a single splashing line depicting the suicide, and even that only because it was committed together with a male ruler. In the Grade 10 “Armenian History” textbook Cleopatra finds more extensive coverage. However, here the context is the resistance to Rome’s expansion and Cleopatra is presented again as Mark Anthony’s wife and has some agency as she orders to execute the Armenian king, Artavazd (Artavasdes) II (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 108-110).

In the Grade 10 “Armenian History” textbook, Queen Erato is represented only in relation to her brother Tigran (Tigranes) IV even though she was a co-ruler who after the death of her brother became the sole ruler (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 113, 116).

⁵⁰ Historian and lawyer Hrant Armen (Qyutukian) has dedicated an entire book to this figure.

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In some cases when women are presented as actors, it bears negative consequences for others. The Grade 8 “World History” textbook depicts Louis XVI of France as a weak ruler only interested in hunting and feasts organized by his wife, Queen Marie Antoinette, and the subsequent execution of the couple (Stepanyan, Safrastyan and Nazaryan 2013, 26).

Women are also mentioned as assets of their ruling brothers or fathers who would make them marry other rulers for political purposes (Stepanyan, Avetisyan and Kosyan 2013, 34). In one case Zabel, the daughter of Leo II, the king of Cilicia, is told to be crowned by her father, but since she was young, and that decision brought about instability, she had to be married off to a strongman Duke of Antioch (Harutyunyan and Nazaryan 2014, 135-137; Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 55-56). The passage omits Zabel’s own deeds as a ruler, such as being the patron of sciences and medicine.

An even more striking case is the depiction of Satenik in relation to Artashes (Artaxias) I, who warred with the Alans and kidnapped their princess (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 53-54). There is a lengthy passage on that particular story, which not only fails to criticize the violent act of kidnapping but also praises the act of the king. So quite often, women are presented as bearers of the actions of others.

Within the cultural lives of the societies, there is a dire underrepresentation of women. In the Grade 9 “Armenian History” textbook, the names of only two prominent singers, Gohar Gasparyan and Zaruhi Dolukhanyan, and 1 renowned pianist, Svetlana Navasardyan, are presented with a great many famous men some of whom have entire lessons devoted to them (Barkhudaryan, Hakobyan, et al. 2014, 140). Another instance when a prominent actress’s image is provided is Arus Voskanyan, who happens to play the role of Desdemona alongside a prominent male actor, Vahram Papazyan playing Othello. Her presence is likely conditioned by the difficulty of separating the roles of the two protagonists in the famous play (Barkhudaryan, Hakobyan, et al. 2014, 93).

In the entire narration of 20th-21st-century cultural life of 50 pages in the Grade 12 “Armenian History” textbook, there are only two photographs of women – writer Silva Kaputikyan and actress Varduhi Varderesyan, the latter perhaps because she appears in a photograph with scenes from plays where male actors are featured. Zabel Yesayan’s name only appears in a list of writers, whereas Srбуhi Dussap’s name did not even make it to the textbooks. On the contrary, many men are featured with photographs, details of biography and works (Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016, 249-306). This is characteristic of the sections on culture of the entire two courses of history – Grades 6-9 and Grades 10-12. Moreover, nothing is written about feminism as a movement in social life. None of the Soviet state policies on gender equality have made it to the textbooks even though these had significant results in terms of representation of women in all spheres of public and political life.

The content of the textbooks, therefore, is highly discriminatory. It heavily relies on the depiction of political and military leaders, omitting the social and cultural context of these

times. Such a choice itself already limits the number of potential women who would be named, considering that women have been historically underrepresented in such roles. It is harder to explain, however, why the few existing prominent women rulers are systematically ignored or defaced, or alternatively discussed in the context of their relations to men and as their commodity.

One reason for the systematic underrepresentation of women in the history textbooks in Armenia is the composition of the author groups that are nearly all male. However, a simple inclusion of women into the writers' groups, while necessary, is not a sufficient condition. Inclusion of women into the writers' groups and the subsequent inclusion of women into the content is important. What is also necessary to address, however, is the narrow focus of the narrative on political and military developments. Should the historical narratives be complex and including a diversity of human experiences, bringing in various aspects of the life of the society, women will naturally emerge from within a truly inclusive history.

2.5 Analysis of Teaching Guidelines and Methodologies in “Subject Standards”, “Teacher Manuals”, and Textbooks

This section looks at the correspondence between the state-prescribed teaching guidelines and methodologies on the one hand and the methodologies suggested by the “Teacher Manuals” and those used in the textbook on the other hand.

In terms of activities, the “Subject Standard and Subject Syllabus” for the middle school prescribes a variety of activities to be carried out in the educational process, among them “self-reflection, interviews with people from different groups around”, “analysis of the information collected from mass media”, “examination of works of art”, “role plays”, “communication with peers from other cultures using the internet”, “meeting guest lecturers”, etc. (Center for Educational Programs 2012). These innovative approaches do not find a reflection in the methodology of the textbooks.

Unlike the middle school “Subject Standards”, the high school ones that did not undergo the revisions of 2011-2013 provide a rather scarce range of educational activities – “relaying of theoretical material; discussions; debates; spoken examination; written thematic, practical, and independent works; field trips; film-screenings; working with electronic materials”. The high school “Subject Standards” also request the methodological manuals to provide the list of recommended literature or electronic libraries for the assignments. (Center for Educational Programs 2008)

Both in middle school and high school, the range of activities are not suggested with specific formulations next to each lesson as is the case of the “Teaching Programs” in Turkey. Rather they are generic lists provided before the core part of the “Subject Standards” under a general title of “Types of Educational Activity” (Center for Educational Programs 2008; Center for

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Educational Programs 2012). The teaching guidelines and methodological approaches are elaborated in the “Teacher Manuals” that are to accompany the textbooks and are also approved by the MoES. The following two “Teacher Manuals” have been looked at for the analysis of this section:

Manual and Grade	Authors	Publisher	Year
Armenian History, Grades 6-7, Teacher Manual	Ashot Ghukasyan, Arakel Gyulbudaghyan	Manmar	2013
Armenian History, Humanities Stream, Grades 10-12, Methodological Manual for Teachers	Armine Sargsyan, Arman Maloyan	Zangak	2009

The high school “Teacher Manual” includes extensive texts on pedagogy citing several Soviet pedagogues (Ivan Nikolayevich Kazantsev, Mikhail Aleksandrovich Danilov, Boris Petrovich Yesipov, and several others) and even the 17th century philosopher and pedagogue John Amos Comenius and their theories regarding the typology of lessons and methods of teaching. Despite these rather outdated scholarly references, the manual also has a useful section on the work with primary sources offering them as ways to break away with the monopoly of the textbooks, seeing the latter as “a holy book”. (Sargsyan and Maloyan 2009, 35)

The textbooks have only predominantly one type of “activities” – “Questions and Tasks” most of which are simply questions. These questions are often asking for technical information such as “How many times did Lenk Temur raid Armenia?” (Harutyunyan, Margaryan, et al. 2014, 122) or “Write out the dates from the text and make a timeline” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 8, 21). Generally, many of the questions refer to the text of the lesson, and students are assumed to recover answers from the text and recite them. This is very much in line with the “Teacher Manual” that claims that “the questions and tasks aimed primarily at the mastery of the content of the textbook are very important methodologically” (Ghukasyan and Gyulbudaghyan 2013, 9; Sargsyan and Maloyan 2009, 43).

Overall the “Teacher Manuals” are rather eclectic in the suggested methodologies. On the one hand, they claim that the student needs to become an active subject of the educational process and that the development of the person is more important than the acquisition of knowledge and so the student needs to be given room for freedom and taking initiative (Ghukasyan and Gyulbudaghyan 2013, 10). On the other hand, in the description of one of the types of lessons to be employed – “lesson for the study of new material”, the manual says, “the content of the lesson is the text of the textbooks and the entire time is dedicated to its study” (Ghukasyan and Gyulbudaghyan 2013, 13).

One of the questions in the Grade 8 textbook asks to recite a favorite poem dedicated to the 1862 Zeytun rebellion (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 75). Another question in the Grade 12 textbook asks to recall songs dedicated to the fighters in the Nagorno-Karabakh war

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(Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016, 201). This is perhaps how the textbooks interpret the requests to build interdisciplinary links between different subjects.

There are sometimes excerpts of primary sources marked “For Reading” or “Additional Material” or even without a marker, so no analysis or activities are related to these primary sources. The overwhelming majority of these excerpts are presented without accompanying analysis; nor are the students asked to analyze them. Some of them are more than suggestive and articulate about what the textbooks own voice would not have said not to trespass all ethical limits. One such excerpt cites a 13th century historian Kirakos Gandzaketsi “about the appearance of the Mongols”: “They were extremely ugly and scary in guise and appearance [...]. Whenever there was food, they would eat and drink voraciously [...].” (Harutyunyan, Margaryan, et al. 2014, 121). Left un-commented and un-criticized, this passage reinforces a racist approach.

Some of the questions uphold the militaristic stance of the textbooks. “Would you enroll into the volunteer brigades if you were there at that time?” asks the Grade 8 textbook about the Russian-Persian war of 1826-1828 (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 37). Such questions of arising empathy for military actors are abundant: “Describe the heroism of the Zeytun people. Who stood out with their heroic deeds? Who would you like to be similar to?” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 75). Another one asks if students would like to be similar to one of the volunteers of the 1877 Bayazet self-defense that made a courageous step. We learn from the text that the person Samson Ter-Poghosyan dressed as a Kurd carried the news of the siege of Bayazet to the Armenian General of the Russian Empire Arshak Ter-Ghukasov. (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 78-79)

Yet in another instance, students are asked if they would like to be similar to a hayduk/fidayi⁵¹. While this question is about the hayduk/fidayi movement that started in the 1880’s, the textbooks resorting to the same methodology of molding all times into one continuum asks: “What do you think? Can the freedom fighters of the Artsakh [Nagorno-Karabakh] war be called hayduk? Explain your answer”. (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 90) Not only is the expression of militarism striking but the fact that the students have not yet studied the Nagorno-Karabakh war in Grade 8 leaves one wondering what sort of knowledge the students should base their answers on. During the second cycle of “Armenian History” in Grade 11, the students are asked, “What position would you adopt?” regarding the voluntary brigades of Armenians during the First World War and “What comparisons they can make with today’s Artsakh struggle?” (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 255).

In the questions about the Hamidian Massacres, students are asked to “substantiate that Sultan Hamid had raised the massacres to a state level” and to retell “how the Turk executioners were

⁵¹ Hayduks or fidayis were guerrilla fighters. Both words have a positive meaning in the discourse of the textbooks.

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carrying out the massacres” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 97-98). The questions about the Genocide ask the students to describe the feelings they have “in their hearts” about the names of the Armenian intellectuals that were victim to the “Turkish yataghan⁵²”, to prove that the Armenian Genocide was the first big genocide of the 20th century of which the entire humanity had not seen the like before. (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 129) This sort of questions “train” the students in reproducing the narrative of victimhood and the “ultimate genocide”.

The questions also reinforce the historicism and essentialism of the main text. The Grade 9 textbook asks students to try to prove that the restoration of Armenian statehood at the beginning of the 20th century was a “natural historical necessity” (Barkhudaryan, Hakobyan, et al. 2014, 14). The Grade 10 textbook asks students to identify “what is the main trait of the Armenian culture for relating to the outside world”. From the preceding lesson, this “positive trait of relating to the outside world that never left our people” seems to be the label of “the Europeans of Asia” (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 142).

The questions often reproduce the retrospective teleology of the texts. A question in the Grade 6 textbook asks, “How did the name Urartu given to Armenia come into being?” (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 36). The impression from this question is that there had been an Armenia to which the name Urartu was given. These projections from the present onto the past and from the past onto the future are abundant. Another question in the Grade 8 textbook asks if “the existence of Armenian diasporic colonies [*gaghtavayr*] can be considered the manifestation of the historical fate of our people” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 172).

Similarly, the sexist discourses are also carried forward. One of the questions in the Grade 7 textbooks asks to “explain such ‘care’ of Caesar Justinian towards Armenian women” and the reference is the law with which Armenian nobility was required to include in the dowry of their daughters also land which “was not divided among other sons [other than eldest], and even more so among daughters” (Harutyunyan, Margaryan, et al. 2014, 51-52)

Some of the questions repeat word for word the exact same formulation. The question “How can you substantiate that the Armenian nation/people was subject to national, religious persecution?” follows the lessons on the Armenians under Persian rule, and Armenians under Ottoman rule which is referred to as “Turkey” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 32, 47). This question also reinforces the victimhood narrative.

Many of the questions contain the answer in them: “According to you, could the big states have prevented the massacres of the Armenians even if they wanted?” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 132) or “Is it possible to equate the deportation of Armenians from Azerbaijan and the out-migration of Azerbaijanis from Armenia?” (Barkhudaryan, Hakobyan, et al. 2014, 126-127). In the section for recommended methods, the “Teacher Manual” speaks about various

⁵² Yatagan or yataghan is a type of short sabre.

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types of questions – “open-ended, closed-ended, prompting, with a subtext, feedback questions, and leading questions”. While the manual acknowledges that the prompting and sub-text questions “hinder the free thinking of the learner and deprive them of the chance to have an own opinion”, it claims that these questions let the “learner feel more protected” and “loosen the anxiety of the learners” (Ghukasyan and Gyulbudaghyan 2013, 33-34). So, under the guise of relieving stress, students are pushed to answer the questions in a certain way and in accordance with the textbook narratives.

Other than open-ended questions, the Grade 8 and 9 textbooks, there are also multiple-choice questions. Only very few assignments in all the textbooks actually ask students to prepare an additional report or write an essay. Under “Practical Assignments” the Grade 6 textbook understands asking students to copy a chart from the textbook and fill it in (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 30, 34; Harutyunyan, Margaryan, et al. 2014, 184) or find something on the map (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 38).

The “Teacher Manuals” offer many other types of activities such as brainstorming, debate sessions, role plays with a detailed explanation of what these methods entail and how to facilitate the activities. They encourage taking up controversial and conflictual themes and conduct debriefing and reflection sessions at the end. However, the textbooks either completely ignore these methodologies or, in the rare cases when they do employ one of these, the activities are framed in a way as to feed off and into the main methodological approaches of nationalism, militarism, and essentialism. It should also be noted that even the “Teacher Manuals” themselves fail to apply these methodologies in the sample lesson plans and are saturated with examples of detrimental language and practice. One of the suggested lesson plans, for example, includes as a goal to the lesson about Seljuk-Turks and Mongols the following: “Inseminate hate against all sorts of invaders that occupy the fatherland of others, rob and massacre the population” (Ghukasyan and Gyulbudaghyan 2013, 55).

Conclusion to Part 2

Armenia, as most post-Soviet nations, carries the legacy of the heavily ideological communist history education both in terms of content and methodology stripped of the umbrella of communist internationalism. The “Subject Standards” issued by the MoES present strict official guidelines that require the textbooks to focus on the history of Armenian statehood and the struggle of the Armenian people against foreign oppressors, while teachers are seen as representatives and carriers of state ideology.

Similar to Turkey, the general pedagogical approach in the textbooks in Armenia does not aim to provide students with information and skills related to the links between or the processes behind concepts such as nation, state, or people. These notions are accepted as self-obvious and intrinsic to the Armenian identity. The ethno-culturalist discourse that presents a continuity between the Armenian empire of 2,000 year ago the and the present-day Armenian state and

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identity dominates the narrative. Similar to the Turkish narrative, the Armenian one too projects a notion of a monolithic and unchangeable Armenian identity that excludes differences and privileges the ethnic identity compared to the civic one.

Within the framework of national liberation, the textbooks consistently portray a narrative of repeated submission to empires and conquests. Within this repeating pattern of oppression and victimhood, the Ottoman Empire and the Turks come to fill the already established “role” of the “other” and the “enemy” within the narrative of the textbooks. With the tipping point of the Genocide, the narrative builds the image of the ultimate victim and the ultimate perpetrator exemplified by Turks. Turks are presented almost exclusively in negative contexts as colonizers and oppressors prone to violence.

Complex historical narratives are reduced to a simplistic narrative of a struggle for national liberation told in the voice of political elites building an essentialist view of unchanging Armenia and Armenians and their “others” with a major accent on victimhood.

Within a masculinist and militarist paradigm, women are largely excluded from the textbook narratives even during the discussions of the socio-economic and cultural developments. Women appear in the textbooks either faceless and collectively or in the capacity of benevolent caregivers or merciful characters reinforcing the gender stereotypes. Another “exceptional” way women appear in the textbooks is if they are related to a male military or political ruler.

The teaching methodologies prescribed by the state guidelines are varied. Alongside those that reinforce nationalism, there is occasional, albeit rare encouragement of using critical and creative thinking. Yet, the textbooks themselves are composed of colossal amounts of bare historical texts without an explicit push towards critical analysis. The recitation in class is further complicated by the examinations and texting systems that check for mechanical memorization.

Conclusion

In this paper, we looked at the history education models and historical narratives in the school textbooks in Armenia and Turkey with the aim to expose how the current configuration of curricula, textbooks, and methodologies contribute to the construction of enemy images and the perpetuation of conflict. We engaged in this analysis and critique with the conviction that there is “always a *politics* of official knowledge, a politics that embodies conflict over what some regard as simply neutral descriptions of the world and others regard as elite conceptions that empower some groups while disempowering others” (Apple 1993, 222). To expose this politics in the context of Turkish-Armenian relations, we started from looking at the recent reforms of history education in these countries. We also looked the current framework of documents and curricula framing and directing history education; the current state of textbook development and production. Finally, and most importantly, we analyzed a selection of state-authorized textbooks as texts about the past and present, but also the future of these societies. In doing so, we did our best to be wary about “official knowledge” but also about the assumed hegemony and uniformity of these narratives:

“Texts are really messages to and about the future. As part of a curriculum, they participate in no less than the organized knowledge system of society. They participate in creating what a society has recognized as legitimate and truthful. They help set the canons of truthfulness and, as such, also help recreate a major reference point for what knowledge, culture, belief, and morality really are.

Yet such a statement, even with its recognition that texts participate in constructing ideologies and ontologies, is basically misleading in many important ways. For it is not a ‘society’ that has created such texts, but specific groups of people. ‘We’ haven’t built such curriculum artifacts in the simple sense that there is universal agreement among all of us and this is what gets to be official knowledge. In fact, the very use of the pronoun ‘we’ simplifies matters all too much.” (Apple 2014, 49)

We used the method of critical discourse analysis to engage in this critique of “official knowledge”. We conclude that even though in the past decade reform attempts have somewhat ameliorated the discourse of the textbooks in Armenia and Turkey, the overarching narratives with patterns of exclusion and marginalization, omitting and silencing remain resulting in thin and simplistic, nationalistic and ideological narratives. The past is not dealt with but heroized; violence and conflict are not criticized but perpetuated. The narratives in the history textbooks in Armenia and Turkey epitomize Teun van Dijk’s “ideological square” in regard to “we” various “they”:

- emphasize our good properties/actions
- emphasize their bad properties/actions
- mitigate our bad properties/actions

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- mitigate their good properties/actions. (van Dijk, Ideology 2008)

Not only does the “us” versus “them” dichotomy result in the construction of various “others”, “enemies”, and “traitors” but also these constructs are essentialized in the nature of humans, groups, and societies. In this sense, the deconstruction of the enemy images will be a “painful” endeavor because it assumes destabilizing the romanticized, heroic, inherently good image of “us” as well.

The historical narratives in the textbooks of both countries are single-voiced and flat. We hear only one perspective, and the richness of human experience is reduced to the voice of the political elites painting a historicist narrative of continuity of statehood, nationhood, civilization: time passed; history unfolded; things changed, yet “we” persisted.

Another aspect in common for the textbooks of both countries is the militarism and the glorification of war. Moreover, probably without any intention, the textbook authors create content that normalizes violence and actions against the will of other individuals. Military figures are the textbooks heroes of choice, with dedication to the “protection of the nation and fatherland against others” constitute the ethics of the textbooks.

A point of divergence in these narratives of “we” versus “others” is the narrative of victimhood in the textbooks in Armenia contrasting against the narrative of the survival of the state by all means in the textbooks in Turkey. There is, however, an element of similarity in this divergence as well. Both construct “others”, “enemies”, and “traitor” that either oppress “us”, as in the case of Armenia, or attempt to dismantle “us”, as in the case of Turkey.

Indivisible from the militarism in the textbooks is their sexist streak. The textbooks tell the story of politically and militarily significant men. Women are presented collectively and as a background, as bearers of the actions of the others, as victims or ruled subjects. Their “main role” is to act as caregivers that conform with gender stereotypes upholding “honor” and reproducing the nation. Another way they “sneak” into history is through their fathers, husbands, brothers, or sons sometimes as a commodity subject for them to exchange for strategic alliances. There is an underrepresentation of women in cultural undertakings as well.

At this point, one of the objectives of this analysis was to show that even within the narrow frame of hegemonic masculinity, women are unduly excluded. Yet a more thorough questioning of this paradigm is necessary in order to completely deconstruct the narratives and create methodologies for their reconstruction in a more gender balanced and gender equitable manner including also an account for the struggle for this equality.

Overall history education in Armenia and Turkey is still far from contributing to raising peace-oriented and conflict-sensitive and critical thinking individuals who actively engage with multiple perspectives. This analysis and critique suggest that a thorough overhaul of history education is needed in both Turkey and Armenia. As a matter of fact, a series of suggestions to ameliorate history education in general and textbooks in particular can be formulated. The

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paper “Guiding Principles Towards an Alternative Understanding of History Education” that
follows attempts to formulate such suggestions.

Paper 2. Guiding Principles Towards an Alternative Understanding of History Education

Introduction

The aim of this paper is to outline guiding principles for the transformation of the current exclusivist narratives and the developing of inclusive, multiperspective, and conflict-sensitive content and approaches to history education in Turkey and Armenia.

This paper comes second in this publication because it builds on the analysis and critique carried out in the previous paper on “Analysis of History Education Models and Historical Narratives in School Textbooks in Armenia and Turkey”. The findings in the analysis and critique constitute the problems that this paper is trying to ameliorate. While this paper has been written based on the findings of the analysis of history education models and textbooks in Armenia and Turkey, it might be relevant for various geographies around the world. Professionally, the paper is addressed to current and aspiring teachers; current and future textbook authors, methodologists, and editors; academicians in the field of social sciences; and policy makers in Turkey and Armenia.

What constitutes the basic framework shaping the principles offered in this document? In other words, what is the main perspective of our guiding principles?

It has been already emphasized by several seminal books that the central education system is a tool invented by the central state to further disseminate its power and ideas (see for example: (Weber 1976, 303-338)). Mostly during the 19th century, the national curriculums were formulated in order to strengthen people’s loyalty to central authority, teaching them common values and history that gives a sense of belonging. Hence, the rise of modern education was a process where one of the main targets was the formation of a national identity formation. In this sense, during the formation eras of nation states, respect for diversity, human dignity, or peace were never the principles acknowledged in school curriculums.

History education had even a more accentuated role in establishing a national identity. In 1882, French historian and Orientalist Ernest Renan wrote his famous *Qu’est-ce qu’une nation?* The article explains the major principles of nationhood, namely a spiritual principle resting in the past/shared memory/history and present. He adds that the formation of a national identity is based on establishing a selective memory and forgetfulness (Renan 1882). As Benedict Anderson (1983) states in his “Imagined Communities”, museums, national memorials, archives are the milieu of this selective memory to establish a national identity (Anderson 1983). But above all, most of the formation and forgetting of common memories that are the basis of a national identity is established by the official history narrative and school history curriculum.

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Therefore, for a long time, the purpose of history education had been reduced into voicing nationalist narratives and glorifying past military achievements. This path of history education was more than often reproducing xenophobic myths and prejudices.

However, the 20th century produced also critical approaches to history teaching. More recently, the definition of the function of history education has changed. The foundation of this change emerged first and foremost in critical attitudes that tried to disentangle history education from nationalist prejudices, especially in post-conflict societies. The new perspectives conceive of history education as a process to build a culture of democracy, a culture of diversity, and respect for human rights. These guiding principles are formulated in order to strengthen these alternative perspectives.

This paper is composed of two parts. Part 1 offers guiding principles for history textbook production and development while Part 2 offers guiding principles for an alternative concept and role of history education and teaching methodologies.

Part 1. Guiding Principles for History Textbook Production and Development

Some of the debate around the cutting-edge approaches to education evolve around the changing concept of instructional materials or textbooks – abandoning printed school textbooks in favor of digital textbooks or simply resource-based teaching and learning and further changing the definition of teachers and students within the system⁵³. Some of these approaches go as far as challenging the concept of school subjects by partially moving away from clear-cut subjects in favor of “phenomenon-based” learning as has been declared by the goal of the new concept of education in Finland (Finnish National Agency for Education 2016). While these innovations also deserve a consideration in the case of Armenia and Turkey, the purpose of this section is to offer changes in the textbook development and production that might bring about a smooth transition to such a debate. Before delving into the consideration of recommendations for such a transition, a brief survey of existing models of textbook development and production around the world is due.

1.1 Textbook Development, Production, and Approval Models Around the World

Experts in educational and developmental psychology, Ivan Ivić, Ana Pešikan, Slobodanka Antić of the University of Belgrade identify two main models of textbook approval – models coming close to total freedom⁵⁴, state-approved or state-produced textbooks for mandatory use, and two prescriptive or advisory models in between. They identify the following models: a) liberal or *laissez-faire*, b) centralized, c) the accreditation model, and d) the professional assessment model (Ivić, Pešikan and Antić 2013).

⁵³ See for example projects such as “Beyond Textbooks” (<https://www.beyondtextbooks.org/>) or “Khan Academy” (<https://www.khanacademy.org/>) and papers elaborating on the debate such as ‘*Has Past Passed?*’ *Textbooks and Educational Media for the 21st Century* edited by Mike Hornsley, Susanne V. Knudsen, and Staffan Selander produced in 2005 after the conference of the International Association for Research on Textbooks (IARTEM) (<http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:179762/FULLTEXT01.pdf>). Another useful example is the 2017 collection of chapters *Educating for the 21st Century: Perspectives, Policies and Practices from around the World* Edited by Suzanne Choo, Deb Sawch, Alison Villanueva, and Ruth Vinz. To do justice to the argument, there is also a criticism on the renunciation of textbook use; see for example: “Why textbooks count. A Policy Paper” by Tim Oates produced in November 2014 (<http://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/images/181744-why-textbooks-count-tim-oates.pdf>).

⁵⁴ “Total freedom” would mean that individual teachers could choose instructional materials and methods independently, free from the influence of government bodies, publishers, school administrators, colleagues, and parents based on their own educational ideas and the evaluations of the students’ needs and possibilities. Perhaps there are no models as such in the world as of now.

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The **liberal model** is in place in very few countries. The UK, the Netherlands⁵⁵, Sweden⁵⁶ (since 1991), Finland (since the early 1990's with a prior history of strong state approval), Norway (since the early 1990's), Denmark, Italy, Ireland, Estonia, Australia all use the liberal model of textbook development and production with basically no approval mechanisms (Wilkins 2011; Sargent, et al. 2013). This model usually relies on a strong competitive market and tradition of publishing houses that have interest in quality control and powerful teachers' unions to monitor quality. There are countries that in theory strive towards this model but in practice have a caricature version of it because of a weak market economy, few and inexperienced publishers, no expert communities in research and quality control, and no spaces for public criticism of the textbooks and their production. In the past decade, the World Bank with varying success has attempted to assist these countries in transitioning to a liberal model of textbook production; in this sense, Romania may be considered a case of success.

On the other extreme is the **centralized model** where the only books or rather any instructional materials used in schools are those produced by a government agency, such as the Ministry of Education or another state institution (the Soviet Union, Saudi Arabia, South Korea⁵⁷). As a rule, there is only one textbook per subject in these models.

Next come the **accreditation and the professional assessment models** that may present a wide variety of practices. Textbooks are produced commercially and are officially assessed. Following this, either schools or the teachers (individually or as a group) choose which textbooks to use and usually there are more than one or a number of textbooks for each subject to be chosen from. However, the degree to which the state insists on using the accredited/authorized textbooks is very different from case to case. Also, the criteria and processes used for textbook assessment have varying degrees of transparency to stakeholders and the public. In cases, such as Armenia and Turkey, where the state-approved curriculum lays out the lesson by lesson structure and goals of the potential textbooks, the open call for

⁵⁵ In the Netherlands, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science sets a general national curriculum framework and funds the National Institute for Curriculum Development, which serves as an independent advisory group to provide consultation. However, schools are free to determine curriculum content and to choose appropriate teaching methods and materials. Textbooks are produced by commercial publishers and supplied by the school. Teachers choose textbooks for their classes. (Sargent, et al. 2013; International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement 2015).

⁵⁶ In Sweden, textbooks are produced by commercial publishers. Teachers have the right to use or not to use a textbook in the subject they are teaching and to choose which textbook without restrictions. (Sargent, et al. 2013) (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement 2015)

⁵⁷ In South Korea, even though regulations were relaxed leading to the appearance of several competing textbooks used since 2010, the Ministry of Education still compiles its own textbooks alongside the commercially-produced ones (that have to comply with the official guidelines) and is currently considering even to bring back the state's monopoly on history textbooks (Mundy 2015). In Japan and Singapore also, the state still produces some textbooks (Sargent, et al. 2013).

textbooks is not likely to yield many alternatives. Quite often, only one textbook is approved for use, and its use is mandatory, i.e. classroom instruction relies heavily on textbooks.

For example, both Japan and France use the accreditation and the professional assessment models. While France has an official approval scheme, in practice it is quite liberal. The textbooks produced by private or public publishers are based on the curricula and official recommendations of the Ministry of Education⁵⁸. So, it might seem that the state is rather controlling. However, textbooks must leave teachers free to choose their own teaching methods, which can be adapted in accordance with the needs of students. Use of textbooks from the recommended list does not prevent teachers from using any other method or material that they deem fit. Meanwhile in Japan, textbooks must be selected from those approved (or compiled by) by the Ministry of Education, and the local boards of education select books from a list of authorized textbooks for schools under their jurisdiction. So, teachers do not enjoy the freedom of choice of instructional materials.

These models have a wider freedom if the entire system of education is not based on textbooks. For example, in New Zealand a government agency *is* responsible for the production of the national curriculum and associated resource materials. However, textbooks do not require state approval because the New Zealand approach to education is not a textbook-based curriculum and teachers have a free choice of what materials to use. (Sargent, et al. 2013; International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement 2015)

About half of the states in the USA practice some form of approval. Other states allow school districts or schools to choose the textbooks they will use. A number of states have a process for approving or recommending textbooks and materials to be used in local districts and schools. The same variety of approaches exists in Switzerland and Germany. (Sargent, et al. 2013)

1.2 Recommendations for the Cases of Turkey and Armenia

In the cases of Turkey and Armenia, the first big step towards the liberalization of textbook development and production seems to be the transition from a view of the textbook as the primary source of knowledge to the view that it is a supporting material in the processes of teaching and learning. With the pace at which change especially in social sciences occurs in various disciplines, it seems reasonable to abolish the idea of striving towards the typical complex, heavy, and lavishly illustrated textbooks as sole sources. Instead of viewing textbooks as the only teaching and learning guides, we need to rely on a wide array of instructional materials that in some contexts have been termed as “*parascolaires*”, meaning “extra-curricular”, but could well mean curricular along with textbooks.

⁵⁸ As a matter of fact, there is also a National Commission which approves/monitors all publications intended for a young audience.

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Recently, many new genres and types of educational materials are emerging as more efficient – multimedia, movies, fiction, etc. Textbooks need to be collections of sources and a guide in navigating these sources as samples, selections, and interpretations of the world; or in other words textbooks need not be one of those interpretations! A curious account of such a “textbook” as a collection of references is told in the 1973 story *The Book of Manuel* by Julio Cortázar which tells the story of an intellectual family that in pursuit of appropriate school books for the boy of the family, Manuel⁵⁹, resorted to collecting and discussing with him various texts encountered in routine life and through which both knowledge and values were conveyed. Egil Børre Johnsen in his comprehensive survey of research and literature on textbooks in the USA and Europe, *Textbooks in the Kaleidoscope*, argues that Cortázar’s story is a “manifestation of the educational possibilities of the extended intellectual family” and that “no production, distribution, or consumer apparatus anywhere would approve a textbook designed according to Cortázar’s pattern today” (Johnsen 1993). From the distance of 1993 when this comprehensive survey was carried out, perhaps such a textbook would seem unconceivable. However today, given the myriad of resources available and the readiness with which they are available, such a “textbook” or rather a resource-based approach to education seems more and more plausible.

If such a new concept of textbooks seems too radical as of today, there are many other steps that can be undertaken to ameliorate the deficiencies in the textbook production and development in Turkey and Armenia working around the present schemes in place.

First of all, steps need to be taken for the emergence of a qualified professional community for textbook development and production in the long term, while textbook authorship needs to be diversified in the short term. The grip that an author or a group of authors have at the production of the textbooks is extraordinary in Armenia and Turkey. It would not be a very gross generalization to say that often, the names of the authors of the textbook become synonymous or rather metonymous for the subject itself and this is true not only for the discipline of history but also others, most notably the subjects that treat the study of “self” – native language, literature, and history. One might argue that the reason behind this is the distinguished achievements of this or that academician and the input they have had into the development of scholarship of their discipline. However, the other side of the coin is that the hierarchical approach in the academic world overall translates into a monopolization of the textbook production process by one or two academicians in each subject area backed up by loyal followers in the academia. The current authors of the textbooks are perhaps notable representatives of their academic disciplines; however, they are not in the forefront of pushing education reform and innovation: rarely do they write reflective articles to communicate their

⁵⁹ The boy’s name “Manuel” is an allusion to the word for “manual” in Spanish (“*manual*”) or in French (“*manuel*”) and some translations of the story have the wordplay title “The Manual for Manuel”.

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purposes, motifs, and motivation for authoring textbooks, or what their vision for the future of the textbooks is.

How can this monopoly of textbook authors be broken? In order to answer this question, it would be useful to start thinking about what qualifies one to become a textbook author. And here problems are characteristic even for many countries with a successful liberal tradition of textbook development and production: the massive professionalization of various spheres that academia saw in the 19th and 20th centuries has bypassed the area of textbook production. Around the world, there are no schools or degrees that prepare professionals in textbook production⁶⁰. Moreover, even within the teacher training schools and programs, there is no separate component that would train teachers in textbook knowledge – from skills to choose a textbook for classroom instruction to skills to develop a textbook or parts of it. Until textbook design, development, and production becomes a systematized body of learning, textbooks might really become obsolete. Meanwhile, what if the teacher training schools and programs integrated activities aimed at textbook production? One example could be to transform one of the course-level assignments for future teachers into designing a model textbook or a chapter for a textbook. There could also be professional training programs to drawing from different disciplines to prepare a new generation of textbook authors.

While such measures would allow for the emergence of a qualified professional community for textbook development and production, under the current circumstances of a vacuum of such professionals, the primary goal should be the diversification of the professional profiles of the textbook authors. Within a multidisciplinary group of co-authors, teachers first and foremost should be leading the group of authors that prepare the textbooks. For now, if a teacher is included in the co-authorship of textbooks, it is albeit a symbolic nominal presence or one limited to the teaching methodology of the textbook but not the development of its central content. Besides teachers, there should be qualified education specialists, child and adolescent psychologists, and other relevant specialists from research, didactics, educational science, and the school. There should also be a strict surveillance over the separation of the groups of people who work at the different stages of the chain of textbook production as well as the other stages of regulation of education. Several countries have explicit rules stating that neither representatives of the publishing houses nor authors may serve as members of state curriculum planning committees.

Another area of improvement is the evaluation mechanisms for the textbooks. Besides the general lack of transparency of these mechanisms and the resulting mistrust in the educational communities in the fair selection, important constituencies are left out from these feedback mechanisms. Who do textbook authors have in mind as they work on textbook production? Is it the student? Judging from the letters to the students or prefaces, the textbooks are indeed

⁶⁰ However, even in the case of no professionalized schools and universities for preparing textbook authors, there are trade unions of textbook authors in Sweden and Norway.

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addressed to students⁶¹. However how genuine are these letters if they are actually a channel of one-way communication? Are students given a voice in providing feedback into the development and production of textbooks? As of today, textbooks in Armenia must go through a year of trial (since the school year 2005-2006) before getting approved for use in all schools. However, the feedback that is collected from schools that participate in the trial of the textbooks is only from teachers. It would be commendable if students were also included into the evaluation of the textbooks that are to serve them.

Yet another area in need of improvement is textbook research, design, and development and breaking the monopoly within the textbook industry. “Textbook development” is largely a misnomer in the case of Armenia⁶² and Turkey. Textbook (re)production is what is happening at most because development in the sense of innovation that presupposes research, betterment of practices and products does not take place.

Who, then, is responsible for textbook development in the sense of reform and innovation? Publishers typically should take the lead in this process but in practice employ developers from an exclusive network in order to produce a textbook that is “fit for winning” the state tender. The rest of the submissions legitimize the process, yet they have very slim chances of winning.

How many of the textbooks that are in circulation now in Armenia and Turkey started off as unsolicited manuscripts submitted to the publishing houses? Do publishing houses sponsor surveys and research among education communities to understand what are the current needs of the educational process? Which forums provide venues for such feedback from educational communities? Do textbook authors conduct personal investigations experimenting with the methods they purpose? When we put this sort of an engagement of all stakeholders on the one end of the spectrum of how textbook development could be done, the current state of affairs seems no more than an illusion – textbooks are the result of the “word processing” of well-known texts that have a high likelihood of approval.

Lastly, if bold steps are to be taken towards reform and innovation in the sphere of textbook development and production, Turkey and Armenia should gradually move towards a discontinuation of textbook approval by state agencies. There might be scholarly skepticism in allowing the textbook production into free float guided by the competition between various publishing houses; however, that will lead to a healthier situation than the current one with a meta-ideology that steers all decisions in one particular direction behind the scenes and becomes

⁶¹ While these prefaces say very little about the thought processes behind the production of this or that textbook, they do send elucidating signals about the meta-discourse on textbooks – a meta-discourse of pathos.

⁶² Currently, in Armenia, the Textbook and Information Communication Technologies Revolving Fund together with the Ministry of Education and Science are the main organs that govern the textbook production process. The Ministry intends to launch a new center at the National Institute of Education to coordinate textbook production.

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superordinate to the visible legal system regulating textbook production and development. It would make sense to abolish the maze of educational bureaucracy that creates obstacles on the way of groups of authors and publishers to arriving into the classroom. This would be an incentive for the publishing houses to commission research into the needs of the students and teachers and the innovative approaches in meeting those needs in the best way possible. It might become increasingly difficult for publishing houses to base themselves on sufficiently widespread professional consensus to ensure large markets and eventually new reforms will be needed to transition to an education system that is dynamic and relies on a multiplicity of resources rather than quickly outdated static publications – something that was also discussed at the beginning of this section.

Part 2. Guiding Principles for the Concept and Role of History Education and Teaching Methodologies

2.1 Towards a De-ideologized and Re-politicized History Education

Many projects of curriculum reform in Europe speak about the need to depoliticize education and most importantly history education. If by depoliticization we mean the removal of the influence or control of specific political actors or the governments' interference in education, then by all means we should argue for a depoliticized education⁶³. However, another definition of the concept of depoliticization is removing the political aspect of education. In this case, depoliticized education should be understood as *apolitical* education. What does apolitical education entail, and should we be striving towards such a concept of education, especially in history education?

At first glance, it might seem that an apolitical education, one that removes or rather avoids *the political* aspect of education, can be a positive thing. In order to evaluate this, we need to define what is *the political* and what is *politics*. According to Chantal Mouffe, a Belgian political theorist, human societies consist of irreducible antagonistic relations; society is, and always will be, built upon division and difference, upon a concept of a "we" through a demarcation of a "they"⁶⁴. This conflictual terrain is *the political* on which *politics* attempts to build unity, a collective life, and in doing so, creates institutions and practices of power and oppression. (Mouffe 2005) So, *the political* is ever-present, and *politics* is the attempt to shift the current configuration of the political.

Thus, by depoliticized education or apolitical education – within this framework of the definitions of the political and politics – is the attempt to escape deconstructing politics that legitimizes the political in its current manifestation. Unfortunately, currently history textbooks show many traits that help to reproduce the current political order and power relations, hegemony and oppression. A re-politicized history education would give a critical approach.

As a matter of fact, several scholars, among them also theorists of critical pedagogy, have written about the unavoidability of the political in education. Besides the explicit didactic curriculum vested through laws, state standards, and decisions of the education ministries and

⁶³ The shift away from political history to other types of history is also very desirable and is the recommendation of a later section in these guiding principles.

⁶⁴ The "we" and "they" are not fixed or essential themselves and can be realized and contested in different ways.

other formal institutions, there is also the “hidden curriculum”, that is the entire set of unwritten norms, daily routines, and social interactions and relationships that constitute the school’s role in social reproduction, or as Henry Giroux has defined, “those messages and values that are conveyed to students silently through the selection of specific forms of knowledge, the use of specific classroom relations [...]” (Giroux 1988, 4). Giroux defines schools as “political institutions, inextricably linked to the issues of power and control” (Giroux 2001, 46). In this sense, Giroux builds on Pierre Bourdieu who argues that it is exactly the seeming relative autonomy that allows the educational system to exercise its monopoly of symbolic violence⁶⁵ under the guise of neutrality (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990, 67). In their turn, Bourdieu’s ideas about reproduction in education can be traced to the thoughts of Emile Durkheim who wrote about the inculcation through schools and the functioning of a class as a small society (Durkheim 1925, 1961, 144-149).

So, apolitical education that solely promotes the statutory and moral aspects of citizenship, such as rights and responsibilities and helping others, avoids the political in education in self-deception. It is politicized, or perhaps re-politicized education, that will empower students to question the reproduction of the existing order and relations of power, acknowledge conflict and contestation, and allow room for dissent and the imagination of possibilities for change. And this applies to history education and any social science education and most importantly those subjects that shape the collective identities and hence unavoidably deal with the political.

Education has always played a significant role in preparing youth for their roles as citizens in society and many curriculums have a proclaimed goal of educating for active citizenship. Being aware of the political dimension of education for active citizenship will contribute to breaking away with citizenship education as instilling the explicitly patriotic and nationalistic narrative. Only if given the knowledge, skills, and competence to understand the relations and institutions of power that they are emerged in or impacted by, will students be able to perform as active citizens capable of critical thinking and reflection, equipped with tools for engaging in conflict and collaborative efforts for change.

While the depoliticization of education is a theoretically and practically unachievable and undesirable task, the de-ideologization of education is a possible and desirable task. Be it communism or Kemalism, nationalism or assimilationist, white supremacist, racist, or xenophobic ideologies, all of them need to be identified and oozed out of the education processes and first of all textbook production and teacher-training.

Different constituencies engaged in the chain of education play a role in the production and reproduction of a collective consciousness of a society. They are important in that if a large-scale change is to happen in that closed circle of consumption of a certain meta-narrative and those

⁶⁵ “Symbolic violence” is defined by Bourdieu as the “power which manages to impose meanings and to impose them as legitimate by concealing the power relations which are the basis of its force” (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 1990, 4).

that govern the meta-narrative, the small-scale change is to happen at that crucial moment when the personal norms, values, and paradigm of an education professional – a textbook author or educator – might alter their approach instigating a wave like spreading out onto the larger society.

2.2 Overcoming the Omniscient Single Voice in Favor of Multiple Voices and Perspectives

History textbooks are often written with an omniscient tone; that is, we hear a single stable voice throughout the whole textbook. This voice is so confident, “objective”, “neutral” that it even seems that the textbook does not have an author and that it is a body of transcendental knowledge. Why is a single-voiced textbook problematic? It leads to a robotic regurgitation of the authoritative text; it steals any chance from history education to be the exciting investigative endeavor it could otherwise be because unequivocal answers are provided by the textbook before questions can be posed. Hence, students often justify their answers with the impersonal “the book says...”.

A related problem to a singular voice is the product of this voice – the monolithic, uniform, coherent historical narrative. What is problematic here? A brief elaboration is needed to demonstrate how coherence and uniformity are constructed and why this is detrimental to history education.

Paul Ricœur has written about how humans make sense of human action, events, and time through language and its use as discourse: “nothing in experience arrives at meaning unless it is borne by language” (Ricœur 1990, 1999, 48). However, humans do not deal with the world event by event (Bruner 1990, 64); these experiences are systematized, organized, and ordered into a sequence of temporality and causality. The result is a narrative or a story. The way a story is organized is its narrative structure or plot. And emplotment happens through (a) delimiting a temporal range for the story, (b) assuming criteria for the selection of events to be included in the story, (c) temporally ordering the events into an unfolding movement and culmination, (d) and clarifying how events have contributed to the story becoming a whole (Polkinghorne 1997). The plot makes a selection of events; only a minority of them find their way into a story; and the selection is based on the construed contribution of these events to the finale of the story (D. Carr 1986).

So, in a historical narrative and in its subplots, a retrospective selection and configuration of events into a meaningful whole occurs from the moment of narration; events and their meanings are fitted into a narrative through a teleological thinking and this “thinking” is usually carried out by those who have power to construct these narratives. The historical narrative excludes events that do not fit its logic and purpose. As a result, there is a monochromatic historical account that avoids, soothes, excludes, silences, puts to oblivion any piece of the past that might challenge the coherence of the story. The richness and complexity of

human experience is reduced at best to a simplistic thin narrative, and at worst, to a “narrative violence” – an act of silencing, marginalizing, and depriving of agency of those whose stories are not told (Cobb 2013, 26-39). Such historical narratives are charged with a negative conflict potential; inside textbooks they are complicit in teaching intolerance and discrimination, domination and oppression, hatred and violence. Moreover, uniform single-voiced narratives are killers of critical thinking and active student engagement with knowledge.

The problem of the omniscient single voice and a single narrative in the textbook, being interconnected problems, can be tackled in two related ways.

One is for the textbook author or teacher to exhibit awareness of their own voice and to bring in other voices and perspectives into the textbook and the classroom. It is important to note that multiperspectivity or polyvocality does not solely mean the textbook author’s or the teacher’s own attempt to give divergent perspectives on the same topic. While it is an important first step towards multiperspectivity, the risk here is that while the textbook or the teacher might give divergent views, some degree of reinterpretation will take place screening and filtering information. Therefore, multiperspectivity should also mean incorporating source materials that give first-person accounts and alternative views. Then students will have a real chance for an unmediated exposure to multiple perspectives and a critical engagement with them. Even if a separate group of historians has settled with a specific narrative of an event, it would be useful to show to students what have been the competing narratives and what has led historians to favor one as opposed to the other narrative or narratives.

The second way to contribute to multiple perspectives and narratives is increasing tolerance among students towards incoherence, discontinuities, contradiction, and ambiguity in historical accounts. This might sound like a difficult task and might require a conceptual rethinking of the discipline of history in general. However, the first steps towards this can be made through abolishing the teaching of history as progress and as a linear sequence of events that have an inherent logic. Rather, the study of history can alter between systematizing events into coherent narratives and studying happenings, occurrences, phenomena that break away with the continuity, that zoom into an instance and its study without the ultimate goal of tying it to a larger narrative.

It also means teaching students the depth of visibility into the past and the varying degree of certainty that we can have talking about it. The certainty we can have about a well-documented occurrence of the recent past is nothing comparable to the knowledge we have about an event of the remote past that is hard or impossible to retrieve. Tolerating ambiguity, acknowledging how “not knowing” and “forgetting” influence the construction of historical accounts will contribute to the students’ ability to engage in historical thinking. This does not mean that students will not learn to synthesize and build coherence in their knowledge about the past; quite the opposite – departing from a position of contradiction and ambiguity, students will exercise the valuable skills of questioning, analyzing, triangulating evidence and arguments to “do” history themselves.

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It is also important to teach students to be critical of the textbook in terms of voice and perspective. Students should be encouraged to question whose voices they are hearing and what perspectives are not represented in the textbook. They should seek the alternative stories that are told about events and look for the stories of the participants of those events to see how they might agree or disagree with the accounts of their experiences. Students should question what is causing the differences in perspective; why texts are organized in the way they are, and what this tells us about the views that the authors are emphasizing.

Finally, it should be in the center of the teacher's attention to close the gap of authority between the student and the textbook. Historian and history educator Robert Bain gives a fascinating account of his teaching experiences and what he calls a "home-made theory" on how to encourage students to overcome the omniscient tone of not only the textbook but also the teacher. In his paper, "Rounding Up the Unusual Suspects: Facing the Authority Hidden in the History Classroom", he tells the story of how he taught a class of ninth-graders a 3-week unit on the bubonic pandemic in 14th century Afro-Eurasia. First, he guides his students in "doing" history: they start from developing tools for determining historic significance and later use a historian's heuristics (sourcing, corroboration, attribution, counterfactuals) to make a historical account of the plague. Gradually, Bain's students develop the epistemological stance towards history that he wanted them to acquire – an understanding of history as "a way of knowing", "that history involves more than facts, that it demands choices and interpretations to reach tentative conclusions grounded in available evidence". (Bain 2006)

However, Bain notices that two things remain immune to this epistemic stance – the textbook and himself. He then devises two techniques to break away with the "ritualized interactions" and citing Ravitch the "modicum of irreverence toward received wisdom" (Ravitch 2003). He reverses the knowledge differential between the students and the authors of the textbook giving the students the disciplinary advantage. They are asked to write a critique of the textbook account, and the students, having done their own historical account of the plague, excel in this task. What follows is yet a braver step that Bain takes: he turns the classroom into a historical account and opens his pedagogical moves to analysis. Bain also notices that his colleagues' concerns that the students would fall into cynicism or relativism did not actualize. At the conclusion of the unit, Bain observes that his students were able to criticize both the textbook and himself without discrediting their learning environment. On the contrary, they came out of the unit with an appreciation of the experience. (Bain 2006)

As a conclusion, we should note that multiperspectivity should not be taken as neutrality, absolute relativism, or saying "anything goes". Jason Nicholls in his paper "Are Students Expected to Critically Engage with Textbook Perspectives of the Second World War? A Comparative and International Study" takes on this question and offers the following approach to multiperspectivity, "[...] this is not the same as saying 'anything goes', [...] a relativistic position that strips knowledge of meaning and the student of critical agency. Rather, the critical interpretation of perspectives requires students, like researchers, to take and justify a position,

an interpretation on knowledge. Within this scheme the reduction of the history [...] to a single perspective is rejected, yet so too is the relativization of all perspectives. [...] critically engaged students must retain knowledge, there cannot be 'interpretation only' without the need to retain knowledge. In addition, to engage meaningfully with multiple perspectives students/subjects must have some sense that single perspectives exist in contrast to multiple perspectives." (Nicholls 2006, 43). The problem therefore is not with establishing the facts; the problem is their singular interpretation.

2.3 Addressing Nationalism in History Education

Without nationalism and related searches for a common identity, there is no way to understand the making of history as a modern academic discipline. The discipline of History and nationalism are closely tied to each other (Conrad 2016, 4). Modern states have been successfully rewriting national/official histories. The field of historical inquiry came to be closely connected to the formation of nationhood, community, and identity. Certainly, identity and community have a multitude of meanings and textures, but they attain a particular importance used in conjunction with the "national". They refer to a sense of belonging and solidarity rooted in nations. History provides nationalism with a certain notion of "we/us" that nationalist projects exploit freely. Benedict Anderson pointed out that these ideas of nations and national identities are what we imagine them to be (Anderson 1983). According to a nationalist reading of history, this "we/us" constitutes a certain social formation – a nation similar to its shape and definition like today. As the main actor of history this "we/us" is represented with certain attributes such as the most benevolent, righteous, and courageous one. Most of these attributes rely on dualities such as "good" and "bad" which necessitates the construction of an "other" – either an external or internal enemy – defined in negative terms as "against". Thus, a nationalist representation of "we/us" is always coupled with a series of representations of those who are under the label of "they/them" and either excluded or marginalized as enemies. When "they" are explained, it is always tied to evil and perceived as guilty and sinful. For example, an Armenian-Turkish citizen's explanation about how he feels about the narratives that the generalized otherization of Armenians as the enemies of Turks reveals this mechanism strongly. He says, "In the history class, I feel sometimes as if I am a traitor" (Yumul 2007, 88). A nationalist reading of history also omits the fact that these past social formations had different historical grounds of identity formation, sometimes based on religion and at other times based on different patrimonial ties. Nationalist histories reveal the nation's, i.e. "our", existence in a legendary way drawn from the beginning of history implying that it will always exist. In fact, this gives an underlying responsibility to the students of keeping it that way. Obviously, "we" is not diversified, and as a result, the history is narrated as the story of a homogenized "nation" ignoring the multiplicity of experiences or, even worse, demonizing these. Nowadays, such a prejudice-invoking approach is clearly not desired as an educational tool.

Nationalism had indeed played a crucial role in the making of history as a discipline. However, the international literature on historiography is rich enough to give us an alternative methodological direction for a non-nationalist perspective on history and (invented) traditions. Two seminal voices are to be recalled here – Ernest Renan and Edward Hallett Carr. If we go back to Renan's text of 1882, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?*, there he makes a somewhat bold statement: according to him, "the advance of historical studies often poses a threat to nationality" (Renan 1882). Why is Renan saying this? He states that "historical inquiry throws light on the violent acts that have taken place at the origin of every political formation... Unity is always brutally established" (Renan 1882). Renan notes that the unity has been sometimes achieved by a dynasty, as in the French case, and sometimes by direct will of provinces, as in the Dutch case; "[t]he modern nation is therefore the historical result of a number of facts that have converged in the same direction" (Renan 1882). Historical details bring back some unwanted clashes and coercions on to the table. Taking Renan's explanations as a lesson on history writing, historical narratives should not situate themselves as the humble servant of nationalism by justifying or omitting past acts. The discipline of history education should rather be a platform where old injustices, episodes of collective violence, and people's search for justice and egalitarianism can contribute to contemporary debates. To surpass these monolithic national/official narratives, it is important to follow the variety of current academic histories.

In his book *What is History?* Carr identifies the basic tool of constructing history as interpretation. For him, facts are not enough to make history. He suggests avoiding a fetishism of fact and written sources. Accuracy is a must, but he concludes that "history means interpretation" (E. H. Carr 1987, 23). Mostly, all comes down to how these facts or sources are being put together, thus the interpretation of these is the cement holding past and present together in the narrative. Having said that, he appraises the style of the editors of *Cambridge Modern History* at the beginning of the 20th century. While communicating to the contributors, the editors stated their requirement as "our Waterloo must be one that satisfies French and English, German and Dutch alike, that nobody can tell, without examining the list of authors, where the Bishop of Oxford laid down the pen, and whether Fairbairn or Gasquet, Liebermann or Harrison took it up" (E. H. Carr 1987, 9). If history is an unending dialogue between the past and the present, students need to be aware of this dialogue and should be allowed to bypass the nationalist discourse and reductionism with relevant textbooks. As a result, a critical stance to prejudiced, discriminatory, and selective interpretation and authoritative narratives of nationalist histories has to be vitalized as a tradition in history education.

These guiding principles, that we have compiled, boldly argue that history education in the contemporary world needs to take a critical stance towards nationalism – a political ideology – which is in fact one of the competing worldviews in a pluralist competition. This is a responsibility for all the stakeholders in the field, including textbook writers, curriculum designers, and teachers. In a nutshell, with these guiding principles we invite all history

educators to take non-ideological stances in constructing history, and apply them at various levels of their vocation.

2.4 Addressing Militarism in History Education

Militarism is another commonly observed bias of mainstream history writing. The historians who like to see history as a discipline and as a field of education which is an auxiliary force to nationalism, produce histories often within the militarist logic. The anthropologist Ayşe Gül Altınay defines militarism “as a set of ideas and structures that glorify practices and norms associated with military” (Altınay 2004, 2). Obviously, the army as a social organization has its own logic and totality of rules. However, when it is confined to the army, these hierarchical rules do not constitute militarism. Militarism starts when the rules for the army begin to dominate civilian life. Altınay notes that militarization is successful when it achieves a discourse of “normalcy” in public discussions. The moment when the logic of the army dominates civilian life and the field of education we start to observe and talk about militarism. The research that has been done on history textbooks reveal a great deal of components of militarism. Five components help us define militarism in history writing and history education:

- a general glorification of war,
- myths and legends exaggerating the military successes of the state,
- reduction in the costs of war, including human casualties,
- presenting the army as the most important institution and, to certain extent, a value for the society,
- depicting periods of peace as periods of preparation for war.

All these components correspond to biases in history writing and in history education. An understanding of history education as a process to build a culture of democracy needs to start all its tasks by challenging this militarism. There are many ways of doing this. One obvious direction to consider is to avoid the understanding of history as that of wars. Textbook writers need to pay more attention to the human costs of wars, war avoiders or other types of dissenting voices, and a general social history going beyond the framework of military history. Social, intellectual, economic, and cultural themes play a great part in the history of a society and are more valuable for bringing the interconnectedness of diverse societies into the picture.

2.5 Moving from Essentialism to Social Constructivism

Methodological nationalism is a major denominator in history textbooks that create an unrealistic image of past societies. However, a critical distance to methodological nationalism is not always sufficient to achieve a history education that promotes a culture of democracy and human rights. History curriculums also need to exclude essentialism as a general approach and the essentialist representation of old societies and historical figures.

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Essentialism assumes a permanent, unalterable, and eternal substance or characteristics for groups, societies, and historical figures. Essentialism distorts knowledge with respect to the past at least in three different layers:

First, it attributes certain fixed characteristics to faith groups, cultures, and nations. This works most of the time by producing stereotypes functioning through dichotomies. The “us” is associated with “civilized”, “dynamic”, “hardworking”, and “rational” whereas the others are “backward”, “barbaric”, “static”, “lazy”, and “sensual”. Two versions of this type of essentialism are observable at the global level: “Orientalism” is the general name for the prejudices of the Western people about non-Western people, history, and cultures. And “Occidentalism” is the general name for the prejudices of non-Western people for the Western people, history, and cultures. Since Edward Said’s book *Orientalism* (1978) came out, this essentialist history writing has been criticized by several authors (Said 1987; Amin 1989; Todorova 1997; Burke III 1998; Dirlik 1999). Yet, it is hard to say that this essentialist perspective is already passé within the discipline. In different contexts, one might still observe the heavy impact of this essentialism.

Second, essentialism attributes moral superiority to the history of a certain group or nation while associating the history of others with immorality. In this sense, essentialism takes morality as a criterion applicable to societies. One should keep in mind, however, that no society is more moral or ethical than the others. Morality is about individuals’ acts. While collective responsibility is a possibility in many cases, history education should avoid generalization concerning the morality of a certain society.

Third, essentialism assumes that the social institutions, rules, and codes we have in the modern world have fixed and unchanging features that were valid in the past as well. For example, social, cultural, and folkloric history explanations in the textbooks are presented in an essentialist manner. Traditions are explained as unchanging cultural phenomena often told in a nostalgic language. History educators need to remind themselves that this is rarely the case. The way institutions, rules, and codes are organized in modern societies is characterized by modernity in a particular way. Let’s take, for instance, the case of state borders. How a state border was organized, what its function was, and how it was conceived in the 16th century is almost entirely different from how it is in modern time. The same applies to gender codes. Codes that are assumed as natural by many might be recently constructed codes. Let’s take, for instance, the meaning we attribute to child care today. Child care was a social practice exercised in every age, yet it had varying meanings throughout different time periods. History educators have to encourage their students to grasp these differences and not to assume the edges of modern time existed in all the past periods. The opening sentence in Oscar Handlin’s still incomplete but interesting realization of USA history is a nice example: “Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants were American history” (Handlin 1951). Perhaps a further realization is that the USA was built on the lands of Native Americans who did not vanish out of history completely after the colonizers arrived.

Essentialist assumptions on social norms and roles, cultural and ethnic origins and “historical” identities argue that these are all very affluent at the present, as if there is no change in the history. It is a common essentialist mistake of history writers to think of an existing society as a previously existing one, forgetting constantly the changing nature of settlement through trade, immigration, and other population movements.

2.6 Towards Diverse Ways of Conceptualizing Time and Space

Another approach that would greatly contribute to equipping students with skills and competences useful for looking at history is designing lessons that aide students in navigating the terms of *time* and *space*.

History education syllabi and textbooks have found a not-so-original answer to the question of “from where do you start telling a story?”. “From the beginning” is perceived as the self-evident answer to a degree, that the course of history education plunges into the time of “before common era” without a second thought. How much understanding of the organization of time have students grasped at the beginning of the course of history to be able to untangle the backward progression of linear time until year one of common era? And what is so “common” about this era? This unconcerned approach instills in young minds the organization of time according to the Judeo-Christian tradition; it however fails to acknowledge even itself – that this is but one approach to conceptualizing time, and there is nothing universal about it. Together with the general authoritative stance of all formal education, this approach results in the perception that there is one and only true way of looking at time. The troubling consequences of this linear progressive view of history are multifold.

A related problem to this is the periodization of history – the division of time into concrete named blocks. For decades, the syllabi and textbooks of the history course in schools in Armenia were governed by the Marxist theory of the stages of history or the evolution of “social formations”. Even though there has been a gradual ousting of Marxist ideology from the system of education after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the syllabi and textbooks still largely use that conceptualization of human time adding to it a layer of nationalism. As a result, we end up with a period of slavery and feudalism where the clash of the “haves” and the “have-nots” is downplayed in times of Armenian rule⁶⁶. As a contrast in times of the rule of the Empires of the

⁶⁶ The textbook states, “The old Armenian society consisted of the free and the unfree”, and the peasants belonged to “the class of the unfree” (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 144). However, a few passages afterwards, the textbook claims, “The main producers of old Armenia were the free peasants” (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 146). The textbook does talk about slaves and slavery stating that they were either received to cover debt or as a result of war. Deliberate enslaving of Armenians by Armenians is nowhere to be seen. The concept of “the free peasant” is included in the list of “new concepts and names” whereas the word “slave” is not (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 146-147). The transition from slavery to feudalism in Armenia is presented as “peaceful”, and “the military

“others”, the feudal order is described as backward⁶⁷, oppressing and discriminating Armenians on the basis of ethnic or religious bias.

Another example of this misconception that periodization labels create is the “Decline Period” of the Ottoman Empire. This title encompassing the last 150 years of the Ottoman Empire comes from a very militaristic and statist perspective. The socio-cultural developments of the period, for example the rise of the printing culture and the entertainment industry manifested in many published products and theatres, all seem to be overshadowed by institutional, political, and military failures.

The view of time and humanity as progressive is also problematic at the naming level; history has outgrown its division of “ancient”, “medieval”, and “modern”. A European approach often imposed on the rest of the world, it now fails to fit the study of history even in Europe. History outgrows itself because the “modern” age is getting longer and longer⁶⁸. Textbooks fail to acknowledge how recent this division is. The term “medieval” came into circulation to accommodate the emergent notion of progress – the promise of Renaissance and Enlightenment. In that sense “medieval” was supposed to be a sort of transition from the “ancient” to the “modern”. That’s why the term “Dark Ages” is used in parallel to “medieval” to stigmatize these centuries. However, this type of conceptualization also implies a norm or a normal progressive development of time. That is by inserting “Dark Ages” we know that the normal flow of progress was hampered temporarily.

The view of time and humanity as linear and progressive is problematic also because it embeds in the value systems of students patterns of discrimination conveying a hierarchy among different cultures. Textbooks follow a 19th-century classification of societies that take for granted a model of linear progression viewing “human development as marching upward from simple nomadic hunter-gatherer bands to complex urban civilizations” and relying on the assumption that there is a path “that all cultures would eventually follow”. This not only puts “societies on a scale of development based implicitly or explicitly on Eurocentric measures” but

intervention of the powerful neighbors interfered with the natural/normal development of the Armenian feudalism” that, as the textbook claims, unlike in Europe did not carry with it a decline of urban activity (Harutyunyan, Margaryan, et al. 2014, 6).

⁶⁷ Talking about the 19th century the textbook tells about the “backwardness” of “others” in many instances: “Persia was a backward feudal state” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 30), “Russia was a backward state as well, but compared to Persia was progressive” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 36), “Turkey, similar to Persia, was a backward feudal state” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 43), “The Ottoman Empire was a backward feudal state” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 65), “The backwardness of feudal Russia had become evident” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 60), “The Tsar’s government, aspiring to make Armenia’s agriculture serve the interests of Russian capitalism, contributed to the development of many of its branches” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013).

⁶⁸ In the case of the course of “Armenian History”, we see the term “newest” history that is supposed to follow “modern” history (the latter in the Armenian language is called “new”).

promotes masculinist views of the mobile “man the hunter” that “drove civilization forward” and the cave-bound “woman the gatherer” that is assigned a restricted role (Maynes and Waltner 2012). This approach also embeds a “sedentary bias” that privileges settled peoples’ over nomadic peoples.

The conceptualization of space is also rather problematic. The appropriation of a certain geography as a national space populates the pages of the textbook. This conception of space along ethnic distributions were seen very important since the 19th century in mapping. The understanding rests on the idea that ethnicity is a natural boundary-making factor. Maps in textbooks usually show boundaries of an ethnic group/nation represented in different colors, changing patterns that show the progress of that nation without referring to the conceptions of space at that time. As Jeremy Black and Donald Macrauld argue, “As with maps of state territory, there was no sense of a blurring at the margins, or of an overlap or mixture; multi-ethnicity or multiple sovereignty were also played down” (Black and Macrauld 2007, 151).

In the Grade 6 textbook of “Armenian History”, we read about the prehistoric communal society, “The need to defend themselves together against the external enemies makes the families and tribes of the Armenian highland unite in militarily stronger tribal unions” (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 26). This is said in a section that describes the transition from Bronze Age to Iron Age; the notion of what constitutes “external” and “internal” to the Armenian highland could not have existed at that time. This misuse of language is further explored in the next principle that deals with anachronisms and retrospective teleology.

So how could an alternative approach be employed to the teaching of time and space. Within the course of history, there needs to be specific lessons/s that address the fundamental component of time, the varied understanding of which is a premise to the understanding of many other phenomena. One approach to teaching time and space would be to teach and reflect on the different ways of conceptualizing time and space because any single one of them fails to depict the trajectories of societies to whom those frames cannot be applied. How time was conceptualized and organized in different places and at different times? How is it conceptualized in different places now? What do the Confucian, Native American, Judeo-Christian, and other traditions imply about time? What are cyclical, linear, monumental, and other types of time? How has chronology and periodization changed over the course of historiography? An integration of different conceptions of time and space might help integrate other perspectives on history in general: there emerge the telling of histories from the perspective of cities rather than counties, dynasties rather than centuries, etc.

Equipping students with skills and competencies to decipher, understand, and engage in a conscious and critical application of terms of time and space will bring to a type of history education that is more inclusive, embracing of differences, and sensitive to possible patterns of discrimination. It will also contribute to breaking away from a monolithic narrative that encompasses all ages and times; it will present history with discontinuities and complexity rather than in a linear, thin, progressive, and coherent narrative.

2.7 Teaching the Method of History

Even within the methodological scarcity that we observe in schools in Turkey, Armenia, and in many other contexts, there is still a variety in the conventional approaches that are applied to each discipline in a school curriculum. For instance, it is impossible to imagine a syllabus or a textbook in mathematics that does not offer students to solve problems using the methods of a mathematician. Likewise, one will not come across a syllabus or a textbook of language that does not build heavily on the practice of producing language in writing or in speaking. In the sphere of biology, chemistry, physics, we come across experiments that students are offered to put in labs in order to understand how scientific knowledge has come into being.

When it comes to social sciences, however, there is a dramatic decline in the amount of practice and active inquiry that is being offered to the student. Instead there is a heavier emphasis on the result or the product which is most often an opaque text with an authoritative voice excluding the student from a community of inquiry. In case of history, this reduction of the discipline to its outcome only stands out in stark contrast; teaching and learning history is understood as teaching and learning of the story – the historical narrative. For decades, the educational communities around the world are struggling with the departure from seeing knowledge as “a commodity that is stored in either individual minds or in texts and other artifacts” (Wells 2000); “that students need to read and listen attentively to the knowledge conveyed through authoritative texts and lectures and absorb and remember it for subsequent reproduction” (Wells 2000) is not a problem unique to the educational environments in Turkey and Armenia.

If the school curriculum is meant to build an environment where skills and competences are to be developed alongside knowledge or rather where skills and competences should make part of what is knowledge, it becomes imperative to include the method of history into the discipline of history. What do historians and historiographers do? How do we come to know what we know about history? These are legitimate questions that are to lead the syllabi and textbooks of history alongside the question of what we know about history or the past. Touching the epistemology or rather gnosiology of historical knowledge should be incorporated into the syllabi and textbooks of history early on.

These might seem like unnecessary and perhaps age-inappropriate complications to the discipline of history. However, there are ways to instill and practice these approaches in simplified forms even at the level of early education. As a matter of fact, the inquiry, the discovery, the experience are part of the human cognitive processes, and it is sometimes formal education that curtails this curiosity that could lead to a prolific generation and construction of knowledge in young individuals. For inquiry to occur at higher grades and levels of education, it needs to be embraced and cultivated at a younger age.

The history syllabi and textbooks could integrate a number of method-focused lessons that invite students to pose questions and to hypothesize, to explore objects and phenomena, to engage in observations and investigations, to share and discuss ideas with peers and teachers,

or in other words to be active learners in charge of the process rather than disempowered recipients of the “ultimate and exclusive historical knowledge”. It is important to note, however, that the layout of the above sequence might contribute to a perception that this active inquiry and introducing the method of history should be the first stage of learning or knowledge generation in a fixed linear sequence. On the contrary, inquiry and method should populate all stages of learning and any particular lesson; questioning and turning from content to process needs to be encouraged at any time. It is equally important for the teacher to participate in this inquiry process creating an ethos of collaboration and a model for students to emulate.

Working with primary sources – newspapers and archives; visiting an archeological site; exploring urban and rural landscapes; studying individual life stories and collective biographies; conducting oral history interviews; making maps; using art, theater, and film as mediums to learn about representations and interpretations of events and people, objects and phenomena; and many other methods – can help make history education a better experience for students. Perhaps this would also lead to an expansion of possible career paths and inspire students to consider spheres such as heritage studies, library and archive studies, conservation and restoration of cultural and historical materials, archeology, museum curating, public history, and many more. Education needs to be redefined as an assisted – by peers and teachers alike – social activity, a participation in a “community of practice” rather than an isolated experience in an institution (Wells 2000; Lave and Wenger 1991). History education, therefore, is to teach the method of history before it jumps to teaching the product that the method has yielded.

Often times we see a reference to history as a toolbox for solving present and future problems: from consulting the past to foresee the future with Machiavelli and learning from history not to be doomed to repeat it with Winston Churchill to defining facts of history as pre-existing laws with Ralph Waldo Emerson. If the Foucauldian revolution in seeing historical narratives as necessarily ordered by the present state of knowledge with never ceasing transformations and breaking with themselves will hardly penetrate the systems of education anytime soon, then at least there is hope for a transition from “transmissionary pedagogy” to a social constructivist theory and practice of education.

Such a shift has a great promise not only for a better education but also for conflict transformation. Active inquiry and engaging with the methods in educational experiences means taking into exploration those objects and phenomena that are of relevance to the students’ present experiences and environment, and this in its turn means generating knowledge that grows out of and is oriented towards socially relevant and productive action (Cohen, McLaughlin and Talbert 1993). In other words, through practicing problem-solving, knowledge construction, and other dialogical and collaborative methods in education, a student builds capacity in practicing an active stance in the mutually constitutive relationship between the individual and the society. Having practiced these essential skills and competences in

educational environments, students grow empowered to engage with problems in their other environments with the belief that dialogic inquiry can lead to a shared understanding and new solutions.

Peter Seixas in his 1993 article “The Community of Inquiry as a Basis for Knowledge and Learning: The Case of History” looks at how the scholarly community that produces knowledge and the classroom community that produces learning can be made analogous. He argues that conceiving of these two communities in a hierarchical relationship with the historians’ knowledge-products being transmitted into the classroom misconstrues the nature of history. According to Seixas, history teachers occupy a key position between two communities making sure that historical knowledge, based in an academic community of inquiry, is not transformed into inert, received information, and is instead conveyed as the stimulus for discussion in the classroom (Seixas 1993).

2.8 Finding the Balance Between Contextualization and Isolation of Histories

Another issue which needs to be dealt with is the proper balance between going into the depth of a single case and contextualization. Obviously, a nationalist history privileges teaching the history of a single sociopolitical unit without paying due attention to contextualization. However, history education should aim at making students familiar with diverse historical experiences of human groups. Therefore, isolating the general narrative into a single case should be avoided. A basic tool for this is synchronization. Synchronization means analyzing what is going on at the same time in other places near and far. This is, in a sense, a process in which more global ties are established. This brings to the fore that all societies are connected to each other and their environments with innumerable ties of trade, politics, population mobility, and cultural exchanges. Contextualization of each epoch and theme within a wider geography will establish a stronger knowledge of historical dynamics and avoid nationalist narratives of exceptionalism.

While considering the proper balance between isolating a single case and contextualization of an event two points are to be made. First, contextualization is not about justification. That is, it should not serve to the purpose of underestimating past collective violence and related collective responsibilities. Certainly, the trends of an époque do not justify the followers in their wrong-doings. It is of utmost importance to realize that history education should not abuse contextualization. Secondly, contextualization helps to go beyond the narrative of ultimate victimhood. For instance, the current textbook narratives on the Turkish Independence War describe a victimized Turkish nation surrounded by evil enemies; completely downplaying the power of the remaining resisting networks and capacity within the Ottoman Empire. It further ascribes Turkey a heroic rebirth through the ashes of a devastating war. National histories fall easily into the error of ultimate victimhood, which is supported by a dramatic language and ascribing an almost sacred/heroic aspect to their experiences.

Thus, a proper balance between over-contextualization and complete isolation is especially needed when it comes to contested histories and narratives of past violence – atrocities, massacres, and genocides. While over-contextualization might result in justification or flat denial of such instances of violence, isolation and complete decontextualization also have negative consequences. A decontextualized stance on past violence is often accompanied by a competition of who suffered the most by the victim communities and an apologetic stance by the perpetrator communities or those that associate themselves with these communities. A balance between over-contextualization and isolation would allow for violence not to be essentialized in the character of the perpetrators or groups associated with them – a departure from paining unchanging enemy images of “others”. On the part of those that associate themselves with the perpetrator communities, a de-essentialized approach would prevent building a feeling of shame about one’s identity and self-demonization. This would facilitate building a liminal space for a complex picture of the past, and most importantly a critical stance in dealing with the past that would be conducive or prevention of future violence. In educational settings, this would free students from seeing the future in the light of historical determinism and leaving it open to their choices as young citizens fostering connectedness and engagement.

2.9 Approaches to the Language of History Education

The history textbook is a text, a narrative, and a source, and students need to be empowered and trained to see it as nothing more than that. It is important to see history education as part of teaching critical mind skills. Students should be taught to question this text and understand the motivation behind and the implications of the *language* that it uses.

History similar to other social sciences is a discipline that is constructed through language. So, within the teaching of this subject, students need to learn first and foremost to work with language and to understand the “grammar” and “syntax” of historical text. Students need skills to analyze the language choices that authors in the textbook (or in the primary sources) make.

Often the language of the textbooks is criticized for its complexity. And true, quite often the arguments in the textbooks are convoluted which quite often is the result of the politics and ideology which shape the narrative; it is not an easy task to convince the readers to accept a single interpretation of an event or a phenomenon. The textbooks are also often criticized for an overly academic text. This has to do with the professional profiles of the textbook authors but also with the overall approach of creating a coherent narrative that covers the entire history of a people. Hence, in an attempt to speak about everything, the textbooks end up simply naming a chain of events and dates, people and documents. Often the meaning of terms is assumed rather than explained, or in the best-case scenario, explained with an appositive phrase rather than being fully defined. It is these patterns of tempered and all-encompassing narratives in the textbooks, rather than just vocabulary itself, that make this language difficult. Thus, the

linguistic choices that authors make for expressing events and concepts in history result in challenges for readers.

Linguists Mary J. Schleppegrell, Mariana Achugar, and Teresa Oteíza have worked on techniques of teaching history to students in a language that is not their first and in doing so have developed a methodology of introducing discourse analysis into the teaching of history that can be applied to other social sciences as well. This methodology is “a means of helping students see how linguistic choices construe content meanings” (Schleppegrell, Achugar and Oteíza 2004). Through this methodology, students learn to identify actions, agents, and receivers of actions, words that convey feeling and opinion. As a result, students learn to identify how information is organized and analyze messages. Rather than reducing the complexity of the language of history, students need tools to deal with it because deciphering grade-appropriate academic language is an important component of education. Raising a reflective capacity in deciphering language can be used in other disciplines as well. After all, a critical thinking can be built through first of all being critical to one’s own learning materials and process.

In addition to building the skills and competence of students in dealing with the language of history, there are changes that the textbooks need to undergo in terms of language for a better history education.

First, the language of pathos and emotional appeal needs to be removed. Language evoking nationalistic zeal and language akin to that of a novel⁶⁹ should leave the textbooks. This will alleviate the issue of building enemy images, using de-humanizing vocabulary, and hate speech.

Secondly, the textbooks need to refrain from retrospective teleology. Retrospective teleology in historical narratives is the reordering of the past occurrences as necessities that lead to an end-state – a “goal”. Retrospective teleology seeks the “germs” of the present in the past; frames a past occurrence as an anticipation of a later occurrence⁷⁰.

On the narrative level, history textbooks use retrospective teleology to build histories that lead to and justify the present day. Another manifestation of retrospective teleology is the “discovery” of past analogues, or rather homologues of later events (See, for example, the case of the semi-independent or semi-autonomous formations framed as “remnants” of the lost

⁶⁹ Here we mean words and phrases such as “The villains slew...” (“*eluzaknery sri en bashum*”) or “Most of the Turks and Kurds, smitten (“*hamakvats*”) with religious fanaticism and fervor (“*tench*”) for looting, gave tribute (“*turq tvets*”); the authors probably meant to use the word “*teghi tvets*” as in “gave in” but this is a separate issue) to the appeals of the government and participated in the massacres” or “the Turkish bloody *yataghan*” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 101).

⁷⁰ Hence the abundance of the “premises” or the “prerequisites” in the titles of many lessons and sections. For example in the Grade 8 textbook of “Armenian History”, “The Premises of the Rise of the Liberation Struggle” (Barkhudaryan, Chobanyan, et al. 2013, 6).

statehood or “precursors” of the future independent Armenian state (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 5; Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 145).

On the level of the vocabulary, retrospective teleology manifests itself through the anachronistic use of concepts. References to “international trade” in the 4th and 3rd millennia before common era or an “early-Bronze age culture of Armenia” (the textbook even uses “*hayastanyan*”, an adjective derived from Armenia as an entity, and not “*haykakan*”, an adjective derived from the name of the people) retrospectively apply terms and concepts – “international”, “Armenia” – that came into being later (See for example: (Melkonyan, Avetsiyan, et al. 2014, 37)).

These conceptual anachronisms are used also retroactively. For example, talking about the “state order” of Armenia in the first few centuries of the common era, the Grade 6 textbook says, “The governors [of the provinces (“*gavar*”)] were first called strategos or minister [“*nakharar*”]. [...] It is not difficult to notice that in the beginning ‘minister’ was the title of an appointed official (as it is in our days). In the early middle ages, the minister was already a prince and, as a rule, had a hereditary power” (Harutyunyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2013, 135). Unfortunately, in Grade 6, the students have not studied⁷¹ the modern meaning of the word “minister” (“*nakharar*”). If anything, they might have heard it from adults. Therefore, the reference to the similarity between appointing ministers in today’s Republic of Armenia and in the first centuries of the common era does nothing but conflate the burden of meaning of the word “minister” in its modern use and the old use.

Finally, the language of the textbooks needs to make a clear distinction between the language of analysis and the language of practice. The terms used in a particular time in the vernacular or even codified and standard language should be identified as such and given a proper definition⁷². These are categories of practice; “categories of everyday social experiences, developed and deployed by ordinary actors” (Brubaker and Cooper 2000). These should be distinguished from “the experience-distant categories” (Brubaker and Cooper 2000) used by the professional or educational communities in order to make sense of the past. Words such as “civilization”, “nation”, “identity” are used in everyday life. Within academic and learning communities these concepts should be deployed without reifying them with real-life referents. This approach would lead to the emergence of elements of critical historiography in the history textbooks.

⁷¹ As a matter of fact, it is unclear if and when they are supposed to study these words as well as the details of the administrative division of the Republic of Armenia today. At least the subject “Country/Fatherland Studies” that is taught in Grade 5 and precedes the study of “Armenian History” does not cover these concepts.

⁷² In general, the history textbooks should have a refined methodology for glossaries. Currently they are very poorly devised especially in the case of the history textbooks in Armenia.

2.10 Going Beyond the Textbook as the All-encompassing Source

The sections above spoke about the importance of teaching students to engage in active inquiry working with sources; breaking away with the textbook authority in general and redesigning textbooks to be collections of sources and guides in navigating these sources. What remains to be said is that history education should include specific lessons where students are taught to differentiate between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources.

Primary sources are those artifacts and evidence, accounts and documents that were created at the time that is being studied through a direct and firsthand experience – participation or observation. Working with primary sources can be challenging for students because they are faced with the raw material of history often with archaic language in case of texts and currently void of meaning or function in case of objects. Quite often primary sources are those that will greatly contradict each other and present the entire complexity of an event or a phenomenon. And it is exactly for these reasons of great mental activity that is needed in order to decipher them that students need to be encouraged to engage with primary sources.

Secondary sources are artifacts and evidence, accounts and documents that are created in a mediated experience (not through a firsthand experience) and are often, but not necessarily, created after the time that is being studied. A secondary source is often produced using primary sources. However, even if a source is nothing but a reiteration of primary sources, the sole act of synthesis or re-presentation of primary sources renders it a secondary source.

And finally, tertiary sources are the catalogues, guides, or consolidations of primary and secondary sources. They give summaries or condensed accounts constructed based on primary or secondary sources. Using this classification, textbooks should be dethroned from their role as the all-encompassing source to being tertiary sources.

In the upper grades, however, textbooks can be re-thought and used as primary sources. Just like any secondary source can be reframed into a primary source for the study of discourses at a particular time⁷³, textbooks currently in use or from previous generations and editions can turn into an object of scrutiny to foster truly critical and conscious learning environments.

⁷³ For example, an article written about the Second World War in 2017 is a secondary source. However, if the article itself becomes an object of analysis, it turns into a primary source. Or similarly a map of Constantinople in 1453 that was produced in 1870 is a secondary source (as opposed to a map of Constantinople in 1453 produced in 1453 by a cartographer's direct engagement). However, it can be used as a primary source when studying the representation of Constantinople throughout different eras.

2.11 Teaching Political History Beyond Political Elites and Wars and Teaching Social, Cultural, and Everyday History

History educators need to think about what should be the weight of political history within the curriculum. Formerly, history curriculums were dominated by political history. With recent challenges in many countries, the situation is more balanced with curriculums including social and cultural histories. This issue needs to be considered with two aspects. First, political history is something bigger than the history of wars. As historical sociologist Charles Tilly reminds us, during the making of the modern state, states changed from magnified war machines into multiple-purpose organizations (Tilly 1992, 38-66). Hence political history has to incorporate modernization histories and histories of institutions during the phase of modernization. For instance, the transformation of the central education system or the modernization of the health care system are legitimate focuses under the title of political history. Second, the overall curriculum needs to be reformulated in a less state-centric manner. The world of the past should be introduced to the students as wide as possible: it has to be wide enough to include marginalized, invisible, and silenced groups. Feminist histories should be an important part of the curriculum.

2.12 Teaching Local Histories

These guiding principles do not only endorse a less state-centric curriculum for the balance between political history versus social history. A less state-centric curriculum also means incorporating local histories into the curriculum. Adding a local side to the holistic approaches of national histories will enable to embody local environments and society as historical actors. If a history of a war is suitable for curriculum, why not to have the story of a bridge, a church, or mosque? In addition, with an age-appropriate approach, local histories might be a good platform to engage students for history-writing exercises encouraging them to find materials and sources of information beyond the textbooks. It will facilitate the inclusion in history's scope everyday life experiences and local memories changing the perception of historical inquiry and historical sources for the students.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to offer guiding principles for the transformation of the current exclusivist narratives and developing inclusive, multiperspective, and conflict-sensitive content and approaches to history education in Turkey and Armenia. Among the guiding principles, there were two strands identified – one on guiding principles for history textbook production and development and another one offering guiding principles for an alternative concept and role of history education and teaching methodologies.

For the strand on history textbook production and development, we offer transitioning from a view of the textbook as the primary source of knowledge to the view that it is a supporting material in the processes of teaching and learning. Steps need to be taken for the emergence of a qualified professional community for textbook development and production in the long term, while textbook authorship needs to be diversified in the short term. Another area of improvement is the evaluation mechanisms for the textbooks. Yet another area in need of improvement is textbook research, design, and development and breaking the monopoly within the textbook industry. Lastly, if bold steps are to be taken towards reform and innovation in the sphere of textbook development and production, Turkey and Armenia should gradually move towards a discontinuation of textbook approval by state agencies.

Within the guiding principles for an alternative concept and role of history education and teaching methodologies, the following alternatives have been offered:

- re-politicizing education empowering students to question the reproduction of the existing order and relations of power, acknowledge conflict and contestation, and allow room for dissent and the imagination of possibilities for change;
- de-ideologizing education stripping it of ideologies be they communism or Kemalism, nationalism or assimilationist, white supremacist, racist, or xenophobic ideologies;
- overcoming the omniscient single voice in favor of multiple voices and perspectives both in the textbooks and in the classrooms; increasing tolerance within educational communities towards incoherence, discontinuities, contradiction, and ambiguity in historical accounts; presenting history with discontinuities and complexity rather than in a linear, thin, progressive, and coherent narrative;
- taking a critical stance towards nationalism – a political ideology – as solely one of the competing worldviews in a pluralist competition;
- addressing militarism in education paying more attention to the human costs of wars, war avoiders or other types of dissenting voices, and promoting a general social history going beyond the framework of military history;
- moving away from essentialism;
- equipping students with skills and competencies to decipher, understand, and engage in a conscious and critical application of terms of time and space; encouraging a type of

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history education that is more inclusive, embracing of differences, and sensitive to possible patterns of discrimination;

- building learning environments where skills and competences are to be developed alongside knowledge; including the method of historical inquiry into the discipline of history;
- finding the proper balance between going into the depth of a single case and contextualization;
- breaking away with the textbook authority in general and redesigning textbooks to be collections of sources and guides in navigating these sources;
- encouraging students to question texts and understand the motivation behind and the implications of the language that they use;
- rethinking political history to incorporate modernization histories and histories of institutions during the phase of modernization; reformulating history in a less state-centric manner including marginalized, invisible, and silenced groups; including feminist histories into the curriculum;
- incorporating local histories into the curriculum.

In the past decades, the constructive nature of learning is gaining more and more recognition. The mutually constitutive relationship between individuals and society means that every instance of joint activity, and those specifically aimed at teaching and learning, have a potential for transformation – for the individuals that participate, the practice in which they participate, and the future possibilities. The active inquiry approach, cooperative teaching and learning, engagement with the whole person and not just simply cognition through transmission, reflective teaching are all methods that need to be embraced by the education systems. The central role of language, all meaning-making mechanisms, and dialogue cannot be stressed enough. Practicing dialogue in classrooms through a carefully thought constructive language can create ground for historical dialogues within and between societies. If our history education and textbooks contribute to redefining our societies as complex organisms composed of individuals freely expressing their different ethnic, religious, sexual, and other identities, consistent with contemporary values, enemy images of “others” will be demolished; moreover “othering” itself will cease.

Postscript

A joint endeavor of a network of history educators, historians as well as other social scientists, and conflict transformation practitioners, this publication has aimed to analyze the history education models and the narratives in the current school textbooks of history in Armenia and Turkey challenging the image of the “other” as an “enemy”. We have also aimed at contributing to the transformation of the current exclusivist narratives and developing and advocating for inclusive, multiperspective, and conflict-sensitive content and approaches to history education in Turkey and Armenia.

We departed from an analysis of the current school textbooks of history in Armenia and Turkey. With a focus on the representations of “self” and “other” in the textbook narratives. We also considered the wider context of history education in Armenia and Turkey including the legacy of the previous generations of textbooks, recent education and textbook reforms, the current state-prescribed and approved history curricula and teaching methodologies, as well as the politics of textbook development and production today.

Building on this analysis and critique, we formed an agreement within our network around principles and approaches necessary for advancing inclusive and multiperspective historiography and history education and offered alternatives to the existing models and approaches to history education.

We plan to build on the results of the work that brought to fruition the present publication. The aim is to raise large-scale awareness towards the current state of history education in Turkey and Armenia and to expand and strengthen the network of historians and history educators. A major effort is necessary to build consensus in the academic and learning communities based on informed support to innovative ideas in the theory and practice of history education.

We plan to continue sharing experiences and expertise, building capacity, and engaging in professional development of education communities. We are also planning to develop alternative educational resources resting on current historiographic scholarship and advancing the joint vision and the principles towards an alternative history education in Turkey, Armenia, and the rest of the world.

Appendix: A Parallel Perspective on Narratives about the Armenian Genocide and the Caucasus Front in the First World War in History Textbooks in Armenia and Turkey

This section presents a parallel reading of a specific theme selected from the history textbooks in Turkey and Armenia – the First World War and the Armenian Genocide.

The selection from the history textbook in Armenia are four sections titled “The Caucasus Front of the World War”, “The Armenian Volunteer Movement”, “The Great Eghern⁷⁴ of Armenians”, and partially “The Beginning of the Recognition Process of the Genocide”. These sections are part of the chapter “Armenia and the Armenian People during the Years of the First World War” of the Grade 11 “Armenian History” textbook (Melkonyan, Barkhudaryan, et al. 2015, 246-267). The textbook has various other chapters and sections on the rise of the national liberation movements, the revolution of the Young Turks, the Armenian Question in different time periods, the Caucasus Front of the First World War, and other relevant sections.

The selection from the history textbook in Turkey is the section “The Caucasus Front” from a larger section “Fronts of the Ottoman Empire in the First World War” in the Grade 10 history textbook. Together with the section “Caucasus Front”, four more sections have been examined – “The Armenian Issue in the First World War”, “The Armenian Uprisings” “The Measures Taken by the Ottoman State Against the Armenian Uprisings”, “The Armenian Issue After the First World War”, “The Armenian Issue During the Cold War Years”, “The Armenian Terror”, “Post-Cold War Armenian Issue”. (Tüysüz 2016, 201-208)

While these passages have been paraphrased, they use the same language as the textbooks and hence no quotation marks are used around specific phrases.

Textbook in Armenia	Textbook in Turkey
[Before the First World War and the Armenian Genocide]	The Historical Conditions of Ottoman Armenians before the World War I
[Prior to the lessons on the First World War and the Armenian Genocide, there are several lessons in different chapters that outline the life of the Armenians in Western Armenia and	The textbook almost entirely focuses on pre-World War I conditions of Armenians. Britain, Russia, and France approached Armenians for their own interests and

⁷⁴ “Medz Eghern” that can be translated as “Great Catastrophe” is the name of the Armenian Genocide in Armenian. It is used alongside the Armenian word for “genocide” – “tseghaspanutyun”.

<p>the Ottoman Empire. The textbooks narrative on this has been presented in the analysis sections of this publication.]</p>	<p>encouraged them for independence and autonomy. Armenians who supported this idea began making efforts towards establishing an independent state. Armenians tried to prove that they were a majority in some cities with false documents. After a while, terrorist organizations were established and they began attacks. However, while some Armenians participated in these activities, others did not. These organizations caused the events in Adana in 1909, leading to the death of many people. They tried to assassinate Sultan Abdülhamit and attacked the Ottoman Bank. The foreign states protected the terrorists who carried out these events and gave them a right to citizenship in their countries.</p>
<p>The Caucasus Front of the World War</p>	<p>The Outbreak of the War and the Changing Conditions of Armenians</p>
<p><i>The Geopolitical Plans of the Ottoman Empire and Russia</i></p>	
<p>The Ottoman Empire delayed entry into the war for a brief time and followed a seemingly neutral policy. In reality, they had been making plans of an imperialistic expansion for creating Great Turan. Armenia and Armenians were an obstacle on the road to this aim. Germany promised to help Turkey in the fight with Russia, England, and France. Russia also had great expectations from the new war with Turkey – to gain control of the Black Sea straits and Constantinople, reach the Mediterranean, conquer Western Armenia, strengthen the positions in Iran and gain leverage in the profitable region of the Middle East.</p>	<p>At the outbreak of the war, the Committee of Union and Progress, which was in power, thought that it was necessary for them to enter battle on the side of one of the parties to the war in order to survive. Germany, on the other hand, wanted to bring the Ottoman Empire into battle because it was aiming to spread the war on a wider area. The Armenians seemed to decide to remain neutral to the Ottoman government when the war broke out. However, this was not the case; they agreed to make alliance with the Russians against the Ottoman Empire and secretly began to acquire weapons for a rebellion. Moreover, the Armenians who voluntarily formed Armenian troops at the outbreak of the war joined the other side and became a part of the Russian troops. They supported the Russians by revolting in</p>

	the Ottoman lands.
<i>The Development of the War; The Agreement of Sykes-Picot</i>	The Development of the War
<p>The most important event of the first stage of the war was the Sarighamish [Sarıkamış] battle of December 1914-January 1915. The Ottoman army comprised of 90 thousand soldiers was defeated and the plans to capture the South Caucasus and then the North Caucasus and Iran fell through. The Turkish side had to concentrate on the Gallipoli front.</p> <p>Since the beginning of the war, the Turkish troops were also attacking the northern regions of Iran. The aim was to use the local Muslim population to capture that area from the Russians. The regular Ottoman army and the local Turk-Kurd-Tatar mob massacred the Armenians of Atrpatakan⁷⁵.</p> <p>In Spring and Summer 1915, the Russian forces and the Armenian volunteer forces advanced almost reaching Mush [Muş] and Bitlis. However, as the Russian troops retreated in July 1915 almost all Armenians living in Mush, Bitlis, Khnus [Hınıs], and Sasun [Sason] fell victim to the Great Eghern.</p> <p>The Russian forces captured Erzurum (Erzurum) in February 1916, this was the greatest victory for Russia on the Caucasian front. Mush, Bitlis, Khnus, Trapizon [Trabzon], Derjan [Tercan], Yerznka [Erzincan], and Baberd [Bayburt] were all captured.</p> <p>Concerned with the Russians' success, the British and French forces, to prevent the Russians from seizing the straits and Constantinople alone, having failed at Gallipoli launched a campaign towards</p>	<p>The Ottoman Empire suffered a great defeat in the Caucasus Battlefront. One of the major causes of this defeat was the collaboration of the armed Armenians with the Russians by attacking the Ottoman army from behind. When the Ottomans began to retreat, the Russians occupied most of the eastern provinces of the Ottoman Empire. After the occupation, massacres started. The Ottoman State acted immediately to prevent these massacres, and on May 27, 1915 the Relocation and Resettlement Law, known as the Deportation Law, was issued. In other words, the Deportation Law was passed to prevent the massacres of the Armenian gangs in the region.</p>

⁷⁵ "Atrpatakan" is the nominal ancestor of "Azerbaijan". It refers to the modern-day territory of Southern Azerbaijan and Northern Iran.

<p>Mesopotamia. They signed the Sykes-Picot agreement dividing the Asian lands of the Ottoman Empire. Prior to that, there had been an agreement between the French, the English, and the Russians that Constantinople, the straits and Western Armenia would go to Russia; and Cilicia, Little Armenia and the Arab lands would be left to England and France.</p> <p>Meanwhile the Russians were organizing the administration of the lands captured lands. The Russians were giving a big role to the Kurds in keeping these lands. They also planned to relocate Russian Cossacks into Armenian territories. Although these plans were never realized, they greatly disappointed the Armenians.</p>	
<p><i>The Armenian Volunteer Movement</i></p>	
<p>The Armenians of the Caucasus were very excited in 1914 as the Russians were consulting them on their readiness to support the war with Turkey. The opinion that the Russian army would liberate the Western Armenians from the Turkish domination of centuries within a few months dominated among the people.</p> <p>Soon volunteer hayduk [guerrilla] troops emerged. Armenian volunteers fought bravely against the Ottoman Army and the number of volunteers reached 10 thousand in the beginning of 1916. Because the volunteer troops were coming out of the Tsarist control, the Russians made these voluntary units part of the regular army.</p> <p>The Armenian political powers had different views on the war and the volunteer movement. Nonetheless, it cannot be denied that the volunteer movement was one of the victorious and glorious pages of the Armenian armed struggle for liberation. Regardless of</p>	

<p>the volunteer troops, the Young Turks had long made plans for the genocide of the Armenians of Armenia and the Ottoman Empire.</p> <p>The Liberal stream of the South Caucasus supported the Entente powers. The Hnchakyan party supported the Entente and demanded an autonomy for Armenia under the protectorate of the Allied powers. Bolshevik Armenians argued that the war was not just and Armenians did not have the right for liberation. Dashnaktsutyun argued that Armenians should remain neutral and both Eastern Armenians and Western Armenians had to perform their military duties as subjects of their countries. Yet, the Dashnaktsutyun did not have a unified approach. Those in Western Armenia supported neutrality, those in the Caucasus supported joining the Russians as voluntary troops.</p>	
<p>The Great Eghern</p>	<p>The Emigration</p>
<p><i>The Genocide of Armenians. The State Program of the Young Turks</i></p>	<p>From the first day of the war, Armenian gangs encouraged the Armenian people to revolt. They were taking weapons from Western states. Some Armenian soldiers and officers in the Ottoman army escaped with their weapons and joined the Russians. In addition, Armenians who formed voluntary groups joined the Russian troops. Moreover, these Armenian gangs accelerated their activities when the attack on Dardanelles started. When the Ottoman army was fighting on three fronts, Armenians rebelled inside and attacked the Ottoman army from behind.</p> <p>Armenian gangs murdered Muslim people and gendarmes and set fire to state buildings. They also provided guidance to the Russian army to speed up the occupation. When the occupation was over, Ottoman soldiers were slaughtered. In</p>

addition, the logistical support units that brought food and weapons to the soldiers on the Caucasus Front were also blocked by the Armenian gangs.

After all these Armenian activities and the Russian occupation of the Eastern Anatolian provinces, the Ottomans who wanted to stop the massacres of the Armenian gangs were obliged to take some measures. On April 24, 1915, 2345 Armenians who were involved in these devastating activities were arrested and placed in Ankara and Çankırı prisons. The day that Armenians try to make the whole world accept as the day of genocide is actually the day that the Armenian gang members were arrested, which is not related with genocide. On May 27, 1915, the Relocation and Resettlement Law was made to prevent the massacres of Muslims by Armenians. The other aim of this law was to move Armenians from the war zones to the safer regions in Syria and Iraq. With this law, the property of Armenians was registered and protected. As an alternative, it was sold, and the revenue was handed over to the town treasury to be delivered to the owners when they returned.

Armenians who did not participate in the uprising did not suffer from the relocation. Talat Pasha emphasized the importance of ensuring the safety of the deportees in an order sent to the provinces and paying attention to the immediate punishment of those who attacked the guards. The displaced persons were placed on fertile soil. Armenians, who traveled safely with the gendarmerie assistance, were also welcomed in the regions they arrived at. They were provided with financial assistance and obtained fertile lands. During the migration, investigations were conducted on officials who demonstrated

	<p>negligence or mistreatment. They were convicted and punished in 1937.</p> <p>Despite all these measures of the Ottoman Empire, some Armenians lost their lives due to weather conditions, circumstances of the time, and epidemics. Armenians and their supporters claim that one and a half million Armenians died during these events. The total number of those who were displaced was 413,067. The number of those who reached their destinations was 383,000. On their way 57.000 people lost their lives.</p> <p>On October 27, 1915, the deportation was officially suspended, and on December 31, 1918, a law was passed to allow Armenians to return. However, Armenians carry on their accusations to this date.</p>
<p>The Armenian Genocide started in the period of Sultan Abdul Hamid, and the Young Turks took over his legacy. The Turks who were expelled from Europe had resolved to build a new homeland and this homeland included Armenian. The Young Turks developed and perfected their plan extending it to all Armenians. In 1910-1911, secret meetings were held in Thessaloniki and decisions were taken. Thus, idea of depriving Armenians of a homeland and genocide was prepared long before the First World War.</p> <p>Economic factors also played a role in the Armenian Genocide. The Armenian industrialists and capitalists had achieved a great fortune with their diligence and natural talents. Exterminating Armenians, the Turks were getting the opportunity to get rid of competitors and seize their property and financial assets. The economic loss of the Armenians is around 20 billion francs.</p> <p>Taking advantage of the war and fighting, the Young Turks had the opportunity to realize their plan. In 1915, a committee was formed</p>	

under the leadership of Talat Pasha for this purpose. In addition, an organization called Teshiklat Mahsuse (*Teşkilat-ı Mahsusa*) which means “Special Organization” was set up including criminals released from prison. They were soon sent to the regions inhabited by Armenians to direct the local authorities.

The plan was executed step by step. First the Armenians near the Caucasus front included in territories under Russian and Iranian rule were massacred.

As one of the other initial steps of this plan, 300 thousand Armenian men were recruited, but they were prohibited from fighting on the Russian-Turkish front and carrying weapons. They were engaged in the construction of roads, bridges, and other heavy labor. Soon they were isolated group by group and eliminated.

Communication in Western Armenia and Asia Minor was halted. Letters in foreign languages and Armenian were prohibited. The subjects of the empire were prohibited from entering or exiting the empire.

The next step was the beheading of the Armenians of their national, political, and spiritual leaders. The first arrests started in October 1914. On April 24, 1915, 2300 members of the Armenian cultural and political elites were arrested according to lists prepared in advance and their majority was cruelly murdered on the roads to Chankri (Çankırı), Chorum (Çorum), and Ayas.

In April 1915, the mass action started. Western Armenians were massacred, forcefully deported, and exiled en mass. The April 15 order of Talat, Enver, and Nazm called for the punishment of all those who would attempt to protect or hide Armenians hindering the holy and patriotic task.

Hundreds of thousands of Armenians were

<p>massacred in their regions. A big number of relocated were killed on the road to exile to Ras ul Ayn, Der Zor, and Raqqa. Soon there was an order to eliminate some of the Armenians in the exile locations. The Young Turks also forcefully converted Armenians and first of all children.</p> <p>By Summer 1916, 1.5 million out of the 2.5 million Armenians living in Western Armenia and other regions of the Empire were victims of the Great Eghern. By then the Young Turks had carried out the big part of their diabolic plan.</p>	
<p><i>Self-Defence</i></p>	
<p>Meanwhile, there were Armenians who engaged in self-defense. Self-defense fights took place in the region of Van in Spring 1915. The Russian advance made the Turks retreat. The Armenian volunteers entered Van and other liberated areas. As the Russians retreated and the local Armenian authority of Van seized to exist.</p> <p>Another self-defense struggle was put up in Mush in Spring 1915. They fought till the last bullet. In March 1915, some Turkish troops and Kurdish brigades moved towards Sasun [Sason] that also put up a self-defense struggle. In June 1915, more self-defense fights took place in Shapin-Garahisar. In July 1915, 4,500 Armenians climb the Musa mountain for self-defense. In September 1915, a heroic self-defense was put up in Urfa.</p> <p>Through this armed resistance, tens of thousands of Armenians were saved. Armenians who had taken up arms sanctified their national dignity through their death.</p>	
<p>[The Years Following the Genocide and Today]</p>	<p>Today</p>
<p>Cultural and economic genocide continued for</p>	<p>In the following years, Armenians put</p>

decades following, and today it is still ongoing not only in Turkey but also in Azerbaijan. The Genocide left a mark on all the generations of the Armenian nation, on their lives, their nature, their national character and their goals. [There is an entire lesson dedicated to “The Beginning of the Recognition Process of the Armenian Genocide. In addition, in the Grade 12 textbook in the chapter about the Diaspora, there is a lesson on the efforts of various Diaspora communities to demand “the joining of Armenian lands to Soviet Armenia” and the strive for the recognition of the Armenians Genocide in the Soviet and post-Soviet years (Melkonyan, Gevorgyan, et al. 2016, 228-232).].

forward a genocide lie in order to stop their assimilation through strengthening Armenian nationalism in different parts of the world. Another aim of this lie is to claim compensation from the Republic of Turkey. After 1973, Armenians who were not satisfied with this lie started to carry out armed terrorist acts against Turkey with the support of the Western states. The organization called ASALA killed 70 people including Turkish foreign officers and their families. ASALA stopped its activities when it made an agreement with the PKK in 1984. The Armenian state, which was established after the dissolution of the Soviets, demands land and compensation despite all the good intentions of Turkey. They even included these intentions into their constitution. In addition, the strong Armenians lobby in the USA tries to convince the USA to acknowledge the genocide officially. However, historical facts show that those events can never be called a genocide.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ASALA – Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia

Imagine Center – Imagine Center for Conflict Transformation

MoNE – Ministry of National Education

NGO – non-governmental organization

SEÇBİR – Center for Sociology and Education Studies (*Sosyoloji ve Eğitim Çalışmaları Merkezi*)

UN – United Nations

USA – United States of America

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