

HUMAN RIGHTS OR MILITARIST IDEALS? TEACHING NATIONAL SECURITY IN HIGH SCHOOLS

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When the earlier version of this essay was presented at a symposium organized by the Turkish History Foundation and the Turkish Academy of Sciences in April 2003, someone in the audience raised his hand in the middle of my talk. He was requested by the organizers to wait till the discussion period. As soon as I finished, this enthusiastic participant identified himself as "an officer in the War Academy," and shared his comment:

"In your talk, you criticized the treatment of military service as a 'sacred practice' in the textbooks. I disagree with this approach. Military service is sacred because the human being is sacred. Death is sacred because the human being is sacred. I mean, the sacredness of military service and death stems from the sacredness of the human being."

As this comment and its context reveal, there are two different frameworks competing to define the textbooks used in Turkey today. Even if they do share a common point of departure, the "human being," they then move in opposite directions. The *militarist* approach, exemplified in the officer's comment, sanctifies all values and processes that relate to the military and wars, including sacrifice and death, and sees education as a means for making these values prevail in all domains of life. The *human rights* approach adopted by the Textbook Project stems out of an effort to make a different set of principles prevail in textbooks, legal systems, and life in general; a set of principles that treats the "right to life" as inalienable, establishing procedures that guarantee the preservation of this basic right for all human beings. An important component of this approach is the continual effort to search for *peaceful* means for solving conflicts between human beings, as well as between political entities. This assumes a civilian political system defined by the rule of law, as opposed to a military structure defined by the chain of command and the use of force. The militarist approach which sees it proper for civilian life to be based on

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military values and for citizens to think like "soldiers" in sanctifying death, embodies a set of violations from the perspective of human rights.

Let me first unpack these statements before moving on to a discussion of militarism in Turkish textbooks. The analysis in this essay follows the lead of recent scholarship which has differentiated between 1) military as a social institution, 2) militarism as an ideology, and 3) militarization as a social process (see Cock, Enloe, Cheney). I understand militarism to be a set of ideas and structures that glorify "practices and norms associated with militaries" (Chenoy 101). In this sense, militarization is "a step-by-step process by which a person or a thing gradually comes to be controlled by the military or comes to depend for its well-being, on militaristic ideas" (Enloe 3). Militarization is successful when it achieves a discourse of "normalcy" in public discussions surrounding the power of the military in civilian life, politics, economics, and people's self-understandings. Historically, national education systems have played an important role in establishing this normalcy. According to the European historian Michael Howard,

"national education after 1870 in most West European countries was to produce generations physically fit for and psychologically attuned to war. It was a necessary part of citizenship. The history of ones [sic] country was depicted by writers both of school textbooks and of popular works as the history of its military triumphs. . . . Service to the Nation was ultimately seen in terms of military service; personal fulfillment lay in making 'the supreme sacrifice' " (Howard 10).

Despite the prevalence of a militarist framework in the beginnings of most national education systems, or more generally the beginnings of what anthropologist Liisa Malkki calls the "national order of things," we should not view militarism as an unchanging, undifferentiated phenomenon. Its manifestations and effects have varied greatly across space and time. Just as societies can be militarized, they can also be *demilitarized* in time. To continue with the European example, the heavily militarized Europe of the late 19th and early 20th century has been systematically demilitarized since the Second World War and crucial in this process of demilitarization has been the establishment of an international system of human rights. We should also note that neither militarization nor demilitarization are inevitable processes. Both require hard work and years of learning and unlearning.

What does militarist learning entail? As Michael Howard argues, acceptance of violence as an appropriate means for resolving conflicts and the

subsequent acceptance of "the supreme sacrifice" of one's life for the nation constitutes a significant part of militarist learning. The result is the sanctification of violence and death. From the perspective of human rights, this approach presents a set of problems. Most obviously, it violates the notion of nonviolence which forms the basis of democratic systems and processes. According to the Human Rights in Textbooks Project Manual (the Manual hereafter), textbooks should be devoid of violations of the right to peace. Article 3 in the Manual identifies the following as human rights violations: "Violation of the right to peace by glorifying death and emphasizing the inevitability of wars in general. The glorification of violence. Taking the ability to die for one's country and martyrdom as the essential criteria for patriotism. Insisting on a fixed, absolute form and interpretation of patriotism."

When we look at the textbooks, the most common manifestation of this violation is the definition of proper citizenship through the notions of "martyrdom," or "dying for the homeland." This implies a very narrow understanding of citizenship. Why do the textbooks leave out the possibility of "good citizenship" through peaceful contributions? Why do citizens need to "die and kill" in order to be good citizens? Why are civilian activities devalued in textbooks while military-related events occupy center-stage? What might be the effects of the continual military presence in Turkish civilian schools since 1926? Unless we are able to ask and discuss these questions, it will be very difficult to reform the Turkish education system. Will the Turkish education system be based on militarist ideals or the principles of human rights? This is the basic choice that the *Human Rights in Textbooks Project* forces us to confront.

In what follows, I will analyze a mandatory military course in the high school curriculum, based on its textbooks and regulations. Taught under different names in different periods (Military Service, Preparation for Military Service, National Defense Knowledge, and Studies in National Security), this course has served all high school students since 1926. Currently, it is called Studies in National Security and is mandatory for all students (male and female) in the second year of high school, regardless of the kind of school. The content of the course has changed significantly throughout the years, but the overall aim of teaching the students to be proud members of a military-nation and obedient citizens of the Turkish state has remained unchallenged. I will first look into the main structure of this course and provide a brief overview of its 78-year-long history. Second,

I will closely analyze the current textbook with a human rights lens. Finally, I will discuss the implications of the military course for human rights and education reform in Turkey.

OFFICER-TEACHERS IN CIVILIAN SCHOOLS SINCE 1926

The Studies in National Security course has a unique place in the curriculum. Since 1926, it has been taught by military officers (or retired officers) who get paid by the Ministry of National Education or the school that employs them. Unlike other courses, neither the Ministry nor the schools have any say in the choice of these officer-teachers. The officer-teachers are "appointed" by the highest commander of the nearest garrison on an annual basis. Moreover, there is no requirement (or even expectation) that these officer-teachers have any training in pedagogy. Their qualification for teaching this course is defined solely in military terms: the most preferred category is that of staff officers (Staff Colonels, Majors and Captains), followed by other officers ranked militarily.¹ The current regulations (in effect since 1980) that outline the parameters of the course differ from previous ones in that they leave room for the employment of a civilian teacher as a last resort if the garrison is not able to allocate sufficient number of officers for the high schools in its province. Of course, this civilian teacher cannot be any teacher: he has to be a male teacher who has performed his military service as a reserve officer.² Article 7 of the Regulations is as follows:

*"As a rule, Studies in National Security courses are taught by regular officers who are graduates of Military Colleges. In the absence of such officers, or in cases where their numbers are not sufficient other regular soldiers, retired soldiers or soldiers who have resigned from their posts can be commissioned. If none of these soldiers are sufficient in number, then secondary school teachers who have performed their military service as reserve officers can be commissioned."*³

1 The second part of this list has slightly changed in years. The current law (passed in December 1979, published in the Official Gazette in February 1980 and modified in 1998) states that after staff officers (of ranks Colonel, Major and Captain), priority should be given to officers (in the same ranks) who have graduated from the combatant classes of the Military College. Third on the list are graduates of other classes, and fourth are all other officers. See Milli Güvenlik Bilgisi Öğretimi Yönetmeliği (Regulations Regarding the Instruction of the National Security Knowledge Course) in *Resmi Gazete*, 2 February 1980, No. 16888, Karar No. 8/37 and modifications of the article in question in *Resmi Gazete*, 4 November 1998, No. 23513, Karar No. 98/11868.

2 In my research, I have not been able to find an example of this practice.

3 See *Resmi Gazete*, 2 February 1980, No. 16888, Karar No. 8/37.

Moreover, the General Staff exercises sole (or, since 1980, primary) control over what gets taught, at what level and for how many hours. In the current regulations (dated 1980), it is suggested that the General Staff act *in coordination with* the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of National Education in making curriculum decisions. All regulations prior to 1980 assign all responsibility and decision-making power to the General Staff *only*. Moreover, textbooks are written by a commission made up of military personnel in the General Staff. Since 1980, the Ministry of National Education has been given the role of "examining" these textbooks and making "suggestions" (together with the Ministry of Defense) for the program to be followed in the course. In short, one can say that military officers have been the exclusive authors and teachers in this course in its 78-year history so far. They have frequented *all* high schools in their uniforms⁴ at least once a week and educated *all* students (female students since 1937) in military affairs.

The prominent discourse that governs the textbooks is another long-standing continuity. The most important element of this discourse has been the emphasis on the predetermined role of the military in Turkish history, character and contemporary politics. In this picture, the military appears as a *natural* extension of national character and an embodiment of the achievements of "Turks throughout history." The students are told that the "eternal symbol of heroism is the Turkish nation and its unmatched military" (Tipi 48) and are called upon to be worthy of their "ancestors" (*ecdad*) by displaying the "heroism that is naturally present [in their character]" (*Millî Güvenlik Bilgileri I*, 13). The current regulations that define how the course is to be conducted list its major aim as "reinforcing the national security consciousness that *naturally* exists in all Turkish youth in line with the requirements of total warfare" (*Millî Güvenlik Bilgisi Öğretimi Yönetmeliği*, Article 1-a, *emphasis mine*).

STRATEGIC THINKING AS A "WAY OF LIFE"

Despite these general continuities, the most recent textbook used in the Studies in National Security course (since 1998) is remarkably different from its earlier versions. One of the major changes is the shift from an emphasis on military service and military organization to *Atatürk's principles*, on the

4 It is strictly forbidden for them to teach in civilian clothes unless they are retired.

one hand, and *strategic analysis of national, regional and world politics*, on the other. Chapter Six, titled "Atatürk's Principles and National Unity" is the longest section of the book, followed by "Games Played on The Turkish Republic," the second longest section. Moreover, their prevalence in the course has been reinforced through classroom practice: my research has revealed that significant class time is dedicated to discussions on Atatürk's principles and contemporary politics (See Altınay). In an extreme case, an officer-teacher suggested that he spent a whole semester on Atatürk's principles.

The changing focus of the military course is reflected in the presentation of the textbook. The Introduction page, which is followed by a picture of the flag, the national anthem and Atatürk's address to the youth (like all other textbooks), is short and very clear in its message:

"The Turkish Republic is faced with [political] games that have their origins outside of Turkey due to its geopolitical positioning. The Turkish youth needs to be ready for these games. And the most important requisite of being ready is to accept that a secular and democratic system is the ideal system for Turkey and to have a developed awareness regarding this issue. The way to do this is to embrace Atatürk's principles and revolutions not only at the level of ideas, but also at the level of life style. As long as the Turkish youth is aware of these games and accept Atatürk's principles and revolutions as a life-style, there is no doubt that Turkey will reach the level of contemporary civilizations. The aim of the National Security Knowledge course is to inculcate these two important behaviors. The Turkish youth will learn these behaviors and, thus, will not let Atatürk down" (Milli Güvenlik Bilgisi 7, emphasis mine).

There are several important messages in this short text. First, the aim of the course is presented as teaching the Turkish youth how they could live up to Atatürk's expectations of them. By implication, students are told that they are educated to fulfill Atatürk's *expectations*. Second, defense is defined as *ideological* preparedness rather than *military* preparedness. Third, it is made clear that the teaching in this course will not be limited to *ideas*, but will target *life styles* as well. In other words, to be a good student, one would have to *think, live and behave* in the way that the officer-teachers of the Studies in National Security course find appropriate.

Anthropologist Catherine Lutz defines the military as a *total institution* that presents a totalistic claim on the life of its members: "Military is a hierarchical and authoritarian workplace. It is a *total institution*, the sociological term for an organization that makes claims on all aspects of a member's life rather than just, for example, the work or school hours or the

time spent in club activity" (Lutz 187). What the Studies in National Security course makes possible is the expansion of this *total institution* into the lives of all high school students. In the context of this particular course, the officer-teachers are given the authority to intervene in their students' life styles and teach them how they should live as good Atatürkist citizens. This approach marks a number of human rights violations, such as the following noted in the Manual:

"Article 4 – Limiting an individual's rights to the context/topic/framework that is recognized or allowed by the state authority."

"Article 27 – Making claims on the basis of some (unquestionable) authority, rather than justifying them through the use of scientific reasoning. Statements which sanctify authority. Heavy-handed, didactical, pedagogical approaches which exclude discussion and criticism and do not make room for differences of opinion."

"Article 36 – Straining to convince students of certain notions rather than educating them and developing their various skills."

Article 37 – Conceiving of textbooks as media for indoctrination and education as an indoctrination process."

Moreover, this introduction makes clear that the Studies in National Security course has recently turned into a course on contemporary politics. This is a new development that characterizes the late 1990s. When I was a high school student in the 1980s, there could be no talk of political issues in the Studies in National Security course. It was indeed a course on military affairs and not one on political affairs. This shift is obvious when one compares the textbooks. The one used since 1998 reads like a political science and international relations book in its emphasis on Atatürk's founding principles, Turkey's geopolitical positioning and discussion of issues that define contemporary Turkish politics: Relations with Greece, Armenia, Iraq, Iran, Russia, and Syria; the Cyprus issue; the minorities in Turkey; the characteristics of "divisive" political movements (i.e. the Kurdish movement); Islamic "fundamentalism"; the political organizations that Turkey has joined (e.g. the UN, NATO, European Council, Black Sea Economic Cooperation); and Turkey's relations with the European Union. Both the teachers and the students I have interviewed since 1999 talked about the possibility of EU candidacy and its implications, Abdullah Öcalan's death sentence, and the Islamic movement in Turkey as some of the major topics of discussion in the classroom. The overall framework that defined the presentation of these issues, both in the textbooks and according to my interviewees, was the idea that "Turkey has no friends" (*Türk'ün Türk'ten başka dostu yoktur*) and that

no country or organization in the world (including the EU) wants Turkey to be a strong country. The overall conclusion of this "strategic" worldview is that "Turkey must always be a strong country" (*Milli Güvenlik Bilgisi*, 90).

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE CURRENT TEXTBOOK

The volunteers who reviewed this textbook have identified human rights violations that correspond to almost every criterion indicated in the Manual. Most frequent among them were: Article 2 (discrimination on the basis of gender, religion, nationality, ethnicity, political opinion and social class), Article 3 (the violation of the right to peace by glorifying death and emphasizing the inevitability of wars in general), Article 5 (the definition of the concept of citizenship through responsibilities and obligations rather than within the context of rights and freedoms), Article 8 (the definition and exposition of questions of Nationalism/Patriotism and national values not from a universal, comparative viewpoint, but as if they were peculiar to an ethnically Turkish and denominationally Moslem context), Article 9 (defining/constructing the national identity on the basis of exclusivism, perceived threat and enmity. Xenophobia.), Article 15 (glorification of the authority of the state. Attributing a metaphysical significance to the state), Article 17 (the presentation of social institutions, notions and values – State, nation, democracy, human rights, freedom, rights, law, morality, justice – absolute, constant, eternal, sacred and unquestionable entities), Article 18 (opposing 'rights and freedoms' to security and stability), Articles 21 to 24 (sexism), Article 25 (essentialist propositions), Article 26 (making normative statements as if they were positive propositions), and Article 27 (making claims on the basis of some [unquestionable] authority, rather than justifying them through the use of scientific reasoning). Below are some examples of these violations.

Let us begin with gender disparities. The Studies in National Security textbook is one without any reference to women. None of the illustrations in the book contain women figures, and there is no mention of women's relationship to the military. Even the women officers in the military are excluded from the narrative of the book. Moreover, the association of men and masculinity with military service automatically marginalizes women in any discussion of the military and relegates their citizenship to secondary status. The authors of the textbook define military service as: "the most sacred service to the homeland and the nation, which also prepares young people for real life conditions" (20), and go further to suggest that "a person

who has not done his military service cannot be useful to himself, his family, or his homeland" (20). In this definition, military service appears as an obligation to one's "family, nation, and homeland," rather than an obligation to the state, and those who have not, cannot or choose not to do military service (e.g. women, gays, or the disabled) are made to feel "worthless."

Other examples of discrimination (particularly those based on ethnicity and religion) and of xenophobia can be found in the section that discusses Turkey's geopolitical uniqueness, its relations with neighboring countries, and its "internal" enemies, titled "The Games Played Over Turkey." Here, all of Turkey's neighbors are regarded as enemies that play particular "games" over Turkey. For instance, it is suggested that the Greek attitude towards Turkey is based upon the historical ideology of "Megalo Idea" (Great Ideal) which aims at a larger Greece that includes Turkey's western and northern provinces: "Until they obtain these lands, they will continue to fight" (92). Similarly, Armenia seeks to "establish Great Armenia, which is believed to have existed in history but in fact has not" (94). For this reason, Armenia is blamed for supporting all kinds of movements that are aimed at weakening and dividing Turkey. Iran's main goal is also to weaken Turkey and to "turn Turkey into a theocratic state" (95). Syria claims that Hatay, "a province that has been Turkish for centuries is part of their land mass and dreams of a weak Turkey...Syria supports all kinds of movements against Turkey" (96). It is further suggested that other countries that are not Turkey's immediate neighbors also feel uncomfortable with the idea of a strong Turkey, particularly because Turkey is a democratic and secular country with a predominantly Muslim population.

The games played by "our neighbors" are followed by a discussion of Turkey's internal threats. The "activities" that seek to divide Turkey along the lines of race, religion or religious sect are presented as the major threats to the democratic and secular regime of the country. It is argued, over and over, throughout the textbook, that those who claim to belong to a different race are the "divisive elements" (*bölücü unsurlar*) that promote racial discrimination in society and are supported by Turkey's enemies, not by the Turkish people themselves (74-75, 90-100). It is also made clear that the minorities (Greek, Armenian, and Jewish) recognized by the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 are the only minorities that exist in Turkey, that these non-Muslim minorities are regarded as "Turkish citizens" regardless of their religion and race, and that they are treated equally under the law (97). The rest, i.e. "the large majority comprising more than 95 percent of Turkey have

shared the same fate for thousands of years and have blended with the same culture and goals" (97).

One implication of this suggestion is that the 95 percent majority *has not* shared the same fate or blended with Jews, Armenians and Greeks for "thousands of years," a move that simultaneously denies the co-existence of multiple ethnicities, religions and sects under the Ottoman Empire and ethnicizes and Islamizes Turkishness. Defined outside of the shared culture of the "majority," these non-Muslim "minorities" are denied an equal standing in relation to the "Turkish nation" and are only recognized as "Turkish citizens," i.e. they are given an equal status *only* in relation to the laws. The second implication is that the "95 percent majority" is made up of a homogeneous *Turkish* nation that is thousands of years old. This formulation denies the history of different Muslim communities that fought together in the Independence War, who (Kurds, Laz, Circassians, etc.) Atatürk himself had announced as "sibling nations" in the early years of the Republic,⁵ and denies the contemporary existence of any group or member of society that has not been a part of the "historical" Turkish nation.

It is emphasized several times that the "games played on Turkey" are *external* in their origins and that Turkish people have not been fooled by them. In this approach, all of international relations and internal politics are reduced to issues of "strategy." Being prepared to fight against them, first of all, requires a strong Turkey and, by implication, a strong military: "If our country has not been attacked in many years, this is because our military strength is sufficient. If the Armed Forces did not possess this strength (which is a deterrent force), Turkey would have faced many military offenses" (27). Secondly, it requires *strategic thinking as a way of life* for its citizens. The kind of life-style that this course seeks to inculcate is clearly articulated as one based on an unconditional belief in Atatürk's principles and strategic thinking.

5 The following statements by Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) were made in the Grand National Assembly in 1920: "Within these borders, there are Turks; there are the Circassian; as well as other Muslim elements. These borders are national borders for *kardeş* [sibling] nations that live in a mixed way and that have totally unified their goals. [In the article concerning borders], the privileges of each of the Muslim elements within these borders, which stem from their distinct milieu (*muhit*), customs (*adat*) or race (*ırk*), have been accepted and certified with sincerity and in a mutual fashion" (*Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri 1* [1997], 30). "What we mean here, and the people whom this Assembly represents, are not only Turks, are not only Circassians, are not only Kurds, are not only Laz. But it is an intimate collective of all these Muslim elements" (*Atatürk'ün Söylev ve Demeçleri 1* [1997], 74-75).

The treatment of the Cyprus question in the textbook is emblematic of the kind of strategic thinking promoted for all Turkish citizens:

"The Cyprus Peace Operation has confirmed certain facts. Firstly, it was a very successful military operation. Secondly, it has confirmed the heroic character of the Turkish military. . . . As a result of this operation, first the Northern Cyprus Turkish Federal Republic was founded, and later the Northern Cyprus Turkish Republic" (102-103).

These "facts" (see Article 26: making normative statements as if they were positive propositions), place other facts out of view. For instance, the students are not informed by the fact that Northern Cyprus is a political non-entity, "trapped outside the international system" (Navaro-Yashin 108) since the "Peace Operation" in 1974, unrecognized by any other state. Nor does the book mention the diplomatic and political problems the political operation has caused for Turkey, particularly in relation to Greece and the European Union. Moreover, this narrative implies that international problems are best solved by military operations. This view encourages the students to be blind to or suspicious of peaceful efforts, as well as of legal and diplomatic processes.

In short, students in this course are encouraged to view both international and national political issues in *strategic* terms and adopt this thinking as a *way of life*. Instead of developing critical faculties as individuals, they are instructed to blindly follow the principles laid out in their military textbook. They are encouraged to be suspicious of all foreigners, particularly people from neighboring countries; fear all differences, remaining blind to the differences among their Muslim friends and treating their non-Muslim friends as categorically different (in fact, as non-Turkish); regard all dissent within Turkey as having an "external" origin (and thus non-authentic, non-Turkish); and think of international politics as being determined by wars and international politics by the military, accepting the inevitability of the use of force. The discussion of daily political issues in the classroom reinforces the basic assumption that the right political perspective is the military perspective. All politics is reduced to state policy that is best understood through a military perspective. As a result, military officers almost by default become political scientists and teachers of politics in high schools.

CONCLUSION

In a 1961 report prepared by the National Defense Committee, it is suggested that both the NATO countries and countries behind the "Iron Curtain" have

educational programs that prepare students for their nation's defense.⁶ Turkey's need for the military course in high schools is, thus, presented as a natural outcome of this international system and a "necessity." Whether it has been reinforced by the traffic between nationalism and militarist thinking in early years of state-making, the conditions of a Cold War world, or the continuing perceptions of threat posed by Turkey's "internal and external enemies" in a Post-Cold War present, the military presence in civilian high schools has persisted to this day.

By bringing officers-in-uniform into civilian schools and making military knowledge a requirement for high school education, policy makers and educators have contributed to the blending of military and civilian realms, barrack and school culture. This course and its officer-teachers embody the idea that education and defense are two sides of the same coin, where citizenship is reduced to the willingness to die for one's country. This, I believe, has been the most significant long term impact of the high school military course since its introduction into the curriculum in 1926. Regardless of its changing content or success, it has been effective in *naturalizing* the existence of military officers in every high school as well as the need for military knowledge for every student. Moreover, this course has provided uninterrupted access for the military to *all* high schools and *all* high school students since the 1920s.

As it was reported in the National Defense Committee report in 1961, the military has been involved in civilian education in other parts of the world as well. Jacolyn Cock writes about the Youth Preparedness Programme and "school cadet system" in white South Africa which began in early 1970s and suggests that "the military nature of the white educational environment became more marked over time. During 1987 it became known that the Transvaal Education Department had instructed certain teachers to carry guns; and fences, barbed wire and high walls have been built around many white schools" (Cock 72). Catherine Lutz and Lesley Bartlett (14) show that the JROTC (Junior Reserve Officer Training Corp) programs in the U.S. high schools have been expanding rapidly, causing "a proliferation of military influence into what should be a strictly civilian world of education and youth services." What is unique about the Turkish case is that the presence

6 The report was written by the officials of the Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Press and Publications, the General Staff and two officer-teachers. Six out of the eleven members of this committee were active or retired military officers (see *Millî Eğitim ile İlgili Millî Savunma Komitesi Çalışmaları ve Raporu* [1961]).

of military officers in schools has remained a constant throughout the past 78 years, despite changes in Turkey's internal politics and changes in the international arena. Moreover, it is significant that this course has been compulsory for all students.

Students throughout Republican history have been told that they are members of a "heroic" race and that they should prove this by being good soldiers. Crucial among the "duties and responsibilities" that students have been asked to learn through education is the one towards the Turkish "military-nation." More recently, these responsibilities have included "thinking" and "behaving" in a certain way, i.e. along the lines of Atatürk's principles and the requirements of strategic thinking. The recent developments in the course point to a renewed traffic around politics between the realms of education and the military: 1) the officer-teachers of this course are no longer experts on military affairs only, but on Atatürk's principles, international relations, and contemporary politics as well, and 2) the student-soldiers are no longer educated in the necessities and technicalities of military service, but in developing *strategic thinking as a way of life*. This approach leads to the "securitization," and by extension militarization, of not only politics, but also the concept of "everyday life." The military interprets its authority to reach the level of determining not only how the students "think," but also how they should live their lives.

Our overview of the course suggests that *civilianization* should be an important component of textbook reform in Turkey. This can proceed in three directions. First, the education of all high school students by a military officer, a practice that appears to be unique to Turkey, can be discontinued. This would mark a significant step towards disengaging civilian education from military education. A society whose members have been educated as "soldiers" is a militarized society. Moreover, the current contents of the course contribute to the militarization of politics by aligning political discussion with military strategy. Therefore, the first step towards civilianizing education would be to discontinue this course altogether.

A simultaneous second step could be the demilitarization of other textbooks in the curriculum. Textbooks from the first grade onwards present various human rights violations as they sanctify death, naturalize wars, present the military solution as the only viable solution to certain political problems, and treat the students as "soldiers" (or potential soldiers). For instance, at age seven, the students learn about the color "red" by drawing and painting the flag with the following introduction: "Our ancestors have fought with the

enemy and have become martyrs. Our flag takes its red color from the blood of these martyrs" (Emin Özdemir, quoted by Baraz and Kütük 28). Similarly, students in second grade are asked to learn the meanings of such words as "struggle," "martyr," and "veteran" (Tekişik 48). They are also told that the weekly flag ceremony is conducted to honor Atatürk and "our martyrs" (Tekişik 147) and that "if necessary, we should sacrifice our lives for our flag" (Tekişik 58). This early introduction to war, death and national sacrifice is reinforced throughout primary and secondary education. Such statements in all textbooks need to be examined and re-written from both a human rights perspective and a pedagogical perspective (e.g. at what age and through which pedagogical tools should the students be introduced to practices such as war?). A third step towards civilianization of textbooks entails the introduction and discussion of positive concepts such as peace, co-existence, dialogue, and nonviolence. In the current textbooks, they are almost non-existent. Variants of peace education tools that enable nonviolent conflict resolution, encourage dialogue, and inspire hope and enthusiasm in the students would greatly enhance the efforts to firmly establish a human rights perspective in the textbooks and the students alike. It would also be useful for the students to be presented success stories of peaceful resolutions to national and international conflicts. For instance, the ideas and actions of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King would enhance the students' understanding of world politics and historical change. Processes are just as important as historical figures. An account of national and world history that privileges war-making not only naturalizes wars, but it also leaves a very significant part of humanity and human livelihood in the dark. Positive examples from world history of mutual understanding, co-existence of differences, solidarity, peace efforts, nonviolent resolutions of conflicts, and the enhancement of human rights would increase the confidence of students in peaceful processes, and inspire creative thinking and action in their own lives. The students could be encouraged to do research on such themes and develop their own ideas about human relations, human rights, and conflict management.

As we discuss educational reform in Turkey, we are faced with an important challenge: Will the Turkish education system continue to be based on militarist ideals or the principles of human rights? If our decision is the latter, adding courses or course-sections on human rights is not sufficient. We also need to identify and change the militarized aspects of the current curriculum.

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