ABSTRACT

This study interrogates whose knowledge about the self and the other is represented to Iranian students in the 2004 and in selected pre-2004 editions of elementary and guidance school textbooks by analyzing how issues of identity politics, diversity, “citizenship” and development inform the construction of Iranian national identity since the introduction of various curriculum reforms (i.e.: global education) after the Revolution of 1978-79. I draw upon antiracism and transnationalism as discourses of analysis through which the West-East dichotomy is (re)evaluated and interrogated within the context of Edward Said’s notion of Orientalism and Boroujerdi’s (1996) conceptualization of “Orientalism in reverse”. I utilize deconstruction, discourse and qualitative interpretative content analyses as methods of investigating how “race”, ethnicity, social class and gender are configured in representations of sameness and difference. I “look at style, figures of speech, settings, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances, not the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original” (Said, 1978, p. 28). I argue that the ideal citizen and Iranian national identity are constructed by references to conflicting discourses of mustâţafîn (the oppressed), jîhâd-i sâzandâgî (the Reconstruction Jîhâd), 'âshayîr (nomadic tribes), Ummat-i Islâmî (Islamic Nation/Community), Îrân-dûstî (loving Iran), the Aryan migration, velayat-e-faqih and colonialism. In their discursive formations, nationalist, anti-imperialist, Islamic, middle-class and Orientalist narratives construct a homogenized Iranian citizenry who has always been active in regional and global relations of power. The ideal citizen is represented through the invocation of two types/sets of “shifting collectivities” that identify it as “white”, male, Shi’à, Aryan-Pars, progressive, independent, pious and a leader in the Islamic world. The first set divides between Shi’a-Persians and non-Shi’a and non-Persians. The second set of binary oppositions represents the ideal citizen in relation and in opposition to the West and the East in their multiple and historical forms. Iranian school textbooks are assimilationist texts that act as “border patrolling” and “stigmatizing” discourses. They are also forms of “textual genocide” that exclude the voices and histories of national and global minorities and acts of discrimination committed by Iranians against women and minority religious and ethnic groups as official knowledge about friendly/enemy insiders and outsiders.
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DEDICATION

FOR SABRINA

AND,

IN MEMORY OF NAJ-MOL-SADAT QA’EM-MAQAMY

Who planted the seeds of this thesis early in my childhood
Chapter One: 
Iranian School Textbooks, Globalization, Official Knowledge and Representations of the Ideal Citizen

1. Introduction

In this dissertation, Iranian school textbooks are critically evaluated and investigated for their portrayals, representations and constructions of national identity, “citizenship/civic education” and Iranian citizen’s obligations to the state, the Islamic Republic, other Iranians, the East and the West in light of textbook revisions introduced since the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79, from an interdisciplinary approach.

I examine and analyze the ways in which the ideal citizen is represented in the 2004 edition of Iranian school textbooks for elementary (grades 1 through 5) and guidance (junior high school, grades 6 through 8) levels in the context of the implementation of various national and global reforms and approaches to educational issues and curriculum construction such as the Islamization process and global education. I also explore and compare how conceptions of the ideal citizen, the revolution and its leadership and the Iranian national identity are represented in selected texts/subjects of previous editions of school textbooks for Persian, geography, social studies, history, career studies and religious studies in order to evaluate the extent of revisions in the 2004 textbooks in relation to the previous editions.

I ask whose knowledge and conceptions of “citizenship education”, diversity, development and identity construction inform the content of school textbooks by focusing on how images of otherness reproduce global and national relations of power inequalities and/or emancipatory understandings of the other with free and wilful agencies that reflect their voices and historical and collective memories. I interrogate those ideas and value systems that inform the knowledge students are required to know about the history of the nation, national identity, the ideal citizen and various forms of insiders (us) and outsiders (them). I expose the discourses, categories of difference, assumptions and views about otherness that are configured, depicted and portrayed in constructing “Iran” as a nation-state and “Iranian” as the national identity of its citizens. I analyze whose religious, ideological and political perceptions of “civic” and “citizenship education”, economic relations and political structures inform the official

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1 In this research, I refer to the three years of junior high grades as grades 6, 7 and 8. However, in Iran they are referred to as junior high grades 1, 2 and 3.

2 Historical and collective memory refers to those ideals, values, understanding and knowledge that are produced by groups considered as the other in national and international contexts and reflect their experiences of domination in relation to dominant groups and other minority groups, As Kelly (1998, p. 126) maintains, “historical and collective memory maintained by parents, books, peers and other sources affects the way in which experiences within schools and school-produced knowledge is received”. 

---
knowledge. I investigate whose conceptions and representations of topics and factors such as gender, justice, peace, social class, religion, “race”, ethnicity, national and global identities and rights and obligations inform the ways in which the ideal Iranian citizen is normalized and constructed for students. I examine how cultural and historical sites (and their political and religious significance) are employed in constructing and representing the ideal citizen. More specifically, I analyze how the ideal citizen is positioned, both similarly and differently, in relation to other nationalities, raced groups, ethnic minorities and various forms of otherness in representations and discussions about the history of “Iran” and the characteristics of the Iranian national identity. How are non-Persian, non-Iranians and other political, religious, gendered and classed groups constructed in the narrations of the birth of the Iranian nation in antiquity, the introduction of Islam into Iran (651 AC) and the interaction between modernity and tradition in the context of colonial and post-colonial relations in Iran beginning in the 1750s? Are there significant changes in how categories of otherness are represented during different historical periods? This study exposes how nationalistic and religious identities, attitudes and worldviews, in the context of global relations, are employed in representations and constructions of national and global us and them categories. How do such divisions legitimize certain criteria of difference as “the truth” in narrating the story of the nation through the prevalent discourses and myths about Iran? In deconstructing those narrations that inform the representations of the ideal citizen, I draw upon antiracism (Dei, 1996), transnationalism (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blance, 1994), Said’s (1978) notion of Orientalism, the discourse of “Orientalism in reverse” (Boroujerdi, 1996) and poststructuralism from a multidisciplinary approach. It is in the context of these theoretical frameworks that I utilize deconstruction, qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis as my methods of investigation in order to explore the representations of identity formation in various editions of Iranian school textbooks.

In this chapter, I offer a general synopsis of the main assumptions and arguments regarding education, schooling and curriculum in promoting “citizenship education”, national identity, integration and development. I provide a short history of the policies involved in the revisions of textbooks both before and after the revolution.

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3 Raced groups are constructed due to a process through which the dominant society defines the characteristics of a minority group based on racist and racialized ideologies. The term racialized refers to “processes by which meanings are attributed to particular objects, features and processes, in such a way that the latter are given significance and carry or are embodied with a set of additional meanings” that have political, social and economic consequences for members of the group (Henry et al., 1998, p. 5). Racial ideology is defined as knowledge about the other that is based on concepts, ideas, images, and institutions that establish a framework for interpreting social relations in society based on the idea of race as a reified concept. It produces and perpetuates a system of dominance based on race “through agencies of socialization and cultural transmission such as the mass media, schools, and universities, religious doctrines, symbols and images, art, music, and literature” (Henry et al., 1998, p. 410; Glossary).
After a brief discussion of the terms and the theoretical perspectives that inform this research, such as official knowledge, selective tradition, global education, antiracism, transnationalism, poststructuralism and “shifting collectivities”, the main goals and aims are discussed.


Modern education systems and schooling have been considered as the most important agents of nation-building, modernization and socio-economic-political-cultural change and progress. In dealing with national and global forms of underdevelopment and inequalities, educators and state officials have proposed various “solutions” to such issues and “problems” that are based on elaborate and contradictory pedagogical approaches and methods of teaching and learning. Scholars have argued for free public schooling in Iran (Sadiq, 1931), deschooling (Illich, 1971), the privatization of public schools, charter schools and home-schooling in North America (Buchen, 2004, p. 212-213) and traditional Islamic schools in Pakistan (Abbott, 1966, p. 293-302). In more recent years, schools and education systems are also conceptualized and utilized as effective transnational/global tools in institutionalizing “global” and/or “civic and citizenship” education by scholars, civil society, government organizations, non-government agencies and the United Nations (Smith, Fountain and McLaren, 2002; Lee, 2002). Schooling is also associated with promoting economic growth and preparing the youth for the types of skills needed in the economy, leading to higher standards of living and better health conditions (Dewey, 1971a; Menashri, 1992; Banani, 1961; Apple, 2004, 1986, 1999; Richards and Waterbury, 1990; D’Oyley, Blunt & Barnhardt Eds., 1994; Mazurek, Winzer & Majorek Eds., 2000).

In addition, many school systems and their (national) curriculum across the world have been reorganized and restructured based on a corporate management style system of control and distribution of goods and services (Clinton, 1987; Apple, 2004, 1999). Although schools are viewed as influential tools in promoting democracy, justice, peace, equality and equity between sexes, ethnic groups, nations, and racialized communities, the unequal consequences of nationalistic policies in terms of providing equal opportunities and upward social mobility for all citizens of the nation and educational attainments have not gone unchallenged. The effects of educational policies and reforms on the life-chances of students from various class, racialized and ethnic backgrounds vary across the world and are also conceptualized and interpreted differently depending on one’s ideology and theoretical perspective (McLaren and Farahmandpur, 2003; Ravitch & Viteritti Eds., 2001; Giroux, 2005, 1988). For example,
education systems have been criticized for their conceptualization of students’ diversity as one of the causes of their failures in school (Banks, 2001). Nevertheless, the education system, schools and the process of literacy have been “heralded” as institutional and pedagogical tools to “awaken” both Western and non-Western nations from the miseries of tradition and dogma (Mehran, 2002, 1999, 1997; Freire 1985). In addition, schools are also considered as important resocialization institutions in reconstructing society based on revolutionary, anti-colonial and anti-imperialistic ideals of justice and equality. For example, soon after the revolution in Cuba, the aim of schooling was to “prevent cultural colonization from surviving economic colonization” through an emphasis on critical and dialectical approaches to teaching and learning (Castro as cited in Spring, 2006, p. 122). In Iran, these policies have ranged from the educational policies of the White Revolution during the 1960s and the 1970s, the Islamization process in education after the Revolution of 1978-79 and the World Bank’s recommendations to restructure the Iranian school system during the mid-1970s that was implemented after the revolution.

Moreover, in the last three decades, theoretical approaches such as “global education” (Goldstein & Selby Eds., 2000), “citizenship education” (Lynch 1992), “civic education” (Lee, 2002; Hinderlitter Ortloff, 2005), “civil education” and “human rights education” have become important themes of investigation and the focus of research, scholarship and public policy across the world (Steiner-Khamsi et al., 2002; Oldenquist Ed., 1996; Limage, 2001; Sigel & Hoskin Eds., 1991; Goodman, 1992; Scott & Lawson Eds., 2002; Reeher & Cammarano Eds., 1997). In

4 Since the Revolution of 1978-79, the aim of the education system has been to re-socialize the population in light of revolutionary and Islamic characteristics. This necessitated a re-evaluation of the ideological content and messages of school textbooks (Siavoshi, 1995). As Siavoshi (1995, p. 210) maintains, Islamic liberation, as an ideological and hegemonic tool in constructing school textbooks, required a critique of Western values and institutions. The Islamization process aimed at purging the system from the elements of the old regime. It also functioned as a way to legitimize the revolutionary regime’s cultural and political policies amongst a population that had experienced intense social, economic and political changes influenced by Western cultural and economic systems since the early decades of the last century (Mehran, 2004). Since the end of the Iran-Iraq War in 1988, the Islamic Republic has also implemented cultural and economic policies addressing issues such as “underdevelopment”, the effects of the war, high unemployment rates and a growing youth population that did not experience the war or the revolution. At the same time, the call for cultural understanding and pressures from ethnic minorities in Iran has propelled the central government to address some of their concerns (See Farhi, 2005; Atabaki, 2005). Some of these demands include better schools, an increase in the availability of culturally sensitive instructional materials and addressing the economic inequalities faced by members of ethnic minority groups. In fact, due to the globalization of the economy, information and the movement of people across national boundaries, schools and education systems in various parts of the world are now being conceptualized as tools in promoting global “citizenship education” and new approaches to constructing the ideal citizen by scholars, civil society, government organizations, non-government agencies and by the United Nations (i.e.: UNICEF and UNESCO). This is partly due to the fact that participation in the global economy is assumed to require a population that is informed about other countries, peoples and socio-economic relations. More recently, global education has also been introduced in Iran that aims to restructure the Iranian school curriculum for grades 1 through 10. This new approach is also influenced by other educational theories and approaches such as critical and child-centred pedagogies that are incorporated in light of political transformations and critiques of Western colonial and imperialist interventions in Iran and across the world.
many nation-states, the need for an inclusive education that teaches respect for human beings and the rights of others has been considered an urgent and necessary “reform”. “Global education” in the Middle East, “civic and citizenship education” in Europe, “antiracism education” in the United States, Canada, England and Australia and “critical multiculturalism” in the United States all point to the need for the inclusion of diversity and multiple forms of identity formations. This is despite their varied and at times contradictory implementations across the world (Lee, 2002; Kalatzis and Cope, 1999; Spring, 2007). Their aims are to promote critical thinking through praxis oriented and child-centred pedagogies that are inclusive of difference and diversity locally, nationally and globally (Dei, 1996, Dei et al., 2005; Lynch, 1992; Banks, 2001; Freire, 1987; Visano and Jakubowski, 2002; Giroux, 1994, 1988; Mehran, 1999; McLaren and Farahmandpur, 2003; Moodley, 1999; Nieto, 2004; Spring, 2004a, 2007). Furthermore, conservative right wing groups in Canada and the United States, religious “fundamentalists” in various parts of the world, such as Christian Evangelical movements in America and the Islamic revolutionary discourse since the “populist” Revolution of 1978-79 in Iran, as well as national and global economic elites, have introduced a range of diverse sets of policies and reforms that undermine the efforts of critical educators to implement democratic values in schools. For example, proponents of “moral education” conceptualize “civil identity” in light of a common set of norms that are supposed to bring the nation and community together (Ravitch and Viteritti, 2001, p. 1-12; Damon, 2001, p. 127). Such an identity is defined as an “allegiance to a systematic set of moral and political beliefs, a personal ideology of sorts, to which a young person forges a commitment” (Damon, 2001, p. 127). However, in these approaches to identity construction and the moral roles of the education system, “civil identity” is conceptualized as a national construct and not as a regional and local outcome that is specific to the needs of people in face-to-face communities. These “conservative and liberal” views do not consider the idea of “nation-state” as problematic and as a barrier to the emancipatory aspects of “citizenship” and “human rights education”. Such a definition of the modern subject, in fact, “tears” individuals away from their local relations and situates them in relation to other people in the context of (inter)national boundaries without accounting for the effects of structural factors on their life chances. Furthermore, such conservative theoretical approaches to education and curriculum are often based on the dominant Western conception of democracy that equates human rights with economic rights and consumer choice (Giroux, 2005; Apple 2004; Zinn, 2005, p. 123-27, 144-149).

5 Examples of such supra-national bodies are the World Trade Organization, World Bank and International Monetary Fund.
From a critical perspective, national education systems have been critiqued as “ideological state apparatuses” that are involved in the economic, cultural and political reproduction of existing class relations and economic structures (Althusser as cited in Dei et al., 2005, p. 33-34; Apple, 2004). They are conceptualized as modern institutions of domination that are hegemonic (Apple, 2004). In order for those in power to socially and politically regulate their citizens, the dominant groups need to control ways of behaviour and how knowledge about the nation, the state and insiders and outsiders is communicated to students. Regulation requires control over how representations of various forms of selves are employed in discursively reproducing hierarchically organized types of difference and otherness as legitimate categories of distinguishing between the ideal citizen and local and global groups labelled as enemy insiders and outsiders. In these institutions, both minority groups and students from the dominant classes are othered and stigmatized (Apple, 2004, p. 25-40; Moodley, 1999; Pinar, 1995, p. 27; Delpit, 1995; Dei 1996). As Spring (2007) argues, throughout the history of education in the United States, schooling has been an effective tool of “de-culturalization, segregation, and denial of educational opportunities” to Native Americans, African Americans and other minority students. The education system and schools “function” as anti-democratic institutions that marginalize the experiences of minority and working class students. This is despite the fact that scholars such as Dewey (1971a, 1971b), Apple (1999), Banks (2001), Mehran (2002, 1999), Giroux (1999)

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6 Representation involves both ideological and discursive formations and is a social process enabling individuals and groups to make sense of social, economic, cultural and political relations and structures at local, national and global levels “within available systems of communication: speech, writing, print”, pictures, maps and texts (Kelly, 1998, p. 52). This process is an important element of the construction of us and them categories and the process of othering. Representation refers to those cultural “beliefs, moral values, symbols and ideas shared by” members of national and ethnic groups (Bocok, 1996, p. 157). Through representation the dominant group constructs specific and particular conceptions of “time and space” within a culture (Bocok, 1996, p. 157). Representations, as discourses and as the outcome of discursive representations, are “always implicated in power”: they are “systems through which power circulates” (Hall, 1996b, p. 204). Representations of groups and people in the context of discursive formations such as Orientalism and ‘Orientalism in reverse’ cannot “be innocent because [they do not] represent an encounter between equals” (Hall, 1996b, p. 204). Knowledge, feelings, relations and structures that are produced through representations “constitute a kind of power [that is] exercised over those who are ‘known’” (Hall, 1996b, p. 204-205). When representations are incorporated in the context of the curriculum and the textbooks as subjects of study, those who have the power to produce representations “also have the power to make [them] true” (Hall, 1996b, p. 205). As such, representations, due to their discursive formations, are implicated in the production of ‘regime[s] of truth’ (Hall, 1996b, p. 205). Construction refers to this process of producing ‘regimes of truth’ when representations are crystallized “into institutions with normative force; thus reproducing social structures” (Hubert and Thompson, 1996, p. 234). The act of construction is influenced by “who controls [the process of representation and]” such how such representations will be interpreted (Henry and Tator, 2006, p. 69). The act of construction involves discourses of knowledge (i.e.: history and education) and has ideological dimensions (Henry and Tator, 2006, p. 245). Portrayals are the final product of the process of representation that reflect the desired characteristics that are placed upon the cultural artifacts depicted from the vantage point of those in control of the power structure, who frame the meanings based on pre-established relationships between individuals and groups at local and global levels (Henry and Tator, 2006, p. 245). It is in this light that I examine Iranian school textbooks within the context of historical, political, cultural, economic and religious factors and relations.

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and Freire (1985) have explored and argued for the possibility of public schooling and education systems in developing and institutionalizing democratic values in light of uneven global relations of power and in light of a “pedagogy of hope” that is central to their “philosophies”. The role of the curriculum in developing democratic and social justice understandings, values and attitudes in students has also been emphasized by these scholars (Dewey, 1971a, 1971b; Apple and Beane, 2005, p. 1-25). This hope also informs the basis of this research that through a critical approach to knowledge production, liberation from domination is possible.

Constructions and reproductions of national and ethnic identities are also affected by the consequences of globalization. Globalization is an important educational theme that highlights the increase in the process of globalism, or the linkages that are the end result of “flows and influences of capital and goods, information and ideas, and people and forces, as well as environmentally relevant substances” (as cited in Hebron and Stack, 2009, p. 2). Globalization is “the intensification of global ties and points to the shrinkage of distance on a large scale” (Hebron and Stack, 2009, p. 2). Globalization does not imply universalism but points to the ways in which work, science, the social organization of space and the expansion of markets have facilitated the transnational division of labour and how national issues are now shaped and influenced by non-state actors and organizations (Hebron and Stack, 2009, p. 3). In this sense, the discourse of globalization emphasizes structural, hegemonic, cultural, economic and ideological inequalities and resistance to them. This is particularly so in light of the effects of various cultural/national groups migrating across the globe over the last one hundred fifty years in search of employment, protection and improvements in living standards. The increase in global migration has added to cultural diversity, economic inequality and power differentials nationally and locally, resulting in the formation of “transnational identities” (Satzewich and Liodakis, 2007; Lynch, 1991). The globalization of the economy has also had tremendous negative effects on the “Third World” and in “developing” countries that have resulted in the differential treatment of individuals and groups in society and in political, cultural, economic and educational systems (Faulks, 2000; Heater, 2004; Beiner, 2003; Kymlicka, 2001; de Jong et al., 2005; Bello, 2002). The economic and political inequalities as well as cultural marginalizations that accompany a lack of economic and political power have been criticized by grassroots organizations and the poor across the world. However, struggles over minority issues have also again resulted in the rise in ethnic nationalism and violence against minorities who seek independence and demand cultural and political rights and freedom from domination and unfair treatments by their respective national elite groups (Diamond & Plattner Eds., 1994; Iram, 2001, p. 217-220; Ghosh and Abdi, 2004).
As an important dimension of this research, the globalization of educational approaches to cultural, political and economic diversity/inequality, human rights, inclusive curriculum and economic development points to the need to move beyond the conceptualizations of society, the nation-state and educational issues as “well-bounded system[s]” to an approach that “concentrates on how social life is ordered across time and space” (Hall, 1996a, p. 619). In addition, over the last twenty years, many researchers have argued that in analyzing representations of the ideal citizen, it is important to account for how “identity develops via difference and by exclusion of others” (Nasser, 2004, p. 224). As Hall (1996a, p. 612) argues, identity formation is understood as a process that involves power relations between us and them and within each category. In the context of global relations, then, representations of the ideal citizen in school textbooks need to be deconstructed in light of an understanding of the self and theoretical perspectives that include “multiple voices, languages, knowledge and discourses” (Dei, 2005, p. 53). Such a discourse also highlights the dialectical relationships between education, the economy, religion, politics, culture and representations of history. An exploration of curriculum in this light points to the extent to which “locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social [economic and political] influences quite distant from them…. What structures the locale is not simply that which is present on the scene; the ‘visible form’ of the locale conceals the distanced relations which determines its nature” (Giddens, 1990, p. 18-19). This disembedding process is influenced by what Giddens (1990, p. 22) calls the establishment and implementation of ‘expert systems’.

The educational and economic ‘expert systems’ ‘provide ‘guarantees’ of expectations across distanciated time-space” that simultaneously “remove social relations from the immediacies of context” (Giddens, 1990, p. 28). The roles of these ‘expert systems’ that are both local and global need to be critically evaluated in deconstructing curriculum and textbooks that aim at promoting cultural understanding, mono-religious teachings and global interdependency. The global proliferation of progressive education in terms of the influences of Dewey’s ideas and his pedagogical assumptions that were popular in Russia, China and Iran as well as the implementation of the Global Education Initiative in Iran since the early 2000s are examples of the process of globalization and how the other influences educational and curriculum reforms (Spring, 2006, p. 10-27). Progress or development is another concern and theme that is reflected in the restructuring of schools across the globe. The importance of progress and economic growth is closely related to changes brought about due to global influences that dictate educational prescriptions that aim at enhancing “individual skills for economic competition” and “adapting cultural [and minority cultural norms and] traditions to economic national plans” that are nationally developed but also influenced by global factors and
organizations such as the IMF and the World Bank (Spring, 2004b, p. 45, 61). In fact, the role of the World Bank in promoting neoliberal educational policies in Africa and in Latin America that call for “more community involvement and privatization of schooling” is another example of the global dimension that needs to be accounted for in analyses of curriculum and educational policy changes (Spring, 2004b, p. 62).

1.2 “Citizenship Education”, Nation-Building, Westernization, Islamic Ideology, Persianization and School Textbooks

“Citizenship” is defined as “membership in a community called a nation” that, in theory, “offers equal participation rights in the political arena” (Wallerstein, 1998, p. 14). Historically, since the French Revolution, the need for “citizenship education” has been linked to the rise of nation-states as sovereign political units and the replacement of “subjects with obligations” with “citizens with rights to liberty, equality and fraternity” (Davison, 1993, p. 6). “Citizenship education” is based on a set of ideals about “what a citizen ought to be and how he or she ought to live in order to enjoy the rights that states bestow on their citizens” (Barr, 2005, p. 56). One of the main aims of “citizenship education” has been to develop attitudes and values in state policies that assist with the integration of individuals into society at the national and global levels and to “help develop positive relationships between individual citizens and the state” (Barr, 2005, p. 56). However, Faulks (2000, p. 29) points out that the egalitarian aspects of “citizenship” are contradicted for various reasons. As Wallerstein (1998, p. 21) maintains, “citizenship” involves the inclusion of some people in the political process, at the cost of the exclusion of others. As such, differential representations of national identity and the national self and the other are important elements of “citizenship education”.

The approach to “citizenship education” in various countries across the world has been as diverse as the philosophical and theoretical approaches to “citizenship”. Some countries require students to read about the “process and function of government”, and in other countries students study national history (Barr, 2005, p. 57). At the same time, the dilemma in educating about national identity and “citizenship education” is one of balancing between “individual rights and state rights [and] between individualism and the need for national unity” (Barr, 2005, p. 60). Banks (2002, p. 81-82) maintains that a critical approach to “citizenship education” requires a balance between the needs of the nation and the needs of its diverse ethnic and racial population within the context of the globalization of the economy and information. Students should not only have knowledge about their own ethnic groups but also
about other cultural groups across the world (Banks, 2002, p. 82). In the context of globalization, the aim should also be to develop feelings and attitudes that enhance the peaceful co-existence of different people across the globe. This requires an approach to “citizenship education” that “facilitates the development of civic consciousness and agency within students” from various cultural, religious and racial backgrounds (Banks, 2002, p. 82). “Citizenship education” should also help students to develop global attachments that are critical of human rights abuses based on the importance of civic duty for action in order to solve global problems such as poverty, racism and AIDS (Banks, 2004, p. 7, 9). However, as Banks (2004, p. 1) maintains, due to the intensification of nationalism and globalization, the task of helping students to develop both positive national and global identifications that are reflective and considerate of cultural and moral diversity has been difficult to achieve. This requires a move away from assimilationist and nationalistic policies that prevent minority and racialized students from being fully integrated into society as equal partners in the process of nation-building and the intensification of global relations (Banks, 2004, p. 7). “Citizenship education” for democratic societies should also be based on a movement “wherein education for critical consciousness begins where people are” (hooks, 2002, p. 109). hooks (2002, p. 109) argues that the historical conditions of the working classes across the globe are good examples of pedagogical materials that educators can incorporate as part of their curriculum. Behrangi (2004) argued the same point during the 1950s by calling for school knowledge that is also critical of the economic, social, political and emotional conditions of the poor. He urged for the incorporation of students’ voices in the textbooks as pedagogical tools in politicizing them.

Furthermore, Luchtenberg (2004, p. 266) argues that “human rights education” is also an important discourse for connecting multicultural characteristic of a nation-state “with international and global aspects, since violation of human rights, as well as success in combating human rights violations, is a worldwide topic”. For example, in Germany, human rights issues focuses on “the social and legal status of refugees, crimes perpetrated against them and” how to prevent such crimes from taking shape in the future (Matari, 2002, p. 97). However, as Lee (2007, p. 51) points out, economic concerns are also important aspects of “citizenship education” in the form of strengthening national economies in the context of the globalization of economic relations and structures. In Germany, for example, “citizenship” considerations include multiple concerns such as the European identity and the market economy (Lee, 2002, p. 51). Furthermore, Lee (2002, p. 47) points out that “for other countries, there seems to be a disassociation between citizenship and politics, in the sense that internal political debates and party politics
are now days only a minor concern for citizens”. He labels this process as “depoliticization” of “citizenship education” (Lee, 2002, p. 47).

Although “citizenship education” is often conceptualized in the context of the nation-state, due to globalization and “anti-globalization” movements, a number of scholars have argued for cosmopolitan citizenship (Barr, 2005, p. 56; Moodley, 1999). Others have called for the introduction and implementation of supra-national (global) identities such as the European identity (Hinderlitter Ortloff, 2005, p. 35-49). Bowden (2003, p. 355), however, argues that global conceptualizations of “citizenship” that are based on Western conceptualizations of rights, individualism and human rights arguments and perspectives often unintentionally promote nationalistic sentiments. These nation-centric approaches are based on the value system of a specific group within a specific geographical region. In light of the implementation of global education in Iran, I explore whether or not school textbooks ultimately construct a vision of national and global relations that requires outsiders to assimilate into the dominant culture by changing who minority students really are, despite being important aspects of the construction of the dominant national identity and other transnational forms of identities in neighbouring countries bordering Iran and across the world (Rahimieh, 2001, p. 7). As such, I analyze whether or not counter-hegemonic movements and minority definitions of “citizenship”, such as those of Sunni Arabs in Shi’a Iran that question the status quo, may find limited representations as part of the definition of the ideal citizen in Iranian school textbooks.

“Citizenship education”, nevertheless, is more than merely constructing an image of the national self within the context of global relations of power in school textbooks. It also needs to be understood in the context of a political economy analysis of schooling and textbook production and content (Apple, 1986, 2004). Moreover, as Apple (1999, 1986) in his discussion about official knowledge argues, information, knowledge and narrations about the self, science, history, diversity, “citizenship”, human rights, national identity and the ideal citizen, establishing distinctions between us and them such as the self/other and the East/West, are constructed by employing selective emic and etic discourses, or “selective traditions”. Apple (1999), furthermore, maintains that school knowledge is cumulative. It is the end result of various historical, economic, ideological, religious and scientific factors and relations during different historical periods. Official knowledge is also relational in the sense that knowledge is not static but is related to local and global relations of power in direct and indirect ways. Apple argues that it is not enough to just ask what kinds of information, discourses and “technical knowledge” are included in school textbooks (Kincheloe & Steinberg Eds., 1995). It is also necessary to ask whose views about history, democracy,
human rights, the other and the self are incorporated as part of the curriculum and school textbooks (Macedo, 1995, p. 43-57; Curtis, 1995, p. 130-137). In this light, how the ideal citizen and national identity are portrayed need to be understood in the context of colonial relations and resistance movements to imperialism across the world without falling into an economic determinist approach to class analysis. In discussing “citizenship and civic education”, it is necessary to ask whose values and norms, visions of the future and understandings of the past and present as well as whose ideological perspectives inform the construction of the ideal citizen and conceptions of rights and national identity (Apple, 1986). In Iran, “citizenship education” is also related to modernist, religious and revolutionary changes and views and ideas regarding the role of the state in promoting the rights of people and/or in limiting their rights based on the adherence to strict nationalist and religious doctrines or revolutionary social justice principles.

During the process of nation-building in countries such as Iran that were influenced by nationalism and modernization projects, “citizenship education” and national identity were constructed based on a conception of the ideal citizen that emphasized similarity in order to establish categories of insiders based on universal shared values (Sadiq, 1931). Faulks (2000, p. 44) maintains that nation-states deny various non-elite dominant identities that are unequally hierarchized access to economic opportunities and political processes and statuses. The construction of individuals as citizens of a specific nation, as Arendt argues, also excludes them from being a citizen of the world since “a citizen is by definition a citizen among many citizens of a country among countries” (as cited in Bowden, 2003, p. 252). In Iran, civil identity also has a revolutionary and religious connotation. However, as Mazzini (as cited in Bowden, 2003, p. 355) argues, revolutionary movements often “seek to make the centre of the movement their own country or their own city. They do not destroy nationality; they only confiscate all other nationalities for the benefit of their own. [Their conception of] a chosen people …” often homogenizes the past and limits reflections of diversity in the construction of who belongs to the nation and who does not (Abrahamian, 1993, p. 60-110). The ideal citizen, with his or her universal civil identity, finds unequal representations in official discourses of the definition of nation.

Following the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79, Islamic principles and ideology began to be influential in devising educational policies (Mohsenpour, 1988, p. 83). The Islamization of Iran, as a modern “reaction” to the process of Westernization, conceptualized as *gharbzadegi* (“West-toxication” or “West-struckness”), was initiated through the implementation of the “Cultural Revolution” that aimed at cleansing and purging the educational system (especially the universities) in terms of pedagogical goals, curriculum content and staff that were considered as
gharbazedeh ("weststrucked"), pro-Shah/Western, non-Moslem and tyrannical (Rastegar, 1995, p. 220; Mohsenpour, 1988; Shorish 1988; Menashri, 1992; Sanasarian, 2000). Al-e Ahmad (1982, p. 21) located the source of gharbzadegi in colonialism and imperialism. It is an aspect of the process of colonial intervention in the “Third World” and its “civilization” mission. “After all,” maintains Ale-Ahmad (1982), “‘colonization’ draws its roots from ‘development’, and whoever engages in ‘development’ inevitably takes part in civilization” (p. 17). He viewed gharbzadegi as “the subjugation to the West of modern Iranian subjectivity” that took the West as the source of mimicking and the basis for introducing cultural, social and economic change and reform (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2000, p. 566-567). Gharbzadegi\textsuperscript{7} is “all the symptoms that have been created in the life, culture, civilization, and manner of the peoples on this side of the world without any historical background or support from tradition, and with no thread of continuity through the changes” (Al-e Ahmad, 1982, p. 21).

According to Rejali (1994, p. 139-141), Al-e Ahmad not only problematized the manner in which the “West” exploits the “East” through its machineries (i.e.: technological advancement and institutions), he also pointed to the role of disciplinary complexes (such as regimentation, one of the main goals of schooling) that are transplanted in the “East”. Behrangi was also critical of how Western knowledge was used to define, alter and contain the Iranian population within the context of imperialist and ethnic relations in Iran. He (as cited in Hanson, 1983) argued that the appropriation of American cultural imperialism was not only in the form of material aspects of the culture and society of the West, but it also took the form of ideas and views about social relations, the state’s functions, economic relations, education and gender interactions. As Hanson (1983, p. 4) states, Behrangi believed that extreme reliance on American educators causes Iranians not only to forget their own educational problems but also to remain unaware of them. Behrangi (as cited in Hanson, 1983) argued that it is the task of those with teaching experience in the villages and towns to write the curriculum rather than those who have attended schools in the West. He promoted the idea of redistributing power not only within the school system but also within the larger society. In this light, the education system of the Shah’s government was viewed as an important institution of gharbzadegi (West-toxication) and as an extension of colonial, imperialist and capitalist institutions and relations in the region.

\textsuperscript{7} According to Al-e Ahmad (1982, p. 11-24), gharbzadegi (West-toxication) is a disease brought about by the West. He compares this disease and its consequences to an infested field of grain. Gharbzadegi, he asserts, has two heads: the West and those Iranians whom he labeled “weststrucked.” He conceptualized both as the other. To him, gharbzadegi is characteristic of a period in which Iranians have not yet mastered the sciences and technology of the West; yet, they are compelled to use machines and Western goods because of global economic pressures on Iranians. See Al-Ahmad, J. (1982). Gharbzadegi. Alizade, Ahmad and John Gree (Translators). Lexington: Mazda Publishers.
As Said (1994, p. 270-271; 298-299) points out, being critical of imperialism should be read in the context of also being critical of anti-imperialist movements. Rahnema and Behdad (1995, p. 9) argue that it is important to scrutinize Eastern conceptions of the self and the other. Also, despite arguments put forth by some scholars that through informal associations and social organizations many Iranians are now attempting to establish “a common set of goals and purposes” that are based on “political pragmatism rather than ideological dogmatism” (Jahanbegloo, 2004, p. xx-xxi), it is as important to account for the extent to which the goals and purposes within civil society are already filtered through a knowledge base (i.e.: school knowledge) that has not been seriously deconstructed for its nationalist, patriarchal and ethnocentric constructions of social identities. In addition, Rahnema and Behadad (1995, p. 8-9) argue that distinctions between terms such as civil society and the state as separate entities in Iran are problematic since the idea of civil society is partly influenced by the state’s policies. In fact, they (Rahnema and Behadad, 1995) maintain that “the distinction between civil society and the state is, however, at best blurred in the Islamic revivalist movement” (p. 9).

This is further complicated by the fact that by analyzing Islamic ideology as an important and central component of the construction of Iranian national identity (Mehran, 2002, 1999, 1997), there has been no systematic research on how both Islamic ideology and non-Islamic discourses inform the construction of the ideal citizen in the school textbooks. Most post-revolutionary researchers have studied the effects of the Islamization process on the representation of gender relations, national identity and the ideal citizen (Mehran, 2002, 1999, 1997; Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995; Ferdows, 1995). Despite the ideological rejection of nationalism as an imperialist plot by the Iranian post-revolutionary elite (Abrahamian, 1993, p. 123-125), Islamization takes shape in the context of racial, ethnic and religious relations within the boundaries of Iran and is not based on other cultural practices, such as those prevalent in Iraq or in Syria, which could also be considered as Islamic. Moreover, as mentioned, the institutionalization of a national culture based on the values of one ethnic group often implies the exclusion of other cultures and traditions from being reflected in the values and goals of the nation (Nasser, 2005, p. 1-42). In this sense, the project of nation-building is a hegemonic process through which one group dominates other groups structurally, culturally, economically and socially. This is despite the apparently or supposed universal application of rights to all, including women and minority groups.

In addition, ethnic, religious, linguistic and national categories of difference divide not only between Iranians but also between them and other nationalities (Farhi, 2005; Banuazizi & Weiner Eds., 1986). Iranians are
conceptualized by Western colonialists and imperialist forces as “Oriental” others. Iranians also divide and group themselves in relation to outsiders, such as Arabs in the Persian Gulf States, and other Iranian minority groups, such as Armenian-Iranians. Such constructed categories of insiders and outsiders are based on several interrelated factors. They depend on specific understandings of racialized, religious and social class relations that are employed in constructing the ideal citizen. This construction is also affected by their differences and similarities in relation to the ideal Iranian citizen and the consequences of such divisions in terms of social justice issues and economic equality. It is in this light that I analyze and present data in exploring how an anti-imperialist movement is constructed for its student population. I deconstruct whose attitudes towards dominating metropolitan centres and other dominated peoples and nations is presented as the official knowledge by interrogating the representations of otherness, difference and the historical memories of the marginalized groups in Iranian school textbooks in light of Rahnema’s and Behadad’s (1995, p. 8) argument that one needs to be critical of how pragmatic approaches to Islam, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, promote the existing world order and relations of domination.

Furthermore, as Abrahamian (1993) and Jahanbegloo (2004) point out, the Islamization process should not be merely considered as a fundamentalist reaction to modernity and as a sign of a return to traditionalism. In fact, this kind of understanding between “modernity” and “tradition” implies that “the meaning of a ‘return to tradition’ [as reflected in the so-called ‘fundamentalist’ ideology of the post-revolutionary regime expressed in the discourse of Islamization] is not clear either, and at the moment in Iran any kind of return to tradition is a modern claim” (Jahanbegloo, 2004, p. xi). It is as important to consider the interactions between the two, not simply as monolithic encounters, but as complex exchanges that cannot be easily classified into simple binary oppositions of “either/or” (Jahanbegloo, 2004, p. x). They are fragmented, interrelated and dialectical relations, consisting of relations between “shifting collectivities” that embody both.

In modernity, absent global relations and structures affect national and local structures in various ways, and Iran is no exception (See Hall, 1996b). The Islamic Revolution of 1978-79 should be conceptualized as another manifestation of the consequences of modernity in Iran. It is the end result of power struggles at the national level with significant global consequences. As Tavakoli-Targhi (2004) maintains,

Modernities can be viewed as a product of a global network of power and knowledge that emerged initially around the sixteenth century. … Whereas Europeans constituted the modern Self in relation to their non-

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8 In Canada, the term often refers to peoples of South East Asia such as the Chinese, Vietnamese and Taiwanese. Here, Oriental should be understood as the subject of the process of othering by the West and through the “colonized” lenses of the non-Western.
Western heterotopias, Asians and Africans redefine the Self in dialogic relations to Europe, their new significant Other. (p.131)

In fact, in Orientalist literature, Islam is considered as the most important explanation of cultural differences between the East and the West. These cultural differences are employed in depicting Middle Easterners in stereotypical terms such as “fanatical, cowardly, treacherous, despotic, sexually repressed, and patriarchal” (Burke, 1993, p. 7). Tavakoli-Targhi also points out that the historical role of the Oriental other as an influential actor in the formulation of the Western and European self is ignored in representations of Europe or the West “as the originator of modernity and rationality. This forgetful assertion gained hegemonic currency by conceptualizing ‘non-Western’ modernity as ‘Westernization’” (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2004, p. 131).

In addition, an emphasis on highlighting Islamization as a form of non-Western modernity hides the extent to which Westernization and modernist nationalistic sentiments remain central characteristics of the Iranian education system. In fact, educational studies have not fully explored the extent to which the Persianization and the Westernization of the population within the context of the nation-building process and the uneven economic development of Iran, which began during the Pahlavi era, have been advancing under the Islamic Republic (Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995; Ferdows, 1995; Boroujerdi, 1996; Mehmet, 1995; Vaziri, 1993; Mehran, 2002, 1999, 1997). As such, I investigate the promotion of a pan-Islamic identity in light of revolutionary slogans after the revolution in Iran as a modern nation-state in relation to other Moslem nationals and in the context of how Western countries have historically situated themselves politically and culturally in the Middle East (Ramazani, 1988, p. 130-139). I analyze whether or not the 2004 edition of school textbooks are also influenced by the broader view of the Iranian education system and schooling as important tools in modernizing Iran, in establishing the central government’s legitimacy by inculcating a common national identity amongst the population, in assisting the development of Iran’s economy and in implementing social programs and reforms (Mehran 2002, Arasteh, 1969). I ask whether or not the narration of nation and construction of Iran remain to be based on similar assumptions advocated by Iranian scholars at the beginning of the last century. For example, Sadiq (1931) maintained that Iranians,

desire to have a country strong and independent to preserve this entity and their national life. They wish to have a Persia prosperous through scientific development of their natural resources in agriculture and mines, and through exchange of those products with other countries. They aspire that Persia have a place of honour among nations of the earth by constituting the country’s best to the culture of the world. (p. 83-84)
Sadiq (1931, p. 84) also argued that the aim of the education system is to provide students with a cultural capital that would enable Iran to enter the age of modernity as a powerful contender in the region. He (as cited in Banani, 1961, p. 109) proposed for a nationalistic education system that was also based on the principles of progressive education with a strong base in science and technical knowledge. Education was:

  to create in the minds of the people a living consciousness of the past by showing the great achievements of the race; … to train boys and girls to become good citizens of modern Persia; … to teach the rural people and the tribes to live, make a home, … prepare food and clothing, … [and] prevent disease …. (as cited in Banani, 1961, p. 109)

According to Sadiq, tribal people were considered as an obstacle to modernity. His solution to traditionalism in Iran was to teach and to re-socialize the students and citizens of Iran based on new conceptions of the self in modernity and on the culture of the Persian “race”.9 As the previous passage illustrates, the racial connotations of nationalistic discourses in Iran (Banani, 1961) were important elements of the process of nation-building despite the multi-ethnic-religious characteristics of Iranian society (Farhi, 2005; Atabaki, 2000; Shaffer, 2002). In fact, the process of nation-building since the early decades of the last century was viewed by ethnic minorities as a hegemonic way of Persianizing the population. In addition, since the inception of the Iranian nation-state, Persian hegemony has resulted in ethnic inequalities (Banuazizi & Weiner Eds., 1986; Shaffer, 2002; Atabaki, 2000). For example, the modernization policies of Mohammad Reza Shah during the 1960s and 1970s resulted in mass poverty, a high level of illiteracy and underdevelopment in various non-Persian provinces (Mojab and Hassanpour, 1995, p. 234). The most evident aspect of the Persianization process is the usage of Persian as the official language of instruction. As Mojab and Hassanpour (1995, p. 231) point out, during the reign of Reza Shah (1925-1941), Kurdish Iranians who spoke their mother tongue were arrested and jailed. This emphasis on Persian as the national language of all Iranians was accompanied with the proliferation of racist and chauvinistic myths that assumed all Iranians are part of the “pure or genuine Aryan race” (Mojab and Hassanpour, 1995, p. 231). The Persianization process in the curriculum and the education system, with its consequences in terms of unequal outcomes, warrants scrutiny in light of the processes of nation-building and “racialization”. The process of Persianization of Iran and of non-Persian communities during the Pahlavi era coincided with the implementation of policies that resulted in “genocide, ethnocide and linguicide” (Mojab and Hassanpour, 1995, p. 232). Although in the province of Azerbaijan “preparations were being made in 1993 for limited teaching of Turkish in primary

9 Although in popular discourse in the West, “Iranian” and “Persian” are used interchangeably (Shaffer, 2002, p. 1), in this dissertation, the category “Persian” refers to the dominant ethnic group and “Iranian” to the national identity.
such racial elements of the national identity and nationalistic discourses have not often been seriously deconstructed in discussions about the representations of the Iranian self in educational circles. In addition, the mislabelling of Iranian modernity as a form of non-Western modernity not only continues to privilege the position of the West, but also fails to account for the racialized images and representations of the other that reflect Iranian/Persian views about Western others and other Easterners. Furthermore, by labelling Iran’s reaction to Western imperialist encroachment in the region as a form of non-Western modernity, the extent to which racially bias views within the East are partly reflective of the process of Westernization and Western representations of otherness in the East is ignored. For example, it is important to note that in “Orientalist in reverse” literature, the West is depicted as the nemesis and as the other of the East due to its exploitation of Easterners politically, socially, culturally and economically (Rahnema and Behdad, 1995, p. 5-7).

In general, an emphasis on the effects of Westernization and Islamization has further resulted in a lack of attention paid to how the process of racialization may be constituted in representations of the ideal citizen and how and whether or not “race” continues to be an important aspect of identity construction in Iranian school textbooks in this global age (See Dei, 1996). As such, I explore how various notions of “racialized” identities inform the construction of the self and the other in light of the role of the education system in the nation-building and the Persianization processes. I explore whether or not Persian cultural attitudes and values inform the construction of the ideal citizen from a Western-centric perspective. That is, I interrogate the narration of nation for those racialized

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10 This research was shaped during my MA thesis on the transmigration of Iranians to Canada, where I explored how Iranians’ self-perceptions and views regarding their conceptions of Whiteness were reconstructed and reshaped within a few years after immigrating to Canada. For some Iranian immigrants, their self-perceptions as white Aryan immigrants were reinterpreted in light of Canadian racialized relations and the Canadian government and media classifications of Iranians as “visible minorities”, non-white and non-aboriginal (Mirfakhraie, 1999). My interest was further fuelled by an incident soon after I completed my MA thesis. In a conversation with a twelve year old Iranian boy on vacation in Canada with his parents, he told me that he did not like these "yellow people", which took me by surprise. What did he mean by that term? Why was he using a racial(ized) identity in order to refer to members of another visible minority group? This led me to reflect back on my racialized and racial identities as they had been formed and reformed throughout my life in Iran, France, the United States of America and Canada and in various levels of educational systems across the globe. My racialized identity was already well-established before I left Iran. I saw myself as a Shi’a/Aryan. Looking back, I was often offended by Americans calling and labelling me “Arab”. I believed in a romanticized and sanitized conception of the past that was devoid of the ethnocentric and class biases of nationalism and national identity. Consequently, I began to question my racial(ized) ideology and my inferiorizing “view” towards “Arabs”. What did I learn about “Arabs” in my school textbooks? What did that Iranian boy read about those “yellow people” in his school textbooks?
discourses as sources of identity and the extent to which these reflect the Orientalists’ fascination to understand European history and societies rather than to understand the East and to present the East through local perspectives (Burke, 1993, p. 7). As Edward Said (1978, p. 3-8) maintains, Orientalism is an academic field and a style of thought about the distinctions between the Orient and the Occident. It is an institutional authority about the Near East. In constructing the East through the discourses of Orientalism, many important texts and sources were neglected by the Orientalists in favour of specific historical and religious documents that were then considered as the only objective sources and data about the Orient and Iran (Burke, 1993, p. 7).

In exploring whether or not racialized discourses affect the construction of the Iranian national identity, I do not argue that these constructions are necessarily racist. Rather, as Dei (1996) argues, the aim is to point to those “emerging meanings of race [that] denote particular ways in which communal [and national] differences come to be constructed” in dividing between insiders and outsiders (p. 47). At the same time, it is also important to note that there are now new forms of racism that “do not depend on racial typology” in differentiating between groups (Dei, 1996, p. 47). It is through notions such as culture, religion and nation that new doctrines of racism and racialized discourses are being produced (Dei, 1996, p. 47). As such, I also investigate the textbooks for those non-racial representations of “race” in forms that are not based on simple dualities between, for example, white and black skin pigmentation differences (Dei, 1996, p. 49). By asking what Iranian students read about the process of racialization and the racialized experiences of various people across the world, I also account for the manifestations of new forms of racisms such as cultural and moral panics in Iran.

The emphases on Islamization, the revival of traditional views and practices after the revolution and Westernization and their effects overlooks the extent to which the aim of the regime has been to industrialize, to improve the economy technologically and to introduce political reforms (Mehran, 2002). Halliday (2003) maintains that one of the challenges that Iran faces is a political one that calls for “greater openness in political life, a commitment to democracy and to upholding of Human Rights” (p. xiii). He (Halliday, 2003, p. xiii-xiv) argues that this requires a reformulation of the cultural policies that attempt to assimilate diverse groups into the national culture and to impose an Iranian identity and a specific representation of the ideal citizen on all despite existing cultural, tribal, ethnic and rural/urban differences. This requires a reconsideration of the official Islamic laws to account for

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Racialization is defined as the ways in which social relations are affected by the "signification of human biological" and socio-cultural characteristics resulting in the categorization and stigmatization of racial-ethnic groups as the other by viewing and constructing them in unequal and different ways in order to inform the construction of "social collectivities" (Dei, 1996, p. 21; Henry and Tator, 2006, p. 351-352).
the different interpretations of Islam formulated within and outside Iran by both Iranian and non-Iranian scholars and activists (Halliday, 2003, p. xiii-xiv). Mehran (2002) echoes this view by arguing that in post-revolutionary Iran, the content of school textbooks must facilitate the socialization of “the young for the national and international ideals of the twentieth-first century” based on a “culture of peace, human dignity, and equal rights in response to the country’s brutal manifestations of violence, racism, violation of human rights, and national, ethnic, and religious intolerance” (p. 233).

In terms of gender and education, Iranian scholars such as Mehran (as cited in UNICEF, *Girls’ Drop-Out from Primary Schooling in the Middle East and North Africa: challenges and alternatives*, 1997, p. 47-48) call for the introduction of several structural changes in order to promote “gender equity” in education. The Iranian government has also been active in promoting educational gender equity. In 1988, *the Plan for the General System of Education in the Islamic Republic of Iran* outlined different “roles and responsibilities for boys and girls” and at the same time, promoted policies that aimed at “empowering young girls and women in the field of education” (Mehran, 2003, p. 275). Mehran (2003) maintains that according to *the First Economic, Social, and Cultural Development Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1989-1993*, female education aims at “improving the conditions of women through education” (p. 275). The plan also states that the goal of the government is to increase their participation in national affairs “while maintaining the values of the family and the character of the Muslim women” (Mehran, 2003, p. 275).

Despite the stated goals of the government to “strengthen the social and political insight of girls and increase their self-confidence”, these goals aim at maintaining “their social and family responsibilities” (Mehran, 2003, p. 276). The aim of the curriculum is to ensure the sanctity and stability of the family by socializing girls and boys according to the different gender roles in material life (Mehran, 2003, p. 276). *The National Report on Women’s Status in the Islamic Republic of Iran*, published in 2001, also stated that revision of the curriculum and inclusion of materials that portray proper images “of women’s roles in the family, society, and education” are needed that also depict correct images of “the mutual rights of women, men, and the family at all levels” (Mehran, 2003, p. 284). Mehran argues that this requires revising the textbooks and curricula “so that they no longer stereotype girls” (as cited in UNICEF, *Girls’ Drop-Out from Primary Schooling in the Middle East and North Africa: challenges and alternatives*, 1997, p. 47-48). Such revisions also necessitate the introduction of “changes in teaching methods so that girls are encouraged to think critically” and that “their physical safety and security [is]
ensured, and facilities are built to meet their need for personal privacy” (Mehran, as cited in UNICEF, *Girls' Drop-Out from Primary Schooling in the Middle East and North Africa: challenges and alternatives*, 1997, p. 47-48). In fact, in experimental projects in various parts of rural Iran, free food programs and the provision of clothing, instructional materials and stationary, have been successful in promoting regular attendance of both male and female students in areas where no or limited social services are available through the government (Mohsenpour and Kiamanesh, 2000, p. 30-38). Such programs have also incorporated educational kits provided by UNICEF and have introduced interactive methods of teaching and “life-skill” training in problem-solving and decision-making that have had positive effects on both the students and instructors (Mohsenpour and Kiamanesh, 2000, p. 20-63).

Mehran (2003) argues that a revision of school textbooks in terms of gender representations must also be accompanied by other policies that enable women to participate in educational activities. According to the 1988 Education Plan, female participation in the decision-making processes, planning and management of educational structures are also encouraged, “especially at the top-level position” (Mehran, 2003, p. 276). In fact, the Iranian government has also introduced legislation to transfer some of the decision-making processes to the provincial ministries and to hire local teachers to teach in rural and urban schools in the provinces (Ministry of Education, Education in Islamic Republic of Iran, 2003; Sahki, 2004). Since 2004, school curriculum also includes information about Iranian cultural and historical sites in order to introduce and familiarize students with important national historical sites and tourist attractions in various parts of the country in order to “promote the traveling zeal among the young generation”.

It is in this light that I analyze the extent to which racial ideology, class biases and sexism are (re)produced as official knowledge and incorporated into the curriculum in narrating the history of Iran and relating it to other countries (Said, 1978; Seidman, 1994; Boroujerdi, 1996).

1.2.1 Pre- and Post Revolutionary Textbooks, the State and Global Education in Iran

The “evolution” of educational policies and textbook production is influenced by “the wider process of state formation”, “the emergence of the modern capitalist nation-states” (Whitty, 1992, p. 277) and colonial and imperialist relations across the globe (Anderson, 2001). As Apple (1999, p. 37) argues, curriculum is a contested ground in which various actors struggle for their voices and concerns to be heard and implemented in the form of

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public educational policies and school knowledge. At the same time, textbooks are also sites of “intellectual civil war, and the battle for cultural authority” (as cited in Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 4). The process of textbook and knowledge production is not only an internal, state and national concern. It is also influenced by global bodies and exchanges in theoretical approaches to education and identity construction. In fact, Iranian school textbooks have been revised based on the ideals of child-centred pedagogy (Notes to Parents and Teachers, Persian 1, 2004; Social Studies 3, 4 and 5, 2004). Cultural domination through textbooks takes shape through a selective approach to curriculum construction. Schools and school knowledge can be forms of “regulation and exploitation” but also forms of resistance (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 8). A standardized national curriculum is one of the ways through which revolutionary and nationalistic governments and “new elites within former colonies” control the production of knowledge for their citizens (Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 6). In Iran, the production and distribution of school textbooks is controlled by the state. In fact, Iranian society and the education system are conceptualized as “textbook cultures” (Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995, p. 338-339). The “textbook culture” (Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995, p. 338-339) is a reference to the importance of “books” and “technical knowledge” in Iran. Apple and Christian-Smith (as cited in Apple and Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 4) argue that “textbooks, for better and worse, dominate what students learn. They set the curriculum, and often the facts learned, in most subjects”. They remain an important universal source of the curriculum despite the introduction of multiple forms of instructional tools such as media resources (Ministry of Education, Islamic Republic of Iran, 2003). This is also reflected in the introduction of complementary workbooks for Persian literature and Quran subjects at the elementary level since 2001. I approach the textbooks in terms of how power relations are represented at the national and international levels and how, in constructing the ideal citizen, certain groups “are commonly forced into structural positions lacking formal authority and power” (Camino and Krulfeld, 1994, p. xv).

As mentioned, UNICEF (headed by a team of experts from the University of Toronto) has also been involved in the (re)structuring and (re)formulation of Iran’s school curriculum for grades 1 through 10, based on the assumptions of global education (Kiamanesh, 2004a, 2004b). The first stage of the project, undertaken in 2001-2002, was implemented in twenty primary schools in the “provinces of Sistan va Baluchistan, Hormozgan, Kurdistan, Western Azerbaidjan, and the city of Tehran” (Kiamanesh, 2004a, 2004b):

IIGE is involved in a Global Education and Life Skills Education Project with UNICEF Iran and the Iranian Ministry of Education … Phase One involved the implementation of a new grade 1 and 5 experimental

14 Also see Websites http://www.ier.ir and http://www.talif.sch.ir.
Global education “seeks to enrich the Iranian curriculum through the infusion of global education cross-curricular themes and the adoption of interactive and participatory learning”\textsuperscript{16}. According to Pike and Selby, global education is influenced by the progressive vision of education and curriculum that emphasizes a “discovery method” and a “participatory approach to learning and feedback” (as cited in Allemanno, 1996, p. 58 footnote 36). It attempts to account for the needs of students in their daily encounters and in the context of the changing social, economic and cultural world (Kiamanesh, 2004a, 2004b). The goal is to develop self-assertive students by teaching critical thinking skills and to socialize students who respect others and who are critical thinkers. Global education takes as its main objective an approach to students and their learning that considers them as active producers of knowledge and meaning and as action-oriented actors who are not passive agents in their everyday lives and relations (Kiamanesh, 2004a, 2004b). Educational activities, it is assumed, “should engage students’ natural interests and contribute to their self-fulfillment” (Parkay et al., 2005, p. 305).

Global education is based on the constructionist approach to education and also aims at involving communities and parents as members of school culture (Kiamanesh, 2004a, 2004b). The aim of global education is to implement democratic values by increasing the level of students’ participation in the decision making processes and by “the transformation of majority behaviour through acceptance of new ways of living and working now being developed by creative minorities” (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 16). Social issues, such as discrimination, are approached from a systemic perspective or systemic paradigm, according to which issues are interrelated, diverse and interlocking (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 29). The goal of global education is to assist students to develop “the attitudes and competencies needed to function within cultures outside their nation-state” (Banks, 2001, p. 52). I explore how and to what extent the ideal Iranian citizen is constructed in light of these basic assumptions. More specifically, I evaluate how gender, ethnicity, social class and racialized relations are incorporated in discussions about “citizenship” and civic duties based on these theories.

Despite promoting democratic values, global education can be considered as a reflection of how Western educational theories and metanarratives continue to influence local educators in various parts of the Middle East and


in Iran (Ashton, 2000; See also Sadiq’s discussion of progressive education and child-centred pedagogy, 1931). As such, Iranian school textbooks are not merely viewed as national products but are also considered as the end result of transnational efforts and knowledge production. I define transnationalism as a process consisted of multi-stranded social relations that link together groups within and between nation-states through “social fields that cross [and intersect] geographic, cultural, and political borders” and are based on multiple relationships—“economic, social, organizational, religious, and political” (Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc, 1994, p. 7). However, most studies on Iranian school textbooks do not analyze the textbooks as “technical texts” that are based on the perceived theoretical assumptions of the curriculum writers (Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995; Ferdows, 1995). These studies have explored the effects of political change without seriously exploring the sociological and theoretical explanations that are used in writing the textbooks in terms of similarities or differences between the pre- and post-revolution curriculum in content and/or organization.

Siavoshi\(^\text{17}\) (1995) briefly explored the theoretical assumptions of both pre- and post-revolutionary textbooks in terms of their portrayal of economic relations. The pre-revolutionary textbooks promoted an approach to modernization that was based on the theoretical assumption of Rostow in terms of economic development and the process of industrialization in the “Third World”. According to Rostow\(^\text{18}\), development in countries such as Iran required a transformation of traditional institutions and their replacement with modern institutions based on principles of industrialization, the utilization of science and technology and the promotion of investment and savings (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 206). During the Pahlavi regime (1925-1979), religion and politics were separated and secularization was considered and emphasized as the most important element of and requirement for economic, social and cultural growth and development (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 204). These textbooks were critical of any form of


\(^{18}\) According to Rostow, low levels of development in “Third World” countries is due to “low levels of capital in particular” (Kubow and Fossum, 2007, p. 37). Rostow’s approach to development was a justification for economic aid and investments by Western industrialized countries in “underdeveloped” countries (Kubow and Fossum, 2007, p. 37). Rostow theorized that all societies “pass through similar stages of development”, culminating into a consumer society resembling the United States during the 1950s (Kiely, 2005, p. 121). It was argued that modern schools play an important role in the implementation and normalization of modern attitudes and values and the maintenance of modern institutions as necessary for the process of modernization envisioned in an evolutionary form that is based on a “culture of poverty” explanation of “underdevelopment” (Kubow and Fossum, 2007, p. 37). The process of modernization was envisioned in light of adopting Western style social, cultural, economic and political structures and relations that promoted rationalism, professionalism and the incorporation of “cutting edge technology” (Kiely, 2005, p. 121).
religious interference in the affairs of government. In fact, the authors maintained that the prerequisite for economic
development demanded a desire and an attempt to change one’s attitudes and values (Siavoshi, 1995; Higgins and
Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995). Students were informed that religious and traditional values were the causes of
underdevelopment of the “Third World” and developing countries (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 204). In other words, the
discourse of “culture of poverty” was employed to blame the Islamic/traditional culture of Iran as the source of the
problem rather than presenting students with an analysis of structural factors as the causes of poverty and
underdevelopment. These textbooks did not offer any real critical analysis of the effects of colonialism and neo-
colonial relations and did not examine how underdevelopment was affected by the role of international political,
social and economic institutions and global capitalism (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 206). In general, Western Europe and the
United States were portrayed in a positive light and discussions about Iranian welfare programs praised the Shah for
his economic and social policies, known as the “White Revolution” (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 206-207).

The pre-revolutionary textbooks also represented the monarchy as “a natural phenomenon based on
socioeconomic laws” (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 211). In fact, they ignored the roles of the Iranian people in the
development of the country and constructed the kings as the “navigator[s] of the fate of the country” whose power
emanated from the will of God (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 211). The strengths and characteristics of national leaders were
singled out as explanations for the rise and fall of civilizations and nation-states (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 211). The ideal
citizen was represented as conformist and passive. In short, the textbooks attempted to construct the monarchy as a
legitimate political system (Mohsenpour, 1988, p. 77). The goal was “to strengthen the students’ feelings for the
royalty and nationalism as well as patriotism” (as cited in Mohsenpour, 1988, p. 79). Political stability was viewed
as central to economic and cultural development, attracting foreign investments needed for development projects
(Siavoshi, 1995, p. 211).

The revolutionary elite conceptualized the Pahlavi’s approach to modernization as hegemonic processes of
the Americanization and Westernization of Iran. According to the Islamic leadership, the main goal of the Pahlavi
education system was to impoverish “the Iranian students’ religious beliefs” by spreading “atheism and polytheistic
teachings” (Mohsenpour, 1988, p. 77). In contrast, soon after the revolution, religious textbooks were revised and
taught by “scholars from the theological schools of the city of Qum” and “young men and women who [were] duty
bound to Islamic values and qualified to present religious values” (Mohsenpour, 1988, p. 84). At the time,
Islamization was defined as “the internalization of correct religious beliefs” (as cited in Shorish, 1988, p. 60). Its
The aims were conceptualized as “develop[ing] from the children of today men and women who are worthy, committed, constructive, good-willed, kind, highly chivalrous and God-loving” (as cited in Shorish, 1988, p. 60). Adil (as cited in Matini, 1989) maintains that, “Islamization of textbooks … [was] not confined to books on religion instructions. The point of view that governed the rewriting of textbooks [was] this: everything must be Islamic” (p. 49). The authors of the textbooks incorporated more information and lessons on Islamic values, history and cultural traditions of Iranians. However, it is also important to note that the purging of the textbooks from its Western elements did not affect how Western scientists were portrayed. In fact, lessons that introduced great Western inventors were retained as part of the curriculum (Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995, p. 355).

Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari (1995) also point out that before the revolution, the majority of pictures and the content of the curriculum portrayed a middle-class lifestyle as the norm within society without any real references to the working or lower middle-class social settings. After the revolution, more representations of the traditional lifestyles of the working classes and peasantry were included (Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995). Nevertheless, it is important to note that “there was no difference in the occupations portrayed for men and women in the two sets of Persian language textbooks…. [M]ale intellectuals were the focus in 36-40 percent of the lessons” during both periods (Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995, p. 358). In addition, there was less emphasis placed on the Persian identity of Iranians that characterized the textbooks of the Shah’s period. For example, the 1986-87 edition of Persian elementary textbooks did not contain as many poems by Firdawsī, “with its focus on pre-Islamic Kings” (Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995, p. 355). Mehran (2002) also points out that in contrast to constructing the West as the “enemy-other”, the notion of “the unity of mankind and the unity of the Islamic Ummat [the Islamic Community]” also became an important element of the curriculum. These textbooks have also encouraged students to show "sympathy, empathy, compassion, and solidarity with the oppressed" of the world (Shorish, 1988, p. 63).

In post-revolutionary Iran, the education system continues to be envisioned as an important institution that can be utilized to promote equality, albeit in light of an Islamic modern revolutionary discourse. School knowledge is considered as an important tool in promoting national unity. Through school curriculum, students are introduced to the official knowledge about their national identity. School textbooks are employed as effective tools and guides for the realization of the new Islamic society through which students receive guidance to become rational Moslems who "have every confidence to do what is asked" of them (as cited in Shorish, 1988, p. 70). However, as Mehran (2003, p. 242) points to in reference to the 1999 edition of elementary school textbooks, Iranian students have been
confronted with an image of the ideal citizen that is not reflective of their various self-identities (Mehran, 2002, p. 242). Mehran (2002, p. 250) concludes that these textbooks did not provide enough information in order to prepare students for the challenges of the twentieth century and the globalization of the economy and information.

I conceptualize school textbooks as “ideological state discursive formations” that can play important and contradictory roles in shaping and informing students’ understandings about themselves and other marginalized and/or dominant groups in the world (Siavoshi, 1995). I analyze Iranian school textbooks as a unified and collective set of diverse, fragmented and hierarchical texts in relation to other “texts” for their inter-textualities. I question and subvert the basic assumptions of the discourses used and employed in developing the Iranian curriculum and their metanarratives that simultaneously inform the construction of these discourses (Seidman, 1994). As a methodological tool in deconstructing Iranian school textbooks, I read and analyze school textbooks in relation to and in the context of other forms of writing/knowledge that explore the lived experiences and conditions of various peoples and groups, both locally and globally (i.e.: historical analysis, biographical accounts, educational research and studies on development, class relation, social movements and working class and ethnic relations in Iran). I account for those binary oppositions that are employed in categorizing populations into homogenized groups, such as marginalized, working class, middle class, elite, dominant and colonized. Do Iranian school textbooks reflect how the West and the East are intertwined and connected entities? How is this interconnectedness reflected in school textbooks and in the construction of the ideal citizen? How is national identity represented in the context of regional and global relations of domination within the East and Iran and between the East, Iran, the West and the United States? Do contradictory constructions of the West and Iran continue to inform the representations of the ideal citizen in the 2004 edition of elementary and guidance school textbooks? How are these constructions of the West, Islam, *Ummat-i Islamî* (the Islamic Community) and Iran reconciled in the context of a global education approach to textbook production? Are students encouraged to critically evaluate the contradictory discourses that inform the relationships between and within groups in Iran and across the world? The aim is to open up spaces for the critical inclusion of those forms of knowledge and ways of understanding social relations and structures that are manipulated and/or excluded in the textbooks.
1.3 Problem Statement

This research is informed by the argument that the globalization of the economy and information and the movement of people across national boundaries requires a new approach to knowledge production and to conceptualizing “citizenship” in order to construct national identities and ideal citizens that reflect both particularistic and universalistic concerns (Beiner, 1997; Lee, 2002, p. 41; Kymlicka, 1995). As Lynch (1992) maintains, current approaches emphasize “human rights” and “diversity” as important themes in “civic education” curriculum. In deconstructing school textbooks, I draw upon and contextualize my research in light of how assimilationist, exclusionary and segregation policies of various nation-states in terms of their educational goals, curriculum content, textbook knowledge and their effects on their respective ethnically diverse populations have led to various critiques of these policies in both Western and non-Western countries (Nasser, 2005; Kalatzis and Cope, 1999, p. 247; Herman, 1996, p. 173-194; Gaskell & McLaren Eds., 1991; Kelly, 1998; Moodley, 1999). The call for inclusion of diversity and histories of marginalized groups as part of school knowledge in multinational-ethnic-religious societies is closely related to the effects of globalization and is an important dimension of critical theoretical approaches to identity politics in the context of colonial and post-colonial relations (Banks, 2004 and Dei, 1996; Kelly 1998; Mehran, 2002, 1999, 1997). This call is also echoed by various actors in Iran such as non-government organizations, government officials, educators and activists. They point out that minority identities have been denied reflections in the political and social structures of Iranian state institutions such as the education system, curriculum and textbooks (Higgins, 1986; Mojab and Hassanpour 1995; Mehran 2002, 1999, 1997; 1996; Atabaki, 2000). More specific, women’s groups and scholars within and outside Iran have urged the Islamic government of Iran to promote “gender equity” in education (Mehran, 1997). As Esfandiari (2004, p. 142-154) maintains, women deputies in the Iranian Majlis (the parliament) urged the government to reform laws and policies that have negatively affected Iranian women and that have been influential in promoting patriarchal and misogynist attitudes towards women in society. As Atabaki (2000) also maintains in reference to Azeri ethnic groups, “the call for enjoying more cultural rights, right of having a bilingual national colloquium in Azerbaijani as well in Persian, increasingly has become more marked in Iranian Azerbaijan” (p. 191), especially after the formation of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan following the collapse of the Soviet Union. Atabaki (2000, p. 192) argues that in twenty-first century Iran, issues of ethnicity and territorial sovereignty is dependent on the extent of political, social and economic reforms that account for both the individual and collective rights of Iranians, especially ethnic
minority groups. It is then necessary to assess the extent to which textbooks have been revised to represent women’s and other minorities’ issues, their concerns and their contributions to the nation-building process.\textsuperscript{19}

By focusing on Iranian school textbooks, I examine how local and global political, religious, economic and social processes and dynamics play out in representations of the ideal citizen and the history of a revolutionary state in the context of both national and global relations of power. In this light, I interrogate several important relations in order to highlight the assimilationist, emancipatory or oppressive aspects of the education system. For example, I explore how official school knowledge is reproduced by analyzing the ways in which information about the self and the other is employed to distinguish and differentiate between groups, countries, economic systems and conceptions of progress and morality.

In analyzing how knowledge as a source of both national and international power is drawn upon, I account for the emphasis on promoting political, cultural, social and economic justice in revising school textbooks. I pay specific attention to both hegemonic approaches to schooling and identity construction that do not reflect upon students’ life-chances and self-perceptions as members of various groups. I account for how their knowledge and understandings of social and political events is incorporated as the official knowledge or ignored and further marginalized and, as a result, deny students the voice required to represent themselves in order to be heard (Nieto, 2004).

By reference to Iranian school textbooks for elementary and guidance levels, I explore the extent to which the Iranian Islamic revolutionary state provides a standardized knowledge about anti-imperialist ideology and colonial encroachments based on the incorporation of critical theories of global education and child-centred pedagogy. I examine which factors, concepts, discourses and statements are discursively drawn upon by the authors of the textbooks in order to construct emancipatory or ideological images of the ideal Iranian citizen and other Western and Eastern groups. For example, I analyze how the revolutionary leadership constructs itself in relation to the ideal citizen. I interrogate whose visions and understandings of the East and the West informs school knowledge. I examine whether or not the authors present knowledge that is critical of issues that affect most of the poor across

\textsuperscript{19} It is also important to account for the contradictory policies of the state in respect to minority issues and in reaction to their ‘demands’ for economic, political, religious and human rights (Sanasarian, 2000, p. 92). For example, since the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79 a number of villages and ethnic-tribal groups have ‘benefited’ from the policies of the state, such as the construction of roads, access to veterinary and agricultural services and educational facilities staffed by the tribal people, through the formation of the Organization for Nomad’s Affairs that is administered by tribal men within the ideological limitation of the construction of tribal people as the oppressed (mustāţafīn) (Beck, 2004, p. 249-251).
the world by analyzing how geographical categories such as Africa, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, North and South America; political territories such as Iran, the United States and Canada; and concepts such as culture, “race”, language, religion, politics and the economy are presented to students. In this sense, I interrogate the positionality of the ideal Iranian citizen as it relates to both the East and the West in terms of similarities and differences between these categories and the extent to which these predetermined locations are themselves reflections of the hegemonic and ideological aspects of the curriculum as statements of the state. By considering Iranian school textbooks as examples of “the Great Books of the … tradition”, I explore the ways in which relationships between Iran and the rest of the world are recreated for students and whether or not they are constructed “as signs of eternal values” or “lack the very contradictions that inform their production” due to the ideological and hegemonic rearrangements of the various discourses and theories that inform their inclusion in the textbooks (Sleeter and Grant, 1991, p. 78). In deconstructing these textbooks, I acknowledge that to write about other cultures and other people in both the East and the West requires “not only [a] shift in … paradigms but also the way [authors] think, write and speak” about a topic (hooks, 1994, p. 11).

1.4 Theoretical Lens

As Spivak maintains, “what we do toward the texts of the oppressed [and oppressors] is very much dependent upon where we are” (as cited in Razack, 2001, p. 53). An educational journey “is always undertaken within particular relations of power, and the traveler’s access to these relations and the discourses that surround them transforms his or her status [as experts] both on the road and at a given destination” (Behdad, 1993, p. 45). It is then necessary to “address the contingent and partial locations in which [theories of education] are produced, while remaining attentive to the significance of political alliances in the general struggle against neo-colonial regimes of truth” that are produced both within the East and the West (Behdad, 1993, p. 45). Knowledge production is a contested ground where various bodies compete for their views and ideologies to be reflected as useful information and/or important aspects of understanding the world.

As Rejali (1994) points out, “in the course of the twentieth century [and as the result of the globalization of information and movement of people], the subject has become to be situated at a major locus of power, and so, quite appropriately, it is a locus of political [and pedagogical] struggles more so than ever before” (p. 139). The Iranian modern subject was the “product” of Western regimentation that required “a desire for conformity” in politics,
habits and conceptions of the self and the other (Al-e Ahmad, as cited in Rejali, 1994, p. 139, 140). Regimentation
involved the implementation of Western disciplining complexes, including theoretical approaches to education and
politics, which provided the “Third World” countries, such as Iran, with standards and instructions, developed by
Western advisers, of how to evaluate their national self-conceptions (Rejali, 1994, p. 141). Although non-Western
intellectuals have influenced Western theoretical perspectives, as Roman (1993) argues, many intellectuals in the
West have “largely marginalized, if not colonized and appropriated, the [postcolonial scholarship regarding identity
formation] in the circulation of scholarly work” (p. 75). This is despite the attempts of those educators who are
inclusive of Eastern approaches to philosophical understandings of the relationships between mind/body and
self/other.

Moreover, although postcolonial theorists have criticized “Western national narrations of imperialism”,
such analyses have not been incorporated in order to revise “the terms of debate and bases” in the West for “political
struggles and coalition around … differential forms of oppressions” in various parts of the world (Roman, 1993, p. 75).
The inclusion of subalterns’ critiques of the Western world requires a critical analysis of the intersections of
class, “race”, gender and ethnicity and the ways in which such critiques themselves are from positions of privilege
and do not necessarily reflect the voices they claim to represent. It is significant to make sure that discursive
understandings of representations based on the conceptions of the postcolonial subjects do not overshadow and blur
the material realities of women, raced groups and colonial subjects (Roman, 1993). The voices of postcolonial
subjects do not always have to be anti-establishment as they are influenced and operate within larger relations of
power that subordinate some groups and benefit others. As Mohanty points out, the invocation of binary oppositions
between “veiled woman”, “the powerful mother” and the “obedient wife [and daughter]” reinforces both “Western
[and non-Western] cultural imperialism[s] within the scholarship” (Roman, 1993). Such representations in light of
anti-colonial sentiments and from the perspectives of the dominant cultures in Islamic societies across the world also
perpetuate “internal forms of colonialism” that other both Western and non-Western minority bodies and
institutionalize patriarchal and ethnocentric values and norms as tools of domination.

In addition, as Fanon succinctly points out, the nationalistic aspects (and I also add, the religious ferments
of political actors in the Middle East) have not transformed into what he refers to as “social consciousness” (as cited
in Said, 1993, p. 307). In order to account for this persistent nationalistic conceptions of the self and the other as part
of anti-colonial movements, there is a need to read and interpret the writings of scholars such as Al-e Ahmad who
were critical of Western hegemony. This self-reflection needs to take shape in light of and “along with other African, Indian, and Caribbean works [and writings], enlarging, widening, refining the scope of a narrative form at the centre of which had heretofore always been an exclusively European observer or centre of consciousness” (Said, 1993, p. 311). It is important to account for how they are now being reclaimed by the oppressive elements within non-Western countries in light of anti-imperialist discourses. At the same time, it is significant to critically evaluate how the views of White intellectuals, through their practices of travel and observations due to their movements across the Western world and as “guests” and “experts” in Eastern countries, continue to affect the theoretical conceptualizations of non-Western post-colonial subjects and their theoretical reformulations and pedagogical practices, which put into doubt the assertion that theory “is no longer naturally ‘at home’ in the West” (Behdad, 1993, p. 42). The Western postcolonial’s “trace” needs to be highlighted and incorporated as an important element of analyses of postcolonial subjectivity.

As such, there is a need to question simple binary approaches to issues of identity politics and its class, gendered and racial dimensions (Omit and Winant, 1993, p. 7). In constructing postcolonial subjectivities and identities, dualisms such as “Europe and the rest” or “Islam and the other” are insufficient categories that do not account for how “migrant communities” challenge the status quo in various metropolitan centres in both the West and the East and in the intersections of these two entities both physically and virtually across the world (Omit and Winant, 1993, p. 7). It is possible to break the dualisms of Western-thought/Islamic-tradition, male/female and rational/emotional by “adding a third category” of subject position and point of departure in the context of what is referred to as ‘instinctual immediacy’ (Razack, 2001, p. 53). This entails questioning not only one’s point of departure but also both the colonial and postcolonial points of departures so that the projects of knowing oneself do “not become end points in themselves” (Razack, 2001, p. 53). This requires a theory of listening that problematizes and clarifies what those involved in pedagogical research hear and how they speak. In this sense, the choices that are made in terms of whose voices to include and whose voices to exclude and when to use such visions as part of the project of postcolonial approaches to identity politics becomes a political journey of redefining education that is also concerned with and aware of colonialization from within in terms of what colonization and post-colonization mean and how they differentially constitute educational and pedagogical theories (Razack, 2001, p. 54). The complexities of postcolonial spaces demand eclectic approaches to the theoretical and methodological understandings of power relations.
In this research, my approach to anti-racism, poststructuralism, transnationalism, Orientalism and “Orientalism in reverse” is informed by this lens: to unlearn privileges that are embedded in notions of Whiteness, progress and both inclusion and exclusion as part of the definition of self. It is at the multiple intersections of the self and the other within the limits of conceptual frameworks such as modern/tradition, mind/body, immigrant/citizen, developed/underdeveloped, “Third World/First World” and colonized/colonizer that I deconstruct Iranian school textbooks by conceptualizing my theories in light of an approach to discourse analysis that accounts for the material manifestations of the pedagogical consequences of thinking about diversity, “citizenship” and identity politics within the dialectical relationships between local/global, particular/cosmopolitan and self/other.

1.4.1 Modernity, “Shifting Collectivities” and the Construction of Official Knowledge

Antiracist, transnational and poststructuralist perspectives critique the modern discourse of fixed identity. They question the basic assumption that the modern subject/citizen can be known and is universal. Such a modern conceptualization of identity invokes binary polarizations and constructions of otherness that identify certain groups as non-citizens and as members of either the enemy-other or friendly-insider.

The proliferation of antiracism discourse “is due to the activism against racism [that was originally initiated] by people of colour” (Wilmot, 2005, p. 13). Although most antiracist research has focused on educational issues in Western societies (May et al., 1999; Dei, 1996; Wilmot, 2005; Dei, 2005; Kailin, 2002; McCarthy, 1990), in this research, I conceptualize antiracism as a pedagogical tool and as a theoretical perspective that goes beyond a “limited” notion of the West in analyzing socio-economic relations and discursive practices by including the East as an important element of the critical analysis of educational issues from a transnational perspective. The Western-centric bias/focus of antiracist research and its main concentration point on the experiences of non-White groups within the context of Western educational, colonial and imperialist settings is useful especially since an antiracist critique of curriculum writing and the organization of Western schooling can be drawn upon as a platform to deconstruct the Iranian curriculum. In this light, antiracism education is conceptualized as a discursive tool in questioning the processes of economic and cultural (re)productions, the process of racialization, hegemonic constructions of the official knowledge and the reproduction of power inequalities and their representations.

The basic tenet of antiracism education is its emphasis on the importance of practice and experience in formulating a new philosophy of education. As a theoretical, methodological and praxis oriented approach, it aims at
decentring and dislocating the dominant forms of power by politicizing the “particular” over the “general” without losing account of the effects of the globalization of economic, social and cultural relations and structures on various groups and identities (Dei, 1996). Dei (2005) maintains that antiracism is based on an approach to “research on racial domination and social oppression” that aims at “providing local subjects with an opportunity to speak about their experiences within the broader contexts of structural and institutional forces of society” (p. 11). Antiracism is not only concerned with transforming individuals’ attitudes and prejudices but also with problematizing and exposing institutional forms of racisms and transforming the hegemonic systems of power. Educational policies and curriculum are analyzed not just for their biases but also for how they reproduce racisms and various forms of discrimination (Giroux, as cited in Rezai-Rashti, 1994, p. 76). The aim of anti-racist educators is to deconstruct and locate as well as understand “the historical specification that engender the production of races, [gendered relations, social class identities and structures and ethnocentric views] in socially constructed spaces” by problematizing the structure of the textbooks and the ways in which their contents are presented (Dei et al., 2005, p. 16).

That is, antiracism education is concerned with issues of representation. Its aim is to provide a “multiplicity of perspectives entrenched as part of the academic discourse, knowledge and texts” (Dei, 1996, p. 78). This requires an approach to curriculum that is inclusive of students varied experiences (Kailin, 2005, p. 17). In promoting an inclusive education, antiracism education is critical of “differential experiences of [students belonging to the dominant racial group and those categorized as] students of colour” and the effects of “labour-market processes as determinant of [their] life experiences” and life-chances (Kailin, 2005, p. 52). However, as Kailin (2005, p. xix) points out, antiracism is not merely concerned with how societies reproduce racial dominance through the control of social structures and “maintaining group privilege”. It is also critical of the ways in which subordinated voices, histories and knowledge in both local and global contexts are marginalized in school curriculum and the ways in which their concerns and histories are not provided spaces in order to affect structural changes and transformation (Dei, 1996, p. 79). As such, “teaching and learning liberation” takes form in the context of critical investigations of the gendered, classed and racialized structures and relations that can serve as a guide for future actions in order to promote social justice for all (Briskin, 1990, p. 443).

Antiracism attempts to move away from a narrow conceptualization of socio-cultural, economic and political issues and events in the form of either/or approaches and move towards a both/and analysis of events and relations. It rejects “an essentialized reality or a universal, simplified definition of social phenomena” (Dei, 1996, p.
23). Antiracism education conceptualizes “race” and difference as issues of power inequalities and not simply as ethnic or cultural issues. As a discourse, it accounts for how “power is used to differentiate, discriminate and establish material advantage and disadvantage among and between peoples and groups” (Dei, 1996, p. 64).

I also draw upon transnationalism as a theoretical perspective in investigating socio-political relations and institutions and ethnic, racialized, class and gender diversities and inequalities from local/global perspectives. Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc (1994) define transnationalism as

the process by which [non-Western nationalities in their respective countries and] immigrants [in various parts of the world] forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin, [colonial and imperialist states] and settlement. We call these processes ‘transnationalism’ to emphasize that many [non-Western nationals and] immigrants today build social fields that cross [and intersect] geographic, cultural, and political borders. [Citizens of various nation-states and] [i]mmigrants who develop and maintain multiple relationships—familial, economic, social, organizational, religious, and political—[are now interacting with one another in ways] that span borders we call ‘transmigrants’. (p. 7)

Although Iran is not an “immigrant” receiving country, ethnic and religious diversities within Iran are also replicated in various countries in the region, especially in neighbouring countries such as Pakistan (i.e.: Baluch), Iraq (i.e.: Arab and Kurd), Turkey (i.e.: Armenian, Kurd) and Azerbaijan (i.e.: Azeri). In fact, ethnic diversity and inequality in Iran and in the region point to a need for theoretical and methodological approaches that are critical of nation-centric approaches to understanding and explaining various forms of inequalities (Rahimieh, 2001).

Transnationalism is a discourse that accounts for the dialectical relationships between the globalization of capital, the reproduction of hegemonic relations and formations of resistance movements, oppositional organizations and discursive fields that cross ethno-national boundaries and influence/(re)shape social relations in both the East and the West (Hyndman and Walton-Roberts, 1998; Basch, Glick Schiller and Szanton Blanc, 1994; Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton, 1992). This perspective focuses on the effects of absent relations on the formation of the self, development policies and economic and political relations and structures at both local and global levels. Transnationalism is concerned with the creation of "hybrid" cultures and the extent to which local cultures incorporate and transform aspects of other cultures as their own. This theoretical perspective accounts for the outcome and consequences of conditions and social relations that impelled “non-Western” nation-states to modernize/develop through “emulation” and “mimicking” of the West, both during and after the colonial era. As such, I view and analyze identity politics--that are celebrated, rejected, altered and rejuvenated in both Iran and abroad--in the context of the processes and discourses of domination, submission or resistance to capitalism,
colonialism, Islamization and post-colonial relations and through an exploration of their material manifestations in both the East and the West.

By drawing on poststructuralism, I analyze the “operations of difference and the way in which meanings are made to work” (Wiener, 1994, p. 101; See also Hall, 1996a, p. 611). Poststructuralism challenges meaning and power in modernity (Wiener, 1994, p. 101; See Hollinger, 1994, p. 109; Seidman, 1994). It considers knowledge production as a process that “is linked to the system of power which produces and sustains it” (Weiner, 1994, p. 99). As such, “knowledge itself is a site of struggle and not a given quantity” (Dei, 1996, p. 23, footnotes).

I utilize poststructuralism as an approach to deconstructing the ideal citizen by critically problematizing how historical injustices that affect people differently based on factors such as “race”, ethnicity or national origin are constructed for Iranian students and for what purposes (Bowden, 2003, p. 356). By analyzing how differences are employed as part of the information and knowledge students receive about other groups and other nation-states and by exploring how the process of exclusion informs the representations of national identity and diversity locally and globally, I explore how the history of the nation-building process is sanitized in the textbooks. As Hall (1996a) points out, in portraying oppression, domination and/or resistance, modern nationalist constructions of minority groups are often presented without the accompanying “standpoints”20 in official documents such as school textbooks. These standpoints, even when present, are portrayed through the prevalent dominant discourses that are, nevertheless, constituted by it and constitute it. From a poststructuralist perspective, diversity and difference per se are not considered the problem. Rather, it is the significance or the social meanings that are attached to differences, and more importantly, the way that differences are employed in discussing the unequal treatments of groups around the world, that can be utilized in interrogating the hegemonic and problematic representations and images of the other in terms of the signification of, for example, gender relations and colour of skin in differentiating between human groups. I highlight the significance of why certain groups are represented as examples of otherness, exploiters or exploited in light of those discourses that inform who and what the ideal citizen is. For example, how are discussions of poverty in light of emancipatory languages of constructivists theories of learning and/or Islamic

20 From a feminist perspective, Manicom (1992, p. 367) argues that “the standpoint of a teacher is political: to develop analyses that inform/reform teachers’ and students’ attitudes and ways of acting in and on the world”. One’s standpoint reflects one’s political identity and experiences that are determined by what Anthony Giddens calls strucutation (Ritzer, 2000, p. 522-526). This implies that as agents of social change, we are both the authors/producers of social structures through our actions and we are at the same time products of these structures and are influenced by them. It is reflective of the person’s experiences within institutions, society and with other people of various or similar background. It is the outcome of ideological and hegemonic relations through which a set of ideas that form the discourses inform one’s worldview.
revolutionary slogans represented to students and for what ends? Are they hegemonic tools of manufacturing consent and/or forms of cultural control and surveillance?

The aim of poststructuralist educators is also to create many centres of power by deconstructing and by empowering marginal groups to become part of the centre in searching for a common definition of humanity based on principles of equality, responsibility and community (Dei, 1996, p. 60-70). In this light, an inclusive curriculum is also based on a decentred conception of subject. Such a curriculum accounts for various forms of “shifting collectivities”. According to Laclau (as cited in Hall, 1996a), “A dislocated structure is one whose centre is displaced and not replaced by another, but by ‘a polarity of power centres’” (p. 599). Society is conceptualized as a collection of local and global fragmented, diverse and hierarchical sets of “shifting collectivities” and multifaceted identities. “Shifting collectivities” refers to the situational aspect of identity construction, which depends on the interrelationships between factors such as class, “race”, gender and sexuality in high modernity (See Camino & Krulfeld Eds. 1994).

I explore the extent to which these “shifting collectivities” such as Iran, Iranian, Arab and the West have been constructed in school textbooks since the Revolution of 1978-79. In deconstructing these “shifting collectivities”, I investigate the emic and etic representations and constructions of the ideal Iranian citizen by analyzing how they relate to diversity in terms of ethnic, women and working class histories. I also examine how school authors represent the views and the material conditions of minority groups to students (Banks, 2000; Dei, 1996; McLaren, 1996).

1.4.2 Orientalism, the Self and the Text

One of the consequences of colonialism, capitalist investments and imperialism has been the Europeanization and Westernization of the world as Western hierarchical binary oppositions and their either/or metanarratives have been incorporated, revised, reworked and altered as part of how non-Westerners view other non-Westerners and Westerners (Hollinger, 1994, p. 109. See also Said, 1978; Mehmet, 1995). In fact, colonial interventions and the effects of cultural imperialism, alongside liberation movements, have altered the ways in which history is remembered and told in Middle Eastern societies and in their school textbooks (Anderson, 2001, p. 6; Mehran, 2002; Nasser, 2005; Keddie, 2003; Vaziri, 1993; Cleveland, 1994). As a result, the historical and global contexts through
which modern, traditional, colonial, *emic*, *etic* and Western discourses of representation have been adopted and are represented in school textbooks need to be investigated.

The important question that arises in analyzing school textbooks is the extent to which the images of the West and the East and Western and Eastern societies produced and manufactured in the textbooks are themselves Western constructions since in (re)constructing the West and the East and in achieving authority over them, the Eastern Oriental starts from a conception of the world and itself that has already been affected by years of colonialization and imperial interventions. For example, Du Bois (2005, p. 91-6) argues that despite the need and the desire of black Americans to develop a “truer” sense of “self-respect, self-realization and self-consciousness”, it is paramount that black educators be critical and aware of how knowledge about themselves is a mediated and “selective knowledge” that is expressed in the language of domination, control and power (hooks, 1996). I investigate how the West and the East are constructed in light of colonial and post-colonial relations and Orientalism. In light of Edward Said’s (1979) argument that anyone writing about the Orient is an Orientalist, this thesis questions whether or not the Iranian school curriculum, in light of “citizenship education”, constructs an image of the ideal citizen that reflects Orientalist constructions which, in fact, “others” Iranians and non-Iranians (internally and externally) in relation to other forms of difference. In other words, do school textbooks function as tools of domination by representing a view of the world based on contradictory discourses that are simultaneously employed to judge and categorize people and groups and thus place them under the gaze of authority?

Hence, in discussing the formation and construction of “Iran” as a “nation” and the ideal Iranian citizen, it is important to document how these notions are constructed by references to visible and invisible discourses that inform their constructions historically and at the present time. Representations of the Iranian national identity and the ideal citizen in Iranian school textbooks are constructions that are produced, manufactured and developed in the context of “selective traditions” that are nevertheless reflective of the intense period of contact between Iran and the West since the 1850s (Farhi, 2005; Vaziri, 1993; Vhadat, 2002, p. 1-23). Although representations of the ideal citizen in school textbooks may be interpreted and understood differently by students, they are expressed through ideologically comforting, all encompassing and, at times, homogenized representations that are nevertheless presented as knowledge and as the truth about the world in a society that highly prizes book reading and book knowledge, at least among “the book reading public [that is comprised of] the young, educated, and middle class, mostly from central Iranian cities” (Matin-Asgari, 2004, p. 73). My aim is therefore to explore school textbooks “for
what they are -- partisan discursive constructs offering particular meanings and modes of understanding” which result in seeing “how it is that texts suggest their readings, the possibility of reader positions in reading texts, and the suggestions of text for [racialized, ethnicized] and gendered subjectivity and relations” (Kelly, 1995, p. 101).

1.5 Aims and Research Questions

The aim of this research is to analyze the extent to which discussions and representations that are employed in constructing an image and a worldview of the ideal citizen at the same time marginalize the histories, cultures and worldviews of other groups. I investigate the extent to which “imagined” national solidarity as well as “invented” images of the “other” are reflected in discussions and representations of the ideal citizen (Vaziri, 1993). Do they construct the ideal citizen as an active member of national and global civil societies, advocating change through participation in the political-economic processes of the Islamic world? I analyze how constructs such as “Iran” and “Iranians” are related to other Western and non-Western groups. I explore those perspectives and selective traditions through which the Oriental other (i.e.: Iranian) understands and approaches the world by problematizing whose perspectives influence the narrations of nationalistic, revolutionary, Islamic, anti-colonial and democratic movements in Iran, in the Middle East and across the world (Banani, 1961; Vaziri, 1993; Said, 1978; Foran Ed., 1994). In other words, the aim is to analyze how such representations and images of the self and the other are juxtaposed against and in relation to one another. By deconstructing how “Iran” as an Islamised nation-state and “Iranian” as a citizen of Iran with citizenship rights and obligations are represented, I also analyze how other definitions of subject and subjectivity are reflected in the definition of the ideal citizen. I explore whose perception of diversity ‘is of most worth’ in these official documents and from which perspective such views are reflected in representations of the ideal citizen. As mentioned, categories of difference such as “race”, gender and ethnicity do not simply signify differences in terms of colour of skin, sex or culture. Through the invocation of these categories as analytical constructs, the aim is to “understand power differentials in society and the process of racialized, [gendered and ethnicized] subjectivity” that are expressed through discursive means (Dei, 1996, p. 49). As such, I analyze whether Iranian school textbooks are ‘Orientalist’ or ‘Occidentalist’ texts.

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21 “Race” is defined as “a socially constructed category used to classify humankind according to common ancestry and reliant on differentiation by such physical characteristics as color of skin, hair texture, stature, and racial characteristics” (Henry et al., 1998, p. 409).
My aim is to determine the extent to which those categories and ideas that are portrayed and discussed in the textbooks reflect the “dynamics of social construction that produce these categories and hold the boundaries around them in place” both locally and globally (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 14). Do the ways in which such views are presented also reflect the lived experiences of peoples in Iran and across the world historically and at present? The aim is not to determine the “true” and essential “nature” of the ideal Iranian citizen. Rather, I want to consider how the official conceptualization of the ideal citizen fits into the political ideology of the ruling elite and the extent to which, for example, such a view is a hegemonic or emancipatory tool in reproducing the status quo or in subverting it. This research analyzes the extent to which the construction of national identity is (or is not) a unified concept and/or whether it is (or is not) a “contested, unstable and discursively constructed” idea that finds different meanings in different contexts within various school textbook topics/subjects, depending on the types of other discourses used in any specific lesson (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 41).

To summarize, in this research I look at four main themes that have not been studied as interrelated topics, structures and relations in the context of textbook analysis in Iran: identity politics; diversity; citizenship; and development. I critically evaluate how divisions of ‘us and them’ are depicted in constructing the ideal citizen. More specifically, what are the discourses that are employed to discuss and represent the ideal citizen in relation to otherness? I explore whether or not the “other” is represented from the perspectives of the “other”, for example, by incorporating their histories in school textbooks. I question and problematize how the textbooks discuss the historical role of “Iranians” in the process of “othering” individuals and groups, that may view “Iranians” as either symbols of the “imperialist them” or as the “uncivilized” “other”, internally and internationally. To what extent are these processes of “othering” partly the consequences of the incorporation of contradictory discourses in constructing the Iranian national identity within the constraints of Islamic- and Persian-centrism? I analyze whose views and actions are considered as emancipatory or dehumanizing and how other non-Iranian and non-Western populations are conceptualized. As such, I explore the extent to which current Iranian school textbooks limit critical thinking and social and civic emancipation (Dei et al., 2005, p. 32-34).

More specifically, my aim is to explore whether or not, and, if so, the extent to which Iranian school textbooks dehumanize other groups in constructing the ideal citizen along the following four major axes:

1) How are the ideal citizen and national identity constructed in relation to Western and Orientalist or Islamic/Iranian constructions and perceptions of the self, the other, “race”, gender, ethnicity and class? The aim is to examine the processes of social exclusion/inclusion and whose knowledge/perspectives are used to construct Iranian national identity and the ideal citizen.
2) How are categories of insiders and outsiders incorporated in presenting the narrative of nation in relation to Africans, Europeans, Asians, North and South Americans and indigenous populations across the globe? Which category (i.e.: male/female, West/East, enemy/friend, insider/outsider) is used and in what sense in the construction of “citizenship”, the ideal citizen and national identity? The aim is to explore which categories of difference are emphasised and are reflected in the textbooks in presenting information about insiders and outsiders and which categories are de-emphasised and denied reflection in depicting diversity.

3) To what extent are the ideal citizen, national identity and rights and obligations constructed in light of the need for global peace, harmony and interdependence and respect for human rights and individual and group freedoms? What are the responsibilities of the ideal citizen to Iranians, non-Iranians and to the state? Do the discourses about the ideal citizen construct an image of Iranian society that limits the possibilities of dialogue as a means of inclusion of different and diverse histories and ways of being and knowing (Pinar, 1995, p. 27)? By addressing this question, the aim is to analyze the extent to which reforms based on perspectives such as critical pedagogy, global education and child-centred education have been incorporated in discussing and presenting racialized groups, women, the poor and the oppressed in both Iran and the world. I explore whether or not the obligations of the state to its citizens and the rights and obligations of citizens to the state and to the other are conceptualized in the context of Iran as a nation-state. Do Iranian school textbooks provide examples of global identity or membership in the global political (or symbolic/religious) community?

4) What are the roles of Iranian citizens in developing Iran? The aim here is to explore how ethnic, racialized, gender and class relations and religious groups are portrayed in discussions about development and progress in light of the process of inclusion and/or exclusion in representing the ideal citizen. I explore whose class positions, economic interests and conceptions of development are presented to students in order to assess how local and global factors and ideas are reflected in the revisions of the textbooks after the Revolution of 1978-79.

To date, these questions have not been fully explored in a systemic way and within the context of the globalization of culture, information and capital and their effects on the Iranian school system and textbook production, particularly since the introduction of a global education program in Iran.

In the next chapter, the theoretical framework employed in this dissertation is discussed in more detail. In Chapter Three, the methods of investigation utilized in this research are discussed. I explain how deconstruction and quantitative research methods are drawn upon in analyzing school textbooks. In Chapter Four, I analyze the data by critically problematizing those discourses and binary oppositions that inform the construction of the ideal citizen. I explore how Iran is (is not) constructed and who is (is not) considered Iranian in light of information about rights and obligations. In Chapter Five, I evaluate the 2004 textbooks from a poststructuralist perspective and offer recommendations for future global education projects in Iran.
2. Introduction

In this chapter, I explore several interrelated themes that emerged from the discussions of official knowledge about otherness in Chapter One: diversity, citizenship, development and identity politics. I discuss the theoretical perspectives and assumptions that have shaped this research in analyzing the content of textbooks for those particular worldviews about citizenship, the ideal citizen, insiders and outsiders that are presented as “innocent” and factual narrations about the nation, the self and the other (Giroux, 1999, p. 31). I investigate how knowledge about the nation and the ideal citizen is produced and presented in the textbooks from multi-theoretical perspectives. First, I explain my approaches to antiracism, transnationalism, poststructuralism, Orientalism and “Orientalism in reverse”. I also contextualize my theoretical approaches in light of a short discussion of global education and a historical synopsis of the major socio-economic changes in Iran, with an emphasis on curriculum construction as it relates to the process of nation-building in Iran.

2.1 Antiracism, Transnationalism, Poststructuralism and Orientalism: Identity Construction

Antiracism education questions the centrality and “validity” of Euro-centric knowledge by problematizing the process of articulation of social differences from the perspectives of the elite groups within the existing power structures. Rather than producing universal and essentialist conceptions of diversity, antiracism education aims at generating conflicting and diverse “sites [for the reconceptualization] of human social differences” (Dei, 1996, p. 60). Antiracist discourse also requires researchers “to demonstrate a personal/political struggle and radical engagement with issues of race, racism and antiracism … It [also] suggests a more explicitly political engagement on the part of the reader…” (Dei, 1996, p. 12). It accounts for power differentials among social actors who are engaged in “pedagogical and political action” (Dei, 1996, p. 12). It questions why certain knowledge is not considered as acceptable and legitimate by incorporating multiple ways of knowing as methodological tools (Dei, 1996, p. 29-30). It asks how knowledge is employed as a hegemonic tool to “negate and devalue the experiences of” marginalized groups (Dei, 1996, p. 29). As such, “knowledge is [conceptualized as] negotiable or more open space than dominant Western Euro-Canadian/American traditions have held” (Dei, 1996, p. 12). In this light, antiracism
requires researchers to politicize knowledge production and identity construction and consider these processes as “the basis for political struggle” (Dei, 1996, p. 59).

Antiracism promotes incorporating the knowledge base of those in the community who know about the cultures and values of the student population (Dei, 1996, p. 30). Daniel (2005, p. 57) refers to this knowledge as ‘indigenous knowledge’ “associated with long-term occupancy of a place. It refers to the traditional norms and social values, as well as mental constructs which guide, organize and regulate people’s way of living and making sense of their world”. According to antiracism, school knowledge also needs to be inclusive of oppositional knowledge. The purpose is a “commitment to ‘radical openness,’ the will to explore different perspectives and change one’s mind as new information is presented” (hooks, 2003, p. 48). The aim is not to promote division and separateness but to forge “a learning community that values wholeness over division, disassociation, [and] splitting” in such a way that it “does not annihilate difference” (Palmer, as cited in hooks, 2003, p. 49). It views “other” cultures and raced, classed and gendered groups as having histories and as such, it is a pedagogy that allows students to reinvent themselves (Dei, 1996).

As Bowers (2005, p. 124-125) also points out, the inclusion of traditional forms of knowledge about the environment and ecological crises is an essential aspect of revising school curriculum. Such an addition of traditional knowledge also needs to include these “themes and issues”, such as:

the tension between the sustainable practices within the commons and the spread of industrial and [post-industrial] culture[s]—with [their] dual emphasis on consumerism and the... automation of production; the difference between modern and indigenous (or low-impact) technologies; the gains and losses connected with scientifically based technologies, including the colonizing nature of Western science; the ideology that presents change as a progressive force and traditions as a source of backwardness—and the destructive impact of this view of tradition on revitalizing the commons and local democracy; and the aspects of everyday life that can be enhanced by learning to think ecologically as opposed to thinking via industrial and [post-industrial] model[s]. (Bowers, 2005, p. 124-125)

As a result of the inclusion of local, traditional and minority histories and knowledge of various communities, students can then “situate themselves and their cultures, histories and experiences in the learning process” (Dei, 1996, p. 83), which also avoids promoting “naturalized discourses of ‘here’ and ‘there’, ‘us’ and ‘them’, ‘our own’ and ‘other societies’ that fail to provide a deeper understanding of human global interaction” (Gupta and Fergusson, as cited in Dei, 1996, p. 52). This approach is not only concerned with understanding the structural causes of conflict, oppression and inequality in the status system but it is also concerned with how “the status system is dictated by the contradictions in industrial [and post-industrial] cultures” (Bowers, 1995, p. 125). Antiracism education is not merely concerned with promoting a subjective identity construction based on limited
knowledge and skills that are not critical of exploitation and “the forces of consumerism and environmental degradation” (Bowers, 2005, p. 54). Knowledge about the self is contextualized in a critical approach to the political economy and how local and global elites in the form of “corporate oligopolies” and supranational institutions “are linked to a global social structure of accumulation that works to enforce economic, political, and cultural norms … which have become regulating mechanisms of what has been called ‘the New World Order’” (McLaren and Farahmandpour, 2003, p. 101).

In deconstructing knowledge, it is also important to consider how the ‘deep curriculum’ or “the official and hidden aspects of the school curriculum” “as well as the intersections of the school culture and relations of power among educators, students and parents” affect the ways in which knowledge (and whose conception of useful knowledge) is presented to students (Dei, 1996, p. 79). The aim is to provide a ‘balance curriculum’ that is based on students’ experiences and cultures (Dei, 1996, p. 79). This allows students to develop a better understanding of their selves and how they relate to others since individuals have developed critical conceptions of who they are and how they are implicated in the processes of change, “progress” and oppression. In this light, the self is not thought of as an isolated individual but as part of multiple collectivities (Dei, 1996, p. 31). Such an approach is critical of encouraging students to imagine that “they are [simply] constructing their own ideas, meanings, and identity; when this rootless form of individualism is exactly what serves the interests of the promoters of consumerism” (Bowers, 2005, p. 54). The emphasis is on collective ownership of knowledge in light of individual constructions as tools to promote change through human agency.

Although inclusive schooling is based on giving “centrality to minoritized people’s perspectives on the issues of race, social justice, and oppression” (Dei, 2005, p. 13), the importance of the inclusion of communities of difference as a way of providing space for a politicized notion of diversity also aims at deconstructing how “words and meanings function relative to [the] power” of the elite groups nationally and globally and the extent to which the socio-economic and political ‘nature’ of language and discourses employed in writing textbooks reproduce hegemonic relations (Dei et al., 2005, p. 17). Difference is considered as a pedagogical as well as an analytical tool that questions the status quo and relations of power by highlighting their real economic, political and social consequences at both local and global levels.

As Castagna and Dei (2001, p. 19-36) maintain, there are “material, ideological and political consequences to race” and to discuss “race” is not due to “a need to categorize” and reify it as a “biological essence” (Castagna
and Dei, 2001, p. 21). The aim is to understand and find ways of eliminating “racially constructed power-relations” in the world (Castagna and Dei, 2001, p. 21). “Race” is understood in the context of history and in light of discussions about racial formation and the process of ‘racialization’ (Castagna and Dei, 2001, p. 21). ‘Racialization’ is understood as the ways in which social relations are affected by the “signification of human biological” and socio-cultural characteristics, resulting in different and unequal ways of defining and constructing “social collectivities” (Castagna and Dei, 2001, p. 21). As such, the term “race” does not refer to black and white divisions but to the ways in which subject positions are determined through the process of ‘racialization’ in the context of colonialism, imperialism and globalization (Dei, 1996).

Antiracism discourse acknowledges that there are multiple forms of racism such as cultural and moral racisms. As McLaren and Torres (1999, p. 42-76) argue, the concept of “race” needs to be re-conceptualized in the plural form of “racism”. “Race” and racisms are analyzed in the context of their historical articulations in conjunction with other ideologies and in relation to capitalist relations. There are many types of “historically specific racisms” (McLaren and Torres, 1999, p. 47). The Iranian treatment of “minority” ethnic groups took place during the era of reforms, which coincided with the construction of the Aryan myth as part of the definition of who Iranians are, the product of the eighteenth century European scientific inquiry into linguistics, geography and philosophy that was incorporated as part of the narrative of nation (Vaziri, 1994).

Antiracism also questions the limited categorizations of groups based on “narrowly defined, tradition-bound cultural or religious heritage” (Wilmot, 2005, p. 19). Identities are considered as multifaceted and complex. There is a need to account for contradictions in identity politics and the effects of other forms of oppression, such as sexism and classism, that also affect members of any group, depending on their locations and how they are categorized within society. In this light, “race” is viewed as a multifaceted criteria of difference, which intersects with other criteria of oppression such as class, gender, ethnicity, culture, sexuality and religion. As Wilmot (2005) maintains, analyses of racisms and their effects cannot be separated from a concurrent analysis of “class exploitation, [racism], sexism and heterosexism” (p. 19). The notion of ‘integrative antiracism’ is useful since it addresses “the problem of discussing the social constructs of race, class, gender and sexuality as exclusive and independent categories” (Dei, 1996, p. 55). ‘Integrative antiracism’ identifies how different forms of “social marginality and structured dominance intersect and shift with changing conditions in society” by rejecting “essentialist and reductionist approaches to race [gender, class and economic] analysis” (Dei, 1996, p. 49, 56).
Within this perspective, “race”, class, ethnicity and gender are conceptualized as signifying “real and imagined differences among and between people” (Dei, 1996, p. 48). As such, an ‘integrative antiracism’ questions either/or representations of difference. It “does not see the self as that of which the other is not” (Dei, 1996, p. 60).

The relationships between the self and the other are historical and multiple with diverse consequences that need to be understood in light of global relations of power. For example, antiracist educators in the West “define White racism as the main problem” (Troyna and Williams, as cited in Kailin, 2005, p. 55) and question the dominance of “White (male) power and privilege and [its] rationality for dominance in society” (Dei, 1996, p. 28). Whiteness, as a social identity, is considered an important aspect of dominant institutions. Antiracism subverts “institutionalized power and the systemic forces of society that [promote] the privilege [position of] White males” (Dei, 1996, p. 29; 2005, p. 10). It attempts to make the power of whiteness visible and to show how “the invisibility of whiteness strengthens the power it creates and maintains” (Wildman and Davis, 2002, p. 89) and how this power creates and reproduces conceptions of superiority in relation to those considered as “dominated” (hooks, 2002, p. 22; Dei, 1996, p. 29). McIntyre (1997) maintains that “the lack of self-reflection about being a white person in North American societ[ies] distances white people from investigating the meaning of whiteness and prohibits a critical examination of the individual, institutional and cultural forms of racism” (p. 14). According to Katz and Levy (as cited in McIntyre, 1997, p. 14), to be “unaware of one’s racial identity” and to not be able “to conceptualize [the effects of] the larger system of whiteness” on marginalized people results in being unable to experience oneself and one’s culture as “it really is”. Macintosh (as cited in McIntyre, 1997, p. 16) also argues that White individuals are not taught to see the privileges that are associated with being White in the same way that men do not see the privileges that are associated with being male in patriarchal societies and sub-cultures. An emphasis on Whiteness would result in dialogue regarding “the implications of racist attitudes for the dominant groups” (McIntyre, 1997, p. 17). As McLaren and Farahmandpour (2003, p. 102) maintain, there is a need for White people “to disidentify entirely with the White race”.

However, antiracists also recognize the “relative power and privilege of all members of society” (Dei, 1996, p. 29) and the extent to which the ideals of Whiteness are also aspects of identity construction amongst groups and nations across the world. As Banks (1996) maintains, although

‘minority’ group ethnicity or [non-Western national] identity is constructed in relation to the dominant group, to the state [and Western nations], there is also a sociologically relevant discourse of race among minority [and non-Western national] groups. For this reason, the salience of race as a social category is as
important in an understanding of [non-Western nationality and] ethnicity manifested by apparently white [Western] groups as in the ethnicity of apparently [Iranian,] black or brown groups. (p. 178)

Antiracism problematizes the ways through which those with White privilege speak for oppressed racialized groups by accounting for how difference is given meaning through racist, classist, patriarchal and revolutionary discourses (Dei et al., 2005, p. 16). As mentioned, antiracism education argues that there is a need to account for how social differences are articulated in order to examine and to expose how “the dynamics of social difference[s] [are] related to issues of identity and subjectivity [by] mov[ing] away from establishing a hierarchy of difference and an exclusive and problematic concern with the ‘other’” (Dei, 1996, p. 60). In this light, issues related to multiple identities and subject positions are considered as important aspects of critical thinking (Dei, 1996, p. 63).

Antiracism views social and economic relations and structures from a holistic perspective. For example, rather than highlighting a class analysis as the only explanatory factor in understanding inequality, antiracism education also accounts for how marginalized people and dominant groups view themselves through the invocation of multiple local and global dominant discourses (Dei, 1996, p. 64). I problematizes how marginalized people may also reproduce inequality locally and globally and contribute to other forms of marginalizations and oppressions. Drawing upon Dei (et al., 2005, p. 15), I account for how racialized bodies and subjects in the East “are constituted and regulated” in the context of an analysis of “the material/structural relations of power” in both the East and the West that operate within Iran. I also account for the ways in which “new justification[s] used by Euro-Canadian/American society for asserting its political and economic dominance over indigenous and colonial people” are implemented through economic relations and inform Eastern forms of oppression (Dei, 1996, p. 68). As such, “knowing one’s oppressor” requires an analysis of gender inequality, class oppression and ethnic inequality within the dialectical relations of colonial and imperialist as well as “revolutionary” and religious discourses of power that operate and have affected various societies across the world. By dialectic, I mean “how people come to be situated in a social world characterized by contradictory relationships and interactions” (Visano and Jakubowski, 2002, p. 37).

Through the application of transnationalism, I critically evaluate and interrogate the one-sided interrelationship between the Orient and Occident. As a theoretical lens, transnationalism points to the multifaceted and overlapping sets of interactions and processes of identity formations within the context of high modernity that affect ethnic and racialized groups across the world (Satzewich and Liodakis, 2007, p. 215). As both a process and
discourse, it is critical of the process of the incorporation, rejection, and naturalization of the Enlightenment project in many non-Western and Western countries, by accounting for how the “language of modernity”, in the form of us and them and other forms of essentialized and bias categories, informs the worldview of social actors without a critical evaluation of their Euro- and ethno-centric “characteristics”.

Transnationalism is a discourse that goes beyond the “limited” notions of the West and the East in analyzing socio-economic, cultural and political relations. Geographical localities are viewed and analyzed across time and space. I conceptualize the education systems and modern school textbooks as examples of “Westernized” global institutions and cultural products of modernity with local manifestations and characteristics. Although the Iranian education system is a state controlled national institution, its history is intertwined with the history of colonialism, nationalism, development, ethnic violence and imperialism (Arasteh, 1969). Schools were/are conceptualized as agents of socializing classes of educated, technical and professional subjects/citizens (Boroujerdi, 1996, p. 23). The role of technocrats and social scientists in the development of the education system and the economic system based on Western scientific style management and techniques cannot be denied. As Arasteh points out, the education system and the economy are intertwined institutions:

> educational planning must be coordinated to economic programs and consequently requires in advance a demographic study and an analysis of Iran’s potentialities. Such a plan would require a central scientific agency composed of scientists from all branches and headed by individuals well acquainted with Persian culture and the basic motives of Western civilization. (Arasteh, 1969, p. 203)

Iranian school knowledge of both the past and present systems remains “a particular representation of the dominant culture, one that was constructed through a selective process of emphases and exclusion” (Giroux, Introduction; In Freire, 1985, p. xv). This selective process takes form within the context of a dialectical relationship between the West and the East that oscillates between the two sides without being fixed in either camps. In other words, the basic assumptions about pedagogy and methods of organization and assessment of the Iranian education system as a transnational institution are based on both Western and Eastern scientific understandings of the self, health issues, development and the environment (Menashri, 1992). Therefore, I conceptualize Iranian curriculum as a ‘hybrid’ of modern/traditional interactions that may promote both ethnocentric and Eurocentric ideology.

As sites of “political engagement” and “cultural reproduction”, transnationalism refers to the intersections of the fluidity of citizenship rights, hybrid identities, social institutions and educational and everyday practices.

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22 Mehmet (1995, p. 9) defines Eurocentrism, as “a deep-rooted Western intellectual tradition” that “idealize[s] everything Western out of reality, perceive[s] ‘others’ as inferior”.
In this light, the construction of Iranian identities and knowledge are treated as local/global discursive positioning of selves/otherness and truth, within a web of unequal power/knowledge relations, by references to factors such as “race”, tribalism, gender, the economy and nationality. As Said (1978, p. 42) points out, Orientalist knowledge has often represented “facts” through the use of homogenized terms such as the East and the West. “Because this tendency is right at the center of Orientalist theory, practice and values found in the West, the sense of Western power over the Orient is taken for granted as having the status of scientific truth” (Said, 1978, p. 42). This aspect of the Enlightenment and its universalisation needs to be critically evaluated. A transnational perspective accounts for the multifaceted characteristics of ideas and views (i.e.: Persian, Shi’a and Western) through which individuals and groups “represent” and “rank” other ethno-nationalities and members of different political/religious groups.

Transnationalism problematizes nation-centric approaches to citizenship and social, legal, economic, cultural and educational relations by offering a multifaceted approach to insider/outsider divisions. As Held argues, “the capacity of the nation-state to protect individual autonomy is now gone” due to the globalization of culture, politics, the military and social relations (as cited in Kymlicka, 2001, p. 235). The transnational characteristic of the interdependence of nation-states has resulted in the inability of “nation-states to determine crucial questions about their [citizens’] life-chances” (as cited in Kymlicka, 2001, p. 235). This transnational interdependence can no longer be ignored (Kymlicka, 2001, p. 235). As Held maintains, nation-states’ policies are now affected by external and global decision-making bodies that also function as new sites for “democratic political action” (Kymlicka, 2001, p. 236). In addition, as ‘rights’ are becoming more “predicated on residency, not citizen status, the distinction between citizen and status” is eroding (Koopmans and Statham, 2000b, p. 191). Koopmans and Statham (2000b) point out that this has resulted in

“a decoupling of identity and rights, the two main elements of citizenship: ‘Rights increasingly assume universality, legal uniformity, and abstractness, and are defined at the global level.... As an identity, national citizenship [based on a single cultural model shared by all citizens {Koopmans and Statham, 2000a:20}] ... till prevails. But in terms of its translation into rights and privileges, it is no longer a significant construction’”. (p. 191)

In discussing global issues in the context of national boundaries, transnationalism allows the researcher to go beyond a bounded and unilinear understanding of national formations, citizenship rights, migration trends, educational policy and economic relations between and within the East (“developing” nations) and the West.
("developed" countries) as fixed geographical boundaries. The East and the West are themselves saturated with differences and similarities that find their sources in both Eastern and Western histories. Neither the West nor the East are considered as privileged spaces/locations; rather, the two are viewed as extensions of one another. Their meanings are not considered as stable and static but as dynamic, ever changing and contradictory. The East is not conceived as a “victim” of the West but as a category which consists of actors with varied, conflicting, and at times, similar agencies. Although such a theoretical perspective focuses on one ethno-national category, it does so in relation to other forms of ‘otherness’ in many Western and non-Western parts of the world. They are constructions that are given meanings through discourses of domination, subjugation, resistance, cooperation and exploitation. It is in this light that through the discourse of transnationalism I account for:

- the construction of “identities” across time and space in the context of the effects of colonialism and global capitalism in both the East and the West as floating categories rather than as fixed entities;
- the movement of ideas, perspectives, groups and peoples between nation-states; and,
- how representations of otherness in both the East and the West have been (re)constructed, altered and maintained from a historical perspective.

Transnationalism and Westernization are conceptualized as two different yet interrelated processes. Transnationalism accounts for those Eastern influences in and outside the West as well as the process of Westernization in the East and its consequences in terms of, for example, the global exploitation of labour and the movements of Easterners to the West as citizens, researchers, students, refugees and/or immigrants. Transnationalism accounts for the racialization and feminization of the labour market and processes in local, national and global contexts within the context of the international movement of capital and investment by transnational capitalist classes, “ordinary people” and ethnic/diasporic communities (Satzewich and Liodakis, 2007, p. 215). Westernization, on the other hand, is a process that is thought to “cripple” the East and stall its “development” (Mehmet, 1995). Moreover, as Mehran (2003, p. 273) asserts, it is also significant to distinguish between modernization and Westernization, which are deliberately separated within the context of post-revolutionary Iran. A modern Islamised nation-state that aims at industrialization, technological advancement and political reform “is not viewed as necessarily a Westernized one” (Mehran, 2003, p. 273). Despite such distinctions, the redevelopment of war torn regions soon after the end of the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) suggests that such programs are tools in rationalizing “the everyday life from above” (Madanipour, 2003, p. 142). This aspect of the rationalization of everyday life dates back to the early decades of the twentieth century, when the goal was to
eliminate traditional values and attitudes in order to instil in Iranians a new way of approaching the self, social space and work in the context of encroaching European powers and imperialist interventions in the Middle East. The education system and school curriculum have played important roles in this process. In the context of this conceptualization of the East and the West, I am able to account for the movement of ideas about the self, the other, Islam, the nation and “Western” knowledge, theories and institutions, as discursive analytical tools to examine Iranian school textbooks in the context of multiple and dialectical relations.

Conceptualized within an antiracist approach and from a transnational perspective, Iranian identity finds various meanings and representations in Iran and in various parts of the world as national, ethnic, hybrid, gender, political and/or hyphenated constructs in government documents and in school textbooks (Mirfakhraie, MA Thesis, 1999; Hyndman and Walton-Roberts, 1998; Basch, Glick Schiller and Blanc-Szanton, 1994; Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Rahimieh, 2001; Razack, 2000, p. 30-40). As such, transnationalism enables me to account for ethnic and religious diversities within Iran that are related to forms of otherness in various countries in the region and in other parts of the world, as I explore how ethnic, racialized, gendered and class relations are reproduced and represented to students in their school curriculum. In this light, I also interrogate how “White/Black”, “Persian/Arab”, the “West/East” and “female/male” binary oppositions are constructed locally and globally in contrast to other forms of otherness (i.e.: the “female/male” bodies) across nations and how one set is used to define the other, always privileging one over the other (i.e.: White/male/Anglo-Canadian over White/female/Anglo-Canadian who is privileged over Black/female/Arab; or White/female/Canadian over “coloured”/female/Iranian).

As such, the term “Iranian” is viewed as a modern creation that has meaning not because there has always been an “Iran” as a modern nation-state, but because it “finds” meaning within the context of competing discursive fields. Factors such as “Aryan” heritage, Western conceptions of the self and the modern subject, Shi’a/religious beliefs, gender, religion, ethnicity, language, dialect, political beliefs, geographical location, citizenship/immigrant status and social class divide not only between Iranians but also between Iranians and other nationalities within the limitations that have been placed upon them due to the reification of us and them divisions within the context of colonial and post-colonial relations/structures and global competition for resources and capital (Vaziri, 1993).

Iranian identity is conceptualized as a transnational identity. The term “Iranian” is defined as a segmented identity and a manifestation of the “Oriental other” in relation to Euro-Westerners and other non-Iranians locally and
globally. The term “Oriental” refers to the object of the process of “othering” and “gazing”. Both Western/non-Western and Iranian actors and institutions are involved in this process. That is, “Iranians” as “Orientals” are depicted in light of Western and non-Western representations of otherness and, at the same time, they recreate, resist and redefine the position of the “Oriental” and the “Occidental” in their multiple and contradictory relationships with Western and non-Persian/non-Western populations of Iran and the world. I call this the subject position “double Oriental”, since these individuals are not only ‘othered’ in the context of their relationships with the West and the non-Western Europeans but they are also ‘othered’ and are viewed by other “Orientals” and Western subjects in the East and in the West from perspectives that despite their *emic* characteristics, have been influenced by the worldview of what Edward Said (1978) refers to as Orientalism and what Boroujerdi (1966) refers to as “Orientalism in reverse”. As such, I am able to account how which present forms of power relations “carry” the residues of the past within them, in terms of specific interpretations of the past.

As Said (1978) maintains, the political nature of cultural and economic representations of the Orient in their historical, literary or anthropological forms have been based on imperialist and colonial endeavours. How images of otherness and difference have been constructed is linked to the project of colonial rule and domination: that is, the colonialist attitude, “his” novels and “his” traveling accounts of the “exotic”, “wild” and “untamed world” all had and continue to have political and ideological connotations and significance (Said, 1978). This is not to claim that the Europeanization and later the Americanization of Iran has not faced opposition at local, national and regional levels or that Iranians have not been involved in the exploitation of Iranians and in the ‘othering’ of minority groups in Iran. Rather, the concern is how years of Europeanization and Westernization have resulted in the construction of an imagery of the West that reconfirms Orientalist assumptions about the Middle East and the rest of the world in school textbooks despite the anti-imperialist ideologies of the ruling elite since the Revolution of 1978-79. Although the Islamic ideology of the state implies that the aim since the revolution has been to awaken its people from years of Westernization and anti-Islamic propaganda, the Islamic ideology of the Iranian elite cannot be understood outside the framework of Iran as a nation-state and the existing Persian-centrism of the state’s policies despite the Islamization process (Nima, 1983, p. 103). In fact, the Islamization of the education system and society after the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79 can be conceptualized not merely as an anti-imperialist policy but “rather [as] a political and ideological struggle against the left and liberals in Iran” (Nima, 1983, p. 103). Since the revolution, the process of nation-building in Iran has relied on the (re)constructed, (re)invented and (re)emphasized aspects of its
historical past and on the newly acquired knowledge through intense economic and intellectual contact between the East and the West. This knowledge base is now (re)formulated in the context of the Islamization process in school textbooks. To what extent do Orientalist and anti-Western images find expressions in the ways in which Iranians have come to think, to reject, to appropriate and to imagine other ethnic minorities or other nationalities within the domain of the state’s Islamic ideology and colonial and imperialist conceptions of us and them divisions?

I deconstruct representations of the ideal citizen and national identity from a poststructuralist perspective by exposing the discursive structures that function as the main “principle logic of social explanation” (Seidman, 1994, p. 201). It is through discourse that “reality” is constructed and finds meaning. Textbooks are conceptualized as cultural products of “discursive formations” that function as “political site[s] for the reproduction of social realities and political conflict” (Seidman, 1994, p. 210). By discursive formation, Foucault (as cited in Hall, 1996b, p. 201) refers to a set of statements that function together as a unit since these statements are represented as being related to one another in political, cultural, social or economic terms. They are related in such ways that, “They refer to the same object, share the same style and all support ‘a strategy … a common institutional … or political drift or pattern’” (as cited in Hall, 1996b, p. 201). Accordingly, the ideas of “nation and the ideal citizen”, as discursive representations, viewed from multiple positions and standpoints and through the lens of “shifting collectivities”, are never coherent and complete categories of identity politics in themselves. In fact, they are dynamic in the sense that they “endlessly refer to other signs” and discourses due to the changing nature of the global political economy and its effects on the representations of sameness and difference (Sturrock, 2003, p. 125). From this perspective, the exclusion of specific groups from the processes of nation-building and identity formation is affected through the process of ‘othering’ these specific groups in relation to the national identity as fixed and knowable. This process is considered “a major feature of colonial discourse” and also finds emic and internal manifestations (Dei et al., 2005, p. 45).

Poststructuralism is critical of master or metanarratives that legitimize social reality and give coherence and meaning to other narratives and to socio-economic and political structures, events and practices through the process of exclusion based on ethnocentric and logocentric views that function as ‘traces’, “hidden logic” and authoritative narratives that claim to “reveal truth [and] moral rightness” (Seidman, 1994, p. 202, 206). As Seidman (1994) explains, “linguistic meanings are not innocent of political significations … however, [they] do not in themselves produce subjectivity and the social world. They are embedded in institutional frameworks and political hierarchies”
Poststructuralism critiques ethnocentric, middle-class, gendered and patriarchal knowledge and questions their “validities” by accounting for other types and forms of knowledge in order to “trace how signifying and discursive practices empower and give privilege to certain individuals, groups and forms of social life” (Seidman, 1994, p. 204). This alternative view of knowledge explores how various forms of oppression and resistance are reproduced across the globe in particular places. Moreover, poststructuralism also “reject[s] essentialist and reductionist approaches to race, [gender, class and economic] analys[es]” due to the logocentric character of knowledge in modernity (Dei et al., 2005, p. 31; Dei, 1996, p. 49). Poststructuralism points out that knowledge is presented and produced in the context of uneven power relations. It aims at subverting “the political meaning of” language, knowledge and social order (Seidman, 1994, p. 202). In this light, what is considered as universal knowledge is, in fact, a “selective knowledge” presented as “official knowledge” and “the truth” about the world. Knowledge is conceptualized as a site of transformation, reinvention and subversion of the dominant conceptualizations of what is considered as useful knowledge in both the East and the West (Dei, 1996, p. 12, 23).

Moreover, notions such as modern subject and identity are questioned by pointing to the multiplicity and diversity of “subject positions” and the instability of the so-called coherent and fixed identity. As Hall (1996a, p. 613) points out, national cultures consist of symbols and representations and, as such, are discourses that impart meanings that influence and organize citizens’ actions and their views about insiders and outsiders. As Anderson (1991) argues, national identity is based on a conception of an ‘imagined community’ that is constructed in contradictory relations to otherness at both local and global levels. Anderson (1991, p. 6) defines the nation as an “imagined political community” that is both limited and sovereign. Nationalism does not awaken a deep sense of collective consciousness shared by members of a nation; rather, it “invents nations where they do not exist” (as cited in Anderson, 1991, p. 6). National communities are limited due to the enclosed boundaries imposed upon them that are the outcomes of political struggles, colonial rule and anti-colonial relations in many parts of the world (Anderson, 1991, p. 7). National identity is considered as a contested site and is (re)produced as well as resisted through similar or different yet related discursive practices at individual, group and/or institutional levels.

In fact, the globalization process and the creation of transnational identities are now undermining the official conceptions of national identity. Notions such as the colonized and colonizers, that are conceptualized based on the “West/East”, the “Orient/Occident”, “male/female” or other kinds of dichotomies, are narrow in their applications and fail to consider oppositional subject positions within each category. According to Nasser (2005),
the other groups that are absent in these discourses of representation and narration are nevertheless necessary for imagining and constructing any national identity. Views about otherness become taken-for-granted aspects of life and commonsense. Moreover, from a poststructuralist position, the emphasis on diversity and difference should be understood as a political desire and praxis to provide space for representations of other various histories and historical memories of marginalized groups in official accounts of, for example, the nation, from the perspective of these othered groups in relation to the dominant culture and national identity (Dei, 1996; Seidman, 1994). In constructing modern national identities and in representing the ideal citizen, other people and cultures are often not viewed and depicted as participants in the process of nation-building, of having histories or as being part of a history, let alone a national one. These marginalized and “minority” groups are also denied reflections and representations in the nation-building processes in other parts of the world based on criteria that are exclusionary, sexist, classist and racist (Seidman, 1994; Dei, 1996). This regeneration of the other from the perspectives of the dominant political group within a nation-state ensures that certain images, representations and knowledge about these ‘historical others’ in relation to the ideal citizen remain knowable in the public memory/discourse of the new generation (Dei et al., 2005, p. 45). The relationship between various representations of the ideal national self and the other in the context of narrating the history of a nation in textbooks needs to be retold and reconfigured as changes in global and local economic relations and political structures affect the relationship between the self and the other (Vaziri, 1993; Abrahamian, 1993).

However, the processes of ‘othering’ and the idea of otherness are more than just processes of excluding individuals and groups from membership in the nation. Otherness does not always imply discriminatory practices and outcomes. To label someone as the other also requires criteria for inclusion. The process of ‘othering’ involves an understanding of sameness and what those qualities of sameness mean in terms of group behaviour, relationships and membership. In other words, the process of ‘othering’ brings people together for socio-economic and political reasons and purposes (Dei et al., 2005, p. 57). It is through the narration of nation represented in “national histories, literatures, the media, and the popular culture” as well as in school textbooks that citizens of a nation are confronted with a “set of stories, images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols, and rituals which stand for, or represent, the shared experiences … that give meaning to the nation” (Hall, 1996a, p. 613). As Herman points out, in deconstructing national identity and how the ideal citizen is constructed, it is also important to expose the dialogic relationship within the self in respect to views about others (as cited in Dei et al., 2005, p. 53). The other is not
merely outside, but also inside the self, the identity. In this sense, identity has meaning partly in relation to “what is not” (Dei et al., 2005, p. 57). There is a useful distinction that needs to be made here. Difference functions in identity politics in relation to other terms, in regards to its perceived opposites, that are conceptualized as either a collective them or distinguished and hierarchized. As Hall (1996a, p. 614) points out, the narration of nation also imposes a sense of sameness, “continuity, tradition and timelessness” that invoke ‘invented traditions’ that are not historical but modern representations of the nation. The ‘invented tradition’ relies on the notion of “the idea of a pure, original people or ‘folk’” (Hall, 1996a, p. 615) in order to distinguish itself from those groups and communities of people that, by definition, are not part of the ‘original people’ and places them in a hierarchy. This hierarchization is influenced by those definitions of the self, the nation and the state that reflect the views, ideologies and worldviews of the elite groups who categorize themselves as members of the founding nation and the ‘us category’, thus as insiders in relation to otherness. However, through the idea of otherness, it is also acknowledged that other ethnic, religious, gendered and racialized groups exist independent “of any specific relation of difference” to some external form of knowledge base or constructions of identity (Dei et al., 2005, p. 57). For example, the statement ‘Italians are brave and willing to preserve Italy’s glory’ does not claim that other nationalities do not possess these qualities or that they are incapable of acquiring such sentiments. The national self is also related to images of otherness and attributes of other nationalities that also share similar or the same characteristics that are also considered as important aspects of the national self. In other words, there are aspects/qualities of the multiple-selves of otherness that are also shared by images of the national self or the ideal citizen.

Through an exploration of how difference and sameness are constituted in the construction of the Iranian ideal citizen, I emphasize how exclusions, fragmentations and hybridizations inform who and what Iranians are. Through the emphasis on otherness, I examine how information about Iran, its history and its relationships with other countries is communicated to students and whose understanding about political affairs is expressed as the truth about the world. By drawing on Apple (2004, p. 158), I investigate how dominant national groups also construct what Raymond William refers to as a “structure of feeling” based on an understanding of the past that also organizes

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23 Hybridization refers to the process of hybridity. Young (2006) maintains that hybridity “rejects the claims that the boundaries and classifications between subjects and and disciplines reflect features of knowledge itself and sees them as always a product of particular historical circumstances and interests” (p. 738). Young (2006) asserts that hybridity is viewed as a consequence of the “increasingly boundary-less character of modern economics and societies” (p. 738). A curriculum based on the concept of hybridity supports the basic assumptions of social justice and equality and equity (Young, 2006, p. 738).
people’s feelings towards the state, the nation, the ideal citizen, the self and otherness. In what ways does this knowledge promote liberation or reproduce domination as a form of social control?

I examine how differences between the East and the West, expressed through discourses, stories, poems, pictures and maps in school textbooks, invoke specific understandings and applications of insider and outsider categories in producing knowledge about Iran, Islam, Christianity, development and diversity in other parts of the world. Does this knowledge reflect the ideology of the Iranian state, global imperialists and the capitalist class or internal ethnic, religious and class relations and divisions? The term ideology is defined as a set of ideas that aim at explaining, justifying, legitimating and perpetuating the social, economic and political conditions faced by a group or community (Henry and Tator, 2006, p. 16). Ideology informs how members of a society should behave and make sense of the world around them. At the same time, ideology is a framework that justifies and maintains relations of power in society (Henry and Tator, 2006, p. 16). It imparts “meaning to life, instilling a common bond among group members, and explaining situation” (Henry et al., 1998, p. 408; Glossary). As such, it provides concepts and a framework of systems of dominance (Henry and Tator, 2006, p. 16). Ideology is related to discourse in the sense that it informs cultural, educational, political and legal institutions and policies as well as group identities, norms and practices and how history is understood and interpreted. In this thesis, ‘ideology’ is defined as a set of discourses that are also “particular sets of effects within discourses” (Eagleton, 1991, p. 194). Ideological power is understood as not merely a matter “of meaning but of making a meaning stick” (Eagleton, 1991, p. 194). In other words, discursive formations are influenced and embedded in ideological formations, “which contain discursive practices as well as non-discursive ones” (Eagleton, 1991, p. 195). Discursive processes are marked by ideological relations and structures of power. As McLaren (1989, p. 200) points out, according to Giroux, schools are not only spaces and sites in which teachers instruct and students learn. Schools are complex sites where dominant and subordinate groups that are ideologically linked, defined and constrained by the limits of power relations and structures are involved in legitimating particular constructions of reality despite resistance. Ideologies can be hegemonic in supplying the terms of reference, symbols and representations that hide the actual relations of power and in justifying the power of the dominant groups over the subordinated ones (McLaren, 1989, p. 174). School knowledge then can be both ideological and hegemonic as it manufactures meanings and the language through which students come to view their relations with both insiders and outsiders. School knowledge provides students with discourses that enable them to develop ‘subject positions’ that have meanings in the context of discursive positions “that
condition [students] to react to ideas and opinions in prescribed ways” (McLaren, 1989, p. 174). As such, the term ‘Iranian’ positions students as objects of the discourses that define and limit what is meant to be a citizen of Iran and a member of the nation, from the perspective and ideological disposition of the dominant society. In this light, Apple’s emphasis on the hegemonic and the political economy nature of textbook production is employed to present a holistic account of the ways in which difference, otherness and the exploitive aspects of the production process of textbooks operate in a country such as Iran.

This necessitates me to be critical of how knowledge is always mediated by prior political, social, cultural, racial, gendered and classed as well as discursive assumptions and power configurations. As Said (1978) maintains, writing about the Orient and/or the Occident requires prior knowledge about them. This knowledge “affiliates itself with other works, audiences, institutions, with the Orient [and the Occident themselves]” (Said, 1978, p. 20). Orientalism, as knowledge about the Orient and as a narrative about the Near East, offers a useful and critical lens through which to examine how knowledge is employed as a tool of domination and othering within the context of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Orientalism creates “the very reality [it] appear[s] to describe” (Said, 1978, p. 94). The Orient is represented in such a way that the “objective structure, the designation of the Orient, and subjective restructure, the representations of the Orient by Orientalists, become interchangeable” (Said, 1978, p. 129). The Orient is reified as an object of investigation and the subject of study by colonial administrations, universities, journals and think tanks. Orientalism not only reproduces knowledge about otherness through a racialized typology, it also provides universal and scientific explanations for the behaviour of the “other”. These others also need to be simultaneously contained, understood and (re)imagined (Said, 1978, p. 5-18; 203; 211). The West attempts to create authority over the East by invoking specific constructs and meanings and associating them with the Orient, as a geographical area. Orientalism “claim[s] to, recapture[s], and finally expropriate[s] [the Oriental’s] ‘true’ and ‘authentic’ identity” (Said, 1978, p. 253). Building on Said, I argue that Orientalism essentializes both Oriental and Occidental identities by references to universal categories such as American, Iranian or Arab mentalities/identities that are constructed by references to metanarratives that are logocentric and invoke binary oppositions such as “sane” and “insane”. In other words, Orientalism functions as a set of “codes by which Europe [as the West] could interpret itself and the Orient to itself” (Said, 1978, p. 253). As a metanarrative, Orientalism has also come to redefine the Oriental’s view of himself or herself in light of the knowledge that has been produced to dominate the East. This way of thinking also influences the modernization policies of both pre- and post-revolutionary regimes in
Iran. In light of Boroujerdi’s (1996, p. 12) arguments, I investigate the extent to which constructions of the self and the other in Iranian school textbooks only serve to uncritically reaffirm European-Western and non-Western assumptions of inherent differences that separate the assumed homogenized cultures and peoples of the Orient and Occident. I explore how images of the Oriental and Occidental are depicted by references to essential geographical locations that play the role of “hypothetical viewer, or what Jacques Derrida has referred to as a ‘culture of reference’” (Boroujerdi, 1996, p. 12).

“Orientalism in reverse” consist of heterogeneous responses to the Westernization, Europeanization and Islamization of Iran in modernity. I do not conceptualize “Orientalism in reverse” as a homogenized anti-Western “counter-narrative [to] Orientalism” or merely as a reflection of the “seductive lure of nativism”, defined as the call for a return to the past or a reformulation “resurgence, [or] reinstatement” of “indigenous cultural custom” (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2000, p. 565). Tavakoli-Targhi (2000) points out that it is important to account for the different ways in which Iranian religious leaders, intellectuals of different political and theoretical perspectives and political groups have been engaging with various socio-economic and political relations that have affected Iran since the early 1800s. As Boroujerdi (as cited in Tavakoli-Targhi, 2000, p. 568) argues, the Iranian clergy and the clerical subcultures were transformed “into the primary agency of political socialization and contestation”, which was also a reflection of the process of “the modernization of tradition”. This process, as Tavakoli-Targhi (2000) and Abrahamian (1993) point out, was not without contradictions and was informed by a dialectical relationship between various sectors and classes within Iranian society, resulting in diverse effects. Tavakoli-Targhi (2000) maintains that the role of the Pahlavi state, as a modernizing agent in this transformation of the ulama, needs to be analyzed, especially since the religious leadership was able to reach a wider population due to the introduction of the literacy programs by the Shah’s regime.

The “reactivation of [the] religious subculture” was partly due to the reciprocal relationship between the state, civil society and the existing religious structure (Tavakoli-Tarqhi, 2000, p. 568). For example, the establishment of religious organizations such as Hujjatiyeh, based on conservative religious ideas that aimed at fighting heresy, also served the interest of the Pahlavi state (Rejali, 1994, p. 103). “Established in 1953 by Ayatollah Halabi”, the main objective of this organization was to curb the influence of Baha’is in Iran (Rahnema and Nomani, 1990, p. 211). It was comprised of “mullahs, seminaries, civil servants, and [even] elementary school teachers”, who combated the publication of non-Islamic literature, disrupted “Baha’i meetings and religious services”, identified
those Baha’i individuals who were employed by the State and pressured the state to end their employment (Rejali, 1994, p. 103-104). In fact, Hujjatiyeh became a national organization with chapters in various cities supported by influential ulama and pious individuals (Rahnema and Nomani, 1990, p. 211), whose political and religious ideology blamed minorities such as the Jews and the Baha’is for the socio-economic conditions of Iran by labelling them as oppressors (mustakbarin) who promoted the interests of foreign enemies (Abrahamian 1993, p. 48). This is partly due to the ideological construction of the Baha’is as agents of Britain during the nineteenth century and as a “secret political organization” controlled by the Americans, whose President—Ronald Reagan “supports … [them with the aim] … of subverting the Islamic Republic” and its religious leaders, such as Ayatollah Khomeini (as cited in Abrahamian, 1993, p. 124). Members of Hujjatiyeh also promoted anti-communist ideology, which served the interests of the Pahlavi state and as such, their activities were tolerated during the Cold War period (Rejali, 1994, p. 103). It was thought that their anti-Baha’i and anti-communist ideologies would divert dangerous subversive religious activities that could have been channelled against the Shah’s regime towards marginalized groups without seriously undermining the legitimacy of the regime (Rahnema and Nomani, 1990, p. 211).

Although Hujjatiyeh organizations were dismantled after the revolution and were replaced by other revolutionary organizations, they served the interest of the religious leadership due to their well-established national program and due to the fact that a number of their members also joined the revolutionary committees known as Komiteh, which played pivotal roles in the establishment of the current government through the use of force (Rejali, 1994, p. 104). In fact, Tavakoli-Targhi (2000) argues that anti-Baha’ism and anti-communism provided the mechanisms for the transformation of religious piety into dissident political subjectivity. The discourse that is widely misrecognized as ‘Islamic Fundamentalism’ [See also Abrahamian, 1993] was a product of an intricate and protracted process of de-familiarization of borrowed concepts and their re-circulation as Islamic and Qur’anic terminology. Vilayat-i faqih [velayat-e-faqih] is such a de-familiarized concept that it conceals its dialogic relationship to the Baha’i concept of Vali-i Amr. (p. 569)

Ayatollah Khomeini’s main writings show the evolution of his views on the role of the state. Ayatollah Khomeini initially argued that the state had the responsibility to collect religious taxes, known as Khoms and Zakat, to maintain a healthy balance between the different strata of society, to implement the sacred law and to facilitate religious judicial decisions (Abrahamian, 1993). In his first book, Kashf al-Asrar (Secrets Unveiled, written in 24 See Rahnema, Ali and Farhad Nomani. (1990). Chapter 5: Domestic policies. In Ali Rahnema and Farhad Nomani. The Secular Miracle: Religion, Politics and Economic Policy in Iran (pp. 211 – 213). New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd. for a brief discussion of doctrinal ideological, religious and political differences between Hujjatiyeh members and the Islamic leadership.
1943), he argued that the monarchy is an acceptable political institution if the monarch seeks the advice of the senior Shi’a clerics (Abrahamian, 1993, p. 54). In his second book, *Velayat-e-Faqih: Hokumat-e Islami* (The Jurist's Guardianship: Islamic Government), Ayatollah Khomeini changed his views about the legitimacy of the monarchy and maintained that “the clerical jurists had the divine right to rule” (Abrahamian, 1993, p. 54).

The state, Ayatollah Khomeini initially argued, was a vehicle through which individuals can be directed toward the Divine Light (Abrahamian, 1993). As such, Islam, as God’s last command, is considered as the end rather than as a tool in order to achieve equality. Ayatollah Khomeini argued for an authoritarian religious state to foresee the protection of private property against self-seeking individuals since he perceived individuals as corrupt, ill and as dangerous as “wild animals”. In his view, individual liberty was seen as a precursor to chaos (Abrahamian, 1993, p. 44). According to such views of individuals, despite differences in wealth, all people must strive from within and transform themselves to achieve the goal of all Moslems: submission to God’s will. Such an Islamic view justified the existing inequalities by reference to the Aristotelian metaphor of the “human body”, which served as the basis for describing society and the relationships between individuals within society (Abrahamian, 1993, p. 46). In contrast, Ayatollah Motahhari perceived social transformation as the end product and the function of the “individual’s own development in society” (Nomani & Rahnema, 1990, p. 41). It is the individual qualities that determine the nature of the self (Rejali, 1994, p. 40). However, as Vahdat points out, Ayatollah Motahhari’s view on subjectivity also incorporated the assumption that “human consciousness is [not] independent of theism” (as cited in Vahdat, 2002, p. 171). Ayatollah Motahhari (as cited in Nomani & Rahnema, 1990, p. 41) also viewed individuals in terms of their personal struggles in light of binary oppositions such as ‘Evil and Good’ and ‘God and Satan’. He was critical of the Marxist conceptualization of historical materialism and maintained that,

> According to the deterministic theory of historical materialism, material social conditions determine man, give him direction, and construct his direction, and construct his character, will, and choice. He is but a mere empty vessel and raw material vis-à-vis the social conditions. Man is made by the social conditions being made by him. Prior conditions determine the future direction of man; man does not determine the future direction. Therefore, freedom cannot have any meaning whatsoever. (as cited in Vahdat, 2002, p. 177)

In Ayatollah Motahhari’s view, it is the role of religious institutions to show humans how to achieve and shape their futures by denying their human agency (Vahdat, 2002, p. 171). In other words, he also maintained that individuals
live in the duality of the supernatural world and their freedom is dependent on the interpretation of the Quran by the *marja’-i taqlīd* (source of emulation).

Soon after the revolution, the state, under the leadership of the *marja’-i taqlīd* (source of emulation), was seen as the symbolic representation of God’s rule in contemporary Iranian society. As such, the state was viewed as the “reality of ethical life in the present” and as determined by the interpretations of the Islamic laws and customs, a task that only a *mujtāed* (senior cleric) is capable of doing (Abrahamian, 1993, p. 9). The rhetorical message of the Iranian Revolution was that Islam and an Islamic state are the solutions to poverty and that revolutionary Islam promotes a “class-less” society (Abrahamian, 1993). But as the ‘massacre’ of demonstrators in south Tehran during the 1990s attests, this modern Islamizing state did not hesitate from using force against its “poor” and “disinherited” “citizens”, whom Ayatollah Khomeini referred to as the *mustāfżafīn* (the oppressed) (Banuazizi, 1994, p. 6). After the revolution, Shi’a political Islam was no longer an oppositional discourse. It had become the discourse of power based on a repressive ideology, defining the characteristics of the central Iranian government despite its revolutionary messages.

Moreover, after the revolution, many powerful religio-politicians who were involved in running the government argued that religious competence and knowledge were not the only necessary criteria for becoming *velayat-e-faqīh* as the Supreme Leader (*Valī Faqīh*). Such an individual must also be knowledgeable as a *faqīh* (jurist) regarding the political and economic issues that face a nation. Many of the ulama, who were qualified as *faqīh*, argued that religio-politicians who were mainly lower ranking clerics did not meet these requirements. As Menashri (2001) points out, several constitutional amendments after 1989 were made to the constitution that separated, the positions of *marja’īyya* and *velayat*, thus allowing any *faqīh* with ‘scholastic qualifications for issuing religious decrees’ to assume the position of the Supreme Leader (*Valī Faqīh*) (Articles 5 and 109). The 1979 stipulation (Article 5) that the Supreme Leader be ‘recognized and accepted’ by ‘the majority of people’ (a requirement for the *marja’īyya*) was also dropped. At the same time, the new constitution stressed that preference must be given to those better versed in ‘political and social issues’ (Article 107). (p. 17)

The end result not only lowered the religious requirements for leadership but it also placed greater weight on political experience (Menashri, 2001, p. 17). The concept of *velayat-e-faqīh* (jurist guardianship) and its principles in the post-revolutionary period have not simply been accepted as an unproblematic approach to
leadership in the Islamic Republic. As Menashri (2001, p. 24-26) points out, there is division amongst the clerical leadership in terms of the position of *vali-faqih* (religious jurist) under the Islamic Republic. Ganji refers to this religious government as a state that attempts “to impose governmental religion” on the clerics who are critical of the state and its leadership and who advocate a separation between religion and state (as cited in Menashri, 2001, p. 31). Many Iranians and young clerics have also been critical of the role of *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship). They argue that “the cleric’s political involvement is ‘compromising their historic spiritual role’ and that it would be better for Iran and Islam if the clergy ‘returned to the mosques and left the task of government to professional politicians’” (Menashri, 2001, p. 34).

In this light, Sorough, who was one of the supporters of the Islamic Revolution, distinguishes between religion and ideology (Menashri, 2001, p. 33). As Tavakoli-Targhi (2000, p. 570) maintains, Sorough, who was involved in the process of the Islamization of the universities soon after the revolution, questions the “homogenization and totalization of the West” and considers the West, pre-Islamic Iran and Islam “as constitutive components of modern Iranian culture”. He maintains that religious ideas and modern views regarding human nature, natural history and epistemology are closely related and “constitute[e] ‘parts of circle’” (Vahdat, 2002, p. 201). At the same time, Sorough argues that the ‘ideologization of religion’ is a reflection of its “vulgarization and [has led] to its deterioration” (Menashri, 2001, p. 33).

In his view, a Popperian perspective on science is compatible with the Islamic Revolution, which is a reflection of Sorough’s “anti-Marxist crusade in both the pre- and post-revolutionary periods” (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2000, p. 570). Sorough maintains that the contemporary understanding of the *Shari‘a* is not reflective of the essence of the *Shari‘a* in itself, but one’s understanding of the *Shari‘a* is “historically situated” and is mediated through “the extra-Quranic cultural capital that informs juristic exposition” (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2000, p. 571).

As Menashri (2001, p. 34) points out, Sorough’s critique of the concept and practice of *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship) aims at reforming Islam. In fact, Tavakoli-Targhi (2000) maintains that Sorough opened “the sanctuaries of religious knowledge to the scrutiny of scientific views and promoted radical rethinking” of the views of those “traditionalist ulama who claimed access to the essence of Islam and the *Shari‘a*” (p. 571). Sorough writes that no text reveals its meaning (on its own). It is the mind of the philologist that reads the meaning in the text…. Accordingly, the meanings of the phenomena are not written on them and are not obtained by simple looking. The observer must know the ‘language’ of the world to read and understand. Science and philosophy teach us this language. And these languages are neither stagnant nor perfect, but in constant transformation. (as cited in Vahdat, 2002, p. 200)
However, Soroush also falls into a modernist conceptualization of science and the role of the intelligentsia in bringing about democracy as the solution to the ills of society by arguing that “the rule of clergy is ‘based on the logic of power, not the logic of liberty’” in comparison to “the religious intellectuals [trained in modern education who] have brought a reconciliation between religion and revolution, and are now endeavouring to reconcile religion with democracy” (as cited in Menashri, 2001, p. 34). These ‘nativist’ conceptions of modernity and tradition show how critiques of Iran and Iranian society by Iranian intellectuals and religious leaders are mediated through reflections on Western thought and perspectives rather than through other forms of non-Western and non-Islamic knowledge that have also been affected by the forces of modernity and colonialism. These languages are themselves discourses and cannot be understood outside relations of power. They tend to determine meaning in light of binary oppositions between the self and the other, in the form of either/or arguments rather than through multiple both/and reflections of various forms of otherness also engaged in the projects of modernity. In this sense, Iranian intellectuals’ approaches are themselves Orientalist in as much as they ignore other forms of non-Western, non-Iranian and traditional indigenous knowledge in reforming Islamic thought and the discourse of *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship).

In these discussions, the image of the self is conceptualized in light of a politicized view of the self and the other that simultaneously reflects two definitions of *gharbzadegi* (West-toxication), as a manifestation of the process of “the subjugation to the West of modern [Islamic] Iranian subjectivity” and of “contemporaneous” “deployment of Greek logic in theology and jurisprudence” (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2000, p. 566). The discourse of *gharbzadegi* is not anti-Western as much as it is a search for redefining an “authentic” definition of the self that is critical of a “mimetic subjectivity” influenced by “the national delusion of ancient grandeur” (Tavakoli-Targhi, 2000, p. 567). However, both approaches to the discourse of *gharbzadegi* are conceptualized in light of envisioning ‘Iran’ as a geographical space with a historical, religious and cultural claim to a region affected by non-Islamic, Islamic, colonial and imperialist relations. Moreover, the context in which the Iranian subaltern attempts to redefine itself has already been altered by the effects of Westernization and the “refashioning of Iranian culture” that was not based on a dialogical process leading to a self-realization devoid of racisms, sexism and classism. As such, although Tavakoli-Targhi (2000) argues that such efforts could be understood as part of “a project of vernacular modernity”, these narratives employed by contemporary Iranian intellectuals did not emerge from a critique of the state and its policies, society and its traditional class relations from within the ‘vernaculars of [other forms of] tradition’ but in
the context of borrowing a modern Western language that has not always been critically evaluated for its own biases in terms of “race”, ethnicity and science on its own terms and from non-Moslem, non-Iranian and non-Western perspectives. As such, the centrality of the other as part of the definition of the self should be understood in light of a critique of the Western other’s formative influences over how the Iranian self is depicted in Iran and in Iranian school textbook.

It is in this light that I analyze how various forms and manifestations of Western and Eastern imperialisms and internal colonialism are reproduced in light of an Orientalist view of the other that is also informed by Occidentalist perceptions about the self and otherness. I attempt to expose the extent to which the dominant Persian group in Iran and its images of the self in relation to various forms of “shifting collectivities” and their manifestations in the narration of nation in Iranian school textbooks are based on Orientalist and/or “Orientalist in reverse” epistemologies that are also diversely affected as a result of Iran’s relations to local and global forms of domination, otherness and oppression (Kamrava, 1993, p. 37-65; Dei, 1996, p. 55-74). Due to the fact that the practice of velayat-e-faqih (jurist guardianship), as a legal entity with rights and obligations, is an important aspect of non-Western modernity, I explore how this form of modernity influences the construction of the ideal citizen and the narration of nation (Hall, 1996a), through an exploration of the discourse of leadership/leader. I account for how this discourse informs the socio-political context in which school textbooks construct the ideal national self that is viewed as the other of the West and the East by both Western and Eastern countries such as the United States and Saudi Arabia. I explore the discourse of velayat-e-faqih by exploring how leadership is represented in Iranian school textbooks and how the discourse of leadership is configured in the construction of the ideal citizen.

2.2 Global Education, “Orientalism in Reverse” and “Shifting Collectivities”

As Said (1978) points out, “the very presence of a ‘field’ such as Orientalism, with no correspondence equivalent in the Orient itself, suggest the relative strength of Orient and Occident” (p. 204). Such a dichotomy in Western epistemology continues to influence how Oriental subjects “approach” and interact with modernity through the lenses of dominant Western theoretical understandings of politics, education, economic development, history and identity construction. As mentioned, global education, as it is being introduced to the Middle East through the United Nations, is one example of recent Western influences that defines pedagogical and instructional approaches to teaching and learning, through which Western scholars’ views about diversity, citizenship and inequality
influence how Orientals should attempt to (re)construct themselves in relation to the West and other countries in their respective national school textbooks in post-modernity (Heater, 2004).

Pike (2000) maintains that global education attempts to socialize students as peaceful and concerned citizens of the world. The need for a global approach to education has been theoretically developed and influenced by North American scholars and activists (Heater, 2004). According to Selby and Pike (as cited in Heater, 2004, p. 158), global education assumes that students should become aware that their personal decisions have local and global consequences. From this perspective, such an understanding should be based on well developed concepts of social justice and human rights (Heater, 2004, p. 158). As such, citizenship education is also considered as an important aspect of global education (UNESCO, Citizenship Education for the Twenty-First Century). Furthermore, as Pike (2000, p. 225) argues, such an approach is conceptualized in light of multicultural education, which deals specifically with internal forms of ethnic, racial and religious diversities, to name a few, rather than simply with international and global multiethnic issues and controversies (Pike, 2000, p. 225).

Global education aims at promoting democratic values and encourages students to become critical social thinkers whose knowledge of local and global conditions leads them to an understanding of social relations that highlights the globalization of socio-political and economic relations and structures and the interdependence of human beings and relations of power, by

- “exploring humans in their physical, spiritual, material, intellectual, and cultural complexity, in which their external and internal worlds are seen and assessed as parts of a whole” (Ashton, 2000, p. 12-13);
- informing students about the “main current global issues related to development, environment, peace, and human rights” (Ashton, 2000, p. 12-13); and,
- familiarising students with perspectives, opinions, views and arguments that are different from their own.

Global education emphasizes a system approach to relationships between nation-states and assumes that students will develop and construct a new understanding of their national histories by being exposed to critical approaches to, for example, colonialism and its effects on various groups and nations across the world (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 7).

In addition, the global push towards child-centred pedagogy, inclusive curriculum and a critical view of gender, racial and ethnic issues entails a re-conceptualization of how national identity, the ideal citizen, the self and the other should be imagined and conceptualized by Iranian curriculum authors. However, in this transfer of knowledge from one part of the world to another, there exists a separation between various forms of Oriental others who are transnational and have made “homes” in different nation-states. Oriental others in the Orient and Oriental
others and the dominant White and non-White Western groups in the Occident are separated and hierarchically positioned due to the effects of imperialism and power differentials at local and global levels. In this light, I explore who has “the power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging” (Saïd, 1994, p. xiii). This power to narrate history and the desired characteristics of the ideal citizen are important aspects of imperialism and the discourses of domination employed by Western forms of modernity (Saïd, 1994, p. xiii). I argue that global education also sees the Orient and the Oriental other in the West as locations of critique that gaze at the East as a way of acknowledging that “discontent with [Western] rule is growing universal”, which ultimately requires Western intervention in the form of the reconstruction of non-Western educational structures, teaching methods and curriculum content (Saïd, 1994, p. 206).

I analyze the 2004 edition of Iranian school textbooks and selected previous editions by problematizing how Orientalism and “Orientalism in reverse” continue to inform the ways through which the Islamic Iranian/Oriental other, from the perspective of the West, sees the self or the ideal Iranian citizen through representations of internal and external others, such as Afghans and black Americans, in the context of imperialism, counter-hegemonic relations and the “new world order” (Boroujerdi, 1996). Boroujerdi (1996) argues that “Orientalism in reverse” does not “claim the universalist and scientific mantle of Orientalism proper” (p. 13). It fails to “superimpose a totalizing identity or ideology upon its non-oriental others” (Boroujerdi, 1996, p. 13). I ask whether or not inclusive approaches to diversity that are based on both Eastern and Western philosophies, as claimed by global education, and a critical view of structural inequality in educational circles in the context of Iranian school textbooks end up laying claims similar to those of Orientalism that aim at “recapture[ing, and finally expropriat[ing the Oriental’s] ‘true’ and ‘authentic’ identity” of not only Iranians but also various forms of Western and non-Western otherness through the efforts of both national and global experts (Boroujerdi, 1996, p. 12).

By drawing on Vaziri (1993), I also explore the extent to which the Iranian national identity and the origin of the nation, as it is constructed in Iranian school textbooks, is based on the reproductions of certain “myths”, which exclude rather than include diversity and recreate an image of Iran that resembles the Orientalist views about the Persian Empire and its origin. Vaziri (1993, p. 131) argues that the construction of Iran as a nation-state with historical roots in antiquity is due to a methodological bias that took dynastic connection in pre-Islamic and post-Islamic periods as a basis for the formation of national meanings. The end result of this methodology was to construct Iranian political history as a “persistent socio-cultural entity” over time (Vaziri, 1993, p. 131). In
constructing Iran, the Iranian identity was set against other forms of otherness such as Arabs and Turks (Vaziri, 1993, p. 143) and minority groups in Africa, Asia and the Americas. Vaziri (1993, p. 152) maintains that “the framework of Iranian scholars’ historiography and Iranology in the twentieth century was basically modeled on European-centred methodology”. As Vaziri (1993, p. 163) argues, scholars need to be critical of nationalistic approaches to history, which also requires a sound re-examination of Western Orientalism and its Eastern adoption in the form of, in the case of this research, curriculum writing. School curriculum must be analyzed for its non-critical evaluation and incorporation of not only Orientalist knowledge but also of their methods and theoretical suppositions. As Vaziri (1993) maintains, it is anachronistic to apply today’s notions of identity to the past in the process of constructing a national identity. I explore the extent to which the racial biases of the Orientalists have also become part of the historical construction of Iranians in relation to, for example, the Turk and Arab populace, despite the process of Islamization and the introduction of progressive educational programs in Iran. Are global education and similar methods of constructing textbooks attentive to how the origin of Iran is represented for students in the curriculum by accounting for the “racial biases” that inform its construction in Orientalist discourse?

Through “Orientalism in reverse”, I also highlight that school knowledge about the ideal Iranian citizen should not be understood as being produced within a so-called Islamized culture by accounting for how knowledge produced by Iranians for Iranians may be an adaptation of other forms of knowledge produced by others in various parts of the world and from perspectives that may be racist, sexist and nation-centric. This knowledge about otherness is drawn upon in representations of the ideal citizen and is considered as authentic knowledge about someone else, an outsider. It is in this sense that I examine how Orientalism and “Orientalism in reverse” inform the ways in which the self, national identity and the ideal citizen are constructed in relation to objective, knowable and perpetual forms of otherness that reflects the attitudes of progressive forces in a distant land about Oriental others residing in the East or in the West. I explore how “Orientalism in reverse” distinguishes between elements of the West and the East and situates the East against various forms of otherness that are divided into friendly and enemy others, whose positions and relations change due to global and local events. Moreover, I examine whether Iranian school textbooks represent essentialised and totalizing images of the Occident, Occidental other and non-Iranian parts of the Orient as “the truth” about Iran and the world. I also investigate whether “Orientalism in reverse” has the same universalist consequences due to its Western epistemological and theoretical suppositions that eventually elevates the West in relation to Iranians and other non-Westerners as more “civilized”.
The discourse of “Orientalism in reverse” has a profound meaning and implication for understanding the ideal citizen and national identity in the context of the discourses of global education, child-centred pedagogy, Islamization and Persianization. As mentioned, the Iranian self-conception of the national self (us) is conceptualized in light of the views about other forms of otherness in both the East and the West that construct it as a homogenized image (Boroujerdi, 1996). In the context of global relations of power, Iran, the Islamic Republic and Iranians are also conceptualized as the other of the West. For example, Iranians in relation to Westerners are conceptualized as them in Western epistemology. Both Iranians and Western others simultaneously construct their otherness through the lenses that are also used in constructing and representing their nemeses, such as the American and Iranian ideal citizens and national selves. In exploring a notion of us to describe Iran and who Iranians are, the category Iranian is also defined in respect to internal them categories that are often identified in popular culture as Afghan refugees, Turk, Kurd, Baha’i and Arab minority groups (Banuazizi & Weiner Eds., 1986, p. 157-255). In exploring the history of Iran, its education system and textbook production, I analyze the image of the Iranian self and how it is equal to the sum of the dialectical interactions between various forms of “us and them” categories within the discursive formation of Islam, Persianization and/or Western educational theories and perspectives that invoke and reflect specific interpretations of pre-Persian Empire, post-Persian Empire, Islamic, pre-colonial, colonial, anti-colonial and imperialist interactions.

I focus on how self-conceptions of other groups are reflected upon from the perspective of dominant groups in charge of producing and disseminating official school knowledge in Iran. I explore how, during which historical epoch, under what kind of political atmosphere and for what ideological purposes are us and them contradictory relations invoked. I argue that the various relationships between insiders and outsiders are constructed within a hierarchy that is already established by the discourses used. I explore how discourses that highlight differences between groups are given significance in the context of the construction and legitimization of Iran as a nation-state in Iranian school textbooks, by determining which social difference categories are labelled as legitimate and important (Dei, 1996). I also analyze which social difference categories are essentialized by references to certain fixed attributes that are then considered as characteristics of the whole group. These differences have real material consequences and in constructing a democratic curriculum, there needs to be an attempt to address “how racism, sexism, and ethnocentric views” inherent in these approaches affect the life-chances of individuals (Dei, 1996). In fact, the extent to which global education in light of a critical approach to “Orientalism in reverse” as universal
knowledge about the other is incorporated into school textbooks has not been adequately studied and interrogated in the context of school textbooks in the Middle East and Iran (Nasser 2005; Anderson, 2001; Vaziri, 1993). In exploring the multiple and hybrid dynamics of social difference[s] and issues of identity and subjectivity, I question the hierarchy of difference. I account for the multiple forms of us and them divisions within and between both categories of the self and the other by subverting a problematic and exclusive fascination with the other (Dei, 1996, p. 60). I explore whose concerns and visions of divergent conceptualizations of difference/sameness are presented by analyzing how these differences and representations of sameness are employed in contradictory ways in positioning “multiple identities” and “subject positions” in depicting idealized images of the other in terms of its relations to Iran’s nemeses (Dei, 1996, p. 63).

Seeing and accounting for difference and sameness from a dialectical perspective is considered as a pedagogical tool in the process of de-colonizing knowledge. The problem of reproducing the other from the perspective of the dominant group is averted by focusing on how various types of selves are constructed from within the self and the national identity and in relation to their perceived characteristics.

Put differently, within the framework of colonial and anti-imperialist movements, I argue that “the identities of colonized and colonizers are constructed relative [to sameness and] to both difference and otherness” (Dei et al. 2005, p. 55). That is, the ideal citizen is viewed as a collection of specific “shifting terrains of meanings” that partly inform citizens’ conceptions of their rights and relations to otherness as coherent or disjointed selves. Central to these conceptions of otherness or the self as coherent or disjointed are the differences that constitute them. Also, the discourses that control and manage how differences are represented and reproduced play an important role in depicting coherent identities that are required to carve out of diversity a sense of unity that is then applied to view diversity and conceptions of self.

“Shifting collectivities” refers to how groups and individuals determine and define their ever-shifting memberships in various groupings and how, in turn, they are considered and classified as members of specific groupings by the state, different institutions, school textbooks and individuals with different class, ethnic, religious and national origins in different countries, places and during different time periods. As Linda Camino and Ruth Krulfeld (1994, p. xii) point out, “identity construction is often defined as situational”. According to Fredrick Barth (as cited in Camino and Krulfeld, 1994),

“in situations in which boundaries and identities are negotiated, [they] may vary depending upon: whether the members of the group are interacting with themselves; whether they are interacting with people external
to the group; how those external to the group [i.e.: those in control of the state and its institutions] regard them when interacting with them; and how they are regarded by outsiders when they are not present among these outsiders”. (p. xii)

“Shifting collectivities”, then, refers to the situationality of identity construction, which depends on the interrelationship between factors such as class, “race,” gender and sexuality in high modernity, how categories of insiders and outsiders are conceptualized and how marginalized groups are affected by state policies of modernization and international political affairs, such as Zionism, Islamization and imperialism. These “shifting boundaries”, as Nasser (2004) argues, are based on national and international power relations and discourses that simultaneously inform the relationship between us and them.

I explore how racialized, classed and gendered inequalities are represented and/or ignored in the textbooks from what I call a “transnational standpoint”. This position points to an outsider within status, a position of belonging “yet not belonging which forms an integral part of [the subject’s] oppositional consciousness” (as cited in Henry, 1996, p. 367). This position of belonging to two worlds partly resembles what Hall refers to as diaspora identities “that are constantly producing or reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference” (as cited in Grossberg, 1993, p. 97). However, such a transnational standpoint at times may itself fall into what Bhabha calls mimicry, which should be understood “as a (‘mis’)appropriation of the dominant discourses”, that in this case are both Eastern and Western (as cited in Grossberg, 1993, p. 97). A transnational standpoint has many interactive sides, two of which are: the awareness of both the dominant worldview prevalent in society and one’s own minority perspective.

In this research, an oppositional standpoint aims to account for both Western and the Iranian elite’s influences in developing the Iranian education system (Henry, 1996, p. 365; Razack, 1998, p. 39-41). Such a standpoint is critical of the status quo (Ng, 1993). The aim is to deconstruct those power relations which operate within the school system and outside educational institutions at home, the work place and through other forms of private and public institutions as tools in decoding school textbooks. This requires viewing sexism, classism and racism as systemic and interpersonal. Inequalities need to be combated collectively, not just personally (Ng, 1993). Seen in this light, education is viewed as a site of struggle for meaning and control over power relations, a process which is transnational. As Said (1978) states, “the politics of cross-cultural representation, whether historical, literary, or anthropological, has been a colonial politics, that the construction of otherness and difference has for the
last several hundred years been linked to projects of rule and domination”. I deconstruct the textbooks within the confines of these transnational “shifting collectivities”.

Through this approach, the deconstruction of Iranian school textbooks can result in emancipatory and empowering processes that enable me to interrogate those social collectivities that are othered and constructed as in need of control and change in the textbooks. This knowledge can be utilized as a way of introducing and implementing structural and institutional changes in textbook production in Iran. In deconstructing the textbooks for their portrayals of difference and the ideal citizen in his or her broader national, economic, regional and family contexts, I attempt to expose the terms the other and the self, as they are constructed in Iranian school textbooks, not only in terms of the marginalization of difference and non-dominant relations and structures per se (Jenkins, 1991, p. 25), but also in terms of the essentialization of various types of selves into binary oppositions of “good” and “bad”.

2.3 Schooling and Knowledge: Contradictory Relations and De-Colonization

School knowledge and how it is presented to students and read by them has been the subject of intense debate about the “nature” of learning, teaching and functions of schooling and education across the globe (Oakes and Lipton, 2003, p. 2-39). As mentioned, the education system has been historically perceived as important for the nation-building process and for democratic education. This requires that school textbooks reconstruct a nation’s history and its representation in a linear form, showing continuity between the present and past (Anderson, 2001, p. 5). Yet, as Anderson (2001, p. 5,7) points out, national identity and representations of the ideal citizen that are often conceptualized as universal are, in fact, based on the norms and values of certain groups and classes within those groups.

Representations of diversity, history, gender, ethnicity, “race” and “morality” in school textbooks are not apolitical depictions, but determine who gets to speak and when (hooks, 1990, p. 9). In other words, they are discursive: they limit what can be said by being represented from a specific perspective and for specific ends (McLaren, 1998, p. 184). They dictate what components must be excluded from these discursive representations. Hence, whoever produces knowledge and controls its dissemination also controls how people ought to behave and what they need to know about themselves, their nation, culture, war, human rights and genocide. This knowledge is perceived as shaping people’s consciousness and their understanding of the roles of the ideal citizen and the national self.
Said (1993, p. 14) points out that cultural narrations are hybrid constructions and imperfect representations. In the context of post-colonial relations, many non-Western leaders have “projected their power backwards in time, giving it a history and legitimacy that only tradition and longevity could impart” (Said, 1993, p. 16). The “Third World” has created images of itself that show how it used to be before colonial and imperialist interventions. Said (1993, p. 306-314) maintains that it is time for Middle Easterners to account for and become critical of the existing constructions of otherness within the Middle East that developed within the region and demarcated imagined boundaries between the peoples of the Middle East based on factors such as ethnicity, language and religious beliefs.

In the context of colonial and imperialist relations, the colonial gaze also finds its *emic* manifestations as the other of the West and it excludes internal others who diverge from the perceived norms of national identity along tribal/ethnic lines and political ideology. As Spivak argues, “No perspective critical of imperialism can turn the ‘Other’ into an insider (i.e.: the national self and the ideal citizen) and a member of the ‘us’ category, because the project of imperialism has always already historically refracted what might have been the absolutely ‘Other’ into a domesticated ‘Other’ that consolidates the imperialist self” (as cited in Henry, 1996, p. 378). There are colonial-like internal relationships that constitute everyday interactions between the peoples of the Middle East. Differences between Turks and Persians, Arabs and Persians, Arabs and Indians, and Shi’a Arabs and Sunni Arabs are generalizations that do not account for diversity within or across these categories (Vaziri, 1993; Vahdat, 2002). Nevertheless, such classifications point to historical divisions that are themselves hierarchical and the outcome of years of interactions between regional powers (Cleveland, 1994). In this study, I identify the ways in which the intersections of different forms of “social marginality and structured dominance” and their shifts “with changing conditions in society” (Dei, 1996, p. 56) are depicted in Iranian school textbooks. I also acknowledge that it is also the other through his/her theories that needs to be critiqued in light of nationalistic movements and anti-imperialist slogans in examining how conflicting images and interpretations of the us and the other are reflected in constructing and portraying images of the ideal citizen. This conceptualization also applies to other “Third World” societies who construct their national identity in relation to the West. Are such images of the nation hegemonic or emancipatory? Do they promote resistance, participation and opposition or acceptance of the *status quo* and conformity?

bell hooks (1990) argues that it is through decolonizing “colonized minds” and actions that it is possible to promote “the insurrection of subjugated knowledge” about the self and the other. By decolonizing “colonized minds”, I am referring to the need to critique how it is that non-Westerners continue to be engaged in a “ritual of
transcendence, a movement out into the world of difference” (hooks, as cited in Razack, 2001, p. 5), whose parameters are determined and implicated by Western epistemologies and Western knowledge about the other, the Western self and raced groups within the West. At the same time, the dialectical relationships between various forms of unequal categories are nevertheless confined and “determined” by laws, norms, political ideology and regulations within various national boundaries. They are also affected by the types of relationships between national governments and between national governments and their respective minority groups (Hobsbawm, 1993). Orientalist knowledge cannot be decontextualized and separated from the process of colonization. Thus, in discussing how Orientalism informs textbooks knowledge, it is also significant to take into consideration that Islamic ideology, as a political ideology and a way to decolonize knowledge itself, has incorporated Western frameworks in situating itself in national settings by relying on what Giddens (1990) refers to as ‘expert systems’. In decolonizing non-Western perceptions about national and global relations, there is a need to account for how non-Western ideological and nationalistic worldviews about the self and the other in their multifaceted forms incorporate a Western conceptualization of the binary opposition of ‘civilized’ and ‘liberated’ that end up “positioning [non-Western intelligentsia] as modern, free and enlightened” (Razack, 2001, p. 5-6) and offer counter-hegemonic discourses and solutions to the oppressive policies of Western capitalist countries.

As such, I adopt a dialectical understanding of the contradictory consequences of schooling. On one hand, education and schooling are conceptualized as a way of and a tool in, “furthering liberty, equality, and the good of the individual—not just the good of the state” (Menashri, 1992, p. 169). On the other hand, the education system entails within it a discourse for the “social integration” of various individuals and groups into the dominant culture, norms and values. Education and schooling can be emancipatory, hegemonic and ideological. Berezin (1994) argues that as an ideological entity, they are “open to contestation, resistance and rebellion, whereas [hegemonic schooling and the education it provides] are subtle, pervasive and ultimately difficult to contest because [they subsume] the forms that structure actions and beliefs” (p. 103). The education system, as an apparatus of the state, is “not satisfied with imposing new ideologies that can be easily ignored or adapted” (Berezin, 1994, p. 103). Those in control of the state attempt to “change the forms of social behaviours to impose a new [form of] hegemony” (Berezin, 1994, p. 103). Using Gellner’s words, it could therefore be argued that “[t]he monopoly of legitimate education is now [as] important [and] more central than [the] monopoly of legitimate violence” (as cited in Schudson, 1994, p. 30). Related to this are the rights and monopoly of the “production of useful knowledge”, especially for modernizing and
revolutionary governments. It is also important to consider the role of schooling as a disciplinary institution whose logic is also informed by the ‘matrix of discipline’ (Rejali, 1994, p. 37). Do school textbooks order life, rank priorities and provide a sequence of feelings and routines that are coordinated and regulated within the context of school experiences and structures? Are textbooks vehicles for enabling teachers “to correct defects [amongst students]” within appropriate and efficient means of how lessons and subjects are structured and knowledge about the self and the other disseminated? What are those ‘symbolic generalizations’ about the nation, the West, science, class, economic relations and gender that students read in their textbooks that are “deployed without question or dissent by group members” (Kuhn, 1970, p. 182)? What is the role of school textbooks in enabling students to become familiar with a component of the ‘disciplinary matrix’ that instils in them “shared commitments to such beliefs as” the origin of the nation, the continuity of the nation and its founding peoples (Kuhn, 1970, p. 184)? How is the history of the nation presented in light of “the concrete problem-solutions that students encounter from the start of their education” about the importance of the nation and its inherent right to govern a specific geographical area referred to as “Our Country” (Kuhn, 1970, p. 187)? I investigate how Iranian school textbooks, viewed as ‘disciplinary matrices’, function as structures through which individuals are trained, observed and their conceptions of selves corrected according to the dominant knowledge base, values and norms (Rejali, 1994, p. 37).

2.4 School Textbooks and Nation-Building as Curricular Knowledge

The curriculum “is the primary vehicle for achieving the goals and objectives of a school” (Parkay et al., 2005, p. 301). It is considered as an important source of printed instructional material across the globe from which educators draw their teaching content (Parkay et al., 2005, p. 301). Textbook publishing has become a competitive and lucrative global business especially since the commercialization of knowledge (i.e.: including public “commons” knowledge, Bowers, 2005). The introduction and use of textbooks is also a gendered enterprise that attempts to deskill the predominately female elementary teacher workforce. In this sense, textbooks are forms of domination and control of the workplace (Apple, 1986). Through school textbooks, the materials, objectives and goals have already been set for the teachers (especially elementary [female] teachers) at the national level (See Freedman’s discussion on gender, division of labour and curriculum construction, 1988, p. 204-217).

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25 Iranian textbook publishers also produce additional teacher manuals and visual aids for teachers and parents (See http://literature-dept.talif.sch.ir/?id=24, retrieved January 13, 2005).
The process of textbook knowledge production is context dependent (Manicom, 1992, p. 372; See also Thompson and Gregg, as cited in Henson, 2001, p. 7; Nieto, 2000, p. 383; Razack, 1998). It reflects the prevailing ideological and political relations of power (Steedman, 1988, p. 119-139). It represents a selected and dominant view about racialized, ethnic, gender and class relations, nationally and globally (Skilbek, 1975; McCarthy, 1990, p. 63-114). “Selective knowledge” becomes “official knowledge” and, as such, “ignores” and “silences” information, histories of and knowledge about other cultures, classes and religious groups (McCarthy, 1990b, p. 35-49; Apple, 2004). From this perspective, the curriculum is a site of struggle and domination as those in control of the power structure limit the free expression of other peoples’ ideas. “Truth” and knowledge are presented as one-dimensional by representing, promoting and justifying the dominant ideology, ideals and aims/goals (Hall, 1996b).

Giroux (1999, p. 9) states that it is important to account for the concentrated power that produces meanings and knowledge about the self and the other. However, Weiner points out that “meaning is constructed within language and is not guaranteed by what the author intends. Thus, for example, any analysis of the impact of curriculum policy necessarily has to consider its interpretation as well as its intention or impact” (Weiner, 1994, p. 98-99). Meaning is not determined by the author or his or her intentions but it is also dependent on the perceptions and worldviews of its receivers and the kinds of discursive practices and fields that are at play in decoding the “message” in the “text”. As Jenkins (1991) argues, “authors cannot force their intentions/interpretation on the reader” (p. 24). However, this does not imply that texts are not read “in predictable manners” (Jenkins, 1991, p. 24). Therefore, it is also important to account for how textbooks shape “public memory, national identity, gender roles and childhood memories” and who “qualifies as” Iranian and Moslem (Giroux, 1999, p. 10). On this very point, Said (1978, p. 23) reminds us that the collective position of individual authors must be problematized and considered as an important element of research. Textbooks are written by a group of individuals who have certain values, positions and ideological suppositions and standpoints (Jenkins, 1991, p. 21). As Siavoshi (1995) points out, school textbooks are important tools of political socialization in Iran.

2.5 School Textbooks, Narrations of Nation, “Citizenship Education”, the State and Discourse: the Case of Iran

As elaborated in the previous sections, the image of the ideal citizen is represented through narrations about the origin and history of the nation. Stories about the dominant culture are reproduced discursively through the narratives of nation (Hall, 1996a, p. 613). Narrations require conformity to establish norms that are simultaneously
used in constructing images of the nation, the country and the ideal citizen (Seidman, 1994, p. 206; Heater 2004, p. 77; Osborne, 1991, p. 20-22; Kedourie, 1966, p. 83; Anderson 2001; Nasser, 2004; Wotherspoon, 2004; Apple 2004). School textbooks present the narratives of nation to their readers by references to various discourses through which textbooks construct what “nation” is, where “nation/country” is, where “citizens” live and how the “nation” has been transformed over the years by invoking binary oppositions with fixed meanings (Hall, 1996a, p. 613).

National histories idealize the founding nation(s) and demonize otherness (Francis, 1997). Such narrations romanticize certain events, individuals and cultural artefacts that elevate the dominant society “to the status of legend” (Francis, 1997, p. 11). These narrations, such as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as the protector of Canada’s sovereignty, are constructed by vilifying and marginalizing individuals and groups that are considered as “undesirable” (i.e.: the First Nations of Canada, Francis, 1997, p. 11). The discourse of Canadian nation-ness depends on the invocation of other discourses such as the “(noble) savage”. As such, narrations of nation demonize certain groups as “dangerous” and in need of “supervision”. The process of remembering history selectively organizes history into a simplified coherent story about a nation-state and images of the ideal citizen (Francis, 1997, p. 11; Hall, 1996a, p. 614).

Historically, it was assumed by many Iranian intellectuals of both the past and present that in order for Iranians to face the challenges of modernity, they needed to change their attitudes, worldviews and affiliations with religious or tribal nomadism (Banani, 1961). The main aim of the education system was viewed as assimilationist and integrationist in nature and character. Tradition needed to be averted and modernity needed to be explored and welcomed. The separation of us, categorized as Persian, literate, urban, and them, conceptualized as illiterate, “wild”, “uncivilized” tribes-people, did not, however, distinguish between and within ethnic, tribal and minority groups in Iran. This view was further conceptualized in light of an evolutionary paradigm that assumed that “tribal people” are “incapable” of responding to the effects of modernity and need the assistance of the state (Menashri, 1992). In other words, Iranians needed the help of Westerners and non-Persians were in need of Persians for progress, with these limits being defined in the West. As Rejali (1994) argues, “to be modern meant that one was sane, healthy, orderly, educated, disciplined, and useful, whereas to remain traditional meant that one was insane, diseased, disorderly, undisciplined, ignorant, and useless” (p. 52).
As mentioned, after the revolution, the Islamic leadership revamped and revised school textbooks by purging the Westernized ideology and by replacing “it with [an] Islamic ideology” (Mohsenpour, 1988, p. 82-83; Mehran, 1989; Matini, 1989, p. 49). In 1988, the goals of the education system were conceptualized as:

- “[helping] students discover the mysteries of the cosmos and the cause-and effect relations of natural phenomena”;
- “[protecting] the sacredness of family relations based on Islamic faith”;
- “[accepting] the absolute role of God over the world and human beings and unite Muslim nations”.

(The goals are cited in Mohsenpour, 1988, p. 85; See also Shorish, 1988, p. 60; 2002, p. 232; Matini, 1989, p. 48-49; Mohsenpour, 1988, p. 77; Siavoshi 1995, p. 203-204)

The ideal citizen favoured by Iranian educators is “one who is successful both in materialistic and spiritual aspects of life, adheres to ethics and justice and is interested in attaining spiritual perfection”.

These national and global goals are juxtaposed against the other main goal of the state to indirectly intervene in the private affairs of Iranians, as reflected in the policies of the state, by dictating how families should be organized and how relations should be played out in light of the socialization of students in family settings.

It is within this official standpoint of how the family is conceptualized that images of the ideal citizen are reproduced in light of the nation-state as a sovereign entity (Wali, 1995, p. 177; during the 1990s, female Afghan refugees were also told by their elders in Pakistan that they could contribute to Jihād by offering their bodies as surrogate mothers to the nation). In the last fifty years, the role of the state in instigating change in the nature (structure) of family relations and in blurring the distinction between the private and public spheres are important elements or “traces” in deconstructing how the ideal citizen is constructed (Kandiyoti, 1995, p. 22-23). They are tools in the process of controlling and redefining gender relations in correspondence with economic concerns and needs. As such, the public/private dichotomy is dissolved as the affairs of the family are not viewed as affairs of blood relations alone. They are viewed as concerns of a collection of different types of citizens whose relationships with the state and the world must ensure the reproduction of the nation of Iran and the Unmat-i Islami (Islamic Nation/Community), which is necessary for the continuation of the elite’s legitimacy to power. The family is not a category through which I attempt to conceptualize the ideal citizen; rather it limits and dictates the ways in which the ideal citizen can be presented and analyzed. For this reason, I explore how the ideal citizen is presented within the limits of the discourse of the family as it is defined by the Islamic leadership in school textbooks. In fact, in many lessons in the 2004 and previous editions of textbooks for grades 1 through 8, especially in the Persian and

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Social Studies textbooks, representations of family settings and depictions of family members interacting with one another have been employed to present students with various ideas and concepts about, for example, Iran and other countries. These specific lessons are not about the family per se, but the discourse of the ideal family behaves like a “trace” that links all lessons into a single whole about Iran. Although the textbooks are concerned with informing students about who is Iranian and what are the desirable elements of the ideal citizen, the element that is the “trace” in all these discussions is actually the construction of the ideal family as a collection of different types of selves that are gendered, raced, classed and ethnicized. In other words, the idea of family itself is a non-present discourse that defines the limits of the individual rights and obligations of the ideal citizen.

It is then important to analyze how the family is constructed in discussions of the ideal citizen and national identity. As well, I explore how Moslem nations are discussed and depicted in school textbooks in terms of “us and them” relations and through the processes of othering. I analyze the obligations of the ideal citizen to various forms of otherness across the globe and to those who are conceptualized as members of the nation of Islam. Who are they, where are they located and how are they configured in the discussions and representations of the ideal citizen in relation to the Western other? For these reasons, I investigate how the state defines itself locally and globally through private relations and the discourse of family in the 2004 edition of school textbooks.

In the 1999 and previous editions of post-revolutionary textbooks, the ideal citizen was also constructed as an individual who had a sound understanding of his/her obligations to Iran: to defend the country and Islam against invasions by foreign forces (Mehran, 2002). The ideal citizen was depicted as willing to sacrifice his or her life to protect the Islamic Republic. He or she was willing to become a spy, gathering and providing information “regarding what goes on among the people” and be part of the “thirty-six million members of the intelligence service” (Mehran, 1989, p. 39-40). In this sense, the ideal citizen was represented as a vigilant and alert individual. In the textbooks, the ideal citizen was well aware of his or her history and relations with the West. The West was reflected upon as either morally and/or technologically more “superior” and/or culturally and morally less “superior” in representing and constructing the Iranian self (Mehran, 2002, p. 246).

In addition, the ideal citizen in the post-revolutionary period was not represented as a materialist individual but as a person who was more concerned with religious, moral and ethical issues (Mohsenpour, 1988, p. 82). His and her obligations were also to help Iran to develop and become economically competitive. In fact, in 1998, the Supreme Council of Education approved the following general principles, goals and objectives of education
“National development is the primary aim of education and it should be developed to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration and cultivate social, moral, and spiritual values with great emphasis placed on strengthening and encouraging the faith of Islam. The goals also emphasize the role of education in developing labour for different levels of the economy and thus education is visualized as an investment in the future” (Ministry of Education, *Education in Islamic Republic of Iran*, 2003, p. 19). Despite such an emphasis in educational policies, most studies have not explored the role of school textbooks in determining how economic messages, such as the desire to develop Iran, are communicated to students and what are the economic discourses that inform the construction of the ideal citizen in terms of relations between Iran and other countries in this global age of commerce.

In addition, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, in his address to the officials of the Ministry of Education, maintained that there is a need for “serious efforts to provide the young generation with religious training and employing sound and efficient methods to realize this important objective”.

That is, the discourse of *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship) is also both a present and a non-present “trace” that plays a dominant role in the political and economic decision-making processes in Iran. As Mehran (2004) points out,

The religio-political leaders of Iran have aimed at Islamizing the young mainly through the formal education system. State-religious education in the Islamic Republic is used to create a strong Shi’i identity, bring about a sense of loyalty and devotion to the ruling religio-political elite, and promote acceptance of the governance of the religious jurisprudent (*velayat-e faqih*). Religious education in Iran is thus marked by a close link between politics and religion.

Mehran (2004) maintains in reference to the post-revolutionary period,

A uniform curriculum, standard textbooks, and extensive extra-curricular activities are used throughout the country to instil religious values in schoolchildren. In fact, Iran ranks fifth among fifty four countries studied in terms of percentage of teaching time allocated to religious education during the first six years of formal schooling. Iranian schools spend an average of 13.9 percent of time teaching religion, following Saudi Arabia (31 percent), Yemen (28.2 percent), Qatar (15.5 percent), and Libya (14.3 percent).

As mentioned, Mehran (2002) also points out that in elementary school textbooks, the notion of “the unity of mankind and the unity of the Islamic *Ummat* or the Islamic Community was also emphasized as part of the curriculum in the 1999 edition of elementary school textbooks. However, she does not discuss how similarly and/or differently these Moslem nations are constructed and represented. Mehran and other scholars do not explore how Moslem nations are depicted historically in relation to Iran. Moreover, in promoting sympathy, Iranian curriculum

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writers mainly referred to how the Palestinian other is reflected in the textbooks without analyzing how the promotion of sympathy and empathy is related to other marginalized groups around the world (Mehran, 2002). These studies also lack any real attention to how non-Moslem nations that have experienced colonial relations are depicted in the textbooks. The state sponsored Iranian national identity is constructed based on the principles of religious orthodoxy of Shi’aitsm and based on Persian-centric norms, values, culture and mores in relation to these global forms of identity (Beck, 1990; Abrahamian, 1993). I explore how diversity in terms of marginalized Moslems and non-Moslem nations is discussed in light of the discourses of imperialism, colonialism, the oppressed (mustāżafīn) and Ummat-i Islāmī (Islamic Nation/Community).

In addition, Mehran (2002) argues that the same textbooks “instigated” a sense of “fear” and “animosity” towards the “West” that justified “hatred” and “violence” rather than kindness, tolerance and forgiveness. She does not elaborate in what ways “violence” is justified against the West. She also ignores the extent to which “hatred” is also directed at internal forms of otherness or in what ways. Mehran does not discuss how “violence” is depicted in historical terms by Iranians against other nations in school textbooks. An interesting question for further research that emerges is how the ideal citizen is contextualized in discussions of wars, conquests and defeats locally, nationally and globally. Related to this is how “violence” is presented and discussed in relation to various forms of otherness in light of the introduction of a western-centred perspective of global education, which is based on principles of human rights, democracy and acceptance of diversity. Although I do not answer this question, I do account for whose histories are conceptualized as being affected by the violence they have experienced due to the oppressive actions and policies of political groups, ethnic/national groups and/or states across the world.

I focus my analysis on the larger question of whose vision of the West is presented in the textbooks and for what purpose. As mentioned, in the discourses of Orientalism/“Orientalism in reverse”, Iran is often constructed as what it is not: knowledge about Iran in the form of texts is framed in the language and prevalent discourses of Iran’s other. In constructing this knowledge about otherness, there is a simultaneous reflection upon the West as its opposite self that should be controlled by developing further knowledge about the other. However, there are certain aspects of Western cultural, economic and technological products and knowledge that have become important defining characteristics of modern life for many Iranians. Western influences in political thought and social movements have played important roles in the socio-political events in Iran and in popular culture and music. At the same time, I explore the extent to which the West is conceptualized as a unified hegemonic entity by analyzing how
diversity within the West in terms of references to minority and marginalized groups, such as African Americans, is portrayed and represented to students. Do such representations affirm the revolutionary ideology of the state that is then incorporated to situate Iranians in respect to various types of Western otherness as superior? I determine which “selves” within the West, the East and Iran are oothered and which are, at least symbolically, considered as part of the global identity of the Iranian ideal citizen.

As discussed in previous chapters, my approach to deconstructing school textbooks is in line with the recent emphasis on human rights and peace education in citizenship/civic education across the globe. The current emphasis on the discourse of “citizenship education” was developed and influenced by relations and events such as the massacre of millions of people of Jewish ancestry and peoples of other minority and marginalized backgrounds such as those known as ‘Gypsies’ during the Nazi era; the Cold-War mentality; the collapse of the Soviet-Union; Islamic oppositions to Western hegemony; the demand for human rights by groups in various nation-states; the rise in nationalism and the globalization of the economy (Lynch, 1991, p. 8-13).

In most countries, there has been a concerted effort to introduce “citizenship” information as part of civic education. In Northern Ireland, the aim of this education is to shift from an emphasis on political violence to peace (Smith, Fountain and McLaren, 2002, p. 21). In the United States, individual rights are overemphasised in the curriculum rather than collective notions of social responsibility of individuals (Smith, Fountain and McLaren, 2002, p. 21) in a system that also re-emphasizes the importance of national unity and patriotism in curriculum (Apple, 2004, p. 157-171). In Ukraine, as Kuzio (2005) argues, discussions about and representations of historical myths and the nation-building process are influenced by two schools of thought: The “Ukrainophile” is anti-Russian and constructs Soviet rule as negative and the East Slavic approach is not critical of Soviet hegemonic control over Ukraine.

In the United Kingdom, individual aspects of responsibility and moral education dominate the content of “citizenship” classes with little emphasis placed on promoting engaged ‘active citizens’ by, for example, participating in local and international initiatives and coalitions such as the peace demonstrations in 2003 (Cunningham and Lavalette, 2004, p. 255). Those advocating critical pedagogy, on the other hand, argue that “citizenship” in the West is becoming “more privatized and youth are increasingly educated to become consumers rather than critical social subjects” (Ovando and McLaren, 2000, p. 59). It is argued that a critical “citizenship” curriculum should be based on the lived experiences of students that accounts for their cultural, social and political
needs and realities and should attempt to present students with a strong base in critical literacy skills (Wood, 1988, p. 178; Parkay et al., 2005, p. 305).

Critical pedagogy problematizes students’ worldview through a “critical analysis of their experiences” and by allowing students to act with more security in the world (Freire, 1985, p. 14; Banks, 2001, p. 52). An emancipatory curriculum is conceptualized as providing students with opportunities to “evaluate what is read and heard with respect to the interests being served or the position taken” (Wood, 1988, p. 178). The aim is to develop in students a sense of “global citizenship” with “rights and obligations” (Banks, 2001, p. 57; Unicef, *A World Fit for Children*, 2004, in Persian). Despite their differences, the common element in these varied discourses, nevertheless, is their emphasis on “human rights”, global diversity and inter-relationships and child-centred pedagogy (Lee, 2002), which have also influenced Iranian educators.

However, Iranian post-revolutionary school textbooks have not been evaluated for how they have been revised over the last twenty years based on the incorporation of such views. In analyzing these textbooks, I consider how the Islamization process has taken shape within the epistemological limitations of Western scientific knowledge, approaches and conceptualizations of the material world used in constructing the ideal Iranian citizen in relation to various forms of otherness. The discourses that inform the construction of textbooks have also not been interrogated for their sexist, patriarchal, racist, ethnocentric and religious-centric biases and their consequences in terms of representations of otherness in relation to the ideal citizen. This process, which is dialectical and global with manifestations that are hybrid and ever changing, is often ignored.

It is in this light that I examine the extent to which Iranian school textbooks are Orientalist texts. I explore whether or not the ideals of new programs and perspectives that have influenced the Iranian education system in the past decade have been incorporated in revising the 2004 edition of elementary and guidance level textbooks. I deconstruct the discourses of nation-building in Iran and how they give coherence and meaning to “citizenship” identity. I also examine how the idealized myth of the “nation” as the source of identity and identification is presented to “Iranians”. I explore the ways in which representations and narrations of the ideal Iranian citizen, as the “national self”, are contested spaces “where competing discourses jockey for leverage if not supremacy” (Dei et al., 2005, p. 54). Representations of the ideal citizen are approached as “co-constructed, guided, relational and mediated” processes that find specific historical manifestations, but nevertheless occur by references to “multiple voices, languages, knowledge and discourses” (Dei et al., 2005, p. 54). The framing of the ideal citizen is complex,
contradictory and global, which has accentuated the multifaceted “characters” of identity and its socio-economic and political underpinnings. Iran is explored as an example of how economic, political, cultural and social issues as well as local and global conditions affect the construction of us and them divisions that are considered as important and central to the construction of the ideal citizen and national identity.
3. Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the methodology that I draw upon in analyzing and deconstructing Iranian school textbooks. I consider school textbooks, as official knowledge, as the official ‘statements’ of the state that also function as the ‘statements’ of the theoretical assumptions of their authors that inform their structure and content. I deconstruct the textbooks by amalgamating various methodological approaches such as content and discourse analyses in order to account for how power differences, inequalities and everyday actions “are constituted” locally and globally in the context of textbook revisions/production in Iran (Weiner, 1994, p. 99). Through these methods of investigation I explore the extent to which “dominating and emerging discourses in [the textbooks and from the institutions of power] provide a repertoire of concepts, which can be used” to support and reproduce the existing patterns of resource distribution and social constructions of identities (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 32). I introduce the reader to the content and structure of textbooks analyzed in this study in light of a brief discussion of non-present and present traces and discourses that inform their construction. I explain the logic for my “unit of analysis” that allows me to deconstruct school textbooks as multiple ‘statements’. I then proceed with a discussion on deconstruction, discourse and content analyses and end with a critique of the methods used in this research.

3.1 School Textbooks, “Traces” and Deconstruction: Local and Global Statements of Power

I analyze as primary sources of data various editions of elementary and guidance level textbooks in Iran, with a focus on the 2004 edition. Although information about the ideal citizen, the family and other countries is communicated to students in all textbooks/subjects, the core of the issues and concepts that are relevant to my analysis are mainly presented in four textbooks/subjects: history, Persian, social studies and geography. My focus is on the ideal citizen, citizenship/civic studies and how citizens’ responsibilities towards others are presented in school textbooks. Students are introduced to various historical episodes, geographical spaces and important historical figures, scientists and national/religious heroes in their history, geography, social studies and literature textbooks. Due to the fact that I am not familiar with Arabic, I do not analyze Quranic Studies textbooks. I also excluded math, science and grammar subjects because of their technical focus. I do not examine defensive studies
(informing students about “military” sciences) since this subject is only offered in junior high school and is not part of the elementary curriculum.

In total, I examine sixty-one textbooks. I analyze the differences and/or similarities between various editions of elementary and middle school textbooks in terms of their content on specific topics or subjects over the past two decades.\(^{28}\) I explore whether or not students are introduced to emerging conflicts over knowledge production and opposing views and materials in their 2004 textbooks. I examine the extent to which students are (re)introduced to the same or different arguments and information in the 2004 edition of textbooks in comparison to the previous editions of the same or different subjects/grades. As mentioned, I conceptualize textbook as localized “texts” whose content and structure are also influenced by global conditions. They can be emancipatory, ideological and/or hegemonic. In writing about Europe, Asia, Islam, the Crusaders and various other relations and events, Iranian school textbook authors refer to other books and texts produced in other countries not intended for Iranians and not intended for usage in schools per se. Iranian textbooks are also written taking into account the characteristics of each age group, according to Western psychological and educational studies on learning and cognition (Menashri, 1992, p. 156-209). Their content and form are also influenced by global education theories in revising the textbooks. The information and ideas that are discussed in any given grade are understood by students based on a set of assumptions and information that have already been formulated and presented to students as school knowledge in previous years. That is, the narrations and information about the ideal citizen that are communicated to students in school textbooks rely on previous information and data “upon which the stories become comprehensible to [students]” (Lehtonen, 2000, p. 81). This knowledge base also relies on other forms of knowledge and discourses that may not have necessarily been introduced and/or expanded upon in elementary and middle school textbooks. Moreover, the discourses that inform the construction of school textbooks also impose a sense of cohesion between the different grades.

As Apple (2004) argues, the act of writing school textbooks, understood from a global economy approach to curriculum studies, is itself a discourse of “critical reading, where the writer dives into the reserve of already existing texts and revises it with a view to the future” (Lehtonen, 2000, p. 82). The images of the future are prescribed according to the ideology and institutional goals of those in charge of the education system who have the power to implement educational policies (Lehtonen, 2000, p. 82). They are influenced by global social and

\(^{28}\) For a list of textbooks and subjects taught at different grade levels see Ministry of Education, Education in Islamic Republic of Iran, 2003, Source: http://www.ier.ir/Home/News/ier/ENGLISH.pdf, retrieved January 15, 2005.
economic conditions and their meanings are not necessarily limited due to linguistic properties and are determined not only by the rules of grammar (Nasser, 2005, p. 60).

In evaluating school textbooks as discursive ‘statements’, as Royle (2000) points out, I acknowledge that “deconstruction does not have a place for language over here, and a world over there to which it refers. … There are no essential differences between language and the world, the one as subject, the other as object. There are traces” and deconstruction deals with those “traces” (p. 7). “Traces” are the absent others and knowledge about them. “Traces” are those elements and discourses that are non-present but necessary for constructing the insider and the self. However, their non-presence should not be understood as “not being present” (Royle, 2000, p. 7). The “trace” changes in light of external changes but keeps its basic principles. It is a form of “unseen non-presence” (Royle, 2000, p. 7-8). It does not have to be actually present at the moment but is discursively related to many other forms of otherness, sameness and knowledge about the nation. For example, there are several representations of the Islamic Republic of Iran that are dominant in various contexts and expressed by different ethno-religious-political groups and nation-states. Such constructions reflect the many different and diverse ideological and political perspectives of various elite groups in Iran and across the world since the inception of the Islamic Republic in 1979. The Islamic Republic of Iran is viewed as an oppositional discourse and as a global resistance movement against the hegemony of the Shah’s regime and Western imperialism. It has been labelled as a “fundamentalist” movement and anti-modern (Abrahamian, 1993). It is also considered as an undemocratic autocracy within and outside Iran. In the West, the establishment of the revolutionary Islamic government was conceptualized and constructed from an Orientalist perspective by characterizing it as a rejection of modern institutions and science and a return to traditional views regarding social, economic and political relations. It is, however, important to note that the revolutionary rhetoric of the Islamic leadership was based on populist conceptions of social justice (Abrahamian, 1993).

As mentioned, the Iranian revolution was a non-Western modern reaction to the hegemonic policies of the Pahlavi government and imperialist incursions in Iran and in the Middle East based on a Western conceptualization of modernity. The revolutionary leadership took over an existing power structure and bureaucracy that was already organized and developed according to modernist approaches to nation-building and socio-economic and political relations during the intense period of westernization. Since the 1930's, modern schools have played an important
in institutional role in the socialization of students into the dominant Iranian culture(s). The need for a secular and modern national education system characterized the philosophy of most Iranian educationalists during the period between 1925 and 1979 (Matini, 1989, p. 46). Since the Revolution of 1978-79, modernizing and developing Iran and educating its population have remained the central components of the political, economic and social policies of the Islamic Republic. As Siavoshi (1995, p. 203) argues, both pre- and post-revolutionary governments have used the education system as a political socialization institution/social structure in their attempt to “convince the subject population, or at least a significant portion of it, of the state’s right to govern”. The Islamic Republic is more recently viewed as a “terrorist” sponsoring state by the government of the United States and has been (re)constructed as part of the “Axis of Evil”.

It is in this light that I analyze Iranian school textbooks by accounting for four general “traces” that have been singled out to explain the expansion of imperialism and colonial interests in Iran in the last one hundred fifty years (Keddie, 2003). First, Iran was/is considered as an important source of energy for the west. President Khatami (2001) also reiterated this point in his book, Dialogue Amongst Civilizations. Second, Iran was important solely because of its geo-political location to India and Russia before the discovery of oil in the first decade of the last century: Iran was used as ‘the wall’ protecting British India from the French and Russian forces, a policy that is referred to as ‘divide and rule’ (Keddie, 2003). President Khatami (2001, p. 125) argued that Iran still occupies an important geo-political position in the world as the safest and most efficient passageway between central Asia and other industrialized nations. Third, during the Cold War era, Iran was considered as a symbol of "democracy", protecting American interests against the communists in the north. Since the revolution, the Islamic leadership, on

29 The reference is to the cultural approaches of the Pahlavi and Islamic Republic regimes (1925 to present).
30 The process of secularization is an important component of the modernization of Iran. However, what is not often discussed is the extent to which the secularization and nationalist processes did not free Iranians nor did they establish universal rights. Modernization programs functioned as tools to hierarchically integrate diverse groups of people living in Iran as subjects of the state (rather than as citizens with agency).
31 Another characteristic of the discourse of modernization is the rise of secularization. During the early decades of Reza Shah’s reign (1925-39), Iran witnessed a secularization process that aimed at eliminating/reducing the power and control of the clergy. The shah, by promoting his monopoly over the power structure in Iran, attempted to remove the clergy’s control over the education system by introducing a number of laws and establishing the “Teacher Education College” (Menashri, 1992, p. 100). A number of anti-cleric intellectuals also promoted limiting the power of clerics and argued that the best course of direction is “education and action” (Menashri, 1992, p. 101). According to Siavoshi (1995, p. 204), the ideological assumptions of the Shah’s government were to modernize Iran based on a Western line of economic-social development. Secularization was considered as the necessary aspect of achieving the goals of “Westernization”. She writes that in comparison, in post-revolutionary textbooks, Islam, Islamic values and Islamic culture plays a central role. Since the revolution, the ideological supposition is that religion and politics are not separable. In essence, “politics is explained in the light of religion” (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 205).
the other hand, has conceptualized Iran as the beacon of resistance against the exploitation of the “Third World” and other Islamic nations. Fourth, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, especially after the events of September 11, 2001, Iran’s brand of Islam is considered as a threat to western democracy and global stability. These are some of the non-present discourses that function as “traces” that nevertheless inform how Iran is envisioned by the authors of the textbooks as ‘statements’ of the state, as the authors attempt to represent Iran in light of the theoretical approaches that also inform their conceptualization to writing textbooks and disseminating knowledge to students about the ideal citizen and Iran.

In addition, the four dimensions of global education are also considered as non-present discourses and “theoretical traces” that inform the curriculum. The first dimension, the *spatial dimension*,

focuses on the growing interdependence of the world in which we live, a world in which the frequency, profoundness, scale and number of phenomena and human activities, which affect, influence, or are affected by global dependence, are increasing at a considerable pace (divisions or boundaries are losing their previous significance). This dimension obliges schools to give pupils knowledge, skills and attitudes that are necessary for their effective participation in this new interdependent world (Ashton, 2000, p. 12-13).

The world is no longer “a collection of many lands and peoples” but rather a “system” made of many people and lands (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 4). There is also a growing awareness that the different regions of the world are “environmentally interdependent” and form an interrelated eco-system (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 5). In the context of a system approach to relationships between nation-states, students will have a new understanding of their national histories and interests (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 7).

The second aspect of global education that is connected to the first is the *temporal dimension*.

Ashton (2000) maintains that,

The temporal dimension perceives the past, present and future in the dynamics of a comprehensive and dialectical integration. Consequently, the interpretation of the past is connected with, is a consequence of, and is conditioned by concerns and priorities of the present as well as by prospects for the future. Likewise, people’s prospects for their future and the future itself are influenced by concerns and interpretations of the present (and the past) as well as by decisions and actions they undertake today. According to the temporal dimension, global education aims to give the future the place it deserves in the process of education – a place it presently lacks – and to prepare and encourage pupils to be effective actors in a rapidly changing world. (p. 12-13)

Pike and Selby (1988, p. 17) argue that this dimension requires the inclusion of “a forward-looking counter part to history” in the curriculum that aims at critically looking at the past in envisioning a brighter future for all citizens both locally and globally. Curriculum cannot simply be a present and past oriented collection of information.
The third aspect of global education closely related to the first two is the *issues dimension*. Ashton (2000) maintains that this dimension incorporates the following characteristics:

a. Firstly, it aims to familiarize pupils with *the main current global issues* related to *development, environment, peace, and human rights*.

b. Secondly, it aims to familiarize pupils with the existence of differing perspectives, opinions, views and arguments in relation to these issues.

c. Thirdly, global issues should not be seen simply in the context of a merely linear connection but as themselves interconnected in multiple ways. (p. 12-13)

According to the fourth dimension of global education, *the inner dimension*, in a democratic context, students are free and encouraged to question and be critical of dominant values and norms (Ashton, 2000, p. 12-13). History is not to be presented in a manner that sanitizes the negative aspects of the past, reflecting those elements that justify and legitimize the leadership of the elite. According to Ashton (2000), *the inner dimension*,

seeks to extend globalization of dependence to individual human beings, their needs, desires, rights, obligations, concerns, and their inner landscape. It explores humans in their physical, spiritual, material, intellectual, and cultural complexity, in which their external and internal worlds are seen and assessed as parts of a whole. This dimension requires teachers to bear in mind that the social attitudes, values, and aims of education can only be fully achieved if educational processes and the school climate are adequate for the promotion and development of aspects such as self-awareness, self-assessment, group membership, trust, cooperation, and attitudes which show proper regard and respect for the views, sentiments and outlooks of others. (p. 12-13)

Global education is also formulated in light of or in reaction to some of the theories and ideas discussed in previous chapters such as “citizenship education”, “civic education” and human rights education. As Derrida points out, a text, such as school textbooks, is not an end in itself but rather, it is a “fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself, to other different traces” (as cited in Royle, 2000, p. 7). These “traces” and non-present discourses relate to one another in a hierarchy that, in itself, ranks them and incorporates them as part of the process of thinking about how to write and inform students about the ideal citizen and Iranian national identity. In constructing the Iranian national identity and the ideal citizen, the Arab other, Jewish other, female representations and the Western selves are selectively presented to students in light of a general understanding of Iran’s history that is interpreted differently in light of the positions of the authors in relation to the above mentioned “traces” and non-present theoretical discourses. But in being presented with these representations of otherness, students can make sense of all these forms of otherness “only” when specific understandings of these other selves are repeatedly present in other lessons and in other grade levels (but not highlighted, and as such are non-present). I investigate in what ways and how the discursive formations of various arguments about citizenship, development, identity politics and diversity inform the construction of the ideal Iranian citizen in Iranian school textbooks.
Deconstruction highlights how those responsible for the production of school knowledge “move in a circle of repetitive [local and global] texts which refer only to each other and represent only themselves” (as cited in Hollinger, 1994, p. 109). At the same time, deconstruction itself is an act of referencing endless list of terms and ideas as well as authors in offering an understanding of modernity (Ferguson, 2000), as is this research. As such, it is important for me to situate my approach to gathering and analyzing the data. A multidimensional approach based on antiracism, transnationalism and poststructuralism also starts from a position, a standpoint, towards its subject of study. For this reason, I describe very specifically how I conceptualize and operationalize my categories so the reader can evaluate how they are configured in and affect my results. In other words, I consider my approach to the methods as a metanarrative. By showing how I exclude or include, I aim to expose how the discourses used in explaining “reality” limit what can be considered as emancipatory, traditional or ideological.

Textbooks not only entail content but also entail form. The form of textbooks is also as political and ideological as are the issues of content. Understanding narrations requires the reader (the student) to “be familiar with their form of presentation” (Hall, 2000, p. 82). As Lehtonen, quoting Hall, maintains (2000, p. 82), “We used to think that form was like an empty box, and it’s really what you put into it that matters. But we are aware now that the form is actually a part of the content of what you are saying”. The form is also influenced by local and global social policies that are economically and politically motivated. The form and content are, for example, influenced by discourses operating in various different institutions: they are influenced by educational theories, reforms and structures developed in North America.

In studying narrations of nation, the “text” and the “context” are also dialectically connected. School curriculum involves the process of the selection of various contradictory discourses and forms of representation that are then employed to construct images of the nation and the ideal citizen and as a result, “set[s] its own boundaries of exclusion” and rules (Nasser, 2005, p. 61). Textbooks, then, can impose multiple meanings upon terms, such as soldier, for example. This term can be used as a way of teaching letter recognition, as a way of describing an occupation, as a responsibility of all citizens to serve in the armed forces and more importantly, it can become “the signifier of the cultural values that [the term] embodies not in the text per se but in society at large” at local, national and global levels (Fisk and Hartley, 1978, p. 41-44). Nasser (2005), quoting Kress, also argues that “any one text [itself] may be the expression or realization of a number of sometimes competing and contradictory discourses” (p. 60). These discourses shape and also emerge from the economic-cultural-political consequences of “social forces
within a society at a specific historical time” (Nasser, 2005, p. 60). I analyze how knowledge production as a tangible economic product, whose manufacturing is controlled by the state and national considerations, informs who is an insider and who is an outsider.

School textbooks themselves function and are organized in light of the genres and narratives that are employed in affirming the power of the elite. This also takes shape in the context of discursive formations. Discourse represents what we consider as “real” social relations and interactions in the context of uneven power relations. It is argued that meaning is produced from a position of power and “[it] is discursive” (Pinar and Reynolds, 1992, p. 5). This position of power can be identified and analyzed through an exploration of the form and content of the discourses employed in representing an idea, topic or an object in school textbooks. The theories that shape textbooks’ structures and forms are themselves discourses. Textbooks are also the medium of discourse, since they are a vehicle (produced and maintained by the state) used to communicate the narratives of nation and the ideal citizen in relation to various forms of otherness to students. As such, as Foucault (1994, p. 216-218) points out, I also analyze Iranian school textbooks for their techniques and tactics of domination and emancipation. Textbooks, as the end result of the actions and practices of professionals and educators, entail/produce meaning; thus, they all have a “discursive aspect”. School textbooks can be considered as the “discursive ‘unit[s]’ and material manifestation[s] of discourse” (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 4). Textbooks, as mediums of communication, represent “social reality [in light of specific] … meaning[s]” that are the end result of power conflicts over which racial, ethnic and religious group has the right to speak, who should listen and whose ideas and worldviews should remain obscure and outside the centre (McLaren, 1998, p. 184).

At the same time, the meanings of these textbooks are also re-communicated to the readers of this dissertation through my lens and my ability to translate from Persian to English. In this research, all translations of Iranian school textbooks are mine unless stated otherwise. I referenced the New Persian-English Dictionary (compiled by S. Haim published in 1985 in Tehran, Iran by Farhang Moaser publisher) in translating from Persian to English. In verifying my translations, Sara Yasan also translated these same lessons separately. In addition, since the Persian language/grammar does not distinguish between the male and female in the third person, in my translations I use he/she when the text refers to both male and female characters and subjects. Moreover, since there is no universal system for transliteration from Persian to English, I have followed the transliteration style adopted by F.
Steingrass in *A Comprehensive Persian-English Dictionary* (fifth impression, published in 1963 in London by Routledge & Kegan Paul Limited) with the following modifications:

1) ْز is used for یض;
2) ُژ is used for یط;
3) ُس is used for یص;
4) ُس is used for یص;
5) ُه is used for یه;
6) ُه is used for یه;
7) ُی is used for یی;
8) ُخ is used for یخ;
9) ُخ is used for یخ;
10) ُط is used for یط;
11) ُو, ُع and ُای are used to represent combined vowels and diphongs;
12) only the three elementary vowels ُا, ُی, ُع are used; and
13) the silent ُه (ْه) following ُخ (که) is retained.

When citing others authors, I have kept their original Persian transliterations. For those readers who can read Persian, the textbooks can be read in their entirety at www.tallif.sch.ir by electronic download.

### 3.2 The Structure of Textbooks and the Lesson as the ‘Unit of Analysis’

In this section, I explain how Iranian school textbooks are structured. Iranian school textbooks have been revised in terms of their organization of topics. These changes are most evident in the 2004 edition of Persian textbooks for grades 1 through 3 which are now organized around specific themes. For *Persian 1* (2004), they include in organizational order:

- “Writing Through Pictures” (*Negare-ha*);
- “Teaching Signs 1”;
- “Teaching Signs 2”;
- “Reading Fluently” (*Ravān Khānīn*); and
- A list of recommended books for reading at home that are available in the Kanūn.32

For *Persian 2* and 3 (2004), they include in organizational order:

- “Character Building” (*Nihād*);
- “Hygiene” (*Bihdāsht*);
- “Individual and Social Morality Building” (*Akhlaq Fardī va Ijtīmā‘ī*);
- “Knowledge (Science) and Scientists” (*Dānish and Dānishmand*);
- “Religion (Issues)” ([*Mus’īl*] *Dīn[īl]*);
- “National and Patriotic [Issues]” (*Millī va Mīhanī*);
- “Natural Environment” (*Tabī‘at*);
- “Art and Civility” (*Hunar va Adab*); and
- A list of recommended books for reading at home that can also be found in the Kanūn.

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In these textbooks each lesson is divided into the following sub-sections:

- The main text of the lesson;
- “Listen and Tell”;  
- “Correct, Incorrect”;
- “New Vocabulary”;
- “Point” (Nuktah);
- “See and Tell”;
- “Look (Search) and Find”;  
- “Tell Your Friends”;  
- “Role Play [Performance]” (Namāyish);
- “Reading Books” (Kitāb Khwani); and  
- “Let’s Read Together”.

The corresponding Persian Writing booklets (Workbooks) for Persian 1, 2, 3 (2004) are all designed around the same themes and divisions as the Persian Reading textbooks for the same grade levels. The introduction of new subsections asking students about recent books they have read, cartoons or movies they have watched or family outings and vacations they have participated in are designed to engage students and their interests as part of school activities and educational practices. As such, the changes in the organization of textbooks in 2004 serve one of the basic assumptions of Iranian educators, that education should be based on the interests of students. But do the messages and overall content of these textbooks in terms of representations of diversity and difference locally or globally truly satisfy the basic principles of critical thinking and global education?

Social Studies 4 and 5 (2004) are divided into three sections of geography, history and civil studies. The history section for grade 4 begins with the history of religious movements and Prophets, including lessons on Prophets such as Moses, Jesus, Abraham and Noah. It then covers the history of Iran as the Aryan tribes settled in what is known as the Iranian Plateau until the introduction of Islam into Iran. In the history section of Social Studies 5, post-Islamic and modern histories of Iran are explored. In History 6 (2004), students read about the ancient history of Iran until the rise of Islam. In History 7 (2004), the authors begin with the advent of Islam in Iran until the beginning of the Qajar Dynasty. In History 8 (2004), students are introduced to the history of modern Iran, including the Qajar Dynasty.

In the geography section of Social Studies 4 (2004), students are presented with Iran’s geographical characteristics. In the geography section of Social Studies 5 (2004), they are introduced to global geographical characteristics. In the previous edition, this section was divided into five major sections, each dealing with the various geographical characteristics of Africa, Europe, the Americas, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. In the 2004
In all, I analyze twenty-three 2004 edition textbooks:

- five Persian textbooks (grades 1 through 5);
- three Persian workbook textbooks (grades 1 through 3);
- six Social Studies textbooks (grades 3 through 8);
- three Career Studies textbooks (grades 6, 7 and 8);
- three Geography textbooks (grades 6, 7 and 8); and
- three History textbooks (grades 6, 7 and 8).

In addition to examining the 2004 textbooks/subjects, I also refer to selected lessons in selected textbooks (thirty-eight in total) from previous editions that include the 2002, 2001, 1999, 1998, 1994, 1993 and 1986 editions of Iranian school textbooks. In addition to the textbooks listed in Table 3.1, I also refer to the 1999 edition of Career Studies 6, 7 and 8 (for boys) and Career Studies 6, 7 and 8 (for girls); the 1998 edition of Science 6 and 7; the 1998 edition of Science 8; the 2001 edition of Science 1; the 1999 edition of Defensive Readiness 8 (Amadig-i Difa’i) (for boys) and the 1999 edition of Math 8. In total, I analyze sixty-one textbooks.
When necessary, I compare the constructions of the ideal citizen in the previous editions to show how, why and the extent to which the images of the ideal citizen depicted, discussed and explored in the 2004 edition of elementary and guidance school textbooks have been altered by analyzing how “race”, gender, ethnicity and social class are depicted and presented in the construction of national identity and the ideal citizen over the last twenty-years. As such, I provide a holistic and historical account of change in Iranian school textbooks. I explore whether or not the 2004 edition of textbooks include lessons and information that allow students to account for and critically evaluate the type of biased knowledge about insiders and outsiders. It is also through my analysis of how moral lessons, scientific knowledge, ethical issues and economic views are communicated through the textbooks that reveal how similar ideas and values find expression in various subjects and in different grades. In this way, I can examine the corresponding discourses that give meanings to these terms and themes and develop a pattern of ideas, discourses, events, individuals, places, occupations, concepts and characteristics that cross subject specific textbooks and inform the logocentric logic of the curriculum.

Textbooks also consist of smaller units and parts called ‘lessons’ that are represented under a unified subject, such as social studies, but are about diverse topics and ideas. As such, in this thesis, information communicated through various textbooks is examined not as disconnected material but as a coherent set of texts that

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Subject and Edition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>1993 1999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>2001 1999</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Five</td>
<td>1986 1994 2001</td>
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<tr>
<td>Six</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
are related to one another due to their shared focus on, for example, family issues and relations in specific lessons throughout the elementary and guidance level curriculum. In discourse analysis, the unit of analysis is labelled as the ‘statement’ (See Nasser, 2005, p. 60); however, in this research, the ‘lesson’ is conceptualized as the ‘unit of analysis’ of the textbooks as the ‘statements’ of the state. By analyzing textbooks through an emphasis on the main objectives of a lesson, I can delineate those characteristics and aspects in various lessons that are shared and can be conceptualized under the four themes of identity politics, diversity, citizenship and modernization/development. Each lesson also consists of a number of sections and sub-sections. The following criteria/sections in each ‘lesson’ are considered as what is often referred to as the ‘unit of observation’, based on the existing divisions and categories used by the authors of the textbooks:

1) the text (the textual content of each lesson);
2) the pictures/drawings;
3) the maps;
4) the titles/headings;
5) the highlighted terms/names;
6) the homework and assignments;
7) the group activities; and
8) the study guide questions.

These ‘units of observation’ allow me to view knowledge not simply as a collective whole but also as a collection of separate and unrelated ‘units’ that, in their discursive formations, permit the authors to organize various materials into a coherent subject. These ‘units of observations’ have also been selected based on the assumption that the most important information in the lessons is reiterated in and reinforced by the type of answers and information that the exercise and question sections seek or by what is included in the maps and drawings as supplementary materials, such as the hidden curriculum.

In other words, as previously stated, the elementary and guidance level textbooks are considered and conceptualized as the political-economic-cultural ‘statements’ produced by the Ministry of Education of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The lessons, then, are units of presentation through which the ‘statements’ of the state are communicated in explicit and/or implicit ways about a topic and/or idea in light of the varied pedagogical/ideological goals of the authors of these lessons. The maps, pictures or figures are the material manifestations of their ideological assumptions and messages of these lessons.
3.3 **Methods**

I draw upon critical discourse analysis, interpretive structuralism and qualitative content analysis as my methods of investigation. These methods are explored in the following sections after a brief discussion of deconstruction and textbook analysis.

### 3.3.1 Deconstruction and Discourse Analysis: Conceptualizing Textbooks

Deconstruction is a poststructuralist strategy of subverting texts that I draw upon in order to analyze “texts” in relation to other “texts” (i.e.: inter-textuality) (Seidman, 1994, p. 203-205). As Derrida maintains (as cited in Royle, 2000), “the ‘de-’ in deconstruction signifies not the demolition of what is constructing itself, but rather what remains to be thought beyond the constructivist or deconstructionist scheme” (p. 6). Deconstruction reveals other marginalized ways of looking at the world by questioning the basic ethnocentric, patriarchal and Eurocentric assumptions of various discourses that organize thought and action at local and global levels (Butler, 1996; Seidman, 1994, p. 204). According to Hollinger (1994, p. 110), deconstruction “shows that what is privileged, what is present, depends on the absent other that it seeks to dominate and erase”. The aim is not to privilege any location, binary opposition or any knowledge over another.

According to Smith (as cited in Ritzer, 2000, p. 592), deconstruction problematizes the hidden differences that inform identity construction. Deconstruction implies that “difference always involves violence of a hierarchy, a forced inequality” (Derrida, as cited in Young, 2000, p. 201). “By deconstructing how words, [discourse] and meanings function relative to power, [I] interrogate the political nature of [school textbooks] and [their] role[s] in the maintenance of oppression” (Dei et al., 2005, p. 17). At the same time, the emphasis is not on the idea of difference per se, but the aim is also to problematize what is meant by sameness (Nasser, 2005, p. 56-62) in order to subvert the “illusion of truth as a perfectly self-contained and self-sufficient presence” in images of the self and the other (Hollinger, 1994, p. 110).

In deconstructing these textbooks, I am concerned with the extent to which metanarratives/discourses such as Islamization and Persianization and ideas and concepts such as Aryan ancestry and democratic values that have influenced the narration of nation. Discourse is defined “as an interrelated set of texts and the practices of their production, dissemination and reception that bring an object into being” (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 3). A discourse is a way of viewing and representing “a particular type of knowledge about a topic” in a certain way (Hall,
Discourse is produced through “discursive practices” and/or “the practice of producing meaning” (Hall, 1996b, p. 201). They inform us about the content and form of information about a topic (Hall, 1996b, p. 201; McLaren, 1998, p. 184; Lehtonen, 2000, p. 41; Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999, p. vii). In their hegemonic form, they determine who has the authority to speak about a specific issue and who must listen (McLaren, 1998, p. 184).

Discourse “is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined” (Foucault, as cited in Lehtonen, 2000, p. 41). Through discursive formations, specific paradigms are set and established that develop their specific concepts and logics, highlighting what is supposedly the truth and ignoring what is false “within their own regime of truth” (Foucault, as cited in Lehtonen, 2000, p. 41). Those in control of leadership positions in the state are able to “provide themselves with a discursively specific position in the language, where they can present themselves as subjects of knowledge and present the reality in a way it is represented in the discourse they use” (Lehtonen, 2000, p. 43). Discourses and discursive practices shape how the ideal citizen is understood by students as they read about how the country has been affected by local/global political, economic and cultural relations and events throughout the nation-state’s history and civilization (See Nasser, 2005, p. 58-59). As Hall (1996a) points out, “instead of thinking of national cultures as unified, we should think of them as constituting a discursive device which represents difference as unity or identity” (p. 617). The term ‘nation’ is discursive not due to its historical truth but as the “organizing category” that utilizes differences “as symbolic markers in order to differentiate’ one nation from another (Hall, 1996a, p. 617).

I deconstruct the discourses employed in Iranian school textbooks in the context of a framework of discourse analysis based on various methodologies such as interpretative structuralism, critical discourse and content analyses. By applying these methods of investigation, the aim is to explore the ways in which those ideas, concepts, places, objects and views that are pre-selected in the textbooks have historically been created and continue to be maintained at the present time.

3.3.1.1 Interpretive Structuralism

Interpretative structuralism aims at analyzing “the social context and the discourse that supports it” (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 23). Here, it is employed in examining the narratives that are used by curriculum writers in justifying and constructing the history of Iran, the rule of the state and the state’s policies as necessary and
legitimate. In this approach, the analysis is not confined to the content of school textbooks alone, but also relies on other secondary data such as historical, gender and economic analyses of institutional and structural changes in Iran over the last one hundred fifty years as the “description of the context” (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 24).

In the context of this type of analysis, the concern is not with a single text but to “provide insight into the ‘bigger picture’” (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 24). The aim is to examine school textbooks by “references to broader discourse or the accumulated bodies of texts that constitute them” (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 6). This approach is useful in understanding “macro changes in [metanarratives] over period[s] of time” (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 25), such as shifts in educational paradigms and/or revolutionary ideology.

In this light, in order to describe and represent the Orient, such as Iran, and the Occident, such as the West, there is need for a strategy to envision the Orient and the Occident. This approach implies that as an “Oriental” who is involved in analyzing Iranian school textbooks, conceptualized as Orientalist writings, and in studying the authority of the text (or the author), I need to employ methodological devices that Said (1979, p. 20) labels as “strategic location” and “strategic formation”.

However, rather than applying these methods to the positions of the authors, I apply them to the texts, pictures and maps. “Strategic formation” enables me to describe “the text’s position in a [lesson] with regard to the Oriental material that [the lesson is] about” (Said, 1978, p. 20). Through “strategic location”, it is possible to locate the texts, pictures and maps in respect to its object of study, such as the Orient and the Occident. In this way, I expose how the authors of the textbooks attempt to deliberately contain the Orient and/or the Occident through their structures and methods of constructing the text, for example, through child-centred pedagogy and/or global education, as embedded aspects of the structures and the logic of the lessons and textbooks. In these approaches to deconstruction, the aim is not to point to the correctness of the information but to analyze “style, figure of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and social circumstances” (Said, 1978, p. 21) that locate the Iranian in respect to other Orientals and Orientalists.

In employing these methods, I also problematize the ways in which Iranian curriculum writers locate themselves in relation to the Occident and the Orient. This location, or what I call standpoint, requires that certain ways of viewing and representing the East and the West be employed in order to contain the two within the constraints of both revolutionary ideology and educational theories. In reference to my standpoint, I draw on the idea of Weber’s “verstehen”, or understanding, based on the subject’s feelings and the social, economic and cultural
positions to analyze school textbooks (Del Balso and Lewis, 2001, p. 186). As a transnational insider, I rely on my understanding of Iranian culture, modes of producing meaning, Western/Canadian educational settings/theories and my educational experiences as a middle-class Persian/Iranian and male instructor/Ph.D. candidate in deconstructing these textbooks.

3.3.1.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

As discussed, textbooks act as forms of regulation and agents/vehicles of social control and change in terms of the types of discourses that they rely on in constructing the Iranian national identity. As well, the meanings of texts are determined by the socio-cultural context in which the reader encounters the text (Nealon and Giroux, 2003, p. 9-34) and by the structure of the text. The assumption here is not merely that “the authority of school textbooks is lodged primarily in the linguistic properties and structure of the texts themselves” (Ilieva, 2005, p. 38). But rather, it is in the context of the socio-political structural limits that textbooks have claim to authority over knowledge production.

Unlike interpretive structuralism, critical discourse analysis focuses on the extent to which certain discourses and ways of viewing the world are privileged over others, resulting in the marginalization of other forms of being, acting and understanding the world (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, p. 25). Through the application of this method, the attempt is to determine how the textbooks construct who has the right to speak, who is responsible for development, how development should be envisioned, who is considered as the “other” and how and based on whose conception of justice is the “other” envisioned.

I situate how discussions about the ideal citizen in the textbooks employ critical pedagogical tools that invite interrogation of the knowledge base by students or reproduce those discourses that ignore the identities and the lived experiences of working classes and marginalized groups that are considered as the other or as minority groups. I also distinguish between monological and dialogical forms of texts. The monological forms of texts such as epics and poems do not permit for the reflection of other’s viewpoints and value systems. However, the dialogical forms of texts permit the reader to become part of the text. In other words, the characters and ideas in the dialogical text do not necessarily function as a reflection of the authors’ ideological and political positions (as cited in Ilieva, 2005, p. 36).

In this analysis, the monological and dialogical distinctions are applied to all forms of texts. Both poems and epics are considered to have characteristics that would categorize them as either dialogical or monological. If
the text in the textbook repeats the same information and if the questions section and assignments require students to merely find what is already included in their textbook, such a lesson is considered to be monological. If a part of the lesson or the main part of the text in the lesson requires students to research and investigate topics such as historical events, human rights issues and/or other cultural groups within the format of a global education approach to such issues, the lesson is considered as dialogical.

I apply this method to the analysis of exercises/homework to determine whether or not the text and its content in relation to the assignments and homework exercises at the end of each lesson permit students to become self-critical and/or to explore a topic outside the information provided to them in their textbooks. I also examine how various forms of metanarratives already discussed relate to other discourses in constructing who and what is Iranian, through an analysis of the authors’ structure of the text and how the different parts of the lesson highlight specific topics, ideas, values and the extent to which these topics and ideas permit other cultures and structures spaces for critical reflections.

3.3.2 Content Analysis

According to Fisk and Hartley (1978, p. 21), content analysis is “concerned to establish” “what is actually there”. This analytical method involves the operationalization and conceptualisation of factors and terms that are used in the research. How should I define “race”, gender and ethnicity? What images, words and symbols should be considered as representing race? In other words, how should I ‘measure’ these concepts or ‘variables’? One of the main disadvantages of content analysis is that the researcher can never positively know if a ‘valid measure’ of factors is represented in their research. For example, should the veil be considered as a reference of sexist views or be interpreted as a reflection of the “emancipation of women”? These types of questions cannot be answered in advance. The meaning depends on the context and the form in which, for example, the veil is depicted and discussed in the lessons.

There are several studies that have employed both quantitative and qualitative content analysis to analyze Iranian school textbooks. This study is based on qualitative content analysis. It is nevertheless important to differentiate between quantitative and qualitative content analysis. Quantitative content analysis “aims at showing the existence of certain ideas and themes” and determining how important they are in terms of the “presence or weight these ideas and themes have” (Del Balso and Lewis, 2001, p. 186). This is done by “showing how often
words, phrases, or images occur, how much space or time is devoted to them, and so forth” (Del Balso and Lewis, 2001, p. 186). In contrast, qualitative content analysis is used in those studies that attempt to “show how ideas and images [as well as discourses] are interrelated into a complex meaningful whole, which in turn organizes the experiences, perceptions, and actions of individuals or groups in a particular time and place” (Del Balso and Lewis, 2001, p. 186).

Adele Ferdows (1995, p. 328) uses content analysis with the “assumption that written words is one of the most important means for instilling the values and change in attitudes about gender roles, rights and responsibilities”. She incorporates a methodological scheme that looks at four categories of:

- “gender roles”, such as mother, girl, little girl, wife, old women, working women, father, boy, husband, old man and working man;
- “gender identity”, such as personal names, position/identity, daughter, sister, woman, son, brother and man;
- “role functions”, such as guide/protector of child, cook, housekeeper, moral guide, leader/ruler and learned scholar; and
- “role traits”, such as tender, loving, self-sacrificing mother, hardworking, undemanding and neat. (Ferdows, 1995, p. 328-333)

Higgins and Shoar-Ghaifari (1995) looked at factors such as:

- “topics”, such as religion, pre-Islamic and others;
- “style of furnishing”, such as traditional Iranian, Western, ancient and institutional;
- “style of dress”, such as Islamic, Western, working and ancient;
- “prominent type of personal names”, such as Persian, Arabic, Western and mixed; and
- “occupation by gender”, such as intellectual, agricultural and housework. (p. 347-351)

These two studies did not account for representations of factors such as “race”, ethnicity and the racialization process, for example, how whiteness is represented in textbooks. Also, they did not analyze these factors in a holistic manner, as integrative and overlapping, resulting in different outcomes. They did not account for how expressive feelings and instrumental rational characteristics in terms of gender relations are also represented to students. This is important since, as mentioned, the leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran aims at influencing students’ home culture through the education system and through the information and knowledge provided to them through their textbooks.

Analyzing the frequencies of names of individuals, denoting Arabic or Persian sources, styles of dress of the characters in the lessons and styles of furnishing depicted in the pictures of homes are useful ways of exploring how men and women and/or social classes are depicted and presented by, for example, counting how many times women are depicted in public or private spheres (Nasser, 2005, p. 59-64). It is, nevertheless, important to note that a
lack or absence of representation of Western clothing and/or Western names does not on its own suggest a lack of Western influences, such as in textbook production. The content may have changed due to the process of Islamization, but the form is being influenced by theoretical considerations as well as by political goals. Such approaches, however, do not expose whose vision of the world is not told and whose experiences are vilified in the construction of the ideal citizen for students.

I draw upon the content analysis criteria used by Ferdows (1995, p. 328-333) and Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari (1995, p. 347-351) in deciphering the meanings of texts in Iranian school textbooks in light of Christine Sleeter’s and Carl Grant’s (1990, p. 138) usage of qualitative content analysis. The reason for choosing these methods is because they have shown to be both valid and reliable and researchers have achieved similar conclusions using a very similar coding frame for their research in studying Iranian school textbooks (See Higgins, 2006).

In their analysis of school textbooks in terms of representations of “race”, class, ethnicity and gender, Sleeter and Grant (1991, p. 82) developed a “textbook analysis instrument” based on five analyses. They applied their methods to multicultural textbooks in order to “bring conceptual understanding to what multiculturalism means” (Sleeter and Grant, 1991, p. 82). They are: “picture analysis”, “anthology analysis”, “language analysis”, “people to study analysis” and “storyline analysis”.

“Picture analysis” is employed in conjunction with “anthology analysis” and “people [and ideas] to study”. Picture analysis enables me to determine what information is considered as important in the pictures, maps, drawings and cartoons in the textbooks. Through an application of this method, I examine how information is related to other knowledge and factors in other lessons or within the text of a specific lesson under consideration. The aim is to determine what meanings a picture may have, not only in itself, but in the context of the particular lesson and other lessons in the same textbook and in other textbooks. This also highlights the types of narrations that inform the lesson or picture under consideration. For example, studies have shown that in the United States, the economic textbooks in depicting poverty use pictures of famines in Africa or of African Americans. However, when discussing the effects of the Great Depression, most pictures depict white people and ignore non-white populations (Clawson, 2002). The “gender identity”, “race”, “role traits and functions”, “occupation” and “ethnicity” of each character in the pictures and drawings or in the text are also considered as important components of data analysis. It is in the context of the above methods of investigation that I can, for example, interrogate how ethnic spaces,
including provinces like Kurdistan and/or tribal groups, are portrayed in maps and pictures in geography, social studies, Persian and history lessons.

In applying “anthology analysis”, I contextualize characters, ideas and concepts discussed and presented in the text in each lesson by references to the attributes or ideas that are discussed and elaborated in the same lesson/text or in the texts of different lessons (Sleeter and Grant, 1991, p. 82). This approach allows me to account for the types of stereotypes, myths and metanarratives informing the “text”. The social setting of the text is evaluated and analyzed and specific attention is also paid to which groups and who tend to solve problems in the “text”. Do the context and social setting depict modern/traditional, rural/urban, working class/middle class, Western/Eastern and/or family/nation settings?

The “people [and ideas] to study” analysis is applied in determining who and what kinds of topics and issues are mentioned in the text, pictures, homework and/or class activities (Sleeter and Grant, 1991). By focusing on the concept of ‘who’, I seek to confront and expose factors such as class position, gender identity, ethnicity, political ideology and view of development. Factors such as “role functions and traits”, “historical period”, “occupation” and “style of dress” are accounted for as well. I document the type of economic, social and political concerns and/or events discussed or presented in the form of pictures or drawings. For example, I account for how the revolutionary leadership is presented in terms of religious affiliation, political views, “race”, gender and ethnicity. I determine how the leadership is positioned against and in relation to other centres of power.

In the application of “language analysis” to analyzing Iranian school textbooks, I identify and account for the extent to which “loaded words” that include *Ummat-i Islami* (Islamic Nation/Community) and the oppressed; essentialist arguments such as family values and natural gender division of labour; metanarratives such as individualism and Pan-Islamism; and ideological phrases, revolutionary slogans, religious terminology, sexist and racist comments or those “phrases that obscure viewpoints or possible viewpoints” inform the content of school textbooks (Sleeter and Grant, 1990, p. 138).

“Storyline analysis” is mainly drawn upon in analyzing the social studies and geography textbooks. It interrogates “which groups receive the most sustained attention, for example, whose story is being told, which group(s) resolve problems, how other groups appear, the extent to which these other groups cause or resolve problems, and who the author intends the reader to sympathize with or learn most about” (Sleeter and Grant, 1990,
In the context of “storyline analysis”, I also account for the setting, historical period, topics and prominent names/places/cities.

Through the application of “language analysis” and “storyline analysis”, I investigate the ways in which ideas and explanations such as colonialism and imperialism, and economic theories and terms such as the oppressed and martyrdom, may be “used” and “employed” in the textbooks as hegemonic, emancipatory and ideological ways of obscuring/presenting facts and events or as liberatory ways that result in promoting acceptance and understanding of difference. In general, I examine each lesson, taking into account the following criteria when applicable (See Table 3.2):

- settings;
- prominent places/cities/names;
- topics;
- occupations and historical periods;
- styles of dress;
- role traits;
- styles of furnishings;
- gender identities; and
- role functions.
Table 3.2: Concepts and Frames of Analysis  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modern</td>
<td>Intellectual/Mental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribal/Rural</td>
<td>Blue-Collar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Agricultural (mechanized)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>Agricultural (manual labour)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>Animal Husbandry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National/Global</td>
<td>Housework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Class/Middle Class</td>
<td>Housewife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching/Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health/Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carpet Weaving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prominent Places/Cities/Names</th>
<th>Historical Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>Ancient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Persian</td>
<td>Pre-Islamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic/Arab</td>
<td>Post-Islamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Western</td>
<td>Qajar Dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western/European</td>
<td>Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-Revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constitutional Revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pahlavi Dynasty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-Revolution 1978</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Revolution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Class/History of Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Jurisprudence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s Standpoints</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Acceptance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationalism/Patriotism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonialism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperialism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military/National Defence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3.2: Concepts and Frames of Analysis (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style of Dress</th>
<th>Gender Identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Western/Western</td>
<td>Daughter/Son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic/Non-Islamic</td>
<td>Sister/Brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Class/Middle Class</td>
<td>Woman/Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural/Agricultural/Tribal</td>
<td>Revolutionary Guard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient/Traditional/Modern</td>
<td>Protector of Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soldier</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Traits</th>
<th>Role Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tender</td>
<td>Guide/Protector of Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loving</td>
<td>Cook (housework)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Sacrificing Mother</td>
<td>Housekeeper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardworking</td>
<td>Leader/Ruler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Undemanding</td>
<td>Learned Scholar/Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neat</td>
<td>Nurse/Doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brave</td>
<td>Inventor/Scientist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fearless</td>
<td>Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believer/Non-believer</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hijab/Bi-Hijab</td>
<td>Soldiers/Basij</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style of Furnishing</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Iranian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ancient Iranian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western/Non-Western</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iranian/Non-Iranian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In applying this methodology, I analyze Iranian school textbooks for those implicit elements that facilitate what Apple (2004, p. 79) calls “incidental-learning” in the texts, maps and graphics in discussing geographical, cultural, religious, linguistic and demographic characteristics of Iran and various parts of the world. Jarolimek (1986, p. 264-285) explains that maps, globes and graphics are excellent ways of introducing students to dimensions of space and time in social studies as well as in geography textbooks. It is assumed that concrete references to space and time through maps and graphics can help students better understand the content of the text that they accompany. Time and space are also two important dimensions of global education philosophy. I focus on how maps and figures as well as drawings are utilized in the Iranian school textbooks and whether or not they may result in “incidental-learning” about the ideal citizen and various forms of otherness. As Said (1994, p. 78) maintains, the basic element of social space is the geographical domain through which cultural conflicts are waged and represented. Through maps, drawings and texts, students are situated in relation to other geographical places that requires a knowledge base that “is dependent upon the perceived character and destiny of a particular geography” to other spaces (Said, 1994, p. 78). In this light, I conceive of maps and texts as locations of and “points where [power’s] intention” is presented through symbols that reflect those processes that subject and govern views about otherness and present them as homogenized entities (Foucault, 1994, p. 213). In this way, I also explore how peripheral subjects, depicted in the form of repeated texts and maps in elementary and guidance school textbooks, are presented and manifested in light of the effects of power (Foucault, 1994, p. 214). I achieve this by exploring how factors such as gender, social class, ethnicity and “race” find expressions in maps, texts and drawings or in assignments about various topics, including the usage of these terms. I problematize these maps, drawings and texts for their biases by analyzing the types of information the authors choose to include in the curriculum of the previous grade levels that are needed in order for students to make sense of the information presented to them at a higher grade level. I politicize the information presented to students through the texts, maps and figures by focusing my analysis on how Iran, as the main subject of the textbooks, is related in multifaceted and/or bi-lateral relations to other people, groups and nations in other countries in various continents. I deconstruct them in light of how they are employed in differentiating between us and them categories and distinctions in other parts of the world in constructing the ideal citizen along political, economic, cultural and religious axes. In light of Apple’s (2004, p. 140) argument, I ask, “What ideological [racial, cultural, gendered and religious] assumptions underpin the constructs within which this data … [maps and figures are] … generated?” I deconstruct the textbooks for those “textual-spaces” in which
unrelated discourses and binary oppositions that are used in depicting the ideal citizen inform what students should know in order for them to be qualified as “politically literate”. I also locate and “draw attention to how ideas and values are constructed through dislocations in the narrator’s language” (Said, 1994, p. 29) by highlighting the discourses that inform the narrator’s language that are based on the invocation of binary oppositions.

In this sense, I am able to develop a map of terms, names, concepts, ideas and values that cross grade levels in Persian, social studies, history and geography textbooks that allow me to analyze how factors such as “race”, ethnicity, social class and gender intersect one another in different grade levels and in different lessons, maps and titles for different purposes. I locate these “textual-spaces” through which “incidental-learning” about gender, social class, ethnicity and “race” can take place by highlighting how networks of assumptions about the nature of political and economic conflicts across the world are presented to students.

3.4 Conceptual Framework

In this research, the category of “race” is explored by accounting for the extent to which factors such as “colour of skin” are employed in differentiating between people within and outside Iran. References to the term “Aryan” are considered as denoting common “racial ancestry”. Also, whenever the terms “nizhād”, which means “race” in Persian, and “nizhād-parāst”, which translates into “supremacist”, are located in the text, I focus on that specific lesson and topic under consideration to account for how “race” may be configured in discussing and presenting the history of the nation and representations of the ideal citizen. References to colour of skin (pūst), differentiating between individuals in the texts and drawings, are also considered as references to “race”. I account for how these different racial groups that are constructed in a lesson are related to one another in the context of colonial and post-colonial relations and in other topics and grade levels. For example, I look at how “race” and racialized relations are employed to distinguish between friendly insiders and outsiders and enemy insiders and outsiders. I analyze and determine which racial groups are portrayed as “superior”, more “civilized” and technologically advanced and which racialized groups are constructed to be in need of help and assistance and why.

As Babbie (1998) maintains, conceptualization refers to a “mental process whereby fuzzy and imprecise notions (concepts) are made more specific and precise” (p. G1). In other words, conceptualization is “process of coming to agreement [about those mental images about a phenomena or conceptions]” (Babbie, 1998, p. 118). Conceptual framework refers to the process whereby the researcher’s interests become more focused (Babbie, 1998, p. 120). This process is informed by the theoretical framework drawn upon in the research. The theoretical framework puts limits on the types of questions that can be asked and the ways in which concepts are given meaning.
Ethnicity is explored (“measured”) by accounting for the following criteria:

- how terms such as ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes) and aqaliyat (minority) are employed in the textbooks;
- the extent to which ethnically homogenous provinces and regions are discussed or portrayed by references to their ethnic/tribal identities and histories, natural resources in the “ethnic” provinces or economic representation of Iran;
- how tribal people are portrayed by references to their geographical location or by portraying them in tribal customs; and
- the extent to which “ethnic” dynasties, such as non-Moslems and non-Persians, are mentioned/constructed.

I explore how the term ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes) also functions as a discourse that aims at dominating and describing the other.

I conceptualize the category of “woman” in light of minority-majority relations in Iran and the notion of patriarchy. The discourse of patriarchy changes and is reconstitutes in new forms of representations by references to other discourses such as modernization, traditionalism, populism, human rights and globalization, to name a few (Rezai-Rashti, 1995a, 1995b; McLaren, 1996; Poya, 1999; Moghissi, 1995, p. 252). In analyzing patriarchal relations, I recognize that there is no definition of woman (or man) that can be applied uniformly across time and space without risking categorization, romanticization and universalism, thus the exclusion of some groups (Seidman, 1994; Butler, 1996; Ferguson, 2000, p. 189-204). The term woman (or man) can “never” be a site for a unified coalition since identity categories are normative “and as such exclusionary” (Razack, 1998, p. 168). I explore how gendered terms are differentially depicted in the narrations of nation in the textbooks. However, due to this contested ground over the meaning of the term, the definition of the notion woman or man becomes the site of permanent openness that can be used as a tool in accounting for those voices whose perceptions are othered in Iranian school textbooks (Butler, 1996, p. 166). Furthermore, representations of gender, and more specifically, of women, are interrogated by reworking and utilizing the four categories of “gender roles”, “gender identity”, “role functions” and “role traits” that Ferdows (1995) employed in her analysis, as discussed.

Class struggles, in the context of this thesis, find expression in the form of opposition to or the promotion of modernization or development programs. Class struggles are conceptualized as the manifestation of power struggles between the dominant socio-economic strata that are in contention for control and authority in the context of the Islamic Republic’s power structure and the globalization of the economy. Social class is explored by accounting for:

- the representations of working class and agricultural occupations as well as service oriented jobs;
- the style and type of clothing and furniture in pictures and drawings; and
- how terms such as “poor”, “shanty-town”, kārīgar (worker), bannā (semi-skilled construction worker), doctor, painter and the oppressed are used to describe the social positions of the characters in the textbooks.

Primary occupations are considered as professional and signify middle-class lifestyles and secondary occupations are considered as reflecting working-class representations. Styles of clothes and furniture in the pictures, text, and drawings are also employed in order to determine which socio-economic-religious class is constructed as representing the status quo. In general, rural and traditional-city representations of households are considered as working/lower-middle class.

3.5 Data Analysis and Limitations

As I started the process of (re)reading the 2004 edition of Iranian school textbooks in light of the previous editions, I observed that in Persian 1, 2 and 3 (2004), for example, the authors include a number of new drawings (some in the form of cartoon characters), pictures and homework assignments as well as class activities. Another important difference between the 2004 and previous editions is the extent to which the same pictures, similar political, economic and religious messages and certain names/phrases/ideas are utilized in various lessons in the same textbook or in the lessons of other subjects in various grade levels. As a result, I also examine whether or not the ideological messages of the 2004 edition have been altered or reformulated in any significant way.

Although I analyze sixty-one textbooks (with an emphasis on twenty-three main textbooks published in 2004), one of the drawbacks of this research is that I did not include the teacher manual’s for the textbooks available in each subject/area. This is due to the fact that they were out of print. Also, in examining how the ideal citizen is constructed in relation to various forms of otherness, this research does not study all subjects and, as such, it is not comprehensive. In addition, I have not incorporated an ethnographic study of how students understand their textbooks and how textbooks are utilized during class periods. Their understandings and interpretations of the messages of the textbooks are also important considerations in textbook analysis.

In applying a poststructuralist approach, I also run the risk of rendering terms such as gender, “race” and ethnicity as useless criteria of analysis. For example, the assumption that everything is socially constructed “may lead to denial of the category ‘race’ and its privileges” for white groups, which can be used as a very powerful tool of domination (Ferguson, 2000, p. 196). Poststructuralism is a discourse that aims at demystifying Western truth about the world. However, others have argued that such theoretical arguments, in fact, re-colonize the deconstructed
“Third World” at a time in history when the “Third World” needs to be situated and anchored with a coherent sense of self in dealing with the global consequences of neo-liberal policies (See Royle Ed., 2000; Grossberg, 1993, p. 95-97). As such, in applying poststructuralism to understanding the Iranian self and the other, I am in fact involved in the process of imperialism, as the West repositions itself against its many others in this age of global capitalism through the discourses I draw upon in studying representations of the ideal citizen in Iran. At the same time, by pointing to the Eurocentric knowledge that informs their content and structure, it is possible to develop an approach to perceiving knowledge that aims at decolonizing information used to conceive those insider and outsider divisions that inform the constructions of national identities in the non-Western world. This is possible as the discourses and language that inform such a knowledge base are decentred and interrogated for epistemes or “those periods of history organized around, and explicable in terms of, specific world-views and discourses” (Danaher, Schirato and Webb, 2000, p. xi) that identify non-Westerners as different and Westerners as simply the norm (Rothenberg, 2002, p. 2).

My goal is to “tell stories that never end, the stories in which the listener, the ‘narratee’, may become a character or indeed the narrator, in which all structure[s are] provisional”, and as such, may end up limiting the range of possible meanings that could be included in understanding diversity (Pinar and Reynolds, 1992, p. 7). For example, rather than emphasizing the conditions of marginalized women in Iran in promoting diversity, I could instead provide information on non-marginalized people or the perspective of the dominant society. It is important, then, to note that colonial culture is not a homogenous entity. It is also significant to move away from an emphasis on studying discourses of representation and begin to contextual a poststructuralist analysis with a political economy approach to material realities due to the consequences of emic and etic relations of power (Grossberg, 1993).

My goal is also to point to the multiple aspects of identity by problematizing the “lived” aspects of unitary and “truth” oriented rational discourses. Yet, in attempting to achieve this goal, I may end up denying “the possibility of ‘strategic essentialism’ even in historically situated discourses” that function as non-hegemonic and/or as counter-hegemonic discourses of presenting images of the self (Ferguson, 2000, p. 196). In other words, the discourses that I choose as pedagogical tools in analyzing elementary and guidance schools themselves limit what can be included and what must be excluded (Pinar and Reynolds, 1992, p. 7). The process of choosing which ethnic minority group to focus on in analyzing how the texts discuss the representation of national identity in relation to various forms of otherness is a political process through which I decide which marginalized group is given
permission to speak on their own behalf as I construct their explanations into my analysis. Despite such shortcomings, this study is “a political activity that exposes the ideological [and hegemonic] function[s] and content[s] of discursive systems” (Pinar and Reynolds, 1992, p. 5).

In the next chapter, I analyze how the ideal citizen is represented in Iranian school textbooks by exploring the four main themes already developed. In Part One, I explore how Iran is depicted for students and who is considered to be an Iranian. I examine how the ideal citizen is constructed not only by references to how factors such as “race”, ethnicity, gender and class are reflected in these representations but also to the type of discourses that give meaning to this construction and I link them to issues of diversity, citizenship and modernization/development. In Part Two, I examine how different constructions of otherness inform the depictions of the Iranian ideal self from a historical perspective. In Part Three, I examine the obligations of Iranians as they are expressed in the textbooks, not only towards other Iranians, but also towards various forms of otherness that are influential and important in the construction of the Iranian identity and the ideal citizen, nationally and globally. In Part Four, I situate how the ideal citizen is positioned in the context of global economic relations, from the perspective of the national elite, in relation to Iran’s future in the region and beyond.

In discussing these main themes, it is important to note that the data is influenced by the two discourses of nation and family that behave like “traces”: Iran (as the symbolic and material manifestation of the ideal citizen’s sovereignty over a specific territorial space) and the family (as the focal point of everyday leadership and gender roles). These two divisions also inform how the textbooks are organized and how citizenship is presented to students. These “traces” are located when I apply the methods of “strategic formation” to situate the text’s position in, for example, the first lesson of Persian 1 with regard to the material that the section is concerned with (Writing through Pictures) and “strategic location” to locate the position and standpoint of the first lesson’s text, pictures and images in respect to its object of study and my study, such as Iran and the ideal citizen, respectively. Although this lesson is not about the family, the family is chosen as the starting point of introducing students to their first day of grade one in the context of a series of lessons that locate the family in relation to Iran and its leadership. The family is considered as the cradle of the nation, where the discourse of nation finds its roots and is narrated. It is the visibility of the term family in the text that allows it to operate as an unseen presence and as a “trace” that constructs fixed identities for students to emulate and compare themselves to throughout the lesson. This is not a conclusion
that one reaches at the end of the research project. This is the moment in which the “trace” becomes visible only in so far as it can point to the possibility of other forms of “traces” (which is discussed in the concluding chapter).

In Chapter Four, I explore how Iran is constructed by references to dimensions such as nation, leadership, constitution, independence and the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79. I explore terms such as the social responsibilities of the state and individuals in constructing the ideal citizen. I also analyze how “race” and ethnicity are configured in discussions of the nation and the ideal citizen. I explore how the idea of family is discussed by examining how gender and social class are depicted in discussions of gender and family relations from the perspective of the state. In Chapter Five, I offer my conclusions and future policy recommendations.
Chapter Four: 
**Findings: Representations of the Ideal Iranian Citizen**

4. Introduction

In this chapter, I show how diversity within Iran and in other parts of the world is represented in the official knowledge about citizenship, identity construction and economic development. I analyze how factors such as “race”, ethnicity, gender and class relations and structures, including rights and obligations and knowledge about the self, the West and the East, are incorporated in constructing the ideal citizen in the texts, figures, maps and titles/topics of lessons.

This chapter is divided into four parts. Each part accounts for the distinct facets associated with the representation of the ideal Iranian citizen. In Part One, entitled “Aryanisation, Islamization and Ethnicisation”, I present my analysis of the representations of the ideal citizen in terms of the origin of the Iranian nation and the attributes of its founding people. I review these findings focusing on the exclusions and inclusions of various historical and contemporary ethnic/national groups based on specific views about “race”, gender, colour of skin, ethnicity and social class.

In Part Two, entitled “‘Race’, Geography, Culture and Religious Diversity”, I present findings that illustrate the categories of difference, such as West/East, Moslem/non-Moslem, white/non-white, Shi’a/non-Shi’a and enemy/friend, that are employed in the textbooks in organizing information, knowledge and representations of members of insider and outsider groups in light of the narrations of Iran in various textbooks.

Part Three, entitled “Revolutionary Leadership, Ummat-i Islamī, Patriarchal Family and the Construction of the Ideal Citizen”, presents my findings on how rights and obligations of the ideal citizen toward other Iranians, the state and other people across the world are formulated in the textbooks. I provide data and analysis that highlights the nation-centric and global aspects of the ideal Iranian citizen that simultaneously transcends, confines and enhances racialized, ethnic, national, linguistic and cultural differences.

In Part Four, entitled “The Ideal Iranian Citizen and the Discourses of Progress, the West, Islam and Iranian Economic Development”, I present data on how representations of the roles and obligations of Iranian citizens in the development of Iran are employed in light of constructs and discourses such as whiteness, colonialism, industrial and scientific revolutions, pollution, environment, class relations and religious differences. I show how these discourses also function as important criteria of difference determining the inclusion and/or
exclusion of certain qualities in representations of the ideal citizen. Religious and class conflicts as well as the scientific revolution and the rise of industrial capitalism are discussed.
PART ONE

Aryanisation, Islamization and Ethnicisation
4.1 Introduction

In this part, I explore and analyze who is portrayed as an Iranian (insider) and who is not (outsider). I also illustrate and analyze the characteristics of the ideal Iranian citizen in relation to insider versus outsider categories. This part is divided into three sections. In section one, “Narrating the Nation: The Aryanisation of Iran and Representations of the Pars Origin”, I analyse which specific group is designated as the founding nation of Iran in Iranian school textbooks. I also expand on this analysis by investigating how “race”, gender and ethnicity are configured into the narration of the founding nation of Iran. I demonstrate how the authors of the textbooks situate the ideal citizen in light of the migration of the Pars tribe to the Persian Gulf region. I investigate how representations of the Aryan tribe incorporate images of historical insider and outsider others in differentiating between various groups of Aryans in depicting images of the ideal citizen.

In section two, entitled “The Nationalistic Construction of the Islamization of Iran”, under the sub-heading “Islamization, Aryanisation and Constructions of Multiple Forms of Otherness: the Arabs and the Turks”, I show how categories of insiders and outsiders such as pre-Islamic Arab, Moslem Arab, Sunni Arab, Shi’a Iranian, Turkish Moslem and non-Moslem others are constructed and configured in situating the Iranian citizen in history, starting in antiquity until the rise of the Qajar Dynasty to power (1796-1925). I investigate how us and them distinctions are made, remade or reconstituted in the textbooks during this period that denote the start of intense contact between Iran (tradition and Islam) and the West (modernity and Christianity) (Molavi, 2002; Rahimieh, 2001; Rejali, 1994). This sub-section is further divided into the two sub-headings of “The Arab Others” and “The Turkish Others”. In the third section, “The Ethnicization of the Ideal Iranian Citizen”, under the sub-heading, “Constructing the Ideal Citizen through Multiple Discourses: ‘Ashayir (nomadic tribes), Constitution, Leadership, Self-Sacrifice and Ummat-i Islam?”, the representation of the ideal citizen is discussed through an analysis of the discourse of ‘ashayir as a homogenizing and hegemonic term.

4.1.1 Narrating the Nation: The Aryanisation of Iran and Representations of the Pars Origin

In History 6 (2004, p. 8-22; See also History 6, 1994, p. 3-24; Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 70-80), for example, students read about the first 20,000 years of world history starting with a discussion of hunting and gathering societies, followed by lessons on pastoral life and the eventual formation of cities. The authors emphasize
that, in tribal and agricultural societies, “men were always ready to defend their tribe, for this reason, warrior quality was considered as one of their main characteristics and was highly prized” (History 6, 2004, p. 8; See also History 6, 1994, p. 5). Pastoral nomads are constructed as essentially brave (shujā), very patient (šabūr) and perseverant (muqāvīm, resisting and opposing) (History 6, 2004, p. 8). The text states that at some point, nomads decided to settle around the rivers and to defend their territory against other tribes, which the early inhabitants of Iran referred to as “Our Land” (History 6, 2004, p. 8-9; See also History 6, 1994, p. 6). The text also focuses on the migration of the Aryan tribe to Iran and beyond. Students are informed that the Aryans were pastoral nomads who “called their new home ‘the Land of the Aryans’” (History 6, 2004, p. 34; See also History 6, 1994, p. 23).

In the 2004 edition of Social Studies 4, in a lesson titled “The Migration of the Aryans” (History Section, 2004, p. 86), students also read that the Aryans are the ancestors and the founding nation of Iran. The textbooks authors also acknowledge that Iran was populated by indigenous populations prior to the arrival of the Aryans (Social Studies 4, 2004; Social Studies 6, 2004). In the same textbook (Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 79; See also History 6, 2004, p. 14-29; Social Studies 4, 1994, p. 6), students read that the first cities and civilizations were developed on the shores of the Karoon River in Iran, along the Nile in Egypt and in Tigris and Euphrates (Dejle and Farat) in Iraq, long before the arrival of the Aryans. Moreover, in History 6 (2004, p. 35-39; See also History 6, 2002, p. 35-39) students also read that after defeating the Assyrians, Babylonians and Elimates in armed confrontations, the Medes controlled Iran. However, the Medes are not portrayed to have established the first Iranian government. The Medes are constructed as part of the European tribe whose kings, after migrating to Western Iran, ruled Iran and exploited the people.

In reading about the founding nation of Iran, students are informed that,

About four thousand years ago, tribes that called themselves Aryan came to our land from the Northern parts of the Caspian Sea. They settled in the green and fertile {khurram} [pleasant] plains {dasht} and mountainous pastures. Since then, our land was [is] called Iran. The Aryans were [consisted of] three groups: Medes, Parthian and Pars. These groups settled in different regions of Iran .... (Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 86)

The authors not only inform students about how the story of the nation began in antiquity, but students also read about the divisions within the Aryan tribe and the Iranian sub-tribe. For example, in the “Activity in Class” section,
students are asked to complete the following sentences with the help of the Map in Figure 4.1,\(^{34}\) showing the migration and settlement patterns of the Aryans:

1) Medes settled in the west and north west of Iran. 2) Pars people settled in … of Iran. 3) … settled in north-east of Iran. (Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 88)

Furthermore, in the question section of this lesson, students are again asked to name the three groups that migrated to Iran (Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 88). They are also asked why the Medes government collapsed.

According to the text,

After strengthening their [control over the governance of the country], the Medes kings began to oppress people and [to engage] in pleasure seeking [activities]. Consequently [and as a result of the exploitation of the people by the kings of the Medes tribe and their excessive lifestyles], [the Medes] government became weak and the people also stopped cooperating with [their kings]. During this time, the leader of the [Pars tribe] whose name was Cyrus [Achaemenians Dynasty\(^{35}\) 550-331) took advantage of this weakness and went to war with the Medes. Ultimately, he defeated them and became the King of Iran. (Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 88)

Figure 4.1 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a map of the migration routes of Aryan subtribes to the Iranian Plateau.

Figure 4.1, “The Migration Patterns of the Aryans to Iran”, Source: Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 87.

\(^{34}\) The same map was also included in the previous editions of Social Studies 4 (History Section, 1999, p. 99; See also Social Studies 4, History Section, 1994, p. 107).

\(^{35}\) According to Lapidus (1988, p. 6), this is the first empire that directly brought diverse populations of the region from “Oxus Rivers to the Nile and the Dradanelles” under the central control of a single government.
In these constructions of the Aryan migration to Iran, the three Aryan groups populating specific parts of Iran are shown to be “culturally and socially” distinct tribes (See Figure 4.1; for example, the two arrows on the far right hand side depict the movement of the Pars people as a separate and distinct group from the other groups). Moreover, in History 6 (2004, p. 30), students are reintroduced to a similar narration of nation through another map, showing the same migratory patterns of the Aryan tribe (See Figure 4.2). The map in Figure 4.2, however, is more detailed in terms of its depiction of the movement of the Aryan sub-tribes. Distinctions are also made between the various groups of Aryans settling across Europe and Asia. This map divides the Aryan tribe into European, Indian and Iranian sub-categories. The authors state that the Iranian tribe is divided into two main sub-tribes of Parthian and Pars. The farthest arrow on the left hand side depicts the movement of the Indian tribe. The middle arrow shows the movement of the Pars tribe (as the main branch of the Iranian tribe) into central Iran. In fact, in some of the older editions of Social Studies 4 (History Section, 1994, p. 107), the map used in the lessons that discuss the Aryan migration into Iran depicted the Pars tribe as a sub-tribe of the Medes. Also, the movement of the Pars tribe into the Persian Gulf region is portrayed differently and the Pars tribe is shown migrating to Iran from the Western part of
the Caspian Sea. The Pars tribe in these maps is considered to have European ancestry (Social Studies 4, History Section, 1994, p. 107). At the same time, in the 1994 edition of History 6 (22), a similar map as the one depicted in Figure 4.2 was also used, except that in this map the Medes are shown to have entered Iran from the eastern side of the Caspian Sea. According to this depiction, no European-Aryan tribal group has settled in Iran.

Despite such inconsistencies, the most important information in Social Studies 4 and History 6 is the designation of the Pars tribe’s final destination as the core and centre of “Our Land”, which remains the same in all these representations. This region is constructed not merely as the historic land of the Persian Empire but also of Iran and the Islamic Republic. This geographical space represents more than 3,500 years of Iranian efforts to protect their land: Iran, the homeland of the Pars tribe, the descendents of the Aryan “race”. Protecting “our land” is depicted as an important characteristic of the first Iranians who settled in Iran. It is in the context of this framework and approach to the origin of Iran that the authors inform students about the narration of nation beginning in grade one in their Persian textbook. In fact, “Iran” is a topic that permeates all subjects and grade levels.

Nevertheless, Mehran (2002), in reference to the Iranian textbooks for the 1999 elementary level argues that, “the number of villains among us throughout history are the kings beginning with the Medes and ending with the last shah” (p. 240). Mehran (2002) asserts that, “The most evil kings are the Sassanids monarch Khosrau Parviz, whose ‘selfishness’ prevented him from accepting the prophet Muhammad’s invitation to Islam, and Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who is portrayed in the darkest light throughout all textbooks” (p. 240). The 2004 textbooks also portray a bleak picture of all kings and especially the early kings of Iran. Upon closer inspection of the textbooks, however, and despite the construction of most Iranian kings as tyrants, the authors of the textbooks glorify Iranian history and Iranian Pars-Moslem rulers as more superior to those of the neighbouring countries of Iran and the non-Pars and non-Moslem rulers of Iran.

In Social Studies 4 (History Section, 2004, p. 92; See also Social Studies 4, History Section, 1999, p. 104; 1994, p. 114), after reading about the achievements of specific kings that ruled Iran for 225 years during the Achaemenids Dynasty [550-330 BCE], students are informed about the invasion and occupation of Iran by Eskandar (Alexander the Greek), which caused the death of many Iranians and the destruction of the capital. In the 1999 and 1994 editions an entire lesson was dedicated to this period, in which students also read that the Iranian people did not support the last king of the Achaemenids Dynasty [550-330 BCE] (Darius III) since they were unhappy with his rule and policies. Students were also informed that after the death of Eskandar, the Seleucids Dynasty (312-64 CE),
a “Greek Dynasty”, was eventually established. The authors informed students that during the rule of this dynasty Iranians were forced “to live like Greek people and to mimic them, but the people of Iran, despite the fact that their country was administered by foreigners {bigānagān}, were dissatisfied” (Social Studies 4, History Section, 1999, p. 104; See also Social Studies 4, History Section, 1994, p. 114). The same information was also repeated in the introduction to the next lesson in which the authors credit the expulsion of the Seleucids and the establishment of the Ashkanian Dynasty to the Parth tribe (Social Studies 4, History Section, 1999, p. 105; See also Social Studies 4, History Section, 1994, p. 116). Students also read that during this period, Iran’s territory stretched from India to Iraq (Social Studies 4, History Section, 1999, p. 106; See also Social Studies 4, History Section, 1994, p. 117). The information from these two lessons from the previous editions is now included in one lesson in the 2004 edition that mainly focuses on the Ashkanian Dynasty (Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 95). In the 2004 edition, students are also introduced in more detail to how the administration of the country during the Ashkanian Dynasty was controlled by two distinct councils under the title of the “Majlis-i Mahistān” (the Council of Mahistān) (Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 95), which indicates the importance of “bureaucratic” bodies in the administration of the country by the founding fathers of Iran. In the 1999 and 1994 edition, in contrast, only the title of the council was mentioned by the authors (Social Studies 4, History Section, 1999, p. 106; See also Social Studies 4, History Section, 1994, p. 117).

Moreover, in History 6 (2004, p. 50; See also History 6, 2002, p. 51; See also History 6, 1999, p. 46; 1994, p. 40), students read the same information about the collapse of the Achaemenids Dynasty, but in more detail. In this textbook, students are also informed that before Eskandar reached the capital of the Achaemenids Dynasty, a Pars (Fars) tribal leader and his followers killed many Greek soldiers but Eskandar was eventually killed by the Greek army. The authors characterize this Pars tribal leader as shujā (brave) and fearless. Students are introduced to a historical act of sacrifice and an act of heroism by a Pars person. The Pars character is the main protagonist in this construction who is willing to sacrifice his life to save his country from the incursion of arrogant foreign troops. In History 6 (2004, p. 51; See also History 6, 2002, p. 51; 1999, p. 46; 1994, p. 43), moreover, in reference to the administration of Eskandar’s empire after his death, the authors remind students that,

After the death of Eskandar, his military commanders {sardārānash} divided his territory {qalamraw} into three sections of Greece, Egypt and Iran. Iran was administered by one of his military commanders {sardārān} with the name of Seleucid [Seleucids Dynasty, 312-64 CE]. This country was more important than Greece and Egypt, because it was larger in size, had a larger population and it had inherited the wealth of the great civilization of the Achaemenids Dynasty [550-330 BCE].
In *History 6* (2004, p. 52; 2002, p. 52; 1999, p. 47; 1994, p. 43), students are also informed that the rulers of the Seleucids Dynasty (312-64 CE) continued the policy of Eshkander to work with Iranian merchants of Parthian background. In defeating the Seleucid Dynasty, the authors write, “The Iranian families {khvāndan} assisted the Askhanian kings [who were of the Parth tribe {qaum}, a subdivision of the Aryan tribe]” to revolt against the Greek foreigners (*History 6*, 2004, p. 52; 2002, p. 52; 1999, p. 47; 1994, p. 43).

The “supremacy” of Iran as a nation-state in antiquity and male, Aryan (first Pars and then Parthian) Iranians as the true leaders of Iran is often contextualized in discussions and references to the fact that many of the historical non-Iranian regimes relied on male Iranian (Parthian or Pars) administrators, businessmen and “politicians” for the running of their day-to-day affairs of the country. From a historical perspective, then, Iranian elite males are constructed as always having defended and ruled their land against incursions by invaders and the infiltration of foreign views and values. It is in this context that Iranian students are informed about the existence of otherness in Iran in both the pre-and post-colonial era.

For example, elementary students read about Armenia and Armenians in *Social Studies 4* (History Section, 2004, p. 97; 1994, p. 118-119) in respect to the wars over the north-western territories of Iran (which is now referred to as Armenia) between the Ashkanian Kings (Parthian Dynasty, 170 B.C.E. to 224 C.E.) and the Roman Empire and in a discussion about the Republic of Armenia as one of Iran’s neighbouring countries in *Social Studies 5* (Geography Section, 2004, p. 38-41). The authors include information about the highest mountain, its neighbouring countries, the shared river between Iran, Turkey and Armenia and the fact that most of its people are Christians (Armenian) who speak Armenian. Students are also informed about its economy, agricultural production and various industries such as chemical, electric and iron smelting. In a section, entitled “For Further Reading (mutāla‘ah)”, after reading about Armenia’s population students are reminded that, “Armenia is a bāstāni (ancient) land”. The authors state that as students should recall in the History Section of *Social Studies 4*, they had already “learned” that during the period of the Sassanids Dynasty, Armenia was part of Iran and the Romans and the Sassanids fought many wars over its takeover (tašarruf)” (*Social Studies 5*, Geography Section, 2004, p. 41). The core of the information about Armenia, however, deals with a specific period in Iranian history that situates Armenia in the context of the territorial expansion of the Persian Empire within the limits of dichotomies such as Aryan/Roman and Zoroastrian/Christian-paganism.
In *History 6* (2004, p. 55-56; 1999, p. 52), students also read about the expansion of the Roman Empire that neighboured Iran during the Ashkanian Dynasty. In the 1999 and 1994 editions of *History 6* (1999, p. 52; 1994, p. 49), students were also informed that after the Roman elite converted to Christianity, Christian values were introduced to the Armenian region, where there were more followers of Christianity than in any other part of the country. This information is omitted from the 2004 edition of this lesson (*History 6*, 2004, p. 55-56), but in another lesson in the 2004 edition as well as in previous editions (*History 6*, 2004, p. 60; See also *History 6*, 1999, p. 54), students still read that during the Ashkanian period, paganism, Buddhism and Christianity were on the rise and the majority of the population in the Fars, Khorasan and Azerbaijan regions of Iran believed in the Zoroastrian faith. Also, in previous editions, in describing the reasons for the rise of Christianity in Palestine, the authors explain that the Roman Emperors were unjust, overly concerned with worldly affairs (i.e.: accumulation of wealth) and sanctioned inhumane practices such as slave/gladiator “fights”. The authors write, “In such a condition, [Hazarat-i] the Prophet Jesus Christ appeared for the guidance [hidayat-i] of humans in Palestine, but the Jewish priests, with the assistance of the Romans, prevented the people from following the teachings of Jesus Christ” (*History 6*, 1999, p. 51-52; See also *History 6*, 1994, p. 49). In the 2004 edition of this lesson in *History 6* (2004, p. 56), the reference to the Jewish priests is dropped but the role of the Romans is still criticized. In fact, all references to the Jewish people’s or the priests’ deliberate attempts to alter the Jewish holy book and their conscious and direct involvement in the death of the Prophet Jesus are also omitted in the 2004 edition (See *History 6*, 1999, p. 89, 92 90; See also *History 6*, 1994, p. 85, 88, 89). In addition, in the previous editions of *History 6* (1999, p. 93; 1994, p. 89), the authors explain that the conversion of the Roman elite to Christianity was, in fact, one of the causes of Christianity’s inhiraf or deviation from the true teachings of God, which is now also excluded from the content of the 2004 history textbook.

Despite a positive description of Christianity and the teachings of Jesus Christ in *History 6* (2004, p. 66-67; See also *History 6*, 1994, p. 56-57; 1999, p. 60), students also read that during the Sassanids period (224 C.E. to 651 C.E.) many wars were fought between the Iranians and Eastern Romans. The authors state that the main reason for these wars was for control over Armenia, which the authors conceptualize for students as the “problem of Armenia” (*History 6*, 2004, p. 66; See also *History 6*, 1999, p. 60). Students are informed that during this time, many people had become Christians and the Eastern Roman government aimed at annexing this land (*History 6*, 2004, p. 66; See
also *History 6*, 1999, p. 60). The authors characterize this war as a war between the Christians and Zoroastrians that resulted in the death of many (*History 6*, 2004, p. 66; See also *History 6*, 1999, p. 1994, p. 57).

In Iranian school textbooks, “Armenian land” is historically considered as either belonging to Iranians (Zoroastrian/Moslem) or as a ‘pathological region’ due to its relations with Eastern Romans and as Christians in the land of Zoroastrians. That is, this region is viewed as causing disunity, resulting in its separation from the Persian Empire. The meaning associated with Armenia is one of historical animosity between Christians and Iranians. It is only after the establishment of Armenia as a nation-state that this country is constructed as a legitimate cultural landscape of the region. However, the construction of Iran in the textbooks always reinforces the general message that Iran has been under attack and has been invaded several times in the past. But students also read that Iranians have never succumbed to the cultures of their invaders and occupiers, since Iranians (read Pars or Parthian people) have always eventually dominated their dominators. This is a hegemonic construction and characterization of Iran that historicizes the myth of Iranian culture as essentially immortal. In this sense, despite the changing geographical boundaries of Iran throughout history, the term Iranian culture is not envisioned by the authors of the textbooks as inclusive of the cultures of its invaders or of “outsiders within”. The culture of Iran, as defined in the school textbooks of various grades, is homogenized and its Persian characteristics are considered anachronistic.

The narration of nation in terms of factors such as religion (Zoroastrian) and the tribal, nomadic and cultural divisions of the founding fathers of the Iranian nation is explored in discussions about the Sassanids Dynasty. The collapse of the Ashkanian Dynasty is explained in terms of the dissatisfaction of the people with its kings, who had become oppressors and exploiters, and the effects of internal and external wars. The establishment of this dynasty is credited to the efforts of a leader of one of the tribes residing in the Fars region of Iran (*Social Studies 4*, 2004, p. 100). In the 1994 edition of *Social Studies 4* (1994, p. 122-123), in reading about the achievements of Iranians during this period by various Sassanids kings, including the unification of and the establishment of Iran, new cities, universities and architectural monuments, the reference to Anoushiravan (the most famous king of this dynasty) constructed him as unfair and unjust, despite the fact that the authors referred to his great achievements. In this edition, students read that the poor and the lower classes were not given the right to study and were forced to pay heavy taxes in order to pay for the King’s army. In fact, students also read about a story in which Anoushiravan rejects the offer of a peasant, who wanted to give everything he had so that his son could study, by saying that “regular people must not study” (*Social Studies 4*, 1994, p. 123). This negative construction of Anoushiravan, who
was known during the Shah’s period as a fair and just king, is omitted in the 2004 and 1999 editions; however, students continue to read about the existing class hierarchy during the period (Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 101; See also Social Studies 4, 1999, p. 111).

In terms of information about the religion of the Sassanids, students read very limited information about the basic tenants of the Zoroastrian religion in their elementary textbooks. However, in History 6 (2004, p. 63-68; See also History 6, 1999, p. 58-60; 1994, p. 54), students are informed that the Zoroastrian religion became centralized and was supported by the Sassanids government due to the fact that Ardashir, the first king of the Sassanids Dynasty, had recognized that the disunity in Iran during the last years of the Ashkanian dynasty was partly due to the religious instability brought about by Buddhism and Christianity. Nevertheless, the authors maintain that even after the state support of Zoroastrianism due to freedom of religion, the numbers of Christian and Buddhists Iranians were still on the rise. Students are also informed that during the reign of Shapur I, an Iranian named Mani established a new religion that also attracted the attention of the king. The authors state that this increase in the number of Christians, Buddhists and Manicheans resulted in the unification and subsequent uprising of Zoroastrian priests and followers (Mobedan). Following the death of Shapur I and the execution of Mani, students read that Zoroastrianism became the official religion of the court, and the “teaching” (tablīgh) of other religions became illegal (History 6, 2004, p. 66; See also History 6, 1999, p. 58-60; 1994, p. 55). Prior to this lesson, the only other reference to Zoroastrianism is found in Social Studies 4 (History Section, 2004, p. 100; See also Social Studies 4, History Section, 1994, p. 121) in a lesson dealing with the history of the Sassanids government. The authors state that Ardashir established Zoroastrianism as the official religion of Iran. This religion, the authors expanded, promotes good deeds and good thoughts and their “beloved” book is called Avistā (Social Studies 4, History Section, 2004, p. 100).

In the 1994 edition of History 6 (1994, p. 65), in the same lesson that dealt with the events leading to the collapse of the Sassanids Dynasty, students also read about Buddhist and Christian Iranians. The authors wrote that one of many conditions that led to the collapse of the Sassanids Empire was the fact that the Zoroastrian religion could not compete with the two new religions (muqābalah kaunad) in attracting more followers and converts (History 6, 1994, p. 65). In the 2004, 2002 and 1999 editions of this lesson (History 6, 2004, p. 73; 2002, p. 73; 1999, p. 67), the above statements are omitted and the lesson contains less information. The collapse of the Sassanids Dynasty is followed by lessons that inform students about the introduction of Islam to Iran. In all editions,
the collapse of the Sassanids Dynasty is signalled as the start of a new era in Iranian history, known as the “Islamic Era” in 652 A.C. (History 6, 2004, p. 73; 2002, p. 73; 1999, p. 67; 1993, p. 65).

It is important to note that in these descriptions of religious conflicts and diversity in ancient Iran, Zoroastrianism is still depicted and portrayed in a positive light and the historical Iranian self is portrayed as possessing a culture that has always emphasized good deeds and thoughts and moral issues as important. In other words, the characters of the Aryan and “his” Islamic offspring are constructed based on the assumption of superior moral, scientific, artistic and ethical characteristics.

The non-present aspect of these lessons is the argument that the name “Iran”, denoting a nation-state in modernity, was also used to refer to the same geo-political boundary some 3,500 years ago. According to Vaziri (1993), this misconception is based on the incorporation of Orientalist knowledge. As mentioned, Vaziri (1993) maintains that it is anachronistic to apply today’s notions of identity to the past in the process of constructing a national identity. Furthermore, Vaziri (1993) points out that, “Darius himself speaks in inscriptions of being the king of numerous communities, and thus it would be unlikely that Darius conceptualized his empire as Aryan, an alleged unique race” (p. 79). As a racial or a linguistic category, Aryan is conceptualized in different contexts and manifestations. Several Orientalists, primarily philologists such as Pictet, Sayce and Herzfeld, argued that the name Iran is “derived from the establishment of Aryans in the region” (Vaziri, 1993, p. 75). A number of other Orientalist scholars also perceived it as an ethnic community. Yet, as Vaziri (1993, p. 80) maintains, the term in its post-Sassanids usage does not refer to a well established Iranian ethnic community. In fact, according to the Italian scholar Gnoli (as cited in Vaziri, 1993), “Arya neither stood for Iran nor was synonymous with Parsa; and it would be a sheer anachronism to consider Achaemenians the historical source of Iranian aspirations” (p. 80). As such, the history of Iran is assumed to begin with an event, which is characterized as liberating due to the importance of equality, honour and freedom amongst the “Aryans”. Also, the history of Iran and its civilization is represented not in the form of an expansionist and hegemonic empire. Rather it is constructed as the outcome of the efforts of peaceful "men" who sought truth (asha or rāst-qūī) and fought evil and "lies" (druj or durūgh) (Vaziri, 1993). In fact, the promotion of the "Persian" identity as the source for Iranian national identity denies a critical reflection on how ethnic identities have been shaped and affected in modernity (Rejali, 1994). In fact, I also went through a similar schooling and read similar information about myself and Iran that, in retrospect, actually provided me “with
a whole set of misconceptions about the country that I have spent much of my adult life [re-] unlearning” (Francis, 1997, p. 13).

The importance of the discourses of the Aryan and Pars are their implicit assumptions about Whiteness. The discourse of the Aryan ancestry is actually a discourse about legitimizing the Whiteness of Iranians as the central aspect of the ideal citizen. Implicit references to Whiteness through the discourse of the Aryan thesis is another racialized way to distinguish between “insiders and friendly outsiders” without directly discussing “race”. It is through this construction of Iranians as White and as the same “stock” as the Europeans, but at the same time different than them due to cultural and religious factors, that Iran is situated in relation to the world’s civilizations. Iran is viewed from a perspective that divides the world according to colour, facial and religious differences. Whiteness is an important non-present discourse in discussions of Iran in the textbooks, but it is represented through a colour-blind approach to the construction of the Iranian identity. Iranian school textbooks are written according to an ideology that does not acknowledge internal racialized relations in light of national and international power relations and their effects on Iranians. The discourse of “colour blindness” partly informs how Iranian textbook writers talk about and represent the racial characteristics of Iranians (See Wotherspoon, 2004, p. 105). To construct the ideal Iranian as white but never problematize this construction is in itself a racist construction. Racism is manifested in the process of knowledge production in the textbooks that represents the “power held by one group over … [others] to dominate and control [representations of] other[s] … often by establishing what is normal and necessary, desirable and acceptable” (Fleras and Elliot, 2002, p. 238), which here revolves around who is Aryan and who is not.

Like the nationalist construction of Iran during the early decades of the twentieth century, the beginning of the history of Iran is identified by references to a group of pastoral nomads whose culture and tribal relations are represented to have dominated the region (Vaziri, 1993). The history of the Islamic Republic of Iran is depicted for students in light of the migration of a non-Moslem tribe to the region. In this sense, the lesson on the Aryan migration functions as a “textual-space” and the site of Islamization in light of nationalistic sentiments. This is due to the fact that the lesson on the Aryans is introduced in grade four after students have already been introduced to other topics such as the Islamic Revolution, \textit{Ummat-i Islami} (Islamic Nation/Community), martyrdom, Shi’ism, ʻashayir (nomadic tribes) and sacrifice (See below). The racialized aspects of national identity in its historical forms as expressed in the textbooks are important elements of the ideal citizen and in understanding the Islamization of the
Iranian national identity after the revolution. However, in the literature, the Islamization process is considered as more important in the analysis of Iranian school textbooks, which is also indicative of the biases in the academia that after 1978-79, only Islam and Islamic values are significant characteristics of Iran and Iranians.

In fact, as Mehran maintains, it is important to distinguish between Islamic and Islamized society (Mehran, 2003, p. 272). Politicized Islam characterizes an Islamized society. It is a society in which the aim of the religious elite in control of the state apparatus is to govern and influence the private and public affairs of its citizens (Mehran, 2003, p. 272). As this and the following sections show, the fact that a state is revolutionary and Islamic does not imply that political Islam does not tap into a “racialized” history to situate itself in antiquity and at the present time. After all, as scholars have pointed out, the Iranian state is not a fanatical Islamic state but a pragmatic regime with internal struggles over power structures (Rahnema & Behdad Eds., 1995). Islam, nevertheless, also plays an important role in the definition of the ideal citizen. However, the origin of Islam in Iranian school textbooks is associated with Whiteness (See below).

In Iranian school textbooks, the idea of Iran is given a beginning by highlighting several important characteristics: bravery, civilization, progress, alertness and readiness to defend one’s family, home and national territory. These qualities are depicted as central to the image of the ideal citizen. Iranians’ historical claims to the present borders of Iran are based on the idea that Iranian cultural and political characteristics have always been dominant and have always influenced the region. Iran has been “Our Land” and all people who have lived in this land have, from the beginning of its birth, defended it against other unwanted groups. As mentioned, in constructing the ideal citizen, the Aryan self is depicted in relation to various forms of otherness. For example, the Medes and Parthians are constructed as internal outsider others. Their attributes are fixed in history by references to racial and cultural characteristics. As Vaziri (1993) maintains, such a depiction locates the construction of the Iranian nation-state in light of “the nationalist outlook of the early Orientalist [that] inflamed subsequent generations of scholars as well as the centralized state apparatus in Iran” (p. 62-63). In fact, it was de Sacy, an Orientalist, who applied the term Iran to stand as both the reference to the people and land during the time of the Sassanids (224-651 A.D.) (Vaziri, 1993, p. 71). In general, Vaziri (1993) argues that the application of terms such as *arya* or Aryan to the racial composition of Iran and equating them with Parsa and the Achaemenians Dynasty (550-331 B.C) as the first Iranian dynasty are “act[s] of historical blindness influenced by extreme Aryanism in scholarship” (p. 80).
According to the “European formulation of the Aryan or Indo-European hypothesis, the Semites were identified and distinguished linguistically from their Indo-Iranian family. For various reasons, the Iranian world was also separated from the Indian one” (Vaziri, 1993, p. 61). I argue that the construction of the ideal Iranian citizen in Iranian school textbooks as a Persian, descending from the Aryans who are, by definition, white and different from Arabs and Indians, resembles the early “formulation of the Aryan or Indo-European hypothesis” (Vaziri, 1993, p. 61). The difference lies in the fact that in Iranian school textbooks, these distinctions that are made between the ideal Iranian citizen, other friendly insiders and the Western and Eastern others are emphasized from an anti-imperialist perspective. Nevertheless, the separation of the Aryan sub-tribes into modern categories of Iranian, Indian and European is presented as a historical fact, which also reinforces the legitimacy of these terms in opposition to various non-Aryan groups in the region: Arabs and Jews. The history of the nation is also told through reflections on what Iranian is not: of Semitic ancestry. Moreover, the construction of Iran as the “Land of the Aryans” and the division of the Aryan tribe into the European, Indian and Iranian sub-tribes in the maps and in the text also symbolize the beginning of the conflict between the nation of Iran and its European and non-European counterparts as historically significant.

An important absent trace in such lessons about Iran being populated by the Aryans is how, epistemologically, the Aryan thesis developed in accordance with a racialized ideology that also informed the ideology of the Nazi party and many Orientalist writings on the East and its peoples (See Vaziri, 1993, p. 20-48). Yarsharter argues that the name Iran itself is a European-German invention and a “suggestion”, as a way “to signal a new beginning of Persia” that “would also signify the Aryan race of its population” (as cited in Rahimieh, 2001, p. 19). The history of the name change from Persia to Iran is due to the influences of and “the spread of Nazi propaganda in Persia” (Rahimieh, 2001, p. 19). In fact, “Iranians were recognized by the Germans as having profound non-Islamic tradition, as distinct from the general Arab-Islamic culture of the New East” (Miron Rezun, as cited in Rahimieh, 2001, p. 20). This racialized aspect of Iranian history remains an unspoken aspect of the narration of the founding nation. However, scholars such as Rahimieh (2001) claim that “this particular chapter of cultural history had long been closed, although remnants of that era continue to haunt Persian discourses of identity, that sometimes blindly eradicate the multiplicity of languages and ethnicities in search of a mystical pure Persian or Iranian culture and identity” (p. 20). Such comments undermine the consequences of racialized ideology and its presence in the discourses of national identity employed by the masses in speaking about Iran and Iran’s history.
They also ignore the ways in which the Iranian school system has covertly and overtly been providing students racialized positions to speak from. For example, in the 1999 edition of Geography 8 (1999, p. 71), the authors informed students that racial groups, regardless of the diversity of populations, are distinguishable by employing certain characteristics that can be universally applied to the world’s population. According to the text, height, colour of skin, texture of hair and frame of skull are some of these characteristics (Geography 8, 1999, p. 71). Students read that by using “skin colour” as a criterion of difference, humans are divided into three distinct “races”: the white “race”, the yellow “race” and the black “race” (Geography 8, 1999, p. 72). The fact that these characteristics have had specific meanings during different historical periods and have resulted in the genocides of many groups was not discussed or referred to (i.e.: the Holocaust). Moreover, even in History 8 (2004, p. 64), when discussing the events of World War II, the authors inform students about the racial ideology of Hitler and Mussolini in only one sentence. In discussing the effects of both world wars, the authors mention that the war resulted in the loss of millions of lives as well as property, but no direct mention of concentration camps are made (History 8, 2004, p. 54, 65-69). Although the authors refer to the racist policies of Hitler and Mussolini, they do not also offer any explanation or knowledge of the anti-Semitic policies of the Nazi state. These elements are non-present discourses that also function as traces that reflect the anti-Semitic bias towards the Jews in the construction of school knowledge about who Iranians are. Even the picture that is chosen to reflect the devastation of World War II shows the city of Hiroshima after the atomic bomb was dropped on that city. The caption for this picture identifies the Americans as the culprits. The portraits of Hitler and Mussolini are also placed beside this picture (History 8, 2004, p. 54, 65-69). In this sense, the racist ideology of Hitler and Mussolini are employed as backgrounds to highlight the inhumane killing of Japanese civilians by the U.S. armed forces, as the symbol of imperialism rather than as a way to problematize and learn more about the existence of concentration camps during this time period (History 8, 2004, p. 54, 65-69). This lack of inclusion is also necessary in order to construct unproblematic images of Iran in terms of its own genocidal policies of both the past and present and its treatments of religious minorities and ethnic/tribal groups. At the same time, the emphasis on the death of thousands of innocent Japanese civilians rather than Jewish people is ideologically concurrent with the anti-American and anti-Israeli positions of the ruling elite in Iran.

The knowledge Iranian students read about their national identity and its Aryan beginning has not been critically evaluated for its Orientalist biases. The process of de-orientalizing knowledge production in Iranian school textbooks does not require a rejection of the Aryan thesis but it does necessitate a critical self-reflection on how
“race” informs the construction of Islam in light of the discourse of Iran as a nation-state. The history of Islam in Iran is constructed by references to its imagined Aryan ancestry. This discourse creates and highlights the birth of a culture that throughout its history, as it is discussed in more detail, has not been influenced by the cultural values of other invading nations. It is in this light that the Pars self is constructed in relation to other groups of non-Aryan backgrounds, such as the Armenians, Jews, Christians, Buddhists and Romans.

The appropriation of the Aryan thesis in depicting the origin of Iran is a racializing discourse that also others the Arab category in representing the story of the nation. In the following section, I show how the Arab other has been configured in the framing of the ideal citizen in Iranian school textbooks. I also demonstrate how the discussions of Arabs coincides with references to their invasions of Iran as non-Moslem and Moslems in the reification of Iran in history and the Islamic Republic as the best alternative to Western and Eastern styles of democratic and socialist governments.

4.1.2 Islamization, Aryanisation and the Constructions of Multiple Forms of Otherness: the Arabs and the Turks

4.1.2.1 The Arab Others

In History 6 (2004, p. 67; See also History 6, 1994, p. 58-59), students are informed that many Arab tribes from Arabia (Arabestan) (224-651 A.D.) migrated toward the borders of Iran during the time of the Sassanids. The authors state that the Arab migration was characterized by destruction and plundering and, as a result, the Sassanids stopped their intrusion and defeated them (History 6, 2004, p. 67; See also History 6, 1994, p. 58-59). Students are also informed that in order to prevent further Arab encroachment and advancement into Iran, the Sassanids kings permitted a group of Arabs (known as Hayrah) to settle in the southern part of the country (History 6, 2004, p. 67; See also History 6, 1994, p. 58-59). In all editions, students are asked to identify the location of the Arab tribe that played the role of a buffer between Iran and other dangerous Arab tribes. The map identifies this territory as part of today’s Saudi Arabia and close to Bahrain. The authors give the impression that no Arab tribes had ever migrated within the current boundaries of Iran during the reign of the Sassanids. In the 1994 edition of History 6 (1994, p. 58-59), students read that Iran also occupied Yemen at the invitation of the indigenous people who did not want to live under the rule of other tyrant Arab tribes. Students read that Iranians continued living in Yemen until the prophecy of His Excellency, Ḥazarat-i Mohammad. In fact, the authors stated that this community was one of the first groups
of Iranians to embrace Islam. In the 2004 edition of *Social Studies 5* (History Section, 2004, p. 76-78; See also *Social Studies 5*, History Section, 2001, p. 75-77; 1993, p. 93-97), the authors also inform students that the *House of Mecca*, built by the Prophet Abraham, was turned by the Arabs into a place of worshiping pagan gods. Students read that the Qurayshy (Prophet Muhammad’s clan) aristocrats (āshraf) did not believe in paganism but supported the practice since they profited from the business that paganism was attracting to the city of Mecca.

The Arab other is also the focus of discussion when students read about the introduction of Islam into the region and the events leading to the collapse of the Sassanids Dynasty (*Social Studies 4*, History Section, 2004, p. 104-105; See also *Social Studies 4*, History Section, 1994, p. 126; 1999, p. 113-114). The authors state that the wars between the Sassanids kings and the Roman Empire weakened the Sassanids government and resulted in hunger, poverty and sickness amongst the population. Students are informed that it was also during this period that Iranians were introduced to the Islamic faith. The authors write that eventually, wars erupted (637-651 A.D.) between the Sassanids and the Moslem Arabs along the borders of Iran (*Social Studies 4*, History Section, 2004, p. 104-105; See also *Social Studies 4*, History Section, 1994, p. 126; 1999, p. 113-114). The authors maintain that faith in Islam had presented the Moslem army with the spiritual power that assisted them to rise up against tyranny and to defeat the Sassanids’ army (*Social Studies 4*, History Section, 2004, p. 105). Students are informed that the kings’ policies only benefited the upper classes. There were no opportunities open to the masses for upward mobility since, for example, people (the economically disadvantaged classes) were denied access to education (*Social Studies 4*, History Section, 2004, p. 104-105; See also *Social Studies 4*, 1994, p. 122-123; 1999, p. 111).

In a lesson titled “The Fall of the Sassanids Dynasty” in *History 6* (2004, p. 67; See also *History 6*, 1994, p. 65; 1999, p. 65), students are also informed that the Iranian people, who had experienced oppression (*sitam*) and were unsatisfied with the king’s policies, openly accepted the invitation of Islam. As mentioned, in the 1994 edition of this lesson, students also read that the first group of Iranians who embraced Islam were, in fact, those who had already been living in Yemen since the early period of the Sassanids Dynasty. As such, it was not only the Arab Moslems but also the Iranians (read Aryan Pars) who brought Islam to Iran, and so began a new era in Iranian

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36 Such constructions of events are in stark contrast to how Arabs were depicted in pre-revolutionary textbooks. As Mohsenpour (1988, p. 78) maintains, in the 1975 edition of *Social Studies 7*, the consequences of the introduction of Islam to Iran was constructed in the following manner: “Following the conquest of Iran by the Arabs [not Moslems], the living conditions of … rural Iran went from bad to worse. The Arabs charged the rural people of Iran a land tax and called it kharaj. They also charged the people [a] per-capita tax and called it jizayeh. Feudalism extended and great ownership of the Arab state evolved”.
history. In addition, despite the fact that the authors construct a negative image of the last king of the Sassanids Dynasty, monarch Khosrau Parviz, students are informed that he made a mistake by killing the king of the Arab Hayrah tribe. Students are informed that as a result of this action of the king the buffer zone between the Sassanids and the Arabs was now eliminated and the Arabs could reach the boundaries of Iran with more ease.

In *Social Studies 5* (History Section, 2004, p. 97), students read about leadership conflicts arising after the death of the Prophet Mohammad. These conflicts, students are informed, led to the establishment of the Umayyad Caliphate, who abused their political power and Moslem wealth for the entertainment and personal expenses of their caliphs. The authors state that it was due to the order of Yazid, an Umayyad Caliph, that Imam Hussein was martyred. Students read that Imam Hussein was the second martyr of the Shi’a tradition after the “murder” of Imam Ali by an assassin (*Social Studies 5*, History Section, 2004, p. 94-95). The massacre of Imam Hossein and his small group of followers by the Umayyad army is considered as the beginning of many more revolts against the unjust Umayyad government (*Social Studies 5*, History Section, 2004, p. 95). The authors state that, “they did not abide by Islamic rules and justice and considered the Arab race more superior to others” (*Social Studies 5*, History Section, 2004, p. 95).

The establishment of the Abbasids Dynasty (749-1256) in reaction to the exploitation of its people by the Umayyad rulers is also explored and students read that the “Abbasids did not know how to administer a country” (*Social Studies 5*, History Section, 2004, p. 95). Students are informed that, from the beginning of the establishment of this dynasty, their rulers knew that in order to administer Iranian territory they needed the expertise and knowledge of Iranians. For this reason, the authors emphasize, these rulers chose amongst Iranians to serve as ministers. Students read that Iranian prime ministers encouraged writers, poets and scientists to pursue knowledge, “which resulted in the advancement (pīshraft) of scientific knowledge and morals (adab) during this period” (*Social Studies 5*, History Section, 2004, p. 98).

In a lesson, entitled “Independent Islamic Governments in Iran”, the authors state that the exploitive nature of the Abbasids Dynasty resulted in insurgencies against it and “Iranians attempted to free themselves from Arab rule by trying to control the administration of some parts of their country. As a result of these attempts, a number of independent local governments were established” (*Social Studies 5*, History Section, 2004, p. 100). Three examples are mentioned in the maps accompanying this lesson: the Tahirids Dynasty (821-873), the Samanian Dynasty (819-
999) and the Buyids Dynasty (945-1055). This last inclusion is interesting since it highlights the authors’ emphasis on the distinction between Sunni and Shi’a as the Buyids Dynasty (945-1055) had “Twelver Shi’a leanings” and were the only Shi’a Dynasty ruling Iran (See Keddie, 2003, p. 8-9). Nevertheless, the Samanian Dynasty (819-999 A.D.) is discussed in more detail and characterized as playing an influential role in promoting science and the Persian language.

The authors of the textbooks attempt to normalize the introduction of Islam into Iran as the outcome of the tyranny of the kings and the result of the will of the nation. However, the only time the Arab other is positively depicted is when the authors discuss the period when Islam was introduced to both Iran and Arabia. Iranian students are not presented with a positive image of Arabs before the introduction of Islam to Arabia. In fact, the Arab other is constructed as the enemy outsider whose religion was paganism. Iranian students read that before the introduction of Islam in Arabia, the Arab other had already been separated from the real teachings of God. At the same time, the authors construct an Arab aristocrat family in a positive light due to their kinship relations to the Prophet.

The term Arab is de-emphasized only when depicting Moslem “attacks” on Iran. Rather, the text states that the Moslems attacked the Sassanids government and not the Iranian nation (millat). There are also several main images of Arabs that are constructed in relation to Iran and Iranians: the pagan and ignorant Arab, the ‘dangerous’ tribal Arab, the friendly wise Arab and the ‘ruthless’ Moslem-Sunni Arab. These constructions relate to the following statements: Iran (the land of Aryans) was “raped” (tajvuz) by dangerous pre-Islamic Arabs; Iranians had consensually protected the wise Pre-Islamic Arab groups; the Moslem Arabs saved Iran since Iranians in Arabia belonged to the first “army” of the Community (Nation) of Islam; and the Arab Sunni Moslem leadership exploited Iran.

According to the textbooks, Arabs are different from Iranians not due to Sunni and Shi’a differences alone, but also due to the apparent Indo-European (non-Semite) heritage of Iranians. Iranian students are informed that Arabs and other invaders have historically relied on Iranians for their own cultural, scientific and economic knowledge (See Vaziri, 1993 for his critique of this view). The authors of the textbooks present an image in which Iranians are already conceptualized as involved in spreading the words of Allah, science and Islam. Iran, as an
imagined nation, remains the central focus, although the introduction of Islam is used to distinguish the Zoroastrian past from the new era. In this sense, readers are also represented with the death of Zoroastrianism.\footnote{As Golnar Mehran (2002), in reference to elementary school textbooks states, “Since this is the only exposure that young pupil has to non-Moslem Iranians, with absolutely no mention of other religious groups living in the country, he/she may believe that all Iranians are Moslem, and Zoroastrians [and other religious groups] only lived in ancient times” (p. 235).}

In lessons dealing with the historical Arab, the Islamic Republic, as the symbolic representation of modern Iran, is a non-present aspect of the discourse of the nation. It is constructed in light of an Orientalist approach to the Aryan thesis that distinguishes between two white categories and excludes itself from the Semite category. The Islamic Republic is, in essence, constructed as descending from the likes of Cyrus the Great, who allowed for the coexistence of various local cultures such as “the Hebrews whom the Persians encountered in Babylon” (Tragert, 2003, p. 41). In fact, in History 6 (2002, p. 40), Cyrus is referred to as wise and prudent (khiradmand). This positive construction of Cyrus is repeated in Iranian and World History I (first year of high school): “he knew how to behave and act towards different tribes and nations” (2005, p. 58). He is constructed as a just king who respected the religions of other nations and who freed all slaves after the liberation of Babylon (See also Iranian and World History I, 2005, p. 59).

Such a construction situates the emergence of the Iranian identity in antiquity by distinguishing between historical and contemporary Moslem and non-Moslem others based on ideological, religious, political and racialized considerations. As it can be stipulated, the process of altering the historical memory of the population after the Revolution of 1978-79 involves racializing and othering the historical non-Iranian/non-Moslem populations.

The textbooks and representations of otherness highlight the Islamic characteristics of Iran. But they also end up celebrating the Iranian self over the Arab other. In Iranian school textbooks, narrations about others in the storyline construct the Persians as “the centre of attention … by … placing peoples of [different ethnic and racial backgrounds] in the [text] only during time periods or events of particular concern to” the Iranian elite (Sleeter and Grant, 1991, p. 85). Factors such as “race”, religion, social inequality and legitimacy to geographical spaces intersect one another and highlight the integrity of Iranian territorial claims as “sacred”. This period that includes these various images of the other can be singled out as a “discursive turn” in the narration of nation without disturbing its foundation. Representations of the external Arab play important political roles that deny Arab Iranian
minorities representations of their national selves and histories in the textbooks. The ideal Iranian citizen’s legitimate right to this land is, however, textually secured.

In introducing students to the events that led to the establishment of Shi’ism as the official state religion, the Turkish and Mongols are also othered in the narration of nation. In this sense, “race” and sectarianism intersect one another in representing the ideal image of Iranian in antiquity. This is further differentiated by reference to Iranian architectural, scientific and administrative superiority over these other groups. How these categories of difference relate to one another and how they are positioned in relation to the ideal citizen are further discussed in the next section.

### 4.1.2.2 The Turkish Others

In elementary school textbooks, the othering of Arabs in school textbooks coincides and leads to the othering of Turks and their movement into Iran. In the lesson, “Independent Islamic Governments in Iran” (*Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004*), students are introduced to the immigration of the Turkish tribes to Iran. Students are informed that some of these Turkish tribespeople were employed as *ghulām* (“slaves”) by a number of Samanian kings, “some of whom, due to their merits, were elevated to important military and bureaucratic positions” (*Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004*, p. 102). This status of *ghulām* is not problematized for students. Rather, the system is represented as a meritocracy since “slaves” with talents and aptitudes could move up the social ladder (*Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004*, p. 102-103). Despite their Islamic faith, the Turks are constructed as members of non-Iranian tribal groups who can never be naturalized due to their immigrant status (*Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004*, p. 102-103). The authors maintain that Turkish tribes of various dynastic backgrounds ruled Iran for over five hundred years. However, the authors end this section by stating that “the kings of these dynasties employed intelligent Iranian prime ministers for the administration of the country. Students are informed that due to the participation of Iranians in the administration of the country during this period, science and knowledge flourished in the region” (*Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004*, p. 103).

In *History 7*, moreover, the Turkish “migration” to Iran that led to the establishment of the Qajar Dynasty is also explored in light of both the pre-Islamic and Islamic migrations of the Turks to Iran and the invasion of Iran by the Mongols (*History 7, 2004*, p. 29-33). The Turkish other is introduced as an “outsider” in relation to the Iranian self in two distinct ways. First, the authors state that Turkish attacks on Iran date back to the beginning of the
Sassanids Dynasty, who successfully defeated various Turkish tribes’ incursions into Iran (History 7, 2004, p. 33; See also History 7, 2002, p. 33). In the same lesson, the authors refer to the establishment of the first Turkish dynasty in Iran, the Saljuq, in the subtitle, “The Turkish Race” by employing the term “race” that, in the context of this lesson, is constructed as those people whose language is Turkish and who are of tribal nomad backgrounds (History 7, 2004, p. 33). Second, students read the same information about these Turkish tribes in Social Studies 5 (History Section, 2004, p. 102-107). For example, students are reminded that Turkish tribes also invaded Iran after they had already converted to Islam. The authors state that the Turkish Saljuq Dynasty that invaded Iran in the eleventh century was tribally organized and needed the assistance of Iranian prime ministers for the administration of the country. Students read that this period is also labelled as the age of “progress” (pishraft) for Islamic culture and civilization due to the efforts of Iranians (History 7, 2004, p. 37; See also History 7, 2002, p. 37; Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 102-107). Students also read that despite being dominated, Iranians have always managed to administer their country, which is also a point expressed by many Orientalist writers about Iran (See Ghirshman, 1954, p. 190; Vaziri, 1993).

The brutality of the effects of the invading forces on Iranians is explored in detail in dealing with the invasion of Iran by the Mongols. In a lesson titled the “Establishment of Governments by the Turkish Race”, students read that when the Mongols invaded Iran, they killed a large portion of the Iranian population and plundered its wealth, despite Iran’s opposition and resistance. Students are informed that the Mongols’ invasion of Iran “has been the most barbaric attack on Iran” (History 7, 2004, p. 43; See also 2002, p. 43). On the back cover of History 7 (2004), the authors also refer to the invasion of the Mongols as an “uncivilized” and “barbaric” act, resulting in the death of millions of innocent Moslem Iranians. Their leaders are referred to as “blood-thirsty” tyrants. The authors of the textbooks again emphasize that after the invasion of Iran by the Mongols, Iranian scientists and knowledge seeking individuals began to write and publish books and build schools, mosques and universities (History 7, 2004, p. 46).

In the history section of Social Studies 5, in a lesson titled “The Safavids” (2004, p. 109-110; See also Social Studies 5, 2001, p. 113; 1993, p. 147-148; Keddie, 1981, p. 15), another non-Pars Dynasty, students read that after the institutionalization of Shi’ism as the official religion of Iran by Shah Ismail, “the two Sunni governments
[of Ottomans and Uzbeks] became irritated (nā-rāḍī shūdand) and opposed [and later] fought the Safavids” (the Safavids ruled Iran from 1501 to 1722).38 They are also informed that Shah Abbas, after the war,

Moved the capital of the Safavids to Isfahan. During [the reign of] Shah Abbas, Isfahan was transformed into a populace and thriving [developed] ʿābād city. With his decree, Iranian artists and architects built grandiose and beautiful monuments in this city. Many of these monuments, which were built [according to the architectural style] of the Islamic period, are still standing and are world famous. (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 111; See also Social Studies 5, History Section, 2001, p. 114-115; 1993, p. 151)39

The foreign governments are identified as Sunni states and belonging to two distinct non-Aryan “racial” backgrounds. In contrast, Iran is conceptualized as Shi’a, white and Aryan. Turkish Moslem Iranians are conceptualized as “insiders” since it was during the reign of Shah Abbas that Shi’ism was adopted by the ruler as the religion of the court. At the same time, the Turkish category is simultaneously portrayed as “outsiders-within”, which highlights their non-Pars, immigrant and non-Aryan characteristics. Also, the Mongol others are constructed as dangerous “enemy outsiders”. These constructions resemble the emphasis of the Orientalist writers on the division between Iran and Turan during the pre-Islamic period (See Vaziri, 1993). According to these Orientalists, the references to the term Turan in Pre-Islamic “literature” denotes Turkish tribes (See Vaziri, 1993). Once again, history is racialized but it is told through an emphasis on cultural and linguistic factors. In these stories about otherness and the ideal citizen, “males dominate the story line” and their historical and contemporary achievements are celebrated as national achievements (Sleeter and Grant, 1991, p. 85). The language, the words and the terminologies used to describe the achievements of Iranians during most periods refers to them in “glorifying and complementary” ways, such as heroes, knowledge seekers and defenders of Iran and Islam (Sleeter and Grant, 1991, p. 85).

As these examples point to, in History 7, although the term “race” is non-present in the text despite being present in the title and a subtitle of the lesson in various editions of History 7 (2004, 2002, 1993; “Establishment of Governments by the Turkish Race”, History 7, 2004, p. 42-44; See also History 7, 2002, p. 42-44), it is, nevertheless, reified as a pseudo-scientific criterion due to the racialized discourse employed to construct the ideal

38 The 2000 edition is more elaborate in its description. It states that, “Shah Ismail made the Shi’a religion the official religion of Iran which had its followers since the introduction of Islam to Iran. He considered religion as a tool to unite people in various parts of the country” (1993, p. 147).
39 The 2000 (p. 114-115) and 1993 (p. 151) editions describe the events differently. In these textbooks, the emphases are on the role of Iranian intellectuals and artists in designing monuments rather than focusing on the influences of Islamic art on their designs. The authors state that Shah Abbas “moved the capital to Isfahan from Qazvin. After the transfer of the capital to Isfahan, Iranian artists and architects have built many grandiose and beautiful monuments. Many of these monuments, that are reflections of the interest, talents and [artistic inclinations] of Moslem people of Iran are still standing and are world famous”.

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Iranian citizen in the textbooks. The process of othering is explained by reference to the differences between “Iranians” and “foreigners” of different “racial stock”. The Turk has a historical presence but, as the authors of the textbooks write, the culture and “civilization” of Turkish tribes were transformed under Iranian (Pars) cultural supervision (History 7, 2004, p. 37). In other words, Iranian culture (Pars) is constructed as more superior to the “invading” cultures. In addition, Iranian culture is constructed as the defining element of Islamic culture and civilization. As the findings point out, “race” and religion as well as political ideology and culture intersect one another in various ways and manners in depictions of diversity in school textbooks. In all these depictions, a masculine racialized subject is identified as central to the construction of the Iranian Moslem national identity, thus, to the construction of the ideal citizen. Another important component of the ideal citizen is its ethnicity as a Pars or Persian, which is closely related to the how “race” is presented to students in the textbooks. As the data shows, in the textbooks, it is within Orientalist, nationalist, Islamising and “Orientalist in reverse” discourses that the ideal citizen is constructed. The relationship between the West, the East and Iran, however, is not seriously critiqued for essentialist constructions of otherness. In fact, the construction of the Iranian national identity lacks a critique of racialized, ethno-centric and sexists constructions of the narrations of nation. Such a critique entails exposing the Western-centric constructions of the Iranian self, as the opposite of the West (Jahanbegloo, 2004, p. xxi). This also requires problematizing the historical “Iranian proper” as the oppressors in relation to both internal and external oppressed and marginalized minority and ethnic groups.

In Iranian school textbooks, in narrating the story of the nation, the past is remembered through the invocation of the Aryan migration to Iran in antiquity but in light of an Islamization discourse that is also informed by racialized and nationalistic conceptions of the ideal citizen in relation to both “internal-” and “external-friendly-” and “enemy-others”. In this deconstruction of Iranian school textbooks, Islamization should be understood as a historical process that began in 651 and continues to this day. “Iran”, however, is constructed as an objective and real entity even before the advent of Islam. In this sense, citizenship education involves the reification of “Iran” in light of the process of Islamization as it unfolds within the pages of the Iranian school textbooks. In the next section, I expand on how “Iran”, as a nation-state, is depicted in the Persian textbooks, starting with grade one.
4.1.3 The Nationalistic Construction of the Islamization of Iran

Students are introduced to citizenship education for the first time in grade one before studying the topic in more detail in Social Studies 3. For example, in Persian 1 (2004, p. 51) in a poem titled “O’ Iran”, the authors inform students that Iranians love their nation and country, its beautiful landscape and pure “soil” (khāk-i pak). In the next lesson, entitled “Soldier” (“Sarbāz”), students read the following words: “Iran, Iran pāyandah [perpetual and lasting], bā sarbāzah [with soldier] razmandah [fighter]” (Persian 1, 2004, p. 49). As the title suggests and the drawings accompanying the lesson denote, students are informed about the important role that the armed forces play in defending Iran. In the lesson, “Iran: Ābād [flourishing and improved]. Ābād, Iran Ābād, Bīdār [vigilant] Bīdār Iran Bīdār” (Persian 1, 2004, p. 48) students read that as citizens of Iran, they have the obligation to be concerned with three important interrelated issues: development, prosperity (i.e.: ābād) and the readiness (i.e.: bīdār) and willingness to defend one’s country (i.e.: bā sarbāzah razmandah) (Persian 1, 2004, p. 48-49).

The narration of nation is manifested in the form of another lesson where students are introduced to one of the most well known Iranian poets (Persian 2, 2004, p. 135-136). This story is told through the voice of a male youth who travelled to north-western Iran in order to visit the Shrine of Imam Reza and the tomb of Firdawšī. The authors write, “We had a tour guide. He said that, ‘Firdawsī worked hard for thirty years to write his book, the Šāhnāmah [The Book of Kings]’”. In reply to his son’s question, the father tells him that,

‘The Šāhnāmah is a great [and an important] book in which we read many stories about Iran and its great heroes [pahlavān]. Rostam was the greatest hero [and champion] of Iran’. Then [he] said, ‘All of the Šāhnāmah’s tales are narrated in the form of poems. As you heard, for thirty years, Firdawsī tried to collect these tales [and stories] and [to versify] them in order to keep alive the Persian language that we speak today. (Persian 2, 2004, p. 135-136)

One of the most famous books of poetry is identified as an important and invaluable source of knowledge about the history of Iran. Students are informed about Rostam, who is known for his bravery and morality. Iranian students are shown that even before Islam, Iranians had the qualities of bravery and morality. In addition, students are informed that the Persian language has always been important to Iranians, which, as the authors mention in the lesson, is also reflected in the efforts of Firdawsī to revive it. In fact, in Iranian school textbooks, one of the characteristics of the ideal citizen is considered to be his or her ability to speak and communicate through the Persian language. At an early age, by emphasizing on Firdawsī’s role in saving the Persian language, the authors, in fact, legitimize Persian as the official language due to its assumed historical and cultural importance across Iran.
Students are informed that Iranians are proud of their national language and its poetic achievements. The Persian language is elevated as an important source of identity for Iranians. The national language is symbolically depicted as the “mother tongue” of all Iranians.

In this passage in Persian 1, the non-present “others” in the discussion about Firdawsī are the Turkish and Arab invaders of Iran and the formation of non-Iranian dynasties as examples of “outsiders” who ruled Iran during a period that coincides with the introduction of Islam into Iran (651 A.D.) and the collapse of the Sassanids Dynasty (224-651 A.D.). In this light, the Persian language and those whose culture reflects the Persian identity are seen as privileged in contrast to Turkish dialects and Arabic as examples of the Turkish and Semitic language classifications as well as racial categories. The cultural capital of Persians is normalized as a historical “fact” and as a symbol of Iran’s resilience against domination by outsiders. These non-present references to the role of the dominant culture in Iran denotes racial differences as well. The authors also employ mainly male voices and standpoints, as symbols of protection, to reflect upon Iranian history and to speak to both male and female students about their obligations as citizens of the country. Language, “race” and myth intersect one another in light of a paternalistic perspective that genders the ideal citizen and represents it as mainly male. This idealization is, in fact, a masculine construction of Iran and of Iranian identity.

In Persian 2 (2004) in a lesson, entitled “Flag”, a father informs his son about the importance of the flag for each nation. The father states that, “Each country has a flag. A flag is a symbol of freedom and independence for each country” (Persian 2, 2004, p. 97). Students are also introduced to the symbolic meanings of the colours of the Iranian flag (See Figure 4.3, Persian 2, 2004, p. 99). The father explains that, “the Iranian flag has three colours. The colour green symbolizes life (sar-sabz), the colour white is a sign of peace and friendship and the colour red is the sign of our willingness to defend our country and freedom even if that will result in our death” (Persian 2, 2004, p. 97). The father is not only the symbol of authority but he is also a source of wisdom and knowledge who is informing students (his son) why it is important to be willing to sacrifice one’s life for the future existence of Iran. The same message of sacrifice is also reinforced in many other lessons and assignments (See also Persian 2 Workbook, 2004, p. 114, 115,118, 120). One is willing to sacrifice one’s life for the nation because, as a citizen of Iran and a member of this family, students are proud of their country and its achievements. For example, in Persian 2 in a lesson, entitled “Our Iran”, it is stated that, “The name of our country is Iran. We live in Iran. We love Iran.
Iran is our big home” (2004, p. 89). Despite the fact that the authors give the impression that everyone living in Iran is considered “Iranian”, regardless of differences between Iranians in terms of ethnicity and racial classifications, the ideal Iranian student in Figure 4.3 looking with pride at the national flag in his school yard is depicted as a white boy. At the same time, Whiteness, as a characteristic of the Aryan-Pars founders of Iran who have historically defended their territory against various other groups, is also constructed as peaceful since the colour white is portrayed for students as the sign of friendship. In other depictions of Iranian students, in contrast, the colour of skin is employed as a criterion of difference in representing diversity amongst the Iranian population (See below). In this depiction of a boy looking at the flag pole, “race”, religion and national identity coincide in excluding other forms of representation in narrating the history of nation. Also, how the boy is positioned in relation to the pole can be compared to a representation of a soldier who is saluting his superior. The flag stands above the student, as if protecting him. There is also a sense of love and respect that is reflected in the way the boy is looking at the flag with eyes wide open.

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40 The idea of Iran as our “big home” is a central element of Iranian school curriculum.
Figure 4.3 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a picture of a male student in a school yard looking upwards at the flag of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

In this and other similar lessons, as students read about their national heroes and why they should be proud of Iran, they are, in fact, informed about how “sacred” Iran and its culture are. This is achieved as the authors focus the attention of students on the ideals of loving one’s country and caring for one’s nation that are introduced to students as important characteristics and sentiments of the ideal citizen. A lesson is dedicated to explaining why students should “indulge in organized expressions of loyalty to … the country” by reading about the meanings of the colours of the Iranian flag (Francis, 1997, p. 64). The love for the nation, students read, is reflected in the affection and respect one has and expresses for one’s country’s flag (Persian 2, 2004). In this light, love for the flag then is also associated with the importance of independence and freedom for the citizens of the country. As such, the national flag is considered as an important source of identity. The flag becomes the symbol of the nation-state and the story of nation is told through this concept in many other lessons about various topics such as the constitution, ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes), Islam and the Constitutional Revolution.
Students also read that,

I am proud of this country with all its many [historical monuments, forests, mountains, religious centres, places of worship and shrines {ziyārat-gāh}]. Iranian men and women are hardworking {pur-talāsh} and faithful [believers] {bā-īmān}41. They protect their country from the attacks of enemies. Now let’s travel to some regions of Iran. (Persian 2, 2004, p. 89)

The ideal citizen is presented to students as one who is a believer, has a strong work ethic and is ready to protect Iran against its enemies. The other, by definition, is conceptualized as bi-īmān (unbeliever or without faith), which, in this context, also implies being characterized as a lazy individual who does not want to work hard. Faith in God and pride in one’s nation are criteria that distinguish between the ideal citizen (insiders) and outsiders. The ideal citizen is not simply constructed as a religious person but also as a faithful Moslem. He or she stands in contrast to the enemy other who is depicted as a non-Aryan and non-Pars foreigner, whose aim is to dominate Iran. In fact, as students read about the efforts of those who have sacrificed their lives for the sake of the nation, they are symbolically informed about their most important obligations as citizens of Iran to the state. On one hand, the ideal Iranian includes everyone. This reinforces the belief that all of those who live in Iran are Iranians (descendants of the Aryans), despite their ethnicities, racialized identities, gender and social class backgrounds. On the other hand, in depicting the ideal citizen by references to differences that are hierarchized, school textbooks also differentiate within the category Iranian. They do so by references to qualities that construct Iran as the champion of freedom and equal rights from a perspective that distinguishes between individuals based on their level of hard work as reflected in the term pur-talāsh (industrious). Despite the fact that the authors discuss the existence of various forms of otherness and refer to various forms of diversity in Iran over the last 4,000 years, both the ideal historical and modern Iranian are represented and constructed as a member of the Pars tribe. This person is also Moslem, faithful, hard-working and revolutionary. The history of the Islamic Republic is told based on a beginning that imposes “the Indo-European model” of categorizing humans and individuals both on Iran and the rest of the world (See Vaziri, 1993, p. 20-48). As such, the ideal citizen defends Iran as a nation-state against outsiders who lack religious faith and knowledge.

In a lesson, entitled “O’ Iran, O’ My Country” in Persian 3 (2004, p. 102-104), the authors reinforce the information introduced in Persian 2 about Iran’s great heroes in the Shāhnāmah, such as Rostam and Arash; they

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41 This is one of the first words that students learn in Persian textbooks such as Persian 2 (2004, p. 14) and its antonym, bī-īmān (Persian 2, 2004, p. 21) in their Persian textbooks.
also refer to Iranian scientists, poets, a contemporary wrestling hero and Iranian youth martyrs (Persian 3, 2004, p. 103; See Also Persian 3, 2001, p. 78-79) (See Figures 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7). Although in this edition of “O’ Iran, O’ My Country (vaṭan)” the authors no longer employ terms such as shikanjah (torture), khashm (anger) and nifrat (hatred) (Persian 3, 2001, p. 78-79), that promoted anger and hate towards the enemies of Iran, the main message remains constant: It is necessary to protect Iran from its enemies. The central purpose of protecting Iran is also another way of protecting the true teaching of Islam, which is a non-present aspect in this lesson but is, nevertheless, implied by the presence of the word Allah in Arabic in the middle of the Iranian flag. In this lesson, also told from a patriarchal voice and from the perspective of a youth, the authors write,

O’ Iran, the land of purities and heroism, I am proud of you. O’, my land, I promise to my God to strive to develop you with all my heart and soul [that I will try my hardest to develop you]. To love {dāšt bidārām} your good and free {āzādah} people. To rush to assist them and to fight/battle your enemies. O’ my land, today I study with a hopeful and joyful heart and strive to have a more beautiful, more advanced {pishraft-i tar}, proud and developed {ābād} Iran in the future (Persian 3, 2004, p. 104).

Figure 4.4 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a picture of Dr. Hessabi.

Figure 4.4, “No Caption”, Source: Persian 3, 2004, p. 102. This is a portrait of Dr. Hessabi, the famous Iranian physicist.
Figure 4.5 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a drawing of four famous contemporary and historical Iranian male scientists.

Figure 4.5, “No Caption”, Source: Persian 3, 2004, p. 102. This figure depicts Iranian scientists: (from right to left): Dr. Hessabi, Ibn-Sina, Molavi and Biruni.

Figure 4.6 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a picture of Takhti, a well-known Iranian wrestling champion.

Figure 4.6, “No Caption”, Source: Persian 3, 2004, p. 103. The portrait of Takhti, one of the greatest Iranian wrestling champion and the greatest athlete/political activist in the history of Iran.
In this passage, students are also constructed as peaceful people who love their nation and are ready to defend their “civilized” country. They are depicted as proud and determined to develop Iran. Iran, as a nation-state, is not presented to students as an imagined nation. By references to the Shāhnāmah and the Iranian heroes of pre-Islamic Iran, Iran’s long history is told through a discourse that also identifies certain genres of poetry as important symbolic sources of national identity. In this and similar lessons, the Shāhnāmah is, in fact, introduced as a book of Persian poetry that was written years before any colonial interventions in Iran and the influences of Orientalism on knowledge about the East. However, the trace that is not talked about in the textbooks and is not evident in the way in which Firdawsī is incorporated as a national hero/poet by the authors is how the role of Firdawsī in the survival of the Persian culture has been interpreted within the limits of Orientalist and nationalist interpretations of the role of
Persian as the national language of Iran. The authors do not problematize whether or not the term “Iran”, as an independent nation and state, invoked the same feelings and connections for its population at the time when Firdawsī was writing the *Shāhnāmah* as the term “Iran” invokes today (See Vaziri, 1993). In these depictions, the authors present “Iran” as a “sacred” object that has legitimate and primordial rights to the geographical boundaries of this country (*vatān*) and a historical interest in the political economy of the region.

An important element of this and similar lessons is that expressions of the nation (*millat*) and country (*vatān*) are communicated within the confines of a paternalistic discourse of nation-building that often dictates how Iran is related to other groups historically and at the present time. This message of *Irān-düstī* or loving Iran is also expressed using the discourses of development and fighting Iran’s enemies. However, this message of love for one’s *vatān* (country) and *millat* (nation) is narrated within a nationalistic discourse with Orientalist sentiments that inevitably makes available to students a system of meanings that is devoid of any references to or considerations of inequality and violence experienced by minorities in Iran. For example, Iranian students read specific information about Armenians in their school textbooks in light of the construction of Iran and Islam without references to how modern conflicts based on ethnicity and religion within Iran and outside the country have adversely or positively affected minority religious groups. Students are not informed about the migration movement of minority groups out of Iran due to internal or external political affairs, such as the consequences of the Iran and Russian wars of 1826-28. In terms of the contemporary migration of many Armenians from Iran due to acts of violence and genocide (Berberian, 2000, p. 71), Iranian school textbooks are silent about their migration movements in the Middle East and across the globe. The roles of political Diaspora groups such as the Iranian *Dashnaktsutiun* in “liberating to one degree or another Ottoman Armenians” are ignored in the discussions of the transnational roles of religious minority groups and communities in Iran during the era of modernity (Berberian, 2000, p. 89). Yet, as it is discussed in Part Three, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is also central to the construction of the Iranian ideal citizen (See Section 4.3.2.2). The emphasis on Islam and Iranian national identity also acts as a non-present discourse in silencing and eliminating any discussions about the roles of religious minority groups that undermines the image of Islamic societies, Islamized societies and modernizing Moslem countries in the process of nation-building. For example, in the textbooks, students are not informed that Armenians were excluded from important state positions, including the police and armed forces, which limited their social mobility during the early decades of the last century. Despite such discriminations, Armenians “played an important role in the trade between Iran, Europe, and Russia” during
the late Qajar period (Berberian, 2000, p. 75). This exclusion of discrimination and the contributions of otherness to the economy and politics in Iran and abroad from history also results in the omission of knowledge about the socio-cultural-religious history of Armenians in discussions about cities/provinces such as Isfahan and Azerbaijan and social movements in those regions of Iran where there are well-established Armenian-Iranian communities. The process of excluding the Armenians from discussions about the ideal citizen ignores issues that affect Armenian society and at the same time, is a reflection of the cultural and political reality of living in an Islamic society as a minority individual. This lack of attention to religious/ethnic minority issues/histories is also compounded by the paternalistic characteristics of the curriculum. For example, since no discussions about Armenians in Iran is offered as part of the official curriculum, students do not read about diversity within the Armenian community and their contributions to the working class movements in Iran or about the condition of women within this community. Religious worldviews limit how the other can be understood and constituted due to the ethnocentric views that are employed in constructing who qualifies as the ideal citizen. This process is also influenced by those sexist approaches to knowledge production that have not been critically evaluated for their paternalistic approach and bias to politics and the nation-building process. The effects of history on various types of women from various class backgrounds are also excluded.

In light of this knowledge base in Iranian school textbooks about women and minority groups, it is important to be critical of the discourses that are prevalent in popular culture and are used by both men and women in expressing their demands and relations to other men/women who belong to the “outsiders-within” categories and to those outside the boundaries of Iran. It is important to be critical of assertions that assume the rise in the “individualistic subject” within Iranian society is a positive element in the process of consciousness building and in informing a strong sense of civil society in Iran (Jahanbegloo, 2004, p. xxi). Although there may be a lack of “revolutionary romanticism among the Iranian youth” (Jahanbegloo, 2004, p. xxi), this does not imply that civil society is free of discrimination and stereotypes. As mentioned, it is important to account for how conceptions of civil society may be partly influenced by one’s knowledge about the national self that is often “learned” in schools. By ignoring the others’ voices in constructing an image of the self, the authors of the textbooks also exclude references to how ethnic, racial, gender and social class differences affect different individuals unequally due to existing inequalities and structural factors. In the process, a homogenized image of the population of Iran is presented.
This knowledge positions students in relations to various forms of otherness along paternalistic and racially biased depictions that are portrayed as the truth about Iran and themselves. The knowledge base that is provided to students requires that Iranian male and female students think about themselves in relations to various forms of “dangerous outsiders” and from a paternalistic perspective that is devoid of women’s voices in Iran and in other parts of the world. Gender is intersected by other factors such as ethnicity and religion, resulting in multiple forms of identities and experiences that are employed in offering limiting definitions of the Iranian nation. One such definition equates Iran to one’s family.

In order to communicate the importance of the nation to elementary students, in many lessons including the lesson in Persian 4 (2004, p. 143), “Loving One’s Nation”, Iran is often compared to one’s home. All Iranian citizens living in this home (Iran) are conceptualized as one’s brothers and sisters and fathers and mothers. In this sense, the authors of the textbooks not only inform students about how they should feel and behave towards family members but to also apply the same familial relations and feelings of affinity and consanguinity to society at large. In the textbooks, the narration of nation is based on the invocation of the idea of Iranians as brave people whose close family-like relationships with other citizens of Iran turns the nation into a larger clan in the form of a vatān (country) in modernity. It is this clan’s common past, language and religion that bring its members close together due to shared causes, struggles and goals.

There is also a sense of patriarchal emphasis that is being implied here. The heroes of the country and nation, who are all men, are also those who are willing to sacrifice their lives for the millat (nation) and vatān (country). In a lesson titled “Self-Sacrifice {Fadākārī}”, the authors state that,

Always and in all parts of the world, there are great and self-sacrificing human beings, who in order to save other people’s lives or to help their own kinds, have put their lives in danger and their names and memories will always remain with us. In every country, there are many such great and honourable human beings. In the great country of Iran, men, women and even children and youth are also very devoted [and self-sacrificing]. The li[ves] of these human beings are examples [for us] and the light of our path. (Persian 3, 2004, p. 48-50)

These heroes are constructed as individuals whose lives and choices can be emulated and considered as great examples of how to live one’s life, not only in Iran, but also across the globe. Students read about three such individuals, all of Iranian origin. The authors introduce students to Hassan Omidzadeh, a teacher of Gilani ethnic background (Persian 3, 2004). Students read that his body was badly burnt trying to save the lives of his students in a school fire (Persian 3, 2004, p. 49-50). Students are informed that the scars on his body are symbols of his pride.
The authors also state that students should glorify and praise the lives and actions of such individuals. Students read, “We must respect these great and likable human beings. We should strive to be like them” (Persian 3, 2004, p. 50). In another lesson, students also read that they can learn values such as bravery (shujā‘at), valour and courage (shahāmat) from their teachers. In other words, from the perspective of the central government of Iran, teachers lead students in their efforts to fight (mubārazah) for the independence, freedom and greatness of Iran (Persian 5, 2004, p. 188; See also Persian 5, 2001, p. 202; 1986, p. 183; 1994, p. 219). This is due to the fact that Iranian teachers inform students about oppression, injustice and violence (sitam) and who the oppressors and tyrants (sitamgār) are (Persian 5, 2004, p. 188; See also Persian 5, 2001, p. 202; 1994, p. 219; 1986, p. 183). The important role of the teacher is also reflected in the context of the last lesson of Persian 3 (2004), where students thank God “for providing [them] with a kind and knowledgeable teacher … who guides [them] to have faith (īmān), to seek knowledge (dānish) and to be pure and innocent (pāk)” (p. 143).

In Iran, as in the United States (Apple, 2004), school textbooks reflect the ideological biases of the system of education and of the ruling elite by making available a system of meanings that are considered as useful and technical knowledge. As in the previous editions, students are told to accept the values and views of teachers, who most importantly function as agents of the state and the education system (Mehran, 2002, p. 241). However, the emphasis on the role of the teacher and elevating this status to that of a pious and moral individual who is bias free is, in itself, based on a problematic assumption that ‘the teacher knows what is good for his or her students’. The teacher in these accounts is merely a symbolic form of representing the state that requires adherence to its values and attitudes, which ultimately reflects the attitudes and values of the dominant groups within Iran and in other parts of the world.

In addition, the narration of nation is also told through the voices of men, despite the fact that the majority of those who teach in elementary schools are female. The lack of inclusion of women’s standpoints in discussing the importance of sacrifice as a heroic act, which is an important characteristic of the ideal citizen, results in ignoring the many different ways in which women outside the discourse of motherhood have played heroic roles in the formation of Iran as a nation-state. Female standpoints are the necessary absent and women are the non-present others in the narration of nation, despite being represented as mentors and teachers who can lead them towards knowing oneself and God. This narration of nation is told through a patriarchal and highly gendered discourse that excludes those voices that are thought to undermine the state’s supremacy and power position. In fact, the few
conversations in the textbooks between mothers and daughters are often discussions about prayers, attending mosque and visiting Shi’a shrines that seem to offer limiting social contexts for stories about women (See Persian 1, 2, 3, 2004).

Furthermore, despite the fact that these stories are often told in the form of a dialogue between two people, the gendered nature of the narration between father and son functions as a monologue between two males that requires the reader to take the position of the subject of the text, since this is the only platform available to speak from. This also excludes the voices of women of various backgrounds and historical periods as part of the narrative of the nation-building process. In this and in similar lessons, the implied authority of fathers over their sons and the females in the family is an example of a non-presence discourse that shapes how texts may be interpreted by Iranian students. The father is constructed as an authoritarian figure and as a knowledgeable person whose power, authority and wisdom are not questioned.

In the same lesson, the authors also inform students about the martyr Mohammad Hossain Fahmide (See Figure 4.8), a teenage student who volunteered for the Iran-Iraq War. According to the text, “Our leader is that thirteen year old [boy] who attached grenades to his body and crawled underneath a tank” (Persian 3, 2004, p. 48-50; Imam Khomeini as cited in Persian 4, 2004, p. 17-18). Although the other two examples of self-sacrifice that are also depicted in the drawings accompanying this lesson are of ethnic Iranians, the main message in this and other lessons is that Iranians should never forget the sacrifice of this fearless youth and they should remind themselves of the types of youthful champions, warriors and heroes (qahramān) Islam possesses (Persian 4, 2004, p. 18).
The ethnic identities of the characters in this text are not the focus of the lesson. Rather, the emphasis is on the importance of sacrifice amongst Iranians. The inclusion of these ethnic characters as the heroes in the text is due to their actions as caring Iranians. This is considered as a global characteristic. The importance of using these Iranian examples is to emphasize the act of wanting to save the life of another Iranian as an important characteristic of the ideal citizen. This is why Iran is referred to as a “great country”. This also confirms Mehran’s (2002, p. 241) assertion that school children are socialized to believe that “martyrdom is the highest form of sacrifice and martyrs are given the highest rewards by God, including entry to Paradise”. The religious aspect of the nationalistic desire to die for Iran is reflected in another lesson in Persian 5, entitled “O’ Iran, O’ Land of the Brave (dalīrān)” (Persian 5, 2004, p. 42-43).

The authors state that,

O’ Iran, O’ my country, O’ the land of glory and uproar, … O’ the birth place of [resilience] and [patriarchal] generosity, O’ the pillar of Islam and faith, I love you [from the depth of my soul]. I promise
my God to protect you and save you from all propaganda, espionage and conspiracies against you. (*Persian 5, 2004*, p. 42-43)

The message is reinforced by the drawing that accompanies this lesson depicting soldiers and tanks moving away from a town in a military conflict or military exercise. One of the most notable buildings in this drawing is a mosque. The drawing gives the impression that the army’s aim is not simply to protect Iran and Iranians but also to protect and defend the mosque as the symbol of Islamic power, unity and national identity. Martyrdom is the non-present discourse that identifies the importance of defending Iran, as the site of Islamic power, as an important task of the ideal citizen.

The emphasis on martyrdom is also part of the *Persian 4* (2004) curriculum. In a lesson titled “Loving One’s Nation” (“*Mīhan Dūstī*”), also told through the voice of a youth, students read that,

> I study well so that when I grow up I can [assist] Iran in the process of progress and advancement {pīshraft va taragqī}. If Iran is one day in danger, what worth does my life have for [Iran]? In that moment, like the ‘Mujāhidīn’, I defend my nation {mīhan}. … I embrace martyrdom with [open arms] for the safeguarding of the greatness and independence of Iran". (p. 143)

At the end of this lesson, a poem by Firdawsī is also cited with the general message of the willingness to die for one’s country. The idea of sacrifice for Iran is constructed as an important characteristic of Iranian culture and the ideal citizen since antiquity. It is important to note that the ideals of self-scarification and martyrdom are desired only when they are associated with love for the nation (mīhan) and Islam and when Iran is under attack and threatened by foreigners (*Persian 5, 2004*, p. 188; 2001, p. 202; 1986, p. 183; 1994, p. 219). The discourses of sacrifice and martyrdom are dominant in the textbooks, but they are conceptualized in light of imagining Iran as a “nation-state” with legitimate rights to its present internationally recognized territory. This willingness to die for the Islamic Republic is also presented in light of a discourse of development that constructs Iran as a modern and progressive nation. The important message is that one of the characteristics of a true leader and of the ideal citizen is his or her ability to assist in the further modernization of Iran based on Islamic values of compassion, justice and peace. In such lessons, students are informed that they can also be leaders. In fact, the authors of the textbooks represent martyrs, who give their lives for their country, as symbolic leaders of Iran. Martyrdom involves fighting tyranny and oppression and is one way of achieving leadership status since it assists Iran to remain independent if attacked by outsiders. By emphasizing on patriotic and Islamic sentiments, students are socialized according to a “textual-space” and environment in which they are always reminded (or better put, questioned) about their loyalty to
the nation and to Islam. In this sense, the state has two criteria for “stigmatizing” its citizens: unpatriotic sentiments and those values that undermine Islam. This construction presents two types of selves that students should avoid: those who are not willing to die for their country and nation and those who do not participate in developing Iran. Both of these qualities are also constructed as counteractive to the efforts of the state and the nation of Iran to modernize and protect Iran from its enemies. They also function as strong and effective forms of “manufacturing consent”.

In another lesson in Persian 1, entitled “Memoirs of the Revolution”, the authors, using the voice and perspective of a school child, write,

It was the Twelfth of Bahman. They had prepared the classrooms and the school yard for the celebration. We had lined up in the yard and the principal was telling us about the memories of the days of the revolution. The principal was saying, “You were not yet born in those days. Our people, with the leadership of Imam Khomeini, poured into the street and demonstrated. They chanted, ‘God [is] the Greatest, Khomeini [is our] Leader’. The Shah had caused the people to be separated from the Imam. The people did not want the Shah. [Soon] the Shah left Iran. Imam Khomeini came to the country that day, the 12th of Bahman … Every year, [on this day] we remember [and honour] Imam Khomeini and all the martyrs of the Islamic Revolution. (Persian 1, 2004, p. 100-101)

The construction of the Shah as an example of the “enemy insider other”, who is responsible for downplaying the importance of religion for the masses, is a necessary discourse that highlights a famous revolutionary chant through which the idea of *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship) is also legitimized. The most central message in this lesson about the revolution is the statement: “God [is] the greatest. Imam Khomeini [is our] leader”. The clergy’s control over the power structure epitomized in the idealization of Imam Khomeini is portrayed as the end result of the will of the people. Defending Iran at any cost is also central to this paternalistic construction of Iran.

In this representation, the authors also narrate the historical hopes and desires of the nation of Iran to free itself from domination and to achieve independence by constructing this history of liberation and presenting it to students as an anti-hegemonic movement that is actually expressed in ideological terms. It is ideological because the history of the Islamic Republic and the discourse of *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship) “from a sociological point of view … is nothing other than religious and state despotism and dictatorship, resulting in the disappearance of freedom, independence and identity” (Freedom Movement of Iran, as cited in Rahenema and Nomani, 1995, p. 85).

Unlike Katouzian’s (2003a, p. 6-21) assertion that Iran is characterized by “the repetitive cycle of arbitrary rule”,
signifying the “absence of law” and a “lack of social legitimacy for the state”, the authors of the textbooks depict (the Islamic Republic of) Iran as an independent and free Islamic Republic. In the textbooks, the current government of Iran signifies a return to the rule of law and to the true teachings of the prophets.

In Iranian school textbooks, there are clear divisions of us/we and them/they. The us category is constructed as the Iranian nation. God and Iran, led by the clergy and Imam Khomeini, are categorized as “good” and “they” are those who attempt to conspire against Iran and Iranians. Despite global cultural and social differences amongst Moslems, Iran is conceptualized as the centre of the Islamic world and the Islamic Republic as the only viable solution to tyranny and foreign involvement. Islam, in this sense, is nationalized. Yet, the racial origin of this Islamic nation is explored through the invocation of the Aryan discourse. In this respect, the categorization of the ideal global Moslem society in Iran takes shape in the context of a racialized beginning that highlights Iran’s Whiteness. The Iranian national identity is both Islamized and Aryanized and is presented to students as something desirable and natural. The narrations of nation identify positions that are, then, occupied by various groups upon which Iranian students can situate themselves in relation to these positions that are supposed to be reflective of objective and scientific knowledge about Iran. In these depictions, diversity and differences are employed to promote an assimilationist approach to Islamization and Persianization. The othering of non-Iranian groups that are categorized as racially different is a central aspect of this construction. The signification of human biological and socio-cultural characteristics in light of the lack of critical approaches to writing about diversity results in the categorization and stigmatization of racial-ethnic groups as the other. This takes place in terms of viewing and constructing these groups historically in unequal and different ways. However, such constructions of diversity that inform the construction of “social collectivities” are transnational phenomena that cannot simply be ignored in developing educational, curricular and pedagogical approaches to students’ needs in this global age (Dei, 1996, p. 21; Henry and Tator, 2006, p. 351-352). As shown, the construction of the ideal Iranian citizen requires the representations of the Iranian self to be positioned vis-à-vis non-Western and non-Iranian forms of otherness. In their discursive formations, this construction is based on the Aryan discourse as the central component of the knowledge base used to imagine Iran in opposition to its historical and contemporary others. The ideal citizen is portrayed within a transnational context in which a very specific view about “race”, racism and racialization is presented to students. This knowledge base is selective in its inclusion of facts that have affected the multi-stranded groups within and between nation-states through “social fields [of power] that cross [and intersect] geographic[al],
cultural, and political borders” and are based on multiple relationships”, such as economic, social, organizational, religious and political (Basch, Schiller and Blanc, 1994, p. 7). In constructing the nation, the authors of the textbooks also invoke many cultural, political and social symbols. These symbols embody many diverse ideas. What they share is their patriarchal representations. National heroes are men, scientists and poets are men and those who have died for Iran are also men. These symbols function as a way of building political solidarity despite a lack of consensus on what these symbols may mean to different individuals. By juxtaposing them in light of a patriarchal construction and a nationalistic discourse that emphasizes the importance of the sovereignty of the nation over its territorial boundaries, these symbols end up providing a homogenized and an essentialist view of Iran that is both historical and religious. These symbolic presentations of Iran that highlight the desire of the nation to protect itself through the heroic actions and the will of individual males to develop it through artistic, scientific, religious and revolutionary endeavours “structure [students] perceptions and suggest certain interpretation of” their readings of the textbooks that “serve certain political interest and undermine others” (Kertzer, 1988, p. 86, 87). As Giroux (1994) points out, the meanings that students may attribute to icons and symbols are influenced by how “specific context privilege some readings over other … the choices they make and the meanings they produce are not free-floating” (p. 19). As Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983) point out, ‘invented traditions’ are “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past” (p. 1). The Aryan myth as an example of an ‘invented tradition’ “imposes fixed (normally formalized) practice” (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983, p. 2) of remembering the past according to a discourse that excludes certain histories from being told. Students are introduced to individuals and events that are also placed into specific categories with moral meanings and importance within Iranian culture that function as symbols of social identity that students are encouraged to adopt. When these symbols are internalized such “schemes exert a powerful influence on [students] perceptions and judgments. So strong is the power of schemes [that students are presented with] that [their] perceptions are likely to be bent in the direction that makes them conform best with [the qualities inherent in these] schemes” (Kertzer, 1988, p. 81). These symbols seek to inculcate certain values, norms and behavioural patterns through repetition of icons and information in different grade levels and subjects, presenting the past as intelligible. As such, these symbols construct a sense of continuity by turning disarray, injustices and differences into iconic representations that reflect a common historical past that is shared by all Iranians and the Islamic Republic as the outcome of the Iranian people’s
struggles to achieve justice (Hall, 1996a, p. 614). In fact, in such lessons students are encouraged to “worship their society through rites devoted to its symbolic representation” (Kertzer, 1988, p. 65). Representations of various historical monuments, discussions about Firdawsi’s book of poetry and important revolutionary Islamic events in the textbooks serve to instil a new national identity that symbolically binds the people to the land of the Aryans within a revolutionary ideology by turning discontinuity into continuity. This symbolic representation offers a linear conception of time that “fetishizes a particular space—the nation-state and [idealizes a specific perception of] historical [events] as History” (Grossberg, 1993, p. 92-93). Identity is not a fragmented self that is the outcome of a synthesis and “fusion of outsiders identities” (Haraway, as cited in Grossberg, 1993, p. 997). In these textbooks, various discourses and symbolic representations of the nation and the Islamic Revolution are employed that turn the “inherent ambiguity or instability at language’s centre, which constantly undermines language’s power to define a unified, stable identity” by denying those subordinated identities ‘textual-spaces’ within the textbooks that “would entitle them to their own practices or strategies” and symbolic representations of heroes and geographical spaces that reflect their histories and fragmented identities (Grossberg, 1993, p. 97). The ‘habitus’ that is formed within the pages of these lessons and textbooks offers “a relatively stable set of classificatory principles and dispositions which mark out” the differences between Iranians and non-Iranian others and delegitimize any opposition to this homogenized image (Bocock, 1995, p. 148).

In the next section, I show how Iranian tribal identity and the term ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes) are reflected upon in Iranian school textbooks.

4.1.4 Constructing the Ideal Citizen Through Multiple Discourses: Ethnicisation of the ‘Ashayir (Nomadic Tribes), the Constitution, Leadership, Self-Sacrifice and Ummat-i Islami (Islamic Community/Nation)

As Mojab and Hassanpour (1995, p. 232) maintain, during the Pahlavi regime the Iranian state used ethnocide and genocide in order to Persianise the non-Persian population of Iran. It is in this light that I interrogate the textbooks for their representations of the history of tribal pastoral nomads. In 2004, twenty-five years after the revolution that toppled the oppressive regime of the Pahlavi dynasty, students in Persian 1 (2004), in a lesson titled “Our Country”, read that “Iran belongs to all of them” (p. 118). Students are informed that regardless of where they live in Iran, they are Iranians. They read, “We like (düst-dārūm) Iran and Iranians” (Persian 1, 2004, p. 118). This lesson is accompanied by a drawing of Iran that depicts ethnic minority children in their traditional clothing living in various
parts of the country (See Figure 4.9). The ethnic diversity of Iran also finds expression in another drawing (See Figure 4.10) in a lesson titled “Iran” (Persian 1, 2004, p. 48). As in the other picture, tribal boys and girls are depicted as different because of their traditional clothing; yet similar because they are Iranian. In Persian 3 (2004, p. 24), students are also asked to look at four drawings of individuals playing different musical instruments. The first two are pictures of tribal and village boys/men playing traditional ethnic instruments. In one of these pictures, a shepherd is shown playing the flute while his herd is grazing in the background. In another depiction of ethnic diversity in the corresponding Persian Writing 3 (2004, p. 106), students are asked to look at four drawings and determine from which geographical regions the individuals are from. All the pictures depict ethnic minorities in their traditional clothing: a tribe migrating, women and a young boy working in rice patties in northern Iran and a Kurdish father and child with a horse (See Figure 4.11). In addition, a young (Arab) boy drawn with a dark complexion (black skin) is also shown climbing a tree (See Figure 4.11). Such depictions are not inclusive of diversity but rather homogenize diversity based on a romanticized conception of the other and his or her relationship with the land and nature without accounting for how this relationship has been mitigated by the state’s economic and modernization policies and the Iran-Iraq War, resulting in the migration of many ethnic groups into major urban centres. This history is not presented to students. Instead, these representations of ethnic diversity are based on a non-political worldview that sanitizes the conflicts experienced by ethnic/tribal groups. The style of dress is often used to depict ethnic minorities or non-Persians in rural settings. They are not presented in a city (See below). Furthermore, the construction of Arabs in the drawings as darker skinned contradicts their representation in maps of Asia in both elementary and guidance levels as white (See Figures 4.9 and 4.10).

42 The depiction of tribal groups in their traditional attire is not problematic on its own. It is an attempt by the curriculum writers to account for cultural and ethnic diversity within Iran. However, it becomes problematic and narrow in its application as a way to construct difference since it is not accompanied by any reference to their histories and their socio-economic concerns within the context of Iran from a historical perspective.
The depiction of the Arab other in his traditional clothing and by references to skin colour differentiates him or her as an outsider-within in relation to the modern Aryan/Moslem who is, by definition, white. In this sense, this is a racist construction that reduces the internal Arab other to blackness, which is often depicted in light of the discourses of slavery, poverty, colonialism and hunger in other lessons about Africa and the United States. In these representations of Iran, ethnicity, religion, Aryan ancestry and rural and urban diversity/differences are the non-present discourses that are highlighted in other lessons as part of the construction of the ideal citizen. These categories are also intertwined in the depictions of the ideal citizen in the maps included in the textbooks such as the
one in Figure 4.9. Images of groups and historical monuments, animals, plants, modern highways and Imam Reza’s Shrine also accompany depictions of minority people. The images that are used in depicting Iran in Figure 4.9 are also topics of lessons that are explored in more detail in other textbooks and grade levels, which is further discussed in the following sections. Furthermore, despite the fact that in Figure 4.10, various ethnic groups are portrayed in their traditional clothing, the dominant idea and word in Figure 4.10 is the term “Iran” at the top of the lesson printed in black ink. In Figure 4.11, students are asked to name the ethnic backgrounds of those in the pictures by references to geographical locations where these men and women live. The main terms in the question are “men and women”. Although the terms ethnicity and ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes) are not used, the pictures represent individuals as ‘ashayir or rural/ethnic people. In these assignments, the narrators are students. But these representations position ethnic groups as silent observers of their own ethnicities through voices of students who are merely correlating between geography and identity within the limits of the discourse of ‘ashayir. The answer also depends on the stereotypical representation of diversity through clothing in wider society. Such depictions also imply that outside their regions and without their traditional clothing, there is no ethnic diversity.

Figure 4.10 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a drawing of the map of Iran in which ethnic and tribal male and female youth are shown in their traditional clothing.

Figure 4.10, “Iran”, Source: Persian 1 (2004, p. 48).
Figure 4.11 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed consists of four pictures depicting Kurdish males, adult and youth; female agricultural workers planting rice; a black Arab male harvesting dates; and a traditionally clothed Bakhtiari male migrating.

Figure 4.11, “See and Tell” Section, Source: Persian 3, (2004, p. 106). The text reads “In what parts of Iran do these men and women live?”.

In Iranian school textbooks, ethnic diversity is also discussed in the context of discussions of pastoral nomadism and animal husbandry (See Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 2004, p. 15-16). In a lesson titled “Tent Dwellers” in Social Studies 3 (2004, p. 12-14; See also Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 13-14), students are informed that tribes are also called ‘ashayir and they live all over Iran. The ‘ashayir are referred to as brave (shujā) and heroic (dalīr) people. The authors point out that “they serve the country through animal husbandry and God forbid, if the enemy attacks Iran, these people (mardum) will defend the boundaries of our nation” (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 12-14). In the 1999 edition of Social Studies 4, in the lesson “Tribal Life”, 43 tribal people were also constructed as brave (dalīr), religious and ready to defend the Islamic Republic (Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 1999, p. 137; See also Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 1994, p. 152). Students were informed that, “Some of them participated in the tribal Basij Organization. Tribal Basij plays an important role in protecting the boundaries of our Islamic country” (See Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 14; Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 1994, p. 151).44 The important point here is that the ‘ashayir are not referred to as nations in the textbooks. Rather, the general term mardum, denoting all people, is used, which does not refer to one’s national origin. The main ethno-national identity that is associated with the term mardum in this text is “Iranian”.

43 This lesson is omitted in the 2004 edition.
44 As Lois Beck (1991) mentions, a number of Qashqa’i participated in the Iran-Iraq War.
The inclusion of the tribal other as a topic of curriculum is an important defining element of the ideal citizen. However, representations of tribal life are also based on narrow conceptualizations of the division of labour based on the factor sex/gender (See Figure 4.12). Moreover, the tribal other is never permitted to speak to students about his or her experiences. In Social Studies 6 (2004, p. 22), in a lesson about the responsibilities and roles in tribal families, entitled “Tribal Life”, the authors state that in tribal settings, fathers, at times, relegate tasks, such as selling manufactured tribal goods and purchasing needed materials, to other members of society. Students read that these activities are considered to be appropriate for boys. The authors identify cleaning the house, preparing breakfast and attending school as appropriate and desirable tasks for girls (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 22). The importance of school (education) for girls is a positive representation in the school textbooks, since in a number of rural communities schooling for girls is viewed as a “waste” of valuable resources. In fact, such depictions attempt to normalize the act of formal education for women in rural areas where parents may prefer to invest money in educating their sons rather than their daughters. Such a positive depiction, nevertheless, is expressed through patriarchal discourses in writing about Iran and diversity that does not account for conflicts between the state and tribes, the tribes and the local people and the role of tribes and tribal women in the national and global economy. The emphasis of these lessons is to highlight acceptable family relations between males and females, not to promote the “rights” of female children in rural/urban Iran. For example, in Persian 5 (2004, p. 179-180) in a lesson titled, “The Return”, the authors explore the views of a tribal boy who now lives in the city and is daydreaming about rejoining his tribe during summer vacation and assisting his people in their daily activities: men securing the tents and women preparing the fire, milking the animals, preparing food and taking care of the children while older men talk about their life experiences. The lesson does not deal with this youth’s tribal identity as it is being reshaped in the context of an urban centre. Rather, the authors offer a homogenized image of the tribal other (See also, Figure 4.12).
Figure 4.12 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is an illustration of a camp of a nomadic pastural tribe.

Figure 4.12, “No Caption”, Source: Social Studies 4, 1999, p. 136-137. In this picture in a lesson titled “Tent-Dwellers” a tribal camp is represented as a peaceful community in which chores and responsibilities are performed by women and men who “help” each other and cooperate by gathering wood (women); weaving carpets (women); cooking food (women); making dairy products (women) and watching over the herd (male youth).

In these depictions of tribal diversity, the authors construct tribal life as a “peaceful” and “simple” way of living, where the division of labour is based on sex and age. Gender relations are envisioned as harmonious and represented in light of what sociologists refer to as “expressive” and “instrumental” traits. This construction of tribal groups as peaceful is reinforced in another lesson in grade five in which the authors restate that tribes are mostly pastoral nomads who live in tents and who move in search of food for their animals (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 2004, p. 15; See also Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, p. 10). The silent aspect of this lesson that is nevertheless part of the story is the extent of state control over tribal life in the context of the state’s military, cultural and economic policies.

The diversity of pastoral nomads is reduced to the term ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes) and its ethnic connotations are eradicated. The “roles” of the ‘ashayir and their economic and civic obligations to the state are not only to defend Iran’s borders but also to produce agricultural goods and dairy products for the nation. However, their tribal and sub-tribal identities remain secondary to their constructions as they are depicted as Iranians and not as, for example, specific national/cultural groups, such as Baluch or Kurd. The ‘ashayir is simply one group amongst many more that form the nation (See Beck, 1991). In fact, the discourse of ‘ashayir, as it is invoked by the authors of the textbooks by using clothing as a signifier of cultural and social differences/similarities, essentializes difference and situates it at the nexus of binary oppositions that fails to account for how diversity reproduces itself and (re)informs society as it is being shaped and reconstituted by the policies of the state. In discussions of or in references to ethnicity in the form of the discourse of ‘ashayir or through clothing, the central hegemonic message is
the importance of the *millat* (nation) and *vatan* (country) of Iran and the sanctity of the Islamic Republic. On one hand, Iran is ethnically diverse. However, due to the apolitical construction of modern religious-tribal history, ethnic differences and religious conflicts and diversity are, in fact, glossed over by an overemphasis on the Iranian national identity as a unified, stable and historically verifiable entity. Iran is also depicted as a country with a homogenized population (i.e.: descendents of the Aryans). For example, in *Social Studies 4* (Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 143), in a lesson entitled, “The Nation of Iran”, and in other similar lessons in *Persian 1* (2004, p. 116) and *Persian 2* (2004, p. 103-105), Iran is depicted as a revolutionary state that is populated by “a Moslem nation that has a shared constitution, flag, national anthem, [language] and calendar” (*Social Studies 4*, 2004, p. 129). Students read,

> Iranian people have a common past. For centuries, they have lived [together] and have defended their religion and land. These people have always shared each others’ sorrows [pain] and joys and have always had common wishes [dreams]. (*Social Studies 4*, Civic Studies, 2004, p. 132)

This lesson ends with the following remarks,

> The Islamic Revolution of Iran is a sign of the unity of the Iranian nation to free themselves from past sufferings [hardships] [ranjhā] and to achieve common goals. Nowadays, the nation of Iran has joined hands so that with hard work and effort [they can] satisfy the needs of the Islamic country of Iran. (*Social Studies 4*, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 130)

One of the group activities requires students to discuss the symbolic meanings behind the colour of the national flag and the emblem of Allah. According to the authors, the Iranian flag, the constitution and Islamic laws assist all Iranians in achieving their goals of prosperity, freedom and independence. At the same time, these are also the shared characteristics that unite Iranians. This is a hegemonic construction where through the textbooks, the authors inform students that regardless of their ethnicities, “race”, gender, social classes and religious differences, all Iranians are protected by the laws of the country.

Furthermore, in the lesson entitled, “the Nation of Iran”, in *Social Studies 4* (Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 128-129; See also *Social Studies 4*, Civic Studies Section, 1999, p. 142-143; 1994, p. 157), a drawing is included of a group of people, mostly men, wearing different types of traditional clothing who seem to be moving towards an Iranian flag pole in order to keep it straight. This flag of Iran is placed at the centre of the map of Iran, waving over

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45 In the 2004 edition of this lesson the title was changed from “Islamic Country of Iran” to “the Nation of Iran”.

46 In the previous editions this section was phrased differently: “Today, all [of the members of] the Iranian nation have joined hands and have become united so that they can defend the Islamic Revolution, their dear country (mīhan). All peoples of cities, villages and tribes [‘ashayir] try [mīkushand] to account for and to rectify the needs of the Islamic country of Iran” (*Social Studies 4*, Civic Studies, 1994, p. 158; 1999, p. 143).
the country (See Figure 4.14). In this depiction, the flag of Iran is constructed as symbolic of their identities and citizenship rights within Iran. That is, Iran, also symbolized through the flag, reflects their political and economic desires, demands and goals. In contrast, the smaller map of the nation on the left hand-corner of this drawing includes a picture of young men in modern clothing (See Figure 4.14). In this representation of Iran and its youth, the ethnic identities are hidden by representing the youth without their traditional clothing. This is not to say that the youth’s and children’s ethnic identities are not affirmed through traditional clothing in representations of Iranians in Persian 1 and 2 (2004). Despite such differences in representing the tribal and ethnic groups in the picture and drawing, the hegemonic message is stressed that it is in the context of Iran as a stable Islamised nation-state, that the rights of the ‘ashayir are protected. In other words, the authors imply that the ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes) have chosen to join the Islamic and revolutionary nation of Iran due to the rights and privileges afforded to them since the revolution.

The apolitical usage of the discourse of ‘ashayir finds two main expressions that are characterized through the discourse of the Iranian constitution and the family as symbols of Islamic morality, cooperation and justice. Tribal groups are referred to in the context of the representation of the Iranian nation as a household/family and in a lesson that focuses on informing students about Iran’s Islamic constitution (See Figure 4.13) (See Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 128-129; See also Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 1994, p. 158; Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 1993, p. 214). For example, in a lesson entitled, “The Constitution” in the 1993 edition of Social Studies 5 (Civic Studies Section, 1993, p. 214), the Iranian constitution was symbolized as a tree with the symbol of the Islamic Republic, Allah (God), written in Arabic/Persian in the middle of the tree (See Figure 4.13). Furthermore, in this depiction of the constitution, tribal and ethnic groups of Iran in their traditional clothing are shown forming a circle around the tree, looking up towards the symbol of Allah in the tree, suggesting that the legal, cultural, economic and political rights of both male and female Iranians is protected by the legal system that they are also willing to protect. In this drawing and lesson, again, the Islamic Republic is constructed as the ideal society with unified citizens who have common goals, despite their perceived ethnic differences. Ethnicity is not viewed as pathological in these constructions. In fact, it could be argued that by making available representations of ethnicity through tribal/regional clothing in the drawings and pictures to students living in various parts of Iran, they

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47 This illustration is very similar to the famous picture that shows American soldiers attempting to erect their flag on a Japanese Island during World War II.
can become familiar with differences unknown to them. These differences are normalized and viewed as reflections of cultural differences rather than as manifestations of deep political divisions within the nation. This is not the case, however, since ethnicity is non-pathological only when it is perceived to be local, peaceful and nationalized.

Figure 4.13 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is an illustration of the map of Iran depicting the constitution as a tree. Ethnic Iranians are shown holding hands around the tree and looking up at the term “Allah”, which is written at the centre of the tree.

Figure 4.13, “Allah and the Constitution”, Source: Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 1993, p. 214. The term “Allah” can be seen in the middle of the leaves. The term “qānūn-i asāsī” (“the constitution”) appears on the trunk of the tree. The word Allah also appears at the centre of the tree.
Figure 4.14 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a drawing of the map of Iran showing various ethnic males in their traditional clothing holding the pole of the Iranian flag, which is located at the centre of the map.

Figure 4.14, “Nation of Iran”, Source: Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 128.

In depicting Iranian ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes), the ethnic inequalities that they have faced are non-present aspects of the discourse of nation-building that informs the narration of nation in the textbooks. In fact, even in discussing the reforms of the Pahlavi governments that had devastating effects on tribal groups in Iran, the authors focus on the effects of other elements of the Westernization programs of the two Pahlavi kings. In Social Studies 5, for example, Reza Shah is portrayed as anti-Islamic, ruthless, illiterate and as an agent of the West in a lesson titled “The Dictatorship of Reza Khan” in the 1993 edition (Social Studies 5, 176) and “The Pahlavi Rule” in the 2004 edition (Social Studies 5, 124-125). In these two lessons, Reza Shah’s policies regarding the law banning the hijab (women’s Islamic dress) from public places is discussed. The non-present discourse is the reaction of the ‘ashayir to Reza Shah’s “dress reforms … [that] reflected his Europeanizing policies. All of Iranians including Persians were forced to wear versions of European dress” (Beck, 1990, p. 206). In fact, this royal decree regarding clothing reinforced and exacerbated the division between the modernized/westernized and “the rest of the society, which
resented the intrusion in their lives” (Chehabi, as cited in Keddie, 2003, p. 100). Reza Shah’s dress policy was also viewed by minorities as a way for the state to enforce its policy of Persianising the ethnic population by stripping them from traditional forms of clothing as indicators of cultural/ethnic membership and identity. In the textbooks, traditional clothing is used as a marker to distinguish between Iranians without accounting for the consequences and the effects of the Shah’s dress policy, which can be viewed as a racist state policy on tribal and non-Persian peoples of Iran based on cultural assimilation assumptions about diversity. The Persian-centric aspects of this policy are ignored and are not considered as topics of discussion. At the same time, the anti-establishment political messages of ethnic minority groups are also ignored. In such lessons, the histories of ethnic groups do not find expressions in the narration of nation.

The authors of the textbooks do not completely ignore the ethnic uprisings that occurred in various parts of Iran since the revolution. In fact, in History 8 (2004, p. 88), in a subsection titled “Plots/Conspiracies (tauti‘ah) and Problems/Difficulties (mushkilāt)” that covers the events from the establishment of the Islamic Republic to 1988, the authors refer to ethnic and political unrests in various parts of Iran. The authors of the textbooks introduce these topics in light of the discourse of “problems initiated by small groups of thugs”. The history of ethnic resistance against present and past governments is sanitized as these uprisings are depicted as the outcome of the small-scale activities of pockets of guruhak (groups), influenced by outside influences. Students read that the members of these guruhak “burn[ed] villagers’ agricultural products … [and] also martyred a number of great ulama such as Ayatollah Motahari and Dr. Beheshti amongst many more” (History 8, 2004, p. 93, See also History 8, 2002, p. 91, 1999, p. 88). It is important to note that the example that is used in the textbook refers to the assassination of two individuals by the Mujāhidīn Khaḷq-i Iran, a political group that took responsibility for killing more than 70 members of the government and the Majlis (the Parliament). The authors, by equating ethnic uprising with the actions of the Mujāhidīn-i Khaḷq, compare ethnic-nationalism to the ‘terrorist’ action committed by the Mujāhidīn-i Khaḷq in order to gaze at past, present and future ethnic uprisings as acts of “terror” against the nation of Iran and Islam by “enemy insiders/outside”. In this sense, any ethnic uprising is viewed as undermining the sanctity of the nation of Iran, and as such, as un-Islamic. Contemporary ethnic inequalities are not analyzed and/or represented as the end result of years of uneven economic development or due to the ethnocentric and/or racist policies of the Shah’s government. The political groups that oppose the central government are also labelled as agents of imperialist and foreign powers. The authors state that, after the victory of the Islamic Republic, the imperialist position of Western powers
and their interests had been undermined not only in Iran, but also in other parts of the world (History 8, 2004, p. 93; See also History 8, 2002, p. 91, 1999, p. 88). Furthermore, due to such an apolitical depiction of ethnic uprisings, these so-called “problems” are not analyzed as examples of ethnic nationalism and racialized issues/conflicts. In this light, ethnicity is indirectly pathologized and ethnic-nationalism is labelled *guruha* (group), whose members are also *bī-īmān* (unbeliever) individuals who do not possess a sense of loyalty and love for the nation of Iran. Issues of ethnic-nationalism that are not directly discussed are associated with the activities of those outsiders who want to interfere in the internal affairs of Iran.

America’s attempt to rescue their hostages in the early 1980s and the Iran-Iraq War are also conceptualized as the other sources of “conspiracies and problems” that Iranians have had to face since the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79 (History 8, 2004, p. 93; See also History 8, 2002, p. 91, 1999, p. 88). An interesting factor that keeps emerging is that “internal and regional external others” are also often constructed by references to their relations with the West, especially the United States. For example, in the 1993 and 2001 editions of Social Studies 5 (History Section, 1993, p. 192-193; 2001, p. 137-139), students read that after the success of the Islamic Revolution, the superpowers, especially the United States, continued their conspiracies against Iran. The authors wrote that in 1980, the Iraqi Army “raped” Iran (*tažavuz-kard*) and imposed (*taňamul kard*) an eight-year war on Iran. Students were informed that,

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In this war, many of our cities and villages were rampaged and destroyed and factories, hospitals and school were [also] bombarded. The Iranian people, having sacrificed [many things] for the establishment of the Islamic government, rose up and defended their Islamic nation with the army and *Sipāh-i Pās-dārān*. Although many of our pious and young brave (*dalīr*) youth became martyrs, they were able to push the enemy forces out of the boundaries of the nation (*khāk-i mīhan*) and inflict many harsh blows (*zārbahay-i sakhtī*) on [the enemy]. (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2001, p. 137-139; 1993, p. 192-193)
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Iran is constructed as a female whose body is being violated by the “Arab enemy outsider”, whose leadership is labelled as oppressive and a western puppet. In the 2004 edition, the above references are omitted from the history section. However, the content of this lesson is now included in another lesson, entitled “Giving in Abundance (*Īgar*) and Self-Sacrifice (*Fadākār*)” and the same information and arguments are presented to students in the civil studies section (Social Studies 5, 2004, p. 156-157). In the 2004 edition of this lesson (Social Studies 5, Civil Studies Section, 2004, p. 156-157), students are informed that good examples of sacrifice are the actions of those Iranian youth who volunteered for the Iran-Iraq War. The authors claim that it is due to their martyrdom that the Islamic nation of Iran was able to defeat the enemy. Students are also reminded of the importance of the *basīj*
institution that was established by the order of Imam Khomeini in 1979. Students read that many secondary and university students, doctors, workers, engineers and government employees are members of the basij (Social Studies 5, Civil Studies Section, 2004, p. 157). In these constructions, the class base of the basij is ignored and members of all occupations with different prestige scores are included as the defenders of the revolution. Regardless of students’ class backgrounds, through the participation in agencies such as the basij, Iranians can serve their civic duty of protecting and economically developing the nation. In this sense, in communicating the importance of self-sacrifice in protecting the nation from its enemies, Iranian society is constructed as class-less. In previous editions, the same information was communicated to students but in more detail. In 2001, it was stated that,

Our Islamic Revolution is the end result of the sacrifices of thousands of martyrs [the term ‘martyrs’ was printed in red]. After the victory of the revolution, many of our brothers in the Sipah-i Pasdaran and the Islamic Republic Army lost and sacrificed their lives for the protection of Islam, the revolution and [for the] defence of the country/territory {sarzmānān}. Hundreds of thousands of people also joined the Basij-i Mustaţaţfin, fought against the enemies of the Islamic nation and many of them became martyrs (Social Studies 5, Civil Studies Section, 2001, p. 168). In the 1993 edition of the same lesson, the authors ended the book by stating that,

Martyrs are our society’s teachers. They teach us lessons of sacrifice and faith {īmān}. Belief in God and sacrifice for “him” can result in social movements and foundational changes {buonyādī}. The Islamic society of Iran, which is a society of self-sacrificing individuals, is different than other societies. In this society, people sacrifice, [face difficulties and overcome them]. (Social Studies 5, Civil Studies Section, 1993, p. 247-248)

Despite the changes that have been made to the content of this lesson over the years, in all these editions there is an emphasis placed on the revolution’s emancipatory values, the sanctity of the Islamic Republic and the need to defend both at all costs. The interpretation of these events in the textbooks reaffirms how these groups and their activities were constructed at the time by the officials of the Islamic Republic and since 1980. Students are informed that martyrdom is an important quality, but not when it is directed at the Islamic Republic. Ethnic opposition to the government is also presented as an act that undermines the efforts of all those martyrs who have died to ensure the survival of the Islamic Republic, just like the efforts of imperialist powers and their agents in the regions to destroy the Islamic Republic. Moreover, not all Iranians who have died for Iran are actually considered as “martyrs proper”. Amongst the elite groups, for example, this term is used to distinguish the leadership from members of other elite groups (i.e.: both between the elite groups and others and within the elite category). Amir Kabir and Afghani, for example, are not considered as martyrs in narrating the history of Iran (See below). In the textbooks, the discourse of the ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes), the basij, martyrdom, the Islamic Revolution and binary

48 More specifically, such constructions are central to the themes explored in Social Studies 3 (2004).
oppositions such as enemy/friend and i̇man/bī-i̇mān (belief/unbeliever) are employed to situate the reader in respect to his/her future responsibilities as a citizen of Iran. Due to the character of the discourses used, the reader finds him/herself in an oppositional reader-position that distinguishes between groups based on highly charged political and religious terms.

Although school textbooks ignore the economic inequalities affecting ethnic minorities in Iran, there is nevertheless an underlying discourse of economics that informs the peaceful construction of tribal life. For example, in Social Studies 3 (2004, p. 9; See also Social Studies 3, 1999, p. 10), the authors write that, “the villagers [living near Shiraz] who have brought their agricultural products to the city and have sold them, buy sugar cane, sugar, tea, cloth and other things in the Bazaar”. They also weave carpets, area rugs and ghi̇lim (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 16; See also Social Studies 3, 1999, p. 17). Students also read that Iranian villagers grow many products and provide food for themselves and the nation (Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 17; See also Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 120; 1999, p. 132-134; 1994, p. 147-148). The authors maintain that, “In the village, women work alongside men in the fields and assist their husbands in harvesting agricultural products {bardāshti maḥsul}” (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 16; See also Social Studies 3, 1999, p. 17). In fact, the pictures used in the social studies textbooks to depict villagers or tribal peoples weaving and working in the fields are also mostly of women (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 16; 2000, p. 13, 16; Social Studies 4, 1999, p. 51, 56, 136-137; 1994, p. 54, 58, 150-151; Social Studies 5, 2004, p. 14; 2001, p. 36, 41, 45; 1993, p. 42). Tribal and rural women are shown and presented to be working through a patriarchal discourse that does not account for women’s contributions to the economic development of Iran. The othering of ethnic groups is accompanied by the othering of women, as ethnic women, which is constructed without any regard to their political roles at the tribal and national levels (See Oehler, 1993, p. 130-142). In both past and the 2004 edition of Iranian school textbooks, tribal identities are simultaneously celebrated from both ahistorical and historical perspectives. In the context of modern Iran, the authors conceptualize tribes as ‘ashayir from a racialized perspective, since by this term the reference is often to the non-Persian population. The ‘ashayir are celebrated without any reference to their cultural characteristics and the traditions of tribal groups are not of concern to the authors of the textbooks. ‘Ashayir assumes homogeneity at the national level, despite conflict and social hierarchy at the local, provincial, national and international levels. Ethnicity, nevertheless, finds expression through the invocation of the discourse of ‘ashayir and criteria such as colour of skin, geographical location and clothing. In this lesson as well as in various other lessons already discussed, the term ‘ashayir does not refer to any specific ethnic group such as Kurds, Baluch or Arab tribes.
The authors of the textbooks do not distinguish within groups by reference to Sunni, Jewish or Shi’a distinctions amongst, for example, the Kurdish pastoral nomads, since students are not informed about the local and ethnic terminologies used to distinguish between insiders and outsiders themselves. The most important forms of tradition that are mentioned and emphasized are those that reflect the dominant group’s values and norms. Moreover, since Persian tribal groups are, by definition, part of ‘ashayir, the term is also further depoliticized. The textbooks do not provide “textual-spaces” that account for how various non-Persian and Persian pastoral nomads of Iran have been politically, socially and economically adjusting according to national and international factors. Rather, this term invokes a romanticized view of otherness (See Beck, 1990, p. 185) and a paternalistic construction that perceives the ‘ashayir as “disorderly” and in need of “discipline” (i.e.: as guruhak (or groups) but also depicts them as peaceful and in need of help, by references to the discourse of Jihād-i Sūzandagī (the Reconstruction Jihād) and development.

In conclusion to Part One, it is important to note that the ideal citizen is represented in school textbooks in light of contradictory discourses that both critique the leadership of past Iranian governments/dynasties and also glorify pre-Islamic culture in the same way as they glorify Islamic culture. In fact, Iranian school textbooks offer eclectic representations of the ideal citizen that are at once Westernized and sharqzade (affected by Orientitism). As Rahnema and Behdad (1995, p. 7) argue, sharqzadeği, or Orientitis, which is characterized by the “glorification and idealization of the values, social institutions, and – as a whole – the tradition of the East”, is an important point to consider in studying Iranian political economy. This Orientitis is “Islamophilia”; that is, it celebrates the “sanctity of popular Islamic” traditions and values. Characteristics of Orientitis include anti-modernization and anti-Western ideologies (Rahnema and Behdad, 1995, p. 7). The term gharbzadeği (west-toxication), or as Rahnema and Behdad (1995, p. 6) refer to it, Occidentosis, calls for a return “to the true ‘self’”, tradition and traditional ways of life. Tradition is conceptualized as a tool to critique Westernization as an imperialist ploy. It is at the nexus of this interaction between the West and the East that the ideal Iranian self is imagined and invented. This invented conception of the self is constructed in light of nationalistic approaches to identity construction that assumes a certain group with rich religious traditions that are traceable to its ancestral root has had historical claims to a specific geographical space within the region. In this sense, the textbooks highlight, among other relations and factors, the historical presence of Persians in the Middle East as important political actors and the leadership of the ulama as the legitimate leaders of contemporary Iran and the heirs of more than 4,000 years of civilization. It is
through discourses of Islamization, Aryanisation and ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes), to name a few, that the history of the nation in the form of narrations in school textbooks of grades 1 to 8 is presented for the political consumption of students. The exclusions and inclusions of knowledge about groups, national and international structures and relations in these constructions and narrations of nation and the ideal citizen in relation to other nations and national selves are analyzed in more detail in Part Two.
PART TWO

“Race”, Geography, Culture and Religious Diversity
4.2 Introduction

In this part, I analyze how “race” is depicted for students in the figures, maps and texts and how the term “nizhād” is implicitly or explicitly employed in conjunction with other factors/categories such as culture, skin colour, face (chahrah), geographical location and language. In this section, I also account for how elite groups’ positions are legitimized through arrangements of binary oppositions as tools in order to depict a polarized world divided into the forces of “good” and “bad” from highly critical and ideological perspectives. I interrogate how constructions of otherness in Iranian school textbooks rely on a racialized and Islamic-centric approach that highlights oppression and diversity only to dominate various forms of otherness by encapsulating them into two opposite camps of exploiters and exploited in relation to Iranians. In short, I examine how a nation-centric approach to identity construction “cannot be sustained without some component of … cultural othering and inferiorizing” of the self and otherness (Razack, 1998, p. 125).

This part is divided into three sections. In section one, “‘Race’, Whiteness and the Ideal Citizen: Depicting Asia and Africa”, I offer data that compares the ways in which the idea of “race” is represented to students in the 2004 edition of elementary textbooks in comparison to selected previous editions. I also offer an analysis of how guidance level textbooks approach the idea of “race” and represent racialized groups in Iran and across the world by incorporating the term “race”. In section two, “‘Race’, Language, Colonialism and the Americas in the Construction of the Ideal Iranian Citizen”, my analysis points out that in Iranian school textbooks, culture, “race”, religion and views about progress and development intersect one another in offering diverse understandings and representations of the peoples and the various nations in the Americas in light of homogenizing discourses that also divide the population of the Americas into discrete and essentialized groups.

In section three, “Religious Diversity, Racialization and the Discourse of Mustāżafīn”, I show how class relations and views about Africans and Asians are informed by a set of discourses that further divide the world into neat and discrete divisions that employ Cartesian opposites within a Manichean construct of good and bad and oppressed and oppressors that reproduce the positions of Iran and Iranians in relation to Asians and Africans in light of the discourse of anti-colonialism.
4.2.1 “Race”, Whiteness and the Ideal Citizen: Depicting Asia and Africa

The construction of the Aryan birth of Iran is not merely an aspect of cultural knowledge about Iran and its history. As mentioned, it relies on the invocation of “race” as an objective category of dividing human beings, which is also central to Orientalist discourses. The mere invocation of the Aryan thesis by the textbook authors as the beginning of the history of the Iranian nation reifies “race” as well as colour of skin as a way of dividing the human population, regardless of how explicitly or implicitly the idea and history of “race” is or is not discussed in school textbooks.

In Social Studies 3 (2004; See Map in Figure 4.15), the authors explore the experiences of the Hashemi family as they travel from one city in the south to another city in north western Iran due to the job transfer of the father. As Figure 4.15 shows, the location of the cities that have significant religious, political and historical importance for the Iranian elite are signified for students. As the map also indicates, the Hashemi family begins its travels from an area that corresponds to the same geographical location where the Pars tribe is also said to have settled centuries ago. In fact, the Persians (descendents of the Pars) are considered as the dominant ethnic group in Iran and have populated and administered these regions, which is also implied by the name Persian Gulf, written immediately below where the Hashemi family begins its travel, at the bottom left hand side of Figure 4.15. Although the authors do not reference the Aryan tribe’s migration to Iran or the Pars heritage of Iranians, students nevertheless read about the relocation experiences of a ‘Persian’ bureaucrat father who has been given a new assignment in another part of Iran. In this sense, the movement of this ‘Persian’ administrator (albeit working for the Post Office) is normalized. However, ethnic minorities have been critical of the tendency of the central government to assign Persian or pro-regime governors and administrators to their regions, who are often unfamiliar with local customs and economic and political needs (See Beck, 1990). The apolitical construction of such a transfer of a state official from one province to another is partly due to the fact that the idea of Iran, as a legitimate political unit with historical roots in the region, is a taken-for-granted assumption. The discourse of Iran as “the land of Aryans” is the non-present element in this construction of the narration of nation. “Race” and the Aryan thesis are important but implicit aspects of Social Studies 3 (2004). “Race” is presented to students as both political and apolitical factors in discussing human characteristics across the world through the invocation of different discourses that, in their relations to one another in the lessons under consideration, politicize relations between the West and the East as they relate to the ideal Iranian citizen.
Figure 4.15 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a drawing of the map of Iran showing the travel itinerary of the Hashemi family, which includes major religious centres and cities.

Figure 4.15, “No Caption”, Source: Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 7. The legend: dotted lines represent roads, dark continuous lines represent rail lines; green icons represent the location of important Shi’a and Iranian shrines and mosques.

The term “race” was employed as a tool to teach a specific “racialized” image of the world to students in previous editions of elementary textbooks (See Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, p. 64-69; 2001, p. 47-52). In fact, “race” was one of the main topics of discussion in the 1993 edition of Social Studies 5 (Geography Section, 1993, p. 64-69). In the pre-2004 editions of this lesson in Social Studies 5, Asians were raced and each raced group\(^49\) was associated with a specific geographical area within Asia. Asians were given racial identities by the authors of the textbooks based on, for example, the criterion of the colour of skin. For example, in a lesson from the 1993 edition, entitled “Asia: the Most Populated Continent” (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993), the authors wrote,

\(^{49}\) By ‘raced group’, the reference is to the ways in which a (minority) group is defined by non-group members who have the power to depict them in light of a racial epistemology.
More than half of the world’s population lives in Asia. [They are mostly yellow skin than white skin]. A number of black skins are also seen in Asia [A number of black skins also live in Asia]. In some parts of Asia, white skins have mixed with yellow skins and blacks …. The people belonging to each [racial group] (tīrah) speak their specific language. (p. 66-67)

The three factors of “race”, language and colour of skin were used in depicting diversity in Asia in such a way as to communicate how similar (i.e.: anti-colonial attitudes and religious beliefs) and different Iranians are from other Asians. In fact, students were asked to name and determine the specific locations of various racial groups in Asia and to distinguish between different types of white groups that live in western Asian (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, p. 66-67). Furthermore, in the 2001 edition of this textbook (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 2001), the above citation was revised and the text read as, “More than half of the world’s population lives in Asia. Most of them are yellow skin and the rest are white skin. However, a number of black skins are also seen in Asia” (p. 47). In this edition, students also read that “race” is an important factor in differentiating between the populations of Asia (and the world) based on the attribute of skin colour. Moreover, the diversity of the world’s population is further reduced to three main colours.

In addition, in the 1993 edition of Social Studies 5 (Geography Section, 1993, p. 66-68), students were also familiarized with racial diversity in Asia through a map that accompanied this lesson (See Maps in Figures 4.16). At first glance, the diversity of the human “race” seems to be the only important information in this map shown in Figure 4.16. However, the reification of “race” and associating it with a specific geographical location is the main hegemonic meaning that is produced in the textbooks. This map represents the extent of racial diversity in Asia. The colour yellow is used to represent the “yellow race” (nīzhād-i zard), white is used for the “white race” (nīzhād-i safīd) and black for the “black race” (nīzhād-i siyāh). The authors provide an example of the black “race” by referencing the Dravidian group (See the arrow on the map). According to this map, Arabs and Iranians are both white skinned, but Iranians are also categorized as Indo-Europeans. In depicting India, Indo-Europeans in northern India are separated from the black Dravidians in the south by mixed “white and black” and “black and yellow” Indians.
Figure 4.16 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a map of Asia showing racial diversity within the continent.

Figure 4.16, “The Map of Racial Diversity in Asia”, Source: Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, p. 67. In this map, the colour yellow is used to represent the yellow race (nizhād-i zard), white is used for the white race (nizhād-i safīd) and black for the black race (nizhād-i siyāh). An example of the black race, according to the map, is the Dravidian group in India (see the arrow on the map). Arabs and Iranians are constructed as white. Iranians are also constructed as Indo-European.

In these lessons on Asia (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, 2001), students were also presented with other ways of distinguishing between different parts of Asia by reference to another map (See Figure 4.17) associating specific geographical locations and landscapes with specific religions. In fact, the legend for the map on religious diversity in Asia in Figure 4.17 indicates that the colour green represents the land of Moslem people; yellow signifies the land of Buddhist people; purple denotes the land of Hindu people; and the black dots refer to important religious centres (from right to left, clockwise): Lahasa, Bonaras, Mecca, Median, and Jerusalem. This map could be considered as a pedagogical tool to inform students about the diversity of religion in Asia, especially since in the three lessons that discussed the population of Asia, the authors stated that despite differences and diversity within Asia, its people share two common characteristics: they believe in their religions and, as a result, follow their religious convictions (Social Studies 5, 1993, p. 69). In addition, students read that Asians have also

50 The titles are: “Asia”, “Asia: the most populated continent” and “Asia: the most important and ‘universal’ religions and ancient civilizations” Starting in the 2001 (p. 47-52) edition, these three lessons are collapsed into one lesson (“What Do You Know about the Continent of Asia?”).
shown great resistance against colonial forces and exploiters in order to free themselves from oppression (żulm va sitamgārī).

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Figure 4.17 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a map of Asia showing religious diversity within the continent.

Figure 4.17, “The Map of Religious Diversity in Asia”, Source: Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, p. 68. The legend for this map reads as follows: green: the land of Moslem People; yellow: the land of Buddhist people; purple: the land of Hindu people and the black dot denote religious centers (from right to left, clockwise): Lhasa, Bonaras, Mecca, Median, and Jerusalem.

The authors construct Asians by references to three criteria of difference/sameness: “race” (nizhād), religion and culture (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, p. 64-69; 2001, p. 47-52). However, the two most important criteria considered in categorizing the population in Asia were the terms “nizhād” and religion. In fact, by reading the two maps in Figures 4.16 and 4.17 simultaneously, that is, by placing one of the maps over the other, it can be stated that “race”, colour of skin and religion intersect one another in such ways that the majority of Moslems were portrayed as “white skin”, Brahmans were depicted as “black skin” or hybrid (black and white) and Buddhists were represented as mainly “yellow skin”. These categories of sameness were depicted without any reference or exploration of the internal divisions, diversities and conflicts and their effects on white Moslems groups or yellow-skin Buddhist groups. A significant omission in the map in Figure 4.17 is any reference to Christianity and Judaism as important characteristics of the landscape in Asia. Another important element that is ignored in this construction of Asia through the maps and graphs is information about the class compositions of various Asian societies. It seems

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51 These statements are omitted beginning in the 1994 edition.
52 Specific characteristics of these cultures are not discussed in elementary or guidance school textbooks. However, students read about some of these characteristics in high school history textbooks.
that economic inequalities due to colonial efforts are acknowledged but contemporary internal and national class conflicts are ignored as useful knowledge. In fact, the division of Asia’s population into discrete religious and skin-colour categories in Social Studies 5, editions 1993 (66-67) and 2001 (50) was further reinforced through textbook pictures of individuals representing these various racial/cultural groups that accompanied the lessons of religious and racial diversity in Asia (See Figure 4.18). In the 1993 edition, the pictures of Japanese, Indo-Chinese, Mongol, Dravidian, Western Asian and Indian (Handi) faces were used to distinguish between Asian peoples and to visualize the “diversity” of the peoples of Asia for students. In these maps, the Dravidian category is presented as non-white, non-Aryan, non-Indo-European and non-Moslem. The picture of the Dravidian also qualifies them as slim, partly clothed, rural and traditional. However, these pictures essentialize facial characteristics of non-Iranian and non-Aryan Asians and portray them as true representation of diverse groups of people during a specific time/space without critically accounting for facial, colour of skin, linguistic, class, cultural, religious and political diversities within each group.

Figure 4.18 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed are pictures depicting the facial characteristics of various “raced” groups in Asia.

Figure 4.18, “Face (Chahrah)”, Source: Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, p. 67-68. These illustrations show pictures of various ‘Racial’ groups in Asia: from top right to bottom left: The Face of a Japanese, The Face of an Indo-Chinese, The Face of a Mongol, The Face of a Dravidian, The Face of a Western Asian and The face of an Indian (Handi).
Students are told that oppressed groups in Asia have resisted their oppressors, especially the Western oppressors. The West is viewed as a homogenized category and considered as the “dangerous other” in relation to the Asian self, that is divided based on colour of skin, geographical location and religion. In these representations, the lack of the inclusion of diversity within each oppressed group also constructs them as homogenized entities. The authors attempt to represent the complexities of each of these groups by offering images/pictures that only depict a few members of these various forms of otherness. The authors end up constructing Asia as a traditional society that lacks modernization due to the effects of colonial rulers. The act of including the faces of most Asians in their traditional clothing reproduces stereotypical snap-shot representations of the “authentic” others that are specific to a time and space but are assumed to represent the other eternally and accurately in the late twentieth century. In fact, in these pictures, only the Japanese boy was depicted dressed in modern western style clothing. This depiction of a Japanese citizen in Western clothing highlights the view of Iranians at the turn of the last century about the achievements of Japan as a “Third World” country, in terms of its level of industrialization and technological advancements in contrast to both Western and non-Western countries (Banani, 1961, Behnam, 1996). Tradition, as it is depicted in these pictures, signifies a lack of economic development that is not linked to internal factors such as the effects of religious discrimination on individuals and groups belonging to minority religious groups in different parts of Asia. Western modern clothing is used as a signifier of technological advancement rather than as reflecting a loss of cultural identity. The authors construct non-Western dress as traditional in discussing Asia, yet this is how the women of Iran and the ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes) are also depicted, as traditional. However, in reference to women, the chador or ḥijāb is viewed as a symbol of purity and of Islamic values. These pictures are more representative of those views that depict Asia as undeveloped, poor, non-industrialized and traditional in light of the discourse of modernization that requires certain levels of cultural change. Clothing, in this sense, is used as a symbol of tradition within “non-Western modernity”. However, by tradition, the reference is not to cultural values or religious beliefs of Asians per se, since these issues were not discussed.

At the same time, religious unification is viewed as a key characteristic of all Asians (Social Studies 5, 1993, p. 66-67, 2001, p. 47). In fact, despite racial divisions, the Asians’ desire to free themselves from oppressive Western regimes and their puppets is also considered as a common shared characteristic that unites all Asians. However, the authors invoke colour of skin differences using Indo-European language/racial classifications that divide Asians into distinct groups in light of an anti-colonialist perspective that is influenced by Orientalist...
knowledge about itself. For example, the authors divide between Iranians and other groups within these constructions by references to skin colour, religion and “racial-origin” that have specific meanings for students, given the knowledge they have read about Iran in previous years. Whiteness defines Iran in relation to other groups. Iran’s Whiteness due to its Indo-European background is accompanied with a homogenous religious population. Iranians are all white and Moslem. In this sense, they are both similar and different to various groups of Asians.

In contrast to the 1993 edition, in the 2001 edition of Social Studies 5, only the picture of the Japanese child from previous editions was retained and two new pictures were added: two boys, one depicting faces of white and the other black persons, all dressed in modern clothing (See Figure 4.19). By 2001, in both the text and pictures of the lessons on Asia, racial diversity was reduced to its essential three distinct (modern-looking) groups: yellow, white and black. However, the racial map of Asia was still employed as a pedagogical tool in teaching about diversity in Asia.

Figure 4.19 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed are pictures of yellow, black and white “races” in Asia.

Figure 4.19, “Illustrations 27, 28, 29”, Source: Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 2001, p. 50. The captions for each picture reads as follows: (from bottom right to top left, counter clockwise): Illustration 29-white skin, Illustration 27-yellow skin and Illustration 28-black skin.
In the 2004 edition of elementary textbooks, terms such as *nizhād* (“race”) or *aqaliyat* (minority) are no longer used as the main criteria of understanding population diversity. In fact, all racial references/pictures in the lessons dealing with Asia are omitted from *Social Studies 5* (2004). However, this does not mean that the idea of “race” and colour of skin are not employed in representing who is Iranian in the 2004 elementary school textbooks. For example, the only reference that is still retained in *Social Studies 5* (2004) is to the indigenous populations of the Americas and Australia. Students read that in these continents,

In the distant past, only a small number of these indigenous people lived [in low density over a large area]…. Later on Europeans migrated to these continents and occupied (*tašarruf*) them. Do you know what the indigenous and tribal people of the Americas who lived in this land were called before the arrival of the Europeans? (*Social Studies 5*, Geography Section, 2004, p. 61)

In previous editions, similar information was used only to describe the indigenous population of Australia. Students read that, “Almost all of the residents of Australia are descendents of those people who came to this land from England and other countries. The indigenous people (*bumīyan*) live sparsely in the forests” and in the desert (*Social Studies 5*, Geography Section, 2001, p. 65). In the 2004 edition, however, Europeans are constructed as “occupying” indigenous land rather than “discovering” it. Also, the picture of the aboriginal Australian in the 2001 edition is replaced with a picture of a research outpost in the South Pole. However, the authors in the 2004 edition still ask students to name the indigenous peoples of the Americas before the arrival of the Europeans (*Social Studies 5*, Geography Section, 2004, p. 61). One of the possible answers to this question is the term “Handī” (“Indian”) or “redskin” (“*surkh-pūst*”), a non-present aspect of these representations, which is explicitly introduced to students in *Geography 7* (2004) (See below).

Guidance level textbooks have also been revised for how they portray “race” and how they discuss human diversity. Revisions have also been made to *Geography 8* (2004) in terms of references to “race” and language as topics of investigation. The section dealing with “Human Geography” (*Geography 8*, 1999, p. 65-77) and the subsection entitled, “Races and Languages” (*Geography 8*, 1999, p. 71-72) as well as the subparts of this section, such as “Natural Characteristics Differentiate between Races”, have been omitted. In this previous edition of *Geography 8*, in a lesson, entitled “Natural Characteristics Differentiate between Races”, the authors maintained that despite diversity amongst populations, it is possible to distinguish between racial groups by employing certain characteristics and applying them to the population of the world. These characteristics are identified as factors and attributes such as height, colour of skin, hair texture and size of skull (*Geography 8*, 1999, p. 71-72). The authors
maintained that scientists had divided humans into 60 groups. Students were also informed that based on the
criterion of skin colour differences between humans, it is possible to divide humans into three distinct “races”. They
are identified as the white, black and yellow “races”. In the next subsection, entitled “A Shared Language Often
Unites the Members of Different Races” (Geography 8, 1999, p. 71-72), as the title implies, the authors stated that
language is the main source of connection and communication between different “races” and groups. The examples
that were provided are: Persian in India, Afghanistan and Tajikistan; Spanish in Mexico; Portuguese in Brazil; and
English in the United States of America. In constructing the ideal citizen as a speaker of the Persian language that
has transnational manifestations, the linguistic diversity of the Iranian non-Persian student population has been
ignored. According to the Manual for Developing Literacy and Adult Education Programmes in Minority Language
Communities, as of 1999, there were 74 different languages in use in Iran; however, all editions of the textbooks
legitimize Persian as the official language of Iran.\textsuperscript{53} The exclusion of minority languages denies the possibility of
accounting for other unique world views and cultures (Freire and Macedon, 2001, p. 198), for example, through
reading about how a particular “speech community has resolved its problems in dealing with the world” in their own
language.\textsuperscript{54} Although the 2004 editions of Persian 1, 2 and 3 include assignments that ask students to name animals
and flowers in their mother-tongues or in local dialects and languages, they fall short of affirming linguistic diversity
as part of the curriculum. Instead, these (token) inclusions are tools in affirming their secondary positions as citizens
of Iran. They are told when and how they can use their mother-tongues in school environments. In Iran, the
dominant role of the Persian language is disguised by constructing it as one of the main defining elements of the
ideal citizen that unifies the nation. However, in Geography 8 (1999, p. 72), students were also informed that the
political unity of a nation is not solely the end result of a unified language, as is the case in Switzerland, where three
languages of German, French and Italian are spoken.

Students were not informed about the hegemonic and colonial-like histories of national languages in Iran
and in various parts of the world. The authors did not discuss how the concept of “race” has been criticized by
coloured people across the world. Students did not read about the lack of scientific validity of “race” as a concept

\textsuperscript{53} According to the Manual for Developing Literacy and Adult Education Programmes in Minority Language
Communities, as of 1999, there were 74 different languages currently in use by Iranians but the official language is
page 7.

\textsuperscript{54} Wurm, as cited in Manual for Developing Literacy and Adult Education Programmes in Minority Language
Communities, Source: http://www.unescobkk.org/ips/ebooks/documents/minoritylanguage/, retrieved January 15,
2005; page 1.
and category of distinction and its ideological and biased suppositions influencing biological categorization and their usages as objective facts. As a result, the authors reified “race” as a real, objective and tangible entity, and language was viewed apolitically as a unifying tool. Biological differences were used as justifiable elements to categorize people of the world. In being critical of colonialism, the authors failed to provide spaces for students to discuss how ethnocentric views affect students’ perceptions of “otherness” and other nations.

The apolitical aspect of such lessons and its racially constructed assumptions become more apparent since the text does not refer to the migration patterns and emigration of Iranians to various parts of the world since the 1850s and especially since the 1950s (Mehran, 2002). In the 1999 edition of Geography 8, in the context of introducing students to these various topics and issues such as “race”, language, natural biological differences and political unity, the authors also explained human migration and population trends. In the lesson entitled, “Human Geography”, under the subsection, “Movement of Populations Means Muhājarat (emigration)” (Geography 8, 1999, p. 71-72), a map was introduced to students that illustrated the migration trends since the beginning of the last century. In this map, arrows of different colours representing different national, cultural and racial groups and origins were used to show the patterns as well as the direction of the movements of people between different parts of the world (Geography 8, 1999, p. 70-71). The map that accompanied this lesson depicted the contemporary migration routes of English, Portuguese, German, Chinese, Spanish, Italian, Slovak, Russian, Japanese and Indian nationals to various parts of the globe (See Figure 4.20). However, no arrows were directed towards or originated from Iran, despite the fact that Turkish tribes that historically ruled Iran are referred to as immigrants in the history sections and non-White Iranians are depicted as Iranian in Persian 1, 2 and 3 (2004) textbooks (See Figure 4.16). In reference to Figures 4.17 and 4.20, it seems that “whiteness” has defined Iran since antiquity because Iran’s culture has remained “pure”. This is despite the fact that students are informed in their history textbooks that many foreign dynasties and tribal groups have invaded and occupied Iran.
Figure 4.20 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a map depicting modern global migration movements.

Figure 4.20, “The Map of Contemporary Migration Routes”, Source: Geography 8, (1999, p. 71). (The legend: Red = English; Yellow = Portuguese; Orange = Italian; Blue = German; Purple = Chinese; Darker Orange = Japanese; and Dotted Black Line = Russian; Black Line = Polish). The receiving immigrant countries are Indonesia, China, Madagascar, South Africa, Ivory Coast, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

In these depictions of Iran, Asia and the world, a sense of sameness is depicted as Iran is constructed as a nation that has been untouched by the movement of different “raced groups” and ethnicities around the world. Such an exclusion suggests that by not discussing the actual trends in Iranian “migration” movements and by constructing non-Pars groups as outsiders, the textbooks continue to portray Iranian ancestry as “pure” and “untouched”. The ideal citizen is symbolically defined as a pure-Pars person who is not Arab, European, Turk or Indian. This map is excluded from the 2002 and 2004 editions of Geography 8. Nevertheless, a similar map could have been used to introduce trends in Persian and non-Persian internal and external migration routes. Such an exclusion could be for ideological purposes and reasons as this requires students to learn why so many Iranians have left Iran since the 1930s and soon after the Revolution of 1978-79.

In general, although most direct references to the term “race” are now omitted from elementary textbooks, other factors such as religion and skin colour are still employed in both elementary Persian and middle school history and geography textbooks to represent diversity within Iran and across the world. In Geography 7 (2004, p. 16), students are presented with three faces of youth in Asia (See Figure 4.21, the map in Figure 4.21 was also included in the pre-2004 editions of Social Studies 5). They are from top right to bottom right: “Chinese Face” (Chahrah-i Chînî), “Indian Face” and “Russian Face”. Although the reference is not to “race”, the term “face” is

55 In comparison to the 2002 edition, the 2004 editions has also been revised. However, the revisions are only to the “activity section” accompanying this lesson.
used to distinguish between human groups in both the title and body of the lesson. In this sense, *chahrah* (face) is a racialized and gendered term that uses skin colour, sex and other attributes to categorize various groups of people into three main patriarchal colour schemes. Despite the exclusion of discussions about why scientists have divided the world population into distinct racial groups, the same “racial-logic” informs how *chahrah* and facial characteristics are still employed in guidance level textbooks to distinguish between humans. In these construction, *chahrah* is also racialized since colour pigmentation of the face are considered as important criterion of difference in dividing Asia’s population into three distinct groups: Indian (black), Chinese (yellow) and Russian (white). In this light, the intersection between culture, gender, language and “race” is accentuated with associating “*chahrah*” with nationality as well. These are central to the representations of the ideal citizen in elementary school textbooks that also finds other manifestations in the form of discussions about the socio-economic characteristics of the Americas and its peoples in *Geography 7* (2004, p. 51), which I present in the next section.
Figure 4.21, “Illustration 20-Faces in Asia”. Source: Geography 7, 2004, p. 16. The captions for each picture reads as follows (from top to bottom): The Face of a Chinese; The Face of an Indian; and a Russian Face.

4.2.2 “Race”, Language, Colonialism and the Americas in the Construction of the Ideal Iranian Citizen

In Geography 7 (2004, p. 51), cultural diversity is an important criterion of difference used in depicting racialized and ethnic groups in North and South America. In fact, students read that there are two cultures in the Americas (Geography 7, 2004, p. 51; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 51). The authors state that due to British immigration,
the Anglo-Saxon culture and the English language prevail in North America. Students read that central and South America is referred to as Latin America and that Latin culture dominates the southern hemisphere due to the immigration of the Spanish and Portuguese people.56

In reference to the aboriginal and “hybrid” peoples of the Americas, students read that after the discovery of the Americas and with the coming of white European settlers to this continent, many wars occurred between these two groups. Students are informed that the end result of these wars was the decimation of many “redskins”. The text continues by stating that today only a small number of these “Handī” (“Indian”) people still remain (Geography 7, 2004, p. 51; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 51). The references to “Handī” and “redskin” people are not contextualized in a discussion about the effects of colonialism and the consequences of colonial relations after the invasion of the “New World” by white and non-white settlers. Here, one more colour scheme is introduced to the racialized divisions of the world population into discrete groupings. In the 2004 edition of Geography 7, the indigenous peoples of North America are still depicted on the margins of American society with the view that they are dying out, which is similar to prevalent views promoted by many Canadian historians until the 1950s (See Francis, 1992). More important, they are racialized in a sense that their “red colour” comes to represent the brutality of Westerners and the racial division of the world’s population to students. Two pictures are also included that depict a “redskin” and two “black skin” individuals (Geography 7, 2004, p. 52; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 51). The native person whose face is painted and is wearing a “headdress” seems to be of South American aboriginal background. This picture essentializes “redskins” as traditional. As Heinrich (1998, p. 32) argues, teachers should refrain from showing Native “Indians” in the context of popular images put forth by Hollywood movies. She also points out that it is recommended that teachers abstain from “talking about Indians as though they belong to the past” (Heinrich, 1998, p. 32), as “Indians” also live in the modern era. “Indians” are shown living in modern times but within the limits of traditional representations of them by the dominant societies around the world. The picture used in Geography 7 (2004) to depict aboriginal groups in the Americas does not account for differences amongst native peoples in terms of nationality, cultural differences, linguistic differences and religious diversity. Iranian textbooks do not discuss how native people lived in the past. Rather, they are only referred to in light of a focus on how Western influences across the world have negatively affected different groups in relation to the construction of

56 In Geography 8 (2004, p. 82) students, by references to a map, are informed that central America, in addition to North Africa and Asia, is home to one of the first civilizations in the world. The map that accompanies this lesson in Geography 8, however, does not refer to the possible existence of other early civilizations in North America, in southern Africa or in Europe.
the ideal citizen as the leader in fighting imperialism. The inclusion of European colonial contact with “Indians” serves a political goal: it is a tool to discuss the role of European colonialism without informing students about how those “redskins” see themselves. The two black individuals, on the other hand, are dressed in modern clothing and are shown conversing with one another in front of a store. The pictures used in the textbooks to represent non-white people are “ordinary” individuals. This is not problematic per se. However, in limiting the representation of difference to two pictures of “everyday” individuals, students are not presented with pictures of important well-known black individuals such as Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King or black intellectuals such as W.F.B. Du Bois. Students are not informed about the Black Renaissance (See Banks, 2001). In contrast, the majority of the pictures and drawings in school textbooks depict either white Iranians or white male Europeans as scientists. Moreover, there is no historical or contemporary discussion of either black or aboriginal resistance movements against colonial encroachment and structural inequalities.

Moreover, the text labels all “black skin” Americans as descendents of African slaves who were brought by force by “white skins” during the colonial era to work in the mining and agricultural sectors (Geography 7, 2004, p. 51; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 51). Students read that today a large number of “black skin” people live in both South and North America. The authors write that in the United States, the majority of “black skin” people live in the south eastern parts of the country and in urban centres such as Chicago and New York (Geography 7, 2004, p. 51; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 51). The knowledge and information that students read in this part of the text is also emphasized in the activity section (Geography 7, 2004, p. 52; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 51) where students are asked to explain “the origin of black skin people who now live in the United States”. In light of the content of the lesson, this question impels students to answer that all African-Americans are descendents of certain groups of people originating from a specific place who were brought to North America as slaves, and thus ignores the immigration of African nationals to the United States over the last fifty years, since this information is not included as part of the curriculum. In other words, the black population in the United States is identified based on their residential locations, class relations and their origins as slaves in light of their positions in relation to the dominant society in the West. The authors do not account for diversity within diversity. For example, the textbooks do not distinguish between Caribbean blacks, Cuban blacks and African-American categories and they do not reflect the cultural diversity in the Americas. The black population of America is homogenized as a collective entity to construct the colonial Western as the historical enemy of the oppressed of the world, without informing students
about their struggles and the present day consequences of racisms in the United States. Nevertheless, students read that the standard of living of the black population in terms of economical and social factors is not comparable to those of whites (Geography 7, 2004, p. 51; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 51). However, the textbooks also ignore their contributions to North, Central and South American cultural, social, political and economic growth/development.

In all these depictions, the non-present aspect of this lesson that is an important part of the slave trade and its historical diversity is the lack of discussion of the role of African and Arab merchants (See Lovejoy, 1983) and a critical exploration of the history of slavery in Iran during and after the Safavids Dynasty (1501-1722) (See Babaie et al., 2004). The emphasis on economic inequality and the role of European immigrants in exploiting peoples, their labour and natural resources in various parts of the world also intersects religious depictions in relating the ideal Iranian citizen to other groups across the globe. White Euro-Westerners are also constructed as those who solve problems through science and exploit the world due to their colonial legacy. Africans and Asians are constructed as incapable of solving their problems despite efforts in those directions due to neo-colonial relations and the role of the West. Students are presented with an image that the rest of the world is stratified. The text does not account for how the struggles of these people have affected the processes of colonial interactions with them (Sleeter and Grant, 1991, p. 98). In the next section, I show how religion, in light of a discussion of global inequality and human diversity, is further racialized in depictions of minority groups in Africa and Asia through the invocation of the discourse of mustāżafīn (the oppressed).

4.2.3 Religious Diversity, Racialization and the Construction of Mustāżafīn (The Oppressed)

The process of racialization also informed the construction of a number of other lessons in the pre-2004 editions of Iranian elementary school textbooks. It was an aspect of a 1991 lesson titled “Africa: A Rich Continent with a Poor Population”, which stated that “Due to years of colonization of Africa by Europeans, the people of the African continent live in dire and horrible poverty and hunger” (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, p. 76-77). In the 2001 edition of Social Studies 5, this statement was deleted and the title of this lesson was changed to “What Do You Know about the Continent of Africa?” (2001, p. 59). Nevertheless, both editions stated that most Africans live in agricultural settlements and move from one grazing area to another. The authors also informed students that there
are very few industrial and overcrowded cities in Africa. Africa is conceptualized as “underdeveloped” and as rich in natural resources but poverty stricken. These lessons, furthermore, stated that African people try hard to “exploit” their resources but the fruit of their “hard” labour is abused and plundered (ghārat) in the form of raw materials by large/powerful industrialized nations (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 1993, p. 76-77; 2001, p. 59).\(^{57}\) In the 2004 edition of Geography 7 (2004, p. 30-31; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 30-31), in a lesson titled “Why is Africa an Exporter of Raw Agricultural and Mineral Products?” the economic, social and political problems in Africa are also considered to be the end result of the effects of the European colonial legacy, the exploitation of Africa’s raw resources by multinational companies and drought.

In another lesson in the 2004 edition of Geography 7, entitled “What Do We Know about the Race, Language and Religion of Africa?”, the authors also assert that the low population growth in this continent is due to years of internal wars, a lack of public sanitation, the prevalence of various sicknesses, a lack of adequate food supplies and the effects of drought on the production of agricultural goods (Geography 7, 2004, p. 28-29; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 28-29). The picture (See Figure 4.22) that is chosen to depict poverty in Africa is of malnourished black children eating from bowls without utensils. In this and other similar lessons in present and past editions of elementary and guidance school textbooks, Africa is depicted as black, as a victim and as in need of assistance. Global inequality is further explored only in the context of a discussion of the effects of colonialism and post-colonial relations on the African continent.

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\(^{57}\) The ironic part is that students are also informed that one of the aims of the Islamic Republic is to become industrially advanced and competitive in the world market. Yet, there is no discussion on how an industrialized Iran that is competitive in the world market will not contribute to exploitation in other parts of the world.
European encroachment and “race” are not the only criterion used to describe Africa and Africans to Iranian students. Islam is also emphasized as the religion of most Africans in both present and past elementary and guidance levels textbooks. The map in Figure 4.23 (a similar map was also included as part of the curriculum in Social Studies 5 on Africa and Africans, Geography Section, 1993, p. 77; 2001, p. 59) included in this lesson divides African nation-states into Moslem Africa and non-Moslem Africa, consisting of Christian and Pagan religions (Geography 7, 2004, p. 28). In both the 1993 and 2001 editions of Social Studies 5 (Geography Section, 76; 58, respectively), students were asked to identify the Moslem nations of Africa, especially those located near the Mediterranean Sea, which are mainly African Arab Moslem nations. In fact, northern Africa is represented as populated by white skin Moslems, since they are mainly described as being of Arab origin. In this way, difference, in terms of nationality, is used once again to distinguish between Moslem countries in light of racial similarities that divides Africa’s Arab, white and Moslem populations from other black, Christian and pagan Africans. In addition, several different relationships are invoked in this lesson in Geography 7 (2004). The accompanying picture also re-emphasizes and highlights the three main ideas expressed in the text: “lack of public sanitation”, “sicknesses” and “draught”. However, several different identifications are involved here. On one hand, as Moslems, Africans are considered as brothers and sisters of Iranians. And Iranians, as Moslems, have the responsibility to assist them since
they are poor and hungry. At the same time, starving Africans are constructed in light of blackness. Furthermore, in pre-2004 elementary social studies textbooks, students were informed that the “black race” has been negatively affected by colonial and neo-colonial policies of past and present European countries. The reference is not to white African-Arabs. White European Christians are considered as responsible for the starving children in the pictures. Although this specific information is deleted in the 2004 edition of elementary level textbooks, such knowledge is still an important part of their middle school curriculum in Geography 7. Here, the “black race” of Africa is constructed as part of and given the status of the mustāżafīn (the oppressed). They, nevertheless, are distinguished from the rest of the members of the mustāżafīn group due to their nationality, “race” and colour of skin. At the same time, Moslem Africans, including white Arabs, are also considered as members of the mustāżafīn category. In other words, the problems in Africa and Asia are viewed in light of a discourse of colonialism that, as it is discussed in later sections, is also employed by the textbooks authors to explain the rise of wealth and industrialism in Europe.

Figure 4.23 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a map of Africa distinguishing between Moslem and non-Moslem nations.

Figure 4.23, “Illustration 41-The Map of Moslem Countries in Africa”, Source: Geography 7, 2004, p. 29. The legend reads as follows: Green Box: Moslem countries, Yellow Box: other countries.
Iranian students read extensively, from a racialized perspective, about the role of the West in exploiting other parts of the world through an exploration of the category “continent”. This construction is accentuated by other representations of “enemy insiders” as Western puppets. Two issues arise from these explorations. Discussions of colonialism and the effects of imperialism are presented to students by invoking religion as a criterion of difference, distinguishing between groups and individuals across the globe in light of implicit and explicit references to “race”. The world is constructed based on colour of skin distinctions that are reified within a critique of colonialism and inequality, but the authors of the textbooks reproduce certain assumptions about these groups that ends up mimicking colonial-like views about others. The image of the Moslem African other as the victim of colonialism is shaped and given meaning in the context of ideological assumptions that are racially biased and also inform the content of other lessons in various grade levels and editions. In these passages, the emphasis on Islam has ideological considerations. For example, in Geography 7 (2004, p. 17), students are informed about minority groups by reading about religious diversity across the world. In fact, in the textbooks, the term “minority” (aqalîyat) is only employed to refer to religious groups. In the map used to illustrate religious diversity in Asia (See Figure 4.24a), the authors show that in Moslem countries (depicted by the colour green), only Christian minorities reside. Also according to this map, Moslems are minorities in different parts of Asia, living mostly adjacent to Islamic lands. Christian minorities are shown to live mainly in four general geographical areas, including along the Black and the Mediterranean Seas. However, this map does not show any religious diversity in Iran, despite the existence of many religious minority communities, which contradicts what students read about the existence of religious groups other than Moslems since the Sassanids Dynasty (224-651 A.D.). In a sense, the textbooks acknowledge that there were non-Moslem religious groups in pre-Islamic Iran, but in modern Iran there are no minorities, thus they are not presented. However, the division of Asia and Africa into Moslem and non-Moslem identifies a specific area upon which Iranian students are invited to gaze at (See Figure 4.24b).
Figure 4.24a has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a map of Asia depicting religious diversity and also minority religions.

Figure 4.24a “Illustration 23-Religious Territories in Asia” (top map), Source: Geography 7 (2004, p. 17). The legend reads as follows: green: the land of Moslem people; yellow: the land of Buddhist people; pink: the land of Hindu people; purple: the land of Pagans; the hollow black dots denote religious centres (from right to left, clockwise): Lahasa, Bonaras, Mecca and Jerusalem; the cross refers to Christian minority communities and the black crescent refers to Moslem minority populations.

Figure 4.24b has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed are two maps: a map of Asia depicting religious diversity and minority religions and a map of Africa distinguishing between Moslem and non-Moslem nations.

Figure 4.24b (“Illustration 41-The Map of Moslem Countries in Africa”, Source: Geography 7, 2004, p. 29; See Figure 4.23) is reproduced for the reader to visualize the discussion about those geographical spaces that Iranian students are directed to gaze at in the textbooks (the green areas of the two maps).
This gaze is given a specific meaning in light of the racialized construction of Africa and Asia in Social Studies 5 (1999, 2001) and Geography 7 (2004). Students are also informed that,

All of the Moslems who live in different countries of the world are members of a large family. This very [large] family is called ‘Ummat-i Islam’. The population of this [large] family is more than one-milliard [billion] individuals. (Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 131; See also Social Studies 4, 1999, p. 144)

The authors expand by stating that, “Moslem people of Iran, in addition to being [members] of ‘Ummat-i Islam’ [Global Islamic Nation/Community], must strengthen their bonds with Moslems of other countries” (Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 131-132; See also Social Studies 4, 1994, p. 162).

In emphasizing the sameness and equality between Iranians and other Moslems, the authors point out in Social Studies 4 (2004, p. 131-132; 1994, p. 161) that the Islamic world is like one’s home and family in the same way that “Iran” is compared to one’s family in various textbooks across grade levels. All Moslems, regardless of their colour of skin, ethnicity or nationality, are considered as part of this “global nation” (Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 131-132; See also Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 1994, p. 161). As such, national boundaries that divide Moslem nations are symbolically reconstituted in light of the greater Moslem world as identified by the colour green in various maps of Asia and Africa. However, despite the fact that Asia and Africa are demarcated in terms of Moslem and non-Moslem populations in the maps and the text, Moslem nations in other countries in other continents are not discussed. Nevertheless, students are explicitly told that if all Moslems of the world unite, their enemies will not be able to control them (Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 132; See also Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 1999, p. 144). But if they allow their differences in terms of “race”, ethnicity, culture and nationality to divide them, their enemies will be able to rule Moslem countries (Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 131-132; See also Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 1994, p. 162). The discourses of colonialism and imperialism define the enemies of Islam and all Moslems. The unity amongst Moslems is viewed as necessary, mainly due to Western interventions and their oppressive policies rather than solely due to the intrinsic values of Islam about peace and harmony. The civic studies section of Social Studies 4 (Civil Studies Section, 2004, p. 132) ends with the following quotation from the Prophet Mohammad: “Whenever an oppressed [a subordinated person] cries [asks], ‘O’ Moslems, come to my relief [help] and a Moslem person hears this call for help and chooses not to do so, then he/she [cannot be considered] Moslem” (See also Social Studies 4, Civil Studies Section, 1994, p. 162).
Such a message is a familiar one that students have also read in other subjects or in previous years. Racial differences, linguistic characteristics and national origins are non-present aspects of this lesson. These representations relate Iranian citizens by distinguishing them from other Moslems within the limits of a gaze that identifies certain Moslem groups as in need of assistance and help and as members of oppressed groups. The message of unity first requires establishing for students the reason why “Iranians” are different from other Moslems and why they need the help of “Iranians” to fight oppression. The data shows that the images and meanings students read about Africa and/or are asked to apply to Africa, Europe and Iran are multiple, but the text implies that white Europeans are exploiters, black Moslems live in undesirable conditions and white Iranians, as Moslems, have the duty to fight against colonialism and injustices. This is the main ideological message of the textbooks. In fact, in the questions section at the end of this lesson (Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 133; See also Social Studies 4, 1994, p. 162), students are asked: “Who are the members of this nation? Why can (should) Moslems of the world unite? Are Moslems outside Iran members of the Ummat-i Islam?” By asking these questions, an important distinction is being made between being a member of Iran and being a member of the global Moslem community. The criteria “Moslem” qualifies Iranians as members of this community. However, by definition and according to Iranian textbooks, being a Moslem alone does not guarantee membership in the “nation of Iran”. Nationality is a legitimate criterion to separate Moslems into discrete groups that are not open for membership to other Moslem people. Imagined constructs, for example, Iran as a nation-state and Iranian as the national identity of its members, are presented as legitimate ways of constructing the self in relation to outsiders. At the same time, these constructs divide Iranian Moslems from other groups of Moslems, who in the process, are also othered since they are often depicted as fixed and eternal. However, the images of these outsider groupings that are presented to students in their textbooks are not fixed or unchanged but multiple. They are depicted differently at different historical periods. Yet, despite such differences, the other is always reflected upon as what the Iranian self and the ideal citizen are not: in need of help from outsiders. The meanings associated with these images are determined by the discourses employed that limit how students can interpret the information.

The emphasis on Islamic unity is dependent on what Golnar Mehran (2004) argues is “one of the main themes introduced through religious instruction at schools: the Muslim/non-Muslim dichotomy”. Although religious diversity in Asia and in other parts of the world is presented, in the religious textbooks used between 1994 and 1999

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(Religious Studies 1, 2, 3, 4, 5), students were presented with a view that constructed Islam as the most progressive and the best religion in the world. They were informed that only those believing in Islam would enter heaven and be rewarded for their good deeds. Religious studies are also important aspects of Persian, social studies and history textbooks. Social Studies 4 (History section, 1999, p. 84-96; 1994, p. 89-101) included four lessons each dedicated to the Prophets Noah, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. They were described as defending the oppressed of the world, leading the people on the path toward God’s teaching and following his will (Social Studies 4, History section, 1999, p. 84-93; 1994, p. 89, 93, 97, 100;). Moreover, in Religious Studies 2 (1999, p. 25) in a lesson entitled, “Prophets: the Best Sources of Guidance and Teachers for Humans”, the authors presented the shared characteristics and messages of the prophets. Students read that humans must avoid exploiting others and should strive to be kind to others. In another lesson entitled, “The Great Prophets” (Religious Studies 2, 1999, p. 27), the authors ended the chapter by stating that students must respect all prophets because God had chosen them. Students, however, were also informed that, “But our prophet is better/superior (bartar)” than/to the rest of the Prophets. Prophet Mohammad, the authors stated, “is the last prophet and after him there will not be another chosen messenger from God” (Religious Studies 2, 1999, p. 27). Moreover, in another lesson, “The Religion of Islam: The Best Religion for the Best Lifestyle” (Religious Studies 2, 1999, p. 31), the authors also informed students that “The religion of Islam is the best and the most complete of all religions”.

In Religious Studies 3 (1999), the same messages were also repeated and reinforced. Prophets were depicted as teachers who were also conceptualized as being concerned with the well-being of all people. The authors also credited human progress to the teachings and perseverance of the prophets (Religious Studies 3, 1999, p. 12-13). Prophet Mohammad was also referred to as God’s last chosen Prophet who never lied or committed any unjust or inappropriate deed. He was represented as an individual who was always caring towards the elderly and children and was concerned about the welfare of the oppressed (Religious Studies 3, Lessons 7 to 9, 1999, p. 14-21). In the lesson, “The Religion of Islam: The Last and the Best Heavenly Religion” (Religious Studies 3, 1999), the main message that students had already read in the previous year was restated: “The religion of Islam is the best and the most complete of all religions”. The authors also informed students that “anyone who does not accept Islam and

59 The 2004 edition includes the same information about the prophets but the content is condensed into one lesson followed by three lessons about pre-historic and early human civilizations.
60 It is important to note that the contents of these lessons have been revised. I have included these lessons due to the fact that students who were enrolled during the 2004 school year at the guidance level had already been exposed to the information included in the pre-2000 editions of religious textbooks in elementary school.
chooses another religion and approach will be at a disadvantage (ziyān-kār) and helpless (bī-chāra) in the after life” (Religious Studies 3, 1999, p. 22). In general, the “ideal friendly insider/outsider Moslem” (and the “ideal friendly Moslem other”) is conceptualized as an individual who believes in one God and the afterlife; who accepts Prophet Mohammad as the last prophet; who accepts and obeys (iṭā'at) the instructions and teachings of God and the prophet in every aspect of life; and who is a friend of all Muslims and the enemy of the oppressors {sitamgarān} (Religious Studies 3, 1999, p. 22). In another lesson, “The Quran: the Message of God”, students read that the Quran, which was brought to “them” and the rest of the world by the Prophet Mohammad, teaches the best ways of living one’s life to all of humanity (Religious Studies 3, 1999, p. 23). As Golnar Mehran (2004) argues,

There is an emphasis on ‘we’ and ‘us’ as Shi’a Muslims who live in an Islamic state, marked by a close link between religion and politics and governed by the religious jurisprudent. Iranian children are told that they are different from ‘them’ although the ‘other’ is seldom portrayed in negative terms.

Although the other is not overtly portrayed in a negative light; the other is nevertheless depicted as needing to change his or her religion to Islam. At the same time, by overemphasizing Islamic unity, certain groups of Iranians such as Zoroastrians and other religious minority groups are othered and placed outside the global community of Moslems. As a result, the global community that is discussed in the textbooks is selective in terms of its membership: national membership in a Moslem society is not a sufficient criterion. The ideal citizen is a member of the Ummat-i Islāmī (Islamic Nation/Community) and this does not include non-Moslem Iranians who either live in the region or in Iran. On one hand, the membership of Iranians in the Ummat-i Islāmī symbolizes the ideal citizen. On the other hand, the constructions of the ideal citizen do not include the “non-Moslem friendly insiders”.

Members of minority religious groups are also denied an important space in acknowledging their resistance to imperialism as a political force against tyranny, due to their exclusion from membership in the global Moslem community.

Students also read that an important responsibility of the government and the nation’s leadership is to protect the deprived and the oppressed (mustāzafīn) Moslems and other oppressed groups of the world, especially those Moslems who are faced with injustice, tyranny, oppression (ẓūlm), plundering and transgression (tajūvzc, “rape”) (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 1994, p. 223). In the 2003 edition of Social Studies 5 (Civic Studies Section, p. 142-143), the term mustāzafīn is no longer used in this lesson and the section discussing the responsibility of the Iranian government to protect the oppressed of the world is omitted. Furthermore, the section on government responsibilities to combat poverty has been rephrased from “Fighting Poverty”, (Mubārazah Bā Faqr)
(Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 1994, p. 222) to “Improving the Life of the People” (Bahbud Zindagi Mardum) (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 143). The text now states that the government of the Islamic Republic attempts to safeguard and secure (ta’mîn) those services (vasâ’il) that are needed for the welfare and comfortable living (rifâh) of all people of Iran and to eradicate poverty in Iran (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 143). The authors do not talk about fighting poverty anymore, which implies that poverty is no longer as prevalent. This is attributed to the policies of the government that have aimed at improving the life of the people. It can be stipulated that students are socialized to believe that poverty is no longer a national concern but a concern towards other Moslems. However, this construction of Ummat-i Islamî is not solely based on political and ideological factors. It is itself a hegemonic construct that includes and excludes groups based on their relations to the Iranian Islamic leadership, the national self and the ideal citizen, which is also evident in how Moslem and non-Moslem Afghan others have been constructed in the 2004 and in previous editions of Social Studies 5, which is discussed in the next part (See Section 4.3.2.1).

Related to the above issues is how ‘space’ is represented and constructed for students. Geographical space is represented as enclosed ‘territories’ not based on imagined national boundaries depicted as “lines” on various maps of the world. They are also represented through religious divisions that divide the population of various countries into discrete and identifiable categories with diverse belief systems without explaining the basis of their values and world-views. These images of diversity are coded with racialized images that are based on biological distinctions of raced groups and portrayed in light of anti-colonial sentiments that profess economic and political independence without accounting for the effects of such relations on women. The outcome is the ‘territorialization’ of difference and its essentialization in terms of characteristics that are imposed on both Iranians and non-Iranians by the authors of the textbooks. Appropriating Gorssberg’s (1993) discussion of ‘territorialization’, “a territorializing machine distributes subject positions in space” that in the context of Iranian school textbooks, become objectified, knowable and distinguishable based on real moral and ethical principles(p. 100). Such a machine “diagrams lines of mobility and placement; it defines or maps the possibilities of where and how [students] can stop and place themselves” (Gorssberg, 1993, p. 100). In the context of the imposition of the discourses of the Aryan origin and Shi’a identity of Iranians, the geographical representations of the population of the world depict the “subaltern [and Westerners as social categories and not as statement[s] of [their] power [of agencies]” that are diverse and fragmented due to historical specificities (as cited in Grossberg, 1993, p. 100). It distinguishes human
beings from one another, localizes difference and essentializes communities through a coded language that is
gendered, Shi’a-centric and racialized. In imagining Iran, students are presented with an image of the world that
combines social and geographical spaces in order to situate students’ identities as Iranians as unique and different
from all others forms of identities despite similarities (i.e.: the effects of colonialism or the importance of religion).
PART THREE

Revolutionary Leadership, Ummat-i Islamî (Islamic Community/Nation), Patriarchal Family and the Construction of the Ideal Citizen
4.3 Introduction

In Part Three, I offer data that shows how relations of power and the discourses that inform the stories told about the Islamic Republic (1979-present) are represented to students in their school textbooks, by focusing on the events since the inception of the Qajar Dynasty (1796-1925). In this section, I interrogate how male figures are incorporated into the narration of the ideal citizen in light of problematic constructions of insiders and outsiders that discursively reproduce and textually practice genocide and sexism in representations of the Baha’is, religious minorities and women in discussions about the Constitutional Revolution and the Revolution of 1978-79. I present findings on how the histories of Iranian revolutions over the last two centuries are reflected in configuring the characteristics of the ideal Iranian/global citizen through the employment of discourses such as male leadership, freedom, Ījāh-i Sūzandāgī, the mustāżafīn (the oppressed), velayat-e-faqīh (jurist guardianship), Ummat-i Islāmī (Islamic Nation/Community), independence and economic development.

Part Three is divided into three major sections. The first section, “Revolutionary Leadership”, is further subdivided into four segments titled “Amir Kabīr”; “Said Jamalel-Din Asadabadi (1839-1897)”; “Ayatollah Nouri”; and “Imam Khomeini”. The second section, entitled “Ummat-i Islāmī”, is divided into two sections: “Afghanistan and the Afghan Other” and “Palestine and the Israeli Other”. In these sections, I explore how the Iranian national identity is reflected in light of historicizing the Islamic Republic and differentiating it from other Moslem identities in light of a nationalistic discourse that also functions as a hegemonic discourse dictating what can or cannot be said about other non-Iranian Moslems and non-Moslems. In the third section, “The Patriarchal Family and the Construction of the Ideal Citizen”, I present the ways in which patriarchal relations inform the construction of leadership and rights and obligations in representing Mr. Hashemi’s family in Social Studies 3 (2004, 2000) as an example and representation of an ideal family. I also address whose feelings about leadership, cooperation, development and Ummat-i Islāmī are prescribed for students. This section is further divided into two sub-sections, entitled “Gender Roles” and “Social Mobility”. In these sub-sections, I examine how the patriarchal depictions of the family, in light of middle-class depictions of the household consisting of workers and consumers of material and spiritual goods and services, are represented. I discuss and explore how representations of class and discussions of social mobility define the ideal citizen.
4.3.1 Revolutionary Leadership

In the following sections, I explore which groups are excluded from citizenship and from the definition of the ideal citizen as the authors narrate the social changes introduced to Iran during this intense period of change since the advent of modernity by focusing on how the lives of specific individuals are used to inform students about who they are.

4.3.1.1 Amir Kabir

In History 8 (2004), students read about the history of modern Iran and the important events that have shaped Iran and its political economy. In this textbook, the authors introduce students to how Iran has been struggling to ensure its independence from tyranny. Students read how Iranian leaders have spearheaded the struggle against heresy. In a subsection of a lesson, entitled “Colonial Denomination/Sect Building” (“Firqah Sažī Isti’mārī”), students are informed that Sayyid Ali Mohammad, the leader of the Babi movement, was executed by the order of Amir Kabir (History 8, 2004, p. 3; See also History 8, 2002, p. 37). The authors state that Ali Mohammad called himself Bāb (gate), a person who is considered as the communicator between the people and the hidden Shi’a Imam. The authors inform students that Bāb soon declared himself the Messiah and finally claimed to be a prophet. Students are informed that the Russian and British governments were fearful of a unified Iranian nation and attempted to create divisions and to cause disunion (tafragha) amongst the population through their support of “man-made”, false and untrue (durūgh-gūţ) religions such as Baha’ism and the Babi movement (History 8, 2004, p. 37; See also History 8, 2002, p. 37). Baha’i Iranians are reflected upon as the enemies within Iran (“insider-other-enemy”) who have been historically resisted and disliked by the Iranian people and its “pious” leaders, such as Amir Kabir. They are constructed as the other who must be “feared” since their colonial and westernized thoughts and actions undermine Islam and the Iranian nation.

The inclusion of Sayyid Ali Mohammad, the leader of the Babi movement, is not simply due to the anti-colonial sentiments of the ulama or due to the need to expose the role of colonial conspiracies against Iran. Instead, it is itself a reflection of Islamised sharqzadegi (Orientitis) that rather than being Occidentalist in character, is also influenced by Orientalist perspectives. The reference to the Babi movement is due to the need to problematize internal divisions within Islam in modernity within the limits of national boundaries in order to represent and
manufacture a homogenized and unified picture of the ideal Iranian citizen. It is for this reason that the textbooks, in
taking about the Babis, are also silent about the massacre of Babi Iranians in Zanjan. According to historical
documents, in 1851, Amir Kabir ordered the Qajar army to massacre the Babi followers in “the name of Shi’a
Islam” (Mackay, 1996, p. 132). According to Monica Ringer (2001, p. 67), this massacre was inextricably linked to
Amir Kabir’s belief that the Babi’s goal was also to topple the Shah’s government (Ringer, 2001, p. 96, footnote 99). The elementary and guidance school textbook constructions do not consider the Babi movement as an important
social movement or as a reflection of the wider diversity amongst the Shi’a majority of Iran (See Abrahamian, 1982,
p. 15). The silent other is the Baha’i category, despite the fact that they are mentioned and named in the text. They
are othered in the sense that the Baha’i faith is depicted as a blasphemous religious-moral deviation from the true
teaching of God. This depiction of Baha’ism is especially problematic since it goes against the pedagogical message
that students are introduced to in their Persian 2 (2004, p. 4, 49) textbook about peace and friendship amongst all
people of the world. In the Persian textbooks, students are also encouraged and are asked to talk about their ideals,
norms and values in the context of class activities. In such assignments and homework, the identities of Baha’i
students are placed under the gaze as their religious identities are categorized as anti-God. Also, in the same light,
the textbooks do not discuss the violence and their effects experienced by the Baha’i people during the Pahlavi era
and after the revolution (See Gilad, 1990 for her analysis of the experiences of Iranian Bahai’s escaping Iran after
the revolution and applying for refugee status in Canada; Rejali, 1994). This exclusion is a form and the end result
of what I call “textual genocide” in Iranian textbooks, through which Amir Kabir is assigned an important “role” in
the construction of the Islamic Republic as a modernizing element during intense periods of change starting in the
1800s. “Textual genocide” refers to the textual exclusion of discussion about genocide and mass killing and the
representation of these issues in light of demonizing depictions of those massacred that take-for-granted the effects
of prejudice on human relations.

The narration of nation and citizenship is also told through a gendered approach to Amir Kabir’s role in
modernizing Iran. First, Amir Kabir is depicted as a knowledgeable and capable man who attempted to restrain the
involvement of foreign powers in Iran’s internal affairs. Students read that he introduced many reforms in order to
address the “backwardness” of Iran (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 118-119; See also Social Studies 5,
History Section, 1993, p. 162). The reference to Iran’s “backwardness” promotes the idea that, in comparison to the
level of industrial and scientific progress achieved in the West during the nineteenth century, Iran (Persia) was
indeed an “undeveloped” country. According to Monica Ringer (2001, p. 55), the early travelers that were dispatched by Crown Prince Abbas Mirza equated modernization with Westernization and “‘progress’ (taraqqi) with the implementation of such a process of change”. The West is constructed as a reference point that sets the standards upon which Iran’s socio-economic and scientific achievements can be judged and compared to. In this way, the past, as depicted in the textbooks, is understood based on dichotomies and binary oppositions that are also reflected in popular discourses in present day Iran. Such arguments also inform the assumptions of many contemporary Iranian authors. They, however, maintain that the lack of separation between Islam and the state, the absence of rationalism, pluralism and secularism, capitalism, private property and feudalism were the causes of “backwardness” in Iran (Matin-Asgari, 2004, p. 83). In addition, the usage of the term “backwardness” also distinguishes Iran of the past under the rule of the kings, characterized by tyranny and inequality, from present-day Iran under the (super)vision of the ulama. Iran is now constructed as an Islamic country on its way towards rebuilding, progressing and modernizing. Such ideological messages are depicted, explained and portrayed on the back cover of many school textbooks under the subheading of “Iran Dar Räh-i Sūzandagī”, “Iran On Its Way Towards Reconstruction” (Geography 6, 7 and 8, 2004; Geography 6 and 7, 1999; Career Studies 6, 7 and 8 [For Boys], 1999; Science 8, 1998; Science 6, 7, 1999; Social Studies, 1999; Career Studies 6, 7 and 8 [For Girls], 1999; Amadīgī-i Difa’ 61 8 [For Boys], 1999; Math 8, 1999).

It is in light of this division between pre-1979 Iran (“backward”) and post-1979 Iran (free and independent) that the authors state that Amir Kabir also reduced and then eliminated the pension that the royal family received during the Qajar period (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 119; See also Social Studies 5, History Section, 1993, p. 162; Keddie, 1999). Students are informed that Amir Kabir’s important reforms were the restructuring of the economic system; curbing the extent of corruption and abuses by the court and government officials; and establishing Dar al-fonun 62 and sending students to Europe in order to become educated in modern skills and to learn about new industries (History 8, 2004, p. 38; See also History 8, 1999, p. 35; 2002, p. 38). In History 8, Amir Kabir is also credited for publishing the Vaghahe El-tegfagheh newspaper (History 8, 2004, p. 38; See also History 8, 1999, p. 35, 2002, p. 38). The authors claim that it was after this period that more modern schools and newspapers were established in Iran (History 8, 2004, p. 38; See also History 8, 1999, p. 35, 2002, p. 38). This information is

61 It translates into “Defensive Readiness”.

62 In fact, the establishment of Dar al-fonun (the first modern school) was the basis for modernizing the Iranian self and rationalizing the Iranian identity, paving the road for the Pahlavi kings’ socio-economic-cultural-political reforms (See Rejali, 1994).
also repeated in History 12 (2005, p. 26-27), but in more detail. An interesting fact that is not discussed in reference to the Vaghahe El-tefgagheh newspaper is the number of name changes that this newspaper went through, which reflects the “more rigorous experiments in rejecting Arabic in favour of Persian words and derivations” that “characterized the latter Pahlavi’s language policies” (Avery, 1991, p. 821) and continues to this date. In fact, the aims of the newly established school and newspaper were partly based on the political will of reformers to “educate” the people based on modern norms and through the Persian language. As Avery (1991) maintains, the “purpose … was … to [broaden] men’s horizons” (p. 821-822). A Moslem male leader is identified as futuristic in his vision of Iran’s roles in the region and he is applauded for his methods and efforts to modernize the country. This is contrasted to the role of one woman in political affairs at the time in the same lesson.

In History 8 (2004, p. 38), the authors briefly introduce students to the involvement of Naser al-Din Shah’s 63 mother’s (known as Mahd-iUlya) in Iranian political affairs (See also History 8, 2002, p. 38). Mahd-iUlya’s political concerns are referred to as “interference”. This negative construction of female political participation is one of the few instances in which women are included in discussions of Iranian history. The authors maintain that members of the royal court, including the Shah’s mother, conspired against Amir Kabir by influencing the Shah to replace him and order his assassination (History 8, 2004, p. 38; See also History 8, 2002, p. 38). The authors conclude that the colonial (isti’mâr) governments of Russia and Britain used the assassination of Amir Kabir to their advantage and seized parts of Iran in the province of Khorasan and the city of Harat (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 118; See also Social Studies 5, History Section, 1993, p. 163). The death of Amir Kabir is symbolized as the point after which major concessions in banking, natural resources and customs (gumruk) were granted to the British and Russian governments. This depiction of concessions to foreigners coincides with a representation of a female political figure as a mother and an internal enemy, whose ethnic and racial identity categorizes her as non-Aryan. Her Turkish identity also inadvertently characterizes her as a descendant of the early Turkish tribal immigrants, as an “outsider-within”. In fact, in such lessons, gender, religion and ethnicity are configured in depicting non-Iranian and non-Aryan reformers and rulers of Iran as undesirable. Such a representation seems to also be based on the assumption that despite women’s lack of direct political control at the societal level, they still manage to influence men within the context of private spaces and with significant economic and political consequences. Such references to the Shah’s mother are also found in a number of other publications.

63 Naser al-Din Shah, a Qajar king of Turkish background, is depicted in the textbooks as an incompetent ruler who was more concerned with satisfying his excessive needs for European consumer goods.
written by both journalists and academics (Mackay, 1996, p. 132; Keddie, 1981; Keddie, 1999, p. 28; Abrahamian, 1982, p. 54; Nashat, 1982, p. 16-17). This observation points to the level of selectivity that is affected by the process of knowledge production and the lack of attention paid to women’s issues in modernist and nationalist discourses. However, as Nashat (2004, p. 14) argues, conflict and tension between Mahd-iUlya and Amir Kabir might have been due to her relative power and influence within the court which, in the opinion of Amir Kabir, was undermining patriarchal relations. She, nevertheless, played an influential role in the ascension of her son to power. In fact, the queen mother was able to preside “over the state council and [to] maintain calm in the capital and nearby provinces”, which enabled her son Nasir al-Din to arrive in Tehran from Tabriz and claim the title of the King (Nashat, 2004, p. 14). Amir Kabir interpreted the queen mother’s relative influence in political affairs as an “intrusion into the male world” (Nashat, 2004, p. 14). In fact, the Irano-Islamic values at this time regarded women and their participation in politics “with suspicion and [were] condemned” (Nashat, 2004, p. 13). In this sense, the uncritical approach to the role of the Queen mother may also be due to the biases expressed in the literature rather than solely due to the sexist values of Iranian-Islamic cultures or the authors of the textbooks.

It is also interesting to note that Amir Kabir’s reforms threatened the position of landlords, courtiers and high-ranking ulama64 in the courts, as well as the judicial and economic spheres, since modernization included a centralization towards more control over the country, the economy, education, security and the tax collection system by the central government (Keddie, 1999; Nashat, 1982). However, in exploring conflicts during this era, the textbooks do not offer any explanations regarding the role of the ulama in opposing Amir Kabir and his reforms (See Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 119; History 8, 2004). The authors of these textbooks also discuss the involvement of foreign powers in the murder of Amir Kabir and attribute it to his anti-colonial attitudes. Students read that had he been permitted to continue his role as prime minister, foreigners could not have achieved their plans: to exploit and to plunder the wealth of the nation of Iran by manipulating internal political divisions and affairs (Social Studies 5, History Section, 1993, p. 162; See also Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 129).

Students read about the political instability that followed the death of Amir Kabir in light of the discourse of bī-īmān (unbeliever, the Baha’is) and bī-ḥījāb (un-veiled or lacking female modesty, a woman’s involvement in the political history of Iran). In other words, the corrupt royal court, headed by a weak incompetent leader who was easily

64 During the Qajar period, the religious leaders were still able to maintain control over religious taxes and “became economically stronger” (Keddie, 1999, p. 17). As a result of their relations with the Bazaar they were also able to exert their political will and force the Qajar government to alter their policies (Keddie, 1999, p. 17).
influenced by a woman, is identified as a puppet of colonial powers who was responsible for the murder of the reform-minded Amir Kabir, whose role in killing the “enemy insider others” as well as his own death by the agents of the West (the king) are celebrated. Islam and the ideal Iranian citizen are constructed as modern, reform oriented and historically opposed to imperialist forces and Western-liberal reactionary elements within Iran.

In addition, the silence about the role of past corrupt governments discriminating against non-dominant minority Iranians, women and non-Iranian people in the narration of nation sanitizes the history of those groups whose demands are considered to undermine the legitimacy of the system. The textbooks demonize the “internal other” and “cleanse” history from any records of discrimination against them. Religion, social class, ethnicity and “race” intersect one another in representing the relationship between the ideal Iranian citizen and other nationalities/minority groups across the world and in Iran. As mentioned, ethnicity is an important criterion in representing the ideal citizen. In the next section, I show how nationality, ethnicity and global Islamic identities are configured in narrating the stories of the nation and representations of the ideal citizen to students in their textbooks by showing how, through Said Jamalel-Din Asadabadi’s life-history, the Islamic Republic is represented as a historical actor in influencing pan-Islamic movements in various parts of the Middle East.

4.3.1.2 Said Jamalel-Din Asadabadi (1839-1897)

In History 8 (2004), Iranian students are introduced to the philosophy of Said Jamalel-Din Asadabadi (1839-1897), known as Afghani. His role in promoting change and the need for reform initiatives in Moslem societies is discussed. Afghani is introduced as an Iranian, who, after studying religion in Iran, continued his education in the Iraqi city of Najaf before traveling to India (History 8, 2004, p. 40-41; See also History 8, 1999, p. 36-39; 2002, p. 36-39). Students read that in India, Afghani urged Indian Moslems to revolt against the British colonialists and he eventually had to leave India because of his opposition to the immense control the British had over Indian political and social structures (History 8, 2004, p. 40-41; See also History 8, 1999, p. 36-39; 2002, p. 36-39). Students are informed that he “settled” in the Ottoman Empire and was later invited to Iran by Nasir al-Din Shah (of the Qajar Dynasty). The authors state that, at first, Afghani assumed he might finally be able to implement his vision of a new

65 According to the Iranian school textbooks, Afghani was in fact born and raised in Iran (See Cleveland, 1994, p. 118). The interesting fact is that the authors’ emphasis on his Iranian identity is presented to be as important as his anti-colonial stance. The fact that he is one of the most important Moslem intellectuals of the time is not questioned in this thesis. Rather the emphasis on his “Iranianness” is considered to be problematic and reflective of the relationship between nationalism and Islam in the context of contemporary Iran.
Islamic society due to the Shah’s openness to reform (History 8, 2004, p. 40-41; See also History 8, 1999, p. 36-39; 2002, p. 36-39). But, students read that he came to the conclusion that the Shah himself was the cause of the nation’s “backwardness” and the main obstacle to reform (History 8, 2004, p. 40-41; See also History 8, 1999, p. 36-39; 2002, p. 36-39). The authors of History 8 conclude this section on Afghani’s life by discussing and re-emphasizing the three main characteristics of his philosophy: unifying the Islamic world against colonialism; combating British colonialism; and protecting Islamic values (History 8, 2004, p. 40-41; See also History 8, 1999, p. 36-39; 2002, p. 36-39).

There are certain omissions in the textbooks about the social and cultural contexts in which Afghani’s ideas took shape. First, the authors explain that because Afghani aimed at uniting Shi’a and Sunni Moslems, he had to conceal his Shi’a religion and Iranian identity from the public (History 8, footnote 1, 2004, p. 40-4; See also History 8, footnote 1, 2002, p. 36-39, 1; 1999, p. 36-39; Keddie, 2003). In fact, Afghani may not have viewed himself in the same way as the Iranian national identity is understood in the post-1911 period and since the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79. Also, there are no references or discussions of the Islamic movements inspired by Afghani’s teaching in other parts of the world, especially since the aims of the Islamic government include the unification of the Ummat-i Islamî (Islamic Nation/Community). It seems that students are informed about Islam and Islamic contributions in so far as it involves Shi’a input. Afghani’s inclusion in the textbooks is a discourse that aims at elevating the position of Iran within the Islamic world. The Islamic roots of the revolutionary elite firmly rooted in the events of the nineteenth century constructs the contemporary Iranian leadership with a rich history of anti-colonial movements that are global in reach. In other words, the Iranian self finds global manifestations in so far as they are Islamic and serve the interest of the ruling elite. In the next section, I review how the leadership during the Constitutional Revolution of 1978-79 is depicted.

4.3.1.3 Ayatollah Nouri

In both History 8 (1999, p. 43) and Social Studies 5 (History Section, 1993, p. 168-169), students read that the Iranian Constitution during the late Qajar era was written based on the ideals and values reflected in the Constitutions of European countries such as Belgium and France. The text in both History 8 (1999, p. 43) and Social Studies 5 (History Section, 1993, p. 168-169) also informed students that it was due to the input and suggestions of
Ayatollah Nouri that a Provision and Supplement were added to the constitution. As Banani points out, this required any laws passed to abide to “a strict conformity with the Shari’ah and [be] approv[ed] [by the] Ulama” (Banani, 1961, p. 17). In fact, students also read that the ulama submitted a list of names that was used by the deputies to select five individuals as members of the “supreme committee” of mujtahid (“title given to the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries” Rejali, 1994, p. 212) in the Majlis (the National Assembly) (Social Studies 5, History Section, 1993, p. 168-169). As Abrahamian also argues, the aim was “to scrutinize all bills introduced into the parliament [in order to] ensure that no law contradicted the Shari’a” (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 90). In addition to the above explanations, students were also informed that the goal of Ayatollah Nouri was to make sure that non-Islamic laws were not going to be passed by the Majlis so that this institution could not be used against Islam by the gharbzade (westtoxicated) and anti-Islamic agitators and intellectuals (Social Studies 5, History Section, 1993, p. 168-169). Nevertheless, at the time, the constitution of Iran and the Constitutional Revolution were reflections of the admiration of Iranians for the West (Banani, 1961, p. 17). Banani (1961, p. 17) argues that the Constitutional Revolution, furthermore, reflected “the fusion of Islamic and Western ideas and institutions” through which Western liberal democratic ideals based on natural laws and natural rights of individuals formed the bases of laws in an Islamic country, without actually separating the “Mosque” from the state. A non-present aspect of this lesson is the fact that students do not read that the basis of the two main sections of the Supplementary Fundamental Laws were “a bill of rights” that bestowed upon the people equality before the law and “protection of life, property, and honour, safeguards from arbitrary arrest, and freedom to publish newspapers and to organize associations” (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 89). The emphasis is not to stigmatize the liberal conceptualization of individual rights in the constitution. Rather, its non-Islamic source is questioned and problematized for students.

In the 2001 edition of the same lesson, the title was changed from “The Beginning of the Constitutional Revolution” to “The Uprising of the People During the Qajar Period”, and students were no longer introduced to details about the Western-centric aspects of the constitution (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2001, p. 123-126). In the 2004 edition (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 121-123), the title of this lesson once again changed to “The Constitutional Revolution”. In this edition, two lessons from 2001 (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2001, p. 123-129) that discussed the changes during and after the Constitutional Revolution leading to the events of World War II and the establishment of the Pahlavi Dynasty in 1925 have been amalgamated into one lesson. Nevertheless, in both the 2001 and 2004 editions, the authors emphasize that the clergy, such as Ayatollah Nouri, played an
important leadership role in the movement (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 121; 2001, p. 126). The 2002 and 2004 editions of History 8 (2004, p. 51; 2002, p. 45-46) also inform students about these events in the same manner as the pre-1999 edition of History 8 and the 1993 edition of Social Studies 5 (History Section). However, the authors have revised the content of the 2004 edition and have excluded details of the events. But the core of the information remains the same. In this sense, “from a whole possible area of past and present, certain meanings and practices are chosen and excluded. Even more crucially, some of these meanings are (re)interpreted, diluted, or put into forms which support or at least do not contradict other elements within the effective dominant culture” (William, as cited in Witty, 1992, p. 279).

For example, in History 8 (2004, p. 46), students are informed that during the late Qajar era, the Iranian constitution was written based on the ideals and values reflected in the constitutions of European countries. Such a negative Western influence, it is stated, resulted in the deviation (inhirāf) of the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 (History 8, 2004, p. 51). Ayatollah Nouri is also constructed as one of the most important leaders of the Constitutional Revolution (1905-1911), whose Islamic leadership qualities guided the nation in its struggles against colonial and istibdādī (“system of absolute and arbitrary rule”) relations (History 8, 2004, p. 51; See also History 8, 2002, p. 46). These oppressive relations and structures are labelled as responsible for the plundering of Iranian wealth. In History 8 (2004, p. 51), students also read that the execution of Ayatollah Nouri after the capital was taken by the constitutionalists was one of the most unfortunate events during this historical time period. The authors conclude that “this great martyr’s analysis and understanding of the events were accurate and correct” since the people of Iran witnessed that the Majlis never passed Islamic laws (History 8, 2002, p. 51). His picture accompanies this lesson and the lesson ends with his remarks in response to a suggestion that he should seek asylum in the Russian embassy: “After seventy years of serving Islam, is it now that I should seek protection under the flag of infidels [and non-believers] (kufr)” (History 8, 2004, p. 51). The love for one’s flag is historicized in the context of the discourse of martyrdom and is expressed through the discourses of “Irān-dāstī” (loving Iran) and Islamic unification that are also presented to students in light of the discourse of the Western other as the dangerous other (See Hall, 1996b for his analysis of the discourse of the West and the rest). However, the important element of this lesson is not the othering of the West, but the emphasis on Ayatollah Nouri’s opposition to the constitutionalists. His actions are discussed in terms of the constitutionalist’s deviation (inhirāf) from Islam and from God (History 8,

The authors re-emphasize that Ayatollah Nouri believed that the leadership of the Constitutional Revolution no longer promoted the interests of Islam. As Abrahamian argues, Ayatollah Nouri criticized the concept of equality as a Western concept and blamed the immorality and ideological problems that Persia was grappling with on the ideas, values and “subversive influences” of individuals such as the “atheist Armenian Malkum” (Abrahamian, 1982, p. 94). He is also labelled as an agent of the West. Imam Khomeini also blamed Ayatollah Nouri’s execution on the role of the Armenians, the Freemasons, foreign agents and their propaganda (See Abrahamian, 1982, p. 94). In fact, Malkum Khan, who is non-present in this lesson (History 8, 2004, p. 51), nevertheless informs its construction. The non-presence of non-Islamic social thinkers in the description of the events of the two revolutions in Iran hides the fact that non-Moslem individuals like Armenian Iranians have also influenced and contributed to the nation’s culture and economy (the same can be said about the contributions of other minority groups such as Jewish Iranians). Such politically and ideologically charged exclusions and inclusions of information become problematic, resulting in a sort of “historical amnesia” in the minds of students.

In constructing Ayatollah Nouri as a martyr of the revolution, there are a number of absent and present groups and individuals who are also excluded and/or constructed in terms of their differences from the ideal Iranian citizen. The opposition of Ayatollah Nouri to public and universal education, especially for girls, is not discussed (See Ettehadieh, 2004, p. 93). Also excluded from the text is that fact that Ayatollah Nouri did not simply oppose the constitutionalists, but he joined the royalist camp by 1907 in order to protect Islam from “heathen” constitutionalists (See Abrahamian, 1982, p. 94). The Constitutional Revolution is constructed in light of the efforts of the ulama who sacrificed their lives for the nation and in the name of Islam. Iran and its history are constructed by references to how the acceptance of Western values were “Islamised” and promoted by the Islamic leadership and the ulama or in contrast, by radical secularists and nationalists leaders and/or agitators and agents of the West. Moreover, in constructing the ideal citizen, both secular and Moslem Iranians are referred to and discussed in informing students about the history of Iran. In the next section, I show how the textbooks present a modern and charismatic image of one of the most important individuals in Iranian textbooks: Imam Khomeini. I argue that from a historical perspective, the textbooks construct an image of the ideal citizen that is virtuous not only in religious and moral aspects, but also in social and economic terms.

Interestingly enough, Ayatollah Nouri cooperated with individuals such as Afghani while Afghani was in Paris and also contributed to Malkum’s newspaper, Qanon (Law).
4.3.1.4 Imam Khomeini

In a lesson titled “Independence, Freedom and Islamic Republic” in Social Studies 5 (2004), the authors state that these were the basic demands of the Iranian people during the revolution (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 132; See also Social Studies 8, 2004, p. 23-29). The Iranian nation-state is again compared to one’s home that needs to be protected from “interference by foreign enemies”. Students read that Iran needs to be developed in order to obstruct “foreign penetration inside the country to plunder [Iran’s] wealth” (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 132; See also Social Studies 8, 2004, p. 23-29). Students are informed that it was under the leadership of Imam Khomeini that Iran (also referred to in the textbooks as “our land”) achieved independence and the administration of Iran was transferred to its people (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 133). In fact, Imam Khomeini is canonized as the leader of the Islamic Republic who was chosen by consensus to lead the Islamic uprising through political, cultural and armed resistance (History 8, 2004, p. 90; See also History 8, 1999, p. 86; 2002, p. 90).

In contrast to how Imam Khomeini and the Islamic Revolution are represented, the last shah of the Pahlavi dynasty is constructed as the gendarme of the Middle East who created an environment of fear that aimed at preventing the people from participating in popular forms of resistance (History 8, 2004, p. 81; See also History 8, 1999, p. 75; 2002, p. 81). The shah’s government is also constructed as being fearful of the people’s demands for freedom and independence. For this reason, the Iranian people were denied participation in the administration of the country by the Shah’s government (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 133). The role of the student movement during the Revolution of 1978-79 both outside Iran (in the West) and inside the country is also explored. The lesson also states that since the revolution, people can now participate in the management of their country by selecting their representatives as they take part in the electoral process and they can express their visions and views to elected officials (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 134; See also Social Studies 8, 2004, p. 54-69). Students are informed that Iranians now have the legal right to criticize those officials who, as representatives of the people, are deemed non-responsive and non-attentive to their roles and functions and to the demands and voices of the masses (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 134; See also Social Studies 8, 2004, p. 54-69).

In these discussions about the revolution and the previous regime, the main aim of the authors is the legitimization of the Islamic leadership. This is achieved by situating the roots of the revolution in the events leading
to the uprising of the people during the month of Moharram in 1963 in the city of Qom. This uprising, students read, was organized due to the leadership of Imam Khomeini, in opposition to the involvement and interference (dakhkhālat) of the United States and the state of Israel in the internal affairs of the country (Social Studies 5, History Section, 2004, p. 127). In fact, students are told that it was due to “the order and decree (farmān) of Imam Khomeini [that] the people united (basīj shūdand) against the [government] (niżām-i) of the Shah, but the Shah ordered the murder of innocent (bī-gunāh) people” (Social Studies 5, 2004, p. 127-128; See also Social Studies 5, 1993, p. 184; 2001, p. 134). 68 Students are also informed that prior to the death of Ayatollah Boroujerdi in the early 1960s, Imam Khomeini openly opposed the Shah’s regime. However, according to some sources, this is not the case. It has been suggested that Imam Khomeini entered politics in 1963 and before this, he was a “quietist” and he did not promote the overthrow of the monarchy (Keddie, 1981, p. 158; Abrahamian, 1982, p. 426).

The events of 1963 are also discussed in Social Studies 3 (2004), in a lesson entitled “the City of Qom”. Students read that Qom “is considered as very important for the nation of Iran and other Moslems” (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 21; See also Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 24). 69 The authors state that,

In this city, there are a number of great madrasa (religious schools), where religious students (talabah, tullāb) study. Imam Khomeini also taught religious and moral (akhlāq) studies to the religious students in this city. In [1963], the ulama and the people of Qom, by following (payravī) [the leadership of] Imam Khomeini, fought the Shah, the oppressor (sitamgār). (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 21-22; See also Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 24-25) 70

For this reason, students read that the city of Qom is also known as the city of “blood and uprising” (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 22; 2000, p. 25-26). 71 In fact, since the early 1980s, the city of Qom has also been an important site of

68 In the 1993 edition, the events are explained in a slightly different way: “Since [1963] the people’s uprising with the leadership of Imam Khomeini took a new form and the foundation of the Islamic Revolution began (shurū’ shud). During the month of Muharrim, which coincided with the height of religious sentiments (iḥsāsāt), the whole country united (basīj shud) against the [government] of the Shah. But the Shah, by orders of his foreign masters, instructed the murder of innocent people”. In the 2004 (127-128) edition the authors state that, “Since [1963], the uprising of the Iranian people with the leadership of Imam Khomeini began during the month of Muharrim. His Excellency (Hagrat-i) Imam invited the people to express their discontent with the policies of the Shah, the United States and Israel but the Shah’s agents began to crush (sarkub kanand) the people”.

69 The text in the 2000 (24) edition states that people of “other Islamic countries” (which has been replaced by other Moslems) also consider the city of Qom an important centre.

70 The text in the 2000 edition is more elaborate. The authors state, “In this city there are a number of schools in which ustādān [masters, professors] and religious scientists teach talabah [religious students]. As of now, thousands of youth of our country and of other Islamic countries are studying in these schools. Many of the ulama and great masters of our religion live in the city of Qom” (2000, p. 24).

71 The text in the 2000 edition refers to the Shah’s government as a tyrannical state, not simply as the oppressor (sitamgār). The people of Qom did not only resist the Shah but they insurrected against him. The text also uses the
resistance against the Islamic regime by those “oppositional” Ayatollahs who teach in the madrasa and question the legitimacy of the Islamic leadership (See Menashri, 2001, p. 22-32). This important contemporary characteristic of this city is set aside in favour of a historical (re)construction that epitomizes Imam Khomeini as the leader and the city of Qom as the centre of the Islamic world. Qom epitomizes the power of the revolutionary movement in Iran and elevates Iran as the centre of Islamic learning. However, it is important to note that the city of Qom and its religious schools are only significant to Shi’a Moslems. By constructing the city of Qom as an international Islamic centre, the Islamic Republic is also portrayed as a transnational site of struggle that functions as an important historical-geo-political space that situates the ideal citizen in relation to Iran’s leadership, to other Islamic and regional countries and to the West (i.e.: the United States and the state of Israel). This situating of the ideal citizen through the signification of the establishment of the Islamic Republic and Iran’s geographical territories also requires the exclusion of the histories of certain groups within Iran from the narration of nation.

In History 8 (2004), students are (re)introduced to the political and social events and factors and their effects since the establishment of the Qajar period in more detail. Students (re)read about the events of 1963. The opposition of Ayatollah Khomeini is not only portrayed in relation to Western countries, but it is also constructed in relation to women and minority groups within Iran. The authors state that the Shah introduced “a new decree for local councils in October 1962, which allowed women to vote in their elections” (History 8, 2004, p. 72; See also History 8, 2002, p. 72; Esfandiari, 2004, p. 138). Students read that through the Shah’s “White Revolution”, the aims of the United States were to subdue local social movements and agitations, which would have ultimately undermined American interests in the region, and to ensure a market for American industrial goods (History 8, 2004, p. 72; See also History 8, 2002, p. 72). The agents of the West are blamed for altering the laws of Iran and for allowing non-Moslems and women the right to vote. This law and its consequences are portrayed as attacks on Islam and Iran and as a hegemonic tool to depict the Shah’s government as an unjust state in the minds of the population. In reference to voting rights, students also read that, “It is obvious that in Iranian society of the time, even men did not have the real right to vote, in fact, the Shah wanted to deceive {fārīb} women and the public” (History 8, 2004, p. 72; See also History 8, 2002, p. 73). Such a construction reflects Imam Khomeini’s comments about this issue at the time (See also Al-e Ahmad, 1982, p. 80). Imam Khomeini argued that,

word sacrifice (fudākārī) when referring to the contributions of the ulama and the people of Qom (2000, p. 26). The central message, however, is not altered in the 2004 edition.

72 The divisions between Shi’a and other Moslems are not overtly emphasized in the social studies textbooks.
We do not object to women’s progress. We are against this prostitution. Do men in this country have freedom, that women should have it? (as cited in Esfandiari, 2004, p. 138)

He also maintained that,

Is progress achieved by sending four women to the Majlis [the National Assembly]? Have the men … brought you progress so that your women should bring progress? We say sending these [women] to these centres is nothing but corruption. (as cited in Esfandiari, 2004, p. 138)

The authors’ inclusion of Imam Khomeini’s views legitimizes the authors’ critique of “granting freedom to women” at the same time as it requires it. Women’s issues are relegated to the margins of societal concerns in a nationalistic discourse that portrays it as an element of gharbzadegi (west-toxication), thus, foreign to Iran and not supported by the majority of the population (See Esfandiari, 2004, p. 138). Discussions of women or issues that concern them are reflected upon from a revolutionary and androcentric perspective. The social studies and history textbooks, for example, do not mention any positive contributions to women’s conditions due to the introduction of the Family Protection Law, which was introduced during the Pahlavi era.

More important, the role of women in demanding more freedom and improved legal protection against Islamic, traditional and androcentric customs and mores is also overlooked. Rather, the authors emphasize that such decrees to extend voting to women also allowed individuals of non-Moslem backgrounds to take an oath (saugand) on any holy book and not solely on the Quran (History 8, 2004, p. 72; See also History 8, 2002, p. 73; See also Esfandiari, 1997, p. 27).

In fact, as Esfandiari (1997, p. 27) points out, the opposition of the clergy to this law also stemmed from their resistance to any law that distinguished between Moslems and non-Moslems, especially the Baha’i people. It can be stated that these patriarchal and Islamic-centric views of both women and minority groups in constructing the leadership as male, Persian and Shi’a are important elements in constructing the ideal citizen throughout the curriculum.

Despite such paternalistic and ethno- and religious-centric approaches to depicting historical events, the establishment of the Islamic Republic is legitimized by the fact that the Iranian people, as God loving individuals, voted for the republic with an overwhelming majority, over 98 percent (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 134). The establishment of the Islamic Republic is depicted as the end result of rational decisions made by modern revolutionary Shi’a Moslems. In fact, the authors restate that the main characteristic of the Islamic Republic is the belief in God (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 135). Students read that,

73 It is stated that “Khomeini was the first marja’-i taqlīd [the source of emulation] who opposed these measures”, which reflected the animosity of the state and the elite towards Islam (History 8, 2004, p. 72).
God is the creator of all creatures \( \text{majūdāt} \) and humans must obey [God] \( \{az\ 'ū itā'at kunand\} \). God’s commands [decrees] \( \{dastūr\} \) and laws [are communicated to] humans through the Prophets. The Prophet is the leader of society and obedience \( \{iṭā'ar\} \) to [the Prophet] is obedience to God. After the Prophet, the leadership of the Islamic society is the responsibility of religious leaders [those who know religion] \( \{Pīshvā yan-i dīnī\} \). In our time, the leader of the Islamic society has this responsibility. A government \( \{hūkūmat\} \) in which Islamic laws are observed and its leadership is in the hands of a person who is [knowledgeable about] Islam is called the government \( \{hūkūmat\} \) of the Islamic Republic. (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 135)

Furthermore, in another lesson entitled, “Leadership”, the constitution is compared to a plan, blueprint and design that can assist an Islamic society in achieving its goals and ideals (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 140). Students read that an Islamic society requires a leader and this leader must be a pious person. He is the ideal perfect Moslem. He must be knowledgeable \( \{'alam\} \) and fair \( \{'ādīl\} \), must follow the commands of Islam in all matters and must be aware of the state of affairs of society in order to lead and direct it in the most effective way (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 140). The leader must be a well-deserving and qualified \( \{shāyistah\} \) individual (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 140). The authors conclude this lesson by stating that the Iranian Islamic Revolution of 1978-79 was victorious due to three main factors: its base belief \( \{i'mān\} \) in God, the leadership of Imam Khomeini and the unity of the people. Students read that after the death \( \{riḥlat\} \) of Imam Khomeini in 1989, Ḥazarat-i Ayatollah Khamenei was chosen as the leader of the Iranian Islamic Revolution and took over the leadership of the Islamic country of Iran (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 140-141; See also Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 33; 2000, p. 43). In fact, the love for both supreme leaders of Iran is expressed throughout the textbooks. For example, in Social Studies 3, in a lesson named after a cemetery in Tehran where many martyrs of the revolution and the war are buried and where Imam Khomeini’s grave is also located, Mr. Hashemi says to his children, “It is regrettable \( \{afsūs\} \) that Imam is no longer among us. But we are pleased that the people of Iran are continuing on the path of Imam Khomeini with the leadership of Ayatollah Khamenei” (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 33).74 This representation of the Iranian leadership and the role of the state takes shape in light of a discourse of the West that identifies it as pathological (See Social Studies 6, 1999). For example, in the 1993 edition of Social Studies 5 (180), the United States was constructed as “the Great Satan” who supported the Shah’s government. Although this term has been omitted from subsequent editions of Social Studies 5 (2004, p. 124-126; See also Social Studies 5, 2001, p. 132), it is still employed in History 8 (2004, p. 81; See also History 8, 1999, p. 76, 2002, p. 81).

74 This statement is a new addition and was not included as part of the text in the 2000 edition.
A powerful analogy is used in the textbooks that compares colonialism and imperialism to a burglar (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 133). By reference to a thief “invading” one’s home, this lesson discusses the responsibility and duty to protect one’s house (nation) against aliens (bigānagān). The central ideological message in this text is that Iranian people have shared many hardships in order to defend their Islamic revolution. This idea is reinforced by considering the role of the West as colonial, hegemonic and exploitive. For example, in History 8 (2004, p. 85; See also History 8, 1999, p. 81; 2002, p. 85), the human rights policies of the Carter administration are referred to as examples of American propaganda that promoted vague and superficial forms of freedom in countries that were dominated by the United States, including the Shah’s government. The authors expand by stating that this American propaganda reduced the possibility of actual authentic uprisings that could have formed in certain regions around the world. Students again read that the Shah depleted Iran’s God-given wealth and supported and protected American interests in the Persian Gulf (History 8, 2004, p. 85; See also History 8, 1999, p. 81; 2002, p. 85).

The discourse of leadership is based on the invocation of the idea of “Iran”, symbolized as one’s home that needs to be protected from the influences of foreigners (the discourse of enemy outsider) and their attempts to plunder its wealth and resources (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 133). The Islamic revolutionary period and the establishment of the Islamic Republic also signify the Iranian nation’s control over the administration of the country. The role of Iranians is to secure their revolution and independence by avoiding waste (the discourse of isrāf [wasting]) and by becoming prudent, parsimonious and economical consumers (the discourse of šarfa-jāb [conservation]). Students are informed that there is a sense of general consensus and agreement among the population that Islamic laws must inform private/public relations. The idea of freedom is conceptualized within the limits and confinements of Islamic law, which behaves as a non-presence. Freedom is contingent on the interpretation of the Quran and the Iranian Constitution by the Supreme Leader of Iran, who is, by definition, male and religiously learned. In general, the references to Afghani as Iranian and Shi’ā and to other important male reformers and revolutionary ulama are ideological inclusions by the authors to situate the role of Iranians in the affairs of Moslems of the world and to show the continuity of Iranian involvement in the Islamic world and in Middle Eastern history since the advent of modernity and anti-colonial movements. The Islamic Republic is reincarnated as the protector of Islam and of Iranians in light of its imagined role as a major player in implementing modernization policies and in introducing reforms since the Qajar period. Membership in “insider” and “outsider”
categories are not fixed, but they are constructed in the context of the interactions between modernity and Islam/Iran, from the perspective of the Iranian elite. The discourse of leadership becomes an important aspect of the narration of nation and in relating the ideal citizen to national and regional identities.

The constitution of the Islamic Republic is depicted as in accordance with Shari’ah laws and the will of God. The textbooks seem to argue that the policies implemented and decisions made during the Constitutional Revolution that were wrong and detrimental to the country have now been corrected through the legacy of the efforts of individuals such as Ayatollah Nouri and Imam Khomeini. This celebration of the clergy as the true followers of Islam and as leaders of the nation of Iran is epitomized for students in their textbooks in the status of the \textit{vali-e faqih}, held by \textit{Hazarat-i} (excellency), Ayatollah Khamenei. In this context, it can be stipulated that dissention is construed as undermining the will and efforts of the nation, the leader and thus, the commands of God.

\section*{4.3.2 Ummat-i Islami (Islamic Community/Nation)}

My data and analysis shows that the category “relations with the West and the East” plays an important role in narrating the histories and geographical characteristics of Moslems nations and populations in relation to Iran and to the elites of the Islamic Republic of Iran. In constructing the narration of nation and the ideal citizen, on one hand, the West is despised. On the other hand, the West is symbolized as the site of resistance and as an influential factor in the overthrow of the Shah’s government. The West, due to its scientific level of progress, is also seen as a model of modernization and progress that should be emulated (See below). Students are informed that the imperialist powers have undermined the interests of the Iranian people and promoted their own political and economic well-beings. However, this emphasis on the West as the “source” of Iran’s past problems is not contextualized in a discussion of global capitalism as the “cause” of structural inequalities in present day Iran or across the world. As shown, racial, religious or cultural/linguistic groups within the West are also differentially related to Iran and the ideal citizen.

Like multiple images of the West that are employed in narrating the history of the nation, various images and examples of Ummat-i Islami (Islamic Nation/Community) are also employed in Iranian school textbooks. In the next section, I offer data that shows how Afghanistan, as an Islamic nation, is depicted differently in different editions of Iranian school textbooks due to political and regime changes in Afghanistan that affect how the Afghan
other is situated in relation to the ideal Iranian/global citizen in the textbooks. In other words, in the following two sections, I explore how various present and non-present “shifting collectivities” are employed in representations of the ideal citizen.

4.3.2.1 Afghanistan and the Afghan Other

In Social Studies 5, Afghanistan is discussed and referred to as an example of the *Ummat-i Islam* due to the fact that it is also a neighbouring country of Iran. In the 1993 edition of *Social Studies 5* (History Section, 57-62), the authors outlined Afghanistan’s geography in terms of urban-rural divisions by references to the types of goods produced in each area for consumption. The authors also stated that Afghanistan was occupied by the Soviet Union. According to the text, the Afghani people opposed and resisted this invasion and questioned the legitimacy of the government put in power by the Soviet Union (*Social Studies 5*, History Section, 57-62). Students read that the Moslem population of Afghanistan defeated the foreign occupying forces and overthrew their puppet government and the Moslem *Mujāhidīn* took over the leadership (*Social Studies 5*, 1993, p. 62). The accompanying picture was of an armed *Mujāhidīn* group praying to God. In the 2001 edition of *Social Studies 5* (Geography Section, 2001, p. 44-47), once the Taliban had taken over the power structure and relations between Iran and Afghanistan became unfriendly, Afghan’s political struggle against tyranny was no longer mentioned. In the 2004 edition, the textbook’s authors write that,

> In 1978, the ex-Soviet government occupied this country [Afghanistan]. After years of struggle, the Afghan people were able to expel the occupiers from their soil [land], but due to internal wars and the [policies of] the oppressive [cruel] Taliban government, [Afghanistan has faced underdevelopment]. In 2002, the government of the United States attacked Afghanistan and occupied [this country]. (*Social Studies 5*, Geography Section, 2004, p. 53)

In the short period of time between 1993 and 2004, the image of Afghanistan and of Afghani people in the textbooks has partly changed due to the changing nature of global/regional political and socio-economic relations and events. In dealing with the political changes in Afghanistan, the authors distinguish between the past and present Afghan governments based on their political relations with the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Various constructions of the government of Afghanistan are represented that are all based on an Iranian ideological perspective that distinguishes between Moslem countries and categorize them into camps of “good” and “bad”. The Iranian version of an Islamic government is portrayed as more democratic and open than the current government of Afghanistan or the Taliban leadership. Islam, then, is again further divided based on relations of Moslem nations and
governments with Western and Eastern European countries, specifically the United States and Russia. The important point to note is that in describing Western imperialist policies, the authors make the distinction between the American nation and the actions of the government of the United States.

This lesson and other similar lessons on the neighbouring countries of Iran can be considered as some of the few attempts to discuss post-1988 historical events in the region or in Iran (Social Studies 5, 2004). In fact, my analysis shows that despite the rhetorical emphasis on Islamic countries around the world, only Asian and European countries neighbouring Iran are discussed and presented to students as topics of lessons in Social Studies 5 (Geography Section, 2004, p. 27-58). In a lesson on Iraq, for example, only one sentence is dedicated to the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein and the invasion of Iraq by the United States (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 2004, p. 46-49). The textbooks do not mention the attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. Also, there are no discussions regarding the events in Iraq since the U.S. invasion and the role of international capital in human rights violations in that country (See Klein, 2005).

In constructing the ideal citizen, the authors of the textbooks are selective in terms of their inclusion of information about other countries, examples of acts of violence and good and bad governments. The inclusion and exclusion of Afghan resistance is a political tool in manipulating the concept of Ummat-i Islami (Islamic Nation/Community) when it is desirable and feasible and when it is politically alienating. In such lessons, the non-present discourse that partly defines the limits of the ideal citizen is the deep division within the Islamic world that also determines and dictates how the Iranian elite relate to Afghanistan. But these divisions within the Islamic world are not the topic of discussion and are not considered as intrinsic to Eastern societies. The division between Moslems is mediated by invoking the discourse of the West/East and its many manifestations as the “external/internal enemy other”. As the data shows, one image of the Afghan other that has remained constant is how they are portrayed in the 2004 edition when discussing Mongol and Afghan attacks on Iran. This construction is described by references to negative adjectives that dehumanize the historical other. It is through the invocation of ideological/religious distinctions between the “friendly outsider other” and the “enemy outsider other” that the textbooks hierarchize Moslems in order to place Iran at the apex of this pyramid. The Afghan other speaks Persian and is a Moslem; in addition, the Afghan leadership undermines the aspirations of the Iranian global leadership. Although there are many Afghan refugees in Iran, the textbooks do not reference them. In other words, in depicting the Afghan other, the multiplicity of the Afghan identity is ignored and homogenized constructions of the Afghan
leadership are used as a political tool in raising the status of the ideal Iranian citizen. Unlike the Afghan refugees, the Palestinian Moslem refugees and their concerns are configured in the narration of the Iranian nation and the ideal citizen as the authors present narratives about Palestinian people to students in their textbooks. These narrations remain a central component of defining the Islamic Republic and the responsibilities of the ideal citizen to his or her Moslem brothers and sisters.

4.3.2.2 Palestine and the Israeli Other

As mentioned, in Social Studies 4, students read that one of the roles of the Iranian leadership is to protect the rights of the oppressed (Moslem) nations. One of these oppressed nations is conceptualized as “occupied Palestine” (*falasfīn-i ashghalī*). In a lesson titled “A Letter from a Palestinian Child” in the 1993 edition of *Persian 2* (100-102), the authors wrote,

> I am a Palestinian child. We Palestinian children are Moslems. The name of our country is Palestine. The enemy has invaded our country and homes … Since the victory of your Islamic revolution, with the leadership of Imam Khomeini, the enemy has been really scared [terrified]. For this reason they torture 
> {shikanjah} us more. Our enemy is Israel. Israel is the enemy of all free-minded [liberal] {āzādah} people. We will fight Israel until our last breath.

This letter concludes by stating that Palestinians know that, with the help of God and the Iranian people, they will return to their homes. Despite the fact that this lesson is omitted from the 2004 edition of grade two Persian, a similar lesson is included in *Persian 3*. In this textbook (*Persian 3*, 2004, p. 112-113), in a lesson entitled, “Palestinian Teacher”, students read about the “Intifada movement” and the youth involvement in this uprising. The lesson ends with the following sentence: “At that moment, the Israeli officer hit Mohammad’s head [a three year old boy] with the bottom of his gun and Mohammad’s warm blood squirted [sprayed] on the hands of [his six year old brother]” (*Persian 3*, 2004, p. 113). This six year old boy is depicted as a brave “teacher” since his actions are constructed as an example of a self-sacrificing individual (fadākār). The fact that this boy resisted the “enemy other” and was willing to offer his life for the nation of Palestine (Islam) makes him a great source of emulation, just like those Iranian youth who volunteered for the Iran-Iraq War and died for Iran. The state of Israel is constructed as an oppressive regime that does not adhere to the Universal Rights of Children by undermining the safety of the
“innocent ones”. The enemy other of Iran and Palestine is conceptualized as the state of Israel, not the Jewish people or the Jewish faith. Such a politically charged construction of the state of Israel as the “enemy other” is reinforced in Social Studies 3 (2004, p. 57; 2000, p. 75-76). Students read that, “God willing, there will be the day that all Moslems will unite to free Palestine and to free Qouds [an important holy mosque in Jerusalem] from the enemies of Islam” (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 57; See also Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 75-76). As such, the discourse of Palestine legitimizes the Islamic Republic’s symbolic claim to the city of Jerusalem and the Quods Mosque as an important source of pan-Islamic identity for Iranians (it is interesting to note that a segment of the revolutionary guard is named the Quods forces, comprised of 5,000 to 10,000 men, See Cordesman & Hashim, 1997, p. 217). As mentioned, in the drawings and pictures of war and military exercises in the textbooks, mosques are dominant features of the city or the town depicted. In this way, the Iranian army has a symbolic regional mission, not as an occupying force, but as a liberating Islamic army.

This important political message is also repeated in Social Studies 6, in a lesson titled “What is the role of family in our life?” (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 17). Students read that some children have lost their parents due to the effects of natural disasters such as earthquakes. The authors also write that,

… Many of your brothers and sisters in occupied Palestine have lost their fathers, mothers and other members of their families due to the savagery of the soldiers of the cruel and oppressive {žalim} and oppressor {sitamgār} regime of occupied Palestine [falastīn-i asghālī]. They, with the help and support of {bāyārī} other Moslems, try (mīkushand) to take revenge against the rapists {tajūvāz-kaunandīghan} on behalf of themselves and their families. (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 17)

As mentioned, in both past and present editions, the state of Israel is constructed as the dangerous other and enemy of all freedom-loving citizens of the world due to its treatment of Arab Palestinians. The state of Israel is constructed and reproduced as a non-democratic state that terrorizes innocent children and women. At the same time, the othering of the state of Israel is a discourse that describes the philosophy and ideology of Ayatollah Khomeini’s views and the policies of the central government in regards to Palestine. As the data supports, the position of the Palestinian other, as the “friendly Arab other”, is elevated in constructing the ideal Iranian citizen due to his/her relations with the state of Israel. The Palestinian other has also been discriminated against in other Arab countries since the “settlement” of the region by Jewish immigrants, a history that the textbooks do not include. Moreover, only the Palestinian Moslem other is considered as a member of the Islamic Nation (family). Non-Moslem

75 It should be reminded that the discourses of martyrdom, sacrifice and fadākārī are central to the construction of the ideal citizen. These are also the characteristics of the leader. As such, students can only achieve partial status of the ideal citizen since the desired ideal citizen must also be a religiously learned member of the clergy.
Palestinians are excluded from these discussions. In contradistinction, Jewish Iranians, who could be considered as members of another family (Jewish Israeli), are inevitably depicted in the textbooks as the enemies of freedom due to the depiction of the state of Israel as the enemy of all people. Such a lack of inclusion of Jewish (and other ethno-religious) ancestry as part of the definition of Iran is also due to the Aryan bias in the narration of nation, which functions as a non-present discourse. The Aryan thesis is also an important trace that hides the transnational characteristics of Iranian ethnic and religious minorities and communities. Jewish Iranians, by not being represented in the textbooks as essential components of the ideal citizen, are also depicted in light of the category “invisible enemy insiders”. However, students are also told that all those living in Iran are members of the nation and are its citizens. Ironically, it is because of their love for Iran, Moslems, Islam and freedom that students must take revenge on the enemies of free-loving people. This contradiction sheds light on how various representations that relate Iran to a set of other “shifting collectivities” reproduce a coherent image of Iran, as a concerned Moslem nation.

The othering of both the state of Israel and Palestine also informed another lesson in the 1999 edition of Geography 8, entitled “Human Geography”, in which the authors discussed migration patterns and “Races and Languages” (Geography 8, 1999, p. 71-72). In one of the subsections entitled, “Natural Characteristics Differentiate between Races”, the authors stated that globalization (jahāngashāh), insurgencies and emigration (muhājarat) have played important roles in the settlement of populations in all continents (Geography 8, 1999, p. 71). Students read that, at times, emigration is forced upon people (ijbārī), such as the migration of “black skins” from Africa to America (Geography 8, 1999, p. 71). In the 2002 and 2004 editions76 of Geography 8, this section was revised by eliminating discussions about “race”, language and natural differences between humans. In the 2002 and 2004 editions, the reference to black slaves brought to North America as an example of forced migration was omitted and was replaced by the migration of Palestinians as a result of the occupation of their country by an outside force and the migration of people from Bosnian-Herzegovina due to the effects of war with Serbian forces as examples (2002, p. 73-75; 2004, p. 73-75). The ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes) of Iran and seasonal workers are also referred to as representing non-permanent (muvaqqat) migration. In both versions of this lesson in Geography 8 (2004, 2002), ethnic, class and political differences remain important aspects of constructing how the ideal Iranian citizen is related to various forms of otherness, dividing between us and them categories, between “friendly outsiders-within”

76 In comparison to the 2002 edition, the 2004 editions has also been revised. However, the revisions are only to the “activity section” accompanying this lesson.
and “dangerous/enemy others”. However, again, Iranian tribal groups are employed as representations of how people/groups move within Iran without accounting for how their movements have been affected by the economic, political and cultural policies of the central government (See Keddie, 1995, p. 127-153), as students also read that the Iranian state has been providing the ‘ashayir with many services due to the economic policies of the Islamic government. Students are introduced to how Western and non-Moslem states have historically and at the present time treated Moslems across the world, by focusing on the forced migration of Moslems due to attacks by Jewish and Christian states, which is contrasted to how Iran treats “its” tribal non-Persian people. In addition to Western influences and interventions as a criteria of difference that aim to undermine the Islamic Republic, the dichotomy “Islamic/non-Islamic” plays an important role in defining a peaceful image of the ideal citizen. The two enforce an idealized image of the Iranian self in relation to both its adversaries and friends.

Such an idealized image is devoid of difference and power-conflicts since the revolution is further re-emphasized in light of the discussion of the family as a social unit. In fact, Afghanistan, Palestine, Ummat-i Islamî and Iran are often compared to one’s family. Yet, as mentioned, the family analogy in such examples is confined by national boundaries and religious differences. In the next section, I explore how categories of difference and relations of power are represented in discussions about the ideal family structure and relations in Iran. I show how the ideal family, as a microcosm for Iranian society, is presented to students in light of patriarchal class relations that dictate the limits of citizens’ political rights and obligations in the family and in the larger society. The global ideals of Iranians that are expressed in the textbooks also find reflections in lessons about the micro-private sphere of the family and vice versa.

4.3.3 The Patriarchal Family and the Construction of the Ideal Citizen

In Iran, like many other countries, the family plays important social, moral, economic and political roles in society and its functions are related and influenced by government policies and the economic structure. In Social Studies 4 (Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 108-133), the roles of and obligations towards the family, schools, rural settlements, the mosque, the state and Ummat-i Islamî (Islamic Nation/Community) are explored by references to Islam, the revolution, the economy, industrial goods, the constitution, Iran as a nation-state, the Iranian new year and the Persian language. In the 1994 edition of Social Studies 4 (Civic Studies section, 1994, p. 131), society was defined as a collection of people who have lived together for a long time and who have a common goal. In the 2004 edition
of Social Studies 4 (Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 108-133), the authors include the school, the mosque, city, nation and the Islamic community (Ummat-i Islami) as important social units, which function to strengthen social relations within the community. In this sense, the Islamic community includes a micro manifestation in the form of the family within the national setting with a global Islamic identity. It is in this light that I explore how the ideal citizen finds expressions in discussions about family relations in Iranian school textbooks. The family, as a concept, is explored in detail through the travels of the Hashemi family. In Social Studies 3 (2004), this family is introduced in a lesson entitled, “The Hashemi Family”. In this section, I present data and analyze the texts for how the family and family relations have been constructed in Social Studies 3 and 4 as instrumental tools in constructing ideal images of Moslem families that are then used as tools of categorizing students into “insider-friendly” and “insider-enemy” categories and divisions.

One of the noticeable differences between the 2004 edition of the elementary and guidance textbooks and previous editions is how the family is represented in the pictures and drawings, especially in Persian 1, 2 and 3 and Social Studies 3 and 4. In fact, in the 2004 edition of Social Studies 3, in a lesson that introduces the Hashemi family to students, a number of sentences present in the 2000 edition are omitted (the underlined sentences in the following excerpts are omitted) and a few statements have been added (identified in bold). In 2000, students read that,

Ali Hashemi is a third grade student. Ali has a sister who is one year younger than him and studies in grade two. [Her] name is Maryam. Ali is the child \textit{farzand} of Mr. Mahmood Hashemi. Mr. Hashemi works in the city of Kazeron’s post office. Mrs. Tahereh, Ali’s mother, is a housewife. Mr. Hashemi’s mother, who is the grandmother of the children, also lives with them.

Ali’s dad and mom are kind to one another \textit{mihrabān hastand} and like their children very much. Ali and Maryam also care \textit{dāst dārand} for each other very much. They also like their dad, mom and grandmother. The grandmother is caring to all, and she especially treats the children very kindly. Mr. Hashemi also respects his mother very much.

In the home of Mr. Hashemi, everyone helps one another \textit{in accomplishing tasks} \textit{kārha}. When Mr. Hashemi returns from the office, he shops for the house. Mrs. Tahereh, in addition to housework also sews \textit{libās mūāḍad}. She is a good seamstress and she spends the money she earns from sewing for household expenses. The grandmother also helps Mrs. Tahereh by cooking food and cleaning herbs and sometimes she knits socks and warm clothing for the children.

Ali buys bread and heating oil \textit{nāft} for the house. He is interested in agriculture. Ali has planted herbs in the small garden in the yard and meticulously waters it. Maryam also helps her mother with housework. Maryam likes to learn how to cook food and to sew from her mother. In the future, she wants to become a teacher.

Ali’s family has a simple life. Their home has two rooms and a small yard. During the night, Ali and Maryam sleep with their grandmother in one room. The grandmother tells them sweet tales (Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 1-3).

In 2004, students are informed that,

Ali Hashemi is a third grade student. \textbf{Ali has a sister who is two years older than him and studies in grade five. Her name is Maryam. Ali and Maryam are the children of Mr. Mahmood Hashemi. Mr.}
Hashemi is an office employee \( \text{kārmānd} \) of the Kazeron’s post office. Mrs. Tahereh, the mother of Ali and Maryam, is a housewife. Mr. Hashemi’s mother, who is the grandmother of the children, also lives with them.

Ali’s dad and mom are kind to one another \( \text{mihrabān hastand} \) and like their children very much. The members of the Hashemi family like each other \( \text{dāšt dārānd} \) and respect one another. The grandmother is caring to all, and she especially treats the children very kindly.

In this family, everyone helps one another [in accomplishing tasks] \( \text{kārha} \). When Mr. Hashemi returns from the office, he shops for the house. Mrs. Tahereh, in addition to housework, also sews \( \text{libāś mīdūzad} \) and [she] spends the money she earns from sewing on household expenses. The grandmother also helps Mrs. Tahereh by cooking food and [washing] herbs and sometimes she knits socks and warm clothing for the children and tells them sweet tales. (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 1-2)

The concept of the family is also explored in Social Studies 4 and 6. In the 1994 edition of Social Studies 4, in a lesson titled “Family” (Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 1994), students read that,

The family is the first and smallest society in which we live. A family begins with the marriage between a man and a woman. With the birth of children, the number of family members increases and its base becomes stronger. The existence of children in the family brings joy and happiness.

Some families are [few in number] and only consist of a father, mother and their children. But, in some other families, in addition to the father, mother and children, the grandfather and grandmother also live with them.

Father and mother provide food, clothing and living quarters \( \text{maskan} \) for the child and take care of [his/her] health and in case of sickness, take [him/her] to the doctor. When the children reach the age of schooling, father and mother send their kids to school to study. Father and mother educate \( \text{garbīyat} \) their children so that they will become valuable and responsible \( \text{vazīfhīnas} \)

In the family environment, children are familiarized with religious deeds \( \text{’amāl} \), with respect for father and mother, and learn good morals \( \text{akhlāq-i nīk} \) [from their parents]. Children [who have the benefit of caring and moral families] will be useful and responsible individuals.

The religion of Islam pays important attention to the family. In Islam, it is advised that people and especially the families that are related to one another have relationships and inquire about [each other’s well being]. (p. 134)

In the 2004 edition of this lesson (“Family”, Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section), students are informed that,

Each of us is a member of a family. How does a family form?

A family is [the end result] of marriage between a man and a woman. With the birth of children the number of family members increases. The existence of a child brings joy to family life. In some families, grandfathers and grandmothers also live with the father, mother and their children.

In order to continue one’s life \( \text{zindagī} \) we need variety of things. The family plays an important role in satisfying our needs. In your families, who satisfies the needs of other family members?

Father and mother provide us with food, clothing and living quarters. They take care of us and [when sick], take us to the doctor. When we reach the age of schooling, they send us to school to study.

Father and mother with kindness [make] sacrifice[s] [so they can provide us with] comfort and a moral education.

Some families are overpopulated \( \text{pur-jam′iyat} \) and some are under-populated \( \text{kam-jam′iyat} \). Those families that have more than two children are categorized as overpopulated \( \text{pur-jam′iyat} \). (p. 108-109)
The main ideas are further elaborated in the next lesson, entitled “Family Life”, in Social Studies 4 (Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 111-113; See also Social Studies 4, 1994). In the 1994 edition of this lesson entitled, “Family Life” (Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section, 1994, p. 136-138), the authors maintained that,

The family is a small society in which everyone has responsibility, everything has a specific place and every action is performed during a specific time. Usually, the father works outside the house. He has the responsibility to provide food, clothing and other necessary household goods for living \(zindagi\) for his wife and children.

The mother usually does the household tasks. [She] cooks, keeps the house clean, nurtures \(parvarish\) the children and guides them with their homework.

In some families, women also work outside the house. In the villages, women help their husbands in agricultural activities, weaving carpets and milking cows and sheep. In the cities, some women also work in schools and in hospitals or in some factories and offices.

Children also have the responsibility to study, to acquire [learn] good morals \(akhlq-i niku\) and to help their father and mother.

We said that in a house everything has a specific position. Clothing, shoes and the bags of children have specific place[s]. If in the house we [store] everything in a specific place, when we need it, we can find it faster.

Every activity \(kahr\) has a specific time. Night time is for resting and mornings for work. Studying, physical and recreational activities, sleeping, waking up and praying, each are performed during a specific time. From Saturday to Thursday are the workdays, but Friday is the day of cleaning and participation in Friday prayers, visiting friends and sight seeing \(ghardish\).

We must have order in life; that is, we each must perform our responsibilities, put everything in a specific place and perform our duties during [the specified time frame]. In an Islamic society, everybody must work and [carry out] their responsibilities to others.

In the 2004 edition of the same lesson (“Family Life”, Social Studies 4, Civic Studies Section), students read,

**Every One Has Responsibility**

In a family everyone has responsibility. The father has the responsibility to provide food, clothing and other necessary household goods for living \(zindagi\) for his wife and children. What does the mother do in the family?

What else do father and mother do for us?

In some families, women also work outside the house. In the villages, women help their husbands in agricultural activities, weaving carpets and milking cows and sheep. In the cities, some women also work in schools, hospitals, factories or offices.

In the family, children study, help their father and mother with the household tasks and become familiar with religious duties [and] good deed[s] \(akhlq-i niku\).

In the future, children who [are exposed to moral upbringing], kindness and good deeds in the family will become useful and responsible individuals. Thus, the family plays an important role in our education (moral upbringing). For this reason, the religion of Islam pays great emphasis on the family.

**Everything Has a Specific Place**

At home, everything has a specific place. In your opinion, why should you put away clothing, shoes, books and any other item in a specific place?

**Every Action [Function] Has a Specific Time**
Mornings is for work and night time is for resting. Studying, waking up, praying, sleeping, sports and recreational activities, visiting friends, taking a bath and cleaning, are each performed during a specific time.

From Saturday to Thursday are the workdays. Friday is the day to participate in the Friday’s prayer, visiting with family and friends and sight seeing {gardish}.

We must have order in life[.] That is, [we must be] familiar with our responsibility and act upon it[;] to put everything in [its] specific place [and] to perform each task during its specified time. (p. 108-109)

As these lessons point out, the family is defined as the first, most important and smallest social grouping (Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 108-110; See also Social Studies 4, 1994, p. 133-134). Family life is constructed as the marriage between a man and a woman. Children are considered as valuable beings, who bring happiness and joy to family life. In discussing the family, the authors place an emphasis on order and its importance in Islamic society. In other words, Islamic society is characterized as an organized society in which stability, hard work, family relations, harmony, conformity and shared values and norms are highly prized. It is within the family setting and within the context of an Islamic vision of rights and responsibilities that children become familiar with their future roles as they are socialized about religion and good deeds. The family is considered as the backbone of an Islamic society. In such an Islamic setting, the ideal society consists of individuals who have a good sense of the social responsibilities towards other family members and society at large. Students read that Iranians (family members) must cooperate with one another. In fact, cooperation in the family is one of the most important ideological messages since the same information is also reinforced in the assignment section at the end of one of the lessons. In this assignment, students are asked to offer their reasons for why family members should cooperate with one another in solving family issues and problems.

The basis of the Islamic household is constructed on the assumption that society is made of different parts. It is assumed that each part is connected to various other segments that have specific functions and roles for the survival of the whole. In these depictions, the whole is represented in light of man’s natural leadership position in society. For example, in the lessons on the family, the father is discussed first and then the role of the mother and her obligations towards other family members is presented. In these depictions of the family and family relations, the centre is defined as Islamic, male and patriarchal. Everything else is compared to the values intrinsic to this core. In the textbooks, the primary role of fathers is to provide the main source of income for the family. This role is further conceptualized as an obligation to provide the basic material needs of family members (i.e.: the mother and the children). Fathers are not discussed in terms of their responsibilities towards child rearing and housework, but
women are identified as the main caregivers. In fact, the supposed and mystical order and equilibrium within the family and thus within the country and the Islamic community is also depicted and considered as natural, in accordance with God’s will and expected. In such lessons, men are considered as the leaders of families and the protectors of households.

In contrast, women’s work (read married women) is often discussed by conceptualizing it as “helping” and “assisting” their husbands. In the 2004 Iranian school textbooks, women (read mothers) are not represented as the sole or major contributors to household income and single women do not earn income. In fact, in one lesson in the 1993 edition of *Persian 5* (211-212) of a working class boy who finds 1,000 Tomans (equivalent to $1.00), students read that his mother was the main income earner and that she faced difficulties in providing for her four children (this reference is omitted in the 2004 edition). The authors attributed this to the death of her husband during the Iran-Iraq War (1980-88).

Moreover, in narrating the experiences of the Hashemi family across Iran, the authors inform students that the mother does not work outside of the household since she has all her equipment at home. It is the father who works and provides the main source of employment income outside of the home. The income that the mother brings into the household, the authors claim, is spent on household expenses, but also according to the lessons, it is the men of the household who actually purchase household goods, and thus control how household earnings are spent. As a result, these lessons could be interpreted in two ways as it remains uncertain whether Mrs. Hashemi really has control over how she spends the money she earns (*Social Studies 3*, 2004, p. 2; Also See *Social Studies 3*, 2000, p. 1-3). In this and in similar lessons, the mother’s role as the manager of the internal affairs of the household is affirmed. Such constructions of gender relations promote a limited understanding of female citizenship that is

77 In fact, in the context of the post-revolutionary political and cultural environment and power structures, “Iranian women came to be viewed primarily, if not exclusively, as mothers” (Bahramitash, 2004, p. 164). The modernization process during the Pahlavi era deregulated female sexuality, which had a positive effect on the employment of women in the economy (Alizadeh and Harper, 2003, p. 189). After the Islamic Revolution in 1978-79, this process was reversed and as Fatemeh Moghadam (as cited in Alizadeh and Harper, 2003, p. 189) maintains, female sexuality came to be viewed as a “tradable object” that the state began to regulate with tremendous consequences for female employment trends. Fatemeh Moghadam (1994, p. 80) argues that the commoditization of female sexuality puts limits on the extent to which women can own part of their selves which, in the context of Islamic law regarding female sexuality (as the basis for legal discrimination against women) leads to the “occupational segregation of female labour”. According to Islamic laws, women are not deterred from selling their labour in the market; however, the assumption within the Quran is that since men pay for “their wives’ living expenses, they are superior to women, and as husbands [they] are entitled to demand obedience from [their] wives”. This can be interpreted as meaning that the most important function of a woman is as housewife and/or females require the permission of their husbands for employment outside the house (Moghadam, 1994, p. 85).
anchored in private spheres of the family but within a discourse of social responsibility for cultivating a singular image of national citizenry with a global emphasis as sources of morality due to their practice of ḥijāb (See Arnot and Dillabough, 2000, p. 8, 11).

The ideal Iranian family is also depicted as a nuclear family. For example, in Social Studies 4 (2004, 1994), families with more than two children are constructed and represented in pictures and drawings as pur-jamʿiyat (overpopulated). One of the pictures that accompanies the lesson, entitled “The Family”, shows a modern family of four driving a new car and enjoying the ride (Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 109) (See Figure 4.25). This is contrasted with another picture on the same page that shows a family of seven. In this depiction, the father is bald; the mother is holding her baby; and the children are misbehaving in their beat up, old and rusty car. The message is clear: population control is important. Ironically, these pictures also imply that a lack of access to wealth, living in poverty and/or being a low-income earner is a function of having more than two children. The question at the end of this section asks students to reflect and explore the ways in which it is more difficult to provide for a larger family than a smaller one (Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 109). Here, the answer is already given: students are told to look for negative consequences that may be caused by economic factors. However, the economic conditions of poor families are not explored.

Figure 4.25 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is an illustration of two families in their cars: an older model car with a family of seven and a newer car with a family of four.

Students are also introduced to different types of families, but their inclusions are contextualized in light of the effects of natural disasters, wars or military/civilian occupations/confrontations. For example, in *Social Studies 3* (2004), students read that the paternal grandmother lives with the Hashemi family, which implies that her husband is deceased. This choice to include the paternal rather than maternal grandmother is significant to consider since in another lesson (*Persian 5*, 2004, p. 182-184), a widowed woman, whose husband died in the war with Iraq, lives with her brother rather than on her own. Women are often depicted as living with their significant male others after the deaths of their husbands. Moreover, when her son receives a letter from the principal addressed to his parents or guardians, the son first takes the letter to his older brother (*Persian 5*, 2004, p. 182-184). His brother then advises him that their uncle should open the letter. This lesson is about the important educational roles of parents, guardians and teachers as they are compared to coaches that guide their students. However, in depicting mothers as caregivers and “coaches”, their positions within the family are depicted as secondary to men. Women’s agencies are not discussed or presented to students. Iranian women are not depicted as living in single-parent homes due to divorce or other reasons. Only nuclear and extended families are discussed.

The ideal family is also characterized as a caring institution. Students read that an important characteristic of the family is cooperation. Cooperation and helping one another also implies accepting that the *status quo* is natural and normal. Iranian school textbooks are explicit that students should perform their tasks and responsibilities without resistance against the leader in the family, who is represented as a fair and likeable individual. For example, in the “Class Activities” section of *Social Studies 3*, students are asked to observe a picture (See Figure 4.26) and discuss with their classmates how a brother and sister (Ali and Maryam) can help their family by cooperating (*Social Studies 3*, 2004, p. 2).78 The gendered division of labour is naturalized and considered as desired characteristics based on perceived natural biological differences between men and women. The division of labour, for example, is reproduced in the text and pictures of both the 2000 and 2004 editions, where the authors state that Ali is responsible for shopping and Maryam is responsible for cleaning the house while the grandmother does her share of housework. Students are also asked to discuss the ways in which they can cooperate with one another in *Social Studies 6* (2004).79 Gender relations are also further elaborated in middle school social studies textbooks. In the next section, I

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78 In previous versions, the information was included in the text. In the 2004 edition (Social Studies 3), the same information is now included in the picture.
79 In *Social Studies 6* (2004), students read that mountain climbing is an excellent example of cooperation. Mounting climbing is used as an analogy to discuss the role of a good leader in achieving established goals.
show how gender is depicted according to an Islamic vision that reflects the official position on women’s issues expressed through the discourse of leadership. A paternalistic view of gender is configured in depicting the ideal citizen and in representing roles and obligations in the family and in Iranian society.

Figure 4.26 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a picture of the Hashemi family, without the father, involved in various household tasks.

4.3.3.1 Gender Roles

Gender roles are discussed in Social Studies 6 in a lesson entitled, “Why Should We Cooperate in the Family?” (2004, p. 24-28; See also Social Studies 6, 1999, p. 19). A mother’s daily tasks in the household, whose members are constructed as well as represented as always cooperating with one another, include “the responsibility of washing
the dishes and putting the breakfast items in their specific place” (2004, p. 24-28; See also *Social Studies 6*, 1999, p. 19).

In another lesson entitled, “Unselfishness in the Family”, the authors also (re)explore family relations in more detail (*Social Studies 6*, 2004, p. 53-56; See also *Social Studies 6*, 1999, p. 43). Students read that families face problems and family members are not only concerned with their own wants and desires. Family members also try to provide for and satisfy (*jihat-i ta‘mīn*) the needs of other members of their family. The example that is provided refers to mothers and how attentive they are to family issues. The authors state that the roles and responsibilities of mothers are: “to consider her children’s success as her own success; if able, to help her children with school work; to attempt to ensure her children’s success in school” (*Social Studies 6*, 2004, p. 54). In other words, mothers are constructed as caring individuals who are willing to sacrifice their own needs and dreams so that their children can achieve theirs. Students read that mothers are said to share the pain of their loved ones’ defeats. The pictures (*Social Studies 6*, 2004, p. 53-54; See also *Social Studies 6*, 1999, p. 43-44) that accompany this lesson include a woman kneeling on the ground beside her daughter who is sick in bed, implying that she is taking care of her.

Although such representations are reflective of real and lived socio-economic relations and the positions of women as caregivers within society, they nevertheless institutionalize the act of child rearing as something that is the sole responsibility and function of women. Women’s labour and representations are viewed in light of the discourses of “un-selfishness” and cooperation. For example, in the pictures and illustrations included in *Persian 1* (2004), women are depicted mostly as mothers/housewives (p. 2, 3, 5, 13, 19, 28, 29, 37, 40, 41, 44, 46, 54, 56, 67), but also in various ways and in many different contexts such as:

- shopping or going shopping (7, 26, 27, 40, 45, 46, 81, 117);
- taking their children to school (7), to the park (14) or to the zoo (22);
- camping with their families (17, 18, 54);
- working in agricultural fields (116) and rice paddies (71);
- sewing clothing for their children (82);
- weaving carpets (19);
- praying in the mosques (24);
- as teachers (10, 38, 40, 43, 83) and as principles (9).
In Persian 2 (2004), the only times that women are constructed and depicted outside family contexts and without references to motherhood are as teachers (7, 12, 29, 30, 55) a nurse (57), a salesperson in a clothing store (57) and as an employee of a movie set (130, 131). They are mostly depicted:

- shopping with their children for books (p. 15);
- taking their children to dentists and doctors (p. 21, 26);
- playing with their children (p. 38);
- putting their children to sleep (p. 41);
- taking care of a sick child (p. 57);
- taking their children on pilgrimages to the shrines of Shi’a Imams (p. 82);
- cleaning the dining table after lunch/dinner (p. 106) and in various other family activities (p. 53, 84, 103, 106, 138).

In Persian 3 (2004), students are provided with the following depictions of women in drawings:

- as mothers (p. 3, 64, 96);
- as mothers in the context of household and the family settings (p. 8, 41, 42, 64, 98);
- picnicking with the family (p. 7);
- in the kitchen (p. 18, 87, 101);
- weaving (p. 100);
- working in rice patties (p. 106);
- in the Kanūn (a youth cultural centre) with their children (p. 19);
- as employees of the Kanūn (p. 19, 22);
- sick in bed (p. 54);
- as teachers (74) and as teachers who take their students mountain climbing (p. 114).

In Persian 4 (2004), there are only two instances of women in the textbook pictures: a mother visiting her son in the hospital (p. 37) and two women gathering wheat seeds (p. 68). In Persian 5 (2004), women are represented in pictures as a sign-language teacher (p. 35) and as a senior (p. 86). In Persian 6 (2004), students are introduced to a contemporary female poet, Parvin Ehteshami, and her picture is presented to students (p. 25). The rest of the pictures in Persian 6 (2004) depict women in rural or primary non-professional service-sector occupations (p. 76, 97, 78, 86, 90, 135, 137). As Figures 4.27 and 4.28 point out, the majority of the representations of women are as mothers taking care of their children.

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80 The character of the female teacher is presented as a rabbit.
Figure 4.27 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a sequence of drawings depicting a boy with a tooth ache who is taken to the dentist by his mother.

Figure 4.27, “See and Tell” Section, Source: Persian 2, 2004, p. 21.

Figure 4.28 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a sequence of drawings showing a boy overeating, getting a stomach ache and taken to the doctor by his mother.


As the above illustrations also point out, women are depicted as managers of the household, but the leader of the family is defined as the father in various lessons, such as in the lesson entitled “Why a Family Needs a Leader” (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 47). Students read that the leader is an important person who acts in the best
interests of the group and is concerned with the needs of group members. The members of the group, in return, must obey his commands (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 45; See also Social Studies 6, 1999, p. 38). The responsibilities of the father in regards to household chores are presented as being “responsible to prepare the tea, the brother is responsible to buy the bread and the sister to set the table” (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 26; See also Social Studies 6, 1999, p. 18). The roles of fathers, as leaders, are also discussed in another lesson entitled, “How Do Members of the Family Consult with One Another?” (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 34; See also Social Studies 6, 1999, p. 25). The authors also explain that fathers often ask for the opinion of their family members in making important decisions, such as renting or buying a house and in purchasing household items (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 34; See also Social Studies 6, 1999, p. 25). In the same lesson entitled, “How Do Members of the Family Consult with One Another?”, the authors expand by stating that the father in turn transfers (gives) some of the responsibilities of the household to the mother and respects her opinions (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 34; See also Social Studies 6, 1999, p. 25). In these constructions, the family structure is often depicted as being headed by the father or a male-kin. This discourse also influences the type of examples that are used in discussing the difficulties faced by those families who have lost family members that students read about in a lesson titled “What is the Role of Family in Our Lives?” (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 17). The authors state that some families have lost their fathers in the Iran-Iraq War, to natural causes or, like the Palestinians, due to the barbaric actions of the oppressive regime of Israel. Students read that such families do not have the blessing (na’mat) of having a father (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 47). In these families, the text states, mothers attempt to play the role of both the father and the mother in order to assist their children to follow in their fathers’ footsteps (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 47; See also Social Studies 6, 1999, p. 39). In reference to the Palestinians whose fathers have been martyred, students read that, “All Moslems will assist these Moslem Palestinians to revenge the deaths of their loved ones” (Social Studies 6, 2004, p. 47; See also Social Studies 6, 1999, p. 39). This gives the impression that the responsibility of family members also includes seeking revenge for injustices against its members, which in this case is defined from a nationalistic perspective in light of global relations and the idea of Ummat-i Islami. In these families, students are informed, mothers are in charge of family affairs.

The patriarchal ideology that informs the structure of such lessons and the accompanying pictures and drawings conceptualize the presence of the father as important and as a gift from God. This hegemonic construction of masculinity also finds other manifestations in other textbooks and grade levels. In fact, in a drawing in Persian 2
of a family that is shaped like a hand, the father is conceptualized as the thumb, thus the most important member of
the family as students read in many lessons that the father is the leader and thus controls the family’s movements
(See Figure 4.29) (*Persian* 2, 2004, p. 53).

Figure 4.29 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a drawing of two hands: one in the form of a closed fist and the other opened with the
palm facing the reader. The open hand shows four members of a nuclear family as its fingers (the father as the
thumb, followed by the mother, son and daughter).

Figure 4.29, “Let’s Read Together” Section, Source: *Persian* 2, 2004, p. 53.

Although this and similar drawings could be interpreted as symbolizing solidarity within the family and the
importance of cooperation, such moral lessons are portrayed in a patriarchal language that normalizes men as natural
leaders at all levels of society. This does not mean that women are not represented in positions of power outside the
family. Narrow constructions of women/motherhood and representations of women shopping, visiting family
members or picnicking with the family excludes them from many high status positions in society. However, two of
the most important occupations for women that elevate them as agents of the state and as individuals with significant
and considerable levels of power in society are the teacher and principal statuses. Therefore, it is important to explore how women’s roles in society are depicted for students in their textbooks as the authors in various lessons and grade levels discuss the characteristics of the teacher and his or her relationships with students.

The depiction of women as teachers and principles can be considered as one of the options outside the category “mother” that is available to female students in relating themselves to the ideals of the ideal citizen as useful citizens. However, at the same time, female personalities are depicted in positions of authority and, directly or indirectly, as agents of the state. Gender relations of power are subverted in legitimizing the role of the state through the teacher in the classroom. Teachers are constructed in the textbooks as authorities who can help in socializing students for their future roles as adults and citizens in the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to the elementary textbooks, it is through their teachers that students learn about justice (‘adl), how to recognize the imploration for justice (dād), who is righteous (dādgur) and who is just (‘ādil) (Persian 5, 2004, p. 188; See also Persian 5, 2001, p. 202; 1994, p. 219; 1986, p. 183). Teachers are symbolized as friends who are knowledgeable (dānā) and who care for the education and training of their students (parvarish) (Persian 2, 2004, p. 55). Teachers communicate moral values to students by advising them how to be generous, chivalrous (javān-mard) and brave (Persian 5, 2004, p. 188; See also Persian 5, 2001, p. 202; 1994, p. 219; 1986, p. 183). Teachers are constructed as individuals who teach students about the prophets and other great individuals, enabling students to emulate their behaviours and attitudes (Persian 3, 2001, p. 140). Students are also informed that teachers instil qualities such as compassion and mercy (raham) and help students to avoid cruel behaviour (bī-raham) (Persian 5, 2004, p. 188; See also Persian 5, 2001, p. 202; 1994, p. 219; 1986, p. 183). In short, the aim of teachers is to socialize and educate a healthy, intelligent and content student population, one that is well aware of their responsibilities towards other citizens of Iran and the Islamic Republic. At the same time, the authors write that according to the Supreme Leader of Iran, the aim of all Iranians should be to develop the country. In the textbooks, students are reminded that this desire of the nation to develop and to progress technologically is undermined by foreign enemies (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 37-38; See also Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 47-48). The ideal student is epitomized as one who studies hard and assists in developing and defending Iran by following rules and accepting his or her leader’s commands (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 38; See also Studies 3, 2000, p. 48).

In fact, I argue that fathers like Mr. Hashemi are constructed as the role models and leaders to be emulated. All families should strive to be like this family. The leader in this ideal family serves the nation and believes in the
regime and its leadership. As a Moslem man who is educated about Islam and current events, he is the ideal and natural leader for the household in the same way that the Supreme Leader of Iran is depicted as the perfect leader for the nation and for all Moslems of the world. The ideal family is constructed as a paternalistic unit that is made of heterosexual parents, one son and one daughter and in some cases, one of the paternal grandparents. In the household and in the discussions about family units, the division of labour is based on a private/public (anderun/biruni) dichotomy that reflects the state’s views regarding gender/sex differences. Such conceptions of gender are also reflected in the legal codes of the country. As the current Supreme Leader of Iran maintains, “Islam authorizes women to work outside the household. Their work might even be necessary but it should not interfere with their main responsibility that is childrearing” (as cited in Kian-Thiebaut, 2005, p. 55). Men are given excessive privileges according to the civil codes based on the “ground[s] that the economic function is the main attribute of men” (Kian-Thiebaut, 2005, p. 55). The hegemonic aspects of the construction of leadership in light of paternalistic views within the family are reinforced by how women are constructed in the pictures and the texts. For example, it is due to the efforts of Mr. Hashemi and his income that this family is able to afford a middle-class consumer lifestyle.

As mentioned, the role of women in the family or in the development of the nation is depicted as assisting in “educating” and “nursing” the population towards economic self-sufficiency. In school textbooks, women’s and other minorities’ labour are often discussed in the context of an apolitical approach to economic relations. Nevertheless, women and children, like the ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes), are led by male leaders. In fact, Ali is on his way to lead the nation and his family. The desired and ideal cultural capital is reproduced. In conclusion, in the context of the family and the nation, children’s, mothers’, students’ and female teachers’ functions are to follow orders, to accept authority and to assist their leader and family members. The orderly functions of the family, life, the economy, the nation and the country are desired elements in order to reproduce those structures and values that sustain the Islamic Republic of Iran. In discussions about the family, the textbooks promote the reproduction of those class relations that ensure the reproduction of the Islamic state of Iran. Whose class position informs the construction of the ideal citizen is discussed in light of an analysis of how social mobility is reflected
4.3.3.2 Social Mobility

The Hashemi family’s household is depicted in the 2004 edition of Social Studies 3 as a middle-class nuclear family, which is in contrast to how this family was depicted in the drawings in the 2000 edition (See Figures 4.26, 4.30-4.33). In the 2000 edition, the sub-heading of the first picture (See Figure 4.30) read “the Hashemi family has a simple life” (Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 1). This reference to the “simple life” (zindagī-i sāda) was conveyed by a lack of modern furniture/technology. For example, the family was described as living in a small flat and pictured seated on floor. Furthermore, Figure 4.31 depicted the family, excluding the father, sitting in a room with the mother sewing and the grandmother talking to the children. The caption for this drawing read: “Mrs. Tahereh, in addition to house work also sews [khiyatī miḵunah]” (2000, p. 3). Simplicity and gender roles were naturalized and considered as desired characteristics to have. The ideal Iranian family in the 2000 edition was depicted based on working class standards. Moreover, the lack of consumer goods was not considered as an indicator of poverty and/or inequality (See Figures 4.30, 4.31 and 4.32).

Figure 4.30 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a drawing of the Hashemi family sitting on the floor having tea.

Figure 4.31 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a drawing of the Hashemi family seated on the floor: the mother is sewing, the grandmother is telling stories to the children.

Figure 4.31, “Mrs. Tahereh, in Addition to Housework, Also Sews”, Source: Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 3.

Figure 4.32 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a drawing of Mr. Hashemi entering a room with the family gathering around him.

Figure 4.32, “Mr. Hashemi … said he has important news”, Source: Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 5.
The information removed is a drawing of the Hashemi family sitting in their modern living room having tea.
family is still having tea, but on a coffee table that also holds flowers and a bowl of fruits, which were absent from the 2000 edition. The second picture (See Figure 4.26) also includes the following statement (that was part of the text in the 2000 edition): “Maryam and Ali, in addition to studying, also cooperate in performing household duties” (2004, p. 1). In comparing the pictures used in these two editions, class mobility and class relations are depicted through consumption and consumerism. The ideal Iranian family has shifted from being a simple family with basic needs to a family that owns a number of consumer items. Students no longer read about a lower-income “working-class” family. The “norm” is no longer defined by references to the poor/working class. Rather, it is now based on middle-class consumer standards. Students read about a (lower) middle-class family who has all the necessary and required consumer items that signal a modern lifestyle. All of the references to the simple life and the simplicity of Mr. Hashemi’s house are omitted in the 2004 edition.

This consumption also has religious manifestations in the form of cultural artefacts, such as Islamic books and pictures of religious national leaders. Despite clear economic differences between how the Hashemi family is depicted in the 2004 and 2000 editions of Social Studies 3, both middle and working class families are represented as good Moslems and well-read in Persian poetry, communicated through the inclusions of pictures of the past and present Supreme Leaders of Iran (Imam Khomeini and Ayatollah Khamenei, See Figures 4.29 and 4.32), a number of books with Arabic titles, including the Quran and the Nahj-al-Balaghah (the teachings of Imam Ali) and Persian poetry books. It is important to note that non-Moslem and non-Shi’a Iranians would not purchase or display religious texts with clear Shi’a sentiments as part of their library as useful books in their homes. These depictions of family life do not reflect non-Moslem as well as non-Shi’a families. In other words, non-Moslem and non-Shi’a families are not considered as part of the definition of the ideal citizen/family. Moreover, the poetry texts used in these drawings are of Sa’dī, Firdawsī and other famous poets who wrote in Persian. As such, due to the lack of ethnic poetry books in any of the drawings about this family, it can be stated that they are also Persian.

The Iranian family was not always a middle-class family. Prior to the 2004 edition, most drawings reflected working class spaces, contexts and relations. The depiction of the Hashemi family in pre-2004 editions was an attempt by the curriculum writers to be inclusive of working class experiences. In fact, I argue that the depiction of the Hashemi family in the 2000 edition of Social Studies 3 resembles Bauer’s (1983, p. 147-150) analysis of poor women and their families in the poverty stricken areas of southern Tehran during the late 1970s. In this sense, students of poor and village backgrounds read about families like themselves. However, drawing on Bauer’s
research as an evaluating tool in analyzing the same lesson in the 2000 edition of *Social Studies 3*, the authors offered a homogenized picture of family life in working class neighbourhoods. The authors did not account for how working class family lives were affected due to factors such as length of residence in the city, social networks, education and income levels.

In summary, the lessons on gender and social class relations, roles and obligations in discussions about the nation, the family and the history of the Islamic Republic promote a middle-class cultural capital and pro-government political view and conception of the economy, the family and society. Various images of the ideal Iranian citizen are simultaneously juxtaposed against and in accordance with various forms of global identities in different lessons and in different grade levels. In order to present the history of Iran, Islam, the Iranian revolutions of 1905-11 and 1978-79 and images of the ideal citizen, the authors invoke various “shifting collectivities” that reproduce the hegemonic processes of “othering” specific individuals and groups, both internally and internationally. In general, citizenship, in light of an Iranian-Islamic perspective, requires its citizens to demonstrate “feelings of affinity, of common destiny and common responsibility” (Kohn, 1965, p. 21) towards both Iran and the Islamic world, which are defined and demarcated from a highly gendered and racialized perspective. Citizenship education in Iran identifies the sanctity of a middle-class Moslem family life-style as an important national value with global visions of prosperity and freedom for all, from a Persian and male-centric perspective. Citizenship education has personal, national and transnational manifestations that are ethno-centric, racist and sexist.
PART FOUR

The Ideal Iranian Citizen and the Discourses of Progress, the West, Islam and Iranian Economic Development
4.4 Introduction

In this part, I explore how the need to modernize Iran is incorporated in revising the 2004 edition of Iranian school textbooks. I examine how the consequences of economic, social and cultural policies are discussed and explored. In the first section of this part, “Islam, Progress and the West: the Ideal Citizen and the Discourses of Scientific and Industrial Revolutions”, I analyze how the histories of Europe and other Western countries are discussed and how the ideal citizen is represented in contrast and in relation to European identities since the collapse of the Roman Empire. In the second section, “Development, Schooling, the Family and the Construction of the Ideal Citizen”, I show how the urgency to develop Iran is communicated to students. In “Geography, Environment, Pollution, Economic Relations and Independence”, I expand on how economic concerns dominate discussions about the role of the ideal citizen to protect the environment and to develop Iran.

4.4.1 Islam, Progress and the West: The Ideal Citizen and the Discourses of Scientific and Industrial Revolutions

The discourses through which the story of Iran is presented to students may be categorized into five different and distinct historical periods: pre-Islamic Iran, Islamic Iran, the institutionalization of Shi’ism as the religion of the court, the Constitutional Revolution and the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79. There is, however, another important period in the history of the West in modernity that is also employed in constructing Iran and the ideal citizen. Students read how modernizing Europe and the West affected social and political relations in Europe and in other parts of the world. Students are introduced to a short history of Europe in a lesson that coincides with the introduction of Islam into Iran until the establishment of the Safavids Dynasty in the last lesson of History 7 (2004, p. 60-64; See also History 7, 1993, p. 94-101, 1999, p. 81-85). The West (Europe) is portrayed to have benefited from the events of the Crusades. Students are informed that as a result of cultural diffusion, Europeans became aware of their “ignorance” and “backwardness” during the Crusades, which prepared them for and resulted in the events of the Renaissance and the eventual collapse of feudalism (History 7, 2004, p. 60-64; See also History 7, 1993, p. 94-101, 1999, p. 81-85). The Renaissance is defined as the rebirth of science and knowledge (History 7, 2004, p. 60-64; See also History 7, 1993, p. 94-101, 1999, p. 81-85). In the 1993 edition of History 7 (1993, p. 98-99), students were also informed that, at the time, the Europeans were more concerned with worldly affairs, such as the accumulation of profits and consumer goods (material accumulation). The text states that, “Unfortunately
Europeans, who could not tell the difference between the Church and real religion, day after day became distant from religion and plunged into corruption and immorality (fasād akhlāqi)” (History 7, 1993, p. 98-99).

Students read that by the end of the eighteenth century and due to technological innovation, new machines replaced “manpower” and production rates increased, which resulted in an increase in commerce: “This change is called the Industrial Revolution” (History 8, 2004, p. 24; See also History 8, 1999, p. 25). In addition, students are informed that in order to add to their wealth, rich European kings and upper classes supported many of these innovations in science and technology (History 8, 2004, p. 24; See also History 8, 1999, p. 24). The authors maintain that the need for raw materials and new consumer markets caused Europeans to look to other parts of the world, which ultimately led to the colonization of many of these regions. Students are informed that one of the characteristics of the modern era in Europe that distinguishes it from the rest of the world is their advancement of science and innovations in technology (History 8, 2004, p. 20-23; See also History 8, 1999, p. 24). Students read that the Europeans were reintroduced to technology and scientific advancements by the Moslems (read also Iranians), and Europeans became familiar with Moslem contributions to knowledge production (History 7, 2004, p. 63-64). Students are also informed that the religious reforms introduced by Martin Luther and the rise of the Protestant Reformation undermined the power of the Catholic Church (History 8, 2004, p. 23). The most important distinction between the ideal self and the Euro-Western other is the adherence of Iranians to Islam, and thus, to true knowledge. It is in this light that scientific knowledge is conceptualized. Iran is culturally and morally more superior to the technologically advanced cultures of the West. The source of this knowledge is identified as Islamic in character.

Furthermore, in Geography 7 (2004, p. 41-42; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 41-42), in the lesson entitled, “Why Is the European Economy Developed?”, students read that Europe’s wealth is due to the effects of colonialism, the enslavement of other continents and the exploitation of their resources. The authors state that Europe’s progress is due to their access to and usage of scientific measures and methods and modern equipment in producing industrial goods. Students also read that Europe is visited by people from across the world due to its historical, cultural and intellectual centres, natural settings and major shopping centres (Geography 7, 2004, p. 41-42; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 41-42). In another lesson, entitled “What Are the Human Characteristics of Europe?” (Geography 7, 2004, p. 39; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 39), the authors write that there are many employment and economic opportunities available in Europe, mainly because of its desirable geography such as the availability of rivers and sufficient rainfall levels and because of its level of scientific and industrial development.
This depiction of Europe does not account for the economic shifts after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the de-industrialization processes in Western European countries, the rise of service sectors jobs and the effects of neoliberal policies. These exclusions ignore the basic principles of global education, requiring a holistic and critical approach to local and global economic and political issues.

In another lesson, entitled “Are the Americas A Continent With Two Different Cultures And Civilizations?”, students read that the two richest and most industrialized countries in the world are Canada and the United States (Geography 7, 2004, p. 51; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 51). Students also read that development and modernization in North America, and in particular the United States, were influenced by the immigration of Europeans who “discovered” this continent (Geography 7, 2004, p. 53; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 53; 2004, p. 53). Students are told that the Europeans brought with them capital investment and technical knowledge and, as a result, within a few centuries, they established a new “civilization” (Geography 7, 2004, p. 53; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 53). The authors explain that the United States emerged as a “super power” after the end of World War II because American industries were not attacked during the war due to the geographical distance of America from European, African and Asian fronts (Geography 7, 2004, p. 53; See also Geography 7, 1999, p. 53; ). One of the reasons the United States is more developed is attributed to the fact that they were able to stay “ahead of their competition”. Students are also informed that both the United States and Canada have been able to increase their rates of development by attracting technical knowledge and scientists from other parts of the world.

Such a construction of Western European societies as progressive nations places them as sources of emulation, due to the emphasis on the importance of modern scientific knowledge in modernizing Iran. The economic benefits due to advancements in science and technology are emphasized and the negative consequences, including the effects on the environment, are ignored. No critiques of Eurocentric, androcentric and racist assumptions of science are provided. Capitalism is not critiqued. Yet, the Euro-Western conceptualization of power outside religion is construed as the essential difference between “them” and “Iranians” (read Moslems). In this way, the current Iranian constitution and the Islamic Revolution are also elevated as the solutions to the corruption (fāsād) that is due to the lack of religious adherence to God’s commands. This is achieved through the leadership of the office of velayat-e-faqih (jurist guardianship), within the context of an industrializing Iran. In this sense, the Islamic Republic resembles the events of the Renaissance.
The emphasis on development and industrialization in Europe and the West also has ideological and political consequences in terms of the role of students in the economic development of Iran and its independence. Ideologically, the goal of the Islamic Republic has been to reduce its economic, cultural and social dependency on outsiders (aliens). The emphasis on industrialization and mechanization corresponds to the emphasis of curriculum writers on discourses such as “individual responsibility”, development, šarfa-jūh (conservation), šarf (efficiency) and independence. In previous editions as well as in the 2004 textbooks, students are constantly reminded that,

In order to maintain our independence we must try not to be dependent on foreigners. We must study hard in elementary, high school and university and use [our] knowledge in industry and agriculture. [Iranians] must invent [their] own industrial equipment and produce them within Iran and in agriculture, [we] must also grow [our] own food. (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 1993, p. 204; See also 2004, p. 144)

The desire of the Iranian nation to develop and attain the same level of technological advancement as the West does not qualify Iran as a Westernized country, according to the textbooks. In the textbooks, Islamic Iranian society is characterized by “îsârgar [self-sacrifice] and is different than other types of societies” (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 156; See also Social Studies 5, 1993, p. 248). Students are informed that in such a society “people face their problems with grace and end up victorious by overcoming difficulties” (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 156; See also Social Studies 5, 1993, p. 248). As mentioned, independence is defined in economic as well as political terms. The economic development and independence of Iran are considered as important goals of the state. However, an analysis of the effects of the global economy in terms of investments in primary, secondary or tertiary sectors in various parts of the world is not provided. Rather, Western development is explained by pointing to the Western exploitations of non-Western labour and resources across the world. This construction of the West is juxtaposed against the need to become self-sufficient and in order to export the goods produced in Iran to other countries (Geography 6, 2004 and Geography 8, 2004). The textbooks, for example, argue that Iranian industrial innovations will lead to greater economic and political independence. The authors also write that,

In the past, for agriculture [purposes, humans] used energy produced from [their own labour] or [energy produced] by animals. During that time, agricultural equipment was simple, but today many of the machines and advanced tools are utilized in agricultural activities…. [These machines are used in all facets of] agricultural activities. (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 2004, p. 14)

Students also are informed that,

[In the suburbs] near most large and overpopulated cities of our country, large mechanized poultry and animal husbandry [dâmpvarî] industries have been established that produce the needed meat and dairy products for nearby cities. [In these industries, such] commodities are produced using advanced machines and tools. (Social Studies 5, Geography Section, 2004, p. 16)
Promoting industrialization, research and development are not the only messages in Iranian school textbooks. In *Social Studies 3* (2000), students read about a small factory (*Kārgah*) where a mechanical part for an agricultural machine is produced. The authors inform students that,

> We used to buy this equipment from other foreign countries but now we produce them [in our own country]. At the same time as our agriculturalists … produce food for us, [factory workers] also try to build industrial equipment [in Iran] so that we are not going to be dependent on aliens (*bīgānagān*). God willing [and] with the help of you young students, the Islamic Republic will not be in need (*muḥīṭ*) of foreign countries in the future. (p. 40)

In the “Activities That We Should Do” Section, students are asked to discuss what they can do in order to reduce the reliance of Iran on foreign countries (*Social Studies 3*, 2000, p. 41).

Students’ future roles as workers, scientists and producers of goods are also referred to and discussed in *Social Studies 3* (2004, p. 31; See also *Social Studies 3*, 2000, p. 40). Students read that as the agriculturalists attempt to grow the food needed for the nation, industrial workers also try to produce and invent industrial equipment and machinery in Iran so that Iran does not have to be dependent on foreign countries. The authors maintain that, “God willing”, with the help of the youth of Iran, “our Islamic Republic will no longer be in need (*muḥīṭ*) of foreign countries” (*Social Studies 3*, 2004, p. 31; See also *Social Studies 3*, 2000, p. 40). The textbook ends with the following sentences, reiterating the above message:

> [Imam Khomeini] was very fond of children and would have liked children to be morally educated (*tārbiyat*) in such a way that they could serve Islam and their country. From that day on, Ali and Maryam were eagerly awaiting the beginning of school on the first of Mihr [September] and were preparing themselves to attend school. (*Social Studies 3*, 2004, p. 73; See also *Social Studies 3*, 2000, p. 100)

Moreover, in *Persian 5*, students also read that according to Imam Khomeini, Iranian students are the future of the revolution and of Iran (*Persian 5*, 2004, p. 138-139; 2001, p. 148-149; 1994, p. 164-165).81 The authors state that Imam Khomeini was proud of students’ contributions to the revolution, of their level of understanding of social issues and for their love of Islam. Students read that he considered them as the source of Iran’s wealth: “I have hope in you. My hope is to you elementary students. My hope is you who -- God willing -- will inherit this country and its future will be in your hands” (as cited in *Persian 5*, 2004, p. 139).

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81 This lesson was not included in the 1986 edition of *Persian 5*. 
4.4.2 Knowledge, Development, Schooling and the Construction of the Ideal Citizen

The most important and honourable (buzurgvārtarīn) form of knowledge is identified as religious īlm (knowledge) that functions as a fundamental aspect of spiritual unification (tauhīd) and “prosperity” (furūgh) since it is based on the commandments (ahkām) of divine law and ordinance (shar) (Persian 6, 2004, p. 168), but the importance of scientific knowledge is also emphasized. Scientists are characterized as the enemies of ignorance and as the friends of truth seekers (Persian 4, 2004, p. 49). The ideal child-student-citizen loves schooling and the nation of Iran. The duty of both male and female students is to become knowledgeable and use that knowledge to build a better world for Iranians (History 6, 2004, Introduction). The importance of knowledge seekers in the development of Iran is also explored in Persian 6 (2004, p. 63-64), in a lesson entitled “Research” (Muţāla’ah). Students read that Iran’s participation in the world market relies on an informed population that is familiar with the knowledge and experiences of past generations. The only true (yagānah) way to achieve this goal is through studying appropriate (sūdmand, beneficial) scientific books (Persian 6, 2004, p. 63). The textbooks stress that students must attempt to be good pupils, to study hard and to strive towards greater progress (pīshraft) and achievement in order “to serve the kind nation of Iran and all of the peoples of the world” (Persian 3, 2004, p. 143). As an example, students read about “Dr. Mahmood Hesabi”82 (Persian 6, 2004, p. 158). The authors emphasize that while Dr. Hesabi was studying in Beirut during World War I, he was able to endure the harsh conditions caused by the effects of the war and to continue his university studies with the support of his (jadākār) self-sacrificing mother and because of his hard work and intelligence.

Although such information is communicated to both male and female students in their school textbooks, the authors of the textbooks do not always speak to the female students. For example, in one of the last lessons in Social Studies 3 (2004, p. 69; 2000, p. 95), the authors state that after re-evaluating Ali’s transcript, the male principal’s replied, “Wow, Wow! What a good student” Ali is because of his grades (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 69; 2000, p. 95). In contrast, Maryam’s mother comments to her father that “[The female principal of Maryam’s new school] said she really likes Maryam’s hijāb”.83 Students read that, in response, Mr. Hashemi said, “Maryam is a good girl and I

82 He is known as the first Iranian physicist, referred to as the “father of teaching modern physics”.
83 In the 2000 (96) edition, the teacher also examined Maryam’s transcript but her comments were unrelated to Maryam or her transcript.
hope she is going to be well-mannered and organized in school and study well” (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 70; 2000, p. 96).

In Social Studies 3, students also read that Maryam wishes to become a nurse (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 32; in the 2000 (3) edition, Maryam wanted to become a teacher). Her choices of future employment are affirmed since they fit into the constructed image of the ideal woman as caring and unselfish and as an agent of socialization. The depictions of women in these positions, in addition to other medical occupations, are also reflective of the extent to which policies of segregation have created the need for a highly specialized female professional class working at different levels in both public and private institutions, in order to deal with women’s and family issues and concerns (Alizadeh and Harper, 2003, p. 193). Nevertheless, Maryam wants to achieve these statuses because of her “natural” desire to assist the country in achieving its goals and to serve the sick [khammat kunah ba mardumah bimār] (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 32). In an ironic way, Maryam is depicted as being involved in her own domination. She must assist the state in defeating the enemies of Islam and Iran by being a good student; yet, at the same time, her adherence and conformity to the Islamic dress code are valued more than her desire to learn and to become a nurse or a teacher. This construction reproduces the idea of bā-ḥijāb (un-veiled) as undesirable, “impious” and un-Islamic (Persian 2, 2004). Maryam is, in fact, the representation of the ideal women citizen who does not question the role of the state in controlling women’s sexuality and woman’s participation in public affairs, as it contradicts the qualities of a well-mannered and organized veiled Moslem woman. This message is reinforced and is an important aspect of this lesson since in the “Question Section” the authors ask, “Why did Mrs. Principal like Maryam?” (Social Studies 3, 2004, p. 73; See also Social Studies 3, 2000, p. 100). And Ali is considered as the ideal male student who will have access to important positions that require educational qualifications and good grades.

As it can be stipulated, the main political message in these texts is that in order for students to ensure a self-reliant Iranian economy that is not dependent on foreign powers, then they must become specialists in their fields and assist Iran. The ideal citizen is a student with good marks, whose future ideal roles are prescribed for him or her in the school textbooks. In other words, students read that their agencies in their future roles as adults are measured based on their levels of success in schools. Furthermore, their agencies are reduced to individual economic

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84 In fact, in 1986, about 60 percent of all employed women were categorized as white-collar workers; furthermore, in 1986, more than 90 percent of all of those employed in the public sector were, in fact, female teachers (Moghadam, 1994, p. 94). Despite discrimination and difficulties that women have faced, it is interesting to note that middle-class women have been able to resist intolerance with relative success as their rate of employment participation in the private sector attests to (Moghadam, 1994, p. 94).
obligations towards the state and Iran. The level of economic development and political freedom depends on the level of the success of Iranian students in their efforts to learn about various fields of science and technology. The success of Iranian students, however, is depicted in light of personal responsibilities, attributes and success. For example, attributes such as hard working and deferring gratification are also presented to students as valuable and important characteristics of a good student and future ideal adult citizen in a lesson in Persian 2 entitled, “Nūshā va Kūshā” (“Pleasure Seeker and Hard Worker”). The authors explain how Kūshā (hard worker) takes advantage of what is available to him/her and achieves his/her goals (i.e.: becoming a medical doctor). On the other hand, Nūshā (pleasure seeker), who did not apply himself/herself and never finished a task, does not accomplish anything. In the exercise section of this lesson, the emphasis remains on the importance of hard work and deferred gratification. In fact, the message is implied in a series of drawing that students are asked to look at and explain their meanings (See Figure 4.34, read from right to left). The success of Iranian students, however, is depicted in light of personal responsibilities, attributes and successes that are also narrated in light of the discourses of leadership, group solidarity and cooperation that divides the world between the forces of “evil” and “good”: the West/Christianity and Iran/Islam.

Figure 4.34 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is a sequence of drawings showing an ant attempting several times to carry a seed to it’s nest and succeeding.

Figure 4.34, “See and Tell” Section, Source: Persian 2, 2004, p. 46, “Kūshā va Nūshā”.

Students are informed that they should be caring, industrious and hardworking (kārkan) since such characteristics are valuable and everlasting (jāvdānah) resources/qualities. Iranians are constructed as workers whose aims are predetermined for them. They are constructed as citizens who are ready to serve their nation. However, representations of the working classes are not reflective of the diversities within this category (See Yaghoubian, 1993, p. 224-233). In fact, such histories of class antagonisms are absent in the narrations of nation.
The ideal citizen is constructed as a conforming student who works well in groups and who will be ready for the challenges of work in this post-modern world, where knowledge is power.

This ideal citizen’s main task remains to modernize Iran. The modernization of Iran is also envisioned in light of the discourse of efficiency that is Islamised. Iranian political independence is considered as the end result of the Revolution of 1978-79, and since then, Iran has been attempting to achieve economic independence as well. Moreover, efficiency in economic affairs and industrialization are considered in the textbooks as signs of political independence that will secure Iran’s independence from foreign incursions. Despite the political nature of the curriculum, various discourses that relate to one another, such as the discourses of ṣarbūṭ-ja‘ī (conservation), efficiency, development and velayat-e-faqih (jurist guardianship), are employed in constructing the roles of the ideal citizen and his/her knowledge of economic, political and environmental issues, from an apolitical perspective. Yet, their agencies are reduced to individual economic, moral and societal obligations towards the state and Iran.

Through such representations, the qualities that are being transmitted are those that are thought as necessary and important for the development and modernization of Iran within a paternalistic, nationalistic and Islamic discourse. The need to develop Iran is discussed in light of the need to improve the life conditions of all Iranians and to ensure employment for them (Social Studies 5, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 143; See Persian 5, 2004, p. 53-58). The ideal citizen and student are imagined from an economic view of the future that envisions a prosperous and technologically advanced Islamic society, where there are ample opportunities for upward social mobility.

These are the most important and the main goals of individual students in Iranian/Islamic society. Students must apply themselves and try their best to learn from their teachers: this is also their main social responsibility in schools. As part of their school knowledge, students also read about the importance of economic relations and activities in human societies in their school textbooks. In fact, the 1993 to 2004 editions of the geography textbooks and the geography sections in social studies focus mainly on economic issues in light of a class-based and nationalistic perspective. Knowledge about economic issues is often represented to students in light of contradictory approaches to factors and topics such as the importance of water, roads and environmental issues. I discuss these issues in the next section.
4.4.3 Geography, Environment, Pollution, Economic Relations and Independence

In terms of discussions about economic productivity and activities in the 1999 and 1994 editions of Social Studies 4 (Geography Section), students read that in addition to oil, Iran is also rich in minerals (1999, p. 62, 70; 1994, p. 64, 72). For example, the authors pointed out that in major cities like Tehran, there are a number of heavy industries that produce automobiles and refrigerators and specialize in heavy metal production (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1999, p. 71; See also Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1994, p. 73). Students read that in the southern port of Bandar Abbas, not only are ships built but this city also serves as the most important centre for the fisheries industry (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1999, p. 73; See also Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1994, p. 76). Students also read that although city dwellers may buy and sell agricultural products imported from rural areas of Iran, these products are also used as raw materials in the factories, which are often located in major cities and/or in their suburbs (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1999, p. 61; See also Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1994, p. 64). An example that was given is how sugar cane that is produced by farmers in the mountainous areas of Iran, is utilized as raw materials in sugar factories in urban centres for the production of sugar for mass consumption (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1999, p. 62; See also Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1994, p. 64). Another example that was provided to students is how wool produced by villagers and tribal people is transformed into finished goods such as clothing in factories and carpets in small “guilds”. Students were also informed about animal skins that are used as raw materials and made into leather in factories (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1999, p. 62; See also Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1994, p. 64-65). All these details have been omitted from the 2004 edition of the Social Studies 4 textbook.

However, some of the information that was excluded from the geography section of Social Studies 4 (2004) is now incorporated as part of the geography section in Social Studies 5 (Geography Section, 2004, p. 10-26). One of the ways in which the 2004 edition of Social Studies 4 and 5 has been revised is actually based on a vertical movement of information from one grade and including it as part of another grade. In fact, at times, the same questions that were asked in the body of the previous editions and/or in the “Question” sections at the end of each lesson are now asked in the “Group Activities” and/or “Question” sections, which, in fact, make these different editions very similar in content. For example, the discussions in previous textbooks about how raw materials produced in a country are transformed into other useful products through the process of industrialization in factories is now presented in the form of a “Class Activity” in the 2004 edition (See Figure 4.35) (Social Studies 5,
In general, in Social Studies 4 (Geography Section, 1999; See also Social Studies 4 (Geography Section, 1994) the information was explored in the context of the different geographical areas of Iran. But in Social Studies 5 (Geography Section, 2004) the topics are now divided into three major chapters, p. “Agriculture and Animal Husbandry ḍāmparvarī” in Iran (Social Studies 5, 2004, p. 10-17); “Oil and Gas Energy” (Social Studies 5, 2004, p. 18-21) and “Iranian Industries” (Social Studies 5, 2004, p. 22-26). In the 2004 textbooks, the exploration of natural resources, occupation and industry topics have replaced the theme associated with human geography as the desired way of communicating this information and knowledge to students.

Figure 4.35 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is an illustration that asks students to discuss how raw materials are turned into consumer goods.

Also, since the revolution of 1978-79, two of the main themes of Iranian school textbooks at the elementary and guidance levels have been health and the environment. In fact, this is also one of the main concerns of global education theorists. From this perspective, different regions of the world are “environmentally interdependent” and form an interrelated eco-system (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 5). In general, the 2004 textbooks offer many more lessons on issues related to the environment. Environmental issues are also the focus of the government’s Third Development Plan, announced in 1999 that aimed at “upgrade[ing] the sewage system”, reducing air pollution, improving irrigation systems, stopping soil erosion and deforestation and preventing the further spread of desert (Amuzegar, 2005, p. 48). In this section, I focus on how the ideal citizen is represented in light of the narration of nation in the geography sections/textbooks, with a focus on the environment as a category of investigation. I show
how representations of environmental issues are closely linked to how modernization and development are portrayed in determining the role of the ideal citizen in the development of nation, in light of lessons on the importance of roads, “water” and economic production.

In a lesson entitled, “What Are the Functions of Roads in Our Lives?” , the authors state that roads allow people to go to school and work, to shop, vacation or visit family or friends (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 2004, p. 56-57). The emphasis on roads as a sign of development is an important aspect of these lessons that was also communicated to students in the 1999 edition of Career Studies 7 for boys (57). In this textbook, students read that from an economic perspective, roads (rāh) enable the transportation of commercial goods, agricultural products and manufactured goods. Students were also informed that from a military perspective, the construction of roads provides for the movement of military equipment and personnel. Students also read that from a tourism perspective, roads allow for the movement of people (Career Studies 7 [for boys], 1999, p. 57). Such explanations for the importance of roads offer a simplistic economic rationale as the authors do not account for political and military factors. For example, after the Civil War in Kurdistan of Iran that ended in the late 1980s,

The Islamic Republic has offered a number of concessions including material rewards … for example, investment has been made in the electrification of some villages and the construction of roads and bridges in rural areas, and urban development projects such as the expansion of streets and the construction of parks. It must be noted, however, that most of these projects have [had] military significance, and they are dwarfed by the colossal network of army and gendarmerie outposts built throughout the region. (Mojab and Hassanpour, 1995, p. 242-243)

The same information with similar economic emphasis as in Career Studies 7 (1999, p. 57) is also repeated in the first subsection of the lesson, “What Are the Functions of Roads in Our Lives?”, entitled “Commerce” (Bāzargānī) in the 2004 edition of Social Studies 4. In this section, the authors write that,

Can you list a number of items that are produced outside your residential areas and are [transported] to your place of residence? If a specific item is produced in excess of the needs of the people in one area, it is sold in other areas. For example, in Gilan [a province in northern Iran adjacent to the Caspian Sea], tea is produced. In many other parts of Iran the land is not suitable for the growth of tea. As such, some of the tea products [of Gilan] are [exported] and sold in other parts of Iran. Can you provide other examples of this [type of activity]? Which products that you [consume] are produced outside Iran? [How are they brought to you?] Commerce refers to the act of buying and selling products within a country or between countries. You can now better understand the importance of [transportation systems]. The existence of these “roads” [transportation means] is needed for the movement of people and [for the transportation of] goods from one area to another. (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 2004, p. 57-58)

Students read that the most important function of roads is for the efficient movement of people and/or goods that are produced in excess in one region and may not be available in another area due to, for example, the unsuitability of land for the production of certain crops. Students also read that commodities, which are produced in a country and...
are sold abroad, are called exports. The authors inform students that the most important exports of Iran are oil, carpets and pistachios (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 2004, p. 57). The previous editions of the same lesson also included examples of commodities that are imported into Iran such as heavy equipment, pharmaceutical goods and paper, which are excluded from the 2004 edition (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 1999, p. 76; 1994, p. 79). In the “Class Activity” section of the 2004 edition of this lesson (“What Are the Functions of Roads in Our Lives?”), students are asked to complete two boxes with appropriate sentences/answers. An interesting aspect of this activity is the way in which Islamic values are integrated as part of the second section of the activity. Students are asked to propose efficient way(s) of transportation for several types/kinds of movement. One of the examples used is “participation in Hajj [pilgrimage] in Mecca”. In the first box, students are asked to name the pros and cons of three types of transportation with the answers already explained in the body of the lesson. For example, for water transportation, the text uses the example of barges as a good way of transporting heavy goods. The authors state that although sea transportation is cheap it is also time-consuming and slow in comparison to other forms of transportation (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 2004, p. 59). Air transportation, students are informed, is the fastest and most expensive way of moving goods and people across Iran and the world (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 2004, p. 59).

In a lesson, entitled “The Seas and Lakes of Iran” (Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 44-50), students also read about the existing lakes, rivers and other sources of water. In the “Questions Section” of this lesson students are asked:

- In what ways is the Sea of Mazandaran [Caspian Sea] important?
- In what ways are seaports important for the country?
- What are the types of occupations that people of the ports are employed in? Name four of them. (Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 50)

In another lesson entitled, “Why Are Rivers Important to Us?”, students read that rivers are important as sources of drinking water as well as for the production of electricity and for agricultural activities (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 2004, p. 51-55; See also Career Studies 7, 2004, p. 40-42). In Social Studies 4 (Geography Section, 2004, p. 51-55), students are informed that the mountainous areas of Iran are important geographical locations since most of the rivers are found in these parts of the country. Students also read that Iran faces water shortages due to the fact that most of Iran’s geographical mass is covered by desert and Iran is also located in a warm and dry climate. Although these descriptive aspects of the lesson provide a lot of information to students, the ideological supposition
that informs this lesson is the importance of water as a political and economic investment that needs to be preserved and protected. The importance of water is also explained by references to the types of jobs and economic benefits that port cities enjoy.

In the 2004 edition, students are introduced to basic information about why rivers are important in the context of a thematic approach to pedagogy and teaching that actually focuses on the economic roles and benefits of rivers and ports without any reference to the political considerations over who controls natural resources and the effects on rural and urban populations. For example, in the “Dialogue in Class” section of the lesson, “Why Are Rivers Important to Us?” (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 2004, p. 54), students are asked to discuss why they should not dump garbage into rivers (See Figure 4.36). The questions in the drawing are as follows: “1) Why should not we throw garbage in rivers? 2) Read the lesson and state why we should conserve electricity. [How can you achieve this goal?] Give reasons and examples.” Furthermore, in the “Question” section (Social Studies 4, Geography Section, 2004, p. 55), students are also asked about why the mountainous areas of Iran are important geographical locations and why the water quality of all rivers is not suitable for agricultural purposes. More important, students are also instructed that conserving electricity is an important national goal for all Iranians.

Figure 4.36 has been removed due to copyright restrictions.

The information removed is an exercise that asks students to look at two drawings of a polluted and non-polluted river in order to answer the questions.

One of the characteristics of the ideal citizen that is represented to students is the quality of conservation. This is a very important message. Conserving energy reduces the consumption of energy and puts less pressure on the environment. However, the textbooks also promote the discourse of modernization and development that requires more energy for the production and distribution of consumer goods. The economic focus in this and similar
lessons assumes that in order for the state to achieve the goals of its development plans, Iran will require access to more energy sources and natural resources such as water.

More important, conserving energy at the individual level is only one part of the solution and students do not read about the lack of regulations, standards and codes for “private homes and, public buildings and industrial and commercial plans” and their effects on pollution (Amuzegar, 2005, p. 60). The individual consumption of energy does not explain why Iran, with an estimated one percent of the world’s population, consumes nine percent of the world’s energy (Amuzegar, 2005, p. 60). In fact, industrial goods built in Iran tend to consume more energy than similar foreign goods such as cars and refrigerators and industrial factories such as cement producers also use more energy than their foreign counter parts (Amuzegar, 2005).

Similar arguments and information are also presented to students in various other subjects and grades before and after the implementation of the Global Education initiative. For example, in a lesson entitled, “Water” in the 2001 edition of *Science 1* (2001, p. 70-77), students read about sources of water, why they should conserve water and how to avoid polluting and wasting water. Students were shown pictures of different ways of using water and in a subsection, entitled “Keeping Water Clean”, students were asked to look at two pictures, one depicting a pristine waterway and the other depicting a polluted waterway and were asked to propose ways in which waterways could be kept clean and free of pollution (*Science 1*, 2001, p. 74). The authors encouraged students not to waste water in their daily lives and they were also asked in what other ways seas are utilized. Similar information is also presented to students in the 2004 edition of *Persian 3* (2004, p. 29-30), in a lesson entitled “We Only Have One Earth”. Students read that “our city is our home” and like other animals who keep their environment clean, humans also keep their streets clean in order to ensure healthy living conditions for themselves and their communities. The lesson emphasizes that some people pollute their streets, communities and city by throwing garbage in the rivers and street waterways (jūb). The lesson states that,

> We humans need air to breath. If the air is not clean then all of us humans and animals will become sick … Now that the smoke of cars and factories has polluted our city’s air, the sky is no longer blue and beautiful. We wish that these cars and factories would hear our calls and would not pollute the air of the planet earth. (*Persian 3*, 2004, p. 30)

In the “Listen and Tell” section, students are asked: “What factors cause pollution in the city and sickness to people? And why is keeping the earth clean an important task?” (*Persian 3*, 2004, p. 30). An important aspect of the textbooks is that students are encouraged to develop a positive sense of social responsibility and are encouraged to
become active participants in keeping their neighbourhoods clean and tidy. Although students are encouraged to propose ways through which they can protect their environment, such as the various water sources in Iran, it seems that the textbooks actually suggest that student’s personal responsibility is to ensure the perpetuation of the economic benefits of water for future generations, rather than solely informing students about the harm that various forms of pollutions cause the environment and to the health of animals, plants and humans. Moreover, in the “Dialogue in Class” section of the lesson, “Why Are Rivers Important to Us?” (Social Studies 4 (Geography Section, 2004, p. 54; 2003, p. 54), the authors suggest that it is due to the actions of thoughtless individuals who litter the rivers that some rivers are polluted.

It is also important to note that the lesson, “We Only Have One Earth”, is simply a revised version of a lesson from a previous edition, entitled “Our City, Our Home” (Persian 3, 2002, p. 92-99), in which the teacher, in a true “banking approach”, 85 lectures to his/her students about a driver who threw some garbage out of his car. This lesson (Persian 3, 2002, p. 95) ends with the following statement: “we must keep the planet earth, which is our house, clean”. One of the drawings (Persian 3, 2002, p. 95) that accompanies this lesson is of a (middle class) boy whose thoughts are depicted in the form of a drawing, that equates (with an equal sign) his ‘clean’ house to the map of Iran that is painted with the colours of the Iranian flag and its symbol, Allah or God. Those individuals who pollute the streets of the nation are constructed as “demons” and “selfish”, responsible for producing pollution and littering the country with garbage. This aspect of the lesson is still present in the 2004 edition.

Nevertheless, students are asked to discuss and explore the consequences of other factors that result in the pollution of seas and lakes. In the 2004 edition of the textbooks, the roles of factories and cars in polluting the environment are also acknowledged. But this discussion does not include any arguments about the effects of structural factors such as the roles of private industries, global corporations and the government in polluting the environment, both locally and globally (See Social Studies 4, 2004, p. 49, “Class Activity” section; Career Studies 6, 2004, p. 75-80). The authors of the textbooks exclude the information and knowledge that exposes the relationship between pollution, unsanitary living conditions, structural factors, economic relations and poverty at the local level due to national or global relations. For example, conserving energy and water and not contributing to pollution is not simply the end result of irresponsible and selfish individuals and is not merely a matter of personal

85 In the banking approach to education, the teacher is the communicator of information and knowledge that is considered to be necessary for the well being of the pupils. Students are viewed as empty vessels that absorb the information like sponges. The teacher plays the role of the tutor who knows what is best for his/her students.
responsibility. Despite the acknowledgment of the existence of shanty-towns during the Shah’s government due to his exploitative policies, the textbooks do not account for the lack of infrastructure and services that has resulted in the accumulation of garbage and the creation of unsanitary conditions in certain parts of various towns and cities in Iran. Rather, the authors of the textbooks point out how the Islamic government of Iran has been providing services for the needy and the poor since the revolution.

Such a construction of individual responsibility towards keeping the environment clean is not problematic per se. But it is limiting since this and similar messages are often accompanied by an emphasis on and encouragement of students to study hard, defer gratification and become future developers, scientists and technical personnel in order to improve the economic productivity in Iran. The desired qualities such as to be studious learners that are expected from students is not linked to how they, as future adults with professional responsibilities, might use their knowledge to reduce waste and pollution through innovation in their work places. This lack of inclusion of an environmentalist approach to developing conscious future scientists, bankers, workers and managers is accentuated due to the lack of a critical approach to discussing the history of science and knowledge (ilm) (See below).

The authors approach economic relations and environmental issues from an apolitical perspective. Students mainly read about the economic benefits of importing and exporting products and goods such as oil and fish to other Iranian regions and to other parts of the world in terms of, for example, job creation. This is accentuated by the lack of a critical exploration of the roles of the state, industries and the effects of standards in the production of wasteful and hazardous materials. However, the economic functions of roads and water are discussed in detail for students. It seems that in the context of neo-conservative politics at the global level and their ripple effects at national levels and in the case of Iranian school textbooks, critical thinking is conceptualized as “thinking skills” that “teaches” students “higher levels of cognitive skills” (See McLaren, 1998, p. 165).

The interesting non-present element is the social-class history of the working classes and the effects of industrialization on the poor and the marginalized migrant groups. Although Iranian textbooks attempt to be reflective of the working class lifestyle, the textbooks often present a middle class view of the working classes that celebrate them as symbols of revolutionary slogans. For example, in the lesson about pollution in Persian 3, (2002, p. 92-99) a student comments, “I feel sorry for the hardworking city workers (raft-gar) who have to clean and pick up garbage from the streets”. This statement is not problematic on its own. But, in the context of the aim of the
lesson to also be “inclusive” of blue-collar jobs, it “degrades” such jobs due to the expression of feelings of sorrow by students toward those who apparently do menial jobs, such as cleaning the streets and picking up debris. The authors could have elevated such jobs by linking them to the importance of keeping the environment clean. In fact, in another lesson in the same Persian textbook (Persian 3, 2002, p. 118), the authors ask students to look at a set of drawings and write an essay that begins with the following sentence: “One day, Ahmad did not go to school …”. In these drawings, Ahmad is shown walking away from school and passing by a construction site with workers toiling, a farm land with a farmer working on a tractor, … and finally arriving back at the front of the school. The point of this exercise is to reinforce that the outcome of skipping school and dropping out will be low-paying and labour intensive occupations. Despite the fact that in other lessons and textbooks these workers are saluted for their labour and contributions, in this set of drawings students read about the high value of education and credentials (Persian 3, 2002, p. 118).

No critical discussions of “those conditions under which social groups with varying degrees of income, power, and status are arranged in a relatively enduring and large-scale hierarchical order” within contemporary Iran are offered to students (Kazemi, 1980, p. 5). Also, there are no detail discussions offered about the marginal situation of workers, who were/are mainly migrant poor from villages (or their descendants) and how they have been affected by the modernization programs of the Shah’s government since the Shah’s land reform policy. Despite being critical of colonialism and neo-colonial relations, how Iranian modernization programs have affected the marginalized groups are ignored in discussions about economic development in school textbooks.

For example, the rise in poverty and the marginalization of Iranian migrants in major urban centres such as Tehran until the revolution of 1979-78 was the end result of the Iranian socio-economic system, among other factors, and the “expansion of dependent capitalism in Iran” (Kazemi, 1980, p. 8-9), which accelerated after the revolution. According to Assadzadeh and Paul (2004),

> Over a period of ten years [between 1983 and 1993], the extent of poverty in the rural area [of Iran] has declined slightly, whereas in the urban sector it has increased by more than 40 percent…. In addition, there are large variations in the levels of poverty across regions and occupations in Iran. (p. 652)

During 1983-1993, the poorest people lived in both the rural and urban centres of the south-eastern region (with a substantial Baluch population), which has historically been the most underdeveloped part of Iran (Assadzadeh and Paul, 2004, p. 647). Furthermore, “production workers contribute most to poverty in the urban sector” (Assadzadeh and Paul, 2004, p. 652). Farmers were also amongst the poorest in rural areas, “contributing more than 65 percent to

In fact, one of the reasons for the movement of the rural population into cities and the rise of poverty in urban centres may be due, in part, to the agricultural policies of the government and the establishment of production cooperatives known as *mosha* that have “forced” peasants to leave such cooperatives in search of non-agricultural jobs in the cities (Azkia, 2002, p. 113). In addition, the establishment of other forms of large scale farm corporations has also resulted in the “penetration of the bureaucratic system into rural areas … [causing] the alienation [of the] indigenous population [and their] … transformation into non-productive workers. Rich peasants became richer … [and low-income peasants whose jobs were affected by the processes of mechanization] became poorer” (Azkia, 2002, p. 113-114). In fact, the government’s agricultural policies have increased the number of poor peasants to “fifty percent of the total” (Azkia, 2002, p. 117). These changes are taking place in light of the government’s policy to reduce its role and to promote a free market economy based on neo-liberal ideology after the war with Iraq. In coordination with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the government began to liberalize trade and to privatize the economic sector (Assadzadeh and Paul, 2004, p. 640).

Bayat (1997, p. 82-83) also argues that after the revolution, despite the rhetoric of the government in respect to agricultural policies and development projects carried out by *Jihād-i Sūzandagī* (the Reconstruction *Jihād*), the incomes of many farmers remained low. However, in a number of school textbooks of various editions (*Social Studies 5*, Civic Studies Section, 1993, p. 242-243, 2001, p. 165; *Social Studies 4*, Civic Studies Section, 2004, p. 121, 1999, p. 135; *Social Studies 3*, 2004, p. 48, 1999, p. 68; *History 8*, 2002, p. 92-93, 1999, p. 87; 2004, p. 93), students read that *Jihād-i Sūzandagī* (the Construction Crusade) was an innovative end product of the Islamic Revolution and the best example of cooperation and mutual existence (*ta’āvun*), influential in rebuilding and improving the condition of life for all people of Iran in both the rural and urban areas by building schools, hospitals, public baths and roads. However, despite their actual achievements in terms of “potable water supply, wastewater drainage and sanitation, village infrastructure, … and electrification … there has been no increase in the economic potential of rural areas … [and they] have not eliminated the inequalities between rural and urban centers” (Azkia, 2002, p. 117-118). Their programs, moreover, have been limited to providing extension services after the implementation of liberalization programs (Azkia, 2002, p. 118). In addition, despite the textbook authors’ assertion that the *Jihād-i Sūzandagī* (the Construction Crusade) approach to development in rural areas is an Islamic
invention, it is, in fact, based on the two traditions of “the integrated rural and community development approach pioneered in Africa and Latin America during the 1960s” with an emphasis on the unity of Islamic society and the concept of the global Islamic community/nation (Um.mat-i Islamî) (Azkia, 2002, p. 104). Although the reference and detailed discussion of Žihâd-i Sûzandagî is omitted in the 2004 edition of this lesson entitled “Cooperation” (Ta’dvon) in Social Studies 5 (Civic Studies Section, 152-154), one sentence statements about the importance of this organization are still retained in the Social Studies 3 and 4 and History 8 textbooks (2004). Such constructions of the role of the state in developing the nation in the textbooks ignore that the majority of poor farmers (85%) who migrated to the provinces of Hamadan and Isfahan in 1984 left their villages due to low-incomes, lack of land and inadequate water supplies.

The movement of rural populations to urban centres has resulted in the overpopulation of major cities and an increase in the number of towns with more than 100,000 inhabitants (Kîan-Thiebaut, 2005, p. 47). Mass migration to major urban centres in many parts of Iran and into cities such as Tehran and Ahvaz has also resulted in the formation of shantytowns (Lotfi, 2004, p. 105). Before the revolution, during the 1960s, all residents of the western part of the city of Ahvaz were considered as “slum dwellers” (Lotfi, 2004, p. 105-107). Since the revolution, in contrast, the majority of slum dwellers (60% households) now live in the eastern part of the city (Lotfi, 2004;105). Their reason for migrating is due to the availability of services and job opportunities in this city (Lotfi, 2004, p. 106). In the slums of eastern Ahvaz (a population of 3,449 in 2001), 89% migrated to this city from villages and other cities within the province and only 11% had come from outside the province (Lotfi, 2004, p. 106). Out of 1,776 economically active individuals in this part of Ahvaz, only 922 were employed in 2001 (Lotfi, 2004, p. 106-107). The main reasons for their unemployment are identified as being illiterate and lacking employable skills (Lotfi, 2004, p. 107). In this neighbourhood, slightly more than one third of households lacked a kitchen, 12% had no showers and 7% had no washrooms (Lotfi, 2004, p. 109). The lack of a standard sewage system and regular garbage collection resulted in the creation of non-hygienic conditions (Lotfi, 2004, p. 109). As Kazemi (1980, p. 6) maintains, the migrant poor, or in this case, the urban poor, live under economic conditions that allow them “to earn only a bare of subsistence income”. However, the varied consequences of the revolution, land reform and economic reconstruction policies for all Iranians are not reflected in the pages of the textbooks. Students are not presented with realities of life that many Iranians experience everyday (Mehran, 2002). Instead, the textbook authors depict village life in a peaceful manner in which the farmer, who is now represented as owning agricultural equipment and
machines, is only concerned with producing goods and selling them in the market (Social Studies 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, 2004).

The social cohesion amongst the poor and migrant ethnic families is also excluded from the content of knowledge about the other and the self. Kazemi (1980, p. 62) points out that marginalized migrant workers “help each other to find jobs and even provide cash advances to a needy kin or friend”. The poor organized reciprocal networks that assisted their members and helped them to familiarize themselves with varied and structurally different ways of life in urban centres (Kazemi, 1980, p. 62). In June-August 1977, more than 50,000 demonstrators protested “against slum clearance” months before the main demonstrations leading to the establishment of the Islamic Republic (Bayat, 1987, p. 98). Since these voices are absent, their experiences are also excluded from the textbooks. Students are not introduced to autobiographies of the working classes in the textbooks. Bayat (1997) in his book, Street Politics: Poor People’s Movements in Iran, writes about his own experiences as a child in southern Tehran,

In Tehran we first settled in a lower-class neighbourhood close to Ghazvin Street in south Tehran where neighbours consisted mostly of rural migrants like ourselves. The areas that were filled with many colourful little shops and chanting street vendors, and in which I, like so many of my friends, learned to spend a good part of the daytime in the streets. Our one-story house was located in a narrow alleyway in the middle of which ran the sewage duct, a jouy. The house had a toilet, a small kitchen, and five separate rooms, two of which were rented to two separate families (a migrant worker and a pasban, a member of the low status street police) … Our relatives, on the other hand, remained in the nearby slums of Javadieh and Mehrabad. (p. xiv)

Such omissions are necessary exclusions due to the economic assumptions that guide Iran’s development policies. In this sense, any representation of Iranian working classes is hegemonic as the textbooks offer apolitical and sanitized approaches to the conditions of the working classes both before and after the Revolution of 1978-79. As such, poverty is an apolitical issue and a term that is mainly employed to refer to the condition of the people before the revolution.

The emphasis of the textbooks is not to celebrate working class histories but to familiarize students with an important aspect of the ideal citizen, to keep the environment clean and save energy. The ideal citizen is a hard-working and unselfish individual who satisfies the needs of the Islamic society of Iran. For example, in all editions of Iranian elementary and guidance school textbooks, students have been informed that there are different types of occupations in society. They read that humans satisfy their needs by producing goods. Students read that work has individual and “collective” forms. Some people work in the agricultural sector, some in manufacturing and others in
the service sector. In the 2001 edition of *Social Studies 3*, which was completely revised and unlike the 2002 and 2004 editions, in a lesson, entitled "Why Do We Need to Work?", the text stated that “we value all individuals who work and contribute to our society. God likes those individuals who work for their families and society” (*Social Studies 3*, 2001, p. 18). This edition did not include the Hashemi family’s move across the country.

The fact that the textbooks are silent about the effects of industrialization and development on the environment and on various strata of society highlights the unspoken assumption of the nationalist discourse that industrial development will “eradicate” poverty and social problems since it provides jobs and opportunities and assists the nation in becoming self-sufficient. The emphasis on exports and imports is based on an apolitical perspective, which is ironic due to the critical approach of the authors in explaining the exploitation of the world by colonial forces and their agents. Economic relations before the revolution are explored through a critical assessment of the role of the “colonial other” in oppressing the Iranian nation. Internal economic relations are explored without paying any attention to internal conflicts and class antagonisms.

4.4.4 Conclusion

The narrations of nation and the constructions of the ideal citizen are based on contradictory but related sets of discourses, which in their discursive formation, promote a specific view and a value system about the world and in the organization of socio-economic-political life. As it can be stipulated, in the textbooks, God is constructed as the ultimate and wisest “being”, followed by the clergy, as the interpreters of the teachings of the Prophet, the leaders of Iran and heirs of the revolutionary slogans (“Independence, Freedom and Islamic Republic”).

The leadership is anti-imperialist and promotes the well-being of the oppressed. Students read that these characteristics are important building blocks of Iran’s Islamic Constitution, which aims at protecting all Iranians. According to the texts, whatever or whoever stands against the leader is opposing the nation and God. The meaning of “leader” does not allow for dissent regarding the impartiality of the leader. The texts depoliticise the concept of the “Supreme Leader” by “informing” students that they must follow the Islamic Constitution since it is constructed as promoting the rights of all and is the reason why Iranians had a revolution. However, minorities are not represented in any significant way.

On one hand, students are socialized to accept that not many of them have the characteristics of the ideal citizen, which, by definition, includes being male, learned in Islam and politically involved. The ideal citizen is
personified in the representations of the leader and the story of his ascension to power. Students are also presented with other qualities of the ideal citizen, such as being a good student and/or working hard to develop Iran, allowing them to achieve a partial status of the ideal citizen that is defined against its opposite: the West. The “enemy others” are in fact the types of “selves” that Iranians must avoid. The male Iranian, however, is assured his partial leadership position in the family.

The curriculum is informed by an ideology that legitimizes the discourse of velayat-e-faqih (jurist guardianship) at the same time as it is informed by it. The most important change after the revolution was “the transfer of power - theological and political - to the highest religious authority, the marja’-i taqlīd (source of imitation), or as the concept became known in revolutionary parlance, velayat-e-faqih (guardianship or vicegerency of the juristconsult)” (Menashri, 2001, p. 13). However, Iranian school textbooks do not mention that the selection of Ayatollah Khamenei as the Supreme Leader (vali-faqih) of Iran after the death of Imam Khomeini was not without controversy or political pressures and manipulations (See Menashri, 2001, p. 34). This discourse of velayat-e-faqih informs the socio-political context in which school textbooks construct the ideal citizen in light of the qualities of “the leader” that are prescribed, hegemonic and manufactured representations.

In these constructions, two contradictory images are presented: fear and care. The concept of fear/care should be understood in the context of rights and responsibilities and the East/West dichotomy. Upholding the laws of the land, obeying rules and expectations, paying attention to order and caring for and helping the mustaţaffīn (the oppressed) are the basic messages of these texts. The West as the aggressor is also feared. On one hand, caring for Iran, family members, other Iranians, other Moslems and the oppressed of the world is desirable. At the same time, students are told to be wary of enemy outsiders. Students are informed that one way to stop the enemies of Iran is to participate in Iran’s economic reconstruction.

However, the narrations of nation and Iran are often contextualized in the form of a boy reminiscing about his conversations with his father or the places he has visited with his family. Most heroes who are presented and glorified are men. Although Western women are not mentioned, the authors of the textbooks offer more stories about Western men such as Thomas Edison and other scientists in Persian 5 (2004, p. 154-155) and Persian 3 (2004, p. 74-75) than discussions about Iranian women. A patriarchal view of Iran is presented and few female role models are introduced to students. In fact, when the authors of the textbooks refer to Firdawsī’s poems/poetry in the Shāhnāmah, they only mention the stories that are about father–son relationships and ignore those stories that are
about male-female love relationships. The heroes, poets and scientists of the nation are all male. In this sense, the ideal citizen also has these qualities: they are the ones who defend, develop, and write Iran’s history in reaction to outsiders’ aggression toward the nation.

The West is othered in two ways. The voices of Western women are silenced and ignored. They are non-present but are important aspects of the construction of the ideal Iranian citizen. As mentioned, the ideal citizen is bā-ḥijāb (veiled). By definition, many Western women could be considered as bi-ḥijāb (un-veiled). This immorality of Western women excludes the possibility of their inclusion. The other aspect of the Western self that is othered in a positive way and accepted as part of the definition of the ideal citizen is Western progress in science and technology. This discourse is “blind” to the negative effects of modernity in terms of the unachievable promises that science can reduce economic dependence, poverty and hunger by improving production and distribution methods and technologies. This acceptance of the Western other is due to the belief that Iranians have always been concerned with scientific progress and knowledge production.

“Race” and ethnicity are important categories of difference that are used in representing the history of the nation and images of the ideal citizen in relation to other nationalities or cultural and ethnic groups in the world. The emphasis on colour of skin and “race” as ways of dividing and representing difference highlights the incorporation of the idea of whiteness as an ideology and as a non-present discourse that “universalizes identities and commonsense notions of righteousness” of one national group over others (Visano, as cited in Henry and Tator, 2006, p. 47). My findings point to the fact that the construction of the ideal citizen in the textbooks after the revolution relies on a racial construction of the world that divides and categorizes peoples and groups based on a host of other factors and discourses such as culture, religious diversity, geographical locations such as Asia, the Americas and Africa, colonialism, Islamic leadership (velayat-e-faqih, jurist guardianship), the oppressed (mustāžafīn) and Ummat-i Islamī (Islamic Nation/Community).

My analysis also highlights that the processes of othering both local and global marginalized and dominant groups are partly the consequences of incorporating discourses with contradictory assumptions, some with emancipatory and others with hegemonic characteristics, about Iran and its relations to other countries and nations. In constructing the ideal citizen, my findings show that the textbooks gaze at and de-humanize specific groups in both the East and the West for different reasons and for ideological and political justifications.
The findings point to the ways in which male political figures and their leadership roles are configured into the narrations of nation and *Ummat-i Islami* in light of other discourses such as the constitution, *mustafa* (the oppressed) and *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship). Students are presented with a patriarchal view of history about the contributions of individuals such as Amir Kabir, Afghani, Ayatollah Nouri and Imam Khomeini to Iran and Iranians. These individuals are considered as important sources of emulation and as leaders in Iran’s struggles against imperialism and tyranny. Iranian school textbooks are historical biographies that also function as an Islamic-Pars ideological state apparatus.

The official romanticized recreations of the discourses of Aryan, ‘*ashayir* (nomadic tribes) (read ethnicity), economic development, colonialism, imperialism and binary oppositions such as *bā-īmān/bī-īmān* (believer/unbeliever), *bā-ḥijāblī-ḥijāb* (veiled/un-veiled), traditional/modern and white/non-white in the 2004 edition of school textbooks in general disregard the political, economic and military roles and self-identities of tribal groups, women and ethnic minorities. Those ethno-religious and women’s groups, whose ideologies undermine the basic belief system and economic/political interests of the ruling party, are considered as opposition groups and thus labelled insider enemy others. The denigration of the previous regime involves the placement and construction of two minority groups outside the power structures and away from important positions/roles: those women involved in the reforms of the Pahlavi regime and those minority groups that resisted and defied the Pahlavi regime’s economic and cultural policies. This process of exclusion is exasperated as their voices are also silenced and excluded from the official knowledge. The violence that Iranian women faced in choosing to unveil is not a topic of discussion.

The right of Moslem Iranian males to define womanhood in light of the discourse of *ḥijāb* is the main concern. In depicting the Reza Shah as an agent of colonialism, the rights of ethnic minority people are not represented as legitimate and are ignored. The discourse of *ḥijāb* is used as a tool in defying the West and as a critique of Western culture as immoral and decadent.

Tribal people and women are also reflected upon as the friendly internal other as they are presented in their traditional clothing, performing traditional tasks. These internal groups whose voices are excluded from being represented are related and juxtaposed against representations of various external non-Iranian groups, including non-

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86 I consider modernization/reform programs that have affected the lives of tribal people in the form of forced relocations and nationalization of tribal land and literacy campaigns as mechanisms of “discipline” with material and ideological consequences (See Beck, 1990, p. 185-187 for the effects of the Shah’s policy on tribal people).
Western oppressed communities and the oppressed Western others, whose images and depictions in school textbooks are also central to the depiction of the ideal citizen.

The discourse of “Islam for the oppressed of the world” (the mustaʿẓafīn), or political Islam, resembles aspects of the discourse of Canadian multiculturalism (See Henry et al., 1998, p. 27-29) that emphasizes harmony, equality and tolerance. Everyone is tolerated as long as one’s demands and cultural practices lie within the boundaries of what the ulama consider as proper and religiously sanctioned. The above representations also invoke the idea that, in the context of the Islamic Republic, no one is treated unfairly and that only past governments have been responsible for the mistreatment of the Iranian nation, including violating the rights of tribal people. The Islamic Republic, its constitution and its leadership are explored through a discourse that equates the nation-state to one’s family that is blessed with a caring and pious religious leader. The themes of the Islamic Revolution, family and leadership permeate the narration of Iran and the representations of the ideal citizen and Iranian national identity.

The official knowledge implies that Iran has always been involved in the clash of civilizations since the migration of the Aryans, leading to the introduction of Islam to Iran, colonial involvement, the establishment of the modern Iranian nation-state and the Islamic Republic. However, a vision of otherness is required in constructing Iran. This otherness often has two main manifestations that are set against each another. Iran is constructed in light of the relationship between two “othered” groups (i.e.: Palestinians and Israelis) as they relate to Iran and Iranians and to one another. This othering process also takes a national form. Distinctions made between rural and urban, tribal/non-tribal and modern/traditional are central to the construction of the ideal citizen. In the 2004 edition of Iranian school textbooks, Islam is normalized in the context of the clash between modernity and traditionalism and the Iranian Islamic leadership is symbolized as the producer of national identity. The findings point out that the Iranian self is never fixed and is not unitary. However, in the process of discursive formation, an image of Iran emerges that is presented to students as fixed. Its eclectic aspects are ignored in light of the metanarratives of the nation, science, progress, the leader and Islam.
Chapter Five: Conclusions

5. Introduction

In this dissertation, I analyzed and deconstructed the 2004 and selected earlier editions of Iranian school textbooks for how official knowledge about the ideal Iranian citizen is constructed for and presented to students. I interrogated the contradictory and conflictual narratives of nation and the discourses and binary oppositions that are employed by the authors of the textbooks. I demonstrated “how [the images and representations of the ideal citizen are] composed of different textual elements and fragments” that, in their discursive formation, present a coherent and universal view and language about the world to students (Thompson, 1996, p. 570).

I focused on four main recurring educational themes of identity politics, diversity, “citizenship” and development in analyzing how national identity and the ideal citizen find local and global representations. I provided data on how school knowledge differentiates between human beings, groups and nations through the invocation of racialized, nation-centric and xenophobic discourses. I utilized the tools and insights of antiracism, transnationalism and poststructuralism to highlight the binary oppositions and the various forms of absent and present discourses and categories of otherness that are employed in simultaneously constructing an image of the ideal citizen and national identity that ends up dominating and erasing them.

In deciphering the meanings of texts, I drew upon deconstruction, discourse analysis and qualitative content analysis and operationalized the concepts that I employed based on the “textbook analysis instrument” developed by Sleeter and Grant (1991, p. 82) and on content analysis criteria utilized by Ferdows (1995, p. 328-333) and Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari (1995, p. 347-351). As such, my data and conclusions can be compared to the findings of these other studies since the ‘variables’ and concepts drawn upon in collecting the data are similar and compatible. Other scholars interested in quantitative analyses can also utilize the methodologies developed in this study to explore the themes of this thesis in relation to the post-2004 editions of school textbooks.

I maintain that the end result of the process of reproducing the official knowledge about Iran and Iranians in relation to other groups and nationalities is what Pinar calls a “fractured self” (Pinar, 1995, p. 23). This “fractured self” is also a “repressed self” (Pinar, 1995, p. 23). Iranian school textbooks reproduce several notions of “repressed selves” that function discursively as political tools and as “ideological state apparatus” due to the fractured
characteristics of identity politics. They are given specific meanings in light of school textbooks that function as both Orientalist and Occidentalist texts. Iranian school textbooks play the role of “both discourse and the speaker as constructed objects” (Pinar, 1995, p. 23) within the form of a state structure that has historically objectified itself to have political legitimacy and control over a specific part of the world, which is constructed and presented to students as the Land of the Shi’a White Aryans.

This chapter is divided into three sections. In the first section, entitled “Rethinking Identity Politics, Diversity, Citizenship and Development”, I analyze the data in light of the four main themes drawn upon in deconstructing Iranian school textbooks. In the second section, entitled “Textbooks, Knowledge Production, Experts and the (De)Construction of the Ideal Iranian Citizen”, I explore the findings in light of the theoretical perspectives informing this research. The ideal citizen, I maintain, excludes those histories that need to be included in order to promote emancipatory relations and pedagogies and to de-colonize knowledge as a counter-hegemonic discourse in promoting social justice and human rights. In the third section, “Manufacturing Reality, Assimilation, Stigmatized Selves and Iranian School Textbooks: A Pedagogical Simulacrum”, I maintain that in constructing the ideal citizen, Iranian school textbooks reproduce various forms of stigmatized selves that are gazed at and employed as tools of social, political and textual control and for “manufacturing consent”. I focus on how the meanings of identities of other groups in the construction of the ideal citizen change as the political and historical contexts in which these identities are discussed change, pointing to the shifting qualities of the identities of the other that are employed in producing a stable image of the self. I point out that relations between the self and the other are best conceptualized by theorizing the self through the exposition of “self-other-other” sets of relations by problematizing the various binary oppositions and discourses that are invoked in representing the ideal citizen.

5.1 Rethinking “Citizenship”, Identity Politics, Diversity and Development

The universal and uniform aspect of the Iranian school structure and curriculum is a very powerful ideological and hegemonic tool in constructing an essentialized image of the ideal citizen for the “consumption” of students. The world continues to be conceptualized in light of the forces of “good” and “evil”, which determine the ways in which images and representations of the ideal citizen are constructed and represented (See also Mehran, 2002, p. 247; Siavoshi, 1995, p. 208). However, such constructions of the world into forces of “good” and “evil”, based on
perceived differences between groups are, in fact, the outcome of the invocation of contradictory binary oppositions and present as well as non-present discourses that, in isolation, offer more than a simple unilinear division of the world based on a Manichean understanding of the world (See Tables 5.1 and 5.2 for a summary of the main discourses and binary oppositions used in the textbooks). Religion and Islam are presented in light of nationalistic discourses, economic policies/considerations, racialized ideology, political ideology, patriarchal views and educational theories such as child-centred education and global education as critical approaches to representations of diversity and conflict and their inclusions into the curriculum. Several forms of symbolic local, national and global identities or memberships are promoted as important to the ideal Iranian citizen. These identities are also influenced by patriarchal views of the ideal family and Islamic society. Patriarchal conceptions, furthermore, influence how images of other countries and nations such as Israel, Afghanistan and Palestine are depicted. Relations between groups and nations are expressed in the textbooks through male hegemony and power positions and political and economic views that construct other nations and the family as masculine social institutions that are nevertheless in need of help, assistance or reform. The history of the nation is presented to students through narrations that highlight the political lives of males leaders and, as such, exclude women as equal participants in the formation of nation and as important element of the the ideal citizen. The concept of leadership within Iran has both local and global manifestations. The Iranian leadership is constructed as a local Shi’a anti-colonial movement that has historically played important global roles in resisting imperialism and inequality.

As such, Iranian school textbooks are both ideological and hegemonic institutional forms of state control over the processes of knowledge production and its distribution. Ideologically, this official knowledge can be ignored or opposed. Hegemonically, they relate the student through a set of statements to other Iranians and other groups across the globe that have not been interrogated for their emic or etic sexism and racisms. School knowledge does not decentre consciousness by exposing “the internal conditions of [the] strategies of differentiations” and by problematizing the hegemonic aspects of knowledge that make “invisible the actual ‘affiliations that exist between the world of ideas and scholarship, on the one hand, and the world of brute politics, corporate and state power, and military force, on the other’” (Said, as cited in Behdad, 1993, p. 43). As such, school textbooks, as pedagogical tools that are supposed to be based on the ideals of child-centered pedagogy and global education, turn into discourses of scientific and political repression.
Table 5.1: Binary Oppositions Utilized in the 2004 and Previous Editions of Iranian Persian, Social Studies, Geography and History Elementary and Middle School Textbooks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Bad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Dependent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Tyranny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Waste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Supreme Leaders of Iran</td>
<td>Western Style Democracy and Constitutions; The Pahlavi Shahs; Sadam Hossein, Jimmy Carter; Governing Israeli elite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam (بَی‌مَان)</td>
<td>The Imperialist West (Christianity, بَی‌مَان)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran (Aryan-Pars)</td>
<td>Foreigners: non-Pars Aryan, Semite, “Black Skin”, “Red Skin”, “Yellow Skin”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Lack of Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect</td>
<td>Plunder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nation</td>
<td>Outside World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oppressed; Iranian people, Palestinians</td>
<td>Oppressor; Shah, the West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moslem, Zoroastrian</td>
<td>Non-Moslem; Christian, Jew, Pagan, Baha’i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergy</td>
<td>Modern Monarchy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polite (بَا-َادَاِب)</td>
<td>Impolite (بَا-َادَاِب)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern Male</td>
<td>Western Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Iranian Moslem Woman, Male Moslem Religious Leaders</td>
<td>Iranian Westernized Moslem Woman, Baha’I Woman and Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>بَا-َایَجَاِب (Veiled)</td>
<td>بَا-َایَجَاِب (Un-veiled)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Republic</td>
<td>Western Conceptualization of State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believer (بَا‌-َامَن)</td>
<td>Unbeliever (بَا‌-َامَن)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible, Orderly and Good Student</td>
<td>Mediocre Student, Irresponsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourse Characteristics</td>
<td>Discourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The West and East; Islam and Christianity; Afghan and Iranian Rulers; Iranian and Mongol; Iranian and Turk; the Orient and the Occident; Afghan and the Soviet Union; Iraq and USA; Afghan and USA; Iranian and Greek; Persian and Roman; the Shah and Khomeini; Martyr and Anti-Revolutionary</td>
<td>Us and Them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Jurisprudence Versus Liberal Ideology</td>
<td>Velayat-e-faqih (jurist guardianship)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary and Active: Promoting and Preaching Universalism; ( \text{Mujāhidīn} ) (i.e.: Palestine)</td>
<td>Political Islam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral Nomads; Agriculturalists; Working Classes and Families of Martyrs; the Ulama; Teachers; Revolutionary Corps and the Army; Good Students and Middle Class Families</td>
<td>Friendly Insiders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-colonial non-Aryan-Pars and non-Moslem “Hordes” of Asians; The West; Colonialism; Imperialism; Israel; Agents of the West in the Region; Taliban; Saddam Hussein; Current Governments of Iraq and Afghanistan and the Axis of Evil</td>
<td>Enemy Outsiders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Kings; The Westernized Population; Grohaks</td>
<td>Enemy Insiders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wasting Natural and Human Resources; Increase Economic Growth, Dominant West</td>
<td>( \text{Isrāf} ) (Wasting)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase in Economic Growth, R &amp; D, Conservation</td>
<td>( \text{Šarfa-jāī} ) (Conservation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How the East Mimics the West Without Understanding</td>
<td>( \text{Gharbzadegi} ) (West-toxication)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protecting Nation; Protecting Islam and Iran from Outside Intruders and Resisting Tyranny; Membership, including the Ulama, All Social Classes, Teachers, Youth, Iranian and Palestinian, the ‘Ashayir, the Basīj, “People” (\textit{Mardum}) and Nation (\textit{Millat})</td>
<td>Martyrdom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional Other Viewed From the Perspective of the Governing Traditional Us</td>
<td>Hyper-tradition or Non-Western Modernity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revolutionary Islamized Modernization; Protects Iran and Provides Services to the Musṭāżafīn (the Oppressed)</td>
<td>( \text{Jihād-ī Sāzandağı} ) (the Reconstruction ( \text{Jihād} ))</td>
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<tr>
<td>Various National and International Groups and Classes Are Considered \textit{as Oppressed}, including the Bazaar; Blacks skin Americans and “Redskins”; Does not Account for or Distinguish Between the Consequences of Ethnic and Class Inequalities</td>
<td>Mustāżafīn</td>
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The discourses of Aryan migration, Islamization, Shi’ism, ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes), velayat-e-faqih (jurist guardianship), conservation, martyrdom, self-sacrifice, Ummat-i Islami (Islamic Nation/Community), mustāżafīn (the oppressed), gharbzadegi (West-toxication) and the Islamic Republic are important sources of knowledge about Iran and Iranians that simultaneously divide between Iranians and between Iranians and other groups based on narrow conceptualizations of gender, ethnicity, “race” and social class. Despite the incorporation of these various discourses in constructing the ideal citizen, the official knowledge about the self and the other is narrated in such a way that it provides students with a single, stable, sequential and concrete discourse in relating to other groups and nations across the world. This is due to the fact that the authors of the textbooks identify the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79 and the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911 as the key elements in the construction of the ideal citizen in modernity. School knowledge situates and fixes the meaning of the ideal citizen as Moslem, Shi’a, White and Aryan in light of an essentialist understanding of “race” relations and a single-cause explanation for racial and economic inequalities without accounting for gender forms of oppression and inequality (See McCarthy, 1993, p. 35). The ideal citizen is portrayed as the “dominant” figure in relation to the Eastern and the Western others by placing them in a hierarchy based on factors such as religion, “race”, economic development and language. Such a construction of the ideal citizen ends up gazing at specific groups of peoples in both the East and West based on logocentric views that are characterized by paternalistic, Shi’a, Pars and morally superior perspectives, informed by the discourse of Whiteness. It is in the context of these contradictory discursive approaches to representations of us and them divisions, marking the beginning of all students’ (diverse and hierachically organized ethnic) histories in light of an essentialist construction of the narration of nation, that students are informed about their socio-economic and political roles and obligations as citizens of Iran and the world (Turner, 1995, p. 15).

Iranian students read that one of the basic components of a nation-state and the concept of “citizenship” is the belief in the sovereignty of the nation and that this “sovereignty resides in the people rather than in the ruling or in the corporate aristocratic body” (Kohn, 1965, p. 20). The Iranian conception of “citizenship” implies individual liberty under Islamic law (See Kohn, 1965, p. 20): “the people residing in [this Islamic] state constitute a nation, of which they are [its Moslem] citizens” (Wallerstein, 1998, p. 14). Closely related to the concept of “citizenship” is the emphasis on the importance of freedom and economic and political independence from foreign domination and economic exploitation. Education for “citizenship” is contextualized from a nationalistic and xenophobic conception of identity that excludes from within but promises global harmony and friendship. Through “citizenship education”,
non-dominant citizens are not represented according to their conceptions and from a perspective of rights and obligations that reflects the views of minorities. Instead, they are often represented based on views that relate minority individuals to the state from an assimilationist perspective that also dictates citizens’ responsibilities vis-à-vis the state and to other citizens of a nation-state and the world.

Since the revolution, through control over the state and its apparatuses, the revolutionary elite has used the textbooks as a political tool to reflect their oppositional ideological standpoints to imperialist interventions across the world. The Iranian national identity and nationalist sentiments are constructed from within a revolutionary Shi’a ideology of the ruling elite that reproduce the fears and the admirations of the national Iranian elite from a historical perspective but within the constraints of the current global economy. As bell hooks (1994) points out, “identity politics emerges out of the struggles of oppressed or exploited groups to have a standpoint on which to critique dominant structures, a position that gives purpose and meaning to struggle” (p. 88). Textbook knowledge as an avenue to express identity politics is “deeply affected by how the past is already (re)presented in dominant discourses” of the revolutionary elite as well as how the scientific knowledge used to talk about us and them categories highlights and invokes specific understandings of differences between groups with moral, economic and political consequences (Manicom, 1992, p. 369). Iran (after the establishment of the Islamic Republic in 1980) is presented to students as the centre of the Islamic world and as a leader in fighting and opposing injustices in the name of Islam (i.e.: the case of the Palestinians). The discourse of *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship) is a central and defining component of the definition of the “supreme ideal citizen” that is set against both Western and Moslem infidel states and governments. The ideal citizen accepts and follows the leadership of the Supreme Leader (who is characterized as a learned and brave religious *faqih*) and supports the constitution by implementing God’s will and his divine laws in order to protect the sanctity of the family as a social institution.87 Those who question the legitimacy of *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship) by undermining the moral constraints placed upon society by the leaders of the Islamic Republic are not considered as citizens of Iran or the Islamic community.

Despite being critical of colonialism and neo-colonial relations and their effects in different parts of the world and highlighting the Palestinian struggles against Israel as an example of the oppressed seeking freedom from their oppressors, the West is depicted in multiple ways, both as friendly and enemy outsiders. Iranian school textbooks construct the West as the other of Iran and as the antagonist to the ideal Iranian citizen. They also reproduce the positions of the oppressed groups in relation to the West and Iran despite the emancipatory language employed in discussing them. Such constructions of the West isolate an element within the self-construction of the West that also informs the definition of Pars Shi’a Iranians about the West and Iranian ideal citizen: the desire for knowledge and their roles in the progress of humanity. This depiction of the West is accentuated by another representation that relies on a conflict perspective approach in explaining global stratification by highlighting the periphery-centre dichotomy as the model for informing students about how Euro-Western countries have exploited the natural resources and labour of other countries for their own economic benefits without accounting for how Eastern revolutionary states have also contributed to global inequality and exploitation of the oppressed. The textbooks assert that the lack of development in non-Western parts of the world is not the end result of “a deficiency in appropriate modernizing values”; yet, they are not critical of the assumption of modernization theory that “exposure to advanced industrial countries could only be a positive benefit to the Third World” (Webster, 1984, p. 84). The cause of poverty is explained in terms of the “Third World’s” dependency (Webster, 1984, p. 84). The discourse of colonialism, as a way of explaining the process of underdevelopment, is also employed by the authors of the textbooks as the most significant explanation of poverty and in representing marginalized nations and continents in relation to the West and the ideal citizen. However, the authors of the textbooks do not apply this centre-periphery explanation to a critical understanding of issues and discussions of economic affairs within Iran or between Iran and other non-Western countries. Also, such analytical understandings of poverty and underdevelopment are not considered when constructing the ideal citizen in light of the discourse of scientific progress and an economic vision and ideal that are considered significant in the process of nation-building and in situating Iran in global economic relations as a leader in the context of regional relations. The solution to the economic, political and social problems is sought through the application of knowledge and science to achieve economic growth and improve standards of living. The idea of pīshraft (progress), which is measured according to both scientific and artistic factors and promoted through organizations such as Jihād-ī Sūzandagi (the Reconstruction Jihād or the Reconstruction Crusade), is an important discourse informing the construction of the
ideal citizen. The role of students in the progress of Iran is explored in light of their individual merits to study well and become useful citizen in order to lead Iran to economic efficiency. The discourse of national development is juxtaposed against the role of the colonial others based on an anti-imperialist ideology that is not critical of capitalism and its effects. The anti-imperialist ideology is presented through a set of philosophical and dogmatic assumptions that elevates the Iranian-Islamic character as morally superior to the White-Anglo-Christian-Western other. Yet, this Occidentalism becomes a secondary character and factor in light of the need to develop Iran as an independent and self-sufficient Moslem nation in order to achieve the same level of technological advancement and accomplishment as the West. As such, the textbooks justify political divisions and the economic hegemony of the corporate and national elite. In this light, Rostowian assumptions of the textbooks used during the previous regime (Siavoshi, 1995, p. 206) are, in fact, the non-present “trace”, reflecting the ‘modernist’ approach to the development of Iran and to solving global poverty. This Rostowian “mindset” is also reflected in the promotion of a consumer-oriented culture and society in representations of family settings in the 2004 textbooks.

“Citizenship education” identifies the Revolution of 1978-79 and the establishment of the Islamic Republic as a new stage in the historical epoch towards the establishment of an Islamic utopia, from within a locally and nationally centred ideology with a global economic/political vision. Economic development, then, depends on the protection of the Islamic Republic as the symbol of the independence of Iranians. In other words, Iranian school textbooks are “intercultural negotiation and adaptations of the kind” that define “citizenship” based on preconceived modern notions of the state that reproduce Iran as a “real” and “objective” entity that needs to be defended at all costs (Rahimieh 2001, p. 18). In fact, the inclusion of diversity and global identity takes shape in light of a non-present discourse that excludes forms of identity politics that are thought to undermine the ideals of Iran as a nation-state and Iranians as the heirs of the “Aryan Empire”. “Citizenship education” is presented in light of discourses that construct Iran as a viable nation-state in the twenty-first century through a discursive approach to the ideal of “dying for one’s faith”. However, the discourse of martyrdom is a nationalistic construction without a transnational application. It identifies the ultimate act of self-sacrifice as defending and dying for the nation and country and normalizes such acts as a requirement in achieving freedom and independence (See Kedourie, 1966, p. 87). This sense of “brotherhood” stemming from the desire to sacrifice one’s life for one’s country by defending it against “internal-enemy-others”, fellow Moslems (whose governments are depicted as agents of the West) and/or non-
Moslems (whose governments are identified as Western imperialist states) is an important aspect of the narration of nation.

As such, school knowledge enables the state to “force” those already represented as “external enemies”, “friendly-insiders or outsiders” and “enemy-insiders” to submit to the dominant norms or to police themselves by “hiding” their identities in order to avoid the gaze of authority and therefore avoid being exposed due to their lack of adherence to the qualities desired from the ideal Iranian citizen. This function of school textbooks as tools of social control and surveillance is due to the hierarchical organization of students’ ethnic, religious, gender and class identities within a moral ideology that divides groups based on rigid conceptions of “bad” and “good”. But they do not exclude the oppressed categories and those depicted at the bottom of the social hierarchy from membership in the nation. Through the invocation of the discourse of mustāzafin (the oppressed), ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes), economic development and colonialism, school textbooks provide partial membership for those students who do not possess all the criteria of the “supreme ideal citizen”. However, in these discourses the categories of Turk, Persian, Arab, Indian, Islam and Christianity do not account for diversity within them and are not based on their perspectives. Nevertheless, the lack of inclusion of unbiased representations of minority groups and their histories does not automatically imply that in order to be considered as Iranian and as a member of the nation (millat), one has to be born a Persian. Rather, the requirement for membership in the nation is for students (of non-Persian backgrounds) to label themselves as Iranian and to be familiar with the dominant culture, religious belief and the Persian language. Iranian school textbooks legitimize the cultural centrality of the Pars myth in the narration of nation from a racialized perspective: the discourses of the Aryan “race” and Whiteness are central to the discourse of the Islamized Pars who defends Iran and the oppressed people. The authors differentiate the national self from various groups of people in Iran and in other parts of the world since the Pars culture with unique and coherent norms and values is situated in the story of nation as the binding element that brings all Iranians together into a unified nation-state by reference to racialized conceptualization of science and progress. For example, representations of the Arab identity in light of the Aryan and Islamization discourses situate the Arab other against the Iranian self in various conflicting ways and deny the Arab population in Iran a legitimate claim to the land they occupy due to their representation as “outsiders-within”.

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As mentioned, membership in the nation depends on conformity to the ideals of “citizenship” that are, in fact, limiting in their scope in terms of a critical inclusion of the historical memories of subordinate groups and minorities. However, this assimilationist approach does not exclude ethnicity in representing the ideal citizen. Ethnicity, presented in light of the discourses of mustāżafīn (the oppressed), martyrdom and ‘ashayir, is a non-present discourse informing the construction of the ideal citizen. The ethnic identities of Iranians are not considered as pathological. The lack of faith in Iranian revolutionary Islam and in “true and un-contaminated” Islamic traditions are viewed as forms of social diseases that need remedy since they undermine the sanctity of the Iranian nation-state. In fact, ethnic-nationalism is symbolized in light of the actions of a thief/burglar undermining the safety of one’s home. As such, ethnic identity is considered a pathological identity only when it undermines the Islamic Republic. In this case, the assimilationist approach is accentuated by the claim that whomever stands against the Iranian state is standing against God and is considered an infidel. In this light, being characterized as bi-īmān (unbeliever) excludes them from membership in the nation, regardless of their ethnic or class backgrounds.

Being Iranian is the criterion of membership in the nation and Islam is the criterion of global membership. But not everyone is equally considered as part of the Iranian nation and the Islamic world. Both criteria exclude certain groups from being considered as Iranian or as part of the Ummat-i Islāmī (Islamic Nation/Community) (i.e.: Afghans born in Iran, Taliban forces and non-Moslem Iranian citizens). Questioning the Iranian Islamic leadership places groups and individuals as non-citizens in both the nation and Ummat-i Islāmī. At the same time, the emphasis of the textbooks in promoting a global identity only relates Iranians to other Moslem groups that are also distinguished from Iranians due to their nationalities, cultures and relations with Western countries. In this sense, Iranian “citizenship education” confers a transnational identity upon Iranians that only has meaning in the context of the confinement of the Iranian modern nation-state as an Islamic nation-state. Iranian school knowledge reproduces the Iranian state as a legitimate national and global structure of power by attempting to internalize in students “feelings of affinity, of common destiny and common responsibility” (Kohn, 1965, p. 21) towards both Iran and the Islamic world, which is defined and demarcated as mainly the Middle East and North Africa.

Knowledge about the other that informs how minority and majority students construct their identities is affected by the poetics and the politics of representation (Britzamn, 1993, p. 189). The process of defining the self is already overburdened with meanings that are embedded in the ways in which the other is configured in the representation of the self due to the methodological, theoretical and ideological biases of how diversity is envisioned
and portrayed (Britzmann, 1993, p. 189). That is, in developing a sense of self in relation to the other, the other in its multifaceted characteristics is already confined within the limits of the official knowledge that excludes certain types of oppositional knowledge produced by the other from consideration. In the case of Iran, a revolutionary approach to identity politics promotes exclusionary practices and an official knowledge that is “firmly buttressed by institutionalized structures of domination” (hooks, 1994, p. 83), through which the nation, the state, other countries and nationalities become visible, personified, and imagined, in order to be seen, loved, hated, conceived and/or ignored (See Kertzer, 1988, p. 6). The self is imagined by references to “monologic notions of identity such as ‘Arabness’, ‘Americanness’, or ‘Western identity’ [that] impair intellectual freedom and suppress creative interactions” between various forms of otherness and oppressed groups (Said, as cited in Behdad, 1994, p. 42). An identity that is constructed according to the categories of difference that are gendered, raced and ethnocentric are central in nationalist political struggles but it is not reflexive, since its basis and principles are not questioned for the extent to which the relationship between the self and the other is informed by ahistorical and essentialist conceptions that turn identity into a personal issue rather than a political platform to change the world (Dei, 1996, p. 59).

In constructing their conceptions of selves in this globally oriented world, minority Iranian students who are othered in school textbooks construct their selves in relation to other groups across the world through the lenses of the dominant group in Iran and in the context of the available knowledge about those who are conceptualized as the other of the Iranian ideal citizen. The process of knowing themselves includes images and conceptions of the other that turns identity politics into a hegemonic tool of domination rather than an emancipatory tool. This is not to argue that identity politics is an essentializing discourse that should not inform how minority students construct themselves in light of their understandings of social relations and their experiences (hooks, 1994). However, in imagining who they are, they also imagine who the other is and those who are considered as the other are not presented through their perceptions and their approaches to identity politics. It is through the relationship between the other within Iran (in relation to the Iranian ideal citizen) as he or she comes to view the other outside Iran (i.e.: the aboriginal groups outside Iran as “victims” of colonialism who are racialized and depicted as “red skins”) that a nationalistic construction of the relationship between these two forms of otherness emerges that depoliticizes identity politics. If individuals need “to know the self in order to” participate in political struggles against injustices  

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89 I am using hooks arguments in terms of Fuss’ and Said’s critique of the use of essentialism and identity politics as a way of excluding outsiders from having authority to talk about themselves.
locally and globally, the self needs to be questioned and placed under the gaze of critical introspection for its emic and etic biases (Dei, 1996, p. 59-60). As such, “the authority of experience” needs to be understood in light of a critical approach to nationalist and ideological constructions that intervene in presenting the other through racist and gendered constructions of reality that appropriate the voices and experiences of those considered as the oppressed for political gain.

The moral, economic, cultural, religious and political roles of the citizens of Iran oscillate between local, national and global divisions, from a Shi’a and Persian-centric perspective. Using Behdad’s arguments (1993, p. 42) regarding the post-colonial traveler and applying them to the textbook authors as “arm chair” travelers, the knowledge that is communicated through the textbooks is “overdetermined by a whole range of cultural, economic, and political conditions--conditions that privilege some and yet oppress others” due to “the mutable and wavering nature of [knowledge in this global age of information]”. It is affected by the authors “access to power and discourses” employed in distinguishing between the self and the other that invoke various present and non-present differences and diversities in the form of discourses (Behdad, 1993, p. 42). The same criteria are also employed in presenting homogenized and essentialized images of these diverse groups in relation to the ideal Iranian citizen for political, religious and nationalistic objectives. The textbooks employ what I call “textual control” in providing the type of knowledge about the ideal citizen that also serves as a measuring rod upon which, for example, standards of family life are set and delineated for students. This standard is drawn according to a vision that is not devoid of diversity and conflict per se. However, it is religious-centric and nationalistic in its selection of issues of diversity and conflict that may limit the range of issues that civil society is willing to champion or can achieve and attempt to rectify. The inclusion of diversity as part of school knowledge is based on the exclusion of those histories, categories and cultural groups that undermine the legitimacy of the state and the Iranian national identity. School knowledge about civil society is already a manufactured knowledge that has not been de-colonized and de-masculinized. The lack of a critical approach to the inclusion of diversity leads to a vision of “citizenship education” that is based on the modernist assumption of assimilating minority groups into the dominant culture. This is similar to North America where “the assimilationist views the ideal society as one in which there are no traces of [politicized] ethnic and racial attachments” (Banks, 2002, p. 84).

The construction of the ideal citizen as a pious, male, religious, Shi’a, Aryan-Pars, middle-class and knowledgeable person about politics and world affairs, who is also a leader, results in manufacturing various
“fractured selves” due to the partial inclusions of the fragmented nature of identity politics locally and globally. The authors of the textbooks employ and incorporate the fragmented nature of identity politics as tools of domination and surveillance. This dominant discourse functions as a platform through which students are encouraged to think through their own constructions of the selves within the discursive limits of how otherness is incorporated as part of the definition of the self (Thompson, 1996, p. 570). As such, school textbooks reproduce limitations that are imposed on the range of meanings that are available to students in understanding themselves as citizens of Iran in relation to other nationalities and nations. Moreover, the act of excluding some people from being represented as part of the definition of the ideal citizen coincides with those aspects of “citizenship” that also exclude certain groups from having access to privileges that advantage insiders over outsiders in terms of admittance to positions of power.

The ideal citizen is represented in light of a transnational application of what I label as “shifting collectivities”. These socially constructed boundaries between insiders and outsiders “contain rather than disseminate knowledge” (hooks, 1994, p. 83) and this knowledge also situates itself in opposition to other forms of knowledge, through discursive formations of contradictory and diverse binary oppositions. Knowledge about otherness is employed and presented in such a way that it “circulates continuously throughout [the textbooks and] society, concentrating in different places [lessons, grade levels and texts] at different historical moments and constituting particular meanings and identities” in depicting homogenized images of outsiders and insiders in relations to the religious elite and the domiant ethnic group in Iran (as cited in Gedalof et al., 2005, p. 27). These textbooks inform students’ identities based on what is absent, denied and incomplete in its definition of useful knowledge, organization and representations of the ideal citizen, which also requires conformity to rules and the leadership, based on an economic discourse that promises prosperity and development (Pinar, 1995, p. 23).90 The dominant image of the ideal citizen “not only produce[s] man as object and subject but, more importantly, preserve[s] both in our objectified, meaning-observed society” by references to fragmented and eclectic historical “facts”, individuals and social movements in Iran and across the world (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. xxv). This is despite the attempt of the authors to revise textbooks based on an inclusive pedagogy that is supposed to account for various forms of identities and experiences.

90 I am applying Pinar’s ideas and words to my analysis of Iranian school textbooks.
5.2 Textbooks, Knowledge Production, Experts and the (De)Construction of the Ideal Iranian Citizen

Knowledge production is influenced by the “institutions and practices in which they emerge” that also function as dominant forms of pedagogical approaches to textbook production (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. xxv). School textbooks of various grade levels are not merely pedagogical teaching materials through which knowledge is disseminated but are also intersecting transnational texts and the legal statements of the state. They are influenced by the conflicting guidelines and policy considerations that are the end result of how power relations at the national and global level determine what type and whose knowledge is excluded and/or included as the official knowledge. They function as “practices of social domination” by simultaneously legitimizing the direct and indirect control of various national and global groups and bodies over the process of knowledge production and its dissemination (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. xxv). The textbooks play a major and central role in schools and in teaching by dictating what is taught and when it is taught. (Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari, 1995). In fact, “books” are presented as the embodiment of useful knowledge. This function of school textbooks becomes significant since a management style approach to the operation of schools also requires teachers to adhere to the curriculum that is set nationally and influenced by international innovations in education and textbook publishing. It is in this context that a revolutionary-reforming-Islamic state gives “the illusion of meaning” to the “reality” they impose “meaning” upon (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. xxvii).

The effects of global relations on the Iranian school system have intensified and have also been presented through programs such as the Global Education Initiative in the Middle East. Revisions of the textbooks, based on theoretical assumptions that reflect the experiences of researchers in parts of the world other than Iran, is mediated through the experiences of the authors of the textbooks and the ideological biases and limits placed on Iranian curriculum writers. At the same time, the theories that are being incorporated in Iran find their roots in the professional experiences of the proponents of global education, who introduce themselves as British and American scholars living as immigrants in Canada (Goldstein and Selby, 2000). Although their immigrant experiences have shaped their perspectives on educational issues, the immigrant experiences that these scholars bring with them to constructing theories such as global education are based on a “white lens” that may not have been de-colonized and de-Orientalized. Yet, such lenses inform the introduction of peace, environmental and justice education to various

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91 Dreyfus and Rabinow do not discuss school textbooks. I am using their words and discussions about Foucault and relating it to my analysis of the Iranian elementary and guidance textbooks.
parts of the Middle East by incorporating Eastern philosophy as part of educational policies in countries like Iran (See Pike, 2000, p. 237, footnote, 1; Goldstein and Selby, 2000, p. 16-17). These non-Iranian Canadian-immigrant “experts” may lack familiarity with Iranian socio-economic and cultural histories and relations. They nevertheless “instruct” Iranian “experts”, who then train provincial and other Iranian “experts”. Although one of the aims of global education and educationalists in Iran is to be inclusive of the needs of students and their communities in implementing programs, the communities and societies that are supposed to be directly involved are, in fact, excluded from the process of decision-making regarding the direction and content of school textbooks. The process of revising the textbooks has remained a top to bottom process. In this case, the bureaucratic aspects of schooling and its centralized principles are disguised under the rubric of the discourses of decentralization and empowerment.

In other words, the ideals of decentralization are employed in further centralising the decision-making process by giving the impression that communities and students are given voices and “choices”, which is also a central component of neo-liberal policies (See Giroux, 2005). These emancipatory discourses are employed by state officials within a context that is not critical of racist, sexist and classist assumptions of, for example, the discourses of 伊朗-達士特 (loving Iran), “child-centred” and global education (See Bowers, 2005, p. 31-78), which, in fact, reproduce the power of the state. This is mainly due to the fact that critical inclusions of diversity and inequality in Iran since the revolution do not focus on the economic and political conditions of Iranians after the revolution from a critical perspective, since this only de-legitimises the claims of the Iranian government that the Islamic state has been “free” and “just”.

In addition, the hegemonic role of Iranian experts in determining the content of school textbooks and the pedagogies drawn upon to deliver it also indirectly reproduces the privileged position of male Western intellectuals and academic knowledge on issues such as diversity and difference. For example, when discussing women’s empowerment in (adult) education, the experts who are often quoted are members of the “dominant” Western canon, who are also the leading critics of Western traditional and assimilationist approaches to educational issues (i.e.: McLaren and Giroux, Pike and Apple; See Mehran, 1997, 2003). The seminal works and contributions of coloured and non-white scholars are often not mentioned and/or are ignored completely. In such cases, it is the anti-hegemonic discourses of white-male and, at times, female intellectuals that inform and dictate how post-colonial and “Third World” intellectuals communicate with one another (Wright, 2000, p. 124-126). White Euro-Western experts end up playing an important historical role in saving the world through a system analysis that is critical of both
global and local issues. This transnational characteristic of school textbooks acts as a trace of neo-colonial relations that is non-present but it intercedes in how the ideal Iranian citizen ought to be represented in the textbooks in light of professional perspectives and ideological necessities.

This transnational trace of the role of non-Iranian scholars involved in reforming schools and textbooks or in influencing them is also supplemented and coincides with another trace that is based on my immigrant experiences as a visible minority and as a “coloured man”, who intercedes and reinterprets the policies and emancipatory educational approaches such as global education as they were applied in the context of re-writing the textbooks. White-Euro-Canadian-British immigrants were involved in developing workshops for Iranian schools and teachers during the 2000 and 2001 school calendar and influenced the revisions of textbooks based on critical approaches to learning and teaching. I am also bounded by my immigrant experiences and education in Canada in deconstructing the reconstruction of Iranian school textbooks. In this sense, Canadian immigrant experiences and social relations become the traces that affect how knowledge about critical education is interpreted and implemented, in light of the effects of “race”, nationality and ethnicity and/or their different consequences in Canada.

These immigrant traces relate to another trace that not only informs this research, but also global education and the research of those scholars whom I have referenced throughout my research. This trace is based on the emphasis on international “experts”, which puts pressure on national/local “experts” and members of marginalized groups “to keep up with the works of principle progressive figures and to use their language, ideas and concepts to talk to one another, [which] ironically ends up creating an atmosphere that is hegemonic” (Wright, 2000, p. 126).

Applying hooks’ discussion of the internalization of the language of domination by marginalized people as a tool of resistance to the introduction of global education in Iran, this discourse becomes a tool in the hands of the Iranian elite in a textual domination of internal and external marginalized others in the name of progressive education (1994, p. 167). In Iran, such discourses are employed from nationalistic and ethnocentric perspectives that situate minority groups as outsiders who are also not in control of their own representations in the school textbooks. In other words, school textbooks, as the statements of the state and as transnational texts, lack an inclusive approach to the narration of nation through which inequalities and differences could be discussed so that groups and societies would not be demonized and/or further marginalized. As such, marginalized groups are excluded from positions of power that could have been employed as spaces through which groups could democratize the narration of the nation as told and
retold in the statements of the state about how Iran and the ideal Iranian citizen relate to other parts of the world and to other groups, respectively.

In addition, the proponents of global education and other critical thinkers in the West and in Iran address how to educate critical students about national policies and ethnocentric treatments of national minorities in states where challenging the *status quo* is not an option, due to the use of force and violence in silencing opposition. How can educators provide students with knowledge critical of the state’s policies towards its minorities in nation-states that demand full adherence to the leadership and severely punish those deemed as dissidents? Nevertheless, as Golnar Mehran (2003, p. 271) argues in reference to Iranian female adult education programs and textbooks, Iranian students can also benefit from approaching educational issues from the perspective of, for example, “empowerment theories”, that have the potential to provide individuals with critical thinking, literacy and knowledge to assist them in overcoming their “subordinate position[s]”. A curriculum based on emancipatory philosophy and social justice principles views students as agents of change and as active participants in local and global politics (See Jakubowski and Visand, 2002, p. 13). It is assumed that such students can affect structural change through social agencies that are aware of the dialectical ways in which both local and global factors affect their self-identities (Pike, 2000, p. 220).

Furthermore, knowledge developed through theories such as global education that informs students about the world and the negative consequences of domination of one nation by another also serves as an ideological construct that “justifies” the need for Iranians to assist those who are dominated and are in need of help. As Siavoshi (1995, p. 205) argues in reference to the pre-1993 textbooks, those who need assistance are often conceptualized in light of the distinction between Islamic and Western ideologies. It is suggested that one of the differences between the two systems is that in the West “politics is more related to the worldly issues … In Islam, however, [politics] is for guiding the human body towards human perfection … which results in … his eternal happiness” (*Social Knowledge* 12, 1982, as cited in Siavoshi, 1995, p. 205). The same message informs the construction of the 2004 textbooks. However, from a theoretical perspective, critical literacy is conceptualized as a move away from the established cultural reproductions that reiterate the *status quo*, which in the case of Iran, includes the practice of *velayat-e-faqih* (jurist guardianship) (Schultz, 2001, p. 192). Critical literacy is assumed to be achieved through the inclusion of students’ and minority’s self-expressions of the contradictions and realities in which they interact with individuals belonging to various ethnic, racial and class backgrounds (See Schultz, 2001, p. 192). It involves
questioning the structural and institutional arrangements of society (Schultz, 2001, p. 192). This element of critical pedagogy requires the evaluation of the legitimacy of the discourse of *velayat-e-faqih*, which is not presented to students. Rather, the incorporation of critical pedagogy, ironically, reinforces the emphasis in the textbooks and in Iran on the importance of a modernist conception of literacy, *bā-savād* (literate) versus *bī-savād* (illiterate) (See *Persian 2*, 2004), as a political tool that gives the impression that people can affect change and contribute to the societal building process. Future revisions of textbooks need to be more critical in their discussions of the concept of *velayat-e-faqih* since the textbooks lack any significant reflections upon the roles of the supreme leader of Iran. In other words, decentred approaches to the construction of Iranian school textbooks and the ideal citizen require decentring the ideal of *velayat-e-faqih* and political Islam.

In order to reclaim the discourses that are promoted and spoken by counter-hegemonic elements within the West, there is a need to modify (to rupture), to de-Orientalize and to de-colonize them. In promoting justice in Iran and in enabling Iranians to resist those dominant ideologies that originate in the West and in the East requires the creation of textual spaces that problematize speaking the language of the dominant groups in future editions of Iranian school textbooks. This entails acknowledging that “we act unconsciously, in complicity with a culture of domination” (hooks, 1994, p. 173). As such, there is a need to highlight the political consequences of such mimicking of style and approach (hooks, 1994, p. 173), since critical discourses have become “implicated in the process of exclusion” that they are supposed to address and rectify (Wright, 2000, p. 127). For example, referencing Wright (2000), the discourse of empowerment, as it is endorsed by those in the West, does not enable me to talk about the experiences of non-Western intellectuals, such as Behrangi, in the context of Western theories “without in effect ending up speaking to [myself]” (p. 126). Such discourses are also practiced in light of and in the context of bureaucratic approaches to education and pedagogy that remain selective in their approaches to educational issues and inclusion of diversity and voices of marginalized actors.

Moreover, students are often conceptualized as biased and in need of being taught how to be vigilant and how to become productive members of society in order to become involved in the process of changing the world. This itself is also a modernist approach to education in which students are not really considered as agents of change. They are not dictating how society should be transformed. Rather, students must first alter themselves in the context of those ideals that are actually reflective of transnational adult views regarding how societies ought to function in this global age of communication. A curriculum that is based on such assumptions seems to promote a banking
conception of education that assumes students and teachers need to change their behaviours, modes of thinking and ideologies if structures are to be transformed. As Nieto (2004, p. 113) points out, banking education results in powerlessness.

In addition, the aim of global education and critical pedagogy is also to democratize relations through the inclusion of “grassroots” approaches to community issues. However, in representing the importance of “grassroots” approaches to community issues, the authors of Iranian school textbooks encourage students to join other state controlled organizations or religious institutions, such as the local Mosques and the Kanūn, that reflect the ideology of the ruling elite. Local efforts through “individual” participation of social actors in the process of change are encouraged, but within the limits and mandates of these different state institutions. Although the recent textbook revisions may be interpreted as welcoming steps in comparison to assimilationist policies, as Macedo (1995, p. 44-45) points out, decentralization of the decision-making in education should coincide with the decentralization of power and people in state agencies. In the case of Iran, national and global bodies exert their control through discourses that give the impression that students are now involved in the decision-making processes. The discourses of empowerment are presented in light of modernist approaches to the role of individuals that fall short of enabling students to transfer the “centre”, since their inclusion in the centre requires individual students to abandon their ideologies and self-identities before being permitted to affect change. Since the production of school knowledge is centralized and decisions about textbook contents are pre-determined by international and national bodies, the textbooks are, in fact, important components of the international “disciplinary matrix”, that function as local/global “textual total institutions”. School textbooks can be compared to a “textual prison” through which the aim of the state is to rehabilitate students from various familial, cultural, racial, religious and class backgrounds.

School textbooks for grades 1 through 8 are designed to re-socialize students by providing knowledge about what is expected of them and how they should think about who they are as Iranians and as individuals. As “textual spaces”, the dreams of the nation are pre-determined and pre-packaged for students and the Iranian identity is pre-configured. A homogenized and essentialized image of the future in the form of a modern and technologically advanced Islamic Iranian society is formulated and presented to students of diverse backgrounds and histories (See Giroux, 1999).

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92 As mentioned, in this approach, teachers teach and know everything but students know nothing and must listen and absorb what is being taught to them by listening to teachers, whose main task is to talk (Nieto, 2004, p. 113). Teachers choose the materials and students must comply with the choices.
Although global education has influenced the revision of textbooks, textbook knowledge continues to function as an instrument of cultural control and of “manufacturing consent” about who the enemies and friends of Iranians are. Even though the authors of the textbooks have incorporated a technique of narrating stories through the voices of students or in the form of assignments that ask what students think of the books and the movies they have read and watched, the textbooks continue to “privilege some readings over others” in narrating the history of the nation (Giroux, 1994, p. 19). This is due to the fact that students are asked to repeat what they have read in their textbooks without any critical reflection. School textbooks, as a mechanism of power, provide information about the national self that is also used as knowledge to police the self constructions of individuals. The textbooks also make available criteria of difference that, when employed in light of the discursive formations of the ideal citizen, enables students to monitor themselves and others by categorizing themselves into two opposite camps of insider/good and outsider/bad.

The textbooks function as a mechanism of disciplining students’ minds in the form of information about the self and the other that places the other in uneven power struggles vis-à-vis the national identity and the ideal citizen. These images are also placed hierarchically, but they are not merely constructed as homogenized entities either (Foucault, 1977). Diversity is acknowledged but at the same time depoliticized. This is due to the “disciplinary techniques” that are used within the Iranian education system to normalize judgment about outsiders and insiders (Foucault, 1977, p. 183). Using the statements of Foucault (1977, p. 125) in light of Apple’s (2004) conceptualization of curriculum as a hegemonic tool, elementary and guidance level textbooks order students’ lives at the classroom level, at school and at home as well as inform them about other cultures and nations in such a way as to distinguish them from these others politically, morally, culturally and religiously. They are moral and political guides through which students are informed about the importance of conforming to “regulations” and practicing their obligations to the state and to other citizens of Iran. Students are informed that these rules must be followed in order to achieve the revolutionary goals of the leaders of the Revolution of 1978-79.

Iranian elementary and guidance school textbooks “exercise over [students] a constant pressure to conform to the same model”, to follow and internalize the same information that is repeated in different lessons, in different subjects and in various grade levels (Foucault, 1977, p. 183). The information in school textbooks provides official and technical knowledge to students that, due to its repetition, inter-textuality and relation to other lessons, pictures,

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93 I am simply using Foucault’s arguments and applying them to my analysis of Iranian school textbooks.
maps and illustrations, “refers individual actions to a [homogenized and essentialized] whole that is at once a field of comparison” in distinguishing between diverse groups across the globe (Foucault, 1977, p. 183). These textbooks consist of many statements about the ideal citizen/student that when read or written by students, the outcome is the formation of positions that must also be occupied by students as “if [they are] to be the subject of” such statements (Hall, 1996b). In other words, reading school textbooks, as a social practice that has been predetermined for students, results in the formations of “reading positions” that define what can be said and what must be ignored in thinking about and imagining the ideal citizen. These “reading positions” emerge from the structural relations within the textbooks and the ways in which knowledge is organized and compartmentalized. The process of “knowledge-production” and how this knowledge is communicated to students through the formation of “reading positions” by students “structure[s] institutional and social practices” that inform students’ ideal behaviours and their relations to the Iranian national identity (as cited in Gedalof et al., 2005, p. 27).

It is at the nexus of the intersections of cultural, social, political and educational discourses and at “a matrix of multiple codes” that “[the ideal Iranian citizen] emerges, by and to which he [or she] is [also] subjected” to (Gedalof et al., 2005, p. 42). Put differently, the structure of school textbooks, how the subjects and their contents are decided and organized and further divided into lessons and assignment sections suggest the ways in which “school life”, family life and adulthood ought to be experienced by different students differently. In reading and engaging with the textbooks, the authors invite students to “promise to do [their] duty gladly, to behave decently, [as the system promises them] …to hope that, before the expiration of the term of [this eight-year] sentence, [students] will be able to obtain [their] discharge …” into their choice of high school options based on their grade point averages (Foucault, 1977, p. 125).

As this study points out, the content and structure of school textbooks are important factors that need to be studied simultaneously. However, in light of Apple’s argument (2004, p. 43) that the production of school knowledge is “a form of larger distribution of goods and services in society” that is not exempt from the influences of national and international capital, I also argue that the role of international non-government organizations in revising textbooks in Iran highlights the importance of developing counter-hegemonic spaces that are transnational in character, structure and content. I call this space the “borderlines”, where marginalized people within the existing categories of “marginalized” can meet outside the current boundaries of their respective nation-states as both

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94 I am using Gedalof’s arguments and applying them to my analysis of Iranian school textbooks.
physical and virtual places/spaces to begin multi-layered dialogues on how to account for diversity and its representations democratically. The Iranian diaspora is a good example of “transnational spaces” that can play the role of facilitators in order to develop perspectives other than those identified as Iranian that are reflective of critical transnational perspectives. Within the format of the “borderlines” that cross national boundaries and reflect global ethnic, racial and gender divisions/inequalities, it is possible to construct and to provide spaces for the manifestations of varied self-images of those groups labelled as outsiders or insiders that have been silenced.

As Iranian immigrants come into contact with global diversity, the “borderlines” can be utilized in such a way as to situate the Iranian self in relation to various forms of otherness in order to make one aware of those other silenced selves that define our self-representations but whose historical memories contradict our conceptions of official representations of the modern Iranian self. Perhaps the contradictions between how Iranians construct their selves in Iran and in, for example, Canada can serve as locations in situating the self dialectically in relation to various groups of “outsiders-within”, where dialogue that aims at de-colonizing knowledge about the self in both Iran and in Canada can be utilized as pedagogical tools and as starting points to (re)conceptualize the East, the West and Iran from multiple perspectives. In this way, it is possible to identify the shifting aspects of national identity in the confinement of “borderlines”. In other words, it is possible to employ these global locations as platforms to (re)invent “Iran” and thus (re)reinvent what is meant by us and them distinctions in both the West and in the East.

My analysis shows that various forms of knowledge about socio-economic relations and structures in the textbooks reproduce certain modernist feelings, identities and standpoints that are also needed to sustain the socio-political reproduction of the Iranian state in this capitalist world and the changing global market (Apple, 2004, p. 43). The principle ideology remains the assertion that the correct teaching of school knowledge based on child-centred pedagogy can bring about stability within society as students internalize common Iranian values, the dominant ideological beliefs and religious/nationalist sentiments (Apple, 2004, p. 41).

In depicting the history of Iran, the narrations of nation are represented through a linear and evolutionary discourse that identifies a perfect society, the community of the Prophet, within the context of the discourse of the Aryan tribes migrating to Iran. And, it ends with the Islamic Republic as the symbol of progress. Through the discourse of Īrān-dāstī (loving Iran), the Moslem identity of the ideal citizen is affirmed. A strong sense of nationalism is accompanied by removing the ideal citizen from critical discussions regarding issues of racism and sexism. In the textbooks, the authors juxtapose Islamization and the Aryan discourses “so as to invite the [reader] to
position him- or her-self in relation” to Euro-Westerners and Arab, Turk and other non-Pars groups in the region and/or in the Middle East. Iranian textbooks limit the range of identities available to students. Yet, they also employ various forms of identities to define the ideal citizen. As Edward Said (as cited in Hall, 1996b, p. 205) points out, knowledge about the West is also used by Easterners to depict the West as its other and the object of its studies. As “Orientalist in reverse” texts, Iranian school textbooks reinvent the idea of the Orient and Occident by references to many discourses that treat both the Orient and the Occident as an object of knowledge and as a field of inquiry in relation to Iran and Iran’s relations to other parts of the world. However, in constructing the self, the dominant depictions of the ideal citizen gaze at both the East and the West differentially.

In fact, Iranian school textbooks are “logocentric” texts. As such, they rest upon the following characteristic: they invoke many dualisms in constructing the ideal citizen that in their discursive formation, construct a unified “objective” and “real” subject (citizen) (Seidman, 1994, p. 203). The textbooks provide students and establish “a universal language that could disclose what is real, true, right, and beautiful” (Seidman, 1994, p. 203). In constructing the ideal citizen, categories of insiders and outsiders are not only employed to differentiate between groups, but they are also placed in hierarchies. Coherent identity is privileged over difference (Hollinger, 1994, p. 108). Reason is privileged over madness (Hollinger, 1994, p. 108). And the other is rejected in favour of the self (Hollinger, 1994, p. 108). The other of the modern ideal citizen is characterized as an individual who is labelled as lazy, faithless and bī-hījāb (un-veiled), who will “cause” disunity and undermine the efforts of the leaders of Iran in establishing an independent and free nation.

In the absence of “borderline pedagogies” and in the context of the discourse of Orientalism, the Iranian self-conception of national identity and the ideal citizen (“us”) is conceptualized in light of the views about groups and nations that are considered and labelled as what Iranian is not. In constructing a notion of “us” to describe Iran and who Iranians are, the category Iranian is also defined in respect to “internal them” categories that are often identified as Afghan, Turk, Baha’i and Arab groups. The identity “Iranian” is viewed in relation to other forms of otherness in the East and the West, which may be different than the images and constructs of, for example, Afghans about themselves. The Afghan other in relation to the Iranian self has a specific conception and understanding of itself that is conceptualized as “us” and may not reflect the Iranian conceptualization of the Afghan, which is referred to as “them”. At the same time, Iranians are conceptualized as the other of the West by the West and the United States. Iranians in relations to Westerners who conceptualize themselves as “Us” are viewed as “Them” in
Western epistemology. The Western others also simultaneously construct various forms of non-Iranian others through the same lenses that are used in constructing Iran and the Iranian national self.

In other words, the construction of the ideal citizen and national identity involves images and knowledge about the self and otherness that are multiple in form and representation with different meanings that need not be “present” but are necessary for the representations of the ideal citizen in Iranian school textbooks. Knowledge about diversity, identity and “citizenship” is based on invoking different meanings associated with specific terms and categories depending on a host of other factors, including the historical period under consideration. This knowledge about the Iranian national self and the ideal citizen is a by-product of pre-colonial, Islamic, colonial, anti-colonial and imperialist borrowings. By focusing on how conceptions of self-conceptions of other groups are reflected upon from the perspective of the dominant groups in charge of producing and disseminating school knowledge, it is possible to show and explore how contradictory knowledge about various forms of us and them divisions are employed in depicting who is Iranian and who is not. It is also possible to highlight the types of relationships between insiders and outsiders that are central in objectifying and reifying these depictions. Albeit these images of the ideal citizen in their various manifestations in the textbooks construct positions that rely on a liberal-modernist conception of social relations that are hierarchal and unequal, such positions are established by the discourses used that may not have been produced by Iranians and/or may not be inclusive of the self-conceptions of these other groups.

The construction of the ideal citizen essentializes the category of “Iranian” as an example of a free and independent Easterner. This essentialized entity called “Iran” is contrasted to those various “Others” of the West through discourses that already differentiate between Iranian and non-Iranian “Others” in relation to the West. The West is the producer of the discourses that give meaning to these divisions, which in the context of Iranian school textbooks, are simultaneously constructed as the category “them” from the perspectives of Iranian elites and curriculum writers. The Iranian Easterner (“us”) is, in fact, conceptualized as part of the “Them” category from the perspective of Westerners. The West categorizes itself as “Us” in Western discourses that reflect upon other groups and nationalities in order to represent a cohesive and unified image of the West as the most democratic and libertarian space.

At the same time, the Iranian “us” views other non-Iranian groups such as Afghans as “them” in relation to the Aryan conception of the nation and in the context of Iran as a modern revolutionary nation-state. The Afghan
“them” in relation to Iran also has multiple self-conceptions that I label here as “us”. All of these us self-conceptions and reflections of the self by Iranians and Afghans also partly include how identity construction is informed by “Us and Them” distinctions that have also become part of the knowledge about the self in the construction of us and them distinctions in the East. In viewing the category Afghan “us”, the Iranian self finds meaning only in light of understanding the Afghan nationality in the context of its political relations with the Western “other” as the main and the most significant category of difference and similarity in constructing the Iranian ideal citizen. In addition, there are a set of internal divisions within Iran that differentiates between Iranians based on the invocation of skin-colour, religion, Islamic values and the assumed Aryan ancestry of Iranians.

In other words, there are also a series of interlocking relations between the national conception of the self and those labelled as “outsiders-within”. As such, the image of the Iranian self and the ideal citizen is equal to the sum of the dialectical interactions between various configurations of “US” and “THEM” divisions such as: “Us” and “Them” + “us” and “them” + “us” and “Them” + “us” and “internal them”. The construction of the ideal citizen is not reducible to relationships between two objective “entities” that are devoid of multiple (other) relationships and structures. It is by pinpointing these multiple relationships that I was able to determine the limits of Iranian school textbooks in terms of their approaches to diversity and equality as expressed by the Global Education Initiative in Iran and the Middle East. By focusing my analysis on how various conceptions of the self are reflected from the perspective of Iranian elite groups and by accounting for those sets of us and them relations with contradictory characteristics, I showed how the relationship between insiders and outsiders are variously constructed within a hierarchy of ideological and theoretical boundaries that are themselves constrained by the range of the discourses that are used in the representations of the ideal citizen.

These discourses and their accompanying binary oppositions limit what can be said about us and them categories and who can speak from these positions. As such, Iranian school textbooks are hegemonic tools in the hands of the government. School textbooks can be compared to a process through which the dominant culture (group) exercises control over subordinate groups by "consensual social practices, social forms, and social structures" (McLaren, 1998, p. 177). It is in light of the reformulations of various binary oppositions that the dominant culture and group in both the East (Iranian curricular writers) and the West (Western intellectuals involved in global education and emancipatory pedagogy) define and manufacture the dreams and values of both subordinate and dominant groups by "supplying terms of reference" (McLaren, 1998, p. 178).
Due to colonial and anti-imperialist rhetoric in the textbooks, both difference and sameness are employed in constructing the identities of colonized and colonizers from the perspectives of the elite groups (i.e.: Iranian elite) and educational experts with transnational characteristics and manifestations (Dei et al., 2005, p. 55). Despite being presented as an objective entity and historically viewed from this perspective, the ideal citizen, as presented in various editions of Iranian school textbooks, is the end result of the intersection of collections of “shifting terrains of meanings” available for students’/citizens’ conceptions of themselves as coherent and/or disjointed selves. The “shifting collectivities” characteristic of the ideal citizen provides students with a range of rights, obligations towards and relations to otherness, sameness and difference at local, national and global levels that, in their multiple forms of representations, manufacture different meanings due to local and global shifts and changes in the political and the economic spheres.

The image of the Iranian self and the ideal citizen that is equal to the sum of the dialectical interactions between various forms of “US and THEM” categories produced for different reasons are employed in nationalistic manners and are informed by a patriotic zealously that invoke exclusionary religious, ethnic, racial, gender and class boundaries in defining and portraying the national identity and the ideal citizen. In other words, the construction of the ideal citizen and national identity is a reconstituted and reconstructed amalgamate of images and knowledge about the self and otherness that are delineated from sources with pre-Persian Empire, post-Persian Empire, Islamic, pre-colonial, colonial, anti-colonial and imperialist roots that are either produced in Iran or across the globe. These images and knowledge base are not evaluated and critically analyzed for their multiple forms of racisms, ethnocentrism, nationalist sentiments, religious orthodoxy and sexism.

Knowledge about various forms of otherness is presented to students “according to the dispositions that they” are permitted to reveal about the ideal citizen and who the ideal citizen should avoid and fear (Foucault, 1977, p. 125). The textbooks are tangible products and tools of “redefining the individual as subject of law, through the reinforcement of the systems of signs and representations that they circulate” as legitimate (Foucault, 1977, p. 126). The textbooks reproduce these binary oppositions in light of power relations that lie outside the confines of schools and textbooks. It is also in this context that school textbooks reproduce social “reality” by providing students with the vocabulary, the names of individuals, national pride and values that also shape “public memory” and national identity (Hollinger, 1994, p. 110). Using Giroux’s (1999) reference to the culture industry, Iranian
school textbooks resemble “a culture industry that increasingly produces stories that turn [students’] desires and dreams into” political tools for the symbolic and cultural reproduction of the Islamic Republic (p. 12).

In fact, knowledge about the ideal citizen functions as a measuring rod through which the identities of students are reflected upon symbolically through the narrations of nation and the history of Iran as both insiders and/or outsiders. This knowledge informs students of the qualities and characteristics they need to possess in order to be considered as useful citizens and to be able to benefit from the privileges of the state’s services. As such, it can be stated that Iranian school textbooks are based on a conception of cultural capital that is explicitly presented and discussed in the curriculum for all students. Cultural capital refers to the familiarity with the rules and regulations of the school/classroom, the national language, schools’ expectations of students, the dominant values prevalent in society and the official school knowledge (Wotherspoon, 2004). The social success of students depends on whether or not they are familiar with the dominant knowledge that is necessary for the reproduction of dominant relations and institutions (Wotherspoon, 2004, p. 169). In the literature, it is often assumed that the culture that is transmitted by the curriculum reflects the values, norms and the language of the dominant national group (Nieto, 2004). However, national cultural capital is not devoid of contradictory global relations and/or influences. Iranian school textbooks can be conceptualized as ‘democratic’ texts that include what students need to do in order to become successful and to be considered as “good citizens” of Iran and the world. Through school textbooks, the desired cultural capital is made visible for students of working class or ethnic minority backgrounds who may not be familiar with the expectations that Persian-centric schools have of them. However, in explicitly stating the qualities demanded from students, the class bias of the cultural capital becomes an aspect of the hidden curriculum based on an invisible pedagogy that portrays itself in light of revolutionary slogans of brotherhood, peace and equality and an economic discourse that is based on capital accumulation.

More important, knowledge about the “internal them” in the school textbooks is not inclusive of the knowledge of those labelled and categorized as belonging to non-dominant class, ethnic, religious, racialized and gendered groups. The selection process is biased and based on problematic representations of diversity, conflict, “citizenship”, modernization and identity politics. The hidden curriculum and null curriculum, or those elements that are implicit or excluded from the knowledge base, operate at a discursive level and as traces within the universal/official knowledge by delimiting and reinforcing “the basic rules surrounding the nature of conflict and its uses” (Apple, 2004, p. 81). The discursive roles of those marginalized, excluded and/or silenced voices in the
construction of us and them divisions in the curriculum are under-theorized. It is important to account for how the act of exclusion is, in fact, based on the inclusion of certain characteristics of the other that functions hegemonically when operating at the non-present level of discursive formation in disseminating the desired cultural capital.

Iranian school textbooks reproduce conceptions of the ideal citizen that, based on the lack of critical approaches to representing diversity, end up judging and categorizing identities according to highly ideological and material conceptions of the ruling elite. Certain discursive strategies emerge in narrating the history of Iran and in representing the ideal citizen that rely on dividing the world into opposites with distinct moral and political standpoints. These binary oppositions in Iranian school textbooks, as in Orientalism or Western thought, are central building-blocks to establish an “order of truth” that identifies the Islamic leadership as more superior to its many forms of otherness. However, as the findings of this study indicate, Iranian national culture is not represented in the context and confinements of national boundaries alone. The dominant national culture is not an isolated entity and is not immune from global influences. However, it is through the process of idealization and sanitization of historical facts and events, for example, that Iranian students are provided with political and ideological positions upon which boundaries within and beyond Iran are also imagined and investigated (Said, as cited in Hall, 1996b, p. 209).

In depicting Asia, Africa, Europe and the Americas in relation to the ideal citizen and Iran, these forms of otherness reflect the fears and desires of the modern Iranian elite and those who (re)produce this knowledge. In representing and discussing diversity by invoking differences, the ideal citizen is depicted from a perspective and from a vision of an alternative society, where equilibrium, sameness, order and consensus are highlighted as more important and essential than diversity and difference. Despite the fact that the authors of the textbooks argue and inform students that irrespective of their “race” or nationality, all Moslems are equal, the assumption within this statement is a discursive modern trace that indirectly reinforces the idea that, for the sake of unity, differences should be put aside. The assumption is that global equality will be achieved as Moslems unify, just as Iranian Moslems did in 1979. Inequalities and differences within the Moslem category are not explored, except by invoking homogenized and essentializing terms such as mustāżafīn (the oppressed) or ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes).
5.3 Manufacturing Reality, Assimilation, Stigmatized Selves and Iranian School Textbooks: A Pedagogical Simulacrum

Iranian school textbooks “no longer refer to any reality; they create the idea of a reality which simultaneously claim to represent it” (Seidman, 1994, p. 210). Representations of the ideal Iranian citizen resemble what Baudrillard refers to as “simulacrum” (Seidman, 1994, p. 210). The ideal citizen is constructed based on (re)representations of representations and images of various Oriental and non-Oriental others that are produced by other non-Orientals and Orientals for different purposes.

The process of constructing and producing school curriculum rearranges Iranian “historical, cultural, and institutional affiliations that often privilege [Western and Orientalist] text[s] with specific intentions and meanings” over other ways of understanding the self and the other (Giroux, 1999, p. 9). The deconstruction of the representations of the ideal citizen in school textbooks shows that depictions of other groups, ideas and messages that identify the West as the exploiter are an important part of the political socialization of Iranian students. Discussions on the nations and countries that have been affected by colonial policies and American imperialism are based on discourses that do not voice the concerns or histories of these groups and cultures. Rather, they are “highly valued as representations of reality” over other representations and explanations since they reproduce an image of the Islamic Republic of Iran that identifies it as a leader in anti-imperialist movements, science and art (See Giroux, 1999, p. 8). As such, categories such as “Iran” and “Iranian” that are produced for students’ consumption inadvertently become the object of the processes of “othering” and “gazing”. “Iranians” as “Orientals” in their relationships with the non-Persian/non-Western populations of Iran and the globe, recreate the position of the Iranian Oriental other in the context of global relations in respect to the West and Western epistemology. The textbooks fail to discuss that the nationalist movements’ constructions of the Iranian national identity locates its roots in Orientalist knowledge. The discourse of denial informs the depiction of the images of the ideal citizen that ignores how the process of nation-building in Iran and in other Moslem and non-Islamic nations has been marred by massacres, racisms and sexism (See Kohn 1965; Kedourie, 1966). However, by invoking the discourse of colonialism, “mass killing” is highlighted when discussing the role of Western Europe and the United States in the exploitation of non-Westerners. The representation of the ideal Iranian citizen does not critically question how “despotism of [revolutionary Islamic] liberty” and “the dictatorship of virtuous men, devoted exclusively to the interest of” only a segment of the population is assumed to portray the “whole nation” (Marat as cited in Kohn,
More important, in the textbooks, the dreams of religious and pious men are presented as valid and important national goals for students and for the nation.

There is a hierarchy of difference that is employed in constructing and reproducing the ideal citizen that “traces the limit that will define difference in relation to all other differences, the external frontier of the abnormal” (Foucault, 1977, p. 183). For example, the ideal citizen and national identity are represented through a lens that divides the world into Moslem and non-Moslem; Shi’a and non-Shi’a; developed and non-developed; industrialized and non-industrialized; White and non-White; believer and unbeliever; veiled and unveiled; Aryan and non-Aryan; Pars and non-Pars; ulama and non-ulama; and colonizer and colonized. These dichotomies not only inform how knowledge is presented and organized in the textbooks but also provide neat divisions that are also further ‘spaces of differentiation’. These ‘spaces of differentiation’ classify individuals in relation to otherness as members of “us”. Membership into the “us” category requires Iranians to willingly conform to the values that are already pre-established in the school textbooks in the representations of and the narrations about the ideal citizen. The dominant culture represented in the textbooks is depicted as the source of mimicking for students from various backgrounds.

The stated cultural capital is represented to all students through standardized textbooks that are developed based on the pedagogical assumptions that students construct knowledge in light of previous understandings (Henson, 2001, p. 130). However, this knowledge about otherness and the self is not constructed by students as active agents in the process of schooling because the same information is repeated in a number of texts, pictures and maps in various grade levels through series of discourses that invoke differences between groups based on factors such as skin colour differences, gender, social class and style of clothing that become “ordering element[s] for such series, in that [they] connect series which in themselves are unconnected” (as cited in Henson, 2001, p. 129). In many lessons in the textbooks, for example, conformity is presented to students in the form of the categorization of individuals and groups under the term “īmān”, meaning belief. The ideal citizen is identified as a person who believes in God and in [his] leadership. In the textbooks, this Islamic leadership is constructed in light of the discourse of velayat-e-faqih. As a result, the textbooks and their authors simultaneously categorize all of those who are considered to be against the revolution and its leadership as bī-īmān, or unbelievers. However, the discourses of velayat-e-faqih and Islamic Revolution do not in themselves exclude those who are categorized as non-Pars from membership in the nation. Rather, it is through the invocation of differences in values and moral sentiments that individuals are labelled as anti-revolutionary or pro-revolutionary.
Furthermore, in the textbooks, the idea of bī-īmān is objectified through the invocation of other terms and in light of the representations of the ideal family as a Shi’a family. For example, it is gendered in the sense that a lack of adherence to the practice of houette is considered as an act that classifies all women, irrespective of religious differences, as outsiders and not as members of the nation. This is also due to the fact that a bā-ḥijāb (un-veiled) woman is considered and labelled as faith-less and immoral. Although various forms of houette are depicted as acceptable and normal, in this case it is important to note that the characteristic “Moslem” does not determine membership into the categories of bā-ḥijāb (veiled) or bī-ḥijāb (un-veiled). In Iran, non-Moslem women also adhere to this practice of ḥijāb. In this light, the absence of the practice of the correct form of ḥijāb by females in the family is also considered to reflect a lack of leadership in the family. This lack of leadership implies a lack of male supervision and/or strong belief in Islamic morality. In other words, a bā-ḥijāb woman is identified as a symbol of a strong leadership and as obedient to that leadership in the family. The ideological belief of the leader of the family, such as that of Mr. Hashemi, is one of supporting the state and it is strongly associated with the officially sanctioned Islamic values and the patriarchal and homogenized conception of family structure and relations. To be bī-ḥijāb, then, is a characteristic of immoral families. The act of not conforming to the official policy of ḥijāb is considered to be pathological with consequences that are non-Islamic. Bī-ḥijāb is a condition and a state of morality and being that is actually viewed in light of a trace that is non-present but necessary. Bī-ḥijāb is a symbol of a Westernized person or better put, a west-struck (West-toxicated) person. Bī-ḥijāb is a condition and a consequence of gharbzadegi (West-toxication). It is viewed in light of a pathological approach that aims to eliminate it through intervention and social engineering in the form of the content of the school textbooks.

At the same time, students also read that it is not just enough to be bā-īmān (believer) in order to be considered as an ideal citizen. One can still be religious, but this belief can be in the “wrong” and “man-made” religions. The textbooks identify the Baha’i faith as an example of colonial influences in Iran. Baha’i Iranians and those Moslems who question the leadership’s interpretation of Islam are depicted in the textbooks as non-believers. The textbooks also state that a faithful person is one who is not monharef, one who has not deviated from the “true” teachings of God. The ideal Iranian citizen is contrasted to both historical and contemporary Euro-Westerners, who are identified as having deviated from the true teachings of Christianity. Their common characteristics are also identified as exploiters of Moslems and the oppressed of the world. At the same time, Shi’a Islam and the Islamic Republic are also identified as symbols of the true teachings of God and the Quran.
The discourse of colonialism is used to further distinguish between Iranians and between Iranians and others by references to their differences from one another in terms of religion, faith and the correct “belief system”. The discourse of colonialism is employed in constructing otherness in relation to the ideal Iranian citizen in two distinct ways: as members of other anti-colonial movements who have historically opposed Western exploitation, and as Euro-Western colonizers whose roles in the exploitation of the world have had devastating effects across the globe.

Moreover, the above categorizations of different forms of otherness have both negative and positive connotations in light of other binary oppositions used in the textbooks, such as bā-īmān (believer) and bī-hūjāb (unveiled). The Euro-Western colonial men are constructed as responsible for policies forcing Iranian women to “undress”. The clergy, on the other hand, are represented as those who fought for Islam and Iran against this blasphemous practice. In the textbooks, the patriarchal characteristics of the nation and the ideal citizen are constructed and informed according to a set of gender relations that are justified and considered as “the truth” in light of paternalistic readings of religious texts within the context of power relations at the national, economic and political levels. This discursive aspect of patriarchy has not been seriously explored in Iranian educational studies, despite an emphasis on the Islamization of the curriculum. In this sense, who is Iranian and who is not is determined by “texts” that hide as much as they reveal the world through “words” for students.

Anti-colonial movements are also distinguished from one another by references to “race”, nationality, political ideology, geographical location, culture and religion. The invocation of the concept of “race” in the textbooks serves two main functions. First, “race” is treated as a criterion of difference in constructing imperialism. Racialized categorizations are represented in light of a political and economic view and as an ideology in explaining the process of Western involvement in, for example, the slave trade. Second, as an objective criterion of difference, it is also considered as an acceptable and “factual” way of categorizing the world in relation to the ideal Iranian citizen. The authors construct a racialized image of the ideal citizen. “Race” functions as a legitimate scientific term. “Race”, as a category of difference, is given meaning through the discourse of the Aryan thesis in opposition to terms such as “Turkish and Arab races”. Historical Arab and Turk populations in Iran are identified as “immigrant outsiders” due to the fact that they migrated to Iran after the settlement of the Pars tribe, which is credited as the founding nation of Iran. The textbooks offer this racialized image of diversity that “races” everyone but they do not offer students the possibility of interrogating the concept of “race” and its many effects. Racialized categorization is
simultaneously constructed as being devoid of any hegemonic characteristics when, for example, the authors use the term to construct Asia and Africa and to represent the history of Iran. By depicting “race” in its multiple forms and in constructing the nation through the invocation of different racialized groups, the ideal Iranian’s views about these different groups are assumed to be free of prejudice and “race-thinking” due to the emphasis in Islam on equality.

Such approaches used to discuss the effects and causes of racism often end up gazing at the West as the perpetrator of racism, rather than emphasizing on internal racial and ethnic relations and their effects on Iranians. Such constructions present “race” either as an ideology that was employed by White Europeans to justify the practice of slavery despite their liberal belief in universal freedom, or “race” is presented as “an objective biological fact” (Omi and Winant, 1993, p. 4-5). As Omi and Winant (1993) point out, these approaches to representations of “race” also result in denying the possibility of allowing students to analyze how race-thinking evolved [in different parts of the world differently] from the cultural, political and economic changes in Europe, starting in the seventeenth century. Constructions of race as [an ideology[ical] tool to describe human relations in Africa and the Americas as well as “the ideology” of the West in its colonial approach to the East “fail to recognize that the salience of race, [“as a fundamental principle of social organization and identity formation,”] can develop over half a millennium [or within a short period of time in human history]. (p. 3-5)

Such representations of racial diversity also ignore the fact that various societies around the world are “so thoroughly racialized” that to deny “race” as a socio-cultural construct with global material manifestations is to fall into a “crisis of interpretation” and misrepresentation (Omi and Winant, 1993, p. 5). This crisis of interpretation results from presenting “race” as an objective and legitimate characteristic of the self and the other without accounting for the subjective accounts of racism due to the effects of “race-thinking” that stem from the dominant construction of “race” within Iran. The process of “race-thinking” that informs the self-conception of minority groups is, furthermore, ignored in the textbooks.

“Race” is reified in the construction of the ideal citizen as an Aryan. Iran is legitimized and labelled as White. In this case, White is a colour that is devoid of any negative racialized connotations. This construction of the ideal citizen fixes the way the nation is immortalized in relations to its otherness in terms of the criterion colour of skin: “We [Pars/Shi’a/Iranians] are not brown”.95 It is immortalized since the possibility of Iranians being anything but White is excluded from the definition of nation. Yet, skin colour has been used in the textbooks as an important

95 This is one of the questions that a number of Iranian-Canadians living in Canada have been grappling with: Are they really white? If so, why are they categorized as visible minorities (thus non-white) in Canada?
sign of difference in order to distinguish between Iranians. Through factors and characteristics such as the colour of skin and face (chahrah), the idea of “race” is used as a technique of differentiating insiders, as “friendly-insiders” or “outsiders-within” living in various parts of Iran. Moreover, a deconstructive approach also reveals that Whiteness finds various manifestations in the construction of the ideal citizen. The discourse of Whiteness is employed differently along the axes of nationality, language and ethnic origin. Categories such as Arab, Afghan, Europe and Indo-European language classifications are employed in distinguishing within the White category. The textbooks interrogate the roles of Euro-Western countries in the exploitation of the world, but avoid a reflective approach to how Aryanism and nationalism combine in a racialized manner in brutally carving a nation called Iran out of Persia, beginning in 1925. As such, the construction of the ideal citizen is based on an uncritical approach to Whiteness.

Notwithstanding this racialized image of Iran and the world based on the discourse of Whiteness, the ideal citizen is also presented in ways which reinforce the basic and central Islamic principle at all grade levels: there are no differences between human beings. Arabs, Turks, Americans, Jews and Iranians are all equal. Yet, this important message that two of the most important characteristics of the ideal citizen are his/her belief in equality and peace is overshadowed as the school textbooks are also constructed according to biased racialized and religious worldviews. The contradictions in these two different applications of “race” are due to the textual representations of the ideal citizen based on the dialectical and multiple-interlocking relations between the discourses of Islam and nationalism. The discourse of Islam does not define the origin of Iran. Islam is presented as “race-less”. Islam, as the ideological force behind anti-imperialist movements in the Middle East, brings various groups of people under the umbrella of a unified community that is contrasted to their Western others. Moreover, despite being represented as exploiters, White European and Anglo-Saxon populations across the world are also represented as economically and technologically advanced. As White categories, the Euro-Westerner and the ideal Iranian citizen are distinguished from one another by representations of the ideal citizen as culturally, religiously and morally more superior to his or her Anglo-Saxon and European other (Mehran, 2002). In other words, the representations of “race” also manifest themselves through discourses that do not rely on directly invoking “race” as a category of difference/similarity. Rather they promote new forms of racism such as ethno-cultural and religious racisms (Dei, 1996).

These cultural and religious forms of racism are traces and implicit discourses. By constructing the ideal citizen in light of the Aryan discourse and Islamic ideology in the context of an anti-colonial perspective, the textbooks deny that racist attitudes and racisms are practiced in Iranian society. This amnesia has resulted in the
denial of discriminatory practices both historically and at the present time in Iranian school textbooks, much the same way as in Canada (Henry et al., 1998, p. 26-27). The discourse of the denial of racism is, nevertheless, reinforced by a racialized and religious representation of the self in such a way that the representations of the ideal citizen end up stigmatizing and labelling non-Iranians/Moslems as exploited and in need of help or as exploiters that need to be feared and defeated by the ideal citizen.

For example, Whiteness is used as a political tool to describe events during different historical periods and to differentiate within White groups in light of other discourses such as Ummat-i Islamī (Islamic Nation/Community). Geographical regions and nation-states are also distinguished from one another by references to characteristics that dichotomize Whiteness and divide it into two spheres of: 1) developed, European, Christian, and 2) underdeveloped, Moslem, North African, Middle Easterner and revolutionary. In contrast, the category black is usually conceptualized in light of geographical regions that are underdeveloped and populated by Moslem and non-Moslem populations in Africa and by marginalized populations in southern United States and in major North American cities. The colour “red” signifies indigenous populations of the Americas, Australia and New Zealand, who are represented as disappearing. The category yellow represents the populations of southeast Asia that are mainly comprised of non-Moslems from rural backgrounds. School curricular writers’ construction of the ideal citizen is based on an uncritical approach to Whiteness that only interrogates the roles of Euro-Western countries in the exploitation of the world and does not reflect on the historical role of Iranians in the exploitation of labour internationally and historically.

Ethnicity, in light of the discourse of ‘asayir (nomadic tribes), is also used to differentiate between Iranians. But ethnic groups are also distinguished from one another and from the ideal citizen based on colour of skin, clothing style, facial characteristics and/or cultural differences. Central to the representation of ethnic identity is the discourse of Whiteness. However, their nationality and religion homogenizes them into one unified group and, as such, inequalities between Persians and other white- and non-white-Iranians are normalized. These inequalities are considered to have had similar consequences with equal intensities. In this light, the authors of Iranian textbooks invoke what Henry (et al., 1998, p. 28) refers to as the discourse of “White victimization”, which here is labelled as “White-Persian victimization”. According to this discourse, white immigrants in Canada also experienced racism, inequality and discrimination. It is a normal aspect of the immigration process and it is short term. The outcome of viewing history and diversity through this discourse is that the prejudices coloured immigrants have faced are

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downplayed and considered as the effects of the process of settling in a new land, rather than due to the consequences of racism and/or structural discrimination (Henry et al., 1998, p. 28). In such a discourse, the consequences of ethnicity, gender, “race” and colour of skin on one’s socio-economic life-chances and opportunities are not significantly explored in light of the history of the Iranian nation. Political differences and inequalities between Persians and non-Persians and male and female populations within these categories of difference are both ignored and denied reflections in the textbooks.

Multiple forms of identity are employed in highlighting the desired characteristics of the ideal citizen in terms of the national identity’s differences from internal and external forms of otherness. In Iranian school textbooks, as examples of both Orientalist and Occidentalist texts, “difference is not only constituted dialectically relative to the [imperialist] other [or to various forms of anti-imperialist others], but also within the [ideal citizen and the] self” (Dei et al., 2005, p. 57). For example, the authors of the textbooks construct tribal groups in Iran as “outsiders-within” in relation to the dominant Pars-Shi’a ideal citizen. As a result of depicting and representing tribal groups through the discourse of ‘ashayir (nomadic tribes), the authors end up ignoring the historical and present-day conditions of tribal groups in narrating the story of the nation. In light of the discourse of “Irān-dāstī” (loving Iran), the term ‘ashayir homogenizes otherwise diverse groups and does not reflect upon their identities as reactions to the state’s policies and modernization/development programs as Beck (1990, p. 187) effectively argues in reference to the history of the formation of the Qashqa‘i Confederation.

The authors of the textbooks sanitize the history of Iran by eliminating any meaningful discussions about the tribal histories of Iran. Instead, tribal nomad identities are represented as pacified elements of the national identity. This pacified characteristic of the ideal tribal citizen presupposes that such an individual does not oppose the processes of Persianization and Islamization. This is another example of how non-present discourses, in fact, play hegemonic roles and partly dictate the range of meanings available to students about the ideal citizen in their textbooks. Tribal people are depicted as politically assimilated citizens of the Islamic Republic. Tribal and minority groups are gazed from a position of power that silences their voices, but celebrates them through a “food and song” approach to diversity. At the same time, through the application of these principles, the authors also identify the ‘ashayir as in need of protection and development by their paternal Persian relatives. These non-present aspects of the construction of Iranian national identity and racialized ethnic groups are important aspect of the process of Islamization.
Ethnicity or ‘ashayir is still viewed from a nation-centric perspective. In fact, in the textbooks, women and ethnic minorities are not represented as fighting for themselves. In the narrations of nation, it is always Pars/Shi’a men who speak for women and ethnic groups. They are also the ones who are identified as the defenders of women and the ‘ashayir. This paternalistic construction of gender and ethnic relations depicts women as child-bearers whose main task is to reproduce the nation. Yet, the nation is also constructed in light of another non-present discourse that sees diversity as the cause of disunity and as the deterioration of national cohesion. The discourse of Balkanization is an important non-present element in the representations of the ideal citizen. According to this type of reasoning, unity between the people within a state is assumed to be a historical fact. It is argued that acceptance of different forms of values, cultural practices and norms may undermine liberal conceptions of freedom, equality and justice. These conflicts are considered to result in the creation of isolated and segmented communities that are thought to undermine the shared customs and values that bring the nation together. In the case of Iran, factors such as the Aryan past, Zoroastrianism, Islam, Shi’ism, the Persian language, Iranian New Year and the Iranian calendar as well as the flag and the national anthem define the limits of diversity.

The nationalistic aspect of the construction of the ideal citizen is also accentuated by its patriarchal characteristics. For example, women are depicted as responsible for the political and religious socialization of their children as household managers (Mehran, 2002). The division of labour and family obligations are viewed in the context of biological factors that also inform the construction of gender roles in society. Ideologically, women’s positions are constructed based on an assumption that their economic and political positions are due to their “natural inclinations” to be “submissive” and “caring”. The most essential status of women as wives/mothers only celebrates their non-market labour. Women are depicted according to “expressive traits”. Their ability to reproduce the nation is considered as their most significant characteristic, resulting in the “economic dependency of women on their sexuality, childbearing and [child]raising” (Moghadam, 1994, p. 93). In contrast, men are constructed as leaders. They are contrasted to “feminine” ideal citizens who help their husbands, may work outside the home and who, nevertheless, value education. In this light, the ideal citizen has a dual existence and manifestation. These idealized forms of gender relations are also constructed in light of other discourses such as acceptance of leadership and authority, sharing, cooperation, religiosity and self-sacrifice.

However, as the authors exclude discussions about the political involvement of women of different backgrounds and the effects of economic inequality on females, the authors also rule out discussions of the effects of
market forces on the process of feminization in secondary occupations, such as service sector and low pay employment, and of the (de)feminization of the labour market in primary occupations, such as professional and high paying occupations, both nationally and globally. Such constructions normalize a worldview in which “things” have a specific place in a universe that requires order. This normalization of the orderly universe and society is an important political and ideological aspect of the textbooks. It is in this light that women are also identified as “outsiders-within”. It is also through these same forms of representations that students are informed about the ideal citizen’s rights and obligations toward God and his or her fellow Iranian and global Moslem citizens. Iranian textbooks are involved in the process of de-culturating minorities and marginalizing the worldviews of these groups that lie outside the centre.

As mentioned, the ideal citizen is depicted in relation to forms of otherness without references to the forms of violence experienced by minorities in Iran. The 2004 edition of Iranian school textbooks are trans-cultural texts that are produced based on discourses, which are themselves based on “non-violent” forms of “cultural genocide” (Pinar refers to similar views through his term “fractured self”, 1995). I call this “textual genocide”. The exclusion of violence committed by the dominant groups in its historical and contemporary forms cannot be merely considered as “null curriculum”, which refers to the information that is not included as part of the official knowledge. It is a form of genocide since it often normalizes by idealizing the past and sanitizing history from all wrong-doings and acts of violence. Violence is only portrayed as a characteristic of outsider when they attack Iranians. A consequence of the revisions of the textbooks and the omissions of references to or discussions about “race” has been that racialized constructions of the ideal citizen are not interrogated. As a result, one of the effects of the denial of racism and genocide is the absence of any critical discussion about “race”, which limits what can be said about the ideal citizen.

The process of writing textbooks should involve a critique of the discourse of “Orientalism in reverse”, not for its “othering” of the West per se, but for using Western epistemology in reference to other non-Western groups and to itself in the process of narrating the nation. In the context of Iranian school textbooks, the discourse of “Orientalism in reverse” is partly influenced by nationalistic and Western epistemologies. In fact, this nationalistic construction of the ideal citizen is in contradistinction to the government’s claim that nationalism is “a destructive imperialist invention … [and that] Islam does not recognize national ideology” (as cited in Ram, 2000, p. 84). As
Ram (2000, p. 86) also states in reference to Iranian high school textbooks, in Iranian elementary and middle school textbooks “Islam [also] remains in the confines of Iranian nationalism”. As Ashraf points out,

This Islamic-Iranian conception of Iranian identity represents an attempt at bridging the sacred and the secular, tradition and modernity, and it has been adopted increasingly by the leadership and the lower echelons of the Islamic regime in Iran. (as cited in Ram, 2000, p. 82)

Despite this nationalistic construction of the Islamic Republic, the ideal citizen is also represented in light of references to fragmented, diverse and hierarchical sets of and multifaceted identities at local and global levels that are juxtaposed against and/or in relation to the Iranian ideal citizen, whose qualities are identified as Islamic, patriarchal, White, faithful, determined and peace-loving.

Iranian school textbooks invoke “shifting collectivities” in constructing the ideal citizen based on references to the multiplicity of identity and the socio-political/situational aspects of identity construction that link social spaces across time and space in constructing a hegemonic and ideological sense of the self and national identity (Camino & Krulfeld Eds. 1994). The textbooks present a view of global and national relations that is based on homogenized representations of nations, groups and individuals. They are situated differently in relation to the ideal citizen depending on the context and prevalent relations of power. These “shifting collectivities” such as Iran, Aryan, Pars, Turk, Arab and the West are utilized in constructing a coherent image of the ideal citizen that forms the basis of the story of nation in modernity. In the 2004 edition of Iranian school textbooks, the construction of the ideal citizen entails “a sense of being divided within” that distinguishes itself from others based on already established “linguistic, cultural, and psychological” categories and knowledge base (Rahimieh, 2001:6, footnote #6).

The textbooks reproduce relationships between the ideal citizen and others in the form of a self-other-other set of relations that have emic and etic sources and consequences (Dei et al., 2005, p. 57). As Spivak (as cited in Dei et al., 2005, p. 55) points out in reference to India, “It seems that [Iran] is often positioned as the other of the ‘West’”, but in reality it is constructed against many other “things”. It is also an internal “us” [us among many others] (Dei et al., 2005, p. 55). Iranian identity is constructed in the context of historical elements that are “negotiated in relation to other [historical] identities that are [depicted as] inherently unequal” and are othered in the process (Dei et al., 2005, p. 55). In these textbooks, “difference is not only constituted dialectically relative to the [imperialist] other [or various forms of anti-imperialist others], but also within the [ideal citizen and the] self” (Dei et al., 2005, p. 57).
In fact, the ideal citizen is constructed as a “stigmatized self”. In elementary and guidance school textbooks, during a period that spans eight years, students are faced with a historical “problem”: confronting their national “stigma”. The “stigmatized self” refers to those representations of manifold selves in relation to the national self, based on multiple, dual and contradictory perceptions of the ideal citizen. This “stigmatized self” is at once proud of his or her past and at the same time “feels unsure of how normals [the Western and Iranian elite] will identify him [or her] and receive him [or her]” (Goffman, 1986, p. 13).

In Iranian school textbooks, stigmatized Iranians and other non-Western societies, and technologically advanced Westerners and pious leaders of Iran meet one another and enter into “social situations” that are pre- and re-presented to reflect the truth about the past and to represent real and objective understandings of power relations and their effects (See Goffman, 1986, p. 12).

By constructing the ideal citizen through differences and similarities that are distinguished into binary categories, Iranian students are advised to “correct [their] condition[s] indirectly by devoting much private effort[s] to the mastery of areas of activity [often associated with modern Western others and religious and economic leaders of Iran]” (Goffman, 1986, p. 10). This constructed sense of self in school textbooks ends up in “proving [Iranian] is what [Iranian] is not” and how representations of the self aim “at proving [Iranian] is not what [Iranian] is” (Goffman, 1986, p. 63).

Viewed in this light, school textbooks consist of “stigmatizing discourses” and become stigmatizing texts that construct images of “normal” and “stigmatized” that lead to an “awareness of inferiority [that would] mean [the Iranian student] is unable to keep out of consciousness the formulation of some chronic feeling of the worst sort of insecurity” (as cited in Goffman, 1986, p. 13). This insecurity is best conceptualized and is the manifestation of, among other discourses, Orientalism and “Orientalism in reverse”, which are employed as tools of representation and domination. Students are overexposed to conceptions of the national self and the ideal citizen that do not truly reflect who they are, but these stigmatizing discourses serve political and economic purposes that, nevertheless, reproduce the East and West dichotomy.

Politically, Iranian school textbooks explain and dictate the role of Iran in the liberation of all oppressed Moslems and peoples of the world. As Welch points out, in reference to imperialist Christianity,
The cultural genocide of … [revolutionary, modernizing and Islamizing] is not accidental, but is grounded in such an arrogant approach to liberation. It is oppressive to ‘free’ people if [critical reflections on] their own histories and cultures do not serve as the primary sources of the definition of their freedom. (as cited in Giroux, 1988, p. 211)

The Iranian brand of republicanism is portrayed as the best solution to poverty and inequality locally and globally without accounting for its liberal and Eurocentric sources in the form of legal and constitutional borrowings since the Constitutional Revolution of 1905-1911. Iranian school textbooks lack what bell hooks refers to as “the insurrection of subjugated knowledge” (as cited in Visano and Jakubowski, 2002, p. 12). Iranian school textbooks promote the “politics of domination” as local elite and transnational experts act as “privileged interpreters” of marginalized people and their needs (hooks, 1990, p. 9). As Giroux (1994, p. 57) and this study of Iranian school textbooks point out, it is important to account for how the vocabulary and the discourses of emancipation and critical pedagogy are now being (re)incorporated by the elites and the conservatives in both the West and in Iran.

In the 2004 edition of school textbooks, “students have the illusion of acting through [the action-oriented lessons and exercises of textbooks]” that sanitize history from the conflicts that shape the daily lives of students belonging to different backgrounds (Nieto, 2004, p. 113). Despite the inclusion of child-centred pedagogy in revising Iranian textbooks, the textbooks are still written based on the assumption that, “Students are expected to learn what is decided, designed, and executed by [experts]” (Nieto, 2000, p. 105). The difference is that these experts are also non-Iranians who directly or indirectly intervene in educational reforms in Iran.

The need for experts who are knowledgeable about modern issues and relations for the development of Iran has been central to the ideologies of many Iranian and non-Iranian voices. For example, Akhunzadeh (1812-1878) argued for the establishment of universal education as a way of modernizing not only Iran, but also other Moslem countries (Vahdat, 2002, p. 44), which required the need for experts on educational issues. Arasteh (1969) also promoted the view that “the education of youth beyond the age of thirteen [must] be part of a coordinated plan in conjunction with economical, commercial, social, agricultural and industrial centers” (p. 204). The need for scientifically trained individuals is considered as an important aspect of modernizing Iran (Arasteh, 1969, p. 119). In addition, intellectuals such as Arasteh (1969, p. 203) and Sadiq (1931, p. 1-2) argued for the coordination between economic needs and educational planning. In this light, modernist intellectuals such as Sadiq (1931) assume that the application of science and scientific knowledge will resolve Iran’s problems. This ideological approach also informs the views of President Khatami who has argued for the involvement of technical and scientific personnel in the
development of Iran and for those who are familiar with both Western and Iranian cultural and social development (Khatami, 2001). In fact, the Iranian government has been inviting Iranian nationals living outside Iran to participate in the reconstruction of the country since the end of the Iran-Iraq War in 1988. As President Rafsanjani stated as early as the late 1980s, “Iran should maintain ideals, but also meet the needs of the people [which may require] experts from abroad” (as cited in Menashri, 1992, p. 315). Katouzian (2003a, p. 21) links this need for experts to a broader context and argues that at the present time, the modernization of Iran requires political development and the extension of basic rights and freedoms to professional groups and the promotion and creation of political parties and professional associations with certain degrees of responsibility toward society at large.

Despite the influences of emancipatory theories and educational experts, given the revisions to date, the 2004 edition of elementary and guidance school textbooks repeat the same information about Iran even though the fact that more active, participatory and “action-oriented” practices and critical thinking options are available to students and the recommendations of Global Education Initiative has been implemented. The dialogical aspect of critical education is presented in light of what is referred to as “guided conversations” (Visano and Jakubowski, 2002, p. 37), which turns a critical approach to education into monological texts that are either ideological or hegemonic.

Dialogue requires a dialectical approach that points to the contradictions, inequalities, diversity of values and the relativeness of regimes of truth (Visano and Jakubowski, 2002). This dialectical approach, however, is used in dogmatic manners. The dialectical relationship between the two opposites, the East and the West and colonizer and colonized, are employed as subjugating terminologies that introduce students to critical thinking but operate within a context where this self-critical perspective is used to gaze towards the East and the “external-within” categories of national identity. The textbooks end up constructing “stigmatized” images of the ideal citizen that elevate the West and the Persian/Aryan/Moslem male as the idealized “normals”. However, in gazing at the East through an Orientalist lens, the gaze is not directed towards the present (i.e.: Iranian leadership), but at the historical Easterners, the “internal-” and the “external-enemy-others”.

As Dei and Calliste (2000, p. 14) point out, the question becomes “how do we begin toward voicing difference/transformation beyond the dominant discourse while the dominant persistently intercedes in the imagination of possibilities for conceptualizing change?” In revising school textbooks, as Giroux points out (1988, p. 138), knowledge about otherness and the ideal citizen can be critically viewed through the “discourse of textual
analysis” before its inclusion into the textbooks. The aim of such analyses is to problematize those socially constructed representations and interests that organize and emphasize particular readings of curriculum materials. In this approach, the textbooks are designed in such a way as to be part of the process of critical inquiry that interrogate and expose ideological and hegemonic assumptions about the self and otherness from a democratic perspective (Giroux, 1988, p. 138). The curriculum and textbooks are the focus of critique. This requires a poststructuralist approach to re-writing and teaching textbooks that also aims at de-centring the idea of “Iran”. Such an approach, when based on dialogical texts, contributes “to a conscientization of the hidden agenda and the underlying messages being communicated through textbooks” (Adam-Moodley, Private Communication, 2007).

In Iran, students read that the ideal citizen must stand against those who are the enemies of justice, equality and peace. Students are also informed that it is their right to use their voting power to hold the governing body accountable to the ideals of their Islamic and free society in order to bring about equality (See Yaghmaian, 2002; Jahanbegloo Ed., 2004; Mohammadi Ed., 2003).

However, at the present time, “citizenship education” in the textbooks concentrates students’ attentions on events, relations and problems of the past or in other parts of the world (See Chomsky, 1987, p. 124). Nationally produced and controlled official school textbooks/knowledge for a “totalitarian” state like Iran serve a “democratic” function: to ensure that the general population “fails” to distinguish between the historical memories of the masses about the ideal citizen and the manufactured history by local and global elite groups about the perfect citizen. They are transnational indoctrinating texts (Chomsky, 1987, p. 124). As such, Iranian textbooks “manufacture consent” in the context of both global economic relations and anti-imperialist movements. The 2004 edition of Iranian school textbooks ensure and secure both the ideological and social reproduction of the Islamic Republic and its institutions of power (Chomsky, 1987, p. 124). The ideal cultural capital is presented and reproduced. This cultural capital promotes and requires the internalization of the belief that Iranians are White, modern and rational subjects and “superior” to the various other “different” groups, whose cultures are represented as different and unequal (Freire and Macedo, 2001, p. 194).

School textbooks, as the statements of the state as well as of professional experts, play various roles due to the contradictory discourses and ideologies that inform their contents. They differentiate, but they also homogenize. They exclude Westerners as well as include Westerners. They hierarchize knowledge, human beings and countries based on ideological concerns and educational theories. In so doing, school textbooks are normalizing statements,
due to their discursive qualities (Foucault, 1977, p. 183). However, as Apple (2004) argues, the system is selective in its choices of materials and operates at a hegemonic level that reproduces society and its economic, political and cultural structures both locally and globally. In light of Foucault’s discussions, school textbooks are “autonomous systems of discourse”, through which institutionalized power interferes in the process and “influence[s] discursive practices” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. xxiv). By treating school textbooks as “discourse-objects”, I avoided “arguments about whether what [school textbooks] say is true, or whether their statements make sense” (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p. xxiv). Rather, I highlighted the meanings that are produced about the ideal citizen in terms of “race”, gender, ethnicity and social class.

In conclusion, Iranian school textbooks are not merely nationalized textbooks that are critical of colonial relations but they are “border patrolling” (Dalmage, 2006, p. 153) texts that highlight a historical separation between groups and “races” of the world in relation to the culture and civilization of Iran. The critique of colonialism does not emphasize how racialized views and racist conceptions of the other by Europeans and Westerners informs how Oriental others have come to construct themselves. Rather, school textbooks are critical of colonial and imperialist relations in light of the economic and political influences of the West and the eventual domination of the East by the West. Moreover, an essentialized image of the Iranian self is presented to students in light of a critique of American and Western influences in the region. Iranian culture and civilization is presented in such a way as to suggest that Iranian culture has mainly been influenced by three central elements: Pars culture, Islam and Shi’ism. Those who cross these boundaries are viewed as “dangerous outsiders”. Borderism, Dalmage (2006) explains, is “a unique form of discrimination faced by those who cross the color line, do not stick with their own, or attempt to claim membership … in more than one … group” (p. 151). As a result, the textbooks highlight a border that is racialized, ethnicized and Islamized for students. This knowledge is then used in self-assessments and/or self-reflections in the form of textbook assignments and questions. Individual students may resist these images and the official constructions of the ideal citizen. However, due to its national and universal reach, school knowledge also “locates” and “labels” criminal and pathological personalities by singling out certain characteristics in values, ethnicities and geographical places as important criteria in the construction of the ideal citizen.


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