

Introduction

School textbooks are one of the crucial means by which a nation passes on to the younger generations a certain worldview, determined according to parameters set by the educational establishment. As such, they can reveal to the onlooker what the educational system in a specific country wishes to instill in the students' minds.

The Center for Monitoring the Impact of Peace (CMIP), which has already conducted surveys of Israeli, Palestinian, Syrian, Egyptian and Saudi Arabian school textbooks, has undertaken a similar survey of Iranian textbooks, with the cooperation of the American Jewish Committee. For the purpose of this research, 115 Iranian textbook and teacher's guides on various subjects have been examined. All the textbooks were published in 2004. Most of the teacher's guides were published in 2003, with few exceptions the earliest of which dates from 1994. In other words, they reflect mainly the attitude of the Iranian educational system under the former President Mohammad Khatami. The books were carefully scrutinized and any piece of material indicating the attitude to 'the other' or to peace - whether text, map, photograph or illustration – has been inserted in the report as is. In line with CMIP methodology, the present report consists mainly of quotations from the books, organized in chapters according to subject. CMIP analysis in the text appears in italics and is minimal, to allow the material to speak for itself. Occasional explanatory remarks have been added for clarification – either as footnotes, or in brackets within the quotations. CMIP analysis appears in the Conclusion and is made according to a set of criteria suggested by UNESCO and CMIP, as follows:

UNESCO relevant criteria:

- 1. Are the data given accurate and complete?*
- 2. Are maps, illustrations and graphs up-to-date and accurate?*
- 3. Are the achievements of others recognized?*
- 4. Are equal standards applied?*
- 5. Are political disputes presented objectively and honestly?*
- 6. Is wording likely to create prejudice, misapprehension and conflict avoided?*
- 7. Are the ideals of freedom, dignity and fraternity being advocated?*
- 8. Is the need for international cooperation, for the formation of common human ideals and the advancement of the cause of peace, as well as for the enforcement of the law, emphasized?*

CMIP criteria of analysis:

- 1. The image of other peoples, religions and communities: Are they recognized, accepted as equal and respected; or are they presented in a stereotyped and prejudiced way?*
- 2. Peace and the peace process: Does education foster peace? Does it support the peace process? Is there room for improvement in this respect?*

Koranic verses follow in most cases N. J. Dawood's translation of the Koran, published in the 'Penguin Classics' series, 1956. Arabic names and terms have been transliterated according to their Arabic pronunciation, or as they are known in English, except for few individuals' names where Persian pronunciation has been followed.

Due to the vast amount of material found in the books, and in order not to make the published report too bulky, it has been decided to include in it a certain representative percentage of the material only. The full version is available on the site (<http://www.edume.org>).