The European Union and the Modernization of the Turkish Education System

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Description

The European Union and the Modernization of the Turkish Education System examines the reconstruction of Turkish history/social studies curriculum and assesses how well the program conforms to the established European Union (EU) directions and norms. In this age of globalization, the extent to which the EU can impose its educational norms on Turkish education as the membership process unfolds is in question. Therefore, the problem addressed in this study concerns the relationship between educational and national development in Turkey and the degree of influence the EU can exercise appropriately on that development.

The complexity of integrating one nation with another is significantly difficult in itself. The challenge of integrating culturally distinct national entities into a functioning, peaceful community of states increases this difficulty by several orders of magnitude.

This book explores the conflicting imperatives and the efforts to establish commonality. In this area, the influence of history/social studies education becomes the focus as it is the vanguard for establishing permanently altered mindsets for the ultimate good of both Turkey and the European community. Finally, of ultimate importance to this study is the status of evolutionary change in Turkish history/social studies education.

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Based upon the assumption that EU membership for Turkey is a positive step toward avoiding marginalization in the increasing integration motivated by globalization, an evaluation of the current status and the necessary progression of change is not only logical, but also imperative for this study’s value.

This landmark book examines the role of education as Turkey transits from a nationalistic orientation toward EU membership and its inherent multinational/multicultural integration. Of particular concern in this regard are: 1) the issues of sovereign and supra-nationalism which challenge Turkey’s candidacy for membership in the EU in general, 2) the tense relationship between formal education and political power in Turkey, 3) the specific tension and its reflection in the new social studies program, and 4) under these circumstances, the progress, challenges, and needed reforms to accomplish history/social studies education reforms for both Turkey and EU candidacy requirements.

This study strives to reconcile the issues of Turkish accession, the implementation of EU educational standards and policies, the influence of political change (with regard to the EU) on history/social studies texts in Turkey, and the differences between traditional pedagogy and curricular reforms for the whole of Turkish education. This study considers the historical framework of the relationship between Turkey and the EU; Turkey’s efforts toward educational modernization; the rationale for such initiatives; and their role as creating complicating factors for both national education reform, and, simultaneously, EU acceptance of Turkey as a nation and, in particular, its history/social studies curriculum.

*The European Union and the Modernization of the Turkish Education System* is an important book for all history and social studies educators and policy makers.