

INTRODUCTION

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Turkey began accession negotiations with the European Union (EU) in September 2005. However, when we observe the current debates about Turkey's accession process to the EU, there is a strong opposition to Turkey's possible membership emerging both in Turkey and the EU. One of the most important reasons for such opposition for both sides appears to be concerned with cultural identity that has been created through historical contexts. For some, since European identity is thought to be based on Judeo-Christian heritage, Turkey which historically represented a 'Muslim other' for Europe is considered as a deterrent to the development of European identity. Similarly, as Prof. Saydam explains in his chapter in this book, many Turks still consider the relationship with Europe through the conditions just after World War I particularly in the context of the Sevres Treaty in which Ottoman territories were shared among Allies. Therefore, the relationship between Turkey and the EU is significantly affected by how Europe has defined and constructed Turks historically and vice versa.

Most European societies today could be considered as multicultural societies. There has been a large influx of immigrants as guest workers or asylum seekers into western European countries since World War II. In central and eastern Europe, most countries have traditionally had a heterogeneous, multicultural population. Similarly, Turkey has gone through several transformations not only to meet the Copenhagen criteria, but ever since its establishment in 1923, to become a secular, democratic and modern country. In addition to that, Turkey has started to become a multicultural society as an increasing number of foreigners choose to buy property in Turkey and come to Turkey as guest workers or asylum seekers. In this context, what is needed is to reconsider the justifications of historical enmity which arguably result from selective reading of history between societies in the light of a new thinking of what brings us together today. The major role in such change falls upon our education systems, and particularly on history and social studies education.

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As a result of Turkey's candidacy to the EU, Turkey has been placed in a situation to implement fundamental transformation regarding its economic and legislative structures including its education system. The issues of multiculturalism, diversity, participatory democracy and civil dialogue become key factors for a sustainable relationship between Turkey and the EU. History is one of the main subjects where the relationships between Turkey and the EU may be examined. The history curricula in most European countries include a stipulation that the learning and teaching of history has to reflect the situation and the time people are living in. Educating people for a multicultural society is an important aspect of this aim. Young people are part of a global society and have to understand and cope with diversity. In such a context, one of the main tasks of history and social studies teaching should be to meet the needs of multicultural societies.

Although the use of a historic perspective has been crucial for our peaceful well-being on this planet, today in Turkey, its use and understanding by students and teachers is not at a satisfactory level. As Dr. Aktekin explains in detail in his chapter on "Turkish History Education" in this book, some writers have commented particularly on the history curriculum and textbooks and state that it is traditionally superficial, ethnocentric and too detailed which has led students to memorise, rather than understand. Turkish history education has usually been criticized for having a mainly nationalist and ethnocentric structure. Teacher training institutions and in-service courses for teachers also do not address how to teach about multiculturalism, sensitive and controversial issues in history and social studies lessons. However, history and social studies education in Turkey has been undergoing a process of educational innovation for some time now. A new social studies (for pupils up to 14 years old) and history curricula (for students between 14-18 years old) have started to be implemented since 2005 and 2008 respectively. These curricula changes are usually considered to be necessary as the world and Turkey is changing rapidly as a result of global processes. Then, schools and universities (and teacher training institutions) should respond to these changes by adopting a universal approach by teaching social studies and history from a wider perspective. However, although the new curricula cover many recent international developments in the field, they have problems in terms of the implementation. Most of the school teachers are not sure about the theoretical underpinnings of the curricula which are based on constructivism and how to apply the theory into their practice. Teachers (and student teachers) are the most important key to educational change and they are at the heart of any successful innovation in schools. Thus, as many writers have already discussed, there is an urgent need for in-service training (for both teachers and

teacher educators) which re-considers our history and social studies education to promote civil dialogue, democracy and multiculturalism in theory and practice in Turkey. On this account, we, as educators, should aim to evaluate and look for ways to re-conceptualise the history and social studies education and teacher education programmes of Turkey (and of elsewhere) to allow a different/critical understanding of the EU/Turkey and allow students to become critical citizens who can judge events based on rational judgement and critical thinking rather than prejudices.

In such a context, this book is one of the outputs of the project, entitled 'Training Social Studies and History Educators for Multicultural Europe' which is being undertaken in the framework of the EU Promotion of the Civil Society Dialogue Programme between Turkey and the EU and supported by the EU. This project aims to offer support and guidance for school history and social studies programmes and pre- and in-service teacher training programmes in respect to the needs of multicultural and sustainable societies by bringing the main developments within these subjects in the world with particular attention to Turkey and EU relationships and identity politics. The Project is coordinated by Erciyes University, Faculty of Education. Fatih Faculty of Education from Karadeniz Technical University, and the University of West of England, Bristol (UK) are the partners of the Project. The European Association of History Educators (EUROCLIO) has contributed as an associated partner. Teaching methods in history lessons in Turkey have been similar to methods of the 'great tradition' in Britain for many years. In this tradition history teachers' roles were didactically active; they gave the main facts of historical knowledge, putting notes on a blackboard for students to copy or reading textbooks around the class. After prolonged debates during the 1970s and 1980s this 'great tradition' has changed and now the 'new history' approach is popular in UK schools. The New history lays less emphasis on content and more on the process of learning. The New History approach from the UK is the most frequent example which Turkish academics refer to. The New History approach is considered as a valuable experience to overcome the problems of Turkish history education. Dr. Dean Smart, Dr. Penelope Harnett and Dr. Ian Phillips from the UK have written on different aspects of history education in the UK and their chapters will be very beneficial for Turkish readers. Also the director of EUROCLIO Joke van der Leeuw Roord presents recent crucial developments in history education in Europe.

More particularly the project attempted to conceptualise innovative modules in pre-service programmes of history and social studies teacher education in relation to the European dimension. It also organised in-service training in order to strengthen innovation, critical awareness, pedagogic

content knowledge and the professionalization of history and social studies educators. These activities were organised under the following titles by both local and international experts and delivered by the project team:

1. New interpretations of the subject matter, with a special focus on twentieth-century history.
2. Innovative teaching approaches which enhance the effectiveness of the learning and teaching of history.
3. Working with new and modern history and social studies textbooks.
4. Teaching history in a multicultural society.
5. Teaching history which balances local, regional, national, European and global perspectives.
6. Multi-perspective and controversial issues in history teaching.
7. Introducing gender, human rights, sustainable development and the environment in history education.
8. The use of information and communication technology in history education.
9. Curriculum and textbook development.

During this in-service training, innovative teaching materials have also been developed and implemented (these materials will be published as a teachers' resource book which is going to be another important project output). These materials focus on multi-perspectivity in history and social studies education with an emphasis on the awareness of stereotypical thinking. Teachers and student teachers participated in workshops and in training sessions. During those sessions they learned new developments in the field from national and international experts. At the same time they expressed their views on the issue and discussed how their needs may be met.

Furthermore, study visits to England, the Netherlands and Turkey were carried out and they involved networking between the members of partner institutions, exchanging ideas, visits to local schools and local authorities. Good practices in different countries were evaluated and have been made use of. But most importantly, they provided in-sights for all parties on the pre- and in-service teacher training which the partner institutions offer especially concerning multicultural issues. People involved with the project also participated in international training conferences involving different aspects of history education. They attended HTEN, the History Teacher Education Network 2009 annual conference in Birmingham and HEIRNET, the History Educators' International Research Network annual conference in Northern Ireland in 2009. The research process and data were presented at the HEIRNET 2009 International Conference. These conferences were useful

in that lecturers from KTU, Erciyes, UWE and from many European countries and elsewhere met at these conferences and shared experiences. The project team also visited the headquarters of EUROCLIO (The European Association of History Teachers). By attending these events the Turkish participants became familiar with international organizations such as HTEN, HEIRNET and EUROCLIO. Participation at the HTEN and HEIRNET conferences and the study visit to EUROCLIO strengthened the network of activities from other professionals and NGOs from Europe.

As for the book you hold now, it is intended to fill a knowledge gap in terms of social studies and history teaching in the context of innovative pedagogy and multicultural values. In fact this book along with other project materials aims to make a contribution to the successful implementation of the new social studies and history curriculum. The project products are hoped to be useful in terms of facilitating the change process initiated by the Ministry of Education in the field of history and social studies education. Respecting human rights, participatory democracy, multiculturalism, social justice, protecting the environment and cultural heritage, reducing discrimination in terms of gender and race are some of the values that our history and social studies teachers and student teachers should learn how to teach. The book targets lecturers in history and social studies education departments, trainee teachers and history and social studies teachers. However, other interested parties, such as the Ministry of Education, policy makers, curriculum developers, textbook writers, parents and the wider society could also benefit from the theoretical issues raised in this book.

Our guiding principles when writing this book were identifying new approaches to history and social studies education where they are needed in Turkey, the UK and elsewhere. New approaches to history, and history and social studies education claim that history teaching should aim on bridging gaps, taking into account differences between sexes and ages, between ethnic, linguistic and religious identities, between rich and poor, between urban and rural communities and between diverging world-views in society. Thus, multiperspectivity is fundamental to the subject of history. The past has to be systematically studied from different points of view. According to new approaches there is not one truth in history; however there are honest and truthful studies and interpretations based on the scholarly rules of the subject with the effort to approach the truth as near as possible. In history there is a wide variety of events and issues, which address citizenship and civil responsibility. Modern history education sees it as a vital aim to develop among young people a sense of civil responsibility and a passion for active involvement in society. As Joke van der Leeuw Roord stresses in her chapter the study of

history and school history shares a universal methodology. Historical studies include a clear historical question, the critical use of empirical evidence, an historical perspective of interpretation, keeping in mind the knowledge, mentalities and values of the respective period and a discussion about the relevance and impact for the present. A set of organising concepts are the basis for each study: change and continuity; similarity and difference; cause and consequence; time/chronology and fact and opinion. History teaching should focus on the development of curiosity and the spirit of inquiry, the ability to think independently and resistance to being manipulated.

Concluding Remarks

Education is an important aspect of socialisation. It involves the acquisition of knowledge and the learning of skills. It also helps to shape beliefs and moral values. In this context, history and social studies have an important part to play in the socialisation process of pupils and it is an important topic in the national curriculum in many countries. In this respect, this book re-considers our history and social education to promote civil dialogue, democracy, multiculturalism and innovative methodology that address such features as multi-perspectivity, sensitive issues, critical thinking and objectivity. The writers of the chapters are experts in social studies or history education and bring perspectives from Turkey, the UK and the Netherlands. Although they all might have different views on certain things, what is common for them is the need for educating future history and social studies teachers with knowledge, skills and values of multicultural Europe. We hope that this book will be used by lecturers, teachers and students from many different universities for many years and the results of the project will reach a wider society, thus extending the project's outcomes for action.