

An Evaluation of High School History Textbooks in the Republic Period

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Özet

Following the proclamation of the Republic, historiography and history teaching became one of the main means of conveying identity while a new nation was being built. In particular, anthropological and archaeological studies focusing on the origins of the Turks became increasingly common. Such a constructive perspective on history teaching directly influenced textbooks. Using the textbooks' capacity to address broad populations, helped raise historical consciousness and ultimately led to the ideological shaping of historical textbooks in all periods of the Republic. New history textbooks started to be used while the others were being removed depending on the fluctuating political situation due to domestic and foreign political developments. The present study analyzed high school (secondary education) history textbooks that have been used since the early years of the Republic to reveal such change and development. The sources of the study are mainly the Journal of Communiques of the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey, the decisions made in national education councils, and high school history curricula. The study employed the document review method to define categories according to the periods during which the history textbooks were used. Political tendencies and conceptions of history pertaining to the relevant periods were taken into account when developing the categorization, and we created tables to demonstrate when the history textbooks started and ceased to be used. Interpreting the data helped identify the reasons underlying why a single book was used in certain periods, whereas multiple history textbooks written by various authors and published by various publishing houses were used in some others. As the study results indicate, history textbooks have been an area of ideological struggle influenced by political tendencies and conceptions of history. The Turkish History Thesis, humanism, and Turkish-Islamic synthesis were found to influence the writing of history textbooks.

Anahtar Kelimeler

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Abstract

Following the proclamation of the Republic, historiography and history teaching became one of the main means of conveying identity while a new nation was being built. In particular, anthropological and archaeological studies focusing on the origins of the Turks became increasingly common. Such a constructive perspective on history teaching directly influenced textbooks. Using the textbooks' capacity to address broad populations, helped raise historical consciousness and ultimately led to the ideological shaping of historical textbooks in all periods of the Republic. New history textbooks started to be used while the others were being removed depending on the fluctuating political situation due to domestic and foreign political developments. The present study analyzed high school (secondary education) history textbooks that have been used since the early years of the Republic to reveal such change and development. The sources of the study are mainly the Journal of Communiques of the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Turkey, the decisions made in national education councils, and high school history curricula. The study employed the document review method to define categories according to the periods during which the history textbooks were used. Political tendencies and conceptions of history pertaining to the relevant periods were taken into account when developing the categorization, and we created tables to demonstrate when the history textbooks started and ceased to be used. Interpreting the data helped identify the reasons underlying why a single book was used in certain periods, whereas

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Keywords

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