

Yarım Kalan Aydınlanma Atılımı Köy Enstitüleri

The Incomplete Enlightenment Initiative: Village Institutes

İsa Eşme

Eşme, a seasoned academic in education departments, boasts an extensive array of publications and columns spanning physics, teacher education, educational history, and contemporary educational issues. However, the author's primary fascination with Village Institutes originates from his educational background and subsequent role as a physics teacher at Kastamonu Göl Primary Teacher School. Despite its transformation from Kastamonu Göl Village Institute in 1954, the institution managed to preserve the principles and values of the Institute, as well as its traces and educational climate, to a certain extent. In the preface of his work, Eşme acknowledges that his experience at the Göl Village Primary Teacher School was a pivotal moment in his life.

The seven-chapter book commences with an analysis of educational reforms during the Republic of Turkey's first decade and their importance. This section also explores the challenges of extending these reforms to rural areas, presenting pertinent perspectives from that era. Chapter two focuses on the Village Educator Courses, which initiated the progression towards Village Institutes. It delves into the emergence of the educator concept, the foundation of initial courses, and the development of the course program. The third chapter scrutinizes the process leading to the establishment of Village Institutes, the institute law, and parliamentary criticisms directed at these institutions. Chapter four delineates the functioning of the Institutes, the formulation of their educational and teaching programs, the implementation of their distinct principles, and the revitalization of villages through their nationwide expansion.

Chapter five offers an in-depth analysis of the Hasanoğlan Higher Village Institute, which aimed to train teachers for Village Institutes and conduct scientific research in villages, examining its activities. The sixth chapter discusses the accusations leveled against the Institutes during the country's shift to a multi-party system. The concluding chapter outlines the abandonment of the unique values and principles of these institutions, the liquidation of reformists within the government, and the remnants left by the Institutes following their transformation into Primary Teacher Schools in 1954.

The work's strengths include its clear objective to acquaint readers with the Village Institutes, employing accessible language and a fluid style to engage a broad audience. The author maintains the academic rigor while achieving the narrative flow of a novel, with a title that aligns with the content and encapsulates the author's stance. The integration of

photographs by İsmail Hakkı Tonguç enhances the work's value, offering visual insights into the historical context and the Institutes' achievements. The author's thorough examination of the Institutes' remnants and proposal for establishing 'City Institutes' contribute originality to the literature.

However, the work is not without its limitations. The author's partiality is evident, as they belong to the group that lauds the Institutes and acknowledges their personal debt to these institutions. This bias manifests in the uncritical acceptance of historical accounts by Institute affiliates and the use of polarizing adjectives to describe historical figures. Additionally, the work does not fully utilize contemporary scientific articles and books offering original analyses, resulting in a largely repetitive account.

Despite these shortcomings, Eşme's "Incomplete Enlightenment Initiative: Village Institutes" is a valuable contribution to the literature on Village Institutes. The work is likely to enlighten readers seeking comprehensive knowledge about the Institutes. The chronological presentation and attention to coherence facilitate easy reading and comprehension. The detailed exploration of the Institutes' lingering traces and the innovative proposal for 'City Institutes' are particularly noteworthy.

Information about the publication

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