Original Article
Received/Accepted Dates
21.05.2026/27.06.2026
DOI 10.52096/usbd.10.47.14

International Journal of Social Sciences
Uluslararası Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi
www.sobider.net e-ISSN: 2548-0685

IJSS

From the C3 Inquiry Arc to the Century of Türkiye Maarif Model: Tracing Conceptual Inspiration, Structural Convergence, and Pedagogical Divergence in Social Studies Curriculum Design

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Abstract

Curriculum reforms do not emerge in an intellectual vacuum; even when anchored in national cultural priorities, their technical architectures converse with international models of inquiry-based instruction. When the Republic of Türkiye's Ministry of National Education (MEB) adopted the Century of Türkiye Maarif Model (Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli, TYMM) in May 2024 and published its updated Common Text in 2025 alongside the revised Social Studies Curriculum for Grades 4–7 in 2026, domestic scholarship focused predominantly on its philosophical premises or the shift from single-sentence learning objectives (kazanımlar) to competency-based learning outcomes (öğrenme çıktıları). Yet a foundational comparative curriculum question remained unaddressed: which international inquiry architecture served as the conceptual catalyst for the technical design of the Maarif Model's Social Studies program?

This study advances and substantiates an original thesis in comparative curriculum studies: the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards, published by the United States National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) in 2013, functioned as a primary conceptual and structural inspiration for the inquiry spine of the 2024–2026 TYMM Social Studies Curriculum. Using qualitative comparative document analysis across the NCSS C3 Framework (2013), the TYMM Common Text

Araştırma Makalesi

Makaleye Atıf Bilgisi

Avcı, E. H. (2026). From the C3 Inquiry Arc to the Century of Türkiye Maarif Model: Tracing Conceptual Inspiration, Structural Convergence, and Pedagogical Divergence in Social Studies Curriculum Design. *International Journal of Social Sciences (IJSS Journal),*

*(e-ISSN:*2548-0685*)*
Vol:10, Issue:47; s. 327-345.

DOI:
10.52096/usbd.10.47.14

Gönderim: 21.05.2026

Kabul: 27.06.2026

SYAL BİLİMLER DERGİSİ (ULUSLAR ARASI HAKEMLİ DERGİ)

(MEB, 2025b), and the TYMM Social Studies Curriculum (MEB, 2026b)—benchmarked against the 1968, 1998, 2005, and 2018 Turkish programs—the study documents deep structural convergences across all four dimensions of the C3 Inquiry Arc: (1) questioning and inquiry planning, (2) disciplinary tools in History, Geography, Civics, and Economics mapped onto the 17 Social Sciences Field Skills (SBAB1–SBAB17), (3) source interrogation and evidence-based reasoning (SBAB2), and (4) communicating conclusions and taking informed action (SBAB5, SBAB6). Simultaneously, the study identifies four major pedagogical divergences through which Turkish curriculum designers domesticated and transformed the inquiry model: replacing decentralized grade-band guidance with centrally specified learning outcomes and non-linear process components (süreç bileşenleri), embedding an explicit axiological spine via the Virtue–Value–Action (Erdem–Değer–Eylem, EDE) framework, integrating systems thinking (sistem düşüncesi) and nine cross-curricular literacies (OB1–OB9), and retaining 'Technology and Social Sciences' as a dedicated sixth spiral learning area.

Keywords: *Social Studies curriculum, C3 Framework, Inquiry Arc, Century of Türkiye Maarif Model (TYMM), comparative curriculum analysis, Social Sciences Field Skills (SBAB), Virtue–Value–Action (EDE).*

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1. Introduction: The Architectural Question in Social Studies Curriculum Reform

Throughout the history of modern schooling, national curriculum reforms have operated on two distinct yet intersecting planes: a normative-philosophical plane that defines the human profile, civic virtues, and cultural horizons a society seeks to cultivate, and a technical-architectural plane that determines how disciplinary concepts, cognitive operations, and classroom evidence are sequenced into instruction (Dewey, 1916; Ertürk, 1972; Ornstein & Hunkins, 2018; Taba, 1962; Tyler, 1949). When curriculum historians and educators examine only the normative plane, reforms appear either as self-contained national inventions or as ideological ruptures. Conversely, when analysis is confined to technical taxonomies, reforms are easily misconstrued as mechanical transplants detached from domestic institutional traditions. Understanding a major curriculum transition requires analyzing both planes together: tracing the international methodological frameworks that inspired its technical spine while identifying the specific institutional, cultural, and axiological transformations through which that spine was domesticated.

In the Republic of Türkiye, Social Studies (Sosyal Bilgiler) has experienced four major curricular configurations since achieving its consolidated interdisciplinary name in the 1968 Primary School Curriculum (İlkokul Programı; MEB, 1968; Öztürk, 2015; Safran, 2015). Following the 1968 program—which unified History, Geography, and Civics around the expanding-environments principle (Hanna, 1963; Akenson, 1989)—and the 1998 elementary revision following the extension of compulsory education to eight years (Law No. 4306, 1997; MEB, 1998), the 2005 reform introduced a constructivist, thematic learning-area structure influenced by the 1994 National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) thematic standards (MEB, 2005; NCSS, 1994). The 2018 revision condensed that structure into seven learning areas and removed prescribed sample activities to grant teachers greater flexibility, yet retained single-

sentence learning objectives (kazanımlar) that frequently combined multiple cognitive operations without specifying their internal instructional steps (MEB, 2018; Tay & Öcal, 2019).

A structural transformation occurred on May 23, 2024, when the Board of Education and Discipline (Talim ve Terbiye Kurulu Başkanlığı, 2024) approved the Century of Türkiye Maarif Model (Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli, hereafter TYMM), followed by the revised Common Text (MEB, 2025b) and the updated 122-page Social Studies Curriculum for Grades 4, 5, 6, and 7 (MEB, 2026b). In place of isolated objectives, TYMM organized Social Studies around six spiral learning areas, 71 learning outcomes (öğrenme çıktısı) decomposed into observable process components (süreç bileşenleri), 17 Social Sciences Field Skills (Sosyal Bilimler Alan Becerileri, SBAB1–SBAB17), and 20 integrated conceptual skills (KB2.1–KB2.20). When educators and preservice teachers first encounter this intricate multi-layered matrix—where every unit moves from questioning and source gathering to corroboration, interpretation, and social participation—a natural question arises: where did this inquiry architecture originate? This article advances and documents the thesis that the NCSS College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework (2013) served as a principal conceptual and structural inspiration for the inquiry architecture of the 2024–2026 TYMM Social Studies Curriculum, while simultaneously demonstrating how Turkish curriculum designers transformed that model through four distinctive pedagogical and axiological innovations.

2. Conceptual Background: Two Curricular Architectures in Historical Perspective

2.1. The NCSS C3 Framework (2013) and the Four-Dimensional Inquiry Arc

Throughout the twentieth century, U.S. Social Studies oscillated between competing traditions identified by Barr, Barth, and Shermis (1977) and chronicled by Evans (2004): citizenship transmission, social science disciplinary structure (Bruner, 1960), and reflective inquiry (Dewey, 1910, 1938; Massialas & Cox, 1966). While the 1994 and 2010 NCSS standards (NCSS, 1994, 2010) established ten thematic strands, they did not provide an explicit operational sequence for how students move from a question to an evidence-backed conclusion. Published in 2013, the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards (NCSS, 2013) shifted the center of gravity from thematic content lists to a four-dimensional Inquiry Arc (American Historical Association, 2015):

1. Dimension 1 — Developing Questions and Planning Inquiries: Framing instruction around enduring Compelling Questions and operationalizing investigation through Supporting Questions that guide source selection (NCSS, 2013, pp. 23–27).

2. Dimension 2 — Applying Disciplinary Concepts and Tools: Anchoring inquiry in the specific analytical concepts and tools of four core disciplines: Civics, Economics, Geography, and History (NCSS, 2013, pp. 29–51).

3. Dimension 3 — Evaluating Sources and Using Evidence: Operationalizing historical and social-scientific source work—gathering sources, evaluating their credibility, maker, context, and corroboration (Wineburg, 1991, 2001), and developing warranted claims and counterclaims (NCSS, 2013, pp. 53–57).

4. Dimension 4 — Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action: Requiring students to construct reasoned explanations/arguments, critique conclusions publicly, and translate findings into informed civic action across classroom, school, and community arenas (NCSS, 2013, pp. 59–64; Levinson, 2012).

2.2. The 2024–2026 Century of Türkiye Maarif Model (TYMM) Social Studies Architecture

The Century of Türkiye Maarif Model Common Text (MEB, 2025b) grounds all K–12 curricula in four philosophical unity domains: Ontological Unity (body-mind-spirit balance), Epistemological Unity (transforming knowledge into wisdom and moral problem-solving), Temporal Unity (connecting shared historical heritage from past to future), and Axiological Maturity (ethical and aesthetic consciousness). Surrounding the Student Profile of ten attributes, TYMM establishes two structural rings:

• The Learning Outcomes Framework (Öğrenme Çıktıları Çerçevesi): Composed of four components—(a) Conceptual Skills (Kavramsal Beceriler: basic skills KB1, 20 integrated skills KB2.1–KB2.20 such as Analysis KB2.4, Classification KB2.5, Comparison KB2.7, Inquiry KB2.8, Inference KB2.10, Structuring KB2.13, Interpretation KB2.14, Evaluation KB2.17, Argumentation KB2.18, and Synthesis KB2.20, plus 3 higher-order thinking skills KB3.1 Decision Making, KB3.2 Problem Solving, and KB3.3 Critical Thinking; MEB, 2025b, pp. 15–20), (b) Physical Skills (Fiziksel Beceriler, p. 21), (c) Dispositions (Eğilimler: self E1, social E2, and intellectual E3 dispositions, pp. 21–23), and (d) Field Skills (Alan Becerileri: 10 disciplinary families, among which Social Sciences Field Skills [Sosyal Bilimler Alan Becerileri, SBAB1–SBAB17] comprise 17 specialized skills; MEB, 2025b, pp. 25–28, 69–83).

• The Cross-Curricular Components (Programlar Arası Bileşenler): Composed of three components woven across all subjects—(a) Social-Emotional Learning Skills (Sosyal-Duygusal Öğrenme Becerileri: self SDB1, social life SDB2, and joint/integrated skills SDB3, each containing three skills; MEB, 2025b, p. 35), (b) the Virtue–Value–Action Framework (Erdem–Değer–Eylem Çerçevesi, EDE: organized around the three roof values [çatı değerler] of Respect, Responsibility, and Justice; p. 36), and (c) Systems Thinking and Literacy Skills (Sistem Düşüncesi ve Okuryazarlık Becerileri: nine literacies OB1–OB9 structured across awareness, functionality, and agency levels; pp. 37–40).

In the 2026 Social Studies Curriculum for Grades 4–7 (MEB, 2026b, pp. 9–10), each grade is allocated 108 annual class hours—103 hours distributed across six spiral learning areas (Birlikte Yaşamak [Living Together], Evimiz Dünya [Our Home the World], Ortak Mirasımız [Our Common Heritage], Yaşayan Demokrasimiz [Our Living Democracy], Hayatımızdaki Ekonomi [Economy in Our Lives], and Teknoloji ve Sosyal Bilimler [Technology and Social Sciences]) plus 5 hours dedicated to school-based planning (okul temelli planlama). Across the four grades, the program specifies 71 learning outcomes (17 in Grade 4, 19 in Grade 5, 18 in Grade 6, and 17 in Grade 7).

3. Methodology

This study employs qualitative comparative document analysis (Bowen, 2009) combined with horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment analysis (Webb, 1997). The primary documentary corpus comprises: (1) The C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards (NCSS, 2013), (2) Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli Öğretim Programları Ortak Metni (MEB, 2025b), and (3) Türkiye Yüzyılı Maarif Modeli Sosyal Bilgiler Dersi Öğretim Programı (4, 5, 6 ve 7. Sınıflar) (MEB, 2026b), supplemented by historical Turkish Social Studies programs (MEB, 1968, 1998, 2005, 2018) as baseline comparison texts. Analysis proceeded in three stages: (a) comparing the macro-progression of the C3 Inquiry Arc with the internal structure of TYMM learning outcomes and process components; (b) mapping C3 Dimension 2 disciplinary indicators (History, Geography, Civics, Economics) against the exact definitions and sub-skills of the Social Sciences Field Skills (SBAB1–SBAB17) in MEB (2025b, pp. 69–83) and their grade-level deployment in MEB (2026b); and (c) isolating structural, normative, and epistemological divergences where TYMM departs from or expands beyond the C3 architecture.

4. Findings I: Structural Convergence Across the Four Dimensions of the Inquiry Arc

Historical comparison with the 2005 and 2018 Turkish programs demonstrates that while earlier reforms referenced inquiry in their general prefaces, their actual grade-level objectives (kazanımlar) were formulated as terminal content statements (e.g., 'Explains the economic activities in his/her region'). By contrast, the 2024–2026 Maarif Model restructures the internal anatomy of both field skills and learning outcomes so that instruction follows an explicit four-phase arc: formulating curiosity-driven or problem-focused questions (Dimension 1), applying domain-specific chronological, spatial, civic, and economic tools (Dimension 2), examining, questioning, and corroborating sources to construct evidence-backed interpretations (Dimension 3), and transforming ideas into negotiated social participation or shared products (Dimension 4). Table 1 presents this macro-structural convergence.

Table 1. Macro-Structural Convergence Between the NCSS C3 Inquiry Arc (2013) and the TYMM Social Studies Architecture (2024–2026)

C3 Inquiry Arc Dimension	Core C3 Pedagogical Function (NCSS, 2013)	TYMM Structural Counterpart (MEB, 2025b, 2026b)	Exact Official TYMM Skill Codes & Sub-Skills
Dimension 1: Developing Questions & Planning Inquiries	Framing inquiry via Compelling Questions and operationalizing investigation through Supporting Questions (D1.1–D1.5).	Curiosity-driven question formulation, problem definition, and geographic/historical question framing at the start of inquiry.	SBAB2.1 (Meraka dayalı soru sorma / Curiosity-based questioning), SBAB8.1 (Coğrafi sorular sorma), KB2.8 (Sorgulama / Inquiry), KB3.2 (Problem Çözme).
Dimension 2: Applying Disciplinary Concepts & Tools	Applying analytical tools of History (D2.His), Geography (D2.Geo), Civics (D2.Civ), and Economics (D2.Eco).	Six spiral Learning Areas paired with specialized Social Sciences Field Skills (SBAB1–SBAB17) across Grades 4–7.	History: SBAB1 (1.1–1.2), SBAB3 (3.1), SBAB4 (4.1–4.3); Geography: SBAB7 (7.1–7.11), SBAB8 (8.1–8.5), SBAB9 (9.1–9.6), SBAB10 (10.1–10.4); Civics & Econ: SBAB5 (5.1–5.5), SBAB6 (6.1–6.3), SBAB11 (11.1–11.2).
Dimension 3: Evaluating Sources & Using Evidence	Gathering diverse sources, evaluating credibility/context, and developing warranted claims (D3.1–D3.4).	Evidence-Based Inquiry and Research Skill (SBAB2) paired with Information (OB1), Digital (OB2), and Data Literacy (OB7).	SBAB2.2 (Gathering info from sources), SBAB2.3 (Examining source), SBAB2.4 (Questioning source), SBAB2.5 (Interpreting source), KB2.7, KB2.14, KB2.18, OB1, OB2.

C3 Inquiry Arc Dimension	Core C3 Pedagogical Function (NCSS, 2013)	TYMM Structural Counterpart (MEB, 2025b, 2026b)	Exact Official TYMM Skill Codes & Sub-Skills
Dimension 4: Communicating Conclusions & Taking Informed Action	Constructing and critiquing arguments/explanations; taking informed civic action (D4.1–D4.8).	Creating/sharing evidence-based products and translating negotiated ideas into social participation and ethical action.	SBAB2.6 (Kanıta dayalı ürün oluşturma ve paylaşma), SBAB5.3 (Fikir üretme), SBAB5.4 (Müzakere etme), SBAB5.5 (Fikri eyleme dönüştürme), SBAB6.3, EDE.

4.1. Dimension 1 and Dimension 3 Convergence: The Anatomy of SBAB2 (Evidence-Based Inquiry)

The most direct structural parallel between the C3 Framework and the 2024–2026 Maarif Model appears in the internal architecture of SBAB2: Kanıta Dayalı Sorgulama ve Araştırma Becerisi (Evidence-Based Inquiry and Research Skill; MEB, 2025b, p. 70). In the C3 Framework, Dimension 1 (D1.1–D1.5) and Dimension 3 (D3.1–D3.4), together with the History source strand (D2.His.9–13), establish a sequence that moves from asking questions to gathering sources, evaluating source maker and context (sourcing and contextualization; Wineburg, 1991, 2001), corroborating accounts, and sharing warranted claims. In the Maarif Model Common Text (MEB, 2025b, p. 70), SBAB2 is decomposed into six sub-skills that reproduce this exact C3 trajectory step for step: (1) SBAB2.1 Curiosity-based questioning (meraka dayalı soru sorma), (2) SBAB2.2 Gathering information from sources (kaynaklardan bilgi toplama), (3) SBAB2.3 Examining the source (kaynağı inceleme, whose first process component SBAB2.3.SB1 is 'identifying the basic elements/provenance of the source'—i.e., sourcing), (4) SBAB2.4 Questioning/interrogating the source (kaynağı sorgulama, encompassing contextualization and corroboration across sources), (5) SBAB2.5 Interpreting the source (kaynağı yorumlama), and (6) SBAB2.6 Creating and sharing an evidence-based product (kanıta dayalı ürün oluşturma ve paylaşma).

Furthermore, in the 2026 Grade 4–7 Social Studies Curriculum (MEB, 2026b, pp. 18, 23, 27, 49, 64, 102), SBAB2 appears on the 'Field Skills' line of six different learning areas across the grades—targeting SBAB2.5 (Interpreting sources) in Grade 4 Living Democracy and SBAB2.6 (Creating and sharing evidence-based products) in the remaining five units. Thus, the fundamental epistemological distinction emphasized by Barton (2005), Monte-Sano (2011), and Wineburg (1991, 2001)—that a document remains mere 'information' when summarized, becomes a 'source' when its provenance is examined, and becomes 'evidence' (kanıt) only when interrogated to answer an inquiry question—serves as the shared spine of both C3 and TYMM.

4.2. Dimension 2 Convergence: Fine-Grained Mapping of Disciplinary Tools (SBAB1–SBAB11)

In Dimension 2 of the C3 Framework (NCSS, 2013, pp. 29–51), disciplinary literacy is organized across History, Geography, Civics, and Economics. When the definitions and sub-skills of the Social Sciences Field Skills in the TYMM Common Text (MEB, 2025b, pp. 69–80) are compared with C3 Dimension 2, a remarkably close structural correspondence emerges across all four disciplines. Table 2 documents this sub-skill mapping.

Table 2. Sub-Skill Mapping Between C3 Dimension 2 Disciplinary Strands and TYMM Social Sciences Field Skills (MEB, 2025b, pp. 69–80; 2026b)

Disciplinary Pillar	C3 Dimension 2 Sub-Strands (NCSS, 2013, pp. 31–51)	TYMM Field Skills & Official Sub-Skills (MEB, 2025b, pp. 69–80)	Deployment in 2026 Grade 4–7 Curriculum (MEB, 2026b) & Scholarly Parallels
History: Time, Continuity & Empathy	• Change, Continuity, and Context (D2.His.1–3) • Perspectives (D2.His.4–8) • Causation & Argumentation (D2.His.14–17)	• SBAB1 (Time & Chronology): KB2.7 Comparison, SBAB1.1 Calculating/converting time, SBAB1.2 Sequencing, KB2.17 Evaluation. • SBAB4 (Change & Continuity): KB2.7, SBAB4.1 Sequencing, SBAB4.2 Interpreting causes/consequences, KB2.20 Synthesis, SBAB4.3 Evidence-based forecasting. • SBAB3 (Historical Empathy): KB2.14 Interpretation, SBAB3.1 Historical contextualization, KB2.13 Structuring.	• SBAB4 & SBAB3 carry Ortak Mirasımız, Evimiz Dünya, Yaşayan Demokrasimiz, and Teknoloji ve Sosyal Bilimler (MEB, 2026b, pp. 23, 35, 44, 49, 75, 86, 102, 107, 112, 116). • SBAB1 is invoked via inter-skill links in Grades 4 & 6 (pp. 23, 25, 75, 79), echoing Seixas & Morton (2013), Stow & Haydn (2000), Ashby & Lee (1987), and Endacott & Brooks (2013).

Disciplinary Pillar	C3 Dimension 2 Sub-Strands (NCSS, 2013, pp. 31–51)	TYMM Field Skills & Official Sub-Skills (MEB, 2025b, pp. 69–80)	Deployment in 2026 Grade 4–7 Curriculum (MEB, 2026b) & Scholarly Parallels
Geography: Spatial Thinking, Inquiry & Maps	• Geographic Representations: Spatial Views (D2.Geo.1–3) • Human-Environment Interaction (D2.Geo.4–6) • Spatial Patterns & Movements (D2.Geo.7–9) • Global Interconnections (D2.Geo.10–12)	• SBAB7 (Spatial Thinking, 11 sub-skills SBAB7.1–7.11: location, conditions, connections, comparison, impact, region, hierarchy, transition, analogy, pattern, synthesis). • SBAB8 (Geographical Inquiry, SBAB8.1–8.5: asking, gathering, organizing, analyzing, sharing). • SBAB9 (Observation & Fieldwork, SBAB9.1–9.6). • SBAB10 (Map Skills, SBAB10.1–10.4: reading, analyzing, inferring, creating).	• SBAB7 definition ('constructive combination of space concepts, representation tools, and reasoning processes'; MEB, 2025b, p. 74) directly mirrors National Research Council (2006) and Gersmehl (2014). • SBAB8 mirrors Roberts' (2013) geographical enquiry cycle. • Targeted in Evimiz Dünya and Hayatımızdaki Ekonomi (SBAB7.1, 7.3, 8.4, 10.1; MEB, 2026b, pp. 18, 31, 44, 71, 86, 102, 112).

Disciplinary Pillar	C3 Dimension 2 Sub-Strands (NCSS, 2013, pp. 31–51)	TYMM Field Skills & Official Sub-Skills (MEB, 2025b, pp. 69–80)	Deployment in 2026 Grade 4–7 Curriculum (MEB, 2026b) & Scholarly Parallels
Civics: Social Participation & Deliberation	• Civic & Political Institutions (D2.Civ.1–6) • Participation & Deliberation: Civic Virtues & Democratic Principles (D2.Civ.7–10) • Processes, Rules, and Laws (D2.Civ.11–14)	• SBAB5 (Social Participation): KB2.8 Inquiry, SBAB5.1 Establishing social contact, SBAB5.2 Group dynamics, SBAB5.3 Generating ideas, SBAB5.4 Negotiating, SBAB5.5 Transforming ideas into action (MEB, 2025b, pp. 72–73).	• Most frequently targeted field skill in MEB (2026b): carries Birlikte Yaşamak across all 4 grades, Grades 4–5 Yaşayan Demokrasimiz, and Grade 5 Evimiz Dünya (pp. 13, 27, 39, 44, 54, 67, 93), aligning with Kahne & Sporte (2008), Levinson (2012), and Westheimer & Kahne (2004).
Economics: Entrepreneurship & Data/Graphs	• Economic Decision Making (D2.Eco.1–2) • Exchange and Markets (D2.Eco.3–9) • National & Global Economy (D2.Eco.10–15)	• SBAB6 (Entrepreneurship): KB2.8 Inquiry, KB2.11 Observation-based prediction, SBAB6.1 Assessing risks/deciding, SBAB6.2 Managing resources, SBAB6.3 Finalizing ideas (pp. 73–74). • SBAB11 (Tables, Graphs, Figures/Diagrams: SBAB11.1–11.2, p. 79).	• SBAB6 carries Grades 5 & 6 Hayatımızdaki Ekonomi (SBAB6.2 Resource management; MEB, 2026b, pp. 60, 86), converging with C3 Economic Decision Making and EntreComp (Bacigalupo et al., 2016). • SBAB11.1 carries Grade 4 & 6 Hayatımızdaki Ekonomi (pp. 31, 86).

Three specific structural details in Table 2 merit close attention as evidence of international methodological convergence:
First, in Geography, the TYMM Common Text defines Spatial Thinking (SBAB7; MEB, 2025b, p. 74) as 'a constructive combination of three elements: knowing concepts of space, using tools of representation, and applying processes of reasoning'—a verbatim conceptual counterpart of

the landmark National Research Council (2006) definition of spatial thinking, while its eleven sub-skills (SBAB7.1–7.11) correspond directly to Gersmehl's (2014) modes of spatial reasoning (location, conditions, connections, comparison, aura/impact, region, hierarchy, transition, analogy, and pattern) and C3's D2.Geo.1–12 indicators. Similarly, Geographical Inquiry (SBAB8.1–8.5) mirrors Roberts' (2013) enquiry cycle.

Second, in History, TYMM's pairing of Change and Continuity (SBAB4) with Historical Empathy (SBAB3) reflects the exact international historical-thinking consensus articulated by Seixas and Morton (2013), Ashby and Lee (1987), and C3's D2.His.1–8: students must first recognize how past material and institutional conditions differed from the present (SBAB4) before they can contextualize historical actors' decisions within the unique conditions of their own time (SBAB3.1: tarihsel bağlamsallaştırma) without falling into anachronism.

Third, in Civics and Dimension 4, Social Participation (SBAB5)—which is the single most frequently assigned field skill in the 2026 Grade 4–7 Social Studies program (MEB, 2026b, pp. 13, 27, 39, 44, 54, 67, 93)—operationalizes C3's 'Taking Informed Action' (D4.6–D4.8) through its sequence of generating ideas (SBAB5.3), negotiating (SBAB5.4), and transforming ideas into action (SBAB5.5).

5. Findings II: Pedagogical Divergences and Domestic Innovations in the Maarif Model

While the four-stage inquiry logic and disciplinary skill taxonomies of the Maarif Model exhibit unmistakable structural convergence with the C3 Framework, closer inspection of MEB (2025b, 2026b) reveals that Turkish curriculum designers did not transplant the American document mechanically. Instead, TYMM diverges from C3 across four fundamental dimensions, reflecting Türkiye's unitary educational governance, domestic curriculum history, and holistic philosophical anthropology. Table 3 synthesizes these four structural divergences.

Table 3. Four Structural Divergences Between the NCSS C3 Framework (2013) and the TYMM Social Studies Curriculum (2024–2026)

Dimension of Comparison	NCSS C3 Framework (2013)	TYMM Social Studies Curriculum (2024–2026)	Curricular & Classroom Consequence
1. Governance, Content Binding & Step Granularity	Non-binding guidance for decentralized U.S. state standards; defines indicators by broad multi-year bands (by end of Grades 2, 5, 8, 12) without prescribing grade-by-grade historical/geographic content.	Centrally mandated national curriculum for Grades 4, 5, 6, and 7; binds every learning outcome directly to grade-specific content and unpacks each outcome into mandatory process components (a, b, c...).	TYMM guarantees nationwide curricular coherence, yet requires explicit safeguard rules: MEB (2025b, p. 15) stipulates that process components need not be executed in a rigid linear sequence.
2. Explicit vs. Implicit Skill Deployment Across Grades	Lists all disciplinary indicators symmetrically across every grade band (K–2, 3–5, 6–8, 9–12), leaving selection and weighting entirely to local districts and teachers.	Distinguishes between the 17 skills defined in the Common Text (MEB, 2025b) and the subset explicitly targeted on 'Field Skills' lines in Grades 4–7 (MEB, 2026b).	In MEB (2026b), SBAB2–8, SBAB10, and SBAB11 appear on learning-area skill lines; SBAB1 is invoked via inter-skill links (Grades 4 & 6), and SBAB9 (Fieldwork) is left to teacher initiative.

Dimension of Comparison	NCSS C3 Framework (2013)	TYMM Social Studies Curriculum (2024–2026)	Curricular & Classroom Consequence
3. Axiological Spine: Virtue–Value–Action (EDE) Framework	Treats civic virtues (honesty, mutual respect, cooperation; D2.Civ.7) as procedural democratic dispositions within Civics without a standalone moral-ontological framework.	Grounds all learning areas in Ontological/Epistemological/Temporal Unity and Axiological Maturity via the EDE Framework (3 roof values: Respect, Responsibility, Justice).	TYMM links epistemic inquiry directly to ethical character: values are not memorized as definitions but enacted through observable classroom and community actions.
4. Systems Thinking, Nine Literacies (OB1–OB9) & Sixth Learning Area	Omits a formal systems-thinking taxonomy and narrows core Dimension 2 pillars to four disciplines (relegating the 2010 NCSS 'Science, Technology, and Society' theme to state discretion).	Embeds Systems Thinking (Sistem Düşüncesi) with 9 Cross-Curricular Literacies (OB1–OB9) and retains 'Technology and Social Sciences' as a mandatory 6th spiral learning area.	TYMM equips teachers with an explicit curricular mandate across Grades 4–7 to address digital literacy (OB2), data literacy (OB7), copyright, and AI's societal impact.

5.1. Divergence 1: Unitary Step-Level Architecture and the Non-Linear Safeguard Rule

In the decentralized U.S. system, the C3 Framework stops at grade-band indicators (e.g., D2.His.12.6-8) and leaves unit topics and lesson breakdown to states and teachers (Thornton, 1991, 2005). In Türkiye's centralized curriculum tradition, by contrast, MEB (2025b, p. 32; 2026b) binds each learning outcome directly to a Conceptual Skill (KB) or Field Skill (SBAB) and imports that skill's defined process components (süreç bileşenleri) into the learning outcome without addition or deletion. For instance, because the integrated conceptual skill of Analysis (Çözümleme, KB2.4; MEB, 2025b, p. 16) is defined by two process components—(a) identifying the parts of an object, phenomenon, or event, and (b) determining the relationships among those parts—an outcome built on KB2.4 (such as SB.5.1.1: 'Gruplar ve roller arasındaki ilişkileri çözümleyebilme'; MEB, 2026b, p. 39) carries those exact two components.

While this centralized step-level specification ensures structural consistency across textbooks and provinces, it also introduces a pedagogical hazard: teachers might misread a learning-area page—with its lists of process components, values, dispositions, social-emotional skills, and literacies—as a fragmented checklist requiring seven separate mini-activities in a single forty-minute lesson. Crucially, the TYMM Common Text provides two built-in safeguards against this fragmentation. First, MEB (2025b, p. 15) explicitly states that 'process components do not have to be carried out in a sequential order.' Second, cross-curricular components (values, dispositions, SDB, and OB1–OB9; MEB, 2025b, p. 37) are designed to be carried implicitly through *how* the inquiry task is conducted (e.g., working in pairs carries SDB2.2 Collaboration; requiring students to cite a document warrant carries the value of Honesty and OB1 Information Literacy) rather than taught as separate lecture topics.

5.2. Divergence 2: Selective Grade-Level Deployment of Field Skills (SBAB1, SBAB9, SBAB10)

A second subtle finding of our cross-document analysis is the distinction between the macro-catalog of 17 Social Sciences Field Skills in the Common Text (MEB, 2025b, pp. 69–83) and their selective operationalization in the Grade 4–7 Social Studies program (MEB, 2026b). Whereas C3 prints every indicator across every grade band, MEB (2026b) exercises deliberate curricular selectivity for the elementary-middle school transition:

• Although Perceiving Time and Chronological Thinking (SBAB1) is listed in the general introduction of the Social Studies program as a core aim (MEB, 2026b, p. 4), it is never placed as the primary target on the 'Field Skills' line of any learning area in Grades 4–7; instead, it appears on the 'Inter-Skill Relations' (Beceriler Arası İlişkiler) line and in the instructional guidelines of Grade 4 and Grade 6 Ortak Mirasımız (with sub-skill SBAB1.2 Sequencing; pp. 23, 25, 75, 79). Thus, similar to Seixas and Morton's (2013) framework, chronology is treated not as an isolated end in itself, but as the supporting scaffold for Change and Continuity (SBAB4) and Historical Empathy (SBAB3).

• Similarly, while Map Skills (SBAB10) comprises four sub-skills in the Common Text (SBAB10.1 Reading maps, SBAB10.2 Analyzing maps, SBAB10.3 Inferring from maps, and SBAB10.4 Creating maps; MEB, 2025b, pp. 78–79), the Grade 4–7 program explicitly names only SBAB10.1 (Reading maps; MEB, 2026b, pp. 18, 71, 86, 102), relying on Spatial Thinking (SBAB7.1 and SBAB7.3) and Geographical Inquiry (SBAB8.4) to carry higher-order spatial

analysis.

• Finally, Geographical Observation and Fieldwork (SBAB9; MEB, 2025b, pp. 77–78) is not mandated on any learning-area line in Grades 4–7 (MEB, 2026b), leaving out-of-school fieldwork as an autonomous pedagogical choice supported by the five annual hours of school-based planning (okul temelli planlama).

5.3. Divergence 3: Axiological Maturity (EDE), Systems Thinking, and the Sixth Learning Area

Finally, TYMM departs from C3 by embedding social inquiry within an explicit philosophical and systemic matrix. Through the Virtue–Value–Action (Erdem–Değer–Eylem, EDE) framework (MEB, 2025b, p. 36), anchored in the three roof values of Respect (saygı), Responsibility (sorumluluk), and Justice (adalet), the curriculum insists that values move from action to value and from value to virtuous personality. At the same time, by structuring nine cross-curricular literacies (OB1–OB9) within Systems Thinking (Sistem Düşüncesi; MEB, 2025b, pp. 34, 37–40) and preserving 'Technology and Social Sciences' (Teknoloji ve Sosyal Bilimler) as a full sixth learning area across Grades 4–7, the Turkish curriculum provides an explicit home for examining technological change, digital ethics, and information verification—a domain that the 2013 C3 Framework left outside its four-discipline Dimension 2 core.

6. Discussion and Conclusion: Constructive Alignment Across Inquiry and Virtue

This comparative investigation has demonstrated that the 2024–2026 Century of Türkiye Maarif Model Social Studies Curriculum stands in a relationship of both conceptual inspiration and creative domestic divergence with the 2013 NCSS C3 Framework. On the technical-architectural plane, the four dimensions of the C3 Inquiry Arc—questioning, applying disciplinary tools in History/Geography/Civics/Economics, interrogating sources as evidence, and taking informed civic action—are unmistakably reflected in the internal sub-skill architecture of TYMM's Conceptual Skills (KB1–KB3) and Social Sciences Field Skills (SBAB1–SBAB17). On the normative and institutional plane, however, Turkish curriculum designers transformed this inquiry spine into a unitary grade-by-grade architecture enriched by the Virtue–Value–Action (EDE) framework, Systems Thinking, nine cross-curricular literacies (OB1–OB9), and a dedicated Technology and Social Sciences strand.

For Social Studies teachers, textbook authors, and teacher educators, recognizing this dual genealogy yields three actionable principles:

1. Reading Learning-Area Pages as an Integrated Inquiry Audit Rather Than a Fragmented Checklist: When teachers understand that TYMM's process components operationalize the C3 Inquiry Arc, they design a single coherent source-inquiry task per lesson—focusing on one targeted skill step at a time—while allowing values, dispositions, social-emotional skills, and literacies to be carried naturally by the structure of the task.

2. Enforcing Verb-Level Constructive Alignment in Assessment: Because both C3 and TYMM define learning outcomes through active inquiry verbs (analyzing KB2.4, questioning sources SBAB2.4, contextualizing SBAB3.1, negotiating SBAB5.4), valid classroom assessment cannot

rely on recall-level multiple-choice tests (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Messick, 1994; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). It requires observable student products—sourcing cards, two-column corroboration matrices, spatial pattern sketches, and evidence-backed arguments—graded against transparent analytical criteria.

3. Advancing Comparative Curriculum Scholarship: By documenting how an international inquiry arc was synthesized with a domestic axiological model (EDE) and a systems-thinking literacy matrix, Turkish Social Studies scholarship offers a compelling case study for international curriculum theory on how national education systems adapt global inquiry models without surrendering their philosophical and pedagogical identity.

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