The mission of history education in forming future

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Abstract

Developments observed on the base of global phase and reconstructed scientific paradigm has created a chaotic atmosphere as well as it has had an effect on living conditions of both social beings and individuals. Interest to history has increased as a result of conditions related with struggle to handle with these hardships. However history in the past was hardly able to comprehend and dealt with this interest. Therefore a new approach to history inevitably emerged. In this regard it is required to create a new approach to history with its subject; human being. As of the relationship between developments and positioning human beings, the mission of the history education in terms of forming present and future is questioned. Unfortunately this case hasn’t been adequately examined yet. Based on this case it is aimed to emphasize what is the mission of the history education in terms of forming future, what for it and how is it utilized to fulfill this task? To accomplish the task literature and available equipment will be analytically reviewed.

Keywords: History, Education, Globalization

1. Introduction

These days where we are at the beginning of the new century, looking back we see major changes and developments that experienced in many areas. In the current era new changes are being added to them. Changes occurring at the global level and the reconstructed paradigm of science have affected the individual and social lives and have led to the emergence of chaos in the ground.

The Son of Man has been searching for chances to overcome this chaos. As a result of the ongoing quest we witness increased interest in history. At this point, some questions have emerged such as What is History? Why do we learn history? How does history serve? When we think the continuity of this search, and other similar questions, the answers given to these questions showed differences compared to the living.

The events occurred in Medieval and New Age were made for the sake of God and the monarchs were considered as representatives of God. In this context, History was regarded as God's saving his purposes which God put forth. Events had occurred, because God liked that. A way of explanation based on human powers was put forth in Renaissance instead of that. Requirement of History was emphasized to understand and evaluate really such formations like state and society, being present in the Romantic age (Evans R. J., 1999). In parallel to rising of nationalism with French Revolution, the missions were loaded to History Teaching like giving consciousness of national identity and upbringing good citizens to Teaching History which was put as a scientific discipline and a teaching programme in school programme. As well as these, there are many points in the purposes and missions of

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History today. These purposes which were put to the History have an aim about future more or less, which creates source of our study. Before passing to this issue, it must be the point to answer the question of "What is History?".

All provisions of the word “history” in Western languages come from the word (Latin, historia; Italian, Storia; French, historie; English, history) comes from the word Greek "istoria" or ‘’istorein’’. The word is used in Ionian dialect, "declaring, through intelligence information” meanings (Doğan, 2001: 21). In addition, Word of History in Arabic comes from the root 'verehe'. It was came across that the root 'erehe' was used for the meaning ‘year, month' in some excavations made in Southern Arabia. In this context, History in Arabic means ‘defining time' and 'reporting time' (Erdoğan, 2009).

A continuous process of mutual interaction between the historian and his facts, an infinite dialogue between the past and today ‘’ responded to question ‘’ What is history?’” EH Carr (2004: 37).

According to another thinker Greenfeld Liah (cited in Ceylan, 2006: 13) "History is a sense of the sacred book of the nations, the most important, indispensible book, assets and activities mirror, inspired by the rules and track record, testament of the forefathers to descendants, disclosure of the present and moreover the role model of the future. According to another definitions, “History is a multi-discipliner science whose subject is human, whose space is cosmos and whose time was converted into Present Perfect from Past Simple” (Özdemir, 2010: 1).

The subject of the history that has many different definitions is human. In other words, in history and social sciences, people are examining other people, or in other words, he examines humanity himself. In this direction, the history for us is a matter of review and evaluation of history to learn the history of mankind, to make sense of today and to direct the future.

2. The Future and History Education

Tasks loaded to history are different from society to society. On the list of the most important factors that determine this are the livings conditions in which communities are. Because, historical researches are made in the period of the historian. The history that we are all trying to read and understand as a result is form of the questions answered resulting from the accumulation value judgments (Özbaran, 2005).

Developments now occurring in the current globalization process, gives a sense different from its predecessors and a new era has began. Changes in technology innovation and its reflection to contact area, the acceleration of knowledge production and dissemination are at the beginning of the factors that make up this change. In addition, we see a change in science paradigm in the form of transition from positivist (rational) science paradigm to beyond positivism (interpretive) paradigm. The term ‘’postmodern is the most common used name for the new era which has some characteristics including differences. In addition, designations such as post-capitalist, post-functionalist, or the information society, beyond the age of industry, communication age designations reveals the diversity of the new era (Özdemir, 2004). Because it is not the content of these concepts, there will be not too much focus on the subject of the study.

Changing individual and social living conditions are reflected in the field of education. Being aware of this, countries endeavor to bring the educational systems institutions to fit the new situation.

History teaching in the field of education also received its share of change. History education purposes are renewed in accordance with the requirements of the era. History lessons are no longer lessons in which only a name, number, and course materials are memorized. Some of the objectives of the History Education designed in accordance with the requirements of the era are shown in the following (Demircioğlu, 2006: 137).

- Obtaining information about democracy and the rules of law
- Understanding the contemporary world
- Giving students the ability to find their places in society
- Dealing with and solving social problems of his/her country, Europe and the world
- Helping the development of students’ identity
- Having ability to develop properties such as peace, freedom, tolerance and being open to communication
- Preparing students to adult life
- Giving the consciousness of being human
- Giving the consciousness of freedom to person

It is certain that it has many other purposes. But our goals are more in the forefront for the future. When we bethink the importance of desired goals in this era needed to be performed with history education, history education is seen as an effective tool to understand importance of construction of the future. More clearly, in this postmodern era where the floor of the chaos emerged, humankind see as History Education a way out for him and within this context imposes tasks on history. Seeing history education such an effective tool started in parallel with the French Revolution with the rise of nationalism and education program and as a discipline in the school program.

With the modern period important missions were loaded to history education for the nation-state construction. Nation-states have seen education in history as the most important tool for the development of identity citizens. But according to some thinkers, the role of history education in the construction of nation-state ended or has lost its effect in our age. Today, the developments show that this mission will continue. Because, it is not important to discuss such a particular purpose as "world citizenship", there will be communities somewhere resisting it. With this aspect, teaching of history will be used effectively to create a national consciousness. In this regard, John Tosh, (1997: 5) uses the expression “History is a force in shaping the national consciousness and probably it is even bigger than the language” Another thinker, Gustave Le Bon (2004: 81)’s; “For the birth of the union, which is one of the reasons of happiness of a nation, Bringing the members, making up the nation, as the source into a mass of ideas, emotions and faith is necessary to create a certain balance.” History education is one of the most important factors to create this balance.

We can show many examples of history education being used in the purpose of nation-state. One of these examples is History Education lessons instructed in this direction in the Republic of Turkey, which was established after the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Another example is one of the decisions taken by International Congress of African Historians gathered in Dares Salaam in 1965. According to this, "an African philosophy of history which will serve to get rid of the colonial era in Africa, must be a vital issue for all historians in Africa" (Tosh, 1997: 7).

When we impose a task on history education in this way, naturally it is used as a tool of ideology for different purposes as well. The ethnics nestled in nation-states, which see history education as one of the most important tools for their own unity and integrity, are able to use history education for the same purpose. This situation leads to the emergence of new problems for nation states. In other words, History education is used as a tool in squares. With this aspect, we can assume that history education can be taken into consideration as an effective factor at dividing up a state. Eric Hobsbawm (1999: 9)'s sayings on this subject are remarkable; "History is the raw material of the nationalist, ethnic or fundamentalist ideologies like how opium poppy is the raw material of heroin addiction. History is one of the essential elements of these ideologies."

It is seen that the states that have had some problems among themselves has used the history in a conscious way as tool to justify themselves. Such use leads to tensions in relations between the countries. These voltages can reach dangerous levels for the countries and the regions where they are as well. As a result, there are a number of agreements signed between countries not to use humiliating or hostile expressions to each other in history textbooks. As an example, for the elimination of provisions and the feeling of revenge in history lesson books, bilateral cultural agreements were signed between England and Germany in 1950, France and Germany in 1954. In addition, bilateral cultural agreement negotiations that began between Turkey and Greece in 20 April 1951 were adopted on 12 May 1952. The 14th of this agreement remains in effect for a period of five years from 10 September 1952 provides as follows; “Contracting Governments care about their own legislations within the limits and the school textbooks published in both countries are not supposed to contain inaccuracies about each of two countries” (Safran & Ata, 1996: 15).

We see that again disturbances in our societies, the people who rebel to authority and the people who deal with this insurgency work to strangle to take the support of history with them. This applies to governments and those who struggle for power. Because, the past is a very good tool to legitimize. In this respect Keith Jenkins (1997: 32) has brought clarity to the situation “History is never for himself, always for someone.” Again, Keith Jenkins(1997: 32) reveals with his words that history can be used for a ideological purpose “History is a theory and ideological and
ideology is material interests. Ideology, in our social formation, exudes each corner of the history in social institutions- mainly established for this purpose- especially in universities, including history of doing daily practices.”

History of Education’s use in this direction and effectiveness are becoming easier through globalization we live in. Communication, technology and developments in many areas caused by the process that we call globalization makes the world a large village. As a result, more historians in more countries can reach audience in other countries more than ever. For example, translation of French and German history books into English in the last twenty or thirty years is much higher than the previous periods. This situation also applies to the various communities. Ultimately even this situation that can affect the history of different societies. A result of globalization in the context of history education is The Power’s interpretation of history penetrating all the ground through textbooks, press and television.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations

Today, post-modernist thinkers see the similar approaches and the end of history attractive, but in fact, it is modern history that comes to the end. In addition, according to post-modernism, human a versatile, intelligent, interpreter and bio-psychic entity is the subject status as a primary dealer of the history (Özdemir, 2004). Human is already is the subject and the purpose of the history. It doesn't matter how much fast human runs, chains of the past always would be with people. Being the case, as in the past, a team of tasks will be imposed on the history education today and in the future. In addition, the form of writing as in any other field is available to the use and misuse of the powers. The role of history education in the construction of nation-states continues. The new ones have been added to the tasks loaded in only history education. The features of the current era made these additions necessary.

In the context of comments we made about the history education, we can make such proposals as in the following;
- Countries while determining in general the goals of education and in particular history education should take the features of the era they are in into account.
- Taking the roles of history education for the future into account, the contents of history textbooks taught in educational institutions should be organized as a neutral and care must be taken always to be used for the benefit of society.
- We must take better account of the future and make steps in this direction, and also we shouldn't forget that the rest of our life will pass in the future.
- Taking tensions, conflicts of particularly these days into consideration, history education should be used as a means to build peace, tranquility and a desirable ideal society. In this context, a conception of history should be created by taking into consideration local, national and universal values. It should be remembered that the misuse of history education will bring it into an instrument of war.

References