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Values of national identity in child magazines

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Abstract

In the current study, the magazines released from the time of declaration of the Republic to 1960s and the contribution of these magazines to the formation of national identity and values were investigated. Quantitative research method was used in the study. In this research, it is likely to say that basic characteristics of the Republic of Turkey were tried to be attained through writings, novels, stories, tales, poems and travel writings published in the child magazines. The emphasis on Turkish identity and pure Turkish were dominant up to 1950s and the awareness of homeland, nation, culture and history was given through heroic stories. Moreover, the issues over making the readers attain the values concerning Turkish Culture were highlighted and children were made to attain the consciousness of national identity.

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1. Introduction

Identity forms the most substantial and most significant basis of the society and defines and determines the feelings of belonging of the individuals living in a society. Identity symbolizes the way of life such as multidimensional beliefs, attitudes and value judgments which stand for both cultural and social status of individuals in the places where they live (Yıldız, 2007, p. 9).

Identity is the answer given by individuals to the question of “Who are you? Which group are you in?” Getting to know and defining “I”, which is based on the question, “Who am I?”, point to the social and psychological basis of identity and it is called “personal identity” as a subjective feeling including all the values regarding the existence of the person (Turan, 2009, p.22).

1.1. National identity

The formation of a “national identity” which is an instrument for the process of being a nation-state is the product of modern age. In other words, the identity of a state and the suppositional identity of the citizens making up a state correspond. There has been no problem for states to liken the identities of nationalities to the way of defining themselves or no need for them to define themselves with a common identity, assumed to be in their nationality until they turned into this new form of state, named as nation-state. National identity originally comprises a consciousness of identity and identification defined by nationalists. (Yıldız, 2007, pp. 12-14).

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National identity, in other words, is the cultural features that help us get to know a community. National identity is the expression of belonging to a natural culture. People having the culture of Turk have the identity of Turk. The strains caused by this belonging create the sense of nationalism (Köşoğlu, 2002).

The sum of values is the fragmentations that make up a culture. Values also form the identity of a community. All of the indications of social habits, lifestyles and beliefs of a society are included in national identity. With the socialization of the social structure they belong to, individuals have the sense, ideas, beliefs belonging to a nation, and all of those, which is their identity, so they are separated from other human communities with whom they have biological similarities. Values are the senses which are the sources of behaviors and used to judge them.

National values consist of such norms as patriotism, trust, hardworking, bravery, helpfulness, tolerance, love, respect, modesty, chastity, loyalty, solidarity, the culture of obedience, purity, morality and so on.

In order for national symbols and values to be internalized by the society, events, symbols and historical personalities that have been present in the collective memory but not taken in this purpose are made nationalistic; in particular, these are carried out by putting in the national education and cultural policies through military means, the intellects are given responsibilities and supported, so an awareness of an upper identity is tried to be created (Smith, 1991, pp. 111 -112)

1.2. Child publication

One of the child education tools is child publication. Child magazines published in line with the educational policies and goals of a country allow educational goals to become true.

Turkish child magazine publishing appeared in the late 19th century, in the period of Reforms. Child magazines developed as a result of facing to the west in the fields of education, culture, art and science and were published with a purpose of education. Innovations in the field of education and educational issues took place in the magazines to a large extent. The first magazine published in the period of Ottoman was Mümeyyiz (Compos Mentis) and it was followed by Hazine-i Etfal (Treasure of Children), Sadakat (Loyalty), Çocuklara Arkadaş (Friend to Children), Çocuklara Rehber (Guide to Children), Çocuk Bahçesi (Garden of Children) etc. (Şimşek, 2002, p. 15).

In the very beginning of the period of Turkish Republic, children were not only satisfied with reading the writings in the magazines of “Talebe Mecmuası (Student’s Magazine) (1923)’, “Çocuk Dünyası (Child’s World) (1926-1927)’ and “Çocuk Yıldızı (Child’s Star) (Izmir, 1923)’. Among the child magazines published after 1928, Çocuk Sesi (Child’s Voice) (1928-1948), Mektepli (Schooler) and Çocuk (Child) (Ankara, 1936-1948) have a different significance.

Child magazines published in Turkey were one of the most important tools of spreading the basic principles of the republic, making children attain a national identity and teaching them official and national language adopted by the state. In the sense of child publication, national identity is the main goal of the study carried out to determine how national identity bases of the state was formed in the child magazines through the writings and comics in the period comprising the years 1930 – 1960.

2. Method

In the current study, where the educational views of child magazines and the reflections of these ideas in creating a national identity and values were investigated, qualitative research method was used. Text was scanned from the original issues of the determined magazines and published issues was examined through text analysis in line with the purpose of the study, then the frequency and percentages of the topics were determined and analyzed.

3. Findings and comments

With the attainment of national identity and values studied in the rapidly increasing child magazines in the period of Republic, it is seen in the related publications that they were mostly comprised of issues such as Atatürk and his military comrades, republic, homeland, nation, history, family, human love and so on. The number of publication was presented in table 1.
Table 1: Child magazines topic analysis table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Issue (f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atatürk’s Life and his Works</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>İsmet İnönü’s Life and his Works</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republic Love</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love of Country and Flag</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish Language</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love of History</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish Heroes</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bravery</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish Identity</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey’s Geography, Introduction to Provinces</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grey Wolf</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Values</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Fests</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Festivals and Information about Religion</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family (Parents) Love</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Love and Friendship</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation and Solidarity</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Domestic Products</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comics</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tales</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientists, Philosophers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1398</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As given in Table 1, Atatürk’s life and works were given in 115 writings in the magazines examined. In the magazines, mostly issues related to Atatürk were given in certain days and weeks, particularly in national festivals and commemoration days of Atatürk. Some of the headings of the writings given in these magazines are as follows: “Turkish Nation! You Lost Your Saver and Biggest Son. Long Live the Nation (Faik R. Atay), Let the Day and Night Cry until the Doom’s Day, This Country (No author), Circumambulation of our Ancestor (Atatürk) (Poem: İbrahim Alaeddin), To Great Atatürk (Poem: N. Artam), Sun Set (Hasan A. Yücel), Condolence to my Flag, the Golden Age of Holy Atatürk (Va-Hu) (Çocuk, Issue: 113, 18.11.1938).

In almost every issue of the magazine Çocuk Dünyası, there were writings and poems over Atatürk (Çocuk Dünyası, 18, 1940; 8). In the poem below, Atatürk, love of flag and revolutions of the Republican Period were emphasized.

Ninety-three articles were written in the magazines in order to make the readers adopt the awareness of democracy for republican administration. Various world classics were used. The story talking about a group of children in a ship could be given as an example of making children love the administration of republic (Çocuk Dergisi, Volume 10, Issue: 27, 1947; 3).

Of the writings taking place in the magazines, 111 are related to the love of country and flag. In the news about giving the title of Gazi (veteran) to Atatürk published in the magazine Çalışkan Çocuk (Hardworking Child), it was told that Atatürk fought against the enemy with great effort, having seen that the country were invaded by enemy boots, started an action in Anatolia and saved the country with the wishes of all Turks. (Çalışkan Çocuk, 1934; Issue: 2).

In the magazines, 124 writings were published about love of history. 75 writings were about the lives of Turkish heroes, and 120 writings were over such values as bravery. While the readers were made to attain the love of homeland and being a Turk and, remarkable heroes of Turkish history and their wars were given in the magazines. (Çocuk, 1947, V: 2, Issue: 2).

There are 115 writings related to Turkish identity. We see that there was an effort to create a national identity in the historical novels and biographies of Turkish elders. It was aimed to create the love of history and nation with the lives of such Turkish elders as Atatürk, Fatih Sultan Mehmet, Mete, Alpaslan, Namik Kemal, Mehmet Akif, Yunus Emre, Mevlana, Tevfik Fikret, Fuad, İbn-i Sina, Lokman Hekim, Nizamülmülk. Fatih Sultan Mehmet was introduced as the person eliminating Byzantium which stood like a pustule in the middle of the country (Çocuk, 1947; V: 2, Issue: 2). Also, in the poems published in the magazines, it was tried to make the reader to love the
country, the flag and being a Turk. With the poem Turkish Child published in the magazine Çocuk Dünyası, Turkish identity was emphasized.

In the magazines, the feeling of being a Turk was tried to be attained through poems, tales and short stories as well. Even, Robinson Crusoe was told as a series of a story as a Turk living in an island alone (Çocuk Dünyası, 3, 1940; 14).

The number of the writings directly related to Turkish language is 18. In the writings published in the magazines between 1930 and 1950, there were some efforts to use original Turkish words such as “öštükte, ötkünkci, abay, ulus, ertürk, bitimucu, söylev, okutan, acun, çaralı, akalan” and so on (Olgun Çocuk, 1935; Issue: 1).

Additionally, there were 11 symbols of grey wolf in the magazines. Grey wolf was one of the frequently used symbols in the years 1938, 1939 and 1940. In the writing with the title of Ergenekon and 23rd April, it was told that İlhan, the son of Oğuzhan died at a war and his son who survived by chance and his nephew migrated to Ergenekon land with his wife Tokuş. They populated there and they left Ergenekon with their kağan (chief) named Bozkurt. In the earlier issues, similar elements were attributed to Oğuz Khan (Çocuk, 1938, Issue: 83 – 84; 20).

There were 19 writings about religious festivals and information over religion in the magazines. Even though there were not so many writings in the magazines, information was given about religion and festivals on religious days. In the writings titled Ramazan Bayramı (Fest of Ramadan) and İktisat Haftası (Week of Economy), there was an emphasis on being prudent and on living without wasting, rather than holy month of Ramadan. (Yeni Çocuk Sesi, Issue: 55, 1931).

Moreover, love of family took place in the magazines with 29 writings. On the occasion of mother’s day, mother and family love were given in two short stories. In a short story named “Mother Love”, the hard struggle between the mother goat and the eagle which would like to take away her lamb was told. Mother love was highlighted in the story. (Çocuk Gazetesi, Issue: 15, 1949; 3-5).

In the magazines, the topics of working took place 48 times, human love and friendship 31 times, cooperation and solidarity 39 times, using domestic products 16 times as the values. Such values as national and humanistic values, working, honesty, cooperation and solidarity were aimed to be attained through short stories and tales. In a story “A Horse Two Men” (Çocuk Alemi, Issue: 3, 1947; 5), good and bad manners of people towards a horse grazing alone in the pastures were given. The lonely horse behaved in the same manner to the people behaving it in the good manner. People were tried to give the idea that behaving people and animals in a good manner is an important value.

4. Conclusion

Child magazines published in Turkey have been one of the most important tools in order to spread the basic principles of republic, make people attain Turkish national identity and values that were determined in line with the target of one nation, one flag, one homeland of democratic, secular state formed by newly founded Turkish Republic and to teach official and national language determined by the state. As a conclusion;

It is likely to say that through child magazines;
1. Basic principles of Turkish republic were tried to be given to children,
2. The emphasis on Turkish identity and pure Turkish were dominant in 1950s
3. Readers were given the awareness of homeland, nation, culture and history through heroic stories,
4. The awareness of national identity was given to children by emphasizing the attainment of Turkish culture and related values.

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