

**Investigating the Effects of Power Institutions on Iranian
Children and Adolescents' Literature: A Selection of Award-
winner Original and Translated Works Before and After the
Islamic Revolution (1961-1988)**

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Introduction

Throughout history, power institutions have tried to deploy literary and cultural orders in achieving their political, cultural, social, economic and religious goals. Generally, in order for a system to maintain its existence, it is necessary that the young generation of that society believe in and commit to its policies, guidelines and beliefs. Literary works are perhaps the best vehicles for the power institutions in transferring their ideologies and policies from generation to generation.

Methodology, Review of Literature and Purpose

Wunderlich (1992) conducted a case study on the story of Pinocchio and its different adaptations through the American history to show how this work of art has undergone different translations and adaptations in different periods and in answer to different general policies. Thomson-Wohlgemuth (2006) showed how Germany made a huge investment on writing and more specifically on translating works of children's literature with specific ideologies in order to propagate its Marxist-Leninist policies. Lerer (2008) studied the history of western children's and adolescents' literature and showed how churches in the Renaissance period propagated Catholic thinking through children's works and also by establishing the first schools for separating children and adolescents from adults. Arzuk (2013) showed how Mustafa Kemal Atatürk succeeded in creating a great change in Turkey by manipulating children's fiction and publishing a magazine for the direct relationship between the government and the young generation with the intention of propagating western values in Turkey and changing the former Islamic system in this country.

The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of power institutions on Iranian children's and adolescents' works in the period between 1961 to 1988, a period in which the literary order of children's and adolescents' literature in Iran was still young, and the country was in turmoil. The period is divided, according to obvious changes in the political and social arenas of the country, into two periods: from 1961 to 1979 (the final years of Pahlavi period) and from 1979 to 1988 (the Imposed War period). The selection of works was limited to those original or translated works which were awarded in the two periods.

The information of the works was extracted from Lasting leaves' comprehensive bibliography (Zahed-Shekar-Abi, 2014) and then compared with the resources in the National Library of Iran. First, the distribution of awards to these works in these two periods was investigated, and then the contents of the works were analyzed to see if there are any similar issues in them.

Discussion and Conclusion

Investigation of award-winner works in the two period of 1961 to 1979 (the end of Pahlavi period) and 1979 to 1988 (the Imposed War period) showed that powerful national and international institutions have affected the new literary world of children's and adolescents' literature in Iran. in the first period, 15 national and international institutes have awarded 94 works; and in the second period, 19 institutions have awarded 131 works. The number of national institute has increased from 5 in the first period to 12 in the second period which shows that this literary system is getting more and more orderly and independent. Generally, in both periods the original works have gained more attention in comparison with translated works.

From the perspective of the type, works of fiction have gained the most awards in both periods. In addition to this, the number of awarded works of original and translated non-fiction are approximately the same in the second period, suggesting that works of nonfiction have become more important than they had been in the first period. Among the national institutes, Shoura in the first period and Kanoon (the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Adolescents) in the second period were more active than other institutes.

The content analysis of these works showed that they have similar subject matters. Works of fiction in each period have reflected the significant political and social issues and concerns of that period. The contents of the award-winners in the first period revolve around four subjects of relationships, seeking justice and prejudice against strangers, scientific materials and Iranian traditions; and in the second period, they revolve around five subjects of relationships, seeking justice and prejudice against strangers, death, advice, and scientific material. The two subjects of relationships and scientific materials are common in both periods, with the former subject having a significant ideological overtone; so much so that in the first period, it is presented from the perspective of power stratification, while in the second period it is presented from the perspective of war, xenophobia, self-sacrifice and patriotism. Powerful literary institutions have had a great influence in both periods on guiding the original and translation productions and on determining subject standards; and their awarding policies been ideologically biased. These institutions have guided the production of works for the young generation based on general policies of Iranian society and present-day social issues.

Keywords: Iranian children's and adolescents' literature, translation, writing, award, power institutions

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