

Construction of Acceptable Citizenship Through Primary School Textbooks in Iran*

Esin Erginbaş Tok¹

Rukiye Tinas²

İran'da İlkokul Ders Kitapları Aracılığıyla Makbul Vatandaşlık İnşası	Construction of Acceptable Citizenship Through Primary School Textbooks in Iran
Öz Bu makale, İran İslam Cumhuriyeti'nin 1979 Devrimi'nden sonra ortaya çıkan vatandaşlık anlayışına ilkökul ders kitaplarını inceleyerek ışık tutmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bunlar 14 ortak ders kitabıdır: Farsça, Kuran-ı Kerim Öğretimi, Gökyüzünün Hediyesi: İslami Eğitim ve Öğretim ve Sosyal Bilgiler. İncelemenin neticesinde, İran devletinin makbul vatandaşlardan oluşan ideal toplumunu yaratan vatandaşlık anlayışının ümmet fikrinden beslendiği ve Şii-Müslüman ve Şii-İran unsurlarına uygun olarak hem mezhepsel hem de etnik kimliklere dayalı olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır.	Abstract This article aims to shed light on the Islamic Republic of Iran's conception of citizenship that emerged from the 1979 Revolution by analyzing primary school textbooks. Those are 14 books of common courses: Persian, Teaching the Qur'an, Heaven's Gifts: Islamic Education and Training and Social Studies. At the end of this analysis, it was revealed that the conception of citizenship, which creates the ideal society of the Iranian state consisting of acceptable citizens, is fed by the idea of the ummah and based on both sectarian and ethnic identities in accordance with the Shiite-Muslim and Shiite-Iranian elements of the state.
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Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Beyanı	Bu çalışma bilimsel araştırma ve yayın etiği kurallarına uygun olarak hazırlanmıştır.
Yazarların Makaleye Olan Katkıları	İki yazarın makaleye katkısı eşittir.
Çıkar Beyanı	Yazarlar açısından ya da üçüncü taraflar açısından çalışmadan kaynaklı çıkar çatışması bulunmamaktadır.

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¹ PhD Student, Ankara University Faculty of Political Science, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, esin_erginbas@hotmail.com

² Associate Professor, Eskişehir Osmangazi University, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, rukiye_tinas@hotmail.com

1. Introduction

Citizenship, as Aristotle puts it, is one of the identities experienced by the individual as a *zoon politikon* and a dynamic concept that has been defined in different ways throughout history. This concept, as the subject of democracy, mainly refers to the membership of an individual to the political community and the sum of relations one establishes with the state. After the emergence of nation-states, citizenship has taken an identity form in which the individual is assigned a role in every medium, including the public and the private spheres, an identity that aims to influence the individual through various mechanisms. The citizen, who knows his/her responsibilities to the state and is conscious of fulfilling his/her duties with a sense of loyalty, and whose identity is integrated with the state identity, constitutes the prototype of the acceptable citizen.³ The concept of acceptable citizenship becomes operational through individuals who share a sense of belonging thanks to this awareness of responsibility and identity (Balibar, 2016: 90). This sense of belonging shapes the other along with the acceptable. The definition of the concept of the other is principally based on the criteria of the me-us culture, and it refers to the people who are below and lacks this culture (Schnapper, 2005: 25-27).

Following the 1979 Revolution, Iran adopted the Islamic Republic as its administrative model and aimed to construct citizenship in line with the new ideology of the state. The citizenship that the new regime has aimed to construct on the basis of the concept of *Velayat-e Faqih* (Islamic Government), which was developed by Supreme Leader Khomeini, has been defined in line with the *Ithna-'ashariyyah* (The Twelve Imams) branch of Shiism – which Iran accepts as the official sect in the Constitution (Article 12) – and the marginalization of the former regime, the Pahlavi Dynasty.

Defining the Pahlavi Dynasty, the representative of the former regime and the recent past, based on the concept of the other, is significant for the formation of this identity. The Pahlavi administration, which started with Reza Shah's reign in 1925 and lasted until the 1979 Revolution against the rule of his son Mohammed Reza Shah, was identified with the concepts of centralization, Westernization, secularization, modernization, and national unity (Abrahamian, 2018: 110-118). Thus, the Pahlavi administration left the legacy of a nation-state structure and a citizen prototype built on the basis of this structure for the Islamic Republic.

Even though the official name of the new regime includes the word Islam, Iran aimed to establish the allegiance of citizens to the state with the ideological tools used by modern states. This article examines the common parameters which construct both Persian and Muslim (Shiism) Iranian identity for students in Iran through the primary school textbooks in the school, as an institutional apparatus of the modern state, during the period 1396-1397⁴ in the Islamic calendar. The sample of the research consists of 14 books⁵ of common

³ The Turkish version of this concept is used for the first time in 2004 by Füsün Üstel in her book titled "Makbul Vatandaş'ın Peşinde, II. Meşrutiyet'ten Bugüne Vatandaşlık Eğitimi". Üstel reveals the citizen profile that the Turkish State aims to construct by examining citizenship education through textbooks and education programs.

⁴ It is because of the fact that current Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei put forward a new vision by declaring that the *Second Phase of the Revolution* had been started in his speech on Bahman 22, 1397 (February 11, 2019) on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution (Khamenei, 1397). Considering that the education programs and textbooks were renewed in this respect, this study examines the education period of 1396-1397.

⁵ PDF formats of these books are available on the official website of the Ministry of Education of Iran. See Iranian Ministry of Education, (no date), <http://chap.sch.ir/school-books> (Accessed: 14.01.2023).

courses: Persian, Teaching the Qur'an, Heaven's Gifts: Islamic Education and Training, and Social Studies. These textbooks were examined through the document analysis method, a qualitative research technique. The study aims to make a contemporary contribution to the social sciences literature by analyzing the concept of acceptable citizenship, which occupies a significant place in the Political Science discipline, through the example of Iran, which has been examined via different approaches since the Revolution.

This article will first define the conceptual framework of the study by examining the concepts of ideal/other in the West and Islam and discuss the school as an ideological institution for the formation of citizens. On this basis, the impact of the 1979 Revolution and Supreme Leader Khomeini on the formation of the citizen prototype of the Islamic Republic will be analyzed. Finally, the article will present findings of the analysis of the selected primary school textbooks concerning the Shiite-Muslim and Shiite-Iranian Citizen conception of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

2. The Concept of Citizenship in the West and Islam

The concept of citizenship, whose foundations are drawn from the tradition of ancient Greece, will be discussed first in the West, primarily meaning political commitment to a community and a state and having gained new meanings over time. Next, the concept will be analyzed in the Islamic tradition, where it is shaped by religious teachings.

2.1. The Emergence of the Concept of Citizenship in the West

The concept of citizenship first emerged in the polis, which was a form of social and political organization in ancient Greece. In these city-states, citizenship took form on the basis of participation in public affairs, equality, loyalty, partnership, public life, privilege, and prerogative. Examining the concept of citizenship in Athens through the ideas of Ancient Greek philosophers reveals that Plato (2019: 132) classifies citizens into three categories as guardians, auxiliaries, and producers, and distinguishes mass and elite citizens while attaching importance to raising elite citizens for the establishment of the state order (2019: 237). Another philosopher, Aristotle (1975: 8), on the other hand, differentiates the rulers and the ruled and states that it is natural for the ruler class to come to the fore with their intelligence while the slaves come into prominence with their physical strength. Ultimately, citizenship in ancient Greece started to mean sharing in the polis and acquired a form that represents the totality of official obligations, privileges, as well as feelings, and common attitudes (Manville, 1997: 210). Although the number of active citizens participating in public life was limited, individuals assumed the role of active citizenship by representing belonging to the political partnership and participating in public life.

Contrary to the citizenship culture of ancient Greece, which appealed to a limited group, citizenship in Rome gained a universal dimension during the Imperial Period. Following the expansion of the borders, in 212 AD, Emperor Caracalla issued an edict recognizing the right of citizenship of the free people living in the empire. Thus, citizenship acquired a legal and legitimate basis. As a result, individuals gained the right to citizenship without voting and political participation (Bellamy, 2008: 39). Therefore, it is possible to say that the concept of active citizenship had been eroded in ancient Greece, while a new perception of citizenship emerged as a right given to the masses instead of citizenship as participation in active political life.

The concept of citizenship in the Middle Ages, on the other hand, is related to its relationship with Christianity and the emergence of the concept as a status in cities (Heater, 2007: 67). The influence of religion made the devotion to the society and the state seen in the ancient age transform into a *Gemeinschaft* based on fraternity which emphasizes the spirit of individuals (Riesenberg, 1992: 88-89). Indeed, Christian theology, which conveys that the indicator of being a good person is possible by participating in worship, has assigned a role to individuals in line with the aim of being a good person. In addition, since each of the cities had local laws, legislative systems, and administrations of their own in the medieval city-states, they acted as states. As a result, local citizenship culture developed in these city-states. The citizen freedom movement and communal administration, which started primarily in Italian city-states, constitute important examples of this culture (Bookchin, 1999: 140-145). However, the fragmented status of the city-states and the search for political unity paved the way for the era of absolute monarchies. The reduction of local citizenship to the status of being a subject of the state with the obligations of loyalty, subjection, and obedience created the basis for the concept of state citizenship in the absolute monarchies, aiming at political unity.

The rise of the modern nation-state and the emergence of national consciousness in societies correspond to the acquisition of political and legal content of the concept of citizenship. The concepts of nation and state began to be used together as nation-states after the revolutions of the late 18th century. Indeed, the Enlightenment⁶ preceding the revolutions had a great impact on the emergence of these concepts. The political pillar of the Enlightenment, centered on the individual and the consent of the individual, paved the way for governments that derive their legitimacy not from God but from a worldly political order. The supporters of the social contract played an important role in this transition (see Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau). Thus the state is transformed into a modern form that privileges political unity, the individual as a citizen and the citizen as people. In the 19th century, the definition of the modern state in general terms was consciously and often clearly shaped in connection with nationalism. Under the principle of territorial integrity, the modern state is surrounded by militarily defensible geographical borders, has a single currency, a single national language superior to local languages and a single legal system (Poggi, 2019: 114). From the beginning of the 20th century, a series of views have emerged that assess the concepts of nation, nationalism and the modern state, as well as changes in social and cultural realms within the framework of political interest. For example, Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson, while explaining the concepts of nation and nationalism, emphasized social and cultural change. According to Gellner, the concepts of “industrial society” and “homogeneous standardized culture” formed the basis of the modern approach

⁶ The foundation of Enlightenment philosophy is based on rationalism, empiricism, scepticism and human-centered ideas, which are based on the betterment of society and the life of the individual and seek intellectual progress. It refers to a process of development that took shape in France, Germany and Scotland in the 18th century, but is not tied to any specific historical period or place. Among the thinkers of the Enlightenment are Jean le Rond D’Alembert, Denis Diderot, David Hume and Emmanuel Kant. Enlightenment thought is most associated with political revolutions and ideals. The 1789 French Revolution is the clearest example of this (Bristow, 2007). The French Revolution played a central role in the theory and practice of the concept of citizenship and its evolution into modern citizenship. It revived the active political citizenship approach of the classical age and brought direct state membership to the citizens by inventing both the nation-state and the national citizenship ideology (Brubaker, 2009: 74). Moreover, it paved the way for a form of society as a result of modernity, a new type of common identity, and the interstate order (Smith, 2013: 69). It also witnessed the birth of the French nation in the form of the French Republic.

to national identity and the nation. Nations are a new phenomenon that emerged with the process of industrialization in the modern age as a product of faith, loyalty and solidarity created by people (2018: 78). In this context, nationalism transformed the cultures brought by the historical heritage and created nations by resorting to “reviving dead languages” and “inventing traditions”. In other words, it is nationalism that created nations (2018: 138). Anderson, who defines nations as limited and sovereign “imagined communities”, sees nations and nationalism as particular cultural constructs (2020: 23). According to him, the nation entails a sense of communion or “horizontal comradeship” between people who often do not know each other or have not even met and for which countless people have willingly sacrificed themselves (2020: 24-26).

On the other hand, arguing that nationalism preceded nations like Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm considers nationhood and nationalism as concepts of recent times and evaluates them within the framework of political interest. He points out that nations are formed by artificiality, invention and social engineering (1995: 24). Thus, belonging to the modern period, the concept of nation draws its legitimacy from rituals and symbols that are linked to the past and from certain values and norms of behavior that are continuous, namely “invented traditions” (Hobsbawm, 2006: 2).

Another approach is the ethno-symbolist approach of Anthony D. Smith, whose main argument is the respect for ethnic identities and histories in the birth of modern nations. The British thinker assumes that ethnic components are found in many national communities and draws attention to the existence of ethnic elements which constitute the cement of modern nations. According to Smith, ethnicity is made up of common ancestral myths and similarities, shared memories, cultural traits, ties to the homeland, and solidarity among elites (2013: 26). Moreover, referring to the relationship between nationalism and religion, Smith sees nationalism as closer to the concept of “political religion”, rather than seeing it as merely a worldly culture. Indeed, the ceremonies commemorating the “glorious dead” or the “martyrs” who sacrificed their lives for countries exemplify this understanding, which is shaped by the concepts of death and immortality, while these places build the “sacred communions of citizens” (2013: 56-57). In this respect, we see that the opinions of Anderson and Smith are similar. Coming back to Anderson, the proximity of the nationalist imaginary to the religious imaginary is explained through the concepts of death or immortality, as evidenced by the tombs of the Unknown Soldier (2020: 28).

Parallel to Smith and Anderson, Carlton J. H. Hayes asserts that modern nationalism has acquired a religious character. The effect of nationalism on the masses as a substitute for religious belief has been shaped by the construction of national practices that supersede universal Christian religious practices and carry Christian heritage. Indeed, the attribution of the ideal of immortality to nation-states, the acceptance of the nation as enduring, and the magnificence of the immortality of the individuals forming the nation were inspired by Christian heritage. Furthermore, modern nationalism has created a set of ritual practices through national symbols. Hayes illustrated the symbols of these rituals with national flags (greeting, held halfway up their masts, hoisted), which became objects of worship. Moreover, national anthems, temples, holidays and heroes have been defined as the “religious attractions” of modern nationalism (2010: 192).

The ideas of nation and nationalism are also important in the revelation of the feminine condition of the time. The nation was the construction of the male imagination, and women

could not go beyond being symbolic objects (Sancar, 2014: 54). On this point, Nira Yuval-Davis stated that the nationalist discourse treats women as carriers of the community with the role of motherhood and as individuals of the national community. She adds that the role of producers of nations biologically, culturally and symbolically is given to women (2010: 19). Joane Nagel, on the other hand, said that masculinity and nationalism are articulated with each other. By definition, nationalism is closely tied to the state and its institutions, and most state institutions (like the army) have historically been dominated by men (1998: 248-249). Thus the role of protectors of the nation is attributed to men. Similarly, according to Tamar Mayer:

“The nation is comprised of sexed subjects whose “performativity” constructs not only their own gender identity but the identity of the entire nation as well. Through repetition of accepted norms and behaviors – control over reproduction, militarism and heroism, and heterosexuality – members help to construct the privileged nation; equally, the repetitive performance of these acts in the name of the nation helps to construct gender and sexuality.” (2000: 5).

In short, the concept of the citizenship, which has been shaped since antiquity and has become more clear with the emergence of nation-states with definite borders, has gained the meaning of belonging to the community of citizens through homogeneities such as language and race. The concept still maintains this meaning today.

2.2. The Concept of Citizenship in Islam

While citizenship has been defined in terms of political identity and loyalty in the West, its primary definition in the Muslim world has been shaped by religion (Lewis, 1998: 18). Citizenship in the Islamic states has not been based on the distinction between citizen-foreign but Muslim and non-Muslim. Although Islam does not define a state with definitive style and borders in its holy book, the Quran, it has revealed the basic principles of an Islamic government or state in line with its teaching that the purpose of the creation is not only for worldly life (Surah Ali 'Imran 3/104). Indeed, the first Islamic state was established in the form of a city-state in 622, and Mohammed, the Prophet of Islam, assumed the duty of the head of state by using political authority in addition to preaching the religion of Islam (Lewis, 2013: 68).

Written in the first Islamic State with the collective participation of the local people, the Constitution of Medina is significant in terms of showing that the citizenship status in Islam goes back to 622. This text, also known as the first written legal agreement of all times that envisages political participation on the basis of equal rights, was signed between Muslims, Jews, and polytheists. It legally guaranteed pluralism by recognizing religious, legal, and cultural autonomy (Bulaç, 1995: 11). The Prophet of Islam used an egalitarian discourse in his duty to preach Islam and did not make any discrimination among people as the Qur'an requires (Ash-Shura 42/15 and Al-Anbiya 21/109). Indeed, Muslim believers, who formed the basis of the unity of the faith, are accepted as a single ummah⁷ (Surah Al-Anbiya 21/92). Islam acknowledges the taqwa as the criteria of privilege deny race, color, or hereditary characteristics as a source of superiority (Surah Al-Hujuraat 49/13), and does not grant a privilege to any community. In this respect, according to the general perception, tribalism

⁷ The Arabic word ummah (أُمَّة) means nation.

strengthens ideologies that threaten the political unity of Islam and causes internal conflicts among Muslims (el-Mevdudi, 2016: 317-318).

As in modern states, there are rules that regulate the relationship between the ruler and the ruled in the Islamic administration. For example, the duties of loyalty and submission to the administration are important for the stability of the state (Kamali, 2013: 161-162). The Qur'an commands us to obey Ulu l-Amr⁸ as well as Allah and the Prophet (An-Nisâ 4/59) and defines this obedience as the duty of the citizen in the establishment of the Islamic order. The ruler of an Islamic state must believe in and adhere to the Islamic order in order to rule according to Islamic rules. According to the arguments, a person who does not possess these qualifications cannot become the head of state or government (el-Mevdudi, 2016: 727). It is also underlined that citizens do not have to obey an illegitimate government that violates the provisions of the Qur'an (Asad, 1980: 76). It is recognized that citizens have the right to warn the ruler if the ruler deviates from Islamic procedures. In this scope, this duty obliges citizens to supervise the administration and remind the ruler of the limits imposed by the law in case the administration deviates from Islamic principles (el-Benna, 2018: 39-43). In addition to these duties, citizens also have military service obligations. This obligation is related to the concept of jihad in the Islamic state (Asad, 1980: 70). As the subject of many verses in the Quran; this concept has several meanings, such as fighting against non-Muslims, one's nafs (ego) and military, economic and cultural wars. Therefore, the state and citizenship in Islam are shaped by the principles of the religion of Islam and determined by the inseparable coexistence of Islam and state administration, as well as the Quranic principle of "Enjoining (what is) right and forbidding (what is) evil" (Tawba 9/71).

The status and rights of women in Islam should also be addressed under the heading of citizenship in Islam. Although the question of women is considered according to the Quranic verses and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad, it is shaped according to different approaches.⁹ For example, according to the approach that defines women within the family and according to feminine nature, the main duty of the Muslim woman is child rearing and household maintenance. Muslim women should be educated in accordance with her gender, work in commercial fields that suit her gender, should neither compete with men in outside jobs nor do such jobs (el-Benna, 2017: 376; el-Mevdudi, 2016: 633; Vecdi, 2007: 53-54). Moreover, she doesn't have the right to hold public office and should not be involved in politics. According to the opposite approach, based on the Quranic principle quoted above (Tawba 9/71), both man and woman are responsible for this common duty without being favored (Karaman, 1997: 277). Furthermore, according to the evidence presented by the scholars of the Ahl as-Sunnah, there are no obstacles for women to gain access to public office (Hamidullah, 1980: 387).

The criteria of the hijab and the manner of veiling determine the place of women in society. For example, it is explained that the Qur'an (Surah An-Nur 24/31) prescribes women to cover their hair and neck (Ateş, 1998: 16). The hijab is seen as a "material" obstacle that ensures the independence of Muslim women and protects them from evil and masculine

⁸ Ulu l-Amr means those who have the authority to give orders and who are in this position, that is, the chiefs.

⁹ The place of women in Islam is explained with different approaches on various grounds ranging from the hijab to her place in the family and society, from inheritance, divorce, testimony to education and public rights. Due to the limitations of this study, issues falling within the scope of Islamic law such as inheritance, divorce and testimony will not be mentioned.

domination (Vecdi, 2007: 132). On the other hand, the verse in question traces the general lines of the hijab; it is also argued that the details regarding the hijab are fully bound up with customs and traditions, that the word hair is not included in the surah that the Qur'an prohibits men and women from exposing their sexuality and that both genders must protect themselves against the opposite sex (Bilgin, 1997: 38). Finally, contrary to the view that the hijab protects woman from evil (see Vecdi, 2007), it is claimed that the hijab causes the isolation and exclusion of woman from society in many areas, from education to economics (Haddad, 2007: 148-151).

3. Construction of the Acceptable Citizen in Primary School Textbooks

The construction of acceptable citizens takes place when students, who are seen as the guarantee of the regime, receive citizenship education in schools. Educational policies on the basis of the ideology of the state and the school where these policies are implemented are at the center of the construction of the acceptable citizen community loyal to the state.¹⁰ The school is an institution that has a unique culture in which a sense of we prevails, and it imposes the ideology of the state through its educational curricula, especially since the emergence of the modern state (Schnapper, 1998: 150). It reflects a political community space where students are treated equally as citizens of the state (Waller, 1932). In this context, the school assumes the role of the transmitter of the state ideology through its citizenship education for the construction of citizens targeted by the state, and in this sense, it represents one of the ideological apparatuses of the state, according to Louis P. Althusser (1991: 44-45). Similarly, Michel Foucault (2014: 71) also explains educational institutions as the places where the power process (like reward and punishment) is developed through communication (orders, advice) organized between the student and the teacher.

Claiming that the former system was under the influence of Western culture, the Revolution regime reorganized all levels of the educational system, from primary school to university, on the basis of the religious curriculum and ended the co-educational practices in Iran (Bayat, 2015: 100). In accordance with the ideology of the Revolution, the Ministry of Education has based the education program on the following grounds: Teaching the fundamentals of the religion of Islam and Ithna-'ashariyyah, ensuring adherence to Islamic rules, raising moral and virtuous students in line with Islamic values, creating political awareness based on the principle of Velayat-e Faqih in order to contribute to the country's politics in various fields, developing a sense of unity among Muslims, protecting the family institution in line with the Islamic teachings, and raising individuals who obey and respect the law (Özlük, 2017: 733-735). The findings of the examination of the textbooks, which are taught to students who started their education life at the age of six and will receive education at the primary school for six years, will be discussed under the titles Shiite-Muslim Citizen Conception and Shiite-Iranian Citizen Conception.

¹⁰ This role of education and school is based on the construction of the modern child in the Age of Enlightenment and the understanding of the child as a citizen. With the genesis of the modern state, the link between education and citizenship is established and children are considered by the state as the citizens of the future. According to Rousseau, who formulates this thought very clearly, the school is the place where the rules of society operate and where the spirit of equality and fraternity spreads (Heater, 2007: 110). The pedagogical theory of the French thinker is also linked to the gender dimension of citizenship. While stating that men and women are not and should not be the same in character or temperament, Rousseau points out that men and women should receive education specific to their own sex. In his book *Emile*, the man Emile brings home the bacon, while Sophie learns to be a good wife and a good mother (Tannenbaum, 2021: 259).

3.1. Shiite-Muslim Citizen Conception

According to the teachings of the textbooks, an individual in Iranian society must primarily be a person who obeys Islamic rules both in his private life and the public sphere. In addition, one should also have a Shiite-Muslim identity which requires being aware of the basic teachings of Ithna-'ashariyyah, taking the lifestyles and words of the imams as well as Prophet Mohammad as an example, and comprehending who Ahl al-Bayt were.

The first finding classified under this title is related to the construction of the Muslim individual in line with the main religious knowledge. In accordance with what have been stated previously – the Qur'an commands citizens of the Muslim community to obey Ulu l-Amr as Allah and his Prophet and it is their duty to establish an Islamic order – the books teach concepts such as the holy book of Islam and Muslimhood, emphasize being a good and moral individual who cares about the rules of etiquette, represent the Prophet of Islam as a role model, and underline that the Prophet was not only a person who preached religious teachings as the messenger of Allah but also a role model that should be taken as an example in all areas of life (Grade 5, Heaven's Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 30-34). Furthermore, as noted before, Muslim citizens have military service obligations related to the concept of jihad, which is a war against military, economic and cultural invasion or exploitation and, above all, against one's nafs. Thus, students are taught how to dress and spend their spare time in line with the main religious knowledge. Suggested leisure activities include attending religious ceremonies, attending Qur'an courses, helping people, visiting relatives, and taking responsibility in institutions such as the Basij Organization (Grade 6, Social Studies: 72). A text titled The Clothes We Wear Should Be Conforming to Our Religion indicates how to dress by stating that *"clothing should provide proper cover for a Muslim man or woman. Obedience to the hijab and chastity is an indication of one's solemnity and dignity."* (Grade 6, Social Studies: 85). Ultimately, it is also emphasized that a Muslim individual always sees the power of Allah in historical narratives. For instance, the roles of Allah and the prophets are often highlighted while teaching the development of the first villages and cities as well as the improvement of humanity:

"Today, when we look at artifacts from thousands of years ago, we realize that people did not have the tools they have today, and therefore, they faced many difficulties in life. However, they were able to overcome the difficulties because Allah has bestowed great blessings on humans compared to other living things. He has endowed people with intelligence so that they can find solutions to the difficulties they face. God has created humans with capable hands. In addition, prophets were sent to guide people to a better way of life." (Grade 4, Social Studies: 32).

The second finding regarding the Shiite-Muslim citizen conception is the family, which is obliged to set an example for their children and continue the citizenship education that the students receive outside of school. The textbooks put an emphasis on the family on the basis of Islam, mention the relationship of respect and love between family members, and report that grown-ups become role models for students by reading the Qur'an and praying (Grade 3, Social Studies: 45).

The third finding is the construction of the acceptable woman after the conceptualization of the ideal family that starts in the third grade of primary school. 9-year-old and third-grade girls are considered to have reached the age of worship, so *Jashn-e Taklif* ceremonies are held at schools for them. In the text regarding these ceremonies, there are many elements that

encourage girls to wear a hijab. For example, to celebrate the girls who turn the age of worship, school principals send a greeting card in which they state: *“Children, look at each other. See how beautiful and cute you seem in these hijabs. Allah loves you very much when he sees you in these beautiful clothes and hears your words at the time of prayer.”* (Grade 3, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 39). This training, which continues at home, is reinforced by the image of a girl named Parvane covering her hair with a colorful scarf (Image 1). In Image 1, the message that Islam commands women to veil is clearly given. Moreover, within the framework of Islamic teachings, the mother assumes the role of bringing up her daughter within the family in accordance with religious precepts. The texts also clearly teach the main principles of wearing a hijab and the concepts of mahram and non-mahram.¹¹

Image 1: Parvane Wears a Hijab and Smiles at Herself in the Mirror



Source: (Grade 3, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 66, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4834>)

The lives of female figures, who are significant in Islam and Shiism, are also presented to girls as role models. In particular, the texts describe Zaynab, who is an important figure, especially in the Shiite mourning literature, as a headstrong person against Yazid (Grade 3, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 30), who represents the cruel administration after the Battle of Karbala. It gives the message to the students that women should not remain passive against such administrations. The female prototype, who is faithful to her faith and actively fights against the tyrant and irreligious people, has also been associated with the recent history of Iran. For example, it is possible to see narratives and images in the books that show the backstage helps of women and girls who were not on the frontlines in the war with Iraq (Image 2). Image 2 also presents the state’s perspective on the relationship between gender and nationalism. In the war on Iraq, women are coded as figures doing the work in the background, rather than as warriors and subjects protecting the state. This corresponds perfectly to the approach of feminine nature, which attributes to women roles only within the home and according to their nature. It is also this same approach that keeps women away from possible dangers coming from the opposite sex or a non-Muslim and anti-Shiite enemy against which they could not fight because of this nature issue. This also agrees with what Yuval-Davis (2010) and Nagel (1998) announced above, respectively that the nationalist discourse treats women as carriers of the community with the role of motherhood and as

¹¹ *“Girls, it is obligatory to cover your mahram parts. But you don’t need to cover your face. Likewise, you do not need to cover the area from wrists to fingers. People such as grandfathers, fathers, brothers, and uncles are not mahram. But men such as your sister’s husband, uncle’s son, and aunt’s son are not mahram for girls.”* (Grade 3, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 68).

individuals of the national community and that the role of protectors of the nation is attributed to men as masculinity and nationalism are articulated with each other.

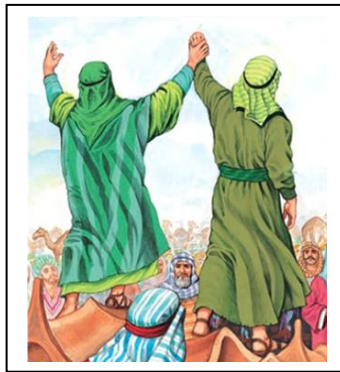
Image 2: Backstage Helps of the Girls and Women During the War



Source: (Grade 6, Social Studies: 123, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4849>)

The fourth finding under this title is related to Ali's prominent position and exalted personality in Islamic society in line with the basic teaching of Shiism. The Prophet Mohammad's statement that "verily he whom I am a leader over, Ali is his/her leader" is among the proofs presented by Shiites to show that Ali was determined as the heir of the Prophet in the event of Ghadir Khumm¹², which took place on Dhu al-Hijjah 18, 10 (March 17, 632). This event has been the subject of textbooks many times, and presented with an image showing the Prophet raising the hand of Ali (Image 3).

Image 3: The Prophet Raising the Hand of Ali in Ghadir Khumm



Source: (Grade 5, Heaven's Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 59, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4843>)

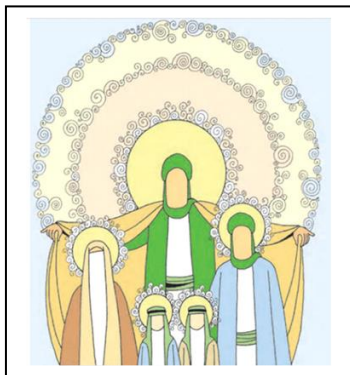
In addition to presenting many examples supporting Ali's right to the caliphate¹³, several texts teach students about Prophet Mohammad's fondness for Ali and Ali's wife, Fatima, as

¹² Shiites show evidence that Ali was appointed by the Prophet as an imam and interpret this evidence, which composes of *hadiths* and verses. One of these pieces of evidence is the belief that the Prophet stopped at a place called Ghadir Khumm while returning from the Farewell Pilgrimage and gathered the Muslims and appointed Ali as his deputy (Tabatabai, 2004: 121).

¹³ In another text, it is stated that: "The Prophet of Islam introduced his successors and suggested leaders to the people many times: We read in a hadith that: After me, my successor is Ali, and after him my two grandchildren,

well as his grandchildren, Hasan and Husayn. For instance, another text titled *Conquerors Without an Army* is one of the narratives which tells that the Prophet went to exchange he made with Christian scholars from Najran with his favourites and relatives, namely Ali, Fatima, and his grandchildren Hasan and Husayn (Grade 6, *Teaching the Quran*: 70-73). This event is illustrated by an image in which the Prophet took them under his cloak (Image 4).

Image 4: Prophet Mohammad Taking Ali, Fatima, Hasan, and Husayn Under His Cloak



Source: (Grade 6, *Teaching the Quran*: 72, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4848>)

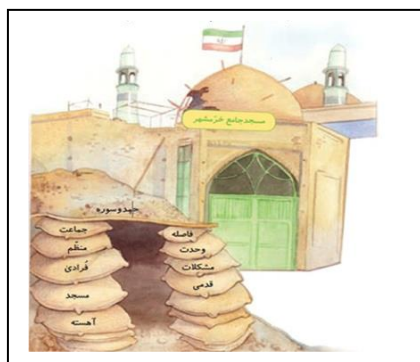
The text emphasizes that although the Prophet appointed Ali as his deputy in Ghadir Khumm, Abu Bakr, the first caliph according to Ahl as-Sunnah, received allegiance from a group of people, and it was an injustice done to Ali. Moreover, it is stated in the texts that during the administration of Umar, the third caliph, according to the Ahl as-Sunnah, the people were subjected to oppression by some rulers, whereas Ali lived a simple life and governed with justice (Grade 5, *Social Studies*: 92.) This reminds us of the words of el-Mevdudi (2016): The ruler of an Islamic state must believe in, adhere to and ensure the Islamic order. The citizens of the Muslim community do not have to obey a leader or a government that violates the provisions of the Qur'an (Asad, 1980) and therefore does not demonstrate fair administration. This once again justifies Ali's right to the caliphate at the expense of the supposedly unjust caliphs.

The fifth finding examined under the Shiite-Muslim citizen prototype is the glorification of Ahl al-Bayt and imams. Students thought about the member of the Ahl al-Bayt, and what the Prophet said about Ali, Fatima, Hasan, and Husayn: *"My God, these four people are my Ahl al-Bayt. Their friends are my friends, and their enemies are my enemies."* (Grade 2, *Heaven's Gifts Islamic Education and Training*: 46). There are many stories that tell the characteristics of the members of the Ahl al-Bayt and the imams to students. The themes of the texts also include how the nine imams after Ali, Hasan, and Husayn, who were the three imams according to the Imamate, showed the true path to the people and guided them with their wisdom, and connected with their followers. These examples indicate the connection between imamate and nubuwwat, that is, the teaching that imams have characteristics similar to the prophets sent by Allah.

Hasan and Husayn. Then, Husayn's nine children are his successors, respectively. The last of them is the Mahdi, who is invisible to people." (Grade 6, *Heaven's Gift Islamic Education and Training*: 36).

The last finding under this title is the mosque, which plays the role of the central unit of the neighbourhood, where the sense of us is constructed and preserved. The textbooks do not portray the mosque only as a place of worship but also as a place where members of the society come together for political, cultural, and social activities, as well as for discussing common problems (Grade 4, Social Studies: 6). It has also been an indicator of independence against the external enemy created by the regime. In Image 5, it is seen that the mosque, which is a place of religious worship, has also become a national symbol with the flag flying over it. In a narrative about the pen pals, Palestinian student Khalid and Iranian student Mustafa talk about the mosques of their countries, and Palestinian Khalid makes the following statements in his letter: “(...) Masjid al-Aqsa is occupied by the enemies of Islam today. (...) They do not allow Muslims to pray and worship in this mosque. (...) In your letter, you wrote that there is a prayer room in your school. This is very nice, but unfortunately, our school was destroyed by the enemies of Islam.” (Grade 4, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 20).

Image 5: Jameh Mosque of Khorramshahr



Source: (Grade 4, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 26, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4839>)

This text points out the sense of unity and solidarity among Muslims through its emphasis on *occupier Israel* and by using the motives of threat and danger. Immediately after this text, the book shows an image of the Jameh Mosque of Khorramshahr with the Iranian flag waving on the top (Image 5). This image refers to Iranian struggle for independence against Iraq through the mosque.

3.2. Shiite-Iranian Citizen Conception

After the principles of the religion and sect to which they belong, the national historical narratives are used in order to teach the Iranian identity to primary school students. The national history narratives, enriched with Shiite elements, also reveal the conception of the acceptable and the other through examples from the history of Iran before and after the adoption of Islam. We will see in the findings below that the other, namely the enemy determined by the Islamic regime, is, among others, sometimes Israel, sometimes Yazid or even the Pharaoh, Shah’s regime, the opponents of the official ideology, in other words, the non-believers. All these potential enemies are comparable according to the regime. Furthermore, the unity of national and religious symbols in Persian-Shiite nationalism is striking. Thus, the phenomenon of “political religion” expressed by Smith (2013) emerges in the example of Iran.

The first finding under the title of Shiite-Iranian citizen conception is that the Battle of Karbala has become a paradigm in terms of Michael Fischer’s theory (2003: 21-22). The textbooks cover the Battle of Karbala, which was caused by the question of whose caliphate was legitimate, Muawiya or Ali, within the framework of the theme of Husayn, who followed the path of the Prophet and fought against the irreligious and undesirable ruler Yazid: *“The Imam and his followers stood against countless enemy soldiers in Karbala with their faith. The war, which started in the morning, continued until the afternoon. That day, Imam Husayn and his great followers fought bravely until their last breath. Their courage in this war is unmatched in world history.”* (Grade 5, Social Studies: 94-95).

The textbooks explain that the Battle of Karbala, which took place on Muharram 10, turned into a ritual in which martyrs are commemorated with mourning ceremonies every year, and it is presented with the image of children wearing headbands with the Oh Husayn writing on them and carrying a banner with the phrase that: *“We (Ahl al-Bayt of the Prophet) do not deserve to be humiliated and despised”.* (Image 6).

Image 6: Children Carrying a Banner with Humiliation is Far From Us (هیهات منا الذله) Writing on It



Source: (Grade 3, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 29, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4834>)

Commemoration of this Battle every year transfers feelings of victimization, anger, and martyrdom from generation to generation. This is an example of “invented tradition” as called by Hobsbawm (2006) to bind a nation together. Also, the feeling of being excluded due to the oppression as well as the emphasis on the common struggle against Yazid of every era, gets stronger.

Another finding in the textbooks is the expectation of the people in the narratives for a savior, like Mahdi and Khomeini. After the narration of the eleven imams, the Twelfth Imam Mahdi, who has not appeared yet, is particularly emphasized through images, stories, and poems. The texts depict Mahdi as a savior expected by the whole world, and his arrival is identified with the start of spring, especially for the suffering children who have no home or who are in war zones (Image 7).

Image 7: The Start of Spring and the Happiness of Children When Mahdi Arrives



Source: (Grade 4, Heaven's Gifts: Islamic Education and Training: 83, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4839>)

This narrative, which is based on the belief in the Mahdi, is embodied in the depiction of Khomeini as the leader who overthrew the Shah's anti-people and anti-religious government (Grade 6, Heaven's Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 48), which is parallel to the assumption that Mahdi will rid the world of evil and cruel administrations.

The third finding, classified under this title, is related to the concept of other and the similarity established between the history of Islam and the history of Iran through this concept. The formation of the other against the acceptable, supported by the official ideology of Iran, has been discussed in the books through the actors who do not believe in God or do not observe God's orders during different periods. Accordingly, prophets of the monotheistic religions, such as Abraham, Moses, and Mohammad occupy the center of this narrative as acceptable citizen role models. The imams of the Ithna-'ashariyyah sect, including Ali, Hasan, and Husayn, in addition to Khomeini, the leader of the Islamic Revolution, are also presented as the representatives of the acceptable. When we look at the concept of the other, on the other hand, there is the cruel ruler Nimrud, who threw Prophet Abraham, the idol-breaking hero, into the fire, and there is also the God-King Pharaoh against the Prophet Moses, who created miracles with his staff. The end of both Nimrod and Pharaoh is the same: Both of these two cruel and rebellious rulers believed in Allah at the end of the text by stating that "Truly Abraham has a great and mighty God who saved him." (Grade 2, Teaching the Quran: 100), and "It seems that the God of Moses is right. I must believe in him." (Grade 5, Teaching the Quran: 92). While the lives of the imams are presented after the lives of the prophets, their troubles and deaths are also included in the books. Moreover, the texts also emphasize the teaching that imams, who were subjected to stalking and oppression throughout history, did not give up in the face of the other, and they were martyred.¹⁴ The Shah and the regime, on the other hand, represent the other of the recent past:

¹⁴ For example, for Ali's death, it is stated that "Amir al-Mu'minin was martyred by one of the enemies of Allah's religion while he was praying in the mosque" while the death of Hasan is described as follows "Our second Imam fought against the oppressors and was eventually martyred by them." Likewise, for the death of Husayn, it is emphasized that "There was an oppressive government called Yazid during the reign of Imam Husayn. He was persecuting Muslims and disobeying the orders of Islam. Our third Imam fought Yazid and was martyred on the day of Ashura." (Grade 2, Heavens's Gifts Islamic Education and Training 60-70). It has been stated that before the Twelfth Imam Mahdi is born, he is perceived as a threat by the Abbasid caliph, and therefore attempts were made to prevent

“The Shah and his soldiers had always said that the Iranians are not capable of doing great jobs and cannot be independent. As if we should always depend on other powerful states! The traitor Shah always took orders from the USA and powerful countries. The Shah did not even allow us to practice Islamic rules in public. (...) There was no news about the religion of Islam and the teachings of the Qur’an on radio and television. (...) No attention was paid to religious values, and instead of promoting hijab and moral values, corruption and exhibitionism were advertised.” (Grade 5, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 93).

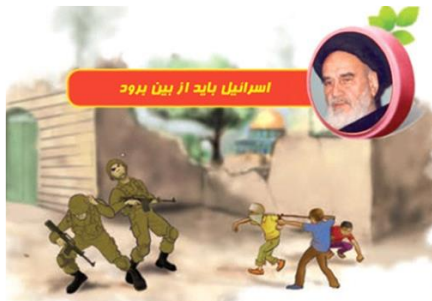
Image 8: Comparison of the Bringing Down of the Shah’s Statue and the Drowning of the Pharaoh and His Soldiers



Source: (Grade 6, Teaching the Quran: 84, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4848>)

The books marginalize the representatives of the regime before the Islamic Republic, the Shah, and his regime, on two grounds: While the former regime could not be independent since it made Iranians dependent on foreign powers and took orders from them, the administration was irreligious because it did not observe the principles of the religion. The faithlessness of the Shah is put into the same category as the Pharaoh. Accordingly, the images showing that the statue of the Shah is brought down and that the Pharaoh is drowning are presented side by side, reinforcing the message that the Pharaoh and people like him ended up in the same place (Image 8).

Image 9: Khomeini’s Statement That Israel Must Be Destroyed and Palestinian Children Throwing Stones at Israeli Soldiers



Source: (Grade 5, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 96, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4843>)

birth. The Abbasid caliph is likened to the Egyptian pharaoh. (Grade 5, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 82).

On the other hand, Khomeini appears in the books as a leader who is full of faith, knowledgeable, brave, not afraid of the Shah and world powers, and breaks idols (Grade 5, Heaven's Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 95). In addition to the internal enemies representing the former regime, it is seen that the subject of external enemy is also discussed in the books. Israel is underlined frequently with regard to the external enemy, and Khomeini's statement that *"Israel must be destroyed"* is included in texts with an image (Image 9).

The fourth finding regarding the identity of the Shiite-Iranian citizen is the identification of the month of the 1979 Revolution with spring in the textbooks, on the axis of liberation from the difficult and painful years and the enemy. This theme has been presented to students since the first grade with a spring image stating that *"The Imam has come"* which represents the return of Khomeini to Iran (Image 10). In this context, Bahman 22¹⁵, as a national holiday and a tool for the construction of a new society, has an important place in the integration of individuals with the targeted social identity.

Image 10: The Airplane with Which Khomeini Returned to Iran Scattering Flowers



Source: (Grade 1, Persian: 97, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4970>)

Another finding found in the textbooks is that the theme of national independence, which is taught through the subjects of the process leading to the revolution and the Iran-Iraq War, glorifies a death-loving martyrdom cult (Khosrokhavar and Roy, 2013: 14) with references from the Quranic verses and Islamic history. The path and struggle of Imam Husayn, especially on the basis of the protection and survival of the holy land, is blessed and presented to the students as an acceptable model: *"The martyrs followed the path of Imam Husayn and defended our Islamic country until the last drop of their blood. They have great rewards in the*

¹⁵ One of the example texts concerning the anniversaries in the textbooks is as follows: *"I took the microphone and started my work. Sayid took his camera and came with me. I asked a boy, who is my age: 'What day is it today?' (...) 'Day of declaring hostility to tyrant and oppressing states and fighting Israel and the USA.' A smiling elderly man was holding a large picture of the Supreme Leader in his hand. I approached him and asked him why he was smiling. 'Seeing all this enthusiasm, excitement, peace, and unity reminded me of the unity and solidarity of the people in Bahman 1357.' (...) A veteran sitting in a wheelchair caught my attention, and I went to him and asked him: 'Why did you come to this march in your difficult situation?' 'To show that I am ready to announce to the whole world that I always listen to the orders of the Supreme Leader and that I am here.', I said to a lady who is moving with a baby carriage: 'Why did you come here in this cold winter weather?' She put her hands to her heart and said, 'Because the revolution is in our hearts!' A mother with a framed photograph of a martyr in her hand saw us and came towards us and said: 'I dedicated my son to Islam and the revolution. Thank God, millions of believing and hardworking young people continue his way today.'" (Grade 5, Heaven's Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 104-105).*

sight of Allah. They gave their lives so that the Islamic homeland could stand. Their sacrifice humiliated the enemies of Islam. We visit them to remember and learn from them.” (Grade 6, Heaven’s Gifts Islamic Education and Training: 86-87).

Furthermore, the images showing the Conquest of Mecca and the Liberation of Khorramshahr are shown in books side by side. Both struggles share a common theme in the books that they took place against irreligious people in the name of Islam and that Allah helps the Islamic warriors (Image 11).

The emphasis on national independence is also intensely covered in the books through subjects of revolution led by Khomeini against the colonial states and the Iran-Iraq War. The narrative that the war was imposed on Iran, and the attacks were launched by Iraq is discussed in the textbooks with the concepts of Imposed War and Holy Defense. This war is discussed with an emphasis on martyrdom, struggle against the oppressor, and independence. As Anderson (2020) pointed out, children are persuaded to die for the good of the country in accordance with the national hero symbol. These concepts are also supported by texts in which child martyrs are introduced and presented as exemplary models. For example, 13-year-old Mohammad Hossein Fahmideh aimed to neutralize the Iraqi forces tank by throwing himself under the tank with a grenade in his hand in Khorramshahr (Grade 3, Persian: 51). He was martyred while his body was dismembered. As seen in the given examples, it is aimed to construct an identity that is greatly enriched with Shiite motives in the textbooks, and this identity construction is expected to serve patriotic feelings by associating it with modern history.

Image 11: Comparison of the Liberation of Khorramshahr and the Conquest of Mecca



Source: (Grade 6, Teaching the Quran: 14, <http://chap.sch.ir/books/4848>)

The last finding under this title is the main elements that construct the national identity in the conception of Shiite-Iranian citizenship. For example, the primary emphasis in the narrative of the pre-Islamic historical period is that Iran has a long history dating back 4000 years. The text underlines the Aryan race and states that “Iran means the land or region of the Aryans. Aryans are noble and royal. The Aryans are three groups: Medes, Persians, and Parthians.” (Grade 4, Social Studies: 46-47). Thus, as Smith (2013) pointed out, we see that the Iranian state aims to build a nation by referring to ethnic identity and the past.

The narrative of post-Islamic Iranian history points to a new era after Iran joined Islamic lands. In this narrative, Iranian states are highlighted with activities in the fields of culture, science, and art. For example, Rudaki, known as the father of Persian poetry, is mentioned as

one of the poets of the Samanid period, which was one of the Iranian states that gave importance to the Persian language (Grade 5, Social Studies: 101). While covering the scientific developments of Muslims, it is emphasized that Iranians have contributed most to the field. In this scope, Zakariya Al Razi and Abu Ali-Sina are highlighted as Iranian Muslims who contributed to the field of medicine, while Khwarizmi and Khayyam come into prominence in the field of mathematics, and Abu al-Biruni in the field of astronomy (Grade 6, Social Studies: 47-50). The prominent indication of this perception is seen when Prophet Mohammad's hadith, which emphasizes a virtuous and chosen people in the sight of Allah, is given as an example in the books: *"If knowledge is in the star of Soraya, people from the land of Pars will go and find it."* (Grade 6, Teaching the Quran: 55).¹⁶

In addition to these, the notion of homeland and what it means to be Iranian are explained by referring to national signs. In this context, information about the constitution, national anthem, flag, official language, and the calendar are taught to first-grade and second-grade students at the basic level. The construction of the eternal nation with symbols such as the national anthem, the national flag and the official language shows us (see Hayes, 2010) that modern nationalism replaces religious practices. In the following grades, the importance of the mentioned insignia is emphasized. By stressing unity and solidarity through all these symbols, the Iranian nation is identified with family members living in a large family called Iran. It is highlighted that being Iranian means unity and solidarity despite regional differences: *"Iran is our homeland. We love our Islamic homeland. Our country is large, and it has seas, wide mountains, and plains. We love the people of our country. The people of our country, wherever they are, are Iranians. We love Iran and Iranians."* (Grade 1, Persian, p: 79). The emphasis on the superiority of the nation, seen especially in modern nation-states, comes forwards with reference to the founding elements of national identity, such as national symbols, national holidays, and official language.

¹⁶ Also, to the left side of this verse and hadith, there is a picture of a nuclear missile.

4. Conclusion

In the courses where the textbooks entitled *Heaven's Gifts* and *Teaching the Qur'an* are taught, basic religious information is given to students, namely the teaching of a student profile who knows Allah and realizes the blessings He has created in nature, reads the Qur'an and knows the virtues of the surahs, recognizes the prophets and understands their miracles, recognizes the imams and love and respects them, and acknowledges their behavior as a role model. The Social Studies and Persian textbooks, on the other hand, design an acceptable individual that will ensure the survival of the Islamic Republic, recognize its homeland with these teachings, learn its glorious history, take pride in the achievements of its nation in the past, and take the struggles of the martyrs as an example. These elements in the books are narrated through texts in the form of instructive annotations, stories, and poems for which the rote-based technique is used.

The framework of the acceptable citizen prototype on the basis of Shiite-Muslim and Shiite-Iranian identities comes forward through prophets and imams witnessing the miracles of Allah, and the Supreme Leader Khomeini, who followed their path, while it is also shaped by the emphasis of being Persian. In this context, common signs that construct a nation are covered in the books, and death is encouraged as a sacred act, both nationalistically and religiously, by frequently referring to the concept of martyrdom. The other of both identities is not limited to the history of Islam and Iran. Instead, it is defined on a legitimate basis dating back to the rulers who stand against the prophets of the monotheistic religions.

Therefore, Iran's construction of acceptable citizenship includes many modern approaches, considering the period from ancient Greece to the modern state. The concept of citizenship, which is enriched by the concept of *ummah* in Islam, has been a notion that preserves both its sectarian and ethnic identity in Iran. In this context, the strongest bond between the Supreme Leader and the citizens is religion and sect under the umbrella of religion. According to the findings, it is possible to state that the citizen of the Revolution, the acceptable citizen of Iran, is faithful to the belief of the Twelve Imams, sets an example to the oppressed Muslims with his/her own struggle and courage, fulfils his/her civic duties to the extent desired by the regime in order to ensure the legitimacy of the regime, becomes a member of the society who is closely connected to the other members under the umbrella of common values by serving the ideology of the Revolution, instead of being an individual on the basis of rights.

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