

Origami for Social Responsibility

B. R. Aydinoglu

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Origami has become very popular in Turkey in the last ten years. The number of people who are interested in origami has been increased via various media such as e-books, social media and YouTube. Origami instructors started to teach and demonstrate origami at schools, workshops, shopping malls and special events. Moreover origami models began to appear in commercials and other PR activities.

This paper will display some of the projects of the author and their results in introducing origami to a wider audience while creating awareness through education and social responsibility activities. One of the projects involved recycling. As very-well known, origami requires paper as the fundamental material. The paper that are used to create origami models in the public events and seminars are in huge amounts. So in order to reduce paper usage or to reuse old papers for a new purpose, the author collected large sheets of project presentation paper from architecture offices. The local municipality also helped in paper collecting where the geometric origami models (cubes, 4-6-8 pointed stars, XYZ models) could be practiced better by using these papers. These large sheets were hand-painted by the children of an orphanage. During the painting activity the author also taught them basic origami models as well as teaching them how to make handmade paper from incorrect-folded models or unused sheets. The cycle was completed with an exhibition of 3D origami models made from recycled paper.

The other project was organized to fold a thousand origami cranes for charity. There were two posters to promote the event one of which was on Sadako Sadaki's story where the second poster visualized the crane diagram. The event consisted of teaching how to fold cranes to three students and help them to fold until the goal was achieved. The students who were expert in folding cranes also taught other people to help the project move faster. Old magazine papers were used instead of new origami sheets. In three days this group folded five hundred cranes where the rest five hundred were completed by the homeless people in the neighbourhood. This project not only helped them to feel confident after folding many cranes but also enabled them to be a part of a social responsibility project that would make a difference. Some of the homeless people reduced smoking cigarette during the course of the project -an unplanned result. The project is going to be repeated the following year.

The last project was realized for the "Hayaller Gerçek Olsa" (If Dreams Come True) Association which works with children with Epidermolysis Bullosa (a.k.a. Butterfly Disease). The aim of the project was to sell origami butterflies as pins both for raising money to the association for treatment expenses and distributing medicine to suffering children as well as creating awareness to the disease. The butterfly origami was fold from plain paper and hand-painted individually making each of them a unique design. The initial origami butterfly pin was made by the author and the diagram was prepared for the volunteers. Many of them and neighbours of the society worked for making origami butterflies and three hundred brooches were ready for sale in the end. The origami butterfly brooch is sold at the charity shop of the local municipality where the income is transferred to the the "Hayaller Gerçek Olsa" (If Dreams Come True) Association.

Although interest in origami in Turkey is revived in the last decade, there is still room for education and social responsibility-oriented projects which will enable huge crowds to be aware of this art as well as being a part of charity organizations. This paper demonstrates the selected examples of a single origami instructor's efforts in a year in bringing the art to the public via educative means.

