



SOCIAL

PARADIGM

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Social Paradigm, 2022, 6 (1): 1-11

Molla Nasreddin's Traditions in Turkish Satirical Press of the Republican Period

Gulbeniz Babayeva

Abstract

The article deals with the Republican period of the 150-year-old Turkish satirical press. Satirical magazines published at this stage, such as "Diken", "Gülyüz", "Aydede", "Akbaba", "Marko Pasha" became the main subject of research. At the same time, the problems in the socio-political, literary, cultural and social life of the Turkish people are interpreted on the basis of examples from magazines. Turkish satirical magazines and newspapers, which were in a period of stagnation during the First World War and the War of Independence, entered a new stage of development after the proclamation of the Republic. The year 1928 is already characterized as the end of one stage and the beginning of another in the life of the press. Well-known writers such as Aziz Nesin, Sabahattin Ali, Rifad Ilgaz, Orhan Kemal worked in the Turkish satirical press, which operated freely with the establishment of the republic. The article deals with the influence of "Molla Nasreddin" magazine on the Turkish satirical press, which caused a great response in the Eastern world. Numerous Turkish satirical newspapers and magazines are compared with "Molla Nasreddin". In general, in the examples of the Turkish satirical press, the literary school "Molla Nasreddin" has a strong influence. Unknown Turkish scientists and intellectual people – Nazim Hikmet, Hilmi Ujabash, Mammad Fuad Koprulu, Ibrahim Altay Govsu, Huseyn Kazim Gadirli, Salim Rafik Rafioglu, Vahab Yurtsever and others noted that the journal of "Molla Nasreddin" has a great reputation and importance in the Eastern world in different magazines, encyclopedias and books of literary history. "Molla Nasreddin" and Sabir are mentioned in the "Turkish Encyclopedia" and the role of this satirical press in Azerbaijan as well as in the Turkic world was emphasized it. The first number of Akbaba, published on December 7, 1922, was a weekly political satirical publication. After 208 magazine numbers, its publication was stopped and in 1933 and it was republished in new alphabet. The magazine has been operating for 55 years, alphabet at intervals, and has earned the right to be the longest-lived satirical magazine in Turkey. While "Akbaba", was continuing its activities during the Republican period, it was published in November 1947 in "Marco Pasha". "Marco Pasha" is the first politically oriented satirical newspaper. With the exception of "Kalem" and "Cem", which were published during the Turkish Independence War, it was "Marco Pasha" who widely criticized political issues on his pages. During World War II, the subject matter of the satirical press expanded considerably. Images of reactionary forces and war initiators appeared in newspapers and magazines, and their aggressive policies became criticism object. At the same time, great satirical writers of the Republican period grew up. At this stage,

the activity of the satirical press pays attention. The Turkish satirical press, which has gone through a great historical period of 150 years, like “Molla Nasreddin” magazine, has not been indifferent to important socio-political, literary and cultural events in the country, social problems, but also to global issues. has been able to show solutions to these problems.

Keywords: Republic of Turkey, satirical press, “Akbaba”, “Marco Pasha”, “Molla Nasreddin” magazine.

Received/Makale Geliş Tarihi: 10.07.2021

Accepted/Makale Kabul Tarihi: 24.09.2021

Introduction

The genre of satire, which has gained status in the rich and centuries-old literature of Azerbaijan and the Turkic peoples as a whole, has opened wide opportunities for the satirical press, that began to work in this direction. Masters of satire, who wrote about the wishes and desires of the people in literature, the serious problems that concerned them and conveyed them to readers, were able to realize their experience in the national press. The global problems of the East and the West, of humanity as a whole, joined in one point, inhumane rules, suppression of rights and freedoms, many social problems, hard and difficult way of life united satirists in the struggle for the same beliefs and persuasions, and revealed the need for the formation and development of the satirical press.

Before the publication of the magazine “Molla Nasreddin” (1906-1931), the pioneer of the Azerbaijani satirical press, the Turkish satirical press already had 36 years of experience in this area. This tradition was successfully continued during the Republican period in Turkey, which had had a satirical press long before “Molla Nasreddin”. With the establishment of the republic, a new stage of the Turkish satirical press began. During the newly formed multi-party period, the scope of the Turkish satirical press expanded and became much richer in terms of topics. The satirical press has found its way to development and progress with the deep and many-branched satirical writings of such great writers

“Molla Nasreddin” Traditions in Turkish Satirical Press of the Republican Period

of the time as Aziz Nesin, Sabahattin Ali, Rifat Ilgaz, Orhan Kemal, Bedii Faik, Haldun Taner, Muzaffer İzgu, Cetin Altan and others.

The Turkish satirical press, which was in a process of stagnation and collapse during the First World War and the War of Independence, continued to operate in a different way after the proclamation of the Republic. In the history of the satirical press, the 1928 year was remembered as the end of one stage and the beginning of another. After the adoption of the new alphabet in Turkey, the establishment of the Serbest Firka (Independent Party - G.B.) on August 9, 1930 in a short time ensured the normalization of socio-political events in the country, the free publication of satirical newspapers and magazines in a completely original form.

Turk Satiric Press in National Struggle

During the period of the National Struggle covering the years 1919-1923, magazines such as “Diken”(1918), “Gülyüz”(1921), “Aydede”(1922) and “Akbaba”(1922) were published in the Turkish satirical press. “Diken”and “Gülyüz”magazines were published under the edition by Sedat Simavi.“Aydede”was published under the edition by Refik Halit Karay, and “Akbaba”magazine was published under the edition by Yusif Ziya Ortac and Orhan Seyfi Orhan.

“Diken” is a literary and political satirical magazine published in Istanbul on October 30, 1918 by Sedat Semavi. Initially published once every 15 days, the magazine was later published once a week. In all, 72 issues of “Diken” magazine, which operated until July 19, 1920, were published. Sedat Semavi, the magazine’s editor, confessed that he started publishing the first issue of “Diken”with the aim of “to give a little smile to the curled lips”. He noted that “Diken” will replace the previously closed “Kalem” and “Cem” magazines. “Diken”has entered the history of the satirical press as a magazine supporting the War of Independence in Turkey. Well-known caricature ists and writers of the time Fazil Ahmet (Aykaç), Selahattin Enis (Atabeyoğlu), Rıza Tevfik (Bölükbaşı), Aka Gündüz, Yusif Ziya (Ortac), İbnürrefik Ahmet Nuri (Eighth), Ahmet Rasim, Ömer Seyfeddin and others published their articles in the magazine.

Turk Satiric Press in Period II Mashrutiiyyat

Many satirical newspapers and magazines published in Turkey after the proclamation of the Second Constitution did not last long, and by the time of the War of Independence, a small number of media organs were able to continue their activities. Gokhan Demirkol writes: “Between the years 1919 and 1922, the so-called period of the National Struggle, the Turkish press was divided into two fronts in the form of “those who were before the National Struggle” and “those who supported the National Struggle”. This confrontation between the newspapers also passed on to satirical magazines, such as Sedat Semavi’s “Güleryuz” magazine, which supported the National Struggle, and Refik Halid’s “Aydede” magazine, which was facing the National Struggle” (Gokhan Demirkol 2015:140).

Sedat Semavi started publishing “Güleryuz” two months after the closure of “Diken” magazine. When the magazine began publishing on May 5, 1921, it published the following poem in its first issue:

Oh my reader, oh my reader, pay attention:

My every page will be filled with verse and prose.

Each copy of “Güleryuz” is a bunch,

The yearly will be a big volume! (Guleryuz, 5 Mayıs 1921 (1337), Sayı: 1)

The cover of that issue featured a picture of Mustafa Kemal sitting on a white horse and the Turkish flag in the background. On the right and left sides of the flag are the following verses:

With your blood that beats a faith in your pulse

You rose to the horizon that did not see light

I don't know that with your forehead higher than the sky

“Molla Nasreddin” Traditions in Turkish Satirical Press of the Republican Period

Did you come from where the sun rose? (Guleryuz, 5 Mayıs 1921 (1337), Sayı: 1)

“Güleryüz”, published once a week on Thursdays, had been published twice a week since issue 60, on Monday, June 22, 1922. After 6 issues were published twice a week, 66 issues were repeated on Thursdays, once a week. The owner of the magazine, Sedat Semavi, also worked as an artist for “Güleryüz”. Along with Sedat Semavi, Cevat Şakir (Halikarnas Fisherman from Kabaagach), Ahmet Rasim, Encument Ekrem (Talu), Fazil Ahmet (Aykaç), Abdülbaki Aziz, Yusuf Ziya (Ortac), Necdet Rüştü (Efe), Selami İzzet Sedes, Vedat Örfi (Bengu), Orhan Seyfi (Orhan) and other artists and writers worked in “Güleryüz”.

In 1923, after the 122-nd issue, “Güleryüz” ceased its operation.

“Aydede” magazine, edited by Refik Halid Karay, was published on January 2, 1922. 20 days before the publication of the magazine, the following announcement was published in the “Peyami-Sabah” newspaper: “Aydede” is published at the end of the month. It is the most fine, illustrated satirical newspaper in Turkey. It reflects the works of the greatest satirical writers and satirical poets. The first copy also contains a very valuable caricature of Cem”. (Peyam-ı Sabah, 19 Aralık 1921 (19 Kanunuevvel 1337), Sayı: 11522-1092).

The headline of “Aydede” depicts a moon falling on the silhouette of Istanbul. This moon shining over Istanbul is Refik Halid. He stated in a programmatic article in the first issue of the magazine, “Persuasion Talk” that “Aydede” would take a neutral position and would not interfere in the country’s domestic politics. Undoubtedly, the confession of the editor-in-chief was intended to evade strict censorship. However, Gokhan Demirkol writes: “Refik Halid, who was soothed by “Aydede” in economic terms, could not wait for the neutrality and he declared in the first issue of the magazine and transferred from “neutrality” to

“supporter” in front of Mustafa Kemal and the National Struggle through “Aydede”. While talking about the National Struggle, Refik Halid and “Aydede” saw Sedat Semavi’s “Gülyüz” in front of him. However, this meeting is not new for either side (Gokhan Demirkol 2015:150).

While Sedat Simavi’s “Gülyüz” magazine supported the War of Independence, Refik Halit Karay’s “Aydede” defended the position of the occupiers, justifying the Greek forces and criticizing the Turkish government and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in his magazine. Therefore, there was a sharp confrontation between the supporters of “Aydede” and the “Gülyüz”.

Along with Refik Halid, “Aydede” also had a team of great writers and artists. The works of writers and poets such as Abdülbaki Fevzi, Reshat Nuri (Guntekin), Halil Nihat (Boztepe), Selami İzzet (Sedes), Fazıl Ahmet (Aykaç), Osman Cemal (Kaygılı), Mahmut Sadık, Rıza Tevfik, Yusuf Ziya (Ortaç), Güzide Sabri, Orhan Seyfi (Orhon), Ercüment Ekrem (Talu), Enis Behic (Koryürek), Vedat Orfi (Bengü) were included in the magazine and were met with interest by readers.

Its artists also play a special role in the magazine’s popularity. Satirical caricatures reflected in “Aydede” were drawn by experienced and talented artists like Bashta (Ahmet Rifki), Ahmet Munif (Fehim), Ramiz (Gökçe), Ratip Tahir (Burak), Mehmet İzettin, Zeki Cemal (Bakıchelebioglu), (Hasan) Fahrettin, Hasan Rasim (Us) and Kazım.

According to “Aydede” magazine, “Gülyüz” received financial support from the Ankara government, and according to “Gülyüz”, “Aydede” received financial support from the occupying forces. This topic was first reflected in the article “Sincere conversations” in the 4th issue of “Aydede” magazine. In response, “Gülyüz” accused the other party in its issue 53 on May 4, 1922, with a poem entitled “It is impossible”. Moreover “Gülyüz” had published satirical caricatures against “Aydede” magazine and its editor, Refik Halid. In the caricature

“Molla Nasreddin” Traditions in Turkish Satirical Press of the Republican Period

in issue 69 on August 10, 1922, of “Gülyüz”, Refik Halid’s head and nose were likened to different fruits, and next to the picture was written: “Who do these fruits remind us? This type of caricatures and articles published in “Gülyüz” reflect the confrontation between the two magazines.

Refik Halid criticized the National Struggle and the Ankara government in “Aydede” magazine and accused the ruling circles of being “sold out”, “collaborators” and “doing meaningless things”. However, after the 72-nd issue of the magazine, Refik Halit’s attitude towards the government changed, because on July 9, 1922, Turkish troops defeated the Greek invaders and entered Izmir. Refik Halid and Ahmet Rifki, who have already seen the victory of the Ankara government, estranged from opposition positions. On July 11, 1922, in the 73-rd issue of “Aydede”, Refik Halit wrote in his article “Fig talk” that he welcomed the liberation of Izmir from the Greek occupation with great joy.

During the National Struggle, “Gülyüz” won the satire front, “Aydede” was closed on November 9, 1922, and Refik Halid was forced to move away from Turkey and to live abroad. In the words of “Gülyüz”, “when the moon set, rose the sun”.

As a whole, in the examples of the Turkish satirical press, which we have considered, a strong influence of the “Molla Nasreddin” literary school is noticeable. Great Turkish scholars and intellectuals Nazim Hikmet, Hilmi Ucabash, Mammad Fuad Koprulu, Ibrahim Altay Qovsu, Huseyn Kazim Qediri, Salim Rafik Rafioglu, Vahab Yurtsever and others noted in various media, encyclopedias and literary history books that the magazine published by edition of Jalil Mammadguluzadeh has a great reputation and importance in the Eastern world. There is information about “Molla Nasreddin” and Sabir in the “Turkish Encyclopedia” (Türk Ansiklopedisi: 428-429) and the role of this

satirical magazine in Azerbaijan as well as in the Turkic world was emphasized.

The first issue of “Akbaba” magazine, published on December 7, 1922, functioned as a weekly political satirical press organ. After the publication of 208 issues, the magazine was stopped and was republished in 1933 in new letters. Between the years 1923 and 1955, during the period when it supported the political line of the ruling Republican People’s Party and opposed an opposition party such as the Free Party Democratic Party, it lost readers’ support and was forced to suspend its publication (1931-1933, 1950-1951). On March 11, 1967, after the death of Yusif Ziya Ortac, “Akbaba”, continued by Engin Ortac, ceased its publication again on December 28, 1977. The magazine continued to operate for 55 years, albeit at intervals, and became Turkey’s longest-lived satirical magazine. “Akbaba” magazine contained satirical, critical writings, theatrical performances, dream interpretations, caricatures, etc. The name of the caricature galley was published in the first editions of the magazine under the headline “Foreign caricatures”, and in the following years under the headline “World caricatures”.

The caricatures in “Akbaba” are very similar to the caricatures in “Molla Nasreddin” magazine in terms of theme and idea. In the 1928-th issue of the magazine from October 4, the underline of İhap Hulusi’s caricature “Instead of wood” reads:

- “So you will stay in the pavilion in the winter ... well, but how will you live in that snow, won’t you be cold?”

- Ah, why am I cold? My father’s library is full of thick books written in Arabic letters, we will burn them to keep warm. The theme and idea of this caricature are in harmony with the “Friendly jest” published in the 11th issue of “Molla Nasreddin” magazine in 1926. As can be seen, the issue of alphabet reform in both Azerbaijan and Turkey had become the main topic of the satirical press.

“Molla Nasreddin” Traditions in Turkish Satirical Press of the Republican Period

Among the authors of the magazine were such great masters as Osman Celal Kaygılı, Ibrahim Alaattin Govsa, Ercument Ekrem Talu, Aziz Nesin, Ilgaz and Muzaffer Izgu. Among the authors of the magazine were such great artists as Osman Celal Kaygılı, Ibrahim Alaattin Govsa, Ercument Ekrem Talu, Aziz Nesin, Ilgaz and Muzaffer Izgu. Among the artists were Munif Fehim, Zeki Beyner, Fethi Develiođlu, Ali Ulvi, Ramiz Nemci Riza and Semih Balcıođlu. In the caricatures published in “Akbaba”, as in the magazine “Molla Nasreddin”, subtitles were preferred in order to reveal the inner world of the image and the true nature of the event.

While “Akbaba” magazine continued its activities during the Republican period, it began to be published in November 1947 in “Marco Pasha”. “Marco Pasha” is the first politically oriented satirical newspaper. With the exception of the “Kalem” and “Cem” magazines published during the Union era, it was “Marco Pasha” that widely criticized political issues on his pages. Socio-political and economic relations between Turkey and the United States have been the leading topics of the magazine. The magazine, which included writers and artists as Sabahaddin Ali, Aziz Nesin, Rifat Ilgaz and Mim Uykusuz, was in the opposition to the one-party government, was repeatedly closed and its writers were imprisoned. The magazine’s harsh style and sharp satirical spirit endangered its staff at all times and did not guarantee the longevity of “Marco Pasha”. Despite all the persecution and bans, the newspapers published at the same time sold for \$50.000, but “Marco Pasha” was sold for \$60.000. However, each time the magazine was closed, it resumed publication. In this regard, aiming to get rid of the persecution the magazine was later republished under the names “Malum Pasha”, “Marhum Pasha”, “Bizim (Our) Pasha”, “Yeddi-Sekkiz Pasha”, “Ali Baba” and “Okuz Mehmet Pasha”.,699.

Satiric Press in Second World War and Next Years

During World War II, the subject matter of the satirical press expanded considerably. Images of reactionary forces and perpetrators of war appeared in newspapers and magazines, and their aggressive policies became the object of criticism. At the same time, great satirical writers of the Republican period emerged. At this stage, the activity of the satirical press attracts attention. Interference in all the events of the period, their satirical interpretation draws attention. Aziz Nesin, one of the pioneers of the Turkish satirical press, dealing about the services of the Turkish press in 1945-1950, especially of "Marco Pasha", writes: "With the difficulties and pressures caused by the World War II, the war task of humor against the ruling class begins. "Marko Pasha" was one of the pioneers of this war (Aziz Nesin 2001:14).

After the 1950s, unexpected changes took place in the publication of the Turkish satirical press. The party representing the republic passed to the opposition, while the opposition party played a leading role. In this contradictory period, the satirical press was given wide space and fertile conditions were created for its evolution and development.

"Tef" magazine is one of those in the Turkish satirical press that keeps the traditions of "Molla Nasreddin" alive. The magazine was closed after being published for two years from 1954 to 1956 and began to be re-published on May 27, 1960. In contrast to "Akbaba" this magazine took a different path in both its caricatures and satirical writings.

Writers such as Oguz Aral, Turhan Selcuk, Ferruh Dogan worked in the satirical magazine with a socialist outlook, and later they became the main authors of the magazine.

Oguz Aral founded a new satirical literary school "Kirgir" published in 1972. One of the most important features of this satirical magazine, which reached high circulations in a short period of time, is that it

“Molla Nasreddin” Traditions in Turkish Satirical Press of the Republican Period

trained writers and artists of many contemporary satirical magazines. Magazines such as “Leman” (1991), “Penguin” (2002), “Uykusuz”(Sleepless) (2007) and the “Çarşaf”(The veil) (1976) that stopped its publication, “Lemon” (1985), “Hibir” (1989), “Pişmiş Kelle” (1990) are derived from “Kirgir”.

Conclusion

The satirical magazine “Kirgir” published under the leadership of Oguz Aral, became famous as the best-selling satirical magazine in the world after “Crocodile”, published in the Soviet Union in 1922-1991. The articles on a yellow and black background were also colorful in terms of theme and idea. The magazine was published in a large circulation of about 500.000, and its authors later played an important role in the emergence and popularity of many press organs. Since 1989, the legendary staff of “Kirgir” has been disbanded. The magazine, which has not been able to maintain its former popularity in modern times, continues to operate, albeit weakly.

Thus, the Turkish satirical press, which has passed a great historical stage of 150 years, like the magazine “Molla Nasreddin”, has not been indifferent to important socio-political, literary and cultural events in the country, social problems, but also to global issues and has been able to show solutions to these problems.

References

- Aziz Nesin. Cümhuriyet Dönemi Türk Mizahı. Adam Yayınları, İstanbul, 2001:14.
- Gökhan Demirkol. Kurtuluş Savaşında mizahın iki cephesi: “Güleryüz” “Aydede”ye karşı. Çankırı Karatekin Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi. İletişim Kuram ve Araştırma Dergisi – sayı 41\Güz 2015:140, 150
- Güleryüz, 5 Mayıs 1921(1337, Sayı : 1)
- Peyam-ı Sabah, 19 Aralık 1921 (19 Kanunuevvel 1337), Sayı: 11522-1092
- Türk Ansiklopedisi. Cilt IV, Ankara, 1950, s. 428-429.