Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi
The Journal of International Social Research
Cilt: 10 Sayı: 49 Volume: 10 Issue: 49
Nisan 2017 April 2017
www.sosyalarastirmalar.com Issn: 1307-9581

WATER THEMED CARICATURES

Mehmet Emin KAHRAMAN*
Bahadır UÇAN**

Abstract

Water, being a part of the world cultural heritage is considered to be the main source of the formation of co-existence and living. As its role on the creation of the universe and mythological systems, water is the basic requirement of life. Life and nature is developing around water, and water as well as creating new habitats, it is a natural beauty of an area or location. In Turkish folk culture, water is holy and described as a panacea. Water is forming the cultural heritage of the world and also with its the economic value can be defined as one of the most demanded natural resource. Environmental problems and growing population of human being is indicating increasement on water pollution in the future centuries. With the discussions on water wars, the world is trying to take precautions against the incoming disaster. Water is gradually increasing its importance as a cultural heritage and economic value and water has been a source of inspiration for caricaturists of Turkey and the world to think and draw on water concept by organizing exhibitions. In this paper, caricaturists and illustrators' works on water concept will be tried to analyze on their own perspectives. Popular caricaturists and illustrators such as Ali Kashi, Kessusanto Liusvia, R.J. Matson will find place in this paper as well as the caricaturists of Turkey such as Burhanettin Ardagil, Nuri Bilgin with their works will be examined. Water's definition with drawings will be presented with different styles of different caricaturists. The relationship of art and water, water and humor will be underlined with caricatures.

Keywords: Water, Humor, Caricature, Culture, Art.

1. INTRODUCTION

Art, if considered as a journey beginning with images that made to walls of caves, history of art is as old as human history. In prehistoric times, caricature-like deformation is noticeable in some of the drawings made on walls of caves. However, the first samples of modern caricature were produced in 16th century. During the Renaissance, despite efforts of drawing and painting "perfectly", Carracci Brothers began to exaggerate figures in their workshop established in Bologna (McPhee & others, 2011, 12). There, the first modern examples of the caricature were drawn by Italian painters. With the discovery of printing techniques, caricature began to reach more people and became a popular and funny device and branch of art.

The origin of the word "caricature" comes from "cari-care(attack)". Moreover, there are many different definitions for caricature (Balcioglu, 1973). It is possible to define caricature as a branch of painting that interprets any event or thoughts in a criticizing and humorous way by using drawing techniques. Caricatures can be "exaggerated" drawings, basically (Yavuzdogan, 2012). The word "caricature" was derived from the word "caricare" which means "attribution" or "holding responsibility" in Italian language. In this regard, caricature means "attributed picture". Cenap Şahabettin who is a poet of Servet-i Fünûn defines caricature as "a clear appearance of reality". On the other hand, Şemseddin Sami Kâmus-ı Türkî defines caricature as "a ridiculous picture drawn for entertainment and humor" and states that the word caricature metaphorically means "a man with ridiculous clothes and behaviors". Cemil Cem defines caricature as the most eminent piece and essence of art (Cosar, 2010). Aziz Yavuzdogan defines caricature as a type of picture which formally exaggerates the issues with a sense of humor or through a critical approach. Sam Viviano who is a caricature teacher defines caricature as the definition of people in real life, not the reproductions of fictional people. Finally, Walt Disney states that he has much difficulty in finding the most appropriate caricature expression for an animal which acts as a human (Ucan, 2013).

Caricature is scattered to world through European countries, and accepted and applied by almost every country of the world. By the development of imaging technologies, tradition of caricature is to be conducted on comics and animations.

In Turkey, the beginnings of caricature history can be extended to Ottoman Empire. Modernization of Ottoman Empire was pioneered by III. Selim (1789-1807); developed by II. Mahmut (1808-1839), and gained importance more than ever with "Imperial Edict of Gulhane" (Ceviker, 2010, 40). Ottoman Empire,

* Assist. Prof., Dr, Yildiz Techincal University, Art and Design Faculty, mek@yildiz.edu.tr
** Res. Assis., Yildiz Technical University, Art and Design Faculty, bucan@yildiz.edu.tr

which was the leading empire of Asia, Europe and Africa for ages, could not adopt itself to geographical discoveries, economical and technological progresses of Europe. Especially in the period of stagnation in Ottoman, sultans had great aspiration to "old" by ignoring the facts of new world.

19th century was the period that Ottoman accepted the supremacy of Europe and made revolutionary changes in this direction to become compatible with European countries and technology. "Imperial Edict of Gulhane (1839)" was the physical sample of this policy. In this sense, 19th century is also important for the history of Turkish humor and caricature. First newspapers and articles were published in 19th century. The first Turkish newspaper in Ottoman Empire was published by Mehmet Ali Pasa in Egypt under the name of "Vakayi-i Misriye (1828)". Takvim-i Vekayi (1831), Ceride-i Havadis (1840) became the other newspapers. In 1860, Agah Efendi and Sinasi published Tercuman-ı Ahval (1860) and in 1862, Sinasi published his own newspaper, Tasvir-i Efkar (1862). The first humor magazine of Ottoman Empire was Diyojen (1870) by Teodor Kasap. During the first formations of humor press in Ottoman Empire, people already had knowledge and interest on humor with Karagoz and Hacivat. The role of humor magazines was to make people "readers" more than "spectators" as they were used to be. The most significant humor magazines of this period can be listed as Diyojen (1870), Cingirakli Tatar (1873), Hayal (1873) and Caylak (1876). In general, caricature is a way of expression and branch of art in which the caricaturist delivers his feelings and ideas through sense of humor and comments on an issue or problem with his/her own drawing style (Ucan, Kahraman, 2017, 371-372).

2. WATER THEMED CARICATURES

This study examines the caricatures of such foreign caricaturists as R.J. Matson, Hosin Hoshmand, Mohammad Habibi, Kessusanto Liusvia, Ali Kashi as well as national caricaturists as Burhanettin Ardagil and Nuri Bilgin which comment on water and the water problem through lines within the axis of environmental problems. Study aims at suggesting a relationship between water and art and a relationship between water and sense of humor through the works of national and international caricaturists.

2.1. Caricatures of R.J. Matson, Hosin Hoshmand, Mohammed Habibi, Kessusanto Liusvia and Ali Kashi

R. J. Matson is an American caricaturist whose more than 800 works have been published on newspapers and various publications. He is both an editor caricaturist of Roll Call and has been working as an editor caricaturist in such publications as St. Louis Post-Dispatch, The New York Observer etc. since 1986. His caricatures and illustrations have been published on such world-wide famous publications as The New Yorker, The Nation, MAD Magazine, City Limits, The Daily News, The Washington Post, Washington City Paper, Capital Style and Rolling Stone (http://www.rjmatson.com/personal.htm, 10.08.2016).



Figure 1. R. J. Matson's caricature (USA) which illustrates global warming

Caricature of this American artist, who was born in 1963, in Figure 1 illustrates a critical approach against global warming and problem of drought. Two polar bears talk to each other and it is noted that the word "drought" is written on a deserted cornfield. A polar bear says to the other that "I used to believe global warming was a vast human conspiracy to destroy the polar ice caps… But now I'm not sure". It tells us that wasteful attitudes of human beings threaten not only poles but also the whole universe and it is emphasized that there is a dark future which waits for human beings if necessary precautions are not taken.

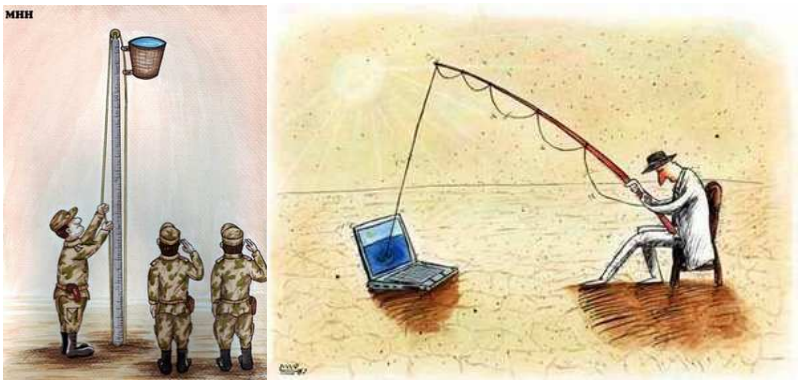


Figure 2. Caricatures of Hosin Hoshmand (Iran) at the left and Mohammad Habibi (Iran) at the right.

Figure 2 illustrates the works of two Iranian caricaturists which handle emphasize problem of drought and modernization. In Hosin Hoshmand's caricature, it is noted that there is a soldier who raises the water in a bucket to the top of the flagpole and two other soldiers watch him stand in silence. It tries to deliver the idea that water is regarded as holy as the flag of a nation. Colorized by dry paint, this caricature is intellectually successful while it has some anatomical mistakes which may be seen in amateur drawings. Mohammad Habibi's caricature tries to deliver the idea that the world which is "modernized" by the developments especially in communication technologies creates a consumption society, so water sources and aquatic animals and plants are destroyed as a result of the consumption mentality of human beings. A character with the head bent wearing a hat casts his fishing line to the sea on his laptop desktop and desperately waits for a fish. Cracked soil in yellow tones emphasizes drought. Shadows of laptop and the character wearing a hat are reflected on the ground. Mohammad Habibi has put his signature under an intellectually and graphically successful caricature.

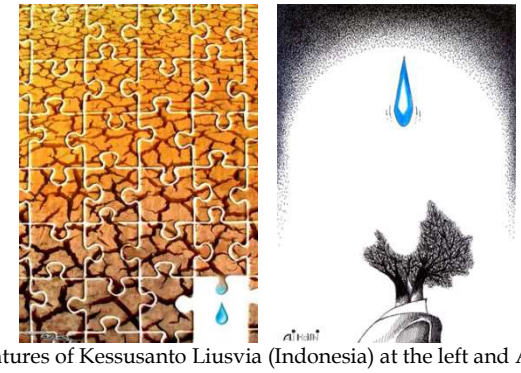


Figure 3. Caricatures of Kessusanto Liusvia (Indonesia) at the left and Ali Kashi (Iran) at the right.

Figure 3 illustrates the works of two international caricaturists. When we analyze the caricatures of Kessusanto Luisvia and Ali Kashi as well as their way of handling the issue of water, we see that they have similarities and they differ from the other works through a graphical expression. Both caricaturists handle the issues of water and drought but their caricatures have a connotation for graphical banners. Ali Kashi tries to add depth and provide mid-tones in his works through patterns and hatchings. On the other hand, Kessusanto Liusvia's caricature resembles a puzzle and can be interpreted as a successful example of graphic-caricature.

2.2. Caricatures of Burhanettin Ardagil and Nuri Bilgin

Figure 4 illustrates the works of two Turkish caricaturists: Burhanettin Ardagil and Nuri Bilgin. It is noted that Burhanettin Ardagil's caricatures put an emphasis on drought in his approach towards the issue of water. There is a desperately smoking mermaid longing for her habitat and water which has been destroyed because of wild consumption and wasteful behaviors of human beings. Having a clear graphical expression, this work uses blue and yellow only for depicting the mermaid. Yellow also reflects the issue of drought as having a connotation for sadness. Blue is the color of sea and water and has vaguely been used on the mermaid as a shading pattern. Nuri Bilgin's work has a graphical style as the work of Burhanettin Ardagil. Having underlined the environmental issues, this caricature depicts relatively "modern" human beings who are got stuck in industrialization and nature.

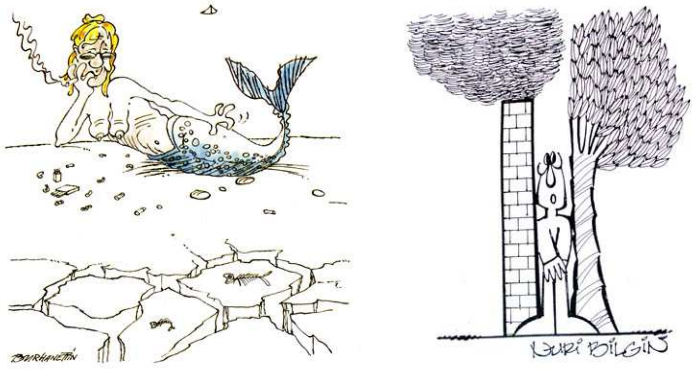


Figure 4. Caricatures of Burhanettin Ardagil (Turkey) at the left and Nuri Bilgin (Turkey) at the right.

3. CONCLUSION

Water is a natural beauty which shapes nature and life as an indispensable value and requirement of life. Water is regarded as a cure for illnesses in Turkish folk culture and was used as a method of psychological treatment in Ottoman Period. Water will gain much more value in the following century, but the fact that sources are run out of too quickly means that environmental problems will gradually have a much more threatening dimension. Water is both an issue and piece of art and it is an important element of sense of humor and caricature. Caricaturists from all over the world comment on water with the help of their own lines and organize various exhibitions and activities which handle water. This study examines the caricatures of Ali Kashi, Kessusanto Liusvia, R.J. Matson, Hosin Hoshmand, Mohammad Habibi, Burhanettin Ardagil and Nuri Bilgin within their way of handling and drawing the issue of water and environmental problems. It also analyzes the reflection of problems, which arise out of consumption society, industrialization and modernization, on the environment and water through the works of Turkish and foreign caricaturists.

REFERENCES

BALCIOGLU, S., ONGOREN, F. (1973). *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Republic Array-4: 50 Years of Turkish Humor and Caricature* (in Turkish), Turkiye Is Bankasi Cultural Publishing, Turkey.

CEVIKER, T. (2010). *CARICATURKEY: History of the Republic on Cartoons (1923-2008), Single Party and the Democratic Party Periods* (in Turkish)", NTV Publishing, Istanbul.

COŞAR, S. (2010). Caricaturized Literature (in Turkish), *International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, Vol. 5/2.

MCPHEE, Constance C. and ORENSTEIN Nadine M. (2011). *Infinite Jest: Cartoon and Satire from Leonardo to Levine*, New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art Press.

UCAN, B. (2013). Digital Transition of Caricature in Turkey: Uykusuz Humor Magazine (in Turkish), *The Turkish Online Journal of Design, Art and Communication – TOJDAC*, Volume 3 Issue 3.

UCAN, B., KAHRAMAN, M.E. (2017). Computer Aided Analysis of Turkish And Australian Cartoons, Uluslararası Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi/ The Journal Of International Social Research, Volume 10, Issue 48.

YAVUZDOGAN, A. (2012). *How to Draw Cartoons?* (in Turkish), Siyah-Beyaz Publishing, Istanbul.

_____[10.08.2016]. http://www.rjmatson.com/personal.html.

Figure 1: http://www.rjmatson.com/cartoons.html, [10.08.2016].

Figure 2: http://www.aybilgi.net/karikatur/50282_Kuraklik-ve-Su-karikatur-yarismasi-en-iyi-karikaturler.html, [01.10.2016].

Figure 3: https://cartooncolors.blogspot.com.tr/2016/01/muhittin-koroglu-cevre-sergisi.html, [10.10.2016].

Figure 4: https://cartooncolors.blogspot.com.tr/2016/01/muhittin-koroglu-cevre-sergisi.html, [10.10.2016].

Copyright of Journal of International Social Research is the property of Journal of International Social Research and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.