AN ASSESSMENT OF THE USE OF CARTOONS IN POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY AND GEOPOLITICS

Siyasi Coğrafya ve Jeopolitikte Karikatürlerin Kullanımı Üzerine Bir Değerlendirme

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Abstract

The development of science and technology, and the intricacy and complexity of social relationships have led to the diversification of international relationships throughout the world. In particular, the fact that the relationships between societies and nations are based on their interests makes some parts of the world battlegrounds or centers of attraction. Policies developed to dominate or defend regions that have become centers of conflict or attraction fall under the field of political geography or its sub-discipline, geopolitics. Print and visual media are used extensively to inform the public about geopolitical events, including scientific books and articles, newspapers, documentaries, news programs, movies and cartoons. This study aims to analyze six examples of the use of cartoons to deliver messages about geopolitical issues to the public. This qualitative research technique. It is assumed that the cartoons used in the study are the primary source. Six cartoons from different periods are described in chronological order to illustrate the diversity of geopolitical understandings of events in different periods. A review of the literature analysis shows that cartoons convey geopolitical events clearly and concisely for readers.

Keywords: Political Geography, Geopolitics, Political Cartoons, Critical Geopolitics, Iconography

Öz

Bir taraftan bilim ve teknolojinin gelişmesi diğer taraftan toplumsal ilişkilerin karmaşık hale gelmesi dünya genelinde gerek toplumsal, gerek devletlerarası ilişkilerin çeşitlemesine yol açmaktadır. Özellikle toplumlar ve devletlerarası ilişkilerin bir takım menfaat ilişkilerine dayanması dünyanın bazı bölgelerini, çatışma alanı veya çekim merkezi haline getirebilmektedir. Çatışma veya çekim merkezi haline gelen bölgelerin hâkimiyeti veya savunulması üzerinde geliştirilen politikalar siyasi coğrafya veya onun bir alt disiplini olan jeopolitiğin ilgi alanına girmektedir. Siyasi coğrafya veya jeopolitiğin ilgi alanına giren konuların kamuoyuna aktarım sürecinde yazılı ve görsel medya yoğun bir şekilde kullanılmaktadır. Bilimsel kitap ve makaleler, gazete haberleri, belgeseller, haber programları, sinema filmleri ve karikatürler siyasi coğrafya ve jeopolitiğin ilgi alanına giren konuların topluma aktarılma sürecinde kullanılan araçlar arasındadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı siyasi coğrafya ve jeopolitik konularının kamuoyuna aktarımında karikatürlerin kullanımına örnekler vererek, kullanılan karikatürleri verdikleri mesaj/mesajlar bakımından analiz etmektir. Araştırma nitel araştırma tekniğine göre tasarlanmıştır. Çalışmada kullanılan karikatürlerin birinci el kaynak olduğu kabul edilmektedir. Bu çalışmada siyasi coğrafya ve jeopolitikle ilgili mesajlar içeren 6 adet karikatür kullanılmıştır. Tarihi süreç içerisinde ortaya çıkan siyasi ve jeopolitik anlayışları açıklamak amacıyla birbirinden farklı zaman dilimlerine ait karikatürler seçilmiştir. Karikatürlerin konu edindiği olaylar analiz edilirken kronolojik bir sıra izlenmiştir. Yapılan literatür analizi sonunda karikatürlerin verdikleri mesajlar bakımından siyasi coğrafya ve jeopolitiğin konusu olan olayları çok kısa ve net bir bakış açısı ile okuyucuya aktardığı anlaşılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Siyasi Coğrafya, Jeopolitik, Siyasi Karikatür, Popüler Jeopolitik, İkonografi

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INTRODUCTION

The development of science and technology has laid the groundwork for the rapid globalization process of societies, cultures and economies around the world. Although globalization trends continue to proceed rapidly, factionalism and conflict are also emerging. Factionalism and conflict have many different causes, including border conflicts, conflicts over natural resources, and ethnic, cultural and religious/sectarian differences. These local and international problems are increasing every day. An important portion of the international problems appear to be related to the ownership, defense, control and use of disputed territories, which fall within the scope of geopolitical issues. As these types of international problems increase, partisan geopolitical discourses put forward by the parties from their own perspectives occupy ever more space in the international arena. Thus, geopolitics is becoming a popular field. Geopolitical issues are presented to the masses in many ways in print and visual media. Scientific books and articles, newspapers, documentaries, news programs, movies and cartoons are among the tools used in the process of relaying the topics of interest to inform societies about geopolitics. It was understood that cartoons of interest to geopolitics are also used in political cartoons around the world, especially in Europe and the USA.

Geopolitical humor and jokes fall into the category of popular geopolitics. Scholars, who have traditionally focused on elite cultural products, have begun to conduct research on popular geopolitics publications such as movies, magazines, humor books, newspapers and political cartoons (Purcell, Scot Brown & Gökmen, 2012:93). Cartoons are one way to disseminate messages in popular geopolitics. A cartoon "is a distorted drawing or likeness on a humorous basis which intends to satirize or ridicule the current discussion topic. Today, cartoons are primarily used in newspapers to convey political comments and editorial views, and in magazines to give visuality to social comedy and current events (Fetsko, 2001: 3). "Cartoons are not the real story of an event, not even the genuine interpretation. By contrast, cartoons, used with care, can complement understanding of events and situations, asking what they were intending to symbolize and whether they accurately characterize contemporary realities" Cartoons, symbolic representations of problems and issues, are not the true story of an event, not even a real comment. On the other hand, carefully used cartoons can be utilized effectively to understand events and situations, to question what they aim to symbolize and whether they characterize contemporary realities correctly, and to see the characteristics of the society that cannot be observed through other sources. Cartoons complement readers' knowledge with symbolic images that enrich their perspectives on topics, which paves the way for their widespread use in popular culture. Cartoons are used to enhance educational and training activities, as well as to draw attention to economic topics (Nino & Lesmes, 2009: 7-8). In addition to the use of cartoons in explaining relationships between countries, it is also seen that they are also used in the analysis of historical events by explaining the foundations on which cultural representations are based (Göçek, 1998). Although cartoonists may have ideological prejudices, it is also emphasized that cartoons can be used as primary sources for political history (González, 1990: 5). Like old photographs or newsreels, cartoons reveal aspects of political culture that are not to be found in official notes, public speeches, newspaper editorials, and theoretical and ideological pamphlets. Cartoons can reveal not only fundamental shifts in political consciousness, they also trace the ebb and flow of political sentiment among their many readers (Duus, 2001: 995). Cartoons can be used effectively to inform the public about political events. Cartoons can deliver messages to the masses in very different areas because as critical tools they function as barometers of people's social, political and economic sensitivities (Soto, 2003: 99). It is noted that cartoons can rapidly manipulate people's views and have become more common in social communication. They are well-known cultural tools for promoting social awareness in humorous ways. They can also have a more serious tone, serve as visual metaphors and encourage critical views of society (Shailo, 2013: 15).

It is seen that cartoons are also used extensively in discussions of political problems. Pointing out that cartoons have a great impact on people's opinions about religious, political and social issues. Shailo emphasizes that "how popular culture constructs discourses in state mechanisms and […] political elites react to these cartoons by changing their attitudes and policies in order to keep their popularity and reputation in domestic and national politics" (Shailo, 2013: 14). Especially cartoons with social and political content are considered as social learning tools because they have a greater impact than the traditional ways of disseminating messages to the public. It is understood that the messages delivered by cartoons create visual metaphors and perceptions that are intended to shape societies' imaginations, visually depict their social and political landscapes, and affect people psychologically and emotionally. By creating national and global geopolitical scenarios, popular cartoons can influence the public, political elites and other institutions by developing strategies or frameworks for manipulating public opinion (Shailo, 2013: 75).

When the literature on geopolitics and political geography in Turkey is analyzed, it is striking that it is not common to associate cartoons with political geography and geopolitical issues in terms of literature. It is noteworthy that cartoons are not used enough to research and investigate political problems today, but studies have noted that their use in interdisciplinary studies is increasing outside of Turkey (Eko, 2007: 230, Hammett, 2010: 2). Dodds (2010: 121) points out that scholars (Hammett, 2010: 5, Hammett & Mather, 2011: 105) are investigating the artistic value and political significance of cartoons. Political cartoons are increasingly used to cover not only specific events or developments, but also the relationships between different trends and paradigms associated with them (Hammett, 2010: 6). It is pointed out that political cartoons can influence policy-makers and persuade readers to change their attitudes (Greenberg, 2002: 195). It is emphasized that cartoons "talk about the world in hyper-figurative terms, political cartoons are a form of opinion news expression that enables the public to actively classify, organize and interpret what they see and experience in meaningful ways" (Dodds, 2007: 178). Tuathail & Dalby (1998: 11) notes that political geographers such as Dodds (1998: 580, Doods, 2007: 179) and Dittmer (2007: 251) write on political geography and popular culture, especially using materials such as cartoons and films.

Studies in the literature have shown that cartoons are an important resource for political geography and geopolitics. Political cartoons contain geopolitical information and have a significant impact on people's understanding of the world that surrounds them, no matter where or when they are drawn (Berg, 2003: 114). Cartoons are also used as a means of expression in popular geopolitics. As a form of popular culture and geopolitical information, cartoons illustrate popular consciousness and mass opinion to protect national interests and territorial integrity, and to participate in protests when human rights violations occur or when democratic activities are suppressed by state mechanisms (Shailo, 2013: 4).

It is pointed out that political cartoons are the windows to the soul of a nation because "they tell the truth to the government's face" (Dodds, 2007: 173), and it is emphasized that they contribute to the health of democratic popular culture and the functioning of democracy (Hariman, 2008: 247). Political cartoons contain geopolitical information and are an effective means of understanding the world. Popular geopolitics draw people into political life through reasoning. Some authors have argued that cartoons and other visual media can be used as geopolitical texts that enlighten and even subvert political practices such as foreign policy decision-making (Berg, 2003: 115). By transforming current events into culturally familiar, locally and sometimes globally recognized signs and symbols, cartoonists try to respond to current socio-economic and geopolitical issues in a humorous and satirical way that can be read and understood quickly and directly (Mhamdi, 2017: 195). It is mentioned that cartoons can "strengthen geopolitical images and representations, thus they provide a framework for interpreting and understanding past and current geopolitical events" (Shailo, 2013: 5). It is pointed out that political cartoons contain geopolitical information and help people understand the world around them (Berg, 2003: 114). How the events in international politics are reported by the news media, how they are also mentioned in movies, plays, novels, cartoons, humor books, music, video games and social media, and their reflections in popular culture are under increasing scrutiny in critical geopolitical studies (Özyılmaz Kiraz, 2020: 409, Power & Crampton, 2007:157, Purcell, Scot Brown & Gökmen, 2012: 93).

Although caricaturing geopolitical events has an important place, it is noteworthy that the use of cartoons, at least in Turkey, for research in political geography and geopolitics has been limited so far. It is understood that the research about the history of the use of political cartoons in Turkey was carried out by Tunç (2002: 51). He focused on the role of political cartoons in Turkey's democratization. Turkey's limited number of cartoons about political geography and geopolitics led the authors to conduct this research. This study intends to point out the importance of investigating and understanding the messages of geopolitical cartoons. The purpose of this qualitative research is to analyze examples of the use of cartoons to inform the public about geopolitical issues.

MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

In this study analyzing selected cartoons with geopolitical messages the research method employed is document analysis among quantitative research approaches. Moreover, the cartoons are related to some historical events, relationships with the relevant historical periods are also established. Since it is aimed that the political geographical and geopolitical messages of the cartoons chosen for research will be analyzed and interpreted, the cartoons used are considered to be a primary source. In this study, 6 cartoons, which are thought to give messages about political geography and geopolitics, were used in terms of subject integrity. In the process of selecting the cartoons, it was taken into consideration that the message of the cartoon was related

to political geography and geopolitics. Moreover, cartoons from different periods were selected chronologically to explain historical differences in political and geopolitical understandings. The cartoon about British expansionism or imperialism was published in 1882. The second cartoon is about the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and was published in France in 1908. The third cartoon is about the historical hostility of Serbs to Bosnians during the dissolution of Yugoslavia. The fourth cartoon is related to US practices in its territorial enclave in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to imprison inmates and violate their human rights despite being perceived as the world's protector and spreader of democracy. The fifth cartoon contains iconography about France's colonialism on the African continent. The final cartoon was published in 2020 during the Nagorno-Karabakh war. It contains propaganda by the Armenian diaspora and indicates that they see dreaming as a life strategy.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The first cartoon that was the subject of the research was the one drawn by John Bull in 1882 and titled "Octopus in Egyptian Waters". In the cartoon, England is depicted as an octopus taking over lands in different continents. In the cartoon, "*The Devilfish in Egyptian Waters*," drawn by John Bull in 1882, England is depicted as an octopus taking over lands on different continents. When this cartoon was drawn, England had completed the skeleton of "the empire on which the sun never sets." The arms of the English octopus stretch from Australia in the Pacific Ocean to Gibraltar, the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea, from the Atlantic Ocean to Malta in the Mediterranean, from India in the Indian Ocean to Jamaica in the Caribbean Sea, and from Jamaica to Canada in the northwest Atlantic Ocean. Just as an octopus control its many arms, England, an island state, also controlled territories in many parts of the world (Figure 1). It is understood that John Bull's cartoon symbolizes the administration of the regions dominated by the British Kingdom, which is defined as the "the empire on which the sun never sets". In fact, this satirical cartoon also exhibits a remarkable point depicting the island of England dominating the world as a metaphorical octopus, with colonies around the world in the grip of its tentacles.

Figure 1: The Devilfish in Egyptian Waters
Source: URL 1

This study's second cartoon was on the cover of the magazine, *Le Pélerin,* in 1908. In it, Achille Lemot depicts the expulsion of the Ottomans from the Balkans. The cartoon shows the Balkans in the background (Figure 2). Representing the Ottoman Empire, Abdülhamit II's arms are being cut off, and the fez being removed from his head represents Crete. Bosnia and Herzegovina, depicted as shoes, are being taken, and Bulgaria is being ripped away. The title of the cartoon is "The Butchering of Turkey." In its caption, Abdülhamit II says: "Thank God I have a good constitution, maybe they'll leave my shirt to me." Considering that II. constitutionalism was declared in the Ottoman Empire in 1908 as a result of domestic and international pressures, and the expression, "Thank God I have a good constitution," in the cartoon, it can be understood that this is the geopolitical view of developments in the Ottoman Empire. The use of the phrase "plundered Turkey" in this cartoon, instead of the plundered Ottoman state or Ottoman lands, is entirely related to how the west saw the Ottoman state in western societies. Westerners define the Ottoman state as the Turkish Khanate or the Turkish Sultanate. The use of the title plundered Turkey in the cartoon is related to this situation.
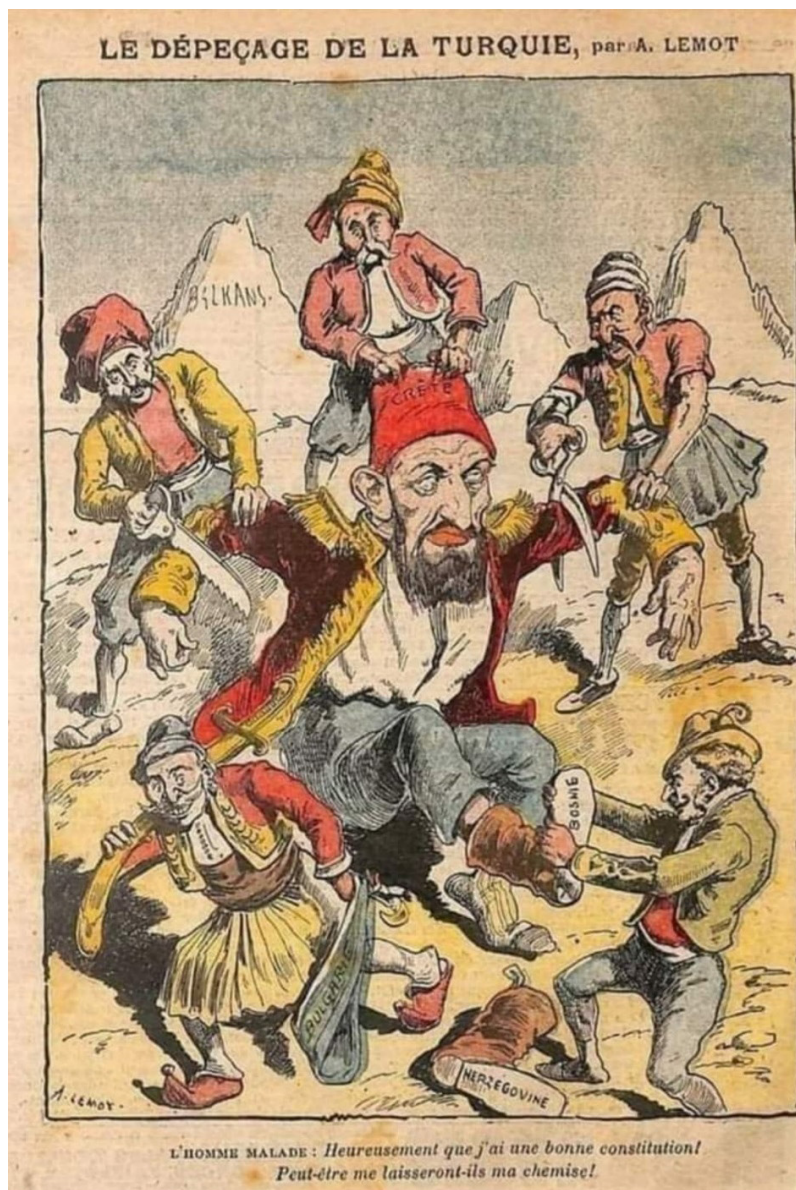

Figure 2: The Butchering of Turkey
Source: URL 2

When the world cultural map is examined, it is seen that the countries located at the intersection of different cultures have witnessed many wars in recent and distant histories. The causes of disagreements and conflicts that lead to war are economic, political, historical and cultural (Adams, 2001: 13, Gurr, 1993: 56). In 1389, when the Balkans came under the rule of the Ottoman Empire after the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, some of the Bosnians living in the region converted to Islam, and some of them remained Christian. The Christians never accepted the rule of the Ottoman Empire or the conversion of other locals to Islam, and they grew the hostility toward Muslim Bosnians lasted for generations. The Ottomans eventually withdrew, and finally, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was founded in 1918 (Özçelik, 2018; 19). The Kingdom of Yugoslavia became the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia in 1943 (Bozkurt, 2010; 54), and in 1963, it became the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, a totalitarian communist state (Ferretjans, 1963: 939; Sancaktar, 2009: 1). In the 1980s, political instability began, leading Yugoslavia to civil war in the 1990s when the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was dissolved (Sancaktar, 2009: 2). The end of the totalitarian communist system saw the eruption of ethnic hostilities created by hatred that had been passed from generation to generation, and violent, genocidal wars and separatist movements emerged in Bosnia. During this time, the Christian Serbs initiated a military operation that amounted to genocide against the Bosnians living in Bosnia, who were of Slavic origin like themselves, but were Muslim. Schot's 1999 cartoon[1] (Figure 3) depicts the mindset behind this conflict with an armed Serb throw a hand grenade into the fire while saying: "Here take this! For killing the great-grand father of the great grand father of the great grand father of the great grand father of my great grand fathes's great grand father in 1389!!" This indicates that the origin of hostility was the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 when the region came under Ottoman rule and some of the Slav people living in the region converted to Islam. Bosnians of Slavic origin, regarded as Turks because they were Muslims, were considered enemies by the Christian Serbs. The main reasons for the Serbs' attacks on the Muslim Bosnians were historical and cultural. At the root of the Serbs' actions against the Muslim Bosnians lies the fact that they were seen as Turks by the Serbs, who wanted revenge for their ancestors' defeat in 1389. This cartoon expresses the reason for the conflict between the Serbs and the Bosnians. It is also noted that in the cartoons drawn during the Bosnian crisis, cartoons used signs and symbols as geopolitical iconography to represent ethnic nationalism (Dodds, 1998: 174), Schot's cartoon and other similar cartoons was a powerful iconographic critique of the ethnic genocide that took place (Dodds, 1998: 175).

Figure 3: Cartoon Drawn by Schot in 1999 to Depict the Historical Background of the Genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Source: URL 3

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1   Bas van der Schot.

The United States has a decisive role in world politics. Especially since the end of the cold war, the US has been perceived as the representative, champion and enforcer of basic human rights throughout the world (Bajpai, 2007: 32). This study's fourth cartoon associates its practices in Guantanamo, US territory in the Guantanamo Bay in eastern Cuba, which is used as a prison for criminals. In the cartoon, "Castro is off the scene", a voice rising from the Americas says "The world demands democracy and human rights in Cuba." The US claims that there are problems with basic human rights in Cuba, which the United States sees as a rogue state. The cartoon emphasizes the ironic contradiction of US discourse about Cuba by pointing that in Guantanamo, US territory in Cuba, prisoners are subjected to torture and inhumane treatment (Figure 4). The cartoon, signed Zapiro, was drawn by Jonathan Shapiro and published in the *Mail & Guardian* on February 21, 2008 with the title "The world demands democracy and human rights in Cuba" (Shapiro, 2008).

Figure 4: The World Demands Democracy and Human Rights in Cuba
Source: Shapiro, 2008.

During the nineteenth century when European colonialism was on the rise, England established the largest colonial empire in the world. France also had a colonial empire especially in North and North-Western Africa. Both England and France saw their colonies as sources of raw materials. In the African continent, nations that were once colonies of France got their independence, but France continued to exploit their resources using the networks of relationships it had already established. This study's fifth cartoon, "France's exploitation of African countries," (Figure 5) was drawn by Dahdouh and published on December 6, 2019 (Dahdouh, 2021). It depicts France's exploitation of African nations' raw materials. This cartoon uses iconographic elements, which have an important place in political geography as distinctive visual metaphors for nations. It is known that iconographic elements such as national anthems, flags, national teams and officially designated or easily recognized flowers and animals can represent nations (Akengin, 2019: 120). The colors of the French flag are blue, white and red, and the animal representing the French nation is a blue, white and red rooster eating from a map of the African continent.

The Caucasus is one of the world's most ethnically complex areas due to the history of its settlement process and its topography. The harsh terrain and ethnic diversity of the Caucasus paved the way for this region to become one of the world's hottest areas in the world in terms of geopolitical locations. The struggles of its communities to expand their areas of domination and to exploit resources date to the early twentieth century. They were put off for a long time when the region fell under the control of the Soviet Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Having understood that the USSR had begun to weaken or that they

could get support from its leaders, the Armenians began to attempt to annex the Karabakh region. After the disintegration of the USSR, Azerbaijan became an independent state and abolished the autonomous status of Karabakh on November 26, 1991, putting the region under the control of its national government. This decision led the Karabakh Armenians to declare independence on December 10, 1991. After the military forces of the Russian Federation, the successor of the USSR, withdrew from Nagorno-Karabakh in 1992, Armenia's activities in Nagorno-Karabakh led to a war with Azerbaijan. Finally, in 1993-1994, Armenia, supported by the Russian army, invaded the Azerbaijani lands between Karabakh and Armenia & Nagorno-Karabakh. This created a de facto situation with the lands from the Armenian border, including Karabakh, occupied by Armenia. The Armenians, supported by the Russian army during this occupation, refused to withdraw from Azerbaijan, especially Karabakh, despite all international agreements and pressure.

Figure 5: France's Exploitation of African Countries
Source:URL 4

Since 1994, while Azerbaijan made attempts to evict Armenia from occupied Azerbaijani lands on international platforms, Armenia occasionally engaged in cross-border operations to expand the occupied areas. The reason why Armenia started cross-border operations can be understood by the fact that both the Armenian diaspora and Armenian politicians wanted to expand Armenia's territory, based on the idea that "dreaming is the life strategy of Armenia (Liparityan, 2020)." Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, who wanted to expand Armenia's sphere of influence and control, emphasized the background of this strategy when he announced the new national security strategy document of Armenia on July 10, 2020: "We are honorable citizens of the Third Armenian Republic, and we are the children of the Armenian people who founded of the Third Armenian Republic and liberated Artsakh [Karabakh]. The Republic of Armenia is the guarantor of the security and freedom of the Karabakh Armenians. The Republic of Armenia is a Pan-Armenian state and represents all Armenians in the world (URL 5)." The message expressed by Pashinyan's national security strategy document is that "Karabakh is now Armenian territory," and that there was no question of withdrawal. The next step was the expansion of Armenia and the realization of the dream of founding the Great Armenia. The kind of Armenia dreamt of by the Armenian diaspora and Armenian politicians is shown in a cartoon published on October 17, 2020 with the headline, "I know it hurts, but this is the truth," while the Nagorno-Karabakh war was ongoing.

This cartoon reflects the intellectual background of the Armenian diaspora (Figure 6). Pashinyan is drawn sitting on a platform and Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev is seated on an oil barrel, which implies that the message intended to be conveyed by the cartoon has nothing to do with historical facts, and that its real intention is to manipulate perceptions. Pashinyan's platform represents Armenian history, archeology, literature, music and culture, while Aliyev's oil barrel the flags of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey sits a pool of blood. The cartoon illustrates how the Armenian diaspora envisages the two nations. It is noteworthy that this cartoon reflects how they see Turks who have lived in Central Asia, the Caucasus and Anatolia for hundreds of years, while attempting to represent the Armenians, who have never been able to found a strong state anywhere in history, as the representatives of a historic Great Armenia.

Figure 6: Cartoon Titled "I Know It Hurts, but This Is the Truth"

Source: URL 6

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In today's world, relationships have been complicated by advances in science and technology. Humanity's problems are changing, and our ways of sharing these problems with the public about them have also changed. Cartoons are sometimes used to inform the public about geopolitical issues. Cartoons are made to satirize or ridicule current events and are distorted for humorous purposes. They provide their target audiences with rich perspectives on the perception and interpretation of messages. It is also believed that they not only reveal fundamental changes in political consciousness, but also the ebb and flow of political feelings among the thousands of people who see them.

The colonial empire established by England with the power of the industrial revolution got a concrete depiction with by the cartoon, "The Devilfish in Egyptian Waters." Adapting the phenomenon pointed out by Fetsko (2001: 3), that cartoons are used to illustrate current events, it is seen that the cartoon used in this study, "The Devilfish in Egyptian Waters", represents the area dominated by England. The arms of the English octopus stretch from Australia in the Pacific Ocean to Gibraltar, the entrance to the Mediterranean Sea, from the Atlantic Ocean to Malta in the Mediterranean, from India in the Indian Ocean to Jamaica in the Caribbean Sea, and from Jamaica to Canada in the northwest Atlantic Ocean. The octopus shows England, an island state, using its tentacles to control colonies around the world.

Mhamdi (2017: 195) emphasizes that cartoonists try to respond to current socio-economic and geopolitical issues by turning the current events into culturally familiar and locally (and sometimes globally) recognized signs and symbols in a humorous and satirical way that can be read and understood quickly and directly. In fact, the cartoon is striking that depicts the exclusion of Turks of the Ottoman State from the Balkans, which were global powers at that time. The cartoon, which depicts the conditions experienced by the Ottomans, reflects the situation of the Ottoman state while it satirizes the current situation (as Mhamdi points out). It is noteworthy that he relates how the rulers of the Ottoman state, under the pressure of foreign powers, made some constitutional changes to solve their problems, hoping to ensure the survival of the state while the lands in the Balkans were being lost. It is safe to say that this cartoon concisely and clearly illustrates the expectations of the states that forced the Ottomans to make constitutional changes.

Berg (2003: 114) points out that political cartoons contain geopolitical information and have a deep impact on people and their perception of the world surrounding them, regardless of where and when they are drawn. One of the cartoons used in this study is about the conflict between Bosnians and Serbs in Bosnia. After all, the conflict between them is directly related to geopolitics. In today's world, there are conflicts between states or societies for a wide variety of reasons. Schot's cartoon about the war between Bosnians and Serbs in Bosnia during the disintegration of Yugoslavia is important because it points out the war's historical roots. In this cartoon, the expression "Take that, for your great-great-grandfather killed my great-great-grandfather in 1389!!!!" is noteworthy because it expresses the magnitude of the generations of resentment and hatred that led to the war.

Shailo (2013: 4) points out that cartoons, as a form of popular culture and geopolitical information, display popular conscience and mass opinion to protect national interests and territorial integrity. They contribute to and become part of the protests when human rights violations occur or when any undemocratic activity is suppressed by state mechanisms. The cartoon by Zapiro, one of the cartoons investigated in this research, shows the USA, the cradle of capitalism on one side and communist Cuba on the other side. The United States is pictured warning Cuba to comply with human rights while, on the same island, they conduct practices that violate the human rights of inmates. The correlation of this illustration and Shailo's description can be observed easily. Hammett (2010: 6) emphasizes that political cartoons are increasingly used to reveal not only specific events or developments, but also the relationships between different inclinations and paradigms with which those events are associated. The caricature drawn by Jonathan Shapiro (with the Zapiro signature) used in this study points to the method emphasized by Hammett. In the cartoon, the difference between the "The World Demands Democracy and Human Rights in Cuba" policy followed by the USA on Cuba Island and the practices in the Guantanamo Bay prison on Cuba Island is indicated in terms of the contrast of the policy followed by the USA on issues that directly concern itself and the policy followed on the international agenda. The approaches of two different governments on the same island in terms of political and human rights practices and, especially, the double standard of the USA on those issues deserve consideration.

Dodds (2007: 178) emphasizes that cartoons "talk about the world in hyper-figurative terms, political cartoons are a form of opinion news expression that enables the public to actively classify, organize and interpret what they see and experience in meaningful ways." One of the cartoons used in this study is about the colonial activities of France on the African continent. France, which was one of the two colonial countries of the world prior to the years of the Second World War, saw their colonial states in Africa as a source of raw materials. The African states that were once colonies of France have gained their independence, but, in the meantime, France continues to use the resources of those countries by using the network of relationships it has established with those countries. In the cartoon titled "France's Exploitation of African Countries", iconographic elements are used that hold an important place in political geography and are defined as distinctive in the definition of states or nations. Geopolitical iconographic elements, combined with national anthems, flags, national teams, and officially designed or easily distinguishable symbols such as flowers or animals, convey the message that Africa is still being exploited by France. It is noteworthy that the message relayed by the cartoon about France used in this study is an example of the notion of interpreting what people experience through political cartoons, as pointed out by Dodds.

The cartoon published during the Nagorno-Karabakh war between Azerbaijan and Armenia bears the title, "I know it hurts, but this is the truth." It shows how the Armenian diaspora actually looks at the relationship between Turks and Armenians through Armenia-Azerbaijan relations. It also shows how Armenian politicians actually perceive Azerbaijan's relationship to Karabakh and the Turkish world, along with their intellectual background concerning Azerbaijan, which emphasizes that "dreaming is the life strategy of Armenia"

Together, the six cartoons' messages concern at least two parties. In the first cartoon, one of the parties is England, and the other is its colonies. In the second cartoon, one side is the Ottomans, and the other side is the subjected communities dividing the lands of the Ottoman empire. In the third cartoon, one of the parties is the Bosnians, who are seen as representatives of the Ottoman Empire, and the other side is the Serbs, who nurtured the hatred toward them for hundreds of years. In the fourth cartoon, on one side is the US, the cradle of capitalism, and communist Cuba is the other. The United States is pictured warning Cuba to comply with human rights, while its violations of inmates' human rights are depicted. The fifth cartoon illustrates French colonialism with African nations on one side and France on the other. Instead of promoting its message in context, the sixth cartoon was assessed on the basis of the message it was intended to send, which illustrates the Armenians' view of Turkey and Azerbaijan, and positions the Armenians in an imaginary world, since the cartoon's message has nothing to do with the facts. In conclusion, this assessment of geopolitical cartoons in question as a whole shows that, with merely some sketches and explicit and clear geopolitical messages, they can illuminate events about which lots of books could be written and lots of discussions could be had.

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