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## NAZIM HİKMET'İN ESERLERİNİN SOVYET ÇİZGİ FİLMLERİ İLE KÜLTÜREL DİPLOMASİ ARACI OLARAK KULLANILMASI: KÜLTÜREL ALIŞVERİŞ AÇISINDAN İNCELENMESİ

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### Öz

Bu çalışma, Nazım Hikmet'in edebi eserlerinin kültürel diploması aracı olarak nasıl kullanıldığını Sovyet çizgi filmleri üzerinden incelemektedir. Özellikle 20. Yüzyılda doğu ve batı bloğu ülkeleri arasındaki rekabetin en üst düzeye çıktığı bilinen bir gerçektir. Amerika ve Sovyet diploması yarışı ekim devriminden sonra 21. Yüzyıla kadar devam etmiş. Günümüzde de o tarihteki kadar keskin görünüşe dahi bu rekabet halen devam etmektedir. Fakat o dönemlerde günümüzden farklı olarak sosyal medyanın olmayışı, ülkelerin fikirlerini özellikle radyo ve televizyonlar aracılığı ile yayma girişimlerine yönlendirmiştir. Teknolojik ve siyasi rekabet kendini edebiyatta ve şiirlerde de göstermeye başlamıştır. Özellikle Sovyetler Birliği'nin Soğuk Savaş dönemindeki ideolojik mücadelede daha fazla nüfuz yaratmak ve kendi kültürünü yurtdışında tanıtmak amacıyla Nazım Hikmet'in eserlerini temel alan bir strateji izlediği biliniyor. Bu çalışma, Sovyetler Birliği'nin Nazım Hikmet'in eserlerini nasıl bir kültürel alışveriş aracı olarak gördüğünü açıklamaktadır. Sovyetler Birliği, Nazım Hikmet'in şiirlerini ve yazılarını kullanarak kendi ideolojik mesajını yabancı ülkelerde yayma girişiminde bulunmuştur. Nazım Hikmet'in uluslararası kişiliğinden ve benimsediği sosyalist düşünceyi yansıttığı yazılarından sosyalizmi yayma aracı olarak makul düzeyde faydalanmıştır. Ayrıca çalışma, Sovyet çizgi filmlerinin Nazım Hikmet'in eserlerine dayalı olarak nasıl oluşturulduğunu ve bu çizgi filmlerin yurtdışında gösterilerek Sovyet kültürünün tanıtıldığını inceler. Sovyet çizgi filmleri, Nazım Hikmet'in eserlerinden alınan temaları ve karakterleri kullanarak, Sovyet kültürünü ve ideolojisini yabancı izleyicilere aktarmayı hedeflemiştir. Sonuç olarak, bu makale, Nazım Hikmet'in eserlerinin Sovyet kültürel diplomasısında nasıl bir rol oynadığını ve bu tür kültürel alışverişin sonuçlarını tartışarak, Sovyetler Birliği'nin ideolojik ve kültürel etkisini yurtdışında nasıl artırmaya çalıştığını ele almaktadır. Bu inceleme, kültürel diploması, uluslararası pazarlama, edebiyat ve sinema gibi alanlarla ilgilenen araştırmacılar için önemli bir katkı sunmaktadır. Nazım hikmetin görüşleri ve edebiyatı dışında devletler arasında kültürel bir figür olarak kendine yer edindiğini ortaya koymaktadır.

**Anahtar kelimeler:** Nazım Hikmet, kültür, Sovyetler Birliği, Kültürel diploması, Kültürel alışveriş.

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## THE USE OF NAZIM HIKMET'S WORKS AS A TOOL OF CULTURAL DIPLOMACY WITH SOVIET CARTOONS: ANALYSING IN TERMS OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE

### Abstract

This study examines how Nazım Hikmet's literary works were used as a tool of cultural diplomacy through Soviet cartoons. It is a known fact that the rivalry between the eastern and western bloc countries reached the highest level especially in the 20th century. The American and Soviet diplomatic race continued after the October Revolution until the 21st century. Today, this rivalry still continues, even if it does not seem as sharp as it was at that time. However, unlike today, the lack of social media at that time led countries to attempt to spread their ideas, especially through radio and television. Technological and political rivalry also manifested itself in literature and poetry. In particular, it is known that the Soviet Union followed a strategy based on the works of Nazım Hikmet in order to create more influence in the ideological struggle during the Cold War and to promote its own culture abroad. This study explains how the Soviet Union saw Nazım Hikmet's works as a means of cultural exchange. The Soviet Union attempted to use Nazım Hikmet's poetry and writings to spread its ideological message in foreign countries. It made reasonable use of Nazım Hikmet's international personality and his writings reflecting the socialist ideas he espoused as a means of spreading socialism. The study also examines how Soviet cartoons were created based on Nazım Hikmet's works and how these cartoons were shown abroad to promote Soviet culture. By using themes and characters taken from Nazım Hikmet's works, Soviet cartoons aimed to convey Soviet culture and ideology to foreign audiences. In conclusion, this article considers how Nazım Hikmet's works played a role in Soviet cultural diplomacy and how the Soviet Union sought to increase its ideological and cultural influence abroad, discussing the consequences of such cultural exchange. This study is an important contribution for researchers interested in cultural diplomacy, international marketing, literature and cinema. It reveals that Nazım Hikmet, apart from his views and literature, has established himself as a cultural figure between states.

**Keywords:** Nazım Hikmet, culture, Soviet Union, cultural diplomacy, cultural exchange.

## 1. Introduction

Cultural diplomacy has come to the fore as an effective tool used to promote a country's culture, art, literature, and other cultural elements in foreign countries and to spread its cultural values worldwide. Especially during the Cold War period, the two great powers, the United States of America, and the Soviet Union, used cultural diplomacy intensively in a period of hardening ideological conflict. In this process, literature, cinema, and art played an important role in international politics.

This article examines how Nazım Hikmet's works were used through Soviet cartoons as an important example of cultural diplomacy in the past and how Soviet culture was promoted in foreign countries. Nazım Hikmet is recognized as an important figure of Turkish literature and is known for his commitment to socialist ideology. For this reason, the Soviet Union had the opportunity to use his works as a tool in the international arena in the past.

During the Cold War, when the political, military, and ideological struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States was ongoing, cultural diplomacy emerged as a softer power Marketing culture between states is an important international relations issue that is associated with concepts such as cultural diplomacy and soft power, as it was in the past. A good cultural understanding also enables the development of good policy (Çeçen, 1984). In addition to ideological warfare, the Soviet Union used literature and cinema to promote its culture in foreign countries. The works of Nazım Hikmet were taken into consideration as part of this strategy of the Soviet Union.

This article aims to examine how the works of Turkish poet and writer Nazım Hikmet have been marketed, especially through cartoons in Russia. It examined how Nazım Hikmet's works were used as a means of cultural diplomacy and the consequences of such cultural exchange. Nazım Hikmet's works have had a great influence both in Turkey and abroad. Especially during the Soviet Union, Nazım Hikmet's poetry and writings found a large fan base in Russia. The merging of Nazım Hikmet's works with Soviet cartoons has made many important contributions in terms of cultural exchange. This merger helped both Turkish and Soviet cultures to better understand each other and work together. Firstly, the association of Nazım Hikmet's works with Soviet cartoons highlighted several shared values and experiences between the two societies. Nazım Hikmet is known for his works that deal with universal themes such as humanity and justice. These themes have great significance in both Turkish and Soviet societies. Therefore, the transfer of these works to the cartoon format has enabled both societies to meet on common ground.

Moreover, the combination of Nazım Hikmet's works with Soviet cartoons emphasised the similarities and differences between the two cultures. This increased mutual understanding and tolerance. Discovering the common values between the two cultures made people feel closer to each other. At the same time, understanding the differences enriched cultural diversity. The merging of Nazım Hikmet's works with Soviet cartoons also played an important role in cultural diplomacy. This merger led to better communication and co-operation between the Turkish and Soviet societies. The discovery of these works by the two societies helped to share a common cultural heritage and to pass this heritage on to future generations. In conclusion, the combination of Nazım Hikmet's works with Soviet cartoons has made significant contributions in terms of cultural exchange. This merger highlighted the common values and experiences between the two cultures, increased understanding and strengthened cultural diplomacy. The discovery of these works by both societies enabled them to find common ground and reach a deeper understanding.

## 2. Nazım Hikmet and His Works

Nazım Hikmet's socialist views and the universal quality of his poetry made him an internationally recognised writer. Nazım Hikmet (1902-1963) was born in Thessaloniki in the early 20th century and grew up in Istanbul. He is recognised as one of the foremost poets of Turkish literature. His life, works and intellectual legacy have had a great impact both in Turkey and internationally. Nazım Hikmet's socialist views and universal poetry made him an internationally recognised writer. Hikmet, who was interested in writing at a young age, continued his literary education in Germany and Moscow. He was interested in socialist thought and placed it at the centre of his life. Nazım Hikmet produced works in many genres of

literature. He wrote poems, novels and stories. These works have been internationally recognised and admired (Miğdis & Demirel, 2020).

### 2.1. Artworks

**Poems:** Nazım Hikmet's poems deal with universal themes such as love, human rights, freedom and justice. His poems have both emotional and intellectual depth. His works such as "Şeyh Bedreddin Destanı", "Memleketimden İnsan Manzaraları", "Varan 1" and "Kan Konuşmaz" have an important place in the Turkish poetry tradition (Yetiş ,2018)

**Novels and Stories:** Nazım Hikmet's novels and stories also deal with social problems and human relations. His works such as "Walnut Tree (Ceviz Ağacı)" and "Darkness Moon (Ay Karanlık)" are considered among the classics of Turkish literature (Bakır, 2022).

### 2.2. Intellectual Heritage and International Impact

Nazım Hikmet integrated socialist thought into his poetry and writings. His intellectual heritage includes themes such as class struggle, workers' rights, equality, and justice. Hikmet's works have reflected the search for individual freedom and social equality. His socialist views advocate the idea that society should be organized in a more just way. Nazım Hikmet also made a great impact internationally. His universal themes and socialist views were appreciated by readers worldwide. Hikmet gained a large following, especially in the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. He also collaborated with other famous poets from around the world, such as Pablo Neruda and Louis Aragon, and became an internationally recognized writer (URL-1). In addition, Nazım Hikmet is considered an important figure of Turkish literature and world literature. His life, works and intellectual legacy have had a great impact both in Turkey and internationally. His socialist views and poems of universal quality have enabled him to leave a lasting legacy in literature.

### 3. Soviet Union and Cartoons

It is known that cartoons were used to spread ideologies in the Soviet Union (Yaman, 2021:64). In particular, the Soviet Union used cartoons as an effective tool to spread their ideas through the works of Nazım Hikmet.

The Soviet Union's dissemination of Nazım Hikmet's works can be considered as a part of Soviet culture and political propaganda. Especially Hikmet's commitment to socialist ideology and the fact that his poems dealt with the problems of the working class may have been effective in the Soviet Union's support for him. Within the framework of the Soviet Union's policy of providing support to communist movements in other countries, Nazım Hikmet's works were promoted and disseminated in the Soviet press and cultural events. According to Bendazzi: "Soviet cartoons originated directly from political manifestos and satirical short stories" (Bendazzi, 2006: 46).

During the Soviet Union period, some cartoons bearing Nazım Hikmet's name or based on his works were produced. These cartoons were produced in order to introduce Hikmet's works to a wider audience in the Soviet Union and to deal with subjects that were considered compatible with his socialist ideology. Turkish poet Nazım Hikmet wrote two cartoon film scripts, "Sevdalı Bulut" and "Güneşin Sevinci", especially during his stay in the USSR (Güneş, 2012: 16). These cartoons can be considered as an example of how much Hikmet's works influenced Soviet culture and society (Kaba, 2014). Apart from these, there are some films about Nazım Hikmet. Here are some examples:

**"Nazım Hikmet - An Art of Harmony (Bir Uyum Sanatı)" (1962) (Назим Хикмет /Искусство согласия):** This Soviet animated film depicts the life and works of Nazım Hikmet. Hikmet's poetry and intellectual heritage are presented in a visual narrative through the cartoon.

**"Bird of Akyol (Akyol Kuşu)" (1981) ("Птица мира):** This animated film is based on the poem "Akyol Kuşu" by Nazım Hikmet. The story of the poem is presented educationally and emotionally for children.

**"Nazım Hikmet - Voices and Silences (Sesler ve Sessizlikler)" (1990) (Назим Хикмет /Звуки и молчание):** This animated film is a documentary about the works and life of Nazım Hikmet. Hikmet's poetry and intellectual heritage are visually represented in the cartoon.

#### **4. Marketing of Culture and Soft Power**

The marketing of culture and the concept of "soft power" is one of the strategies frequently used by states to be effective in international relations (Toprak Ökmen & Ökmen, 2022). This article will focus on how Nazım Hikmet's works were used as a "soft power" tool by the Soviet Union and examine the effects of this strategy on international relations.

**Marketing of Culture:** Marketing of culture is a strategy used to promote a country's cultural values, art, literature, music and other cultural products to foreign publics. It is a way of shaping the image of a country in the international arena (Oğuz, 2011). Marketing culture can be used to promote tourism, attract investments and support foreign policy objectives. Marketing a country's culture is a powerful strategy used to promote and share that country's identity and image around the world. Marketing of culture enables a country to make a voice on the international stage through its rich heritage and can have positive results in many ways (Özdemir, 2011).

##### **4.1. Marketing culture to promote tourism**

Marketing culture has the potential to revitalize the tourism industry. Many tourists want to experience the local culture and discover the differences in the places they travel to. Therefore, highlighting a country's cultural assets can attract tourists. For example, Japan's traditional tea ceremonies, temples and traditional kimonos increase the country's tourist attraction. Marketing culture can help the tourism industry grow and contribute to local economies.

##### **4.2. Marketing of culture to attract investment and promote economic growth**

The marketing of culture has the potential to attract foreign investment. If a country is considered to be culturally attractive, foreign investors may be inclined to invest in that country. For example, the French fashion industry has made a huge impact around the world and attracted foreign investors to France. Furthermore, a country promoted through cultural events, fairs and festivals can increase trade relations and foreign investment. Marketing culture can support economic growth.

##### **4.3. Marketing culture in support of foreign policy objectives**

The marketing of culture can also strengthen a country's foreign policy objectives. Cultural diplomacy can strengthen international relations by promoting a country's cultural products around the world. In particular, well-known people and works in fields such as art, music and literature can increase a country's influence in the international arena (Erkurt, 2020). For example, the works of an author who has won the Nobel Prize for Literature can contribute to foreign policy objectives by highlighting the country's literary heritage. Marketing culture can help diplomacy by promoting international co-operation and understanding (Alexander, 1988). In conclusion, marketing of culture is one of the methods of sharing and promoting a country's cultural heritage, art, literature, music and other cultural products with the world. This strategy has a great potential to promote tourism, attract investments, support foreign policy objectives and strengthen the image of the country in the international arena. Marketing of culture is an important tool for a country to share its identity and values with the world and increase understanding. Therefore, countries need to focus on this strategy to effectively promote their cultural heritage and share their cultural values with more people around the world.

**Soft Power:** Soft power is a concept defined by Joseph Nye of Harvard University (Özel,2018). Soft power is defined as the ability of a country to manipulate other countries to its will. Compared to hard power (military power), soft power refers to a country's ability to influence by using its cultural, ideological and diplomatic appeal. Increasing a country's soft power is important to gain more credibility and support its policy objectives. Being influential on the world stage is no longer only possible through military power, but also through soft power. Soft power refers to a country's ability to use its cultural, ideological and diplomatic

charm to sway other countries in its favour. While hard power utilises coercive means such as armed forces and economic pressure, soft power creates influence through a country's attractiveness and values. Increasing a country's soft power plays a critical role in gaining greater credibility and supporting its policy objectives.

#### 4.4. Cultural Influence and Reputation

Cultural soft power means that a country's cultural products such as its art, literature, music, fashion and traditions are recognised and loved worldwide. In particular, cultural products such as Hollywood films, American pop music, Italian cuisine or French luxury fashion are factors that strengthen the soft power of these countries. Other countries understand the cultural identity of these countries more closely by getting acquainted with these cultural products (Bardakçı, 2014). This increases understanding between countries and strengthens diplomatic relations. Understanding culture also enables societies to develop better relations with each other (Bardakçı, 2012).

#### 4.5. Ideological and Value Based Soft Power

A country's ideology and values form the basis of its soft power. Defending universal values such as democracy, human rights and freedom can be effective in gaining the respect of other countries. Similarly, scientific and technological achievements can also increase a country's soft power. For example, a country's space exploration or environmental protection projects can help it gain respect around the world.

#### 4.6. Diplomacy and co-operation

Diplomatic soft power reflects a country's ability to co-operate with other countries. Keeping diplomatic relations warm and positive is key to developing understanding and co-operation with other countries. Diplomatic soft power promotes co-operation rather than conflict by seeking peaceful solutions. This creates a favourable image in the international community and supports the country's foreign policy objectives. In conclusion, soft power is a concept that is gaining more and more importance in today's world. A country's ability to influence not only through hard power but also through its cultural, ideological and diplomatic appeal provides a great advantage in international relations and diplomacy. Increasing soft power enhances a country's reputation, strengthens diplomatic relations and supports policy objectives (Isfendiyaroglu and Akkaya, 2020). Therefore, investing in soft power strategies and sharing their cultural and ideological richness with the world can help countries become more effective and influential on the international stage. When we look at the entire work, it is clearly understood that Nazım Hikmet, while defending the idea of socialism, reflected this in his poems and literature. Based on this, the Soviet Union played an important role in supporting and adopting socialism in the international arena by incorporating Nazım Hikmet's poems and stories with socialism content into cartoons.

### 5. Nazım Hikmet's Works and Soviet Soft Power

Nazım Hikmet is an important figure in Turkish literature and is known for his commitment to socialist ideology. By supporting Hikmet's works, the Soviet Union promoted their ideology and culture in foreign countries through him. This situation, especially with the development of media tools, has enabled the use of literary products as a tool of culture in many political and social fields (Bars, 2017: 225). In this way, the Soviet Union aimed to increase its own cultural appeal by promoting Nazım Hikmet's poems and writings in international literary events and publications. The Soviet Union's attempt to increase its own cultural appeal by promoting Nazım Hikmet's works in international literary events and publications can be explained for several reasons:

**Ideological Propaganda:** The Soviet Union aimed to spread their communist ideology worldwide (Erdur, 2019, 68). Nazım Hikmet's recognition as a poet with socialist ideas could have encouraged the Soviet Union to support those who adopted this ideology. Hikmet's works could have been used as a platform to spread socialist ideas.

**Cultural Diplomacy:** The Soviet Union was trying to strengthen its relations with other countries through cultural diplomacy (Erdur, 2019). Supporting a well-known writer such as Nazım Hikmet could help Soviet culture gain acceptance abroad and increase the Soviet Union's cultural influence.

**International Relations:** Nazım Hikmet may have been used as a tool in the relations between the Soviet Union and Turkey (Başaran, 2015). The use of Nazım Hikmet by the Soviet Union helped to spread Soviet culture and ideology. Hikmet's works were used as a powerful tool for Soviet propaganda, as they contained themes of socialist values and class struggle. Especially during the Cold War, it contributed to the Soviet Union's effective cultural influence in the international arena. Nazım Hikmet's works were used by the Soviet Union as part of its cultural appeal, constituting an example of its soft power strategy. By promoting Hikmet's works in the international arena, the Soviet Union spread its ideology and culture in foreign countries (İnanır, 2020). This provides an important example of how the concepts of cultural marketing and soft power can be translated into practice through their impact on international relations.

However, it is debatable whether such a strategy was successful only by promoting Nazım Hikmet's works. Nazım Hikmet himself did not regard literature and art as a means of political propaganda and preferred to be recognised as an independent artist. Such attempts by the Soviet Union could have harmed Nazım Hikmet's personal and artistic freedom and led to a critical viewpoint. In conclusion, the Soviet Union's attempt to support Nazım Hikmet may have been motivated by both ideological and political reasons. However, the consequences of this initiative have been complex, and its political and cultural impact, as well as Nazım Hikmet's literary legacy, must be assessed.

## 6. Results and Discussion

This article analyses how the Soviet Union used the works of Nazım Hikmet as a tool of cultural diplomacy and how Soviet culture was promoted in foreign countries and reaches a number of important conclusions. It is also discussed how Nazım Hikmet's works have had an impact at the international level and how they have contributed to cultural exchange. In addition, it provided a clear example of how the Soviet Union used cultural diplomacy by promoting Nazım Hikmet's works in foreign countries through Soviet cartoons. Inspired by Hikmet's poems and writings, Soviet cartoons aimed to promote Soviet ideology and culture abroad. In this article, how Nazım Hikmet's works were marketed through Soviet cartoons and the effects of this event on cultural diplomacy are also discussed. It also touches upon the Soviet Union's promotion of Nazım Hikmet's works through Soviet cartoons, making his poems and writings accessible to audiences in different countries. These cartoons were presented as a reflection of Soviet culture and socialist ideology by visually conveying Hikmet's works. This made Hikmet's works more internationally recognised and attracted the attention of those interested in socialist thought. It also constituted an example of cultural diplomacy. Cultural diplomacy is a strategy used to promote a country's cultural, artistic and educational values in foreign countries. By disseminating Nazım Hikmet's works through cartoons, the Soviet Union increased its own cultural appeal and aimed to spread socialist ideology. This contributed to the Soviet Union's influence in international relations. However, the effects of this strategy are complex. Nazım Hikmet did not support the use of his works as a means of political propaganda and preferred to be recognised as an independent artist. This points to the tension between the Soviet Union's cultural diplomacy and Nazım Hikmet's personal and artistic freedom.

The article also emphasised how cultural diplomacy played an important role during the Cold War. While the ideological struggle continued, cultural diplomacy emerged as a softer power and was part of the competition between the Soviet Union and the United States. In conclusion, this study examined the complex relationship between cultural diplomacy, literature and cinema, and how the Soviet Union sought to increase its ideological and cultural influence abroad. This examination of how Nazım Hikmet's works were used as part of Soviet culture can lead to further research and discussion in the fields of cultural diplomacy and international relations. This can help us better understand how culture, as an important component of cultural exchange and ideological struggle, is used in international politics.

The promotion of Nazım Hikmet's works through Soviet cartoons also represents an example of cultural exchange. By introducing Hikmet's works to a wider audience, these cartoons encouraged cultural exchange. Nazım Hikmet's works functioned as a cultural bridge between the Soviet Union and other countries and helped people to get to know different cultures more closely. By promoting Hikmet's works, the Soviet Union increased its own cultural influence and demonstrated the marketing of culture and the use

of soft power as an effective strategy in international relations. This is an example of promoting cultural exchange and emphasises how Nazım Hikmet's works had an impact at the international level and contributed to cultural exchange.

As can be understood from the study, Nazım Hikmet himself and his works were seen as an image of socialism in themselves. and his international personality and literature were seen and adopted as a good tool for the dissemination of ideas for the Soviet Union. "Nazım Hikmet's poems were used in his films - An Art of Harmony (1962) / Bird of Akyol (1981) / Voices and Silences (1990) to spread socialism and to impose socialist thought, especially on children. In this respect, it is possible to see literature as a tool of cultural exchange. .

In addition, it can be said that Nazım Hikmet's socialist ideas had a cultural diplomatic mission in the relations of the communities within the Soviets with Turkey. Because, Nazım Hikmet is seen and appreciated as an important Soviet figure even in today's Russia.

The current study is a good example of how literature and literary figures can undertake important missions in cultural exchange, which is not mentioned much in the literature. The current study will provide an important preliminary projection for future studies.

This study also addresses an important issue that can contribute to the development of cultural exchange and international understanding. Furthermore, this study will contribute to the wider debate on this topic by providing an important example at the intersection of cultural diplomacy, international marketing, literature, cinema and international relations.

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#### **İnternet Kaynakları**

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