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INFLUENCE OF TUDEH PARTY OF IRAN ON THE PRESS AND LITERARY WORKS

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Abstract

After the overthrow of Reza Shah Pahlavi in Iran in 1941, the Tudeh Party of Iran was created, which is considered a Leninist-Communist Party. The leaders of the party were intellectuals, the majority of whom were educated in the Soviet Union. Their goal was to develop communist views and ideas in Iran. Given the party leaders' familiarity with the influence and importance of media and literature on society, they devoted their effort to the creation and dissemination of literary works and the support of writers and poets who had Communist views. The publication of various newspapers and magazines was one of the main political strategies of the Tudeh Party through which the Tudeh Party created a stream in society and made the society familiar with the literary precursors of Communist ideas. Although the Tudeh Party was formally dissolved in 1948, ideas presented by prominent figures such as the problems of the lower classes of society, the class gaps, the struggle against imperialism have been manifested in the literary works of Iran for many years. The authors of this article have examined the impact of the Tudeh Party's views on the media and literary works and have cited numerous examples to prove that the Tudeh Party's influence persisted for years after its dissolution.

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1. Introduction

With the overthrow of Reza Shah's reign in September 1942, there was a great deal of freedom of action in various fields, especially in the field of culture and politics. At that time, some political and cultural activists with Marxist tendencies who were not active in Reza Shah's time took advantage of the opportunity and they founded the Tudeh Party of Iran in October 1942. The leaders of the Tudeh Party of Iran were mostly educated and well aware of the cultural and social status of Iran, with a particular focus on culture and media, along with political activities.

The press and literature were the main cultural areas that could easily become the voice of the Tudeh Party and spread Party's ideas and thoughts throughout the country; thus, by launching and publishing various journals and creating literary streams, and propagating and exaggerating the works of their intended writers and poets, the Tudeh Party promoted the Party's ideas and views in the form of various literary genres either publicly or secretly.

The present study, by looking at the Tudeh Party's journals and the political and cultural ideas of this group, has attempted to investigate the role of Party's thoughts and ideas in the press and literature of Iran during the period of its activity.

1.1. Literature Review

The activities of the Tudeh Party have not received much scrutiny despite their strong presence in the cultural and literary spheres, and this is one of the many issues still to be addressed. Following is a brief introduction to some of the researches that have been done in this area: "The influence of the Tudeh Party on Iranian fictional literature" (Javadi & Tofangsazi, 2017). In this study, the authors looked at the influence of partisan ideas among Iranian storytellers based on the sociological point of view, but the effects of these views on literature and culture are not addressed. "A Study of the Intellectual Foundations of the Tudeh Party's Literary Theory of 1932-1952". In this study, only the theoretical topics and thinking foundations of the Tudeh Party on literature are discussed (Farashahi Nejad, 2019). "Content Analysis and Assessment of the Mardom Newspaper (Central Body of the Tudeh Party)", MA Thesis, written by Abolfazl Karamad. This thesis, while referring to the history of the Tudeh Party's activity in Iran, briefly introduced some party-affiliated journals and examined the lexicon culture of Tudeh Party and its frequency analysis in the Mardom Newspaper (published in 1980). "Investigating the Impact of Left Ideology on the Translation of Literary Works," MA Thesis, by Yasman Khaliqi. This thesis explained the impact of social conditions and ideology on translated works during 1952 to 1954 and introduced some of the translated works that expressed Marxist ideas. "Literary Poetry of Parties and Organizations from the 1940s to 1960s", MA thesis by Hasan Shaaban Rad. In this thesis, after an introduction to political parties and the history of their formation in Iran and the introduction of party's ideas into world and Iranian literature, the function of the party in the creation of literary works and theorizing and expressing the literary theories is examined. Of course, the author only deals with generalities and few works have been examined.

2. Problem Statement

Considering that the Tudeh Party of Iran was significantly influenced by the Marxist ideas of the Soviet Union and it used one of the presses and literary texts as the most important means of propagating their ideas, the study of these works would be necessary from this perspective.

3. Research Questions

1. How did the Tudeh Party of Iran use the press and literary texts to propagate Marxist ideas? 2. Which press expressed the ideas of the Tudeh Party more? 3. In the press of the Tudeh Party, what kind of literary texts has been given better attention to be more effective?

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the Tudeh Party of Iran has influenced various parts of society through the use of literary and press texts.

5. Research Methods

This research is based on library studies, in which texts and literary and press sources have been reviewed in a descriptive-analytic manner.

6. Findings

With the outbreak of the October Revolution in Russia and the spread of Marxist views, Iranian society has also been somewhat influenced by the revolution in the political, social, and literary spheres, and a new era in Iranian history has emerged (Khaliqi, 2016). During the reign of Reza Shah due to the dictatorship, Marxist viewpoints did not expand much, but after the overthrowing of Reza Shah in 1942 and Iran's occupation by the Allied forces and the presence of the Soviet Red Army in Iran, some political parties with Marxist tendencies were emerged in Iran. The most important of these was the Tudeh Party of Iran. The Tudeh Party used literature and the press as one of its most important propaganda tools to spread its views and published various magazines with a literary approach (Shaaban Rad, 2018). Iranian writers and poets who were in favor of Marxist views published various works in various literary contexts, including writing stories on the themes of social socialism, as well as translation of Russian writers' works, especially those endorsed by the Communist Party. Another aspect of the influence of Marxist views on Iranian scholars was the attention to the lower class of society as well as to the peasantry, which led to the emergence and expansion of folklore literature and folklore research. Issues related to literary criticism, especially social criticism, and topics related to the social responsibility of literature are other issues that were raised under the influence of Marxist ideas in Iran, and the Tudeh Party of Iran, in line with its political and cultural views, and with the use of literature tried to raise such discussions in the magazines which were under the influence of the party (Khosravi, 2019).

7. Conclusion

The Tudeh Party of Iran has been the most important political party in Iran since its establishment in October 1942 until its dissolution in 1949 and has been active in many cultural fields (Karamad, 2016). The Tudeh Party, though adhering to Communist views and following the policies of the Soviet Union in all spheres, given the variety of issues that existed in Iran at that time, especially the religious tendency of the Iranian people, Tudeh Party did not directly address Marxist views and tried to use literature to express its own ideas (Hajibabai, & Abbasi, 2019). To this end, the Tudeh Party of Iran has made the most of its use of the press and, by dominating on a large number of journals, it has made literary streams and introduced writers and poets who agreed with the views of the Party. Of course, after the dissolution of the Tudeh Party, Marxist views remained indigenous to Iranian literary works until many years later. Addressing issues such as class gap, the problems of lower-class people, especially workers and peasants, the oppression of masters over their subordinates, the struggle against world imperialism, especially America, and the poverty and deprivation of rural areas are such themes that have been written for years by writers and poets.

7.1. How Tudeh Party Affects the Literary Press:

Political and social issues are also subjects that are manifested in the literature based on the conditions of society (Shafie kadkani, 2019). After the occupation of Iran in 1942 by the allied forces and the exile of Reza Shah, the political and cultural space were almost opened and conditions were provided for various parties and groups to be able to operate obviously. One of these parties was the Tudeh Party of Iran, which was founded in October 1942 and was able to rapidly exert a wide influence on Iranian culture and literature (Mahjub, 2017).

The Tudeh Party was in fact a party with Marxist and Communist ideas whose founders named it the Tudeh Party due to their knowledge of Iranian society, and also they knew people did not agree much with the Communist ideology (Akbariani, 2019). The Tudeh Party with its progressive ideas in the society of that time soon gained popularity among the various social groups, especially the educated, on the one hand, and the lower classes of society, especially the workers, on the other hand. Given that the leaders of the Tudeh Party of Iran were educated, they were well aware of the power and function of the media, especially the newspaper, and thus sought to take the most advantage of it.

Before the Tudeh Party came to be known officially in Iran, however, in the late Qajar and early Pahlavi periods, due to the political atmosphere and economic conditions, journals were published in support of the lower classes of society, especially workers with the Marxist or so-called “collective” tendencies. These journals can be seen as a precursor to the influence of Tudeh Party’s thoughts in Iranian publications (Ghasemi, 2016)

The Tudeh Party can be seen as a perfect example of a political-cultural party throughout Iranian history that has influenced on many writers, translators, journalists and poets. The most important feature of the Tudeh Party is the power. Power in the party has been centrally democratic; i.e. all members of the Party were pursuing a duty, and each member had the right to freely express his views in the discussions.

In this Party, the implementation of decisions is centralized, but they are democratically examined. (Abrahamyan, 2009).

Another feature of the party is paying attention to the lower class of society, especially the workers. Like the Marxist ideas that dominated the Soviet Union at the time, the Tudeh Party of Iran tried to draw the attention of society to this ever-marginalized class. Of course, the difference between the Tudeh Party and the Marxist movement is in attracting the working class which almost failed in Iran because the Iranian society had not yet reached the stage of industrial society in which the workers could form a specific class. The Iranian society was an agricultural society at that time and there were no civil structures and institutions such as labor unions and syndicates (Dehbashi, 2018).

Another feature of this party was to confront with religion. Marxist thought is based on materialistic and economic bases, so religion has no significant place in it and was often viewed as a deterrent. The Marxists were very hostile to religion and believed that religion was made by the dominant class of society through which to control others.

Prior to the formation of the Tudeh Party, the first Marxist activities can be seen in the late Qajar era and when Reza Shah came to power, the political space got limited, and many political and cultural activists were arrested and killed. The journals with Marxist tendency in late Qajar which dealt with the issues of workers and other oppressed people included the Behlul magazines (1911), Mah Noe (1922), Fekr Azad (1923), Bahar Delkash (1923), etc.

In the introduction of these journals have mainly stated that the purpose of them is to support the working class of society and they have used poetry and fiction to explain their thoughts. "We felt that the workers and oppressed people of Iran need to have such a publication ... to defend and support them truly and then to spread free thought" (Fekr Azad, 1923), "the manner of this journal is to support the workers" (Bahar Delkash, 1923).

These journals can be seen as the background to the formation of partisan publications. With the establishment of the Tudeh Party in 1942 and its official activity, the necessity of establishing party-specific journals was felt more and more; hence, publications were devoted exclusively to partisan discussions and promoted their ideas. Among these publications can be found the Payam Noe Journals, Mardom, Rahbar, Siasat, Ajir, Nameh Mardom, Razm, Zafar, Bashar and Shahbaz.

In addition to publishing political and social articles in these journals to promote the ideas of the Tudeh Party, culture and literature have been used as a tool to promote political thoughts (Ghasemi, 2016).

The components of the Tudeh Party have influenced on literature in two ways: first, to promote Marxist ideas through the creation of literary currents, and to identify some writers and poets as role models, in addition to working in cultural fields they are known as political activists. Also, the publication of literary works based on the socialist realism aimed at promoting political thoughts in the context of the story, and the protagonist of most of these stories are the lower classes of society, and the author's purpose in these stories is to combat class gap. (Shamisa, 2013).

The influence of partisan thoughts on the field of literature can be seen in two forms: first, in the form of articles and contents of the Tudeh Party's press, and second, in the fictional and poetic works of the writers of that time.

Some of the articles and literary studies published in magazines related to the Tudeh Party of Iran were dedicated to the introduction of Russian literature and another part was devoted to the study of Iranian literature (Golkar, 2017). The writers and translators of these publications tried to promote such ideas by introducing Russian literature, especially literary works after the October Revolution that had Marxist tendencies.

The study of Iranian literature also emphasized that modern Iranian literature has taken a growing path, and this development is due to the linking of literature with political and social issues, and has led a wide range of people to associate with literature.

Iranian fictional literature has been most influenced by the Tudeh Party's thoughts and can be traced to later periods. The Tudeh Party sought to localize the socialist realism in Iran through literary articles.

Fictional literature has been introduced as a context for class struggle. Issues that the Tudeh Party favored most caused that the traditional writers, such as Mohammad Hejazi, Ali Dashti, Abbas Khalili, Mohammad Masoud, Hosseingholi Mostaan, who were well-known in Reza Shah's time and wrote more in the style of Romanticism, to get out of the Iranian literary scene little by little, and people like Sadegh Hedayat, Bozorg Alavi, Sadegh Chubak and Jalal Al Ahmad, etc., who had modern ideas and opposed the traditional cultural structures, became the precursor in Iranian literature.

By holding conferences and meetings on issues of Iranian literature as well as literary writings, the Tudeh Party of Iran was recognized as influential in the literary field and could impose its cultural views on authors. Ehsan Tabari was one of the thinkers of the Tudeh Party of Iran who was very active in criticizing literary works and was trying to evaluate most of the fictions in political and social criticism. The main purpose of these criticisms was to find traces of socialist struggles of the working class in the nascent Iranian fictional literature and the new Iranian writers and to make these stories a means of protesting the status quo (Lotfabadi & Pourghanbar, 2016).

The years 1942 to 1962 can be considered the peak years of Russian literature's influence in Iran, and almost all of Iran's storytelling was influenced by views of socialist realism and literary discussions. Most of the writers whose works were translated at this time were either Russian writers or affiliated with Marxist ideas.

Generally, it can be said that the core of the Tudeh Party's ideas reflected in the literary works of Iran at that time include conflicting with religion, fighting against poverty (especially cultural poverty), the expressing class gap, paying attention to the lower class of society, fighting against superstition and the ignorance of people, The slogan of the fighting against world imperialism and issues like these.

Translation is another issue that has received much attention in the Tudeh Party's journals. In these journals, the main focus was on authors who wrote works in line with Marxist ideas or whose style of writing was socialist realism. Among the journals of the Tudeh Party, Mardom Magazines, Payam Noe and Siasat have paid much attention to the subject of translation, especially the translation of short stories and novels. These translations have led to raise the issues of socialist realism in Iranian literature for the first time, and Iranian writers have also been attracted to this school. Russian writers and poets whose works have been most widely translated in the press of the Tudeh Party include Chekhov, Tolstoy, Gogol, Maxim Gorky, Pushkin, Sholokhov, and Nekrasov.

Most of the topics chosen for translation from foreign works, especially Russian, are stories about the lower classes of society that have not had much of a role in literature before. These include Lyubov Kosmodemyanskaya's "My Daughter, Zoya" (1944), Tolstoy's "Russian Mood" (1945), Gorky's "Against Life" (1945), Gogol's "Image" (1945), Chekhov's "Harmfulness of Tobacco" (1945), Alexander Pushkin's "Dubrovsky" (1944), etc.

In the translated poems, much attention is paid to Alexander Pushkin's poems. Most of these poems praise the freedom and protection of workers and somehow indicate that the poet has used poetry to promote his ideas and beliefs.

Paying attention to the plight of the masses and encouraging people to write and express their sorrows are issues found in most of Tudeh's journals. In the biography of the poet, Krylov, it is mentioned in the third issue of Payam Noe journal: "Krylov had risen from the masses and had a thorough knowledge of commentaries, interpretation, literature and so-called Russian folklore. He used to write his fables in public language and his writings were used and praised by all classes of men and women, children, youth and old people" and even more explicitly, in Sadr al-Din Eini's biography in the fourth issue of Payam Noe Journal, it is stated: "Eini is a proficient speaker and can attract the reader. He uses simple language and public culture to create sweet and attractive sentences. Delightful subjects and colorful descriptions of national traditions always come to the attention of the nation." (Yasemi, 1944).

One of the most important achievements of the Tudeh Party in culture is paying attention to folklore. This attention is also derived from the ideological thoughts of the Party, according to which the attention to the masses and the lower classes of society is of great importance (Aman Khani, 2018). Karim Keshavarz, one of the prominent figures of the Tudeh Party of Iran, wrote in the beginning of one of his stories: "The main source of Folklore literature is village. In this respect, Iran is not different from other countries. The legends, stories, poems, riddles and old proverbs are preserved by the peasants here, too. These stories and proverbs are from the distant past - the prehistoric past of the people and reflect the old thoughts and feelings of the people, this "oral literature" also existed before the creation of the writing. After the emergence of the writing, written literature was more dominated by the rich and privileged classes. But the masses continued to extract new words, expressions and concepts and defended their rights to live. However, in the past, official literature has looked at this source of grace with ignorance and has dismissed it as poor and distant source, and perhaps it has humiliated this source. While the "oral literature" of the masses - the tales, the anecdotes, the proverbs, the riddles, the songs and the poems that have reached us from mouth to mouth and are now constantly evolving in the blessed laboratory of people. Famous writers such as Gorky, Pushkin, Gogol, Nekrasov, Tolstoy, Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe realized this and resorted to this infinite source and acquired pristine and new themes. To understand the characteristics of national literature, the advantages of folklore and its mass literature are to be understood. Collecting these precious works is the duty of all those who are interested in Iranian literature" (Keshavarz, 2017).

Although such views have been in line with the ideological thoughts of the Tudeh Party of Iran, its outcome has been very useful to Iranian literature and has led to the growing popularity of Iranian literature and the precious works have been emerged in this field.

Other activities carried out by the Tudeh Party in the field of culture were efforts to attract writers and poets and to use them to propagate Marxist ideas. Among these activities can be mentioned the first

Congress of Iranian writers and poets in 1947. The congress was held in collaboration with the Peace House affiliated with the cultural section of the Soviet Embassy and the prominent poets and writers of Iran such as Malek al-Shaarai Bahar, Rashid Yasemi, Ali Asghar Khan Hekmat, Parviz Natel Khanlari and Nima Yushig had an active presence.

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