



## black humor and its review and analysis in the Humour & Caricature Magazine (1991-2022)

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### Abstract

"Humour and Caricature Magazine" is one of the Iranian comic publications that has been presenting social and popular humor in a written and pictorial way since 1991. The purpose of this article is to introduce black humor and review and analyze it in the humour and caricature magazine by studying and analyzing 298 issues of this magazine. Paying attention to the multifaceted and introverted satires and facts of the contemporary violent world has created a balance between the amount of black humor and the happy or the usual press humor in this magazine. The "Death Station" page with a hilarious look at the scary reality of death, mostly surreal and thoughtful works along with modern aphorism, memorials, anti-war and anti-terrorism works and a part of 4D humor and social cartoons are protuberant examples of black humor in the humour and caricature magazine. Most of the amount of black humor of this magazine in the written humour section belongs to aphorism and in the visual humor section it belongs to no comment cartoon and caricature (face cartoon), respectively. 36 pages, i.e. 12% on the covers and 61 pages on the back cover and inside the covers are correspondingly dedicated to black humor.

**Keywords:** *humour & caricature magazine, black humor, Humorous magazines in Iran, Criticism of contemporary humor.*

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**Extended Abstract****1. Introduction**

“Humor and Caricature Magazine” refers to one of the Iranian humorical publications, monthly published since January 1991. Javad Alizadeh is the owner of the privilege, the responsible manager, and editor of this magazine, who has won numerous international awards in the arena of cartoons and caricatures, in addition to half a century of comic activity in the Iranian press. The present paper investigates black humor in Humour and Caricature Magazine. As mentioned in the editorial of the first issue of Humour and Caricature Magazine, it has started publishing aiming at giving new dimensions to the entity of humor and caricature, and in the same regard, this publication content has paid particular attention to new and serious humor, as well as black or bitter humor.

**Research Question(s):**

What is the ratio of black and normal humor in Humour and Caricature Magazine?

**2. Literature Review**

Until now, except for a few papers in cartoon, caricature, and special graphic and illustration pages in the press, no special research has been so far conducted about black humor in humorical magazines. Moreover, papers have been written about black humor in poetry and fiction, with emphasis on the literary aspect of the works, as below:

2-1- Mohammadi, A. & Taslimi Jahormi, F.; “Comparative Study of Black Humor in Fiction Based on the Surrealism School”; Research on World’s Contemporary Literature, Volume 21, Issue 2, pp. 403-429, 2016.

- This paper focuses on the definition and terminology of black humor and it is about the background of its creation in the surrealism school, sufficing to mention the general characteristics of black humor in the works of Sadegh Hedayat, Gholām-Hosseini Sā’edi, and Bahram Sadeghi.

2-2- Salahi, A.; Pouralkhas, SH. & Shokri, H.; “The Study of Black Humor in the Works of Mehdi Akhavan-Sales”; Tehran: The First National Conference on Fundamental Research in Language and Literature Studies, p. 4, 2018.

- This paper addresses a short definition of black humor, briefly states its history, and compares the researched works on the types of black humor.

2-3- Tadayyon, Y.; "Black Humor, Grotesque (Black Writing), or Neither"; Tandis Magazine, Issue 107, p. 23, 2007.

- This one page note provides a brief definition and general characteristics of black humor.

2-4- Shahidi, D.; "Secrets of the Mystery of Black Humor"; Etemad Newspaper, Issue 4063, p. 7, 2018.

2-5- Shahidi, D.; "Black and White Humor in Gray Existence"; Keyhan Caricature Bimonthly Magazine, 14<sup>th</sup> year, Issue 157-158, pp. 48-44, 2015.

2-6- Shahidi, D.; "Hidden Layers of Fear in the Arena of Black Humor"; Etemad Newspaper, Issue 4074, p 7, 2018.

- According to his work and activity in visual art, Davoud (David) Shahidi's notes focus the visual aspect of black humor and analyze black humor atmospheres, special characters, and graphics of works of this category.

2-7- Ziaei, M.R.; "Confusion of Definitions in Various Types of Cartoons and Caricatures"; Keyhan Caricature Bimonthly, year 16, number 189-190, pp. 43-40, 2007.

2-8- Ziaei, M.R.; "Seppuku and Black Humor in Cartoons"; Keyhan Caricature Magazine, Issues 175-176, p. 51, 2006.

2-9- Alizadeh, J.; "What is Black Humor?!"; Humor and Caricature Magazine, Issue 292, p. 31, 2018.

The above items also include the introduction and description of black humor, particularly in the visual humor section. Regardless of the references in a few short sentences in the interviews with the Humor and Caricature Magazine's editor about the place and nature of black humor in the magazine, no study has been conducted on the subject of this research, i.e. "Black humor in the Humour and Caricature Magazine".

### 3. Methodology

The present study examines black humor in the written and sometimes visual content related to this magazine's texts, using library method and taking note from all the issues of Humour and Caricature Magazine (298 issues) and the available supplementary works.

### 4. Results

In Humour and Caricature Magazine (monthly magazine), the humor is

divided into two general groups: normal humor, i.e. a collection of normal press humor, white humor, colored humor, gray humor, yellow humor, and a combination of usual and popular humor, comic, and social humor. On the other hand, the second group is called black or serious and bitter humor, representing dark and sad humor, and expressing the bitter and negative conditions of human life. These two groups of humor are in balance and proportion, a combination of which covering most of the political, social, and family humors. In Humour and Caricature Magazine, given paying attention to individual, multi-character, and introspective, innovative 4D humor and unusual humor, black humor has a lot of frequency and depth, just like the column of the death station. In the humor written in the cari-kalamator (Cari-word), short poems and sentences in the columns of the death station, senseless humor, meaningless words, meaningless words, sad words, whispers, memorials, and so on emphasize brevity and employing words. In illustrated comics, i.e. cartoons, it has a wide appearance in political, social-family and occasion cartoons like the memorials of Iranian and world celebrities. With 125 issues, the death station page has the highest number of issues among various black humor columns. In the written humor section, the highest amount of black humor belongs to aphorism and bitter social cari-kalamators (Cari-words), and in the visual humor section, it respectively belongs to unliteral cartoons without captions and face caricatures. Furthermore, 12% of the covers of Humor and Caricature Magazine, i.e. 36 out of 298 issues were published; besides, 61 pages of the back cover and the interior of the covers are dedicated to black humor, 10 of which are caricatures of Sadeqh Hedayat's face.

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