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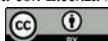
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Rudarji v turističnem delu rudnika živega srebra v Idriji / Minatori nella parte turistica della miniera di mercurio di Idria / Miners in the tourist section of the mercury mine in Idria (foto: Jani Peternelj, arhiv: CUDHg Idrija).

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“A COAL STAIN IS HARD TO REMOVE”: TÜRKİYE’S MINING AGENDA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE HUMOR MAGAZINES (1960–1980)

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ABSTRACT

This article analyses the socio-political situation of Turkish mining and mine workers through humor or caricature magazines published between 1960 and 1980 by using the corpus linguistics method. The corpus linguistics method, which is widely used in linguistics, enables qualitative data to be digitally segmented and analysed in different ways. Coal shortages, rising prices and endless queues became the defining struggles for the urban middle class, workers, civil servants and shopkeepers, giving rise to a “survival humor” that exposed class divides in fuel access. Cartoons revealed miners’ unsafe conditions and occupational diseases and showed their powerlessness before employers. They also criticized government mining policy and patronage networks and debated the nationalization of mines and the role of foreign companies. Beyond economics, coal scarcity was portrayed as eroding traditional culture and morality, affirming humor’s enduring role as social critique.

Keywords: mining, mine labor, caricature, humor magazines, Türkiye

“LA MACCHIA DI CARBONE È DIFFICILE DA RIMUOVERE”: IL PROGRAMMA MINERARIO DELLA TURCHIA DALLA PROSPETTIVA DELLE RIVISTE UMORISTICHE (1960–1980)

SINTESI

Questo articolo analizza la situazione socio-politica del settore minerario turco e dei minatori attraverso riviste umoristiche o di caricatura pubblicate tra il 1960

e il 1980, avvalendosi del metodo della linguistica dei corpora. Il metodo della linguistica dei corpora, ampiamente utilizzato in linguistica, consente di segmentare digitalmente i dati qualitativi e di analizzarli in diversi modi. La carenza di carbone, l'aumento dei prezzi e le code interminabili divennero le principali difficoltà per il ceto medio urbano, i lavoratori, i funzionari e i negozianti, dando origine a un “umorismo di sopravvivenza” che metteva in luce le disparità di classe nell'accesso al combustibile. Le caricature mettevano in luce le condizioni di sicurezza precarie dei minatori e le malattie professionali, mostrando la loro impotenza di fronte ai datori di lavoro. Criticavano inoltre la politica mineraria del governo e le reti clientelari e discutevano della nazionalizzazione delle miniere e del ruolo delle società straniere. Al di là dell'aspetto economico, la scarsità di carbone veniva descritta come un fattore che erodeva la cultura e la moralità tradizionali, affermando il ruolo persistente dell'umorismo come critica sociale.

Parole chiave: estrazione mineraria, manodopera mineraria, caricature, riviste umoristiche, Turchia

INTRODUCTION¹

Humor is a fragile phenomenon, and as the guardian of this phenomenon, the humorist always tries to maintain the delicate, sensitive balance between joke and offense, social commentary and prejudice, controlled fantasy and madness, and all those repulsive situations on which humor is based and their controlled comic counterparts (Alexander, 1984, 76–78). Humor brings issues that society hesitates to voice within power relations to the agenda with less collective reaction. In this sense, the natural position of humor media is opposition. There is an effort in humorous discourse to correct things that are lacking or going wrong (Peifer, 2012, 266). Indeed, Mikhail Bakhtin said that “laughter destroys all hierarchical distances” (Bakhtin, 1981, 23). In this regard, humor magazines² are important for

1 This work was supported by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Türkiye (Türkiye Bilimsel ve Teknolojik Araştırma Kurumu – TÜBİTAK), under Project No. 323K395.

2 Although “humor magazines,” “caricature magazines,” and “cartoon magazines” all refer to the same body of Turkish satirical periodicals, each term carries a slightly different scope here. “Humor magazines” serves as the umbrella term for the genre as a whole. “Caricature” narrows this to the artistic and professional dimension of the genre, emphasizing caricature as a drawing craft and its historical development since the Ottoman period. “Cartoon magazines,” in turn, denotes the concrete periodicals themselves as primary sources, that is, the specific issues and titles treated as empirical data rather than as representatives of a genre or a craft.

the Turkish society's familiarization with the general outlines of comedy in terms of understanding religious, behavioral and cultural patterns.

Modern mass communication in Türkiye strengthened in the twentieth century due to developments that emerged in the final quarter of the nineteenth century. With the increasing spread of high-circulation national newspapers, compulsory public education's effort to produce a uniform citizenry, and the circulation of radio and cinema, governments obtained an unprecedented new political and ideological power element. As a continuation of the nation-state building process, throughout almost all stages of modern Turkish history, the press has endeavored to develop a measured relationship with power to avoid closure and other penalties, while also seeking ways to achieve high circulation in competitive market conditions (Cantek, 2024, 130). The tension between press and political authority was not unique to the humor press, as the broader Turkish and Ottoman periodicals have historically served as both witnesses and actors in power struggles, exemplified by the role newspapers played in shaping and recording the government crisis in the late Ottoman Empire (Korkmaz, 2024). When looking at the issue from the perspective of humor media in Türkiye, humor magazines have historically always been among the best-selling magazines. They contain reflections of popular culture and daily life and are among the productive venues where social and political transformation can be observed (Demirkol, 2025, 53).

Although the roots of humor media in Türkiye can be traced back to the Tanzimat period (1839–76) of Ottoman modernization, *Diyojen*, considered the first published cartoon magazine in the mentioned years, had its privilege rights canceled after 183 issues were published (Cantek & Gönenc, 2017, 9). During this early period when the satirical press flourished in the Ottoman Empire, topics such as fashion and women, economic issues and the alafranga lifestyle in the first Ottoman humor magazines indicate a humor publishing that touches daily life (Özdiş, 2010, 107). An important issue in terms of the historical development of humor publishing in Türkiye has been the liberation of caricature from dependence on painting and its establishment as an independent art form. It must be acknowledged that humor magazines reached a level on par with global standards during the Second Constitutional Era (1908–20). The revolution, and the boom it brought to the Ottoman publishing industry provided the framework for revolutionary developments in the publishing technology (Koloğlu, 2006, 92; Brummett, 2000, 34). These developments of the satirical press during the Constitutional Monarchy period and after World War I were followed by the efforts of Cemal Nadir in the early years of the Republic. Well-known publications such as *Akbaba* and *Karagöz* are prominent examples of satirical publications from the Republican Era (Öngören, 2000, 68–80). With Türkiye's transition to a liberal competitive democratic system in the 1950s and in the turbulent political environment of the 1960s and 1970s, caricature became an inseparable part of daily life. During these years, caricature magazines emerged as an entertainment element and displayed an oppositional attitude against the center of power (Topuz, 1985, 138).

A prominent aspect of caricature magazine publishing in Türkiye after 1950 has been its advocacy for various social classes. With the 1947 legal regulation, new unions were established, and as unionism began to mature institutionally in general, almost every union started publishing its own publications. These developments, which brought a marked revival to press and publishing life, would indirectly also turn humor magazine publishing into propaganda or a tool of social struggle. Humor, which Türkiye's organized working class struggle also intensively resorted to, has served an important function in the recent history of the labor movement (Yıldırım, 2019, 147). Although serious public pressure was formed regarding the right to strike from the 1940s, there was no legal regulation either in the single-party system or during the Democratic Party (DP) rule. However, as a result of the constitutional changes initiated by the military administration of the 1960 coup, the right to collective bargaining and strike was legalized by Article 46 of the 1961 Constitution, which was very liberal in terms of individual freedoms and political participation (Doğan, 2015, 333; Ozan, 2015, 659–746). Thus, strikes proliferated across many business sectors at this stage of the workers' history in Türkiye. Consequently, the labor movement, which began to become an important part of daily life, would be among the main topics of humor media.

The rapid change experienced in Turkish society and politics in the 1960s also initiated a permanent transformation in humor media, with the humor culture developing a tendency toward leftist thought. The emergence of new intellectuals in leftist politics and the beginning establishment of a new social opposition center also determined the topic and content preferences of political humor. In this period, caricaturists also positioned themselves on the left of the political spectrum and practiced their profession. In the 1960s and '70s, caricaturists destroyed all previous traditions and created a caricature technique that required the use of a specific line. This transformation was also followed by a thematic change. In those years, the main topics of caricatures were chosen from subjects such as capitalism and social revolution (Aviv, 2013, 228). Humor vividly addressed a quite wide range of topics including terrorist acts, social polarization, daily life and popular culture in the face of a chaotic period. This vitality and mobility was largely inspired by the relationships of large masses migrating from rural to urban areas with the city, adaptation problems, and the problematic nature of the relationship that the culture they created for themselves established with the city and the urban elite (Hoşafçı, 2006, 79).

In the political atmosphere determined by the 1960 Constitution, the rise of leftist thought was accompanied by anti-Americanism (Turan, 2021, 139). This situation was reflected in humor media as well, in the form of Türkiye's close alliance with the United States being heavily criticized. Anti-Americanism, a product of the Cold War, had significant weight in Türkiye's social memory and was embraced by social segments accumulated in shantytown neighborhoods and frequently addressed in leftist humor media (Christofis, 2021, 121).

Industrial cities that rose with economic development that began after the 1960s and the shantytown reality this situation produced created a differentiation between mass culture and popular culture in Türkiye. In response to mass culture imposed by mainstream media tools and political cultural elites, the new popular culture that began to form in the lower strata of society created an alternative cultural framework from the 1970s onwards. Shantytown residents living on the edges of cities became part of popular culture that emerged around phenomena such as earning money with arabesque song lyrics, making sense of the complex problems brought by the city, preparing a future for their children, and struggling against political elites in the face of increasing living costs (Özbek, 2021, 107).

In the 1960–80 period, Türkiye faced a series of military coups, memorandums and economic crises, and these developments left their mark on Türkiye's recent history (Kasapsaraçoğlu, 2021, 259). With the military coup on May 27, 1960, rightist leader Adnan Menderes was removed from power and executed. Then a new constitution was adopted and new bureaucratic institutions were formed. In this process, the national security perception shaped politics and the legal system (Demirtürk, 2015, 155).

As the right to strike from the 1961 Constitution could not be used, the working class took action. Workers held their largest rally to that date at the end of 1962 (Özdemir, 2002, 41). On the other hand, political processes also continued in the form of short-term coalitions. After the May 27 Coup, the leftist movement became somewhat stronger. Parties, worker movements and unions began to make their voices heard (Gürpınar, 2013, 44). With the adoption of the 1961 Constitution, pressure on leftist thought decreased (Aydın & Taşkın, 2014, 16). Following *Yön* magazine, a group of intellectuals established the Socialist Culture Association. Leftist press strengthened in the 1961–71 period. Columnists such as Çetin Altan, İlhan Selçuk, Aziz Nesin tried to write leftist thought in their daily writings (Çavdar, 2004, 131–134). However, this atmosphere would not last very long, because in the 1965 elections, the right-leaning Justice Party (AP) came to power alone. AP remained in power alone until 1969. During this period, Turkish society's luxury durable consumption habits such as refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners increased, and the assembly system developed in the automotive industry. Therefore, job opportunities multiplied in the small industry area. The 1965–69 period became the years when dialogue between the masses and AP was established (Çavdar, 2004, 152–157; Pelt, 2023, 218–223). However, it was not possible to speak of the same development in the context of worker rights and strikes.

The Second Demirel Government was formed in the 1969 general elections. The economic crisis experienced in 1971 also affected the budget. During this period, separations from Dev-Genç began. The People's Liberation Army of Türkiye (*Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Ordusu* or THKO) and the People's Liberation Party of Türkiye (*Türkiye Halk Kurtuluş Partisi* or THKP) were established. A major worker uprising took place during this period. The government tried to

restrain the Confederation of Revolutionary Workers' Unions (*Türkiye Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu* or DİSK), which was established on February 12, 1967. The political and economic vulnerabilities the country was in dragged Türkiye into a new coup with the military memorandum of March 12, 1971. After this date, the Nihat Erim Government, understood as Türkiye's first interim government, came to power (Aydın & Taşkın, 2014, 178–185, 203–220). Türkiye's problems would not end. After the elections in 1973, a coalition between the Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi* or CHP) and National Salvation Party (*Milli Selamet Partisi* or MSP), the CHP-MSP was formed. Meanwhile, Türkiye changed its foreign policy by carrying out the Cyprus Peace Operation, isolating it in the international arena. The coalition ended with the Nationalist Front Governments in 1975. Although the Nationalist Front Governments carried politics for a while after this date, subsequently, after the early elections held in 1977, a minority government was established by Bülent Ecevit. This period witnessed extremely troublesome events. From 1978, assassinations targeted university professors. The Maraş massacre and the Abdi İpekçi murder dragged the country into chaos.³ Ecevit resigned from his position and in the 1979 by-election, Süleyman Demirel established a minority government. In the 1960–80 period, industrialization gained new momentum and economic transformation from agricultural towns to industrial cities was experienced, and a new life emerged. During this period, the Tarih Resistance, in which workers occupied the Tarih cooperative factories in İzmir and clashed with security forces enforcing martial law, the assassination of former Prime Minister Nihat Erim, the rise of the Kurdish left, and the emergence of the Apocular, the militant faction organized around Abdullah Öcalan (whose nickname "Apo" gave the group its name) that would later form the core of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), all contributed to the escalating unrest of the era. Following political and social fractures and the spiral of violence the country fell into, another military coup took place on September 12, 1980 (Aydın & Taşkın, 2014, 251–289).

Against this historical and social backdrop, the present study aims to reveal how Turkish humor and caricature magazines represented mining and mine workers within the country's socio-political agenda between 1960 and 1980. Using the corpus linguistics method, it seeks to determine how frequently and in what manner labor struggles, strike movements, and government policies concerning mining were reflected in the humor press of the period. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to a broader understanding of how humor functioned as a tool of social and political critique during one of Türkiye's most turbulent eras.

3 In the Maraş Massacre of December 1978, incited by far-right nationalist groups, over a hundred people were killed, leading to martial law. In February 1979, journalist Abdi İpekçi was shot dead in Istanbul by Mehmet Ali Ağca, later known for attempting to assassinate Pope John Paul II. Together, these events dragged Turkey into chaos ahead of the 1980 coup. For further details cf. Zürcher (2004).

GOALS AND METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted on a historical corpus composed of Turkish humor magazines from the years 1960–80. These documents are OCR-scanned digital files, and problematic documents were made scannable through Abby Finereader. During the research, MAXQDA was used for the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, and concept research was conducted using data mining methodology (Fayyad & Piatetsky, 1996, 11, 27–34, 39). Minerals such as gold, copper, silver, lead, and lignite were researched, and alongside these, concepts such as coal worker, miner, and mine pit were examined. Cartoon analyses were provided through Agent Ransack's visual preview feature. In the metaphorical examination section of the research, relevant sections containing the concepts were extracted from their locations and brought together in a single file, and analysis was conducted on these fragments. In the process of obtaining the quantitative source of the research, raw data was reached by determining the number of documents and hit counts where the concept appeared using MAXQDA, Agent Ransack, and Adobe Pdf Reader software. After these data were classified, they were visualized through the Power BI program to obtain graphs. Using MAXQDA, mining-related passages were first identified and organized within the humor-magazine corpus, and within this methodological framework, MAXQDA's AI-assisted text-scanning feature was also employed for a limited purpose, verifying the frequency and co-occurrence of mining-related metaphors, such as coal, mine, and miner. This use was confined to a single exploratory step, not extending to data interpretation or manuscript writing, both carried out exclusively by the authors. The recurrence of these metaphors suggests that mining occupied a prominent place in the public agenda of the period, and the tool was preferred because it allowed efficient cross-checking of pattern recognition across material that would have been impractical to review manually, while interpretation and conclusions remained the authors' responsibility.

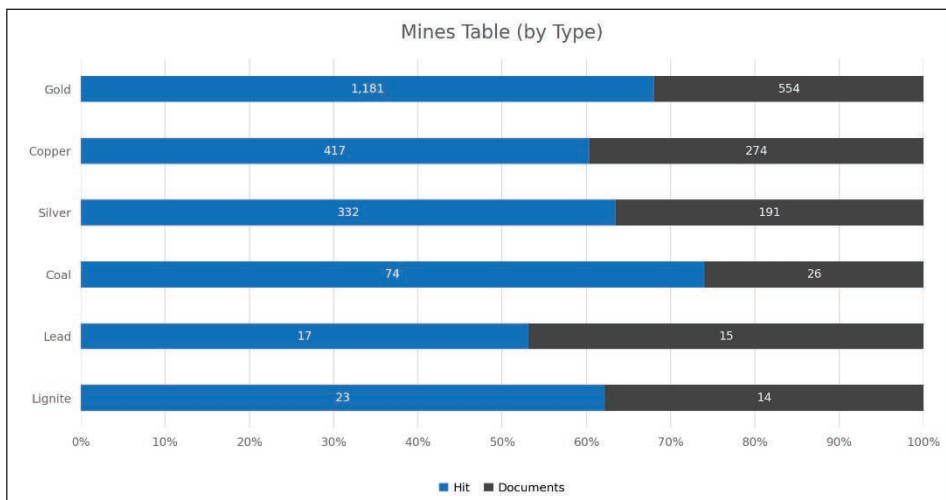
At its core, this study investigates how Turkish humor and caricature magazines reflected the socio-political agenda surrounding mining and mine workers between 1960 and 1980. Within this framework, the research first aims to quantitatively determine, through the corpus linguistics method, how frequently and intensively concepts such as mine, mining, coal, gold, silver, copper, lead, and lignite were used in the humor magazines of the period; it then aims to examine, building on this quantitative data, how mine workers' working conditions, their struggles for the right to strike, and their tense relationship with the state were represented in cartoons. Connected to this, the study also questions how debates over the nationalization and privatization of mines, along with government policies and patronage relations, were addressed with a critical tone in the humor press; and finally, it aims to reveal how everyday problems such as coal shortages, price increases, and coal queues generated class-based anxiety in the lives of the urban lower and middle classes, and how this was transformed, through humor, into a kind of "survival humor."

The 1960s in Türkiye are important in terms of unionisation of miners as in other segments of society. In this context, mine workers made a series of demands from the governments of the period in order to improve their living conditions. Sections of workers, including miners, organized strikes and protests demanding better wages, improved working conditions and job security. Political unrest and ideological divisions also played a role in shaping labor movements during this period. Changes in labor laws and restrictions on the right to strike created a confrontation between unions and governments. Relations between labor unions and the ruling authorities were strained at times. The tensions and the demands of mine workers were reflected in the humor magazines of the period such as *Avni*, *Hıbrır*, *Gırgır*, *Akbaba*, *Limon*, *Öküz*, *Çarşaf*, *Fırt* etc. When the cartoons in the magazines are analysed, the indifference or uncompromising attitude of the government towards the demands of the mine workers is heavily criticized. In addition, demands for the improvement of the living conditions of mine workers are discussed. In the study, the conflict between the government and mine workers will be conceptualised.

If humor magazines are scanned through AI, it can be observed that some metaphors are frequently used in topics such as mining and metals. The intensive use of mining and mines in daily life shows that the mining agenda of the period was all-encompassing in all aspects of life.

Chart 1 shows a distinction between the distribution of mentions of various mineral across the corpus and the intensity with which they were repeated in individual documents. Gold was mentioned most often, reflecting its use

Chart 1: Mentions of minerals in Turkish humor magazines between 1960 and 1980 and the number of documents containing each term.

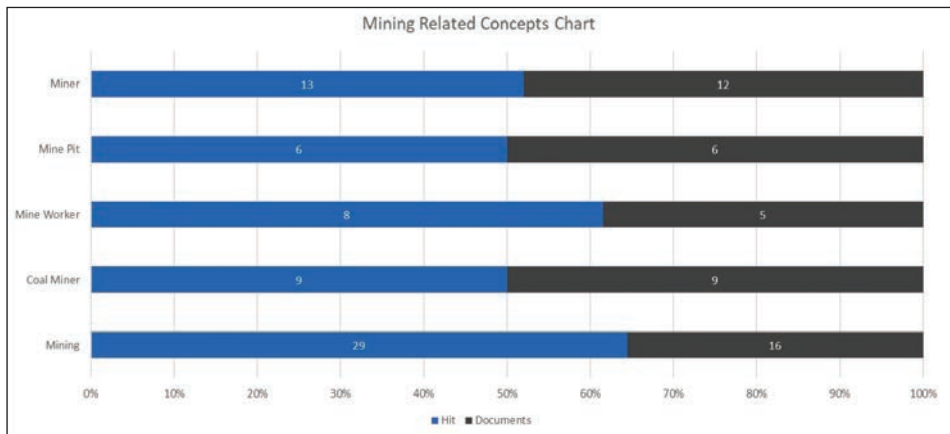


across a wide range of economic, political, and metaphorical contexts. Coal, by contrast, had the highest hit-to-document ratio. Although it was mentioned in fewer documents, it tended to recur more intensively within the documents in which it was mentioned. Copper and silver occupied an intermediate position, whereas lead and lignite remained comparatively limited in both distribution and repetition.

These differences also reflect the varying functions of various mineral in the humor press. Gold, copper, and silver could extend beyond discussions of mining because their associations with wealth, value, money, and economic gain made them particularly suitable for metaphorical and satirical use. Coal was more closely connected to energy shortages, heating, mine labor, working conditions, and the economic difficulties of everyday life. The distribution therefore points to two distinct patterns: the mentions of some minerals circulated across a broad range of figurative and political contexts, while others were concentrated within more specific discussions of energy, labor, and mining. The figures indicate the textual visibility and concentration of these terms within the corpus rather than the social or economic prevalence of the minerals themselves.

Chart 2 shows that mining-related vocabulary occupied a visible place in Turkish humor magazines between 1960 and 1980. The prominence of *mining* suggests that the subject was frequently addressed as a broader economic, political, and industrial issue, while terms such as miner, mine worker, and coal miner brought the human and labor dimensions of the sector into focus. The comparatively concentrated use of mine worker is particularly significant, as it points to sustained attention to working conditions, labor disputes, and the growing political visibility of mine laborers. By contrast, references to mining pits appear to have functioned more as contextual

Chart 2: The number of mining-related terms in Turkish humor magazines in 1960–80 and how many documents they appeared in.

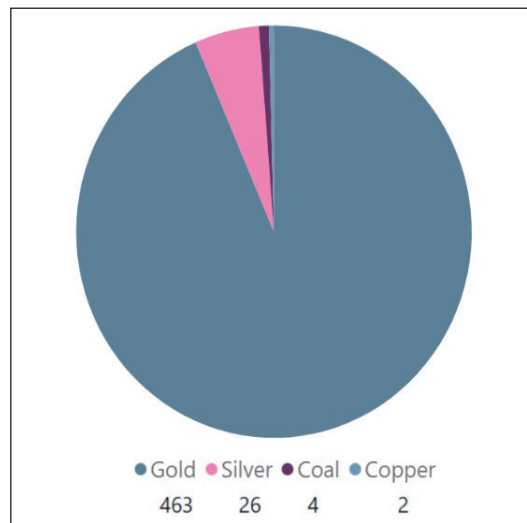


markers of the workplace itself. Overall, the distribution indicates that the humor press did not treat mining merely as an industrial activity, but also as a field shaped by labor relations, social inequality, and political conflict.

The corpus also reveals a meaningful distinction between the terms miner (*madenci*) and mine worker (*maden işçisi*). While *miner* was generally associated with a professional or occupational identity within the mining sector (Akbaba, June 11, 1964, 11; December 13, 1967, 3), *mine worker* more directly emphasized manual labor, harsh working conditions, and the physically demanding character of mining as a heavy industry (Akbaba, January 14, 1965, 8; Gırgır, February 16, 1974, 8; Çarşaf, January 18, 1978, 3). This difference suggests that the humor press used the two expressions not as exact synonyms, but to distinguish occupational status from the embodied experience of industrial labor.

A closer data check on the selected keywords reveals that their usage in cartoon magazines extended well beyond metaphorical reference; a considerable portion of these occurrences were directly shaped by the political climate of the period. Gold, for instance, was not employed merely as a conventional metaphor for wealth but was repeatedly mobilized in cartoons addressing the nationalization and, later, privatization debates of the 1960s and 1970s, appearing as a rhetorical device through which political positions on state versus private ownership of underground resources were satirized (Çarşaf, March 8, 1978, 18; Gırgır, 1980, Issue 415). Similarly, references to coal and lignite were frequently anchored in concrete political events, such as the

Chart 3: Number of metaphorical uses of gold, silver, coal, and copper in Turkish humor magazines between 1960 and 1980.



price-increase policies introduced after the 1971 memorandum, the installment-sale practices of Turkish Coal Enterprises (*Türkiye Kömür İşletmeleri* or TKİ), and the energy debates among advocates of coal, fuel oil, and hydroelectric power during the Ecevit Government (Emeç, 1978, 3), rather than functioning as free-floating figures of speech. This pattern indicates that the frequency data obtained through corpus analysis do not merely reflect the everyday or symbolic prevalence of certain minerals in the Turkish vernacular, but also trace, with considerable precision, shifts in the political agendas of successive governments regarding mining policy. In this respect, the quantitative findings should be read in conjunction with the qualitative cartoon analysis, as the two together demonstrate that lexical frequency in the humor press functioned as an indirect but consistent barometer of contemporaneous political debate on mining and energy policy.

"CAN YOU HEAR MY VOICE?" THE MINE WORKERS' ORGANIZATION AND LABOR STRUGGLES

Comic and humorous drawings, stories and poems related to mining encountered in magazines, have a widespread effect on Turkish social and political life (Cantek, 2024, 206). Moreover, their purchase and reading is effective to a considerable extent, especially on young readers (Demirkol, 2025, 53). The political and economic processes experienced in Türkiye during the 1960–80 period and the transformation that took place profoundly affected cartoons, which remained more orthodox compared to other comedy fields. When a diachronic evaluation of this effect is made, although the 1960–70 period was more stagnant, it is clearly seen that there was a renewal of cartoons in the 1970–80 period. In the 1960–80 period, when Türkiye was trying to resist internal and external stresses, the humor press also pondered over the ideological, political, economic, social, and cultural issues of the period. Although in the decade after the May 27 Coup, cartoonists and cartoons failed to break new ground and remained too much in the background to say anything new to society (Kayış, 2023, 93), the examination of humor magazines of the 1960s demonstrates some regard for the struggles of miners' rights and especially their strikes. There are important references in humor magazines regarding the strikes that mine workers tried to carry out with great difficulty. These cartoons exemplified the portrait of government-worker relations in the transforming political processes.

Thus, on April 7, 1965, in *Akbaba*, the reason for mine workers' strikes was being questioned through humor channels. It was said that the worker could not make his voice heard to anyone; that the working conditions and demands of Zonguldak mine workers⁴ were not heard by the state (*Akbaba*, April 7, 1965, 6). Moreover, the cartoon in Fig. 1, can be considered important in terms of defining strikes in Türkiye

4 This likely alludes to the March 1965 Kozlu/Gelik miners' strike in Zonguldak, in which gendarmerie forces fired on striking workers, killing two miners, following demands for equal wage bonuses and restored allowances. *Milliyet*, 13. 3. 1965: Bloody Incidents in Zonguldak, 1.



Fig.1: Reasons for the Zonguldak miners' strike are being investigated (newspapers), "Up there—I can't hear you. Shout a little louder" (Akbaba, April 7, 1965, 6).

with Mustafa Dinççağ's signature. In the drawing themed "The reasons for Zonguldak mine workers' strikes are being sought," the boss is calling out from a protected, safe position, symbolized by the weak roof above him. The line or rope he holds can be interpreted in terms of keeping the reins in his hands as much as the importance he gives to his own safety. His leaning-in to better hear the miner undoubtedly points

to lack of communication, while the deep well must point to class difference and different worlds. The miners, on the other hand, were symbolized as those who call out but whose voice does not reach above, who work and produce under any conditions (Akbaba, April 7, 1965, 6).

Already in *Akbaba*, an important humor magazine, “the bottoms of mine pits” were considered among the main fronts of poor Türkiye’s “development war” (Akbaba, March 5, 1969, 3).

The humor press criticized the government’s disregard for workers’ strike rights. In the cartoon given with the title “Our Understanding of Strikes” (*Bizde grev anlayışı*), criticism was brought to the government’s understanding of strikes in Türkiye. In the *Sülü and Süleyman* column next to the cartoon in Fig. 2, the Republican People’s Party’s concern about villagers in the Zonguldak region losing their health in mine pits, and Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel’s indifferent approach were reflected to the public (Akbaba, January 22, 1969, 3).

In *Akbaba*’s issue dated October 7, 1970, an evaluation was made regarding worker and mine worker strikes. In this evaluation, regarding the right to strike, after the observation “The word strike was like Hazrat Ali’s Zulfikar in the hands of the Democratic Party before 1950. It cut both right and left,” in the democratization tsunami that began immediately after World War II in Türkiye, Democratic Party pioneers “did not forget the promise of strikes to workers” (Akbaba, October 7, 1970). However, according to the magazine, when they came to power in 1950, they immediately forgot this; emphasizing that Bayar and Menderes did not anticipate where the matter would lead. According to the magazine, strike rights were only restored after the May 27 Coup, based on the idea that democracy could not exist without strikes, and that banning strikes while claiming Western-style democracy was contradictory. This idea was written into the Constitution. The magazine noted

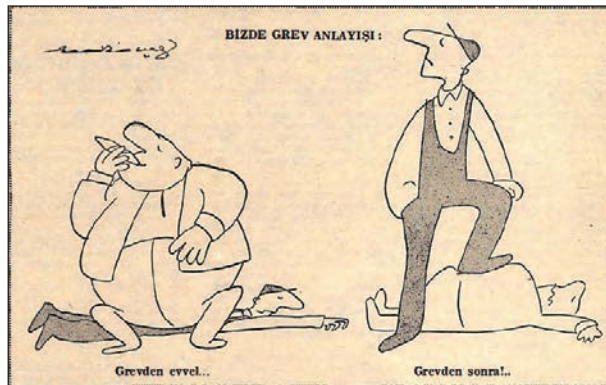


Fig.2: Our understanding of strikes: Before the strike... after the strike! louder” (Akbaba, April 7, 1965, 6).



Fig. 3: The government set up barricade after barricade to block the coal miners' march (Avni, January 12, 1991, 3).

that from then on, the country began experiencing frequent strikes across many sectors, including rubber, mining, steel, petroleum, and maritime workers, as well as groups ranging from tobacco growers to teachers, describing it with the words, “one moment you look and the mine workers [are striking], another moment you look and petroleum workers... are on strike.” The strikes were spreading to other segments of society as well, and interestingly, those who had called for the right to strike were now criticizing the workers who exercised it.

[I]f the mine worker doesn't go down into the pit, he is right in his own way: – Why doesn't the mine worker go down? – Financial hardship [...] – Hey, if these guys don't extract coal, citizens will freeze [...] – Well, aren't these citizens too? If petroleum workers strike, a fuel shortage arises... Well, what will be the end of this? As each person goes on strike, they will find themselves right... and as each person falls into hardship because of strikes, they will get angry at the strikers. (Akbaba, October 7, 1970, 3)⁵

5 *Maden işçisi madene inmedi mi, kendine göre haklı: – Neden inmiyor maden işçisi? – Geçim sıkıntısı. – Yahu, bu herifler kömür çıkarmazsa vatandaş donacak. – Peki, bunlar vatandaş değil mi? Petrol işçileri grev yaparsa akaryakıt sıkıntısı doğar, rıhtım işçileri grev yaparsa piyasa daralır, fırın işçileri grev yaparsa şehir ekmeksiz kalır... Peki, ne olacak bunun sonu? Herbir kişi kendisi grev yaptıkça, kendini haklı bulacak. ve herbir kişi grevler yüzünden sıkıntıya düştükçe, grevcilere yüklenecek. (Akbaba, October 7, 1970, 3)*



Fig. 4: Cartoon published in Akbaba, November 23, 1966.



Fig. 5: “Look, son, this is Turkey... Do you think we can find an empty chimney opening for the minister to crawl through?” (Akbaba, December 23, 1966, 1).

In humor magazines, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, coal sales were defined both as popular and profitable professions (Saygel, 1968a, 4; İzgü, 1969a, 4) and among tradesmen who made credit sales like grocers and butchers (Akbaba, January 14, 1970, 3). In contrast, in the late 1980s, *Hıbr*’s supplement *Reflex* would write that miners described themselves as “those who wander in the dim” (*Reflex*, August 31, 1989, 3).

In the late 1970s, *Çarşaf* approached mine workers’ retirement through from both government and patronage perspectives. The magazine, which reflected Demirel’s populist rhetoric in its columns as in the example of the opening of Oymapınar Dam (Es, 1977, 17), would not hesitate to subsequently voice that the new Ecevit Government was pursuing somewhat populist policies towards young people. It addressed such rhetoric with the sentences

Government programs are a chain of promises: promises with cek and cak⁶ [...] But how many of these sit cuk properly; time will show that too [...] Since prob-

6 The suffixes “cek” and “cak” refer to the suffixes that come to verbs in the future tense in Turkish.

*ability is probably today's problem, in the young Ecevit Government's program too, ceks and caks are directed more towards young people. The elderly may not get any fresh air. (Es, 1977, 17)*⁷

Alongside the claim that the government would not take a step regarding retirement age, examples from developed countries were provided. Efforts to lower the retirement age limit below sixty, reducing working days to four, and working thirty-five hours per week.

Against such a backdrop, the mine worker was defined with the words:

*[F]or a mine worker, working is consuming life... Making life miserable, being buried while alive... Helpless; he looks to escape this yoke as soon as possible, to break the shackles: By throwing himself into the embrace of retirement. (Çarşaf, March 23, 1977, 17)*⁸

On the other hand, Çarşaf did not refrain from the comparison “for some, working is a guarantee of staying alive longer. A painter, a writer; an artist doesn't even concern himself with the concept of retirement.”

This critical approach was completed with the sentences “some can manage this... It is also the state's duty to guide those who cannot. Here is a fundamental point that was never mentioned in Ecevit's government program” (Emeç, 1978, 3).

In the first months of 1980, a meaningful announcement regarding mine workers' rights struggles was published in *Gırgır*. The announcement was about the exhibition opened by Ümit Kartoğlu and Ohannes Şaşkal both cartoonists at Ankara Contemporary Stage Cultural Center in memory of Cartoonist Burhan Solukçu, who died in 1978.

*Burhan Solukçu had become ill while working as an electrician in the mines. His death was also due to this reason. The exhibition therefore addresses the problems of coal workers. The exhibition will be repeated at Istanbul Cinematheque Association between February 16–28. (Gırgır, February 3, 1980, 4)*⁹

7 Hükümet programları, bir vaatler zinciridir: “Cek”li, “cak”lı vaatler ... Ama bunlardan kaç “cuk” oturur; onu da, zaman gösterir [...] İhtimal günümüzün sorunu olduğu için, genç Ecevit hükümetinin programında da “cek”ler, “cak”lar daha çok gençlere yöneliyor. Yaşlılar, belki hava almayacaklar. (Çarşaf, March 23, 1977, 17)

8 [B]ir maden işçisi için çalışmak, ömür tüketmektir. Hayatı piç etmek, yaşarken gömülmektir [...] Çaresiz; bir an önce bu boyunduruktan sıyrılmaya, prangayı kırmaya bakar: Kendini emekliliğin kucağına atarak. (Çarşaf, January 18, 1978, 3)

9 Burhan Solukçu madenlerde elektrikçilik yaparken hastalanmıştı. Ölümü de bu nedenle olmuştu. Sergi bu nedenle kömür işçilerinin sorunlarını işliyor. Sergi İstanbul Sinematek Derneğinde 16–28 Şubat günleri arasında tekrarlanacak (Gırgır, February 3, 1980, 4).

The completed announcement reminded of the insecurity of Solukçu's life, who could not receive compensation because his illness was not recognized as an occupational disease (Coşgun, 2025). About ten years before Solukçu's death, *Akbaba* magazine pointed to the contradictions surrounding mining policy, attributing them to government decisions and patronage relations. Around the same time, it reported on the CHP's concern that villagers in the Zonguldak region were losing their health working in the mine pits. The magazine also portrayed Süleyman Demirel, nicknamed Sülü, who hailed from İslamköy in Isparta, as growing increasingly distant from the people (*Akbaba*, January 22, 1969, 3).

In *Akbaba*, it was also criticized that mining pit accidents did not produce the expected reaction in society:

*Oyyy uncle... Journalist friends are going to the mining pit accident. In the evening, workers' relatives come to them, they sing a kind of lament: "Oyyy uncle" they say mournfully... Our journalist friend Fikret Otyam, curious about every sound, records this "Oyyy uncle" on tape. And after the men leave, he makes his friends listen to it until morning. ...we have a dear friend. He was complaining bitterly: "Because of one oyyy uncle, he kept us sleepless all night!" Lucky Fikret Otyam... He can keep everyone sleepless, while we groan "Oyyy uncle" all our lives and it doesn't affect anyone's slumber in society one bit! (*Akbaba*, April 21, 1965, 9)¹⁰*

In the mid-1970s, it was humorously voiced in *Çarşaf* that collapsing mining pits had experts, without going into detail (*Çarşaf*, April 7, 1976, 5); it must have been clear to the intended public. In subsequent years, criticisms that Türkiye ranked first in the numbers of dead due to mining (and construction) collapses came to the forefront. *Gırgır* was undoubtedly one of the magazines that most addressed and brought to its drawings topics such as mine workers' problems, working conditions, illnesses and death (*Gırgır*, June 28, 1981, 2; October 18, 1981, 2; April 25, 1982, 2; April 1, 1983, 3; December 18, 1983, 2; June 10, 1984, 2; Limon, September 4, 1986, 4; *Çarşaf*, March 12, 1992, 8). Additionally, miners' marches and strikes would also become subjects for humor magazines (*Hıbrır*, January 10, 1991, 1)¹¹.

10 *Oyyy emece (amca) ...Gazeteci arkadaşlar, maden ocağı kazasına gidiyorlar. Akşam, işçilerin akrabaları geliyor yanlarına, bir cins ağıt yakıyorlar: – "Oyyy emece" diye yanık yanık ... Gazeteci arkadaşımız Fikret Otyam, her sese meraklı, bu "Oyyy emece" yi banda alıyor. Ve adamlar gittikten sonra arkadaşlarına sabaha kadar dinletiyor. [...] şirin bir arkadaşımız var. Yana yakıla şikayet ediyordu: – "Bir oyyy emece yüzünden bizi bütün gece uykusuz bıraktı!" Mutlu Fikret Otyam... Elâlemi uykusuz bırakabiliyor, biz bütün ömrümüzce: "OYYY emece" ler inliyoruz da toplumca kimsenin mişıltsısını etkilemiyor zerre kadar! (*Akbaba*, April 21, 1965, 9)*

11 The magazine had published bank account numbers on the second page for those who wished to stand in solidarity with the miners (*Avni*, January 12, 1991, 7).



Fig. 6: “The other hand is injured, should we make him rest?” (Girir, June 10, 1984).



Fig. 7: These miners have the ability to press on under extraordinarily difficult conditions, undeterred by rain, mud, or roadblocks (Hibir, January, 10, 1991).

NATIONALIZATION

In the spring of 1965, *Akbaba* asserted that Turkish youth was joining the struggle for the nationalization of mining and petroleum resources and that the nation was in a state of awakening everywhere. It articulated this movement with the verses from Namık Kemal’s *Vatan Türküsü* (Homeland Song): “Below is one, above is one, of your land... Rise up, brave ones, to the aid of the homeland!” According to the magazine, “Those who only possess the surface of a country can no longer possess that country. Nations cannot rise unless they also claim ownership of the country’s underground riches” (*Akbaba*, May 26, 1965, 8).

Akbaba, during a period when Demirel was first emerging on the political scene, wrote that “A politician of ours who is new to the political market” opposed the nationalization of petroleum by defending the positions of foreign companies with the justification “We cannot usurp rights given by law.” The magazine’s analysis was: “What kind of business is this! The country is our country, the petroleum is our petroleum, the mines are our mines... Whose property are we usurping from whom? Oh Atatürk’s Türkiye... Would you come to this state?” (*Akbaba*, June 9, 1965, 8). The magazine would define the AP as anti-nationalization a few years later (*Akbaba*, July 24, 1968, 3).

In the late 1960s, *Akbaba* again was addressing the contradiction “Ecevit says we will nationalize our underground and surface wealth... Demirel says let foreign companies operate our mines” (*Akbaba*, May 7, 1969, 3). References to mines were generally embedded in debates over nationalization and the rise of anti-Americanism during the 1960s and 1970s. In these discussions, underground resources were represented as national assets that should be protected from foreign control and mobilized through domestic capital to support economic independence and development (Gürpınar & Kurt, 2026, 28–30; Çarşaf, March 8, 1978, 17). This ideological context helps explain why, under the center-right governments led by Demirel, the nationalization of mines was increasingly framed by left-Kemalist and “Third-Worldist” circles (inspired by contemporaneous anti-colonial movements) as part of a broader struggle against Western imperialism and economic dependency (Gürpınar & Kurt, 2026, 28–30). *Akbaba* also noted, under the title “Endless Demands,” that mining engineers were awaiting the enactment of a fully national Mining Law Draft (*Akbaba*, April 2, 1969, 6). Thus, criticism of Türkiye’s mining and petroleum policies increasingly converged around the language of nationalization and state ownership, a discourse that remained visible into the late 1970s, when Çarşaf announced that the mines would be nationalized (Çarşaf, March 8, 1978, 18).

In the spring of 1971, as the 32nd Government gave way to the 33rd Government, Nihat Erim assumed the prime ministry in place of Süleyman Demirel. *Akbaba* followed with bringing to its agenda the views that the traditional spring cleaning in Turkish neighborhoods would be reflected in politics. In this context, the new government’s discourse that underground wealth would be managed with a national policy was also carried to the magazine’s pages (*Akbaba*, April 28, 1971, 3).



Fig. 8: Mines will be nationalized. "I'm glad I got my mother-in-law to put gold teeth in her mouth... They nationalized it!" (Çarşaf, March 8, 1978, 18).

Nationalization debates continued in the 1970s (Çarşaf, March 8, 1978, 17); in the 1980s, they gave way to the privatization of mines (Gırgır, July 20, 1980, 3; December 2, 1984, 1; February 23, 1985, 3).

On the other hand, concerns about the sustainability of mining in Türkiye also found a place in *Akbaba*. In this context, a statement from the Chamber of Mining Engineers, which was also related to superstructure and planning, drew attention in the magazine, because the chamber had announced that iron reserves would be depleted in 1990. The magazine's commentary is meaningful in that it contains an ambitious analysis regarding Türkiye:

Since everything of ours is tightly connected to each other, it's not difficult to guess the rest. Once we finish the iron, we'll start taking care of the others. We'll finish our coal reserves, finish copper, finish lead, finish tin, petroleum, we'll close shop before reaching the year 2000! We couldn't transition from consuming to producing so that our backs could straighten. (Akbaba, August 20, 1969, 10–11)¹²

¹² Her şeyimiz birbirine sıkı sıkıya bağlı olduğu için gerisini tahmin güç değil. Bir kere demiri bitirdik mi, başlarız diğerlerinin icabına bakmaya. Kömür rezervimizi bitiririz, bakırı bitiririz, kurşunu bitiririz, kalayı, petrolü bitiririz, 2000 yılına varmadan kepengi indiririz! Tüketmekten üretmeye geçemedik ki belimiz doğrulsun. (Akbaba, August 20, 1969, 10–11)



Fig. 9: “Stop yelling, idiot. How can you not get your gold tooth pulled? All the mines have been privatized. Don’t you know?” (Girgir, 1980, Issue 415).



Fig. 10: It is said that the mines will be transferred to the private sector. “He had a gold tooth in his mouth” (Girgir, July 19, 1981).

Undoubtedly, even though it’s in a humor magazine, the commentary is of vital nature. In *Akbaba*, focusing on consumption rather than production regarding mines was a subject of criticism.

PATRONAGE RELATIONS

When viewed in terms of government approach, patronage relations and sustainability, an important evaluation of the magazine was:

Will we never see our two sides come together, dear? Once we had scholars, we didn’t have a nuclear reactor. Now we have a reactor, but no people. Isn’t the situation the same in other matters? We have workers but no work areas. We have mines but no people to operate them. (*Akbaba*, June 4, 1969, 9)¹³

It is not surprising to encounter discourses in *Akbaba*, especially by Vedat Saygel, that mining in Türkiye was shaped unplanned and according to chance factors (*Akbaba*, November 22, 1967, 14; Saygel, 1967a, 20–21). An interesting and sarcastic example of this in terms of government policies and private sector strategies was presented to the public again by Saygel through coal; he linked the scarcity and problems related to coal to a newspaper vendor boy (*Akbaba*, September 20, 1967, 12). An interesting example of the claim that randomness was valid for mining in Türkiye in terms of government or political order finds its counterpart in *Akbaba* again in late 1968. The humor magazine, questioning what profession party leaders could do if they started life again, asserted that it was “clear that they have not touched” mining that they had never shown interest in it until that date. This wording contained serious criticism of mining policy at the state and political level, because it emphasized that administrators did not have the depth and managerial skill to operate underground resources found in the country, and evaluated the inoperation of mines as incompetence (*Akbaba*, December 11, 1968, 9).

Akbaba’s issues of January 14, 1965, and September 25, 1968, took up the theme of miner migration, framing it as a matter that had been approached with official indifference and a lack of planning. In the January 14 issue, an elementary school principal was reported to have left for Germany to work as a miner, explaining, “If we manage to put meat on our table twice a month, that month we count ourselves a happy family,” and adding, “So that my children and I might live like human beings”. What this implied for Türkiye’s future was left largely unstated, conveyed in a tone that was subtle but unmistakably pointed (*Akbaba*,

13 *İki yakamızın bir araya geldiğini hiç görmeyecek miyiz kuzum? Bir zamanlar ilim adamlarımız vardı, atom reaktörümüz yoktu. Şimdi reaktör var, adam yok. Diğer konularda da aynı değil mi durum? İşçimiz vardır iş alanımız yoktur. Madenlerimiz vardır, işletecek adamlarımız yoktur.* (*Akbaba*, June 4, 1969, 9)

January 14, 1965, 8). In the autumn issues of 1968, miners' migration to Australia was mentioned (Akbaba, September 25, 1968, 9) and justified as: "With its iron, coal; rivers, mountains, forests; copper, chrome, tobacco, cotton and many other riches, it's as if we dried up the whole of Anatolia. We can't survive unless we send our people to foreign lands" (Akbaba, October 23, 1968, 3).

Coal would frequently be evaluated from the 1960s among price-increases due to economic conditions, as one of the products whose expensiveness was prominent, and for which people did not believe would become cheaper even when they did (Akbaba, June 7, 1967, 10–11; November 22, 1967, 14; August 20, 1969, 8; January 14, 1970, 3; 1970, 4–5; İzgü, 1970, 4; Saygel, 1971, 6). In humor magazines, price increases of mining products, especially coal, were among the main subjects of criticism in relation to the government, and this subject was addressed in quite different and creative ways. In the last days of 1967, following Aziz Nesin's article under the title "It Always Happens Like This," *Akbaba*, published the verses "Wood prices have been frozen. It always happens like this when entering winter. In October, wood prices freeze. In November, coal prices freeze. In December, the country's children who can't find fuel freeze!" (Akbaba, December 6, 1967, 9). In the summer of 1968, when the heat intensified, it was announced that the prices of coke coal, lignite, and other heating fuels had been frozen, thereby offering the public a measure of relief. Immediately afterward, however, the cost of such measures was conveyed in a mocking tone through the words, "The nation freezes from December to March!" In doing so, the passage also completed the chain linking administration, product, and people, laying bare the gap between the government's seasonal measures and the public's actual needs (Akbaba, August 7, 1968, 9).

In the summer of 1970, *Akbaba* reported that prices were raised on iron, copper (Akbaba, June 24, 1970, 3), coke coal and lignite, and also brought up news on price increases and categorized their number along with other negative news as "poison-bitter news" (Akbaba, August 19, 1970, 3). Similar criticism would also adorn the columns of the humor magazine in early autumn (Akbaba, September 9, 1970, 4). By the early 1970s, the fact that TKİ were selling coal at high prices, and had consequently turned to installment sales, had already become a prominent subject of humor (Akbaba, September 1, 1971, 10).

Similarly, while the transformation from the 32nd Government to the 33rd Government was being experienced in the spring of 1971, at the same time *Akbaba* had brought the wave of price increases to its agenda; it depicted this on the cover page as "Price-Increase Emperor Attila!" While Attila stood on top of a pile of price increase rocks with a price increase flag in his hand, the coal price increase was positioned as the rock at the top of the pile. Below, transportation and electricity price increases related to coal were in notable ranks (Akbaba, April 28, 1971, 1).

According to *Akbaba*’s narrative, during the summer months, the cost of living was gradually increasing due to the chaos and mismanagement the country had experienced in the recent past. In this environment, the Erim Government that came after the March 12 Memorandum had reduced the chaos but could not prevent the high cost of living. Moreover, a price increase in petroleum was expected. Additionally, mismanagement and increasing price hikes were also stemming from waste, especially wasting bread. The magazine’s analysis in the following sentences is striking:

Our lignites could very well bring us all to warm winters with the central heating system, which is an invention of today’s technology, but where is that effort [endeavor/result]? If we could have succeeded in that job once, would there have been any need for us to make another price increase on coke coal? [...] It seems science has not yet overcome the antiquated bureaucratic mentality in Türkiye. As long as it cannot overcome it, price increases are the only way out. (Akbaba, June 30, 1971, 3)¹⁴

In the late 1970s, *Çarşaf* addressed the impact of visually based education in a distinctly ironic tone. That coal was foregrounded in this example, given Turkish Radio and Television Cooperation’s (*Türkiye Radyo Televizyon Kurumu* or TRT) status as a state institution, pointed unmistakably to the administration’s broader approach. Indeed, the magazine published a probably fictional scenario after an interested party’s statement: “TRT officials decided to reorganize television programs. In the new implementation that will come into effect in the coming days, some foreign series will be removed from broadcast, priority will be given to productions emphasizing mass education.” The writing was both ironic and sarcastic:

What’s important here is that television viewers ignore current events and see some values they have forgotten the name, taste and definition of on screen again. For example, what is coke coal, how did it burn, by whom was it discovered? [...] Then suddenly, how did it disappear from the market? [...] Our programs will include these and similar topics, our people will drift into sweet, sweet dreams! (Çarşaf, November 15, 1978, 4)¹⁵

The subject of indirect criticism in these sentences was coal shortage. However, coal shortage was reflected in humor magazine columns as the main problem. Coal

- 14 *Linyitlerimiz, günümüz teknolojisinin bir buluşu olan merkezi teshin [ısıtma] sistemiyle hepimizi sıcak kışlara pekala kavuşturabilir ama nerede o himmet [çaba/sonuç]? Başarabilseydik bir kez o işi, hiç lüzum kalır mıydı kok kömürüne bir zam daha yapmamıza?... Galiba bilim yenemedi daha Türkiye’deki köhne kırtasiyecî kafasını. Yenemediği sürece zam, tek çıkar kapısıdır. (Akbaba, June 30, 1971, 3)*
- 15 *Burada önemli olan, televizyon seyircisinin güncel olaylara boş vermesi, adını tadını tanımını unuttuğu bazı değerleri, ekranda yeniden görmesidir. Örneğin, kok kömürü nedir, nasıl yanardı, kimin tarafından bulunmuştu? ... Sonra ansızın, piyasadan nasıl yok olmuştu? ... Programlarımızda bu ve buna benzer konular yer alacak, halkımız tatlı, tatlı hayallere dalacak!.. (Çarşaf, November 15, 1978, 4)*

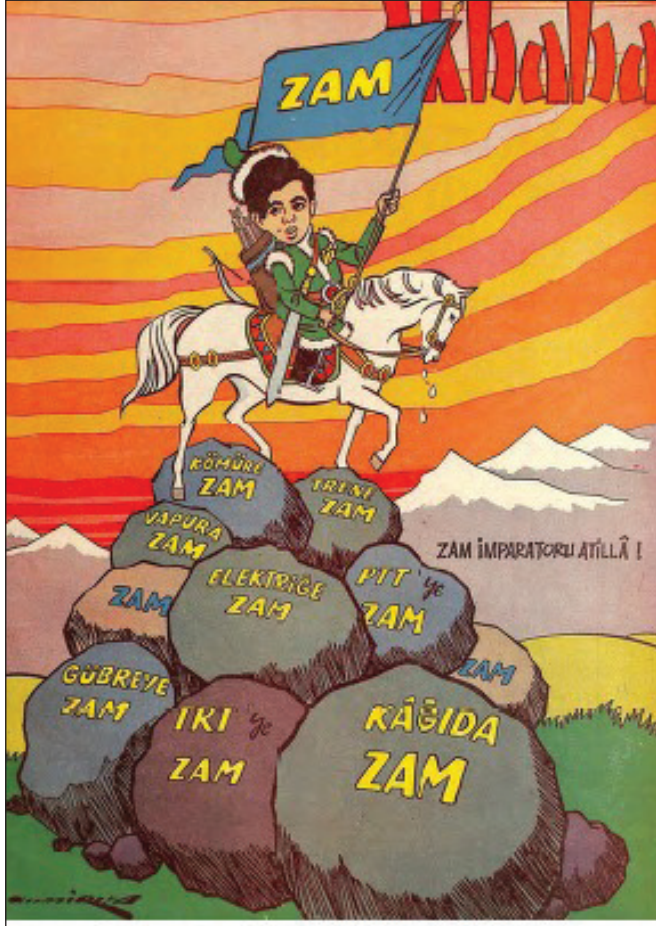


Fig. 11: Attila, the Price Hike Emperor (Akbaba, April 28, 1971, 1).

queues¹⁶ had already been occupying humor magazines' columns since the mid-1960s (Akbaba, February 6, 1964, 6). Vedat Saygel, under the title "Learning Has No Age Limit," included the fictional actor Earl de Fasarya's statement that "the scholars of the future will grow up in minibus, coal and meat queues" and turned people's communication and sharing in queues into a subject of humor (Saygel, 1978, 14–15).

In the second half of the 1970s, Türkiye's political scene was witnessing the struggle between Bülent Ecevit and Süleyman Demirel, and therefore the efforts of the country's right and left currents to come to power. In humor magazines,

16 Two of the article's authors remember spending a considerable part of their childhood in such queues.

caricatures of politicians ranked mines among the main criteria of national wealth. Çarşaf's June 9, 1976, issue, responded to Ecevit's statement that Demirel was playing with fire with: "We found fire, now we need to play! God willing, when we open the great lignite mines for operation in 1998, as a nation we will all play with fire and with whatever we want together," which was an example of evaluating mines as an indicator of wealth (Çarşaf, June 9, 1976, 3). Çarşaf magazine reminded that Süleyman Demirel promised future and wealth with the words "the mine is under this mountain" during the opening of Oymapınar Dam (Es, 1977, 17).

In Çarşaf, Çetin Altan addressed contradictory discourses within a humorous framework; alongside negativities such as the continuous increase in inflation and import-export difference, peasants' sweat going into intermediaries' pockets, he placed the discourse "We are making the mines under the mountains operational. Base prices raised to an unprecedented level have made producers smile. We will realize the welfare state" (Altan, 1977, 16).

As the country started to enter the last quarter of the 1970s, Çetin Emeç would write one of the periodic analyses in Çarşaf magazine on energy sources such as coal and lignite. It can even be said that through this perspective, he created a perspective on the political life of the 1970s. Focusing on electricity problems and outages in residences, Emeç recorded that Türkiye was being dragged into an energy deficit abyss. The author first made the assessment "Türkiye has long been pushed into sick-man status among the conflicts between the thesis and antithesis of poison-antidote." In this context, he noted that first there were discussions between import-dependent fuel source (oil) that could be reached easily and quickly versus domestic lignite that would go slower but heavier, then discussions on coal started just when the final decision was about to be made, followed by discussions on water power.

Emeç resorted to the following sentences to reflect on this development:

According to the lignite supporter, the fuel oil supporter was dependent on the outside, had been sold out. According to the fuel oil supporter, the lignite supporter, the coal supporter was a dreamer and unaware of technology. What was said about the water supporter was perhaps a thousand times worse than the others. Among all these rooster voices, it was clear that morning would not come. Indeed, it didn't. (Emeç, 1978, 3)¹⁷

He drove in his final point:

Now, this bickering, this struggle has been going on for exactly ten years. Those who haven't struck a single match on energy issues in ten years have brought our Türkiye,

17 Linyitçiye göre, fuel oll'cu dışa bağımlıydı, satılmıştı. Fuel oll'cuya göre; linyitçi, kömürcü hayalperestti ve teknikten habersizdi. Su'cu için söylenenler ise, ötekilerden belki bin beterdi. Bunca horoz sesi arasında da, sabahın olmayacağı belliydi. Nitekim, olmadı da. (Çarşaf, December 6, 1978, 3)

which is rich below and above its soil, to a position of begging in energy issues as well. And to whom, can you imagine? (Emeç, 1978, 3)¹⁸

Emeç's assessments were meaningful in terms of energy dependency and also shed light on the polarization in the country from a different perspective.

Çarşaf, in the last days of 1978, reinforced the claim that the Ecevit government approached young people with populist policies and pursued promises with *cek* and *cak* endings. According to the magazine, while price increases were made on many products, with the implementation of the fourth Five-Year Plan, the Government turned to propaganda: "God will give us whatever we desire... our troubles will end in two years... We will stand heroically against anarchy. A mint will be established on every street" (Çarşaf, December 13, 1978, 5). Çarşaf voiced the ministers' solution proposals toward achieving this dream. Finance Minister Ziya Müezzinoğlu's concretized the solution: "as soon as we grab our pickaxe and shovel, we will sweep the homeland from end to end, we will search for gold and silver" (Çarşaf, December 13, 1978, 5). By 1980, the Finance Minister's solution would even become the subject of sports cartoons (Firt, November 25, 1980, 8).

COAL AS A SOCIAL ISSUE AND CLASS ANXIETY IN DAILY LIFE

In the 1960–80 period, humor press, politics, and urban middle-class problems gained wider acceptance as Türkiye's urban population was rapidly increasing (Gelekçi, 2015, 589), but production was not progressing at the same pace. The deterioration in income distribution and the increase in open and hidden unemployment caused the living conditions of broad social segments to weaken. The inability to direct rapid changes in social structure and unplanned urbanization produced results that would shake social security. Sharp class differences had emerged. The political instability and economic crises deeply affected the broader public. In this context, one of the most important problems for the lower and middle classes in Türkiye became heating coal, from its supply to its variable pricing. This issue was also one of the important materials of the humor press. Humorous stories carried the troubles of a fictional but believable Turkish middle class, urban worker segment, civil servant and shopkeeper families to their lines. For example, *Akbaba* was one of the humor magazines that most voiced the reflections of coal need on social life. Vedat Saygel and Aziz Nesin frequently wrote about the negative effects of coal supply and coal price variability on families and social life.

Essentially, the household use of coal and lignite became widespread after 1933. The preparation of industrial development plans and Etibank's effective work on coal, iron and copper operations had expanded the use of coal and lignite

18 Şimdi, *tam on yıldır sürüp gider bu didişme, bu çekişme. On yılda, enerji konusunda tek kibritle çıkmayanlar, toprağının altı, üstünden zengin olan Türkiye'mizi, enerji konusunda da ele, güne avuç açar duruma getirmişlerdir. Hem de, düşünabiliyor musunuz kimlere?* (Emeç, 1978, 3)

as home heating fuel (Ünlü Soylu & Yaktı, 2012, 374). However, population and urbanization growth increased this need and coal queues formed in cities. This situation exacerbated the market price of coal. The difficulties experienced in coal supply and price increases caused the formation of new beliefs and mottos related to coal in society. For example, in a humorous story written by Aziz Nesin, Turkish families were advised to buy little coal so that winter would not last long. Because when too much coal was bought, it was believed that winter would last long. Even when describing the protagonist in the related story, who would grow furious if too much coal was purchased for the building’s central heating as early as summer since a larger coal supply meant the heating would operate longer and thus prolong the winter itself (Nesin, 1967, 4).

Based on the above example, the issue of coal was regarded as one of the most important anxieties of cities and the urban middle class in the 1960s. This problem recurred in two ways. Coal was hard to find, it was a quite expensive, and subject to a variable pricing system. Families had difficulty buying and finding coal, and when they bought it, they also had great difficulty paying coal installments. This problem was voiced in cartoon magazines both through humorous stories and humorous poems. In this context, in the *Akbaba* December 6, 1967, issue, a humorous poem about coal price and supply was written in Aziz Nesin’s column. In the poem titled “It Always Happens Like This,” the problem of not being able to find fuel and coal was criticized with humorous discourse, suggesting that the country’s children froze due to lack of fuel in winter (*Akbaba*, December 6, 1968, 9).

Similar criticism modes were encountered in a humorous dialogue given in Vedat Saygel’s column titled “Aksaray’s Phones Escaped,” where he voiced coal and fuel shortage. According to this, when winter comes, the citizen takes pen and paper and puts possibilities on paper just like having dreams of wealth. He wrote that the citizen dreams of coal in summer, his dreams are made about finding new coal beds. In this fictional but highly credible criticism, finding coal was left to hope: “if miners found a new coal vein, if this vein was very rich, if each mine’s daily capacity found so many tons... Yes yes, next winter there will be no coal shortage! Our bread is hope, our food is estimation, you understand” (Saygel, 1967a, 20). Dreams of getting rich in Türkiye had turned into dreams of finding coal. The possibility of getting rich was more likely than the possibility of finding coal. People’s dreams of accessing coal were also being exploited by politicians. During election campaign periods, election promises including the ideal of “reaching the welfare state” by operating mines were criticized by the humor press (Altan, 1977, 16).

Although citizens dreamed of coal and related election propaganda deepened, there were criticisms in the humor press that administrators did not understand mining. For example, in an article in *Akbaba*’s column called “7 Days,” after the new US president Nixon said “If I started life again, I would become a pianist,” the magazine criticized the politicians’ incompetence in

state administration with a guess of what job Türkiye's party leaders would choose if they started life again:

If we said they would choose trade, it's clear from the country's commercial situation that they couldn't handle it. If we said they would choose law, the decisions they make are returned from the Court of Cassation and Council of State. Even if we were to say that they would choose mining, this is clearly disproven by the fact that they have never touched the underground resources in which they have shown no interest whatsoever. (Akbaba, December 11, 1968, 9)¹⁹

The article emphasized that administrators lacked the in-depth knowledge and capability required to coordinate the operation of the mines, and attributed both the resulting failure to operate them and the hardships this caused citizens to their own incompetence. The need for minerals and coal to meet society's daily needs had frequently appeared in magazines and almost become part of "survival humor." Politics and politicians who could not respond to society's demands and basic needs, the privileged bosses, were filling the yellow pages of humor. The humor press satirized difficulties in coal supply and class through access to coal. This provides us with more evidence about the relationship between class origins and humor. In this context, while coal producers were among the wealthy segments of society, those who could not supply coal constituted the urban middle class. The humor press creates typologies that long for coal. Among the snobbish dreams of the urban middle and lower classes for the future, there are dreams of "coal they can burn abundantly" rather than monetary wealth.

Türkiye's new happiness was accessing coal it could burn in abundance. In this context, news of mineral extraction that would ease Türkiye's consumption was given as great happiness in cartoon magazines. In the August 16, 1967, issue of Akbaba, Reşit Aşçıoğlu's "England Notes" column, titled "Coolness from Lignite," referred to a news item in Istanbul newspapers: "The headline said that lignite was extracted in Elbistan. Oh my God, I would never have guessed that the word lignite would blow such a cool breeze on my face on these hot summer days" (Aşçıoğlu, 1967, 9).

As coal had become a chronic problem of the urban poor and middle class, readers' complaints and negative feelings about coal supply and prices were relieved through cartoons, ensuring that society was freed from its neuroses to some extent. Coal was among the most important expenses in family budgets, and this situation was reflected in cartoons as well (Akbaba, August 24, 1966, 4).

19 *Ticaret seçerlerdi desek kıvıramayacakları memleketin ticari durumundan belli. Hukuku seçerlerdi desek aldıkları kararlar Yargıtay'dan Danıştay'dan dönüyor, Madenciliği seçerlerdi desek hiç ilgi duymadıkları yer altı kaynaklarına şimdiye dek el sürmemelerinden belli oluyor. (Akbaba, December 11, 1968, 9)*

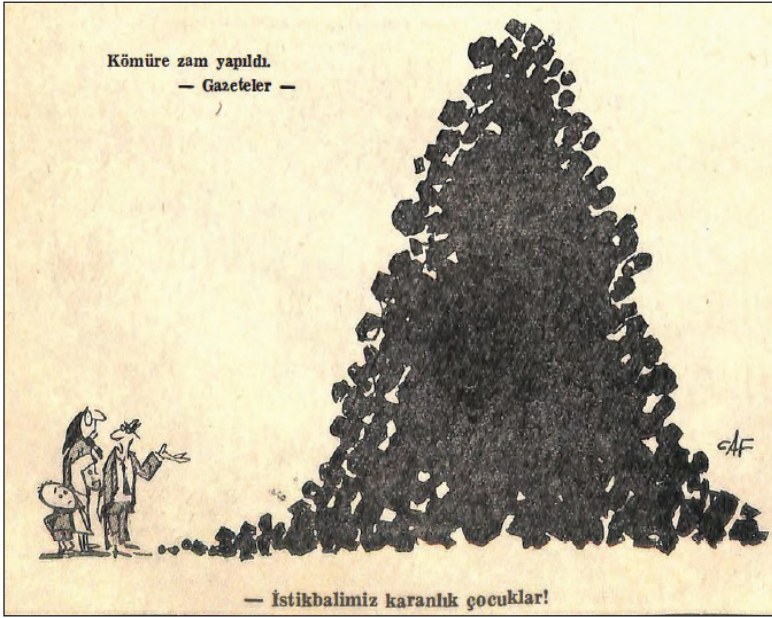


Fig. 12: Newspapers: Coal has gone up. “Our future is dark, children!” (Akbaba, August 24, 1968, 4).

Coal price increases could reach the point of darkening families’ futures. For a society accustomed to expensive coal, it becoming cheaper was described almost as a miracle. In this context, the following verses appeared in a humorous poem titled “Who Would Believe?” in an issue of *Akbaba*:

*Rice and bulgur in pantries,
If we said they exist, who would believe it?
Cheap coal at the coal dealer’s,
If we said it exists, who would believe it?* (Akbaba, June 7, 1967, 10)²⁰

People’s suffering due to expensive coal was conveyed through some interesting cartoons (Mim Uykusuz, January 15, 1969, 11). In the one by Mim Uykusuz, there were two different political propositions. Essentially, while the cartoon mentioned that a kilogram of coal cost 210 lira, at the same time, to emphasize that Turkish money had also lost its value, money was being thrown into the stove to try to keep warm. When the lady of the house saw the money burning in the stove and started

²⁰ *Kilerlerde pirinç, bulgur Vardır desek kim inanır? Kömürçüde ucuz kömür Vardır desek kim inanır.* (Akbaba, June 7, 1967, 10)

screaming in panic, the man of the house stated that he had calculated this type of heating and that this was the most profitable option.

Society's difficulties in accessing coal continued in the 1970s. In 1971, short-term coalition governments and political instability had caused high inflation. There were serious price hikes in essential consumer goods. The high inflation and increasing prices experienced in the country, especially of coal and lignite, were among the criticism materials of cartoon magazines. Under the title "Price Increase Fury," *Akbaba* also criticized the price of lignite and the technology used to extract it. While it was explained that after the March 12 Memorandum, the chaos had partially subsided, price hikes continued. Critique was voiced that if the energy from lignite coal was extracted with the central heating system, which was the technology of the day, people could have warm winters, but because this was unsuccessful, price increases were made on coke coal (*Akbaba*, June 30, 1971, 3). In this way, the growing fuel problem of the urban middle class was criticized through humorous modes.

It is possible to multiply examples regarding the expensiveness of coal. The discovery and extraction of coal was important in Turkish economic history and the person who found coal in the country valued as the historical figure Uzun Mehmet. However, coal prices had risen so sharply that its history was all but forgotten. The satirical press seized on this, noting that by then the word "coal" evoked nothing but price hikes. In the analysis titled "The Story of Coal" the topic was addressed with the following statements:



Fig. 13: Newspapers: 210 lira per ton of coal. "Don't shout, ma'am, I've calculated... this is more profitable!" (*Akbaba*, January 15, 1969).

If the opened campaign gives the expected result, a statue of Uzun Mehmet will be erected in Karadeniz Ereğli. 172 years after the discovery of coal, we know the question that comes to the tip of your tongue: "Why didn't they decide to erect a monument before?" you will say. Aaah, ah! After all these years of raising coal prices, did the authorities even find time to remember the origin of coal? (Akbaba, September 1, 1971, 10)²¹

Humor magazines also criticized coal prices for straining family budgets. While newspapers reported that TKİ had begun offering installment sales, Akbaba pursued the same subject in its column "Siamese Brothers":

We warn the Monument Association: When erecting Uzun Mehmet's statue, don't forget to include TKİ. The symbolization is up to you. Whether Uzun Mehmet's finger now points to the enterprise, or the enterprise's manager points to the mine pit to Uzun Mehmet, we don't know how you'll do it. But TKİ and Uzun Mehmet must definitely be together. What will be written on their plaques is easy to say. For example, it could say: Uzun Mehmet: The first man to find coal called black diamond! TKİ: The one who sells coal at real diamond prices in three installments! (Akbaba, September 1, 1971, 10)²²

Muzaffer İzgü, who wrote for Akbaba, also drew attention to the increase in sugar and coal prices following the devaluation of Turkish currency. In the article, he expressed that after devaluation, citizens could not sleep, that with the decrease in the lira's exchange value, salaries had also melted one hundred percent, and in this environment, the coal dealer and sugar dealer would also demand price increases and the price of everything would increase, including the expressions "the coal dealer is also human, he also has wife and children and sugar will enter his house" (İzgü, 1970, 4).

Humor magazines frequently addressed the social consequences of coal shortage in Türkiye. They even expressed that coal shortage in Türkiye caused different techniques to develop in families, and included fictional but credible stories and scenarios emphasizing that coal and fuel procurement was realized through cooperation among all family members. In Akbaba, while Muzaffer İzgü was writing about the difficulties

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- 21 *Eğer açılan kampanya umulan sonucu verirse, Karadeniz Ereğli'sine Uzun Mehmet'in heykeli dikilecekti. Kömürün bulunuşundan 172 yıl sonra dilinizin ucuna gelen soruyu biliyoruz: "Neden daha önce anıt dikme kararı almadılar?" diyeceksiniz. Aaah, ah! Bunca yıl kömüre zam yaptıktan, kömürün babasını hatırlamaya vakit mi buldu ilgililer? (Akbaba, September 1, 1971, 10)*
- 22 *Anıt Derneğini Uyarıyoruz: Uzun Mehmet'in heykelini dikerken Türkiye Kömür İşletmelerine (TKİ) yer vermeyi unutmayın sakın. Sembolize etmesi sizden. Artık Uzun Mehmet'in parmağı işletmeyi mi gösterir, işletmenin yöneticisi Uzun Mehmet'e maden ocağını mı gösterir, nasıl yaparsınız bilmeyiz. Ama mutlak TKİ ile Uzun Mehmet bir arada olmalı. Pilakalarına yazılacaklar kolay. Örneğin şöyle denilebilir: Uzun Mehmet: Kara elmas denen taş kömürünü ilk bulan adam! TKİ: Taşkömürünü gerçek elmas fiyatına üç taksitte satan! (Akbaba, September 1, 1971, 10)*

people of low income faced in accessing coal, the father character in his story, when children got covered in coal dust during the family's production of coal balls from coal dust, said "uh oh, my father would say, you became just like the day we took you out of the coal sack!" Upon the father's this comparison, the child said:

For some reason, we poor children of the neighborhood came out of coal sacks, while Yaşar, Nedim, and Rifat were brought by storks. Maybe because we were born in winter, when storks weren't here. It was our mother's fault, if she had gritted her teeth a little and brought us to the world after March, we too would have achieved the happiness of riding a stork. (Akbaba, December 31, 1969)²³

In the continuation of the story, the scene where the whole family participated in making fuel from coal dust was described. According to this, since low-income families could not access coal, they produced coal balls from coal dust through family cooperation. This production scene was depicted in-depth in the story. The father would pile coal dust in the middle, the center of the dust would be opened, and filled by water carried in buckets. Children would draw water from the pump, while the mother would carry water. The water would be mixed with coal dust by the father. To give shape to the mortar made with coal dust, the mortar would be placed in trays and the top would be smoothed by hand. Then the trays would be turned over and the coals taking the shape of the tray mold would be arranged in rows. Four days later, the coal molds arranged on the ground would be collected. In four days, the dust would dry into balls. These coal balls would then be carried inside one by one by family members and carefully stacked in a huge box (İzgü, 1969b, 14–15).

Saygel, in his column titled "We're Broke, Man," also criticized coal and its prices in an article he constructed about his nephew asking how an exam he took at school went, the nephew replying that he was hopeful, as the family answered the exam questions together. One of the questions asked at school was "What is coal, how is it obtained?" When the student explained this question in a complex way, the writer addressed the matter through daily satire and expressed the following:

Man, my brother exploded. Haven't I explained to you a thousand times how coal is obtained? What are you mumbling about, you dog! There are two ways to obtain coal: with ration card and without ration card. The rationed one costs two hundred ten lira per ton, the non-rationed, that is, a ton of the black market one ton depends on bargaining. (Saygel, 1968b, 8)²⁴

23 *Nedense, biz mahallenin fakir çocukları kömür çuvalından çıkmış, Yaşar, Nedim, Rifat'lar ise, onları leylek getirmişti. Belki de, biz kışın dünyaya geldiğimizden leylekler burada değillerdi. Kabahat ananın, azıcık dişini sıkıp da bizi Marttan sonra dünyaya getirseydi, leyleğe binmek mutluluğuna biz de erişirdik . (Akbaba, December 31, 1969)*

24 *Ulan diye patladı kardeşim. Maden kömürünün nasıl elde edildiğini şimdiye kadar bin kere anlatmadım mı sana? Ne kem küm edip duruyorsun it! Kömür elde etmenin iki yolu vardır; Ordinolü ordinosuz. Ordinolünün tonu iki yüz on liradır, ordinosuz, yani karaborsa satılanın tonu pazarlığa bağlıdır: (Saygel, 1968b, 8)*

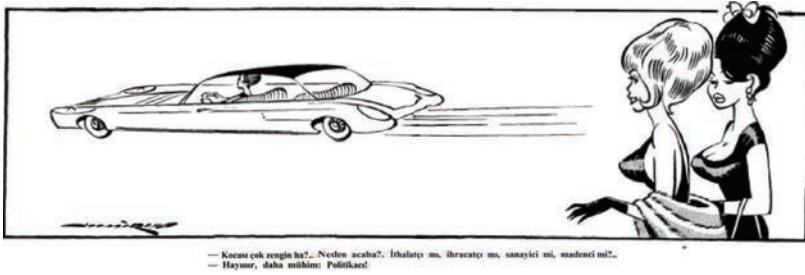


Fig. 14: Cartoon published in *Akbaba*, December 23, 1966, 11.

In the cartoon in Fig. 14, there is data expressing the wealth of mine operators. In the dialogue in the cartoon, two high society women talk while looking at a woman driving a car. One says to the other: “Her husband is very rich, huh? Why, I wonder? Is he an importer, exporter, or miner? No, more important: Politician!” (*Akbaba*, December 23, 1966, 11). Here, there is an emphasis that mine operators are among the wealthy class. Therefore, only a few segments can ride this luxury car.

COAL QUEUES

One of the basic materials in the hands of the humor press during this period were coal queues. In the *Akbaba* column “7 Days,” satirizing daily news throughout the week, coal queues were frequently addressed in the Thursday section. One of the remarkable aspects of this criticism was the comparison of Türkiye’s summers and winters with those in (the rest of) Europe, emphasizing that Turkish families spent their summers and winters in queues. The dimensions reached by expensiveness and heating problems were conveyed as follows:

*Winter came... Not only to us, but also to France, America, Italy, Switzerland. How does winter come to those countries?... Let me tell you: Just as summer comes with beaches opening, sails swelling, boats sailing, speedboats flying, beaches and seas filling with human joy, it comes like that, with new, different, special joy: With skis, winter entertainments, mountain sports, hunts... How does it come to us? I don't need to tell you that, you all see: With queues... Bread queue, coal queue, gas queue. ...At least let's change the name of one of the four seasons in the calendar: Spring, summer, autumn... Queue! (*Akbaba*, February 6, 1964, 6)²⁵*

25 *Kış geldi ... Yalnız bize değil, Fransa'ya, Amerika'ya, İtalya'ya, İsviçre'ye de geldi. Nasıl gelir o memleketlere kış?... Ben size söyleyim: Yaz, nasıl plajlar açılarak, yelkenler şişerek, kotralar kanatlanarak, şarpiler uçuşarak, kumsallar, denizler insan neşesiyle dolarak gelirse öyle gelir, yeni, başka, özel bir neşeyle: Kayaklarla, kış eğlenceleriyle, dağ sporlarıyla, avlarla... Bizde mi nasıl geliyor? Onu benim söylememe haccet yok, hepiniz görüyorsunuz: Kuyruklarla... Ekmek kuyruğu, kömür kuyruğu, gaz kuyruğu....Bari takvimde dört mevsimden birinin adını değiştiresek: İlkbahar, yaz, sonbahar ...Kuyruk! (*Akbaba*, February 6, 1964, 6)*

Although European societies celebrate the arrival of summer and winter with certain joy and rituals, it was noted that in Türkiye, due to production shortage and high cost of living, deep poverty emerged and queues formed for all kinds of consumer goods. Winter was felt by people waiting in coal queues, but in Europe, winter was met by winter joys and sports.

The humor press also characterized coal queues as educational institutions. For example, the following expressions appeared in *Akbaba*:

The elders say "One language, one person, two languages, two people" [...] Today we can change it like this: One queue, one school, two queues, two schools. Citizen, don't remain ignorant, squeeze from one to another! This innovation in education [...] I moved to the accounting department [and] the office boy who ran the errands had taken on men old enough to be his father, reeling off IMF demands that hadn't even made it into the press! Where did you hear these? From them in the coal queue. While complaining about the high cost of living at lunch, when a friend whose life and thoughts I admire said, "Have you ever thought of buying meat from the municipality's regulated sales places?" I said "Okay" to myself [...] "In order to live orderly, to be well-mannered and knowledgeable, it seems necessary to join a queue." (Saygel, 1978, 15)²⁶

EXPENSIVENESS OF COAL AND THE SOCIAL MORAL PROBLEM

Saygel frequently addressed the reflections of coal shortage in social and economic life and made political references through humorous stories. According to Saygel's, the continuous increase in coal prices that triggered a chain reaction of frauds and deception in society started with frauds in coal sales. Coal shortage occupied citizens' agenda so much that people eagerly bought newspapers to follow price increases to be made on coal. Newspapers also wrote about coal to increase or enable their sales. Or newspaper distributors claimed news about coal price hikes to sell or get rid of newspapers by loudly shouting "Extra! Extra! Read all about it!" Saygel, pondered whether there would be high prices or corruption in the country if there were no such shouting, opined that even whispers about coal price increases increased fraud in society. In his story, a ten-year-old newspaper boy yells "coal shortage, it is in the paaaper" to sell all the newspapers under his arm. Upon the child's shouting, first coal dealer Murtaza, who was about to perform the morning prayer, jumps up and buys a newspaper with

26 *Eskiler, "Bir lisan, bir insan iki lisan, iki insan" derler ya. Günümüzde onu şöyle değiştirebiliriz: Bir kuyruk, bir okul, iki kuyruk, iki okul. Vatandaş cahil kalma, birinden birine sokul! Eğitimdeki bu yeniliği ...Muhasebeye geçtim, büronun getir-götür işlerine bakan çocuk, babası yaşındaki adamları karşısına almış, IMF'nin basına bile yansımayan isteklerini sıralıyor! – Kimden duydun bunları? – Kömür kuyruğundakilerden. Öğle yemeğinde hayat pahalılığından yakınırken, yaşamının ve düşüncelerinin hayranı olduğum bir arkadaş da, – Belediyenin tanzim satış yerlerinden et almayı hiç düşündünüz mü? deyince, "Tamam" dedim kendi kendime . "Düzenli yaşamak, görgülü ve bilgili olmak için, kuyruğa girmek şart galiba." (Saygel, 1978, 15)*

twenty-five pence, biting the bullet and paying. After scanning for coal news in the newspaper, he encounters news saying that coke coal stock had decreased and sales over 750 kilograms would be made. The coal dealer Murtaza was deceived by the newspaper boy. He runs to the street to get back the twenty-five pence, but the child has long since disappeared. Murtaza, who returns to his shop breathing through his nose, unable to control his speed, kicks the pitcher where he performed ablution. He also hurls all the curses he knows. He is angry because he was swindled by a foot-tall child. When he gets to work, he pours tap water onto the coal. He will take the coal that the coffee house owner ordered earlier. He sieves the weighed coal to remove its dust. He sends it to the coffee house owner. When the coffee house owner sees the wet coal, he gets angry and curses the coal dealer until he gets tired. While teaching his apprentice the subtleties of the profession, he suggests adding carbonated water for the coffee to be frothy, adding ginger or if not available, pomegranate peel for the tea to give astringency. He sends tea to shopkeepers this way.

The coffee house owner, who cannot be relieved by cursing, chalks on the credit board for drinkers and non-drinkers, saying: "You bastard, you'll add water to steal half a kilo of coal from a poor man like me, are you going to become rich, you godless one?" (Saygel, 1967c, 12). The characterization of Coal dealer Murtaza and the coffee house owner in the story is the new human profile of the city. In fiction, it is emphasized that these men are people without work ethics, who, when they suffer loss, recover their loss by fraud and deception elsewhere. Both typologies are profane people who pretend to be religious. All this fraud was caused by news of an increase in coal prices.

Another cartoon depicting the fraud that emerged due to price hikes was drawn by Zafer Zorlu. Coal prices had also changed behavioral patterns and an urban fraudulent group had emerged. In the humorous mode of the cartoon in Fig. 15, a fraudster is painting stones to give them the appearance of coal, as its price rose to 580 lira per ton (Akbaba, September 1, 1971, 5).

On the other hand, shops and stores also engaged in coal promotions to attract customers offering all sorts of advantages:

One day we looked, and there was an advertisement in the window of the store ahead: "We're sending two of our customers to Europe." Would the guys next to or across from them just stand by? They also hung different kinds of advertisements: "We meet one month's kitchen needs. Your coal is from us. Have fun like crazy wherever you want. No asking, only choosing, as much stone as you can carry. Rent-free apartment, automobile, motorcycle, bicycle. Whatever else comes to mind is hung on windows, doors." (Akbaba, November 14, 1973)²⁷

27 Bir gün bakıyorduk, ilerdeki mağazanın vitrininde bir ilan: "İki müşterimizi Avrupa'ya yolluyoruz". Yanındaki veya karşısındaki adamlar durur mu? Onlar da başka çeşit ilanlar astılar: "Bir aylık mutfak ihtiyacını karşılıyoruz. Kömürünüz bizden. İstedığınız yerde çılgınlar gibi eğlenin. Sormak yok seçmek var, taşı taşıyabildiğin kadar. Kirasız kat, otomobil, motosiklet, bisiklet. Daha aklına ne gelirse asılmış camlara, kapılara. (Akbaba, November 14, 1973)



Fig. 15: When a metric ton of coal costs 580 lira! (*Akbaba*, September 1, 1971, 5).

Those who shopped from these businesses received coupons or tickets, after a certain period a draw was held, and however many customers would win, they would receive the announced prize. Coal was also depicted as an important promotion in this drawing (Türker, 1973, 14).

COAL AID TO FAMILIES

Despite the tense political atmosphere of the 1960s, economic crises and currency devaluations, mining and coal shortage were expressed in interesting drawings. Families' economic hardship stemming from the cost of coal prompted the introduction of certain social measures. In the cartoon in Fig. 16, the state's coal aid was addressed with a political reference. In the drawing with the proposition "One ton of coal will be given to each family," it was expressed that coal was put into the coal truck with a cup, suggesting that coal aid was something of "a story" (Akbaba, August 21, 1968, 16).

Saygel, describing the bureaucratic difficulties of receiving coal aid, included a story of how, in order to get half a ton of coal, he had to go to officials repeatedly, each time being asked for a different document, and when he finally obtained the requested documents, the coal had run out. In the story, the protagonist gives up on ever receiving coke coal aid and decides to get lignite coal. He finds it more suitable for his budget to buy coal, which is cheaper than lignite coal. However, for this, he needs to fill out some forms. In the article, the protagonist, upon hearing that coal aid was being given to newlywed couples, he immediately applied, but was rejected because he had not transferred his residence to his new address, and after hastily transferring his residence, he heard that this form of aid had ended. The official in charge of coal sales says that if they have children, they might have a chance of receiving coal aid. In this way, the ordeals citizens went through to receive lignite coal aid were

humorized. The protagonist of the story ultimately cannot succeed in getting normal lignite coal despite all efforts, and officials suggest that he should buy powdered radiator coal. However, he gives up because this type of coal is not suitable for stoves. The protagonist of the story returns without being able to buy coal. Later, he finds someone he knows through his neighbor and decides to buy coal with his reference. At a private establishment where he went to buy coal, he offers a bribe to obtain coal. However, those at the private coal depot do not take bribes. It is stated that the business gives quality coal to its customers to compete with the state (Saygel, 1967b, 14).

There were some criticisms that coal shortage was damaging Türkiye's cultural values. Reşit Aşçıoğlu, in his "England Notes" column, mentioned that operating Turkish baths would soon become a dream. Aşçıoğlu, writing about various difficulties experienced in operating baths, noted that baths could not be operated because abundant coal for fuel could not be found, observing that in order "to reach our baths that have become a dream, we will need to go on long journeys in the future and we'll be like going all the way to Europe to wash in a Turkish bath!" (Aşçıoğlu, 1968, 15).

CONCLUSIONS

The world of caricature draws on lived experience, the prevailing conjuncture, and conjunctural developments; in short, it is shaped by the political and topical agendas of the period. Viewed from this angle, it can be considered a means, or method, of tracking that same agenda through a different medium and from a different perspective. Minerals are among the leading raw materials

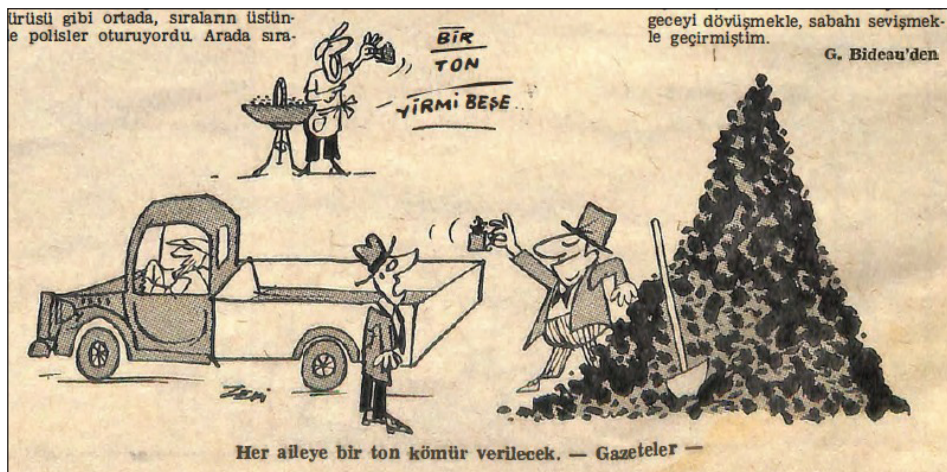


Fig. 16: Each family will receive one metric ton of coal (Akbaba, August 21, 1968).

used at every stage of life within a state-society structure. Accordingly, it can be argued that the intersection between caricature and mining offers a powerful vantage point from which social issues can be communicated through direct messages.

In light of these intersections, the satirical press, operating within the dynamics of its relationship to political power, sought to treat the problems of different segments of society in a softened, mitigated manner. Broadly speaking, it was politics and the problems of the urban middle class that found acceptance as subject matter in the satirical press of the 1960–80 period. The inability to direct rapid changes in social structure and the unplanned urbanization had deepened the problems of the urban middle class (Kozanoğlu, 2001, 58). Because the political instability and economic crises of the period affected broad segments of society, the coal issue readily became one of the elements of class conflict, and in turn one of the major subjects taken up by the satirical press. Humorously toned stories captured the hardships of a fictional yet believable Turkish middle class, the urban working class, and civil servant and tradesman families. At a time when rising population and urbanization had swelled demand, coal queues began to form in the cities, driving up the market price of coal considerably, and the resulting supply difficulties, combined with these price increases, soon turned into a serious economic problem for society at large. Dreams of wealth gave way to dreams of securing an abundant supply of coal, and the satirical press responded with a series of striking cartoons on the subject. Mines and the coal issue turned, in effect, into part of what might be called “survival humor”. By writing about the difficulties of coal supply, the satirical press also brought to the surface, through satirical undertones, the class differences between segments of society revealed by access to coal, findings that lend further support to the relationship between class origin and humor. On the other hand, the yellowed pages of the satirical press also held cartoons that interrogated social morality through the coal issue, portraying pious urban figures who worked as coal sellers, through their commercial cunning and trickery, as the city’s “Others.”

In the cartoons, the figure of a worker trying, while laboring in the mine, to convey his demands upward, paired with an employer who replies, “I can’t hear you, shout a little louder,” symbolized the failure of workers voices to reach those in charge. Humor magazines made visible the poor working conditions and occupational safety problems in the mines, along with occupational diseases and the precarious lives of miners. Coal shortages and high prices are among the most addressed topics in the humor press of the studied period. Coal queues, installment sales and fuel procurement were depicted as daily life problems of the urban middle class. Aziz Nesin and Vedat Saygel masterfully described the social behavioral changes and moral decay created by coal shortage in their stories. Ironic observations, such as “scholars of the future will grow up in minibus, coal, and meat queues” show the depth of social criticism.

Discussions about the nationalization of mines, government policies and patronage relations were also addressed with a critical perspective in humor magazines. The differences in approaches between the CHP and the AP, the mining policies of Ecevit and Demirel were compared in cartoons. Price increases were criticized with the metaphor of “Price Increase Emperor”. The sentence “for a mine worker, working is consuming life... Making life miserable, being buried while alive” summarized miners’ difficult lives. During this period, coal queues were characterized as a social educational institution in humor magazines. Coal shortage was criticized not only as an economic problem but also as a phenomenon that damaged cultural values. The difficulties experienced in operating Turkish baths and fuel inadequacy were interpreted as the loss of traditional culture. Humor magazines also criticized the role of foreign companies in the mining sector and the inability to evaluate underground riches in line with national interests.

»MADEŽ OD PREMOGA JE TEŽKO ODSTRANITI«: TURŠKA RUDARSKA AGENDA Z VIDIKA HUMORISTIČNIH REVIJ (1960–1980)

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IZVLEČEK

Ta članek, ki se osredotoča na obdobje 1960–80, proučuje, kako so turške humoristične revije prikazovale družbeno-politično agendo rudarstva in dela v rudnikih v Turčiji. Študija uporablja korpusni jezikoslovni pristop k zgodovinskemu korpusu digitaliziranih humorističnih revij, med katerimi so Akbaba, Girgir, Çarşaf, Hibir in Limon ter v njih išče izraze, kot so rudnik, rudarstvo, premog, premogovniški delavec, zlato, srebro, baker, svinec, lignit. Za štetje in razvrščanje izrazov so bili uporabljeni programi MAXQDA, Agent Ransack in Adobe Acrobat, rezultati pa so bili kasneje prikazani v obliki grafikonov v programu Power BI, medtem ko so bile karikature in odlomki, ki so vsebovali te izraze, izolirani za podrobnejšo metaforično analizo. Kvantitativni rezultati kažejo, da je bilo zlato zaradi svojega vsakdanjega in simbolnega pomena v turški kulturi omenjeno veliko pogostejše kot kateri koli drug mineral, medtem ko je bil svinec komajda omenjen; med izrazi, povezanimi z delom, prevladujeta »rudar« in »rudarstvo«, kar kaže na vidnost delavskega gibanja tudi znotraj stripovskega diskurza. Na podlagi interpretacije teh vzorcev študija ugotavlja, da so se karikaturisti dosledno postavljali na stran rudarjev proti vladni brezbržnosti do stavk, nevarnih delovnih pogojev in poklicnih bolezni ter večkrat satirizirali politiko nacionalizacije, privatizacije in klientelizma v zvezi z rudarstvom. Pokazalo se je, da sta pomanjkanje premoga in naraščajoče cene predstavljala trajen vir vsakodnevne tesnobe za mestno prebivalstvo srednjega in nižjega razreda, kar je povzročilo nastanek oblike »humorja preživetja«.

Ključne besede: rudarstvo, rudarsko delo, karikature, humoristične revije, Turčija

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